

# LE CINÉMA QUÉBÉCOIS

## The Production Scene

Last year, in its annual Canadian special issue, *Variety* mentioned 13 films in production in all of Canada. This year, according to Cinéma Québec's survey, there are at least 39 features in production in Québec alone. Many of these are by young and/or little-known cinéastes.

L'Association Coopérative des Productions Audio-Visuelles, the co-op responsible for *La Vie Revêue*, which won two awards at the Canadian Film Awards (elsewhere in this issue is an interview with the director - Mireille Dansereau) is working on three productions: *Allo Tout L'Monde*, a documentary feature by Roger Frappier in the editing stage; *Une Nuit en Amérique* by Jean Chabot (whose first film, *Mon Enfance à Montréal* was shown in Verona, New York, and throughout Canada) with Pierre Mignot on camera; and *Tu Brûles... Tu Brûles* by Jean-Guy Noël, which was filmed by a Syndicat National du Cinéma crew and is presently being edited. This story concerns a drop-out fireman and was one of the first CFDC-financed \$100,000 features.

At Les Ateliers du Cinéma Québécois there are also three productions: *Bar-Salon* by André Forcier, which started shooting in November; *M'En Revenant par Les Epinettes* by François Brault; and *Floralie Où Es-Tu?* by Jean Dansereau, filmed with an SNC crew.

At the National Film Board there are a couple of productions which, according to the Film Board itself, will probably not get much commercial attention: *O.K. . . . Laliberté* by Marcel Carrière with Luce Guilbeault and Jacques Godin, Marc Beaudet producing; *La Tendresse Ordinaire* by Jacques Leduc with Esther Auger and Luce Guilbeault, Paul Larose producing, also being edited; and *Les Allées de la Terre* by André Théberge, whose first feature *Question de Vie* was shown at the Critic's Selection at Cannes in 1971. Also at the Film Board are: *1461 Jours* by Gilles Groulx with Paul Larose producing, which should be completed by mid-December; and the film everyone is impatiently waiting for -

*Taureau* by Clément Perron (who wrote *Mon Oncle Antoine*) with André Mélançon and Monique Lepage. (Next issue of Cinema Canada will include an interview with the director.)

MGM; and Jan Kadar's *Lies My Father Told Me* which is being edited in Montreal.

Claude Jutra is editing *Kamouraska*. Based on Anne Hébert's novel, Michel



Director Clément Perron with actress Monique Lepage during the shooting of *Taureau*.

Another film to watch for is Denys Arcand's *Rejeanne Padovani* being produced by Cinak. Arcand's *La Maudite Galette* was selected for the Critic's Week last year at Cannes, and recently played at the Stratford Festival.

Claude Fournier is currently shooting *Alien Thunder* on location in Duck Lake, Saskatchewan. The cast includes Donald Sutherland, Chief Dan George, Kevin McCarthy, Jean Duceppe, and Francine Racette. The script, based on an actual incident in the RCMP files, was written by W. O. Mitchell and George Malko.

*Keep It in the Family*, Larry Kent's new feature starring John Gavin, Patricia Gage and Adrienne LaRussa, has finished filming with an SNC crew. The feature is being produced by Kit Films Ltd., André Link and John Dunning associate producers; with Roger Moride CSC on camera and Claude Hazanavicius on sound.

Syndicat National du Cinéma, with 200 freelance artisan and technician members, also worked on *J'ai Mon Voyage*, a Kit Films Ltd. and Les Productions Mutuelles Ltée. production; directed by Denis Héroux, and starring Dominique Michel, Jean Lefebvre and René Simard; *The Pyx* by Harvey Hart distributed by

Brault did the cinematography, and Geneviève Bujold played the lead. The film is scheduled to be released in March. (Next issue of Cinema Canada features interviews with the director, cinematographer and star.) Also, Claude Jutra's *Mon Oncle Antoine* is to open in Paris in December.

Gilles Carle is completing post production work on *La Mort D'un Bucheron* (The Death of a Lumberjack) which is to be released in January. The film was written by Gilles Carle with the assistance of Arthur Lamothe and stars Carol Laure, Willie Lamothe, Denise Filiatrault, Pauline Julien, Daniel Pilon and Marcel Sabourin. Carle's *La Vraie Nature de Bernadette* has been sold in 28 countries already. The film is to open in Toronto soon, and is playing in Montreal and throughout Quebec. It has been in five theatres in Paris since September and has extended the run of *Les Mâles*, also by Gilles Carle, which has been there since early June. *La Vraie Nature de Bernadette* had good reviews throughout the French press, and resulted in interviews with the director in every major paper from *Le Monde* to *Politique Hebdo*. Most recently, it won five Etrogs at the Canadian Film Awards.

## Educational Filming in Quebec

Recently the provincial Ministry of Industry and Commerce announced the results of a study concerning educational films here. In all, \$25 million dollars are spent annually: \$12 million to buy films and audio-visual documents, and the rest on equipment. These amounts even off to \$25.00 per student, and represent a large part of the livelihood of many production companies in Quebec.

Last spring there was an understandable uproar at the meeting of the Producers Association when Mr. Labonté from Radio-Québec stated that his organization was authorized by law to produce all the films necessary for the Ministry of Education. Not only did this decision seem contrary to the pronounced desire of the government to promote the filming industry with an out-line law on cinema, this would also jeopardize the existence of several production companies who rely upon educational contracts to see them through lean times.

In reality, Radio-Québec is not ready to absorb these contracts, and, having just begun to diffuse its video programs on cable t.v. on the 5th of November, is having enough of its own problems as it is. So the educational contracts are still being meted out to private industry. The situation is precarious, and contracts to the industry could stop whenever Radio-Québec builds up its facilities to begin to produce these films.

### Educfilm

What with all this uncertainty, it is with great interest that one watches the birth of a new production company, fully devoted to the production of educational films and audio-visual documents. Educfilm proposes to make three sorts of documents. First are the scientific films aimed at the educational milieu. They will treat the most recent scientific models of education, and will be shown to educators. Secondly come films and documents to "change the milieu". Aimed at educators and parents, these documents mean to provoke changes in attitude, approaches and understanding and will treat subjects like the non-directive approach, methods of observation, etc. Educfilm believes that social and psychological animation is the sine qua non of this type of film and will be the first production company here founded with a competent "animatrice". The third type of document includes all sorts of audio-visual aids (films, slides, videotapes) and will be used by teachers to help their students learn simple notions.

The company is concerned with the human, psychological aspect of their

work and they emphasize the importance of feed-back and participation in order to make viable films. In all, there will be three or four filmmakers, all of whom will have a background in the physical or human sciences as well as in cinema. There will be a staff of educational animators to accompany the films, and systematic research will be done to judge the effectiveness of the product.

For the moment, Educfilm revolves around the three people who founded it. Michel Moreau, well known here for his education films (*Apprentissage et mouvements*, *Chronique d'une observation*) is presently preparing a thesis in psychology at the Université de Montréal. He was at the National Film Board when a team was organized to make educational films (1964-1969) and has worked with Arthur Lamothe since then, first at the Société Générale Cinématographique and lately at Les Ateliers Audio-visuels du Québec. Edith Fournier-Chouinard will head the animation section. She holds a Ph.D. in psychology and is currently associate-professor in the Science of Education faculty at the Université Montréal. Jean-Paul Léveillé is the administrator and has a lengthy background in business and publicity. For the members of the team at Educfilm, the film has ceased to be an end in itself. One gets the feeling that it's the prolongation of the film, it's impact and effectiveness which mean everything. For this team, a major part of the work begins once the film is completed.

*Educfilm, 934 Wilder, Outremont, Québec (514) 735-0883*

### Shorts on seven Québécois writers

In 1969 the Office du Film du Québec received contracts to produce a series of half-hour shorts on seven writers. These films were conceived by the Service des Moyens Techniques d'Enseignement (SMTE) in the provincial Ministry of Education and follow the lines of its programs at the secondary and college levels.

Having been made in 1970-71, the films had their first public showing this November at the Bibliothèque Nationale. The films and their directors are as follows: *Marie-Claire Blais* by Clovis Durand, *Félix-Antoine Savard* by Claude Grenier, *Alain Granbois* and *Gaston Miron* by Roger Frappier, *Marcel Dubé* by Claude Roussel, *Yves Thériault* by Claude Savard and *Jacques Ferron* by Yves Taschereau. By this time, the films have been shown again at the Cinéma-thèque Québécoise and will now circulate in the schools and universities in order to familiarize the students with the backgrounds and biographies of the authors.

## II International Festival of 16mm Cinema

For the second year the Independent Filmmakers' Cooperative has brought a 16mm festival to town. Directed by Dimitri Eipides and coordinated by Claude Chamberland, the Festival took place in two theatres simultaneously: at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts on Sherbrooke Street, and at the Bibliothèque Nationale on St-Denis Street. Although the attendance was spotty at times, the Co-op brought together 25 shorts and 25 medium and long features from all over the world and gave many Montrealers a chance to see the kind of cinema which is — alas — all too absent from our neighbourhood theatres.

The Festival's purpose was announced in the program as "... not [to find] the commercially attractive or popular aspects of this cinema but rather the truly relevant and significant ones in terms of creativity, originality and social importance, particularly works which by the nature of their content or form may not reach audiences too easily in this country." The Canada Council, the Conseil des Arts pour la Région Métropolitaine de Montréal, the Department of External Affairs, and the National Film Board all thought enough of this purpose to back the Festival financially.

There was an important retrospective of films by Werner Herzog from West Germany, and Mr. Herzog was in Montreal for the duration of the Festival. His four feature-length films were shown: *Even Dwarfs Start Out Small*, *Sign of Life*, *The Country of Silence and Obscurity* and *Fata Morgana*.

The Canadian films shown were *Françoise Durocher*, *Waitress* by André Brassard, *Selling Out* by Tadeusz Jaworski, *Lamatraq* by Lina Gagnon, *C'est pas l'argent qui manque* by Robert Favreau, *Paralysis* by Lois Sieget and Ray Jurgens, and *The Pearly Yeats* by Bruce McKay.

### Films in release in Montreal

In Montreal, one tends to consider Canadian films either as made by a Québécois or by an English Canadian. That one may not be at all English hardly matters; what does is that one is not Québécois. I think of this just now because Paul Almond's *Journey* opened in English and in French (*Détour*) on the 9th of November. In spite of his birthplace on the Gaspé coast, he is generally considered an English Canadian filmmaker here. And this brings me to the startling conclusion that, for the first time in Canadian history, three English

Canadian feature films will play at one time here this November. **Wedding In White** opened up the following night and **Rowdyman** should come before the end of the month. Loyal to Québec and sensitive to the cultural situation, Almond is the only filmmaker of the three who insisted on opening in French and English at once, hence the time-lapse between the Toronto opening and the one in Montreal. As for the films by **Fruet and Carter**, there are no subtitles or dubbed versions and so these films will never be accessible to the majority of the population here. (Inexcusable! ed.)

The Québec cinéma is doing well for itself. Presently, there are five feature films being shown. Three are in first runs. Jean-Claude Lord's **Les Colombes**, which hardly made a ripple at the Canadian Film Awards, opened on the 14th of September and is still doing well. In its first weeks, it did extremely well and even broke the all time record at the Rivoli Theatre for attendance. **Le P'tit Vient Vite** by Louis-Georges Carrier, that questionable comedy which was filmed in video and blown up to 35mm with disastrous results as far as the images and sound are concerned, opened on the 19th of October and is still holding its own in two theatres on Ste-Catherine St. As for **La Maison des Amants** which premiered on the 8th of November, it could have closed the same night, judging from the quantity of people who left the theater before the end. The only significant aspect of the film is that it pushes the old-time Québec-sex flick to a new low by adding some pretty unbearable sado-masochistic twists. It was made by Jean-Paul Sassy, is a Franco-canadian co-production, and was aided by the CFDC. And **Les Smattes** by Jean-Claude Labrecque re-opened in a repeat engagement.

**Les Gars de Lapalme**, a 26-minute short by François Dupuis and Arthur Lamothe, was selected by the Leipzig Festival to be shown in the information section. The documentary festival took place from November 18th to the 25th.

French critic Albert Cervoni spent 10 days in Québec to see the most recent films and meet the filmmakers for a series of articles. He was followed by Louis Marcorelles scouting for the International Critic's Week for the upcoming Cannes Festival.

The Conseil québécois pour la diffusion du cinéma has published an 80-page brochure on Michel Brault, one of the most prominent cinematographers in Quebec since the fifties. The brochure includes interviews, excerpts from films, critical reviews, a comprehensive look at

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Françoise Durocher, Waitress

the artist's work, and a biography and filmography. It is the twelfth in the **Cinéastes du Québec** collection which includes brochures on Gilles Carle, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Claude Jutra, Jacques Godbout, and others. For further information concerning the French language series contact the conseil at 3466 rue St-Denis, Montréal 130, Québec.

*Compiled by Connie Tadros of Cinéma Québec with additional information from the Conseil québécois pour la diffusion du cinéma.*

CINEMA CANADA would like to apologize again for a few things in our last issue: first of all, the apology was incorrect, and to Dr. Bob Reid from the Berkeley Studios of the United Church of Canada we apologize again and thank him for his article in issue #3 entitled **The Multi Image Film and Audience Attitude**: the man who designed Undersky for Paul Almond is named Glenn Blydwell, and not Glenn Bible; Michael Snow's next film is entitled **Rameaux's Nephew** by Diderot, Thanks to Dennis Young, by Max Knowles; and the close-ups of Snow were photographed by Tom Urquhart.

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