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## Fronts West

### MARK O'NEILL



**T**he Vancouver International Film Festival is making room for all the features that have been made in B.C. over the last year. Festival Director **Alan Franey** is introducing two new series to the 1989 VIFF, 'Western Canadian Showcase' and 'The Screenwriter's Art'. He's also scheduled the Festival a couple of weeks earlier than 1988; from September 29 to October 15.

Franey says "So much enthusiasm has been generated by the sudden prosperity of B.C. production... the Festival's commitment to showcasing the broadest field of this year's production will produce rewards for filmmakers and audiences alike." It's worth noting that VIFF audiences last year voted *The Outside Chance of Maximilian Glick* Most Popular Film.

'The Screenwriter's Art' series will feature visiting writers from Canada and around the world. They'll be at screenings and will also take part in public discussions. Franey says the visitors will "also provide a framework for this year's lively archival series, a selection of 'The World's Wittiest Films'."

There are two new members of the VIFF Board: **Bill Millerd**, artistic director of Vancouver's perennially successful Arts Club Theatres, and lawyer **Arthur Fouks**. The Festival is also establishing an Advisory Board, the first member of which is **Dianne Neufeld**, the B.C. Film Commissioner.

### The Year of the Script

The provincial funding agency, BC Film, has dubbed 1989 as 'The Year of the Script' and is backing up the idea with three new or expanded programs.

American TV and film writer **Robert McKee** brings his 'Story Structure' seminar to town March 3-5. It costs \$300 but BC Film is offering a \$100 subsidy to qualifying participants. The agency is also participating in the new CBC training program for visible minorities and has upped its commitment to the popular Screenwriting Internship Program. Up to \$600 per week is now available for experienced writers who want on-the-job film experience.

### Glick's the flick

About 100 Vancouver-area members of the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television showed up to see *The Outside Chance of Maximilian Glick* at the opening night of Genie screenings at the Ridge. All were invited to watch the awards at a special dinner party, March 22 at Sami's restaurant in Kitsilano. Price isn't set yet but will include a multi-course dinner and live, large-screen telecast of the goings-on in Toronto.

Speaking of *Max Glick*... producer **Stephen Foster**'s feature opened across the country in February (as well as film festival screenings, it's also been shown for a week in Montreal to meet Genie requirements). Foster has left Northern Lights to work for his own company, Fosterfilm Productions.

First priority is a half-hour CBC TV series based on the further experiences of young Max "growing up in a prairie town with a weird sort of ethnic mix". Veteran TV producer **Paul Saltzman** is working with Foster on the project; *Glick* writer **Phil Savath** is also on board developing a bible and the first half-dozen scripts. If CBC likes the material, shooting could begin this summer for broadcast next season.

### Writers FUND'ed

B.C. writers scored a respectable share of the latest cash offerings from FUND, the Foundation to Underwrite New Drama. **Ralph Burdman** is working on a comedy called *Daytona Beach Roomba* about an elderly love affair. **Parajayo Robert Reece**'s *My Secret Son* is a father-and-son tale. And novelist **Raymond Spence** is working on *My Brother's Elastic Winkle*, a post-war comedy set in Port Moody.

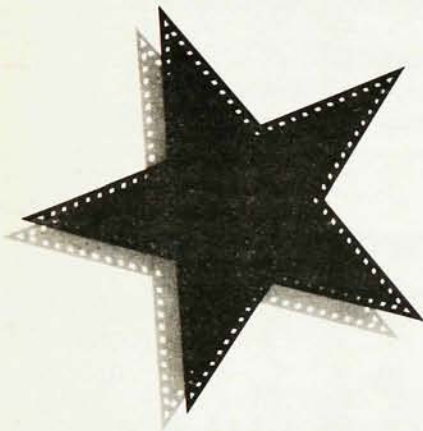
FUND also gave some bucks to two Toronto writers for their project *Hollywood, B.C.* in which a small town awaits the arrival of an American film crew. As well, **Stephen Reid**'s novel *Jackrabbit Parole* is being adapted for film by **David Young** of Toronto.

### Women in Focus

Women in Focus and the NFB are busy organizing a film and video festival to be held in Vancouver in November. 'In Visible Colors' will feature films by women of color and from Third World countries. As well, there will be a two-day symposium on the social and economic realities of producing and distributing women's cinema.

Submissions are invited and information is available from **Zaineb Verjee** at Women in Focus, #204-456 West Broadway, Vancouver, V5Y 1R3, (604) 872-4332.

## T H E N O R T H E R N S T A R



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