

SHOOT ALBERTA

by Linda Kupecek

A respected Albertan was one of the recipients of an Emmy in Los Angeles on Sept. 7.

Jamie Brown, makeup whiz who works films across Canada from his ranch in Olds in central Alberta, won an Emmy for special makeup for *The Three Wishes of Billy Grier*, a TV-movie lensed in Vancouver.

For the fact-based story, Brown aged actor Ralph Machio from 18 to 80, sharing his Emmy with Mike Westmore (who created the appliances) and Bob Norin, after rising at 2:00 a.m. many

mornings to prepare the makeup.

Brown trained with Perc Westmore in Los Angeles, and has been busy in film since 1964, peripatetic while maintaining his ranch, jewellery store and family in Olds. For *Death Hunt*, he created a special body to be frozen in the ice of Canmore (only to have his work hidden by an over-eager special effects crew) and created a special (but uncredited) head for the Charlton Heston flick *Motherlode*.

Returning home after a 10-

week shoot on *Captive Hearts*, a Paramount feature in Vancouver, Brown was recalled to the coast for the Don Ameche/Bob Hope/Debbie Reynolds comedy.

Brown's care for his work is reflected in his rapport with actors and concern for on-screen credibility, and now, in his well-deserved Emmy.

Storm, a low-budget independent thriller shot in southern Alberta by writer/director David Winning, was screened in Calgary in early October after receiving its Canadian premiere at the Montreal World Film Festival.

The Groundstar Picture production is a first feature for 24-year-old Winning, who produced on a shoestring against a backdrop of wooded areas and backroads west of Calgary, and "Dungeons and Dragons" style games at the University of Calgary campus. The tense story of two students stalked by hunters in the woods before a summer storm was edited by Bill Campbell of Campbell Post Production and scored by synthesizer wizard Amin Bhatia.

While Winning and associate producer Michael Kevis try to snag a distribution deal, Telefilm Canada is promoting *Storm* in Los Angeles. Winning's first film, a 1980 short titled *Sequence* is now distri-

buted by Cannon International in the United Kingdom.

When Peter Lougheed stepped down from his 14-year term as premier of Alberta Nov. 1, he left a legacy of film and video incentives, in addition to his more spectacular energy fireworks.

In the early '70s, the Lougheed government established the Film Industry Development Office in Edmonton, the first film commission office in Canada, and one of the pioneer offices in North America. As well, the ACCESS Television Network (the major engager of professional writing and acting talent in Alberta) and the Banff Television Festival, an international meeting place for world-class television producers, were born with Lougheed's blessing.

And, finally, the Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation, a \$3 million loan-bank established to develop Alberta producers and the labour-intensive film and video industry, was established in 1981. So far, the AMPDC has assisted 21 theatrical and television movies, 16 series and pilots, and four documentaries with production budgets totalling \$75 million. Eight are in the can, with five more to be completed in the next months.

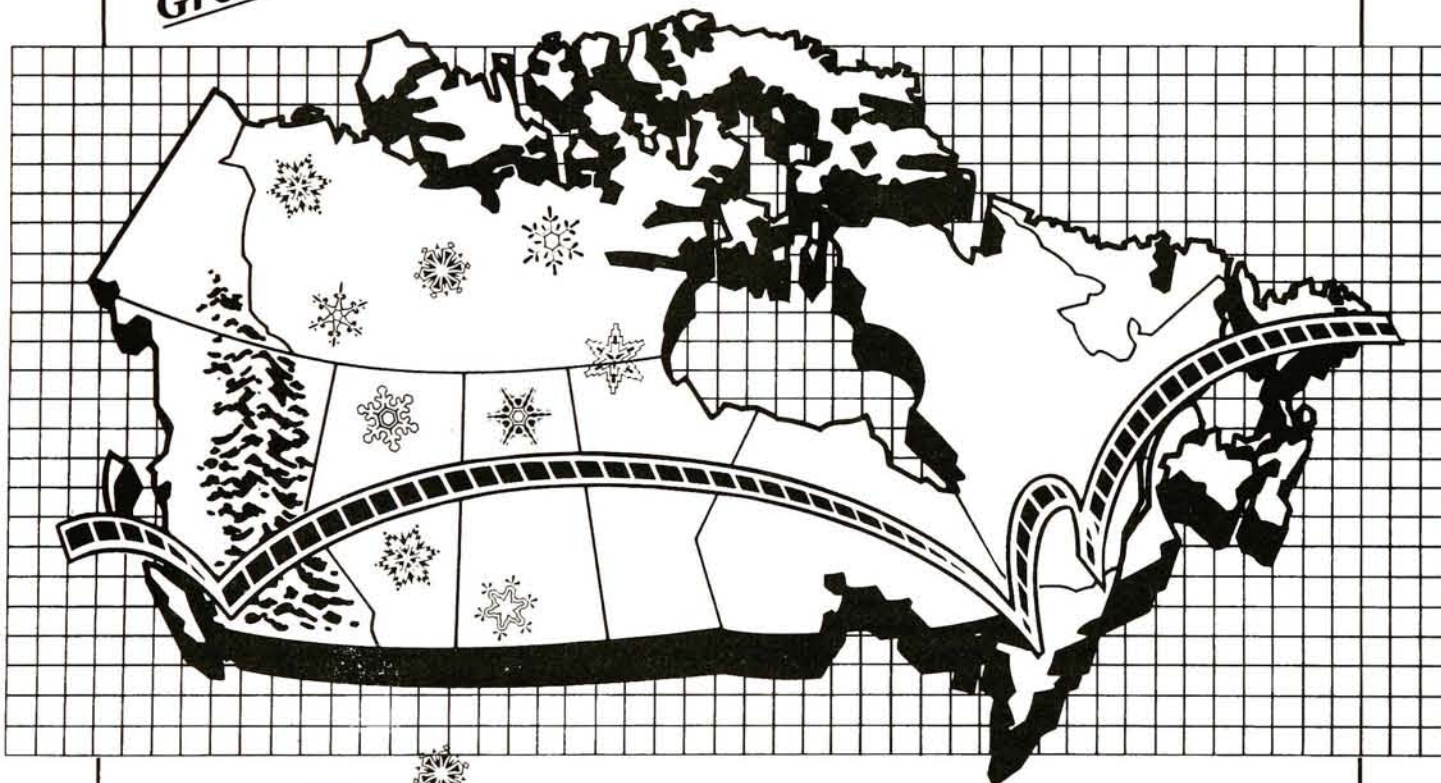
Connecting, the teen television series produced by HBW/Toth Co-productions, premiered on CBC Calgary Oct. 6, and on CBC Edmonton Nov. 30. Described by producers Helene White and Garry Toth as a 'first' in North America, because of its studio forum format for teenagers, *Connecting* is hosted by Reiner Schwarz...

Caryl Brandt has been appointed vice-president, Project Development and Publicity, of the Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation in Canmore. Brandt, with a 15-year track-record of directing and producing for the CBC, MTV and MFB, recently served as associate producer of *Mr. Wizard's World* for the MTV Network, New York...

With Our Own Two Hands, a documentary on prairie farmers helping Nicaraguans produced by producer/director Peter Rayment for the NFB Northwest Studio and written by Judy Haiven, was broadcast on CBC's *Man Alive* in October. *Isaac Littlefeathers*, the Lauron International feature lensed in Alberta with AMPDC help, also aired on CBC in October... Doug Wong's Sundae Sound Studio in Calgary has moved from 16-track to 24-

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Hy Perspectives brings broadcasters Close to Home **Shoot Alberta**

cont. from p. 58

TORONTO – “We’re not into entertainment for entertainment’s sake,” says producer Harvey Crossland of his Vancouver-based production company, Hy Perspectives Media

Group. Instead, what Crossland, together with director Ric Beirsto, are into is the production of films with a social theme.

Crossland, in Toronto in Oc-

tober screening Hy Perspectives’ most recent effort, *Close To Home*, for Superchannel, Global-TV, and other potential broadcasters, teamed up with Beirsto four years ago out of a shared commitment to social issues. “We’re interested in issues we think are important and making people think about those issues. And we think they can be presented in an entertaining way,” says Crossland.

Close To Home, which Crossland is certain will find an audience, is a 95-minute docudrama interweaving the common threads of sexual abuse of children, teenage runaways, and juvenile prostitution. Dedicated to the memory of C.R.O., a 23-year-old young girl Crossland said “died literally on the streets” and whose story is reflected largely in the movie’s teenage runaway-prostitute character Michelle, *Close To Home* also revolves around the streetwise Flynn, a burnt-out youth who’s been hustling too long and television reporter Donna Pedlar (played by working journalist Anne Petrie) attempting the definitive story of their existence. The first major feature for Jillian Fargey and Toronto’s Daniel Allman (as Michelle and Flynn), *Close To Home* required one year of research (including meetings Crossland and Beirsto had with groups of sexually-abused women and sexual offenders) and several script rewrites after receiving advice from real-life police, social and outreach workers, magistrates, and street-kids

(the latter portrayed by actors) to obtain a total understanding and accurate perspective of the issue.

The result, says Crossland, was “a dramatically superior” script followed by a year’s worth of shooting (much of it at night in the fall of 1984 on location in Vancouver, Seattle, Wash., and Reno, Nev.), editing, and post-production work – approximating a total cost of \$500,000, of which \$135,000 was provided by Telefilm (with financial assistance and production support also provided by the NFB’s Pacific Production Group). And given the timeliness of *Close To Home*’s completion as federal legislation and municipal initiatives are underway to curb street and juvenile prostitution, it’s not surprising that Crossland’s received “a really strong response” from the screenings.

In the context of this debate, Crossland says of *Close To Home*, “The whole premise is you can’t legislate morality. Prostitution has nothing to do with laws. And, for the first time in history, we’re starting to confront our attitudes toward children (ancient to Victorian notions of which are documented in the film).”

Now lining up agents for *Close To Home*, Hy Perspectives’ Crossland remains as fervently dedicated to his company’s messages as to the audiences he’s confident his films will find. “We aim to stay true to a commitment to social issues and we won’t do anything that jeopardizes that,” he said.

track, with 52 channel capabilities... The 16mm and 35mm filmsound facilities of silenced Thunder Road have been acquired by the Cinema Television Stage and Radio Arts Department of the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology. The SAIT department intends to rent the CTSR mixing studio to producers with students thrown into the deal ...

Astral and Highgate into prod/dist deal

MONTREAL – Astral Television Films signed an exclusive Canadian distribution and feature co-financing agreement with Highgate Pictures of New York on Nov. 19.

The agreement was announced by Astral Television vice-president Stephen Greenberg and Highgate vice-president Kenin Spivak.

Highgate has produced some 40 specials for CBS and ABC, and is currently producing *Harem*, a mini-series for ABC.

The agreement gives Astral exclusive Canadian rights to Highgate’s film library. Together Astral and Highgate will co-finance three family-theme features, which have been pre-sold to U.S. pay-web HBO, while Astral will distribute in Canada.

Astral Television Film is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Astral Bellevue Pathé Inc.

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