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Cinema Papers #8 March-April 1976

Peter Beilby

Phillippe Mora

Scott Murray

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The crafty combination

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Hasselblad

For free colour brochures, write, enclosing a thirty cent stamp, to Photimport (Aust) Pty Ltd 69 Nicholson Street East Brunswick Vic 3057.

If you describe your special interests or applications, such as underwater or close-up photography, we will send you specialist literature.
The best break in television news!

When news breaks you have to act fast; set up fast—get the picture back fast. Of the two alternatives the better way for on-the-spot, heat-of-the-moment, unrepeatable events is the film way.

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Film is great for the television news business.

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7390 EASTMAN EKTACHROME Print Film

NOTES
1. Where multiple release prints are required, the use of a low-contrast original is recommended.
2. The choice of printing procedure depends on a number of factors, including the types of printing and processing facilities available and certain economic considerations. As a result, certain compromises may have to be accepted.
3. The dotted lines indicate alternate, less common methods.
AUSTRALIA COUNCIL

THE FILM, RADIO & TELEVISION BOARD

GRANTS FOR FILM AND TELEVISION
APPLICATIONS CLOSE: MARCH 22

1. Advanced Production Fund.
Through which assistance is given for projects from experienced film-makers, which are of a high standard but not necessarily commercial propositions.
Upper limit — $25,000

2. Script Development Fund.
Through which grants are made to directors and/or writers who wish to devote their full time to developing a film or television treatment or screenplay over a specific period of time at an approved rate of payment.
APPLICATION FORMS (for 1 & 2) are available from:
The Director,
Films, Radio and Television Board,
Australia Council,
P.O. Box 302,
North Sydney, NSW, 2060.
For information: Telephone a Project Officer who can assist you from pre-production to post-production — Sydney 922 2122

3. Basic Production Fund.
Which is administered by the Board in collaboration with the Australian Film Institute. Support will be considered for projects which are original in approach, technique or subject matter; for technical research projects and for proposals by inexperienced, but promising, filmmakers.
Upper limit — $7,000
APPLICATION FORMS (for 3) are available from:
The Director,
Australian Film Institute,
P.O. Box 165,
Carlton South, Vic. 3053.
For information: Telephone (Melbourne) 3476888, or the Film Consultant, Film, Radio and Television Board (Sydney) 9222122.
The School of Humanities

Griffith University enrolled its first graduate student in 1974 and its first undergraduates in March 1975. The University is organised in problem-oriented Schools, and is committed to multi-disciplinary study and team teaching.

The interests of the fifteen faculty members so far appointed to the School of Humanities include Italian, French, English, Russian and Arabic Literature, European cultural and intellectual history, the study of film and television, anthropology and sociology, philosophy and semiotics.

The School is seeking additional faculty staff to join it in the second half of 1976, and applications are sought from persons whose interests include:

A SOCIOLOGICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL OR SEMIOTIC APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF LITERATURE, STYLISTICS, THE VISUAL ARTS, OR DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE.

It is expected that appointments will be made at Senior Lecturer or Lecturer Level.

The salary range is:
- Lecturer $12,063 — 8 x $500 — $16,193
- Senior Lecturer $16,512 — 6 x $536 — $19,193.

Further information is available from The School Administrator, The School of Humanities, Griffith University, Nathan, Queensland, 4111.

Applications should reach the School Administrator by 26th March, 1976.
1976 THE AUSTRALIAN FILM COMMISSION CONTINUES ITS SUPPORT OF THE INDUSTRY

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Throughout the 1976 Winter Olympics at Innsbruck, Gevachrome II will be used exclusively by Austrian Television and all accredited T.V. film teams. These new Gevachrome II films offer what film and television news teams need: reliable film material with extreme sharpness, outstanding brilliance, accurate colour rendering plus fast, trouble-free processing. All over the world millions of viewers will see why Gevachrome II is a winner.

Gevachrome II by Agfa-Gevaert... the European partners of film and television professionals.

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Pathe introduce two craftman cameras—DS8 and 16mm.

Both are professional.

Possibly the latest electronic Duolight cameras from the Pathe cockerell look like ugly ducklings, but look at their capabilities:

The electronic double super 8 version takes one hundred feet of film which after processing becomes two hundred feet in the super 8 format.

The 16mm version of the camera is similar in design to the DS8. Either camera will take an auxiliary 400 foot magazine with its own motor and automatic camera connections that will provide long running capability.

The new exposure meter has no moving needle, but solid state electronics with LED display. The CdS cell is behind the lens and gives accurate measurement whether the camera is running or not. It drives the lens diaphragm automatically through a servo motor, so you can concentrate on filming.

The meter is also coupled with f.p.s. control, the variable shutter opening and film sensitivity (10-400 ASA).

The speed range is remarkable: 8, 18, 25, 48, 64 and 80 fps, forward or reverse, with variable shutter opening for lap dissolves.

Two sync sound systems: A built-in pilot tone, 50Hz at 25 fps for use with pilot tone tape recorders and single frame pulse sync for use with the new pulse systems. No extras to buy.

Lenses are interchangeable, using a three-lens turret that takes standard C mount lenses. You can also use some still camera lenses with adapters. Choose a lens to create the effect you want. You might like to start with Angenieux's new 1.2 zoom lens, with focal lengths from 6 to 80mm. That's a 13.3 to 1 zoom ratio.

Viewing is reflex through a ground glass screen with hairlines. It also provides an exposure indicator, battery charge level indicator and TV framing limits. Compare its compact dimensions and weight (7lbs) with what you're carrying around.

Now which is the ugly duckling?

Three new sounds in motion from Switzerland

Capture those fleeting moments in pictures and sound. The original sound belonging to your filmed images gives them a new dimension. The sound is recorded during actual filming directly onto the magnetic stripe on the film. (You can even stripe your own with a Weberling.)

Bolex sound quality is excellent. And simultaneous recording of both pictures and sound is no more difficult than with an ordinary movie camera. Both new Bolex models are equipped with automatic setting devices for the diaphragm and sound level during recording, allowing you to concentrate on the actual filming.

The Bolex 580 Sound is particularly suited for outdoor reporting, being fitted with a zoom lens that gives up to eight times magnification. The Bolex 550XL Sound has a very large aperture lens (f/1.2) and is especially suited to filming indoors without the need for additional lighting. Loaded with 160 ASA film, it becomes almost as sensitive as your own eyes. It enables you to film any scene, by the ambient light, just as you see it.

Naturally, your viewfinder has full information, including film end signal.

You can do professional dissolves automatically, starting or ending a sequence with a slow fade-in or fade-out. Another automatic device amplifies weak sound signals and compresses loud ones at your demand.

If you want to appear in the picture yourself, a remote control device enables you to do so. You won’t have any blank frames because an electromagnetic control always stops the shutter in the closed position. There’s even an ‘Actionlight’ mounted on the front of the camera to warn your ‘cast’ when you start shooting.

The film quality you’ll get from either of these cameras deserves a projector to match. Have a look at the new Bolex SM80 Electronic, a new generation in projectors. Simple to operate, but with highly refined recording technique, Sound level control makes it possible to record richly contrasting music without distortion at over 50 Db.

If you’re not into Super 8 sound yet, this is your chance to get moving in hi-fi.

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No advertisement can tell you all about this new Bolex equipment. Write, enclosing 30 cent stamp, for colour literature to: Photimport (Aust) Pty Ltd, 69 Nicholson St, East Brunswick 3057
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**YANKS JUMP IN ON BURSTALL MINI EPIC**

It doesn't pay to trust anyone in the film industry. Hexagon producer-director Tim Burstall, has been given suspended two month prison sentences. Then two days later in Milan, Pasolini's Tango in Paris was banned from Italian screens and all prints confiscated. This was also pronounced on Silvio Clementelli's With Night Today and on Mr. Verhoven's Kitty Tippett.

The distributor behind Tango also disqualifies the film from state aid — which is 13 per cent of box-office gross. As Last Tango, he charged producers and the critics $9.3 million means a loss of over US$1.2 million in subsidy, and with all the legal play involved, the Grainaldi, Brando and Schneider have all been given suspended two month prison sentences. Then two days later in Milan, Pasolini's Salo' or 120 Days of Sodom was banned from Italian screens and all prints confiscated. This was also pronounced on Silvio Clementelli's With Night Today and on Mr. Verhoven's Kitty Tippett.

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**PARISIAN CENSORSHIP: IT'S A RED-HOT PROPERTY**

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McQueen and Marlon Brando. Coppola has confirmed, however, that Fred Roos and Gary Goetzman will be the co-producers; Vittorio Storaro, the cameraman; Dean Tavoularis, the production designer; and Dick McWhorter, the unit manager — all familiar names from The Godfather unit.

In a surprise announcement which conflicts with the attitudes expressed in his recent Cinema Papers interview, Coppola has stated that Apocalypse Now will go out via a major United Artists, in the U.S. and Canada. Coppola had earlier suggested that the film, which is being handled by various independent producers on the foreign market, would be handled in the U.S. by his own distribution outfit, Coppola Cinema 5, in a partnership with Don Rugoff's cinema 5.

Recently, the New York-based Cinema 5 announced that it had experienced its 1st suc­cession for some time, no doubt due to such successes as Monty Python and the Holy Grail, Scrooge, and a Marriage, Sreeted Away by an Unusual Destiny and 7 Beauties. The last two are by the current rage in New York, Lina Wertmüller.

Coppola is credited with having brought Ms. Wertmüller's films to the attention of Rugoff, since filming began. First, the Fellini then did a prima donna in the American premiere in December 1974 at a reduced rate, he must bring to Rugoff's attention a list of films for the U.S. and Canadian markets. It is also possible that the take-up bid — by William Forman, president of Cineroma Inc. — which had been ongoing for some 18 months, has finally been fought off.

ALL TIME TOPPERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety's updated, all-time &quot;Box office Champs&quot; has just been published, and below are listed the top 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jaws</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Godfather</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Sound of Music</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gone With The Wind</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Sting</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Exorcist</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Towering Inferno</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Love Story</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Graduate</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Doctor Zhivago</strong></td>
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</table>

All figures represent total film hire and are for the U.S. and Canadian markets only. (For approximate world grosses, see Variety, Jan. 15.) Of the above titles, only Gone With The Wind (1939) is more than 10 years old.

FELLINI THROWS A TANTRUM

Everyone knows that Federico Fellini has been trying to do a film version of Casanova for about as long as Bergman has been trying to do The Merry Widow — which is a decade or two. Fellini finally got his way last year when Italian producer and associate of United Artists' PEA Rome operation, Alberto Grimaldi, riding high on the success of Last Tango in Paris, and Pasolini, Truffaut, and Last Tango in Paris, called Fellini to Rome and asked him to work with him on a film about Casanova. Fellini was in the middle of shooting his latest film, Zabriskie Point, and was unable to get away from it. The only other film that Fellini is known to have completed is his latest, Le Quattro Cents in Paris, Anatole Dauman is in Germany co-producing The Quattro Cents in Paris, Anatole Dauman is in Germany co-producing Le Coup de Grace. The film is set in Lithuania in the 1920s, during the Communist conjus.

Two famous novelists have fought over the rights to their works. Collette and Robin Maugham. Christine Gozou Renal is to do six one-hour television shows based on Wuthering Heights, and David Van Haan is to produce Map of the Wind. Fellini, the director of Casanova, is working on the screenplay.

More recently, attention has focused on the personal interests of some part-time Commissioners. Anthony Buckley Productions Pty. Ltd. recently received $565,000 for its film Caddie, plus an additional amount when the film went over budget. Anthony Buckley is a part-time Commissioner.

Attention has also been drawn to the outside interests of other part-time Commissioners, Jill Robb and Graham Burre. Robb is a distribution consultant for the ABC, and is currently in Italy on a business trip. Burre is managing director of Village Roadshow and deputy chairman of Hexagon. Many observers claim that it is impor­tant, for the development of the Australian Film Industry, that the Commis­sion be regarded as a neutral and independent organization, whose sole objective is the development of a viable and successful film industry. It is unfortu­nate, however, that the Commission be regarded as a neutral and independent organization, whose sole objective is the development of a viable and successful film industry. It is unfortu­nate, however, that the increasing competition for the Commission's limited funds, is leading to accusations of nepotism.

However, given this situation, it is regarded by many as regrettable that the appointment of an individual with the interests of companies or organizations that are recipients of AFC monies.

FOREIGN PRODUCTION NEWS

Elliott Kastner and Lester Persky are to co-produce Sidney Lumet's film of Equus — Peter Shaffer's stage hit. Budget is estimated at $4 million. Persky and Kastner are also financing Milos Forman's second dip into the counterculture's past — the film ver­sion of Hair. Production of this rock musical movie is due in 1978.

After the financial and critical disas­ter of Zardoz, John Boorman is to direct the sequel of Zardoz, The Heretic. Exorcist II. John Voigt is to star alongside Linda Blair whose little­ girl image is quickly disappearing. Not surprisingly, given a recent television tele­vision interview where she was raped with a broom handle.

If the Devil is to be given a revival, so then, the movie is to be a sequel to The Exorcist: Mark Robson's film, however, is not a remake of the 1935 Gary Cooper vehicle, it will be based on the recent novel by Berke­ley Mather.

Peter Yates is to direct Deep from the outside interest of other part-time Commissioners, Jill Robb and Graham Burre. Robb is a distribution consultant for the ABC, and is currently in Italy on a business trip. Burre is managing director of Village Roadshow and deputy chairman of Hexagon. Many observers claim that it is impor­tant, for the development of the Australian Film Industry, that the Commis­sion be regarded as a neutral and independent organization, whose sole objective is the development of a viable and successful film industry. It is unfortu­nate, however, that the increasing competition for the Commission's limited funds, is leading to accusations of nepotism.

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Producing “Picnic”

PAT LOVELL

The success of Pat Lovell’s production of “Picnic at Hanging Rock”, with co-producers Hal and Jim McElroy, has been one of the more surprising aspects of the local industry’s resurgence. With still much of its prime runs to complete, “Picnic” has already grossed $1.5 million and now rivals “Alvin Purple” as Australia’s most successful film.

Pat Lovell has spent over 17 years in television, including long stints as companion to Mr Squiggle and panel-member of ‘Beauty and the Beast’. Her career as journalist and reporter, for both commercial and government television, has generally tended toward the more specialized areas of current affairs, and at one stage this even had her paddling down a river in Thailand to reach a story.

At present, Ms Lovell is preparing the film version of Cliff Green’s original screenplay, ‘Break of Day’ — a love story set in the Australia of the 1920s. Shooting is planned to commence in April, with Ken Hannam as director.

Ms Lovell was recently in Melbourne, and there she spoke to Scott Murray and Antony I. Ginnane about her involvement with “Picnic”.
The genesis of the “Picnic at Hanging Rock” idea — was it a case of reading Joan Lindsay’s book and going after an option, or was it brought to you in some draft form?

I read it in 1971, and thought it a highly original and unique story: one I could easily see in film terms. I then saw Peter Weir’s Homesdale and thought he had a capacity for seeing the unusual and the sinister beneath typical, everyday events. So I decided he had to do it.

Did you see “Homesdale” when it first came out?

Yes.

So, you were thinking about “Picnic” even at that time . . .

Yes, but I was wishing somebody else would make it. I hadn’t thought about producing films myself, because that seemed a completely insurmountable hurdle.

At what stage did you go about chasing up an option on the book?

In early 1973. I was inspired by Philip Adams, who said: “Why the hell don’t you go ahead and produce it yourself?” So, I took the book around to Peter, who was in the last stages of writing The Cars That Ate Paris, and though he didn’t have enough time, he asked me to leave it with him. I suspect he thought I was slightly crazy. I read it in 1971, and thought it a highly original and unique story; me and going after an option, or was it didn’t have enough time, he asked me to leave it with him. I suspect he thought I was slightly crazy. Anyway, two months later he rang me and said: “I’ve got to direct that film. What can you do about it?” So I rang Cheshires and got the holding option.

How much did you have to pay for that option?

A hundred dollars. That was for three months.

A hundred dollars is a fairly small sum. Is that because they probably didn’t envisage it going any further, or was it standard practice to pay such a sum?

I literally said to Cheshires: “All I have in the world is a hundred dollars” — which was quite true — “will you accept it?” And they did. I am told this was because Joan Lindsay trusted Peter and myself, and believed we could, and would, make the film.

I’ve been into this since with another book and the option on that would have cost me $200. Of course, the money is straight down the drain if you don’t go ahead.

Had Joan Lindsay seen “Cars”?

No, but we spent a lot of time with her when we came to Melbourne. She had talked to a lot of people about it, but in our discussions we apparently hit several of the things that were important to her. From then on, we were the people.

So, there was some competition for the rights?

Yes, but I didn’t realize it at the time. Another company had been after it since 1972.

Once you got the holding option and three months grace, was your next step to try and find some private investors?

No, the script had to be written. Now, part of the option agreement was that I talk to David Williamson, whom Joan had met and adored. But David became over-committed in 1973 and said that he couldn’t do it. However, he suggested Cliff Green, and a meeting was arranged between Cliff and Joan. She then agreed that he could write it. You see, I had to have her permission on that.

Cliff then completed a first draft which was absolutely spot on.

Was it at this point the McElroys came in?

Yes, it was at the end of 1973. Peter had been working with them on Cars, and I have always believed that you should get the best possible people for the job in hand. Frankly I knew nothing about production on this scale, and at that stage I was in fact looking for a co-producer, somebody who knew about investment portfolios and the hard and fast business matters of the day.

Did you then form a joint venture company?

No, not at this stage. They came in singly. I still had the Sugarfoot Company, which held the book rights.

The McElroys then drew up a budget and it was sent to the Australian Film Development Corporation. It was not knocked back, but deferred — they considered it too expensive.

This left me in a very awkward position, because Cliff had to be paid for his first draft. He had done it on an advance of only $1,500 — which was quite ridiculous. So I wrote to the AFDC and said: “You have raved about this screenplay, yet you are dangling me on a string, and I have this highly professional writer who is not getting paid. What do you expect me to do?”

I asked for $4,000: $2,000 to pay off Cliff and another $2,000 for the second draft. They gave me the $2,000 to pay Cliff, but held back on the rest till I brought the budget down. At that stage it was $442,000.
What did the AFDC consider a reasonable budget?

Around $380,000.

And was that the final costing of the film?

No, that was $445,000, which was pretty close to the original budget. Into the bargain we hadn't budgeted for the South Australian experience. One of the conditions of their involvement was that we had to shoot some scenes in South Australia, and not do it entirely in Victoria. This, of course, meant we had to pay travel and accommodation expenses for the cast and crew.

The overages have not been complained about by any of the capital investors, because they can see all the money on the screen. It's not wasted.

Did they give any reason why they considered it too expensive?

Even though all the assessments, save for one, were very favorable, I don't think anybody had any idea about what would make a commercial venture. They were all terribly unsure.

At that stage, they had also invested a lot of money in the McElroys and Peter, and as none of that had shown, I think it went against us. I don't blame them, because when something is going to cost as much as Picnic, you should have to go back and back and back. Anyway, as they had no confidence in the film at that stage, the McElroys and I finally parted.

What was your next step?

I went to British Empire Films to get money for a second draft, but they weren't ready to invest. They did have investments in various other things, like The Man from Hong Kong, but the conditions were not good. So, I raised the $3,000 privately.

Why did you choose BEF?

Because John Fraser had told the AFDC that BEF was very anxious to invest in films.

Peter and I then met with the executives from the AFDC and asked whether they would back the film if we got private investment. They assured us they were right behind us.

Peter then heard in conversation that the McElroys had access to some money and he asked me if I would consider asking them back. As I was absolutely broke at the time I approached them for the sake of the film.

There was also a time problem, in that the film had to be shot in summer, and had we not made it early in 1975, it would have meant holding off for a year — which frankly I couldn't afford to do.

So Picnic Productions was formed in January 1975, and re-named from the Sugarfoot Company. The boys came in as directors with one vote each, while I held two. I thought that if people were going to work with each other for very little money, as we all did, then they all should share the copyright.

This brings us to your rather unusual credit: Produced in Association with Patricia Lovell . . .

When the Macs came back, rather than have three producers, which I thought was too heavy, I decided to take the slightly lesser credit of executive producer. I still had two votes in the company and another non-creative vote was held by my solicitor so I couldn't be voted out of the company — I am not stupid you know.

Actually, "Produced in Association with Patricia Lovell" is, in legal terms, an equal credit to a "McElroy and McElroy Productions".

You then went to the South Australian Film Corporation, and presumably this was after their involvement in "Sunday, Too Far Away". What in fact did the Corporation contribute?

Well, they gave us production facilities and their studio. We also got a lot of the crew from SA, as well as many of the actresses — mainly young girls. They also put John Graves in as executive producer for the SAFC with a creative control in the film.

People like Graves presumably, would have been on salaries from the SAFC and not from yourselves . . .

As part of the agreement they were also on a small salary from Picnic Productions.

Given the AFDC's standard condition that one must have involvement from a distributor, you then went back to BEF. Was this because of their initial interest?

I believe that the story is that David Williams* thought BEF were already involved - probably due to

* Managing director of the Greater Union Organisation.

Was your contract with BEF purely for Australian theatrical release, or does it include television sales?

No, just Australian and New Zealand theatrical.

"Love abounds/Love surrounds . . . .". Saint Valentine's Day at Appleyard College.
You mentioned that the SAFC through John Graves had some sort of creative interest in "Picnic". What concessions, if any, had to be made to the SAFC, BEF or the AFDC?

None at all. All three parties were more than co-operative. The SAFC was excellent and John obviously saw all the rushes, which he was always pleased with.

It is good to have investors who don't interfere.

As executive producer, what sort of creative control did you have over cast and crew and the day-to-day problems of shooting? I was told you were on location quite a lot...

Oh yes, I was there all the time. Nothing ever had to be put to the vote — it was always just a matter of Hal, Peter and my self sitting around and talking things out. I was very pleased with that situation.

To be a little more specific, what control did you have in casting?

Initially, I had a lot to do with the casting, because Hilary Linstead, who finally cast it, was in London. When she came back she literally took over from where I left off. Obviously, we all went to the casting sessions, and we all had a say.

Was the second choice of Rachel Roberts, and the first choice of Dominic Guard, totally based on rightness for the role, or was there some underlying consideration of what might help on the overseas markets — particularly British and European?

"There would have been nothing worse than an Australian boy playing Michael — no matter how good he was". Dominic Guard as the British aristocrat, Michael.

Initially, as you know, Vivian Merchant was cast as Mrs Appleyard and Vivian is not a good box-office name either here or in the United States, though she probably is in Britain. And Dominic's main role was when he was a boy. But when Peter and I first talked about the film, I said it was going to be difficult to cast Appleyard here: she had to be British and know about British ways. As for Michael, there would have been nothing worse than an Australian boy playing him, no matter how good he was.

Peter and Jim McElroy then went to London where they met Vivian and a lot of other actresses. She did consider herself a little bit young for the part, but she was willing to go ahead anyway.

Jim had also worked with Dominic on The Hands of Cormack Joyce, and had been very impressed with him. Peter met him and thought him spot on for Michael — which I think he is.

So, we were really thinking in terms of the right people, rather than box-office. But, of course, Vivian got ill and couldn't come. It was really rather frightening.

It was very close to the actual shooting, wasn't it?

Well, it was. We had scheduled the shooting of Mrs Appleyard's scenes around the final two weeks to allow Vivian to do all her stuff in that last 10 days. Her availability, therefore, was nothing short of a disaster. Jim immediately contacted his agents in Britain and literally asked for suggestions.

Then Rachel Roberts, who had been over-committed when they were in London, was found to be available and in New York. So, there ensued an incredible — and it would have been very funny had it not been so deadly serious — business of trying to ring Rachel's agency in New York from a little wind-up phone with sheep walking past the window. It was organized extremely smoothly and that is entirely due to the McElroys.

Now she was, I think, a terrible shock to everybody, because I don't quite know whether the McElroys or Peter realized how powerful an actress she was. The investors were thrilled, of course, because in the U.S. she is very good box-office.

But I'll never forget the look on people's faces after those first day's rushes — I mean, she was the performance I had expected her to. My recommendation was that I had never seen her do a bad performance, just as I had never seen Vivian. I also thought Rachel's strength was that she was so different from Vivian: after all you couldn't just replace one with another. It was a fairly worrying and difficult time, especially for Peter who had been working under the severe strain of a five-week shoot. Incredible.

How do you see the potentiality of the film overseas and, more specifically, what plans, if any, have you got for its marketing?

Well, we have just had a meeting with the Film Commission and all the investors, and have some definite plans which we can't discuss yet. By the way, all the investors have a say in the overseas sales. Producers have the right to negotiate, but not to clinch the deal, which is only fair — it's an awful lot of money.

However, it is going to involve a lot of frenzied phone calls to the overseas markets, I'm sure. And after all, you may sometime find something so attractive that you have to clinch it on the spot...

I think it means a quick cable to the Film Commission, who then have the facilities to contact the other investors. I don't think it necessarily means individual calls. I have tremendous confidence in our investors, including the Film Commission — in this instance — because they have to, date, been much more than co-operative. It's possible if they weren't happy with the finished product, they wouldn't put it in their bags, but they have been terribly enthusiastic, which helps a hell of a lot.

Have the investors had joint control over things in Australia, like the number of prints BFE have ordered, the shooting budget as the terms BFE have made with Greater Union?

Well so far, I think, probably quite a lot. The AFDC's legal department had to okay the distribution contract and I have a very good lawyer who has also looked at it. I don't think there have been any problems.

On further productions, would you like to be involved with other people in a production company, with a similar voting system, or would you be more inclined to work alone — as when you started this film?

I think I would like to do it alone, though we are trying another sort of tack with my next one, in that Cliff Green will probably come in as associate producer. I think a producer/writer relationship can be a good one, depending on where the money comes from.

The screenplay has to be the same as with Picnic, where you look around until you find the perfect combination. I think one has to do that, because if you go for the first money offered, it might be tied up in all sorts of ways that are completely untenable, and that would be just asking for trouble. When you do get to see the film, you choose him because of certain qualities he can bring to the film.

I take it you will be trying to get the film off the ground long before any money is lodged in your pocket?

Yes, it is like digging for gold all over again. I hope it will be easier this time.

Break of Day is one ahead of Picnic, as far as scripts are concerned, and everything Cliff has learned from doing that first film will have been put into this. It's an entirely different type of film, which I am very pleased about. You may be only as good as your last film, but I think people might be taking me a little more seriously and realizing that I can be a pretty determined lady. I won't ever go ahead with something just because I've got a film made, I won't compromise.

Has being a "lady" been a problem in anyway?

I am not quite sure, because I didn't ever consider it one. I know I've been underpaid quite often and things like that, but I don't think anybody has ever shown prejudice during Picnic — in fact quite the contrary.

I remember Nadine Hollow said to me: "Of course, because you're a woman you are going to find it difficult to get this project to the Board." But I think that hard to believe and I put down the fact that I had so many knock-backs to not really being complete and ready. If people weren't confident enough, it was with the project, not me.

Yes, it is giving them the benefit of the doubt. After that January 1974 deferrment it was put to me by Hal and Jim that because I was a woman, and because I hadn't produced before, it would prejudice the application. But I then went to the AFDC and asked: "Is this true?"

Continued on P. 377.
Ray Edmondson

It did, perhaps, receive better press coverage at its demise than at any time during its brief five-year career. As the Cinesound Movietone Australian Movie Magazine went out to the theatres for the last time on November 27, it was realized that the perennial weekly newsreel had, with a sudden finality, disappeared from the Australian screen after something like 70 years, and that a whole facet of Australian filmmaking had passed into history.

In a post-television age the longevity of local newsreel production has been extraordinary. All but one of the major international reels have long since disappeared and there are few countries which still produce cinema newsreels for domestic release. Yet, up to five years ago, when Cinesound and Movietone merged to produce the Movie Magazine, the local market still carried two weekly newsreels. Inexorably, the economics of it all finally rang down the curtain.

No one can now verify the date or title of the first Australian newsreel, though the newsreel format as we have come to know it—a magazine film containing several short actuality items on current events—was established by about 1910. But this grew out of earlier, less formalized actuality films which concentrated on single events or sometimes of national, but mostly of very localized interest. The first of these actually managed to be both: the now famous record of the 1896 Melbourne Cup by Lumière cameraman Maurice Sestier. His technique was, as might be expected, a little rudimentary, but he had a newsreel man’s feel for action, enlivening—with a little help from some hat-waving friends in the foreground—the footage of the actual race with some of the excitement that was presumably felt at the occasion. He started a tradition, for the race has been filmed by cinema newsmen every year since, with Cinesound and Movietone competing to get their coverage on to the cinema screens mere hours after the event. Later, Movietone News and the Movie Magazine would go to color for the occasion.

After the turn of the century other cameramen—Franklyn Barrett, Harry Krischock and the Salvation Army’s Limelight Department among them—followed in Sestier’s wake, recording current events for presentation both in halls and in the first of the then emerging picture theatres.

In 1911-12, four of the pioneering producers/exhibitors in the rapidly developing film industry—Cozens Spencer, W. A. Gibson, T. J. West and J. D. Williams—merged their separate interests to form what became Union Theatres Ltd. and its production subsidiary, Australian Films. The weekly Australian (later Australasian) Gazette then adopted Spencer’s kangaroo trademark and made it its first appearance, superseding Spencer’s Gazette and presumably other, now unknown, actuality series produced separately by the four partners. Backed by a large distribution base, the Australian Gazette grew and, coupled with a similar growth by some of its competitors (of which there were many), the one-off, one-man newsreels and actuality “specials” gave way to the nationally distributed multi-item reels. These featured the contributions of many cameramen around the country, and editions of the reel would vary considerably from state to state to ensure a suitable proportion of local-interest material. The comparative ease with which silent newsreels could be rearranged (there was no sound track to worry about) contributed greatly to this flexibility.

Reliable records of the Gazette’s history are meagre and only a few of its issues survive in complete form now, but they exemplify characteristics of the silent newsreel which the coming of sound was to alter. Lacking the support of a commentary, information and impact had to be conveyed largely by visuals, supplemented—as was frequently necessary—by titles which provided facts, figures, names and other non-visual information. To a modern viewer the treatment seems curiously slow and detached, although, in their original setting, the reels would have had the atmospheric support of the cinema musicians and employed a range of color tints common in the silent days. The stories were short and a typical reel might have had six or seven of them. For instance:

- “H.M.A.S. Australia” in Cockatoo Docks;
- Sydney: State Theatre building in progress;
- Melbourne: Spencer St. Bridge works;
- Manly: Governor Philip Memorial;
- Randwick: Cross-country race;
- Sydney: Preparing for the future — the underground railway under construction, Circular Quay, the North Shore Bridge;
- Jean of William St. — a woman petrol station operator.

Main title of the Australian Gazette, circa 1920. The Australian Gazette, Published Weekly by Australasian Films Australia No 478

Opposite: Every week the Australian Movietone News opened with the obligatory kookaburras (bottom), followed by the main title (top).
Cinesound alone managed to photograph Captain de Groot's attempt to open the Sydney Harbour Bridge ahead of Premier Jack Lang (stills from their negative were sent to newspapers). The first issue of the company's lagging fortunes in the Depression.

Movietone's success engendered competition from two quarters. In 1931, the Melbourne Herald newspaper joined with Herschell's Films and formed Australian Sound Films Pty Ltd to produce a sound newsreel which would be sponsored by major newspapers in five states. Using British Visatone sound recording equipment, the first issue of The Herald Newsreel (the title varied according to the state and the newspaper concerned) was released on September 21, 1931. The reel was vigorously promoted and the content, if a little mundane at first, improved rapidly.

In Sydney, a few weeks after the Herald's advent, the first Cinesound Review appeared, produced by Ken G. Hall, with assistance from Bert Cross. Hall was, at the time, in the middle of location shooting for Cinesound's first feature, On Our Selection, and at the insistence of Union Theatres' managing director, Stuart F. Doyle, Hall travelled from Penrith to Sydney each night to supervise the newsreel. If his nerves were a little frayed by overwork it didn't show in either project: the Review, like Selection, was an undoubted success and quickly gathered steam. And Union Theatres again had a weekly reel to fill the void left by the defunct Australasian Gazette, and a new product to help stimulate the company's lagging fortunes in the Depression.

The first issue of the Review opened with an on-camera introduction by commentator Charles Lawrence, and it featured, naturally, a coverage of the 1931 Melbourne Cup.

The three reels competed energetically for their share of news scoops: in March 1932, Cinesound alone managed to photograph Captain de Groot's attempt to open the Sydney Harbour Bridge ahead of Premier Jack Lang (stills from their negative were sent to newspapers). The following July the Herald caught the sinking of the "Casino" and the rescue of its survivors. Distance put the Herald at a disadvantage in an all-night dash to Canberra to film the swearing-in of the Lyons ministry on January 6, 1932; but their coverage of Lyons introducing his Cabinet members was first on the screen (in Melbourne the next night) and a print of the reel was presented to the Prime Minister for permanent preservation to mark the occasion.

If there was a golden age in Australian newsreel production, it was now beginning, and though it would end in the fifties with the advent of television, for the next 20 years the rival Cinesound and Movietone reels would completely dominate the field. Films were the mass medium, and newsreels a vital means of communication. So if Cinesound Review styled itself as "The Voice of Australia", it wasn't an altogether idle boast.

Cinesound consolidated its position by absorbing the Herald reel in late 1932 — the Review was for many years thereafter released in Victoria as the Herald Cinesound News Review — and Ken Hall set about developing the reel's distinctive style. From the beginning there was an awareness that it couldn't depend solely on reporting of current events; there had to be a "magazine" component which would maintain audience appeal over the several weeks it was on circuit, and it helped if the news items themselves had some continuing value. Also it had to entertain — which was, after all, the reason paying audiences went to the films in the first place. Serious news had to be presented graphically, tightly, whereas the more light-hearted items could be enlivened with the use of a comedian (in one reel, for instance, Stan Tolhurst had trouble coping with a wet baby during a baby show).

Perhaps the Review's greatest asset was its commentator, Charles Lawrence, who was with the reel from its inception until a gradual retirement in the fifties. Lawrence's style has to be listened to rather than described. Familiar, colloquial, completely without pretension, and with a store of the corniest gags never far below the surface, it ensured that the Review "voice of God" approach sometimes used by overseas reels didn't work at Cinesound. Some sample lines convey the flavor: the title "Baby Born with 4-foot Neck" introduced a segment on giraffes, while an item on pigmy elephants acquired by Melbourne Zoo talks about "giant pachyderms" and "jungle mammoths" and ends (you can imagine the visuals) with: "We're sorry to see the end of Betty and Peggy, but excuse them, they've just had a trunk call." And in a

The kangaroo trademark of the Cinesound Review was inherited from the Australasian Gazette and its precursor, Spencer's Gazette.
Scenes such as this were typical of Damien Parer's footage of the war in New Guinea. Parer's "Kokoda Front Line", for Cinesound Review No. 568, won the only Academy Award ever given to a newsreel.

During the war, several of Australia's finest cameramen sent back graphic footage from the front lines. Here, Roy Driver poses with his rifle-butt-mounted camera.

During the thirties both reels set up a network of representatives and cameramen in every state who contributed footage on a freelance basis, so that important events could be covered anywhere in the nation. Frequently, of course, both reels covered the same events — such as important sporting fixtures, overseas notables visiting Australia, natural disasters and so on — indulging, as with the Melbourne Cup each year, in some well-publicised rivalry over who got their story on screen first. However, given the different character of each reel, the final results were often far from similar. Cinesound, for instance, felt no reticence in voicing an opinion on controversial issues, criticizing government and public bodies on subjects ranging from Aboriginal welfare to drought and soil erosion. On one occasion, it characterized aspects of a post-war incident involving the deportation of Koreans as "un-Australian".

During World War II, the reels reached the peak of their efficiency and influence. Gradually the light-hearted and the inconsequential home news items gave way to reel after reel of graphic footage from the Australian cameramen in the front lines: Frank Hurley, Damien Parer, Roy Driver, Bill Carty, and others. This was supplemented, for example, by stories on the war effort at home and explanations of why there was a need for emergency measures — such as rationing. To a modern viewer, the tautness and compelling urgency of these reels conveys the tensions of those crucial years as nothing else can. And Cinesound Review No. 568 ("Kokoda Front Line" — photographed by Parer, written and produced by Hall) received the only Academy Award ever presented to a newsreel. There could have been no finer accolade for the production standards which Australians had now reached in the field.

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Cinema Papers, March-April — 305
Richard Zanuck and David Brown are presently riding a gigantic wave of success and their film “Jaws”, predicts MCA head Lew Wasserman, will be the first feature to top $1 billion in film hire.

Collectively, they have given MCA its best year since incorporation and restored Wall Street’s failing confidence in entertainment stocks. In Australia, “Jaws” almost single-handedly brought the crowds back into the cinemas; cinemas which had been ominously empty since the ‘crash’ of last September.

In the past Zanuck and Brown were famous mostly by association — Zanuck the son of mythical producer Daryl F. Zanuck, and Brown the husband of Cosmopolitan editor Helen Gurley Brown — but with “The Sting” and “Jaws” they have become the most successful film producers in history.

Zanuck and Brown were recently in Melbourne for the launching of “Jaws”, its first opening outside the U.S. and Canada. There, Cinema Papers’ contributing editors Antony I. Ginnane and Rod Bishop interviewed them in their suite at the Southern Cross Hotel. Zanuck, flashily dressed with Cartier gold bracelets and Gucci shoes, did most of the talking, while Brown, in conservative tweed sportscoat, played the intellectual. They complemented each other well.

Mr Zanuck, how did it feel to be growing up in a household where your father was Darryl F. Zanuck, where film was coming out of your ears from the time you were young?

Zanuck: It was very natural for me. My father was a private person, and not a thrower of lavish parties. I led a very normal boyhood really.

When did you decide to make the film industry your career?

Zanuck: It was a natural happening. I was a movie buff and, as a young boy, used to spend great periods of time at the studio. It was practically a backyard playground for me. Then, when I went to high school, I sold Saturday Evening Post to people at the studio for almost six years — I had a little newspaper stand there.

Your first film work was as a production assistant on “Island in the Sun” . . .

Zanuck: No; I worked at the studio during my summer vacations. Every year I would go to a different department: editorial, story, etc. In fact, I even went to New York and spent a vacation in the advertising and publicity department to culminate a total and all-encompassing apprenticeship in the business.

Were you treated any differently because you were Darryl Zanuck’s son?

Zanuck: No; I don’t think so.

The first feature that you actually produced, was “Compulsion.” . . .

Zanuck: That’s right.

That came about because your father was out of the country . . .

Zanuck: Yes; he was in Africa making a film. He had expected to make Compulsion much later and didn’t think we could get clearance.
for the rights. I can't remember the exact details and circumstances now, but the rights became available and I had developed the script while he was gone.

How old were you at this stage?

Zanuck: I was about 22 or 23.

And you served as producer in the established sense on that film?

Zanuck: Yes. It didn't seem to be a big deal for me because I'd been around. I was young, but I'd been in the movies for my entire life, in one form or another, and I'd seen every conceivable thing. It was a totally controlled, all-studio based film. It wasn't difficult to make.

This film was in fact made for your father's independent production company, wasn't it? I think you produced two other pictures for that company, “Sanctuary” and “The Chapman Report”?

Zanuck: Yes.

As far as “The Chapman Report” is concerned, the director was George Cukor, and there have been various reports suggesting that he was very unhappy with the version of “The Chapman Report” that ended up on screen. I think he lays some of the blame for that on the producer’s doorstep ...

Zanuck: It's so long ago. The Zanuck name had very little effect on what happened at Warner Brothers at the time. Actually it was Jack Warner who put his scissors to the film.

The film wasn't all that financially successful was it?

Zanuck: I think it made a few dollars profit.

In 1962 your father went back to 20th Century Fox as president of the studio, and you went in as production executive. Was this about the time “Cleopatra” was being made?

Zanuck: Cleopatra had been finished. The Daryl F. Zanuck company (DFZ) did The Longest Day, which was finished simultaneously. Really, he went back to protect the release of The Longest Day.

“Cleopatra” was, in the short term, a lot more financially successful than “Cleopatra”, wasn't it?

Zanuck: In the short and long term.

What were you doing before you took over as president of Fox in 1966?

Zanuck: I was head of production, in charge of every film and television show.

Would you come into contact with projects from their instigation right through to their conclusion and release?

Zanuck: Yes. I then took over as vice-president in 1965, and as president in '68.

During that period of 1962 to 1965, Fox didn’t appear to be having a particularly good run. Films like “Cleopatra”, “Hello Dolly”, “Dr Doolittle”, etc. ...
Zanuck: Actually we were having the best time in the history of the company. The Sound of Music, for instance. The first flurry of pictures we made were very successful.

At some stage during 1967/68 there was a lot of in-fighting at 20th Century Fox as to the ownership and control of the company. That was attributed, in some quarters, to dissatisfaction by various shareholder groups, especially as to the way the company was being run, wasn't it?

Zanuck: That took place after I had left.

Why then did you move from Fox to Warners?

Zanuck: We were eliminated. Not by the stockholders, but by the board of directors.

What was the reason for that?

Zanuck: Basically the balance sheet was not good — although we had at that point the greatest lineup of pictures of any studio: M.A.S.H, The French Connection, Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, Planet of the Apes, Patton. We left before those pictures were released. That enabled Stanfill, whom I had hired and who took my place, to achieve the quickest bank pay-down in the history of movies. He paid down something like $150 million in a year and a half. But there is no question about it, what caused the balance sheet to look bad was years of unrealistic bookkeeping — not to mention a lot of big flops.

We found on the books tremendous over-estimates of sales to television, and other things like that. Totally unrealistic. To give an example: Dr. Doolittle was on there for an $8 million sale to television. When Stanfill came in he looked at all of these things very carefully. He was our man, but it was his duty to report all of this to the board. It was none of our doing, though I hadn't realized those figures were so high. We had to write all that down and it caused a great deal of indebtedness.

You then moved over to Warners. It would have been about this time that Warners began to move from the downbeat facade that it had been putting up in the mid-sixties into the aggressive organization that it is now. I think you were associated with “Portnoy’s Complaint”?

Zanuck: We sold Portnoy’s Complaint when we were at Fox to Ted Ashley who was president of Warner Bros. Then, I guess three or four months later, we wound up at Warner Bros.

I notice you are using the term “we”, so I take it that you had become associated with one another by that stage. Perhaps we could backtrack a little bit and turn to you, Mr. Brown. You started as a journalist?

Brown: Yes, I spent a great many years as one.

And you became associated with the film industry in the early fifties, didn't you?

Brown: I was engaged by Darryl F. Zanuck in late 1951 to come to Hollywood to the story department. At that time the big studio system was still in full flower. We had 26 producers and they were all under contract — they were not owners or partners. We had almost as many directors; and a roster of stars. The procedure at the studio was to buy a story, assign it to a producer and then produce it. The producers were in fact associate producers and Darryl F. Zanuck was in fact an executive producer — a line producer in some respects. I had the opportunity to see Hollywood just before television changed the whole stakes. I must confess that I instigated Cleopatra as a much smaller film. I won’t go into the details that led to that film. But I was a victim of it. When Darryl F. Zanuck and Richard Zanuck took over the company in 1962, I was one of the thousands who were fired. There was no more money, and they had to wait for cash flow. They had in turn to muster the resources of the company, which included The Sound of Music (which was his closest colleague; first as head of the story department, then rising to a member on the board of directors and finally, executive vice-president.

Did you two meet privately or through business?

Brown: Through business. Dick was on a lot of DFZ productions and I was a producer working off an executive contract. I had refused to serve as No. 2 man under a man named Buddy Adler, whom Darryl Zanuck appointed to succeed him when he went into independent production. I remained a

Robert Redford and the would-be assassin in George Roy Hill's The Sting — Zanuck and Brown's first real success as independents.

Cannes Festival winner and favorite film of Zanuck and Brown, Steven Spielberg's Sugarland Express. Goldie Hawn as the runaway Lou Jean Poplin.

I had purchased with a lot of other pictures.

I then went back into the book business: I published the James Bond books in hard cover.

Then, a year and a half later, I received a telephone call from Richard Zanuck in Paris asking me to return to my former position at 20th Century-Fox. The money was rolling again, and I rose to the No. 2 spot in the corporation under Richard as president. So we were indeed a team since 1962, because I was his closest colleague: first as head of the story department, then

308 — Cinema Papers, March-April
The biggest grossing film in history — Jaws. The weather-beaten Quint (Robert Shaw) and ichthyologist Matt Hooper (Richard Dreyfuss) before the attack.

Of the films produced by Zanuck and Brown, Ssssnake, Willy Dynamite, Sugarland Express, The Sting, Jaws and The Eiger Sanction have gone into the black. Above, Clint Eastwood's The Eiger Sanction.

Zanuck man, and when Adler died I still remained a Zanuck man. So through the politics of studio life we were sort of orphans of the storm: we got very close at that time. Dick was very helpful to me as a producer, and I served him as an executive on the DFZ Productions — I was their liaison at 20th Century-Fox. It was rather a tricky thing because I had to represent two companies, but I've learned to do that pretty well over the years.

Could you tell us something about the circumstances surrounding your departure from Warner Bros. and your setting up an independent production unit?

Zanuck: When we left Fox, we had a choice of either becoming executives in another studio, or going into independent production. We decided to stay in the executive ranks, and Ted Ashley was the first one to call. We made a five year deal at Warner Bros with him, but after about a year and a half we felt the need to get down to the front-line producing ranks. That's what I really had always wanted to do, but I just found myself drifting through the executive suite, further and further away from that ambition. I started producing pictures and had great fun doing it. So we decided, together, to leave Warner Bros. and tear up the contracts. Ashley was not happy about it, and it took him two or three weeks to give us an answer, but he finally did and we formed the Zanuck/Brown company.

Did you immediately go to MCA-Universal, or did you shop around?

Zanuck: We talked to every company, including Warner Bros., Paramount and Columbia. They all made very nice invitations, but after six weeks we decided on Universal.

Were there any specifically attractive conditions that tipped the scales in Universal's favour?

Brown: First of all there was stability. At that time, the Hollywood film companies were going through a revolving door phase of executives and ownership. We knew that MCA-Universal was a well-endowed company, that there was no likelihood of being taken over by outside groups, that it had a continuity of management, and that it was dedicated to making and distributing films. It also had many protective resources, such as the most successful television and music publishing business. It seemed to us that Universal was the most likely company for a long-range association. We greatly admired Wasserman, whom we had known from the days of the MCA talent agency, and he was unequivocal in his offer to us.

Your organization is in fact an autonomous one, working off the Universal lot ...

Zanuck: Well it's not autonomous, because they do have the final cut and control over everything.

How then is Zanuck/Brown financed?

Zanuck: Permanent finance by the studio.

Do you come up with the projects and then approach Universal for money?

Brown: Yes. We brought them a script called The Sting.

Was that the first project you did this way?

Brown: We had done a number of projects because we did not want to join Universal, or any other company, on a blanket arrangement where they didn't know what we wanted to produce, and we didn't know if they would want to produce. So we visited Mr. Wasserman at his home and presented a number of projects, including The Sting. We got an affirmative response to the projects put forward.

Were these projects your company had acquired options on, or had you developed them to some stage?

Zanuck: Many of them, like MacArthur, were just ideas that we had formulated. That six week period I talked about, when we went from studio to studio, was not just spent in analysing which would be the best place to go, we spent days and hours just deciding on what kind of pictures we wanted to make.

As a matter of fact, many people are under the impression that we hooked Mr. Wasserman at his home to form our first picture Ssssnake: "You guys must have gone crazy". After all when we were president and executive vice-president of Fox, we had been making the biggest pictures of all time — Academy Award winning pictures and all that. But suddenly we formed a company and made a picture about a man who turns into a snake. They thought we'd gone bananas.

But we thought it was a very good, exploitative idea that could be made at a price.

Brown: The budget of that film was less than our combined salaries.

Just as a matter of interest, which of your production slate so far have gone into the black?

Brown: From the standpoint of the studio, the snake film, Willy Dynamite, Sugarland Express, The Sting, The Eiger Sanction and Jaws have all recovered their costs, and some distribution and overhead. From our recollection of what it was like on the other side of the desk, they were shots at the market which succeeded.

Continued on P.382
Jissoji is one of the more individualistic of the younger generation of directors now working in Japan. His films express a strong concern with Buddhism which possibly makes them seem obscure to the casual Western viewer, and for this reason he is little known outside Japan. His four features so far, produced at regular intervals since 1970, represent an impressive body of personal films which stand well beside the work of better-known directors like Oshima, Shinoda or Yoshida.

Jissoji was born in 1937, in Japan, but spent the war years in China. He studied French at Waseda University, in Tokyo, and in 1959 entered one of Japan's major television companies, Tokyo Broadcasting System, as assistant director, graduating to director in 1964, and becoming responsible for a wide variety of programs from 'home dramas' to musical shows.

In 1969, he left his job at T.B.S. because of a conflict with the management over his 'unorthodox' production methods; he had, for example, put political questions to participants in live variety shows, and had used unflattering angles when filming famous singers.

After leaving T.B.S., he quickly established himself as a prodigiously active freelance director of sponsored documentaries and commercials (including a travelogue for Japan Air Lines which brought him to Australia in 1969). At the same time, he decided to invest in co-productions with the Art Theatre Guild, the company which has long been the single most important driving force in creative cinema in Japan, sponsoring work from most of the major directors such as Ichikawa, Oshima, Shinoda, Imamura and others.

Jissoji's first film with ATG was a 40-minute short, *Yojiyami Semareba (When the Evening Comes)*, from an original screenplay by Nagisa Oshima, which had been written for television, but rejected. The story, about four bored students who test their strength of will and self-discipline by sealing themselves in a house and turning on the gas, revealed an element of Mishima-like masochism which was to emerge again in Jissoji's features.

His first full-length feature was *Mujo*, (translated variously as *This Transient Life* or *This Passing Life*), released in 1970. The narrative presents a tangle of melodramatic sexual adventures: a girl made pregnant by her brother continues the incestuous relationship, but seduces and marries a servant in order to conceal the identity of the child's father; an ageing artist invites his wife's lover to live with them and share their bed; the wife seduces her stepson; the lover attempts to seduce a homosexual priest; and so on. As the title of the film suggests, Jissoji's preoccupation is, however, with certain abstractions lying behind the actions, and he lifts the sexual melodrama on to a symbolic plane by employing a visual style which is anything but functional in terms of narrative. Jarring camera angles and highly schematic tracking movements stress (often to the point of absurdity) his intellectual rather than emotional involvement in the action. And in perhaps his boldest experiment in the film, Jissoji contrives to have his characters wear masks which express their inner anguish or joy, and which immediately abstract the content of the scene.

*Mujo* introduces a theme to be developed later (and more satisfactorily) in Jissoji's third feature, *Uta*: the vitality of Japan's ties with her 'past', contrasted with the destructive and alien trappings of modern life. The main setting of *Mujo* is hermetically enclosed and relatively timeless, and disruptions of this world are always associated with modernity. The noise and speed of the Bullet Train repeatedly and menacingly break into images of...
and woman. Ritualized violence and sexual amorality pervade the action once again, linked by a preoccupation with the failure of formal Buddhism to satisfy the characters' spiritual needs.

A religious commune in the country (modelled on an actual Japanese sect) seems to provide an alternative, but only momentarily, and the characters continue with their journey and search.

After the abstractions of Mujo and the even more pronounced non-natural style of Mandara, Jissoji changed style completely and produced his most important work. This film, released in 1972, was Uta, which means song or poem. However, the Chinese character which Jissoji uses to write the title also carries within it an old word for 'brother', which relates the title closely to the theme of the film. The English title is the unfortunately bland Poem.

The story is based loosely on Herman Melville’s novel Bartleby (acknowledged by Jissoji in the name given to one of the minor characters in the film) and presents the theme of resistance to change in the context of a family struggle. Unlike the two earlier films, the setting is open, mundane and modern: no attempt is made to seal the characters in a contrived world of their own. The visual style, too, is markedly different from the earlier films: the geometric camera movements, the distorting camera lenses and the intellectual intensity are replaced by a casual, relaxed style and a strictly functional camera. The action is conventionally naturalistic in its detail.

For all its modest appearances, Uta is by far Jissoji’s most intellectually stimulating film. The narrative centers on a conflict between the three sons of a wealthy old landowner. The old man is dying and two of the brothers begin prematurely to plan for the sale of the family’s estate — a forested mountainside which has been in the family for generations. The third and youngest brother opposes the others: to him the spirit of the family is embodied in the forest, and to sell it to developers will mean the end of the family as a meaningful unit. But the boy’s protests are ignored by his more powerful brothers, and they proceed with their plan. The boy goes on a hunger-strike as a protest, grows weak, and finally dies alone in the forest.

The plot — at face-value material for a television-style home drama — is transformed by Jissoji into a moving allegory on the crisis in modern Japanese society. The older brothers are identified closely with the corrupt and materialistic Japan: one is a weak, spineless creature, the other callous and ill-mannered. Their moral degeneration and brutality is acted out in scenes of sexual athletics which misleadingly became the focus of the film’s rather sensationalistic publicity in Japan.

The younger brother is cast in a different mould: he is attracted to ‘traditional’ skills and arts, and shuns the behavior and values of his brothers, seeking solace in a small Buddhist cemetery in the heart of the forest. The boy resembles the severe, self-disciplined and introverted youths of Mishima’s novels (Jissoji had been drawn to Mishima’s work before, and had produced a play by Mishima on the Tokyo stage).

The self-imposed hunger-strike is a protest against the brothers, but at the same time there is a strong element of sacrificing himself as a symbol of family (‘traditional’) values in the face of an irreversibly corrupting force.

The boy’s death is both a resolution to the family feud and a symbolic act which Jissoji presents with a superb and unexpected simplicity: the dying boy, alone in the forest, drags himself towards the family home where his father dozes peacefully in the sun; the final
death-crawl up the old stone stairway to the home is agonizingly observed by a static camera placed at the top of the steps.

This closing image is as protracted as Jean-Pierre Leaud’s run at the end of The 400 Blows and, as in the Truffaut film, the prolonging of the action lifts it from the functional narrative level to a symbolic plane. The boy’s death agony is not his alone, but also that of the spirit of traditional Japan which he represents. As in the Truffaut film, the boy’s final gaze is directly at the audience, both challenging and appealing.

One may question the nature of the ‘traditional’ which Jissoji asks us to mourn, for within the context of the film the boy is in many ways a frightening character. His severity and single-mindedness suggest an extreme of conservative anti-Western nationalism which seems as unhealthy as the materialism and gross behavior of the ‘modern’ characters in the film. The sympathy which Jissoji generates for the young brother is one of the most disturbing features about this deceptively casual film.

Jissoji’s fourth film was, like Uta, another new direction in his career. Asaki Yumemishi is a historical film, firmly within that peculiar Japanese tradition of historical films which are essentially modern dramas in period costume.

The ‘present’ nature of so much of Japan’s ‘past’ is strongly represented in the film: the story, although set in the thirteenth century, is unmistakably from the 1970s. The theme is a woman’s search for fulfillment, both physical and spiritual, in a society which exploits and suppresses her.

The title, Asaki Yumemishi, is typically Jissoji’s, an exotic, abstract phrase from an old poem with strong Buddhist overtones, about “an end to shallow dreaming”. The film divides clearly into two parts: the first depicts a sterile and decadent court life in which the heroine emerges as a long-suffering victim of sexually-based repression. She is abused by a succession of three lovers (the last a Buddhist priest) and denied access to her children. Finally, she can take no more, and in the second part of the film, leaves the court on a pilgrimage in search of spiritual solace.

Just as the pop singers who played the leading roles in Ichikawa’s mock-samurai epic, The Wanderers, provided a constant point of reference with the present day, so the leading role in Jissoji’s film is taken by Janet Hatta, an extremely popular fashion model making a well-publicised film debut. Her rounded eyes and modern mannerisms belie any pretension in the film to authentic historical reconstruction, and the link with modern preoccupations is stressed in the music score which, with its electronic surging in the music score which, with its electronic

Visually, the film is highly seductive: Jissoji uses the wide ‘Scope screen to create a strong feeling of cool spaciousness in the court scenes, relieved by splashes of bright color in the costumes. Repeatedly the wide frame matches two or more images in striking counterpoint: the title sequence is especially magical, with a woman in white robes singing slowly and mournfully against a background of raging fire.

The crucial scene of the woman’s seduction by the priest is a set-piece of sensuality, with flashes of light and movement in a densely black screen, and with the echoing shock of the priest’s beads crashing to the polished floor and scattering across the room.

Elsewhere the film sometimes verges on flamboyance, uncomfortably recalling the visual excess of Mujo, but the narrative drive is sufficiently strong and involving to survive the occasionally redundant visual stressing.

In addition to these four extremely interesting, if frustratingly uneven, features, Jissoji has made a number of ‘personal’ short films (distinct from his sponsored shorts) which reflect again the thematic preoccupations of his features.

One of the most impressive is Nehan (Paradise), a 10-minute ‘poem’ exploring the spirit of Japan as represented by traditional Japanese dolls and the customs surrounding them. Using off-cuts from Asaki Yumemishi, as well as footage from a sponsored documentary, this 16mm film offers a sensually rich montage of image and sound effects to express the ‘harmonizing’ influence of the dolls during centuries of troubled history.

In many ways, Jissoji is more ‘Japanese’ than most: his preoccupations are only slightly less exotic in modern Japan, than they would be in the West. His is a highly personal and idiosyncratic cinema which will probably never find a wide public following in Japan, and which so far has almost completely been denied exposure in the West, even in festivals. Yet in a national cinema, which is supposed to be falling and which has periodically been very unkind to its major artists, such as Kurosawa and Ichikawa, the very existence and continuity of a body of work as determinedly independent as Jissoji’s is a sure sign of creative potential surviving within the commercial wilderness.
GUIDE FOR THE AUSTRALIAN FILM PRODUCER

In this first installment of an 18-part series, Cinema Papers' contributing editor Antony I. Cinnane and Melbourne solicitor Leon Gorr discuss the aims and guidelines of the series, and the problems surrounding the acquisition of a property by a producer — the first step in the production-distribution-exhibition cycle.


There are many different qualities and attributes that an aspirant film producer in Australia ought to possess. A partial list might include dogged persistence; some measure of marketing ability related to the commercial realities of Australian film activity; a flair for packaging an idea; a feel for administration; a sense for handling two or three concepts at the same time; a charismatic personality — the list is probably endless.

Some of the attributes can be acquired through a variety of film activity. For example, to obtain some knowledge of the commercial values of the exhibition side of the industry the would-be producer might well try to work in some capacity at a cinema.

Certainly not the least important quality, and in the writers' view one of the most, is a knowledge of the law as it applies to the film production-distribution-exhibition cycle. This knowledge has in the past been most difficult to acquire. There are only a few lawyers in Melbourne and Sydney who have knowledge in this area; but most of them have acquired their knowledge in a piecemeal fashion, and largely in response to specific requests by clients.

It is not the purpose of this series of articles to provide a comprehensive text on film law — that would require several volumes and many thousands of pages. The idea, rather, is to discuss the number of topics related to the pre-production, production and post-production of Australian films, and to provide for each of these topics a number of sample precedents. However, while we disclaim any responsibility for their all inclusiveness or total accuracy, they should provide the producer and his lawyer with a guide to the areas that ought to be covered in any agreement relating to the topic.

The producer should be warned in advance of the dangers inherent in a slavish adherence to any particular form. Every situation he encounters will be different and he will need to reflect this in his amendments to the standard forms.

We have tried to refrain as much as possible from reference to numerous cases, statutes and texts which frequently bedevil the readability of "introduction to" type texts. This, of course, has not always been possible — and for good reason. The producer should treat his acquisition of certain basic legal notions as seriously as he does his need to understand budgeting and accounting fundamentals, and so on.

Most of the few texts in this field, and the precedents currently in existence, were written for the U.S. market. For an Australian producer they suffer from two major deficiencies. Firstly, they generally presuppose major studio or distributor involvement at some stage of a property's life — frequently in the early stages. While it is now not uncommon for Roadshow Distributors or British Empire Film Distributors to provide finance to an independent producer in the pre-production stage, this has always been in conjunction with pre-production investment from other sources, be it the Film Commission, private investors, or a foreign distributor. Only Roadshow, with Tim Burstall's Hexagon features, has provided total pre-production finance.

Thus the normal practice for an Australian independent producer will vary considerably from his U.S. counterpart who, unless he is aiming for a low budget exploitation film, will be looking to the major studios initially for finance.

Secondly, there are many aspects of U.S. corporate and taxation practice which are totally inapplicable to the local scene. Specifically there is neither provision in Australia for the limited partnership (except in South Australia, although the proposed new tax laws allowing private companies to be taxed on a partnership basis may be worth examining), nor are the notorious 'tax shelter' provisions of U.S. revenue law directly relevant, likewise the extensive requirements of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, the U.S. Copyright Office and the like, to which the American literature devotes much space.

We have tried to aim these articles directly at the problems Australian producers will face in day-to-day activity. Undoubtedly there will be opposition as it is proposed to offer the series in a loose leaf volume at a later stage, there will be ample time for additions and corrections.

We would welcome comment from those engaged in the areas covered, and can be contacted care of Cinema Papers.

ACQUISITION OF A PROPERTY

"The initial job of a producer is to acquire motion picture rights to a property and develop it to a point at which an investor or motion picture distributor would be willing to finance its production." — Producing, Financing and Distributing Film: Baumgarten, P.A. Farber D.C.: Drama Book Specialists New York 1973.

The producer's first activity must be to decide on, and get, the relevant rights to a property which he may then develop into a package and present to would-be financiers. There is, of course, a bewildering amount of material in existence which the producer will have to choose from. He may be presented with an original concept or treatment which is a few pages in length; he may be drawn to a novel or short story in cloth or paperback form; or he may be offered an unpublished novel or story — likewise a stage play or musical. A feature film, television film, television series, episode or the like may interest him with a view to attempting a remake or sequel. (He may, of course, have an idea himself which he will want a writer to develop, but we restrict our discussion here to material of which rights are owned by some other person.)

In each case the producer will need to get some sort of proprietary interest in the material he seeks to develop. Two problems immediately arise. From whom should he seek to get the proprietary interest and what form should his interest take at this stage.

Clearly, the person the producer must endeavor to get his proprietary interest from is the actual owner of the rights to the material — most specifically the producing rights — and though he may feel personally safe in dealing with an agent who warrants that his client is the owner, the question of copyright must become a consideration.

Copinger and Shore James note (1): "Copyright is to be distinguished from the rights conferred by patent, trade mark and design legislation which give to the registered proprietor an exclusive right to the registered material, even as against a person who has reproduced such material innocently from an independent source".

Copyright is not so much a right to do something, as a right to restrict the doing of acts by others.

The law on statutory copyright in Australia is...

found in the Copyright Act 1968-1973 (as amended). The Act provides for copyright to subsist for the following original works and subject matters: literary works, dramatic works, musical works, artistic works, sound recordings, cinematograph films, television broadcasts, sound broadcasts and published editions of works. The Act defines copyright in a negative way to do certain acts in relation to the specific work in question.

In the case of a literary work, for example, copyright gives the holder the exclusive right to:
(i) Reproduce the work in a material form;
(ii) Publish the work;
(iii) Perform the work in public;
(iv) Broadcast the work;
(v) Cause the work to be transmitted to subscribers of a diffusion service;
(vi) Make an adaptation of the work;
(vii) Do in relation to a work that is an adaptation of the first mentioned work any of the acts specified in relation to the first mentioned work in rights (i) to (v), above.

Copyright in a literary, dramatic or musical work continues to subsist until 50 years from the end of the year in which the author died. However, if the work is not, in the author’s lifetime, published or performed in public or offered for sale on records or broadcast, copyright will continue to subsist until 50 years from the end of the year which includes the earliest occasion on which one of those four events took place.

The duration of copyright in artistic work, sound recordings and cinematograph films is similar to the above, but readers should refer to particular laws of the country in question. In short, the effective date for Australia was May 1, 1969.

TABLE 1
INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT RELATIONS OF AUSTRALIA

CODE: U.C.C. = Party to the Universal Copyright Convention as in Australia. The effective date is given for each country. The effective date for Australia was May 1, 1969.

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writings throughout the world. Most countries offer protection to foreign works under conditions that have been simplified by international copyright, treaties and conventions.

These conventions include the Universal Copyright Convention which came into force on September 16, 1955, and which Australia ratified on May 1, 1969. The UCC requires a participating country to give the same protection to foreign works that meet the convention requirements, as it gives its own domestic works. To qualify for protection under the convention a work must have been written by a national of a participating country, or must have been published for the first time in a participating country. Table I above, attempts to give some indications of the state of copyright relations between Australia and various countries.

The U.S. Copyright Office (Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington DC 20540 USA) provides a series of free forms and circulars concerning copyright to interested parties, and all local producers should familiarise themselves with its procedures and requirements. The machinery of the U.S. office can speedily assist in establishing whether a particular U.S. work is in the public domain, or whether it is still protected.

The following forms and circulars are pertinent:

- Form L-M (for films which are published below); Form C (copyright scripts); Form E (copyright in songs); Form A and B (other copyrightable material); Circulars 38A, 38B and 38C on U.S. International copyright procedures; Circulars 47 and 48 on radio, television and musical works; and Circular 48 B on unpublished synopses, formats and outlines (which cannot be registered as many producers circulating treatments have done to their disaster). The U.S. office also provides semi-annual and cumulative catalogues of registered works; and for an hourly fee will provide copyright searches to ascertain what registrations have been made.

Producers should, of course, be aware that because of the differing copyright laws of particular countries a work that is in the public domain in the U.S., for example, (copyright may not have been renewed after the original two years have expired) may still be protected, say in Australia. These problems will become more important as international sales become more frequent for Australian productions.

Once the producer and his lawyer believe they have established the owner, if any, of the proprietary rights in the work the producer is concerned with, the question arises as to what sort of arrangement should be initially considered. Normally the procedure is to seek an exclusive option agreement. This enables the producer, generally without a large expenditure of funds, to tie up a property for a time long enough to do development work on it and present it to backers or distributors without having made a binding final commitment to the material.

The owner of the work will get a good deal more thereafter. It is crucial that the option agreement between the owner of the work and the producer should have been executed before you submit the form. The application must be SIGNED at line 10. For published works the application must be COMPLETED before you submit the form. The application must include:

1. Copyright Owner(s) and Address(es): Give the name(s) and address(es) of the copyright owner(s). For published works the name(s) should be exactly the same as in the notice of copyright on the copy.

2. Name of Work: Give the complete title of the work. (One of the following boxes MUST be checked.)

3. Author: Give name(s) of author(s) if any. Copyright should be claimed in author's name(s) as shown on title page.

4. Date of Composition: Specify the date of composition. If the work has been published before the date of composition give the actual date of composition as near as possible. (If composition was done before 1923, the date of composition does not have to be given.)

5. Type of Work: Give the complete description of the work. (One of the following classes of work must be checked.)

6. Class: Give the complete description of the work. (One of the following classes of work must be checked.)

7. Application fee

8. Copyrighted material

9. Date of publication:

10. Certifications: (NOTE: Application not acceptable unless signed)

1. I certify that the contents made by me in this application are correct to the best of my knowledge.

Second page follows.

Founded 11 years ago by its director Michael Kutza, and still to a considerable extent dependent on private finance, the Chicago Film Festival originated as a showcase of first feature films. The economics of survival have long since forced it to an almost unparalleled eclecticism: this year's Festival involved 33 entry categories and some titles unlikely to rate in the box-office charts. (Caucistic Soda, Familiar as an Old Shoe, provoking particular mirth at the awards ceremony, though my personal favorite — from the "Health, Medicine and Safety" section — was a catchy short by the name of *The Case for an Oboe Cadaver Nephrectomies*.)

Not even the feature film section, the only one open to the public, was immune from the Festival's expansionist tendencies, with big-budget, high-gloss productions opening (Losey's *The Romantic Englishwoman* and closing (Forman's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*) the program, and Wajda's epic spectacular, *The Promised Land*, plucking up the top prize. Yet, in spite of the glitter of both presentation and patrons, Chicago's distinctive merits as a festival still lie essentially in its selection of exciting first features.

Of these, the most quietly self-assured came from a new French director, Jacques Doillon. Shy, black and white, and with much of its action confined to the attic bed-sitter in which a young baker barricades himself, *Touched in the Head* inevitably sparked comparisons with Eustache's *The Mother and the Whore*. Especially since its hero is joined in his voluntary sequestration (a protest against adult authority in general and his unfair dismissal in particular) by a pair of teenage girlfriends: one a shy bakery assistant whom he has recently deflowered, the other a 'liberated' Swede, both of them honeyed over by the Swedish girl, it is because she char­

ingly bosses them all around (and makes sure the baker sticks with his conservative first wife), she gives them an intoxicating sense of their own freedom to choose.

Dolidon is enough of a realist to suggest that what they choose will not in the end be that different from what their parents would choose for them. But, steering well clear of the metaphysical void, his refreshing film achieves an authentic balance, with work and money as large a preoccupation as sex in defining each of its adolescents' revolt.

Doillon's wit and precision gave *Touched in the Head* the edge over an American first feature not all that different in subject. *Loose Ends*, by David Burton Morris and Vicky Wozniak, concerns a couple of young car mechanics in the mid-West, one of them married and uneasy in his role as head of an impoverished household, the other newly divorced and determined to involve his friend in an unfocused quest for fun, adventure and the wild life. The fun consists just one beer away in an endless succession of dreary bars, pool halls and discos — leaves the pair still dissatisfied and does nothing for the health of the marriage already strained by neglect. Eventually, the two (who have earlier seen *Easy Rider* at a drive-in) head west in a beat-up car. The journey is a disaster. Once it becomes apparent that, for the desperate divorcée, happiness will always be a mirage in the next town down the road, the married man bolts back home to his grease-monkey existence.

*Loose Ends* is uncannily accurate in its description of small-town frustration, but its own horizons are severely limited by the combination of a cinema verite style and characters who lack any real self-awareness.

In fact more ambitious and dauntingly self-confident was the first feature by another American, Karen Arthur. Scripted by its lead actress Joan Hitchins and originally produced on stage, *Legacy* is essentially a one-woman show which only in its final moments betrays its fundamentally theatrical nature. It is that rarest of species, a woman's film, about the female condition, that dares to be tough, unsentimental and, above all, witty. The action follows a day in the life of affluent matron Binnie Hapgood, whose non-stop commentary moves between inner monologue, talking aloud to herself, and an endless series of unnecessary phone calls. Each tiny incident in an essentially empty day unleashes a flood of memories, many of them traumatic and several also grotesquely humorous, like Binnie's girlhood idyll with a young diabetic who suffers an insulin attack in mid-coition.

Slapstick and pain are invariably intertwined, both of them honeyed over by the balm of words through which the heroine endeavors to convince herself that she's a thoroughly nice person, enjoying the best of all possible worlds and marriages in the best of all possible milieux. Following her analyst's advice to keep busy, she fuses over matching butter knives, prepares a center-piece for an impending dinner party, and leaves one of her society friends waiting on the phone while she distractedly masturbates with a sponge in the bathtub.

The empty loneliness of her well-trimmed existence is evident from the disconcerting start — some childhood reminiscences offered to her garrulous mother as the latter swims naked, wrinkled and unhearing round the family pool.}

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To commence with March [ ] June [ ] issue.

CINEMA PAPERS
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U.S. director Sydney Pollack began his film career when he enrolled at Sanford Meisner's Neighborhood Playhouse at the age of 17. There he studied from 1952-4, serving also as Meisner's assistant till 1960. During this period Pollack acted in several Broadway productions, and with Robert Redford in Denis Sanders' film, "War Hunt" (1962). Acting, however, soon gave way to directing with Pollack hiring himself out as a drama coach — including a stint as dialogue coach on John Frankenheimer's "The Young Savages".

ON ACTORS

To what extent is your background in acting significant, as opposed to, let's say, a background in writing?

Well, it is very influential in terms of my approach to directing, and I am sure influential in terms of how the films turn out. Certainly it is not an essential thing to have, but it's a great help for me, in that it gives me an inside view of actors and how they behave in their individual moments together.

Some of the earlier directors, like John Ford, used to act along with actors to get the performance they wanted. Do you tend to do this?

It depends on the nature of the scene. Sometimes during a close-up of an actor I'll call the other actor's role in order to get the specific thing I am looking for. Most of the time it is better for an actor to have the real person there, but it's occasionally easier for me to control the emotion or color when I am off-camera.

Do you find a difference in working with an actor who's been trained in Method, as opposed to a more classical approach?

Yes, very much, though the difference is in the vocabulary, not the point of view. But though they may not agree with each other in terminology, or even in principles and ways of working, the objective of each actor is absolutely the same: to make their role as full of reality and a sense of truth as is possible.

The classically trained actor can work from a method approach without even knowing that he is doing it, if he is just given a few guidelines on how to place his concentration.

Can you give an example?

Well, essentially the starting point of all behavior comes from a certain kind of concentration. Usually the enemy of reality is a kind of self-awareness, on the actor's part, which leads to self-consciousness or self-watchfulness. For example, an actor hearing the sound of his own voice, or being terribly aware of what he is conveying.

Sometimes you can objectify their concentration in such a way that it frees their behavior and they begin to respond naturally. The way you nod your head has nothing to do with what you're thinking about. It has to do with the fact that you are listening to me and losing your own self-awareness, though you will get it back when you ask the next question. But the real listening that you are doing now is what made you smile. You didn't have to think to smile, or nod, or say "right", it just happens because of what I am doing.

If you can put that kind of attention outside of the actor, then it doesn't matter whether he's classically trained or not, a certain kind of organic truthful behavior is going to happen.

Some actors must come on to the set much better prepared to act a scene than others. Presumably you would then have a different task with each one. Did you find this on "Three Days of the Condor"?

In 1965, and after several years in television directing "The Naked City", "The Defenders" and "Chrysler Theater", Pollack directed his first film, "The Slender Thread". He has since gone on to complete nine features, including "They Shoot Horses, Don't They?", "Jeremiah Johnson", "The Way We Were", "Castle Keep" and "The Yukuza".

In the following interview, conducted by David Brandes at the Warner Brothers Studio, Pollack discusses his attitudes to acting, direction and screenwriters — specifically in relation to his latest film, "Three Days of the Condor".

There was a great variation, in that some actors are better self-starters than others. Your job then becomes one of selection, rather than stimulation. There are actors who are quite capable of executing choices with a certain degree of reality, just as there are actors who wait to be told precisely what to do.

Max von Sydow, on the one hand, is probably used to a different way of working than the one we use in the U.S., but he is such an exceptionally gifted actor that whatever he does is going to be filled with a certain degree of truth. We then begin to collaborate on concepts about character.

Faye, on the other, is a studious method performer, as orthodox a method actress as you could find. Her questions, her homework, all have to do with the inner life of the character and how that manifests itself externally.

Bob absolutely detests rehearsals, and doesn't like to make choices. His work is different in every take, not because he is trying to be different, but because he really lacks self-watchfulness. I mean he is a listener, and that is why he is
Faye Dunaway, a studiously method actress. She got very good house laughs in the theatre . . .

The specificness with Faye came on a day-to-day basis, so that by the time we reached that scene she understood the part very, very well. We had many discussions about who this girl was, how she wore her hair, the way she dressed in black in the beginning, then changed into beige and loosened her hair, the way we decorated her apartment in neutral beige and grey tones, so there would be no brightness or warmth in the apartment, apart from two small lanterns.

The area that she was most concerned about was the humor. It was not something she has often played before and as such she was a little bit uncomfortable with it. Faye is normally cast in rather neurotic or intense emotional roles, and it was the first time she had tried to handle comedy. But it's not straight comedy, it has absolute reality and truth in it. She ended up handling it very well.

Did you have to get any more specific with her in that particular instance, or was that sufficient?

All this Faye's intense fear. Consequently, during the close-ups I would play Redford's role off stage and not only say the lines but, in the way I spoke and ad libbed, push her towards the intensity I wanted.

One of the things Faye had difficulty with was the intensity of fear. Consequently, during the close-ups I would play Redford's role off stage and not only say the lines but, in the way I spoke and ad libbed, push her towards the intensity I wanted.

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The problem was to stop Redford looking like a super fighter, although he is victorious in the end.

There was one particularly terrifying moment in "Three Days of the Condor", when the mailman comes into the apartment, pulls out a gun and threatens to kill them. The first time I saw the film I thought it was extremely clever and complex, but the second time I noticed that the technique was not very involved, though it again worked perfectly. How do you account for the intensity of that particular scene?

Well, the situation is going for you. The scene divides itself into two parts. The first part where you know you are into gold territory, as far as audience reactions go, is the cut to the mailman. He was cast by his very distinctive face, so that you would remember him as the assassin from the earlier scene. Therefore, the first time you cut to him you know there is going to be a ripple in the audience. The trick, however, is not to hit it too hard on the head. I shot it three ways — long shot, medium shot and close-up — and used the medium shot. I didn't go to a close-up till I was sure the audiences knew who he was, otherwise they would feel I was telling them who he was. Audiences get an added satisfaction from discovering him themselves, which makes them feel very clever.

The other trick is to make the audience believe that Redford could anticipate that he was going to be shot. What gives away this mailman, and I only figured this out just before shooting, is his shoes — they are stuntman shoes which look kind of off-beat on a mailman.

The second part was the fight itself. This wasn't easy, because we had to stop Redford looking like a super fighter, although he is victorious.

So, you have Redford on the defensive, the mailman on the offensive, and you just hope that Redford can handle the fight long enough. It was choreographed extremely carefully.

Was that done before the shooting, or during the cutting?

Oh, before the shooting. I went on to the set and laid it out the day before. You can't rush the staging of that, because there are a lot of things to think out. I had to have the mailman's back to the bedroom door when Faye comes out, so that she could distract him long enough for Redford to reach the gun and shoot him. The only weapons he could use in the room were a strobe light and a poker by the fire, so we just worked backwards from there. He also ended up using the rug, which I thought of when I walked around and around the set. You can get an image of the style, but the specifics are very difficult.

Did you actually go through the fight yourself?

Yes, I'd go through the fight from beginning to end, just like a dance, until I got the sense of rhythm. When it was slowed down I could quickly see the shots I had to make and where I had to have the camera in order to get them.

Then we'd start getting into geography problems, because when a fight is all over a room, it is extremely difficult to find the best angle for each specific blow. A punch and still manage to keep the people moving in the right screen direction. Otherwise, the audience becomes very confused about who's where in the room.

One of the problems of making a film like this is that, with a very few exceptions, the spy-thriller as genre usually relies on so many gimmicks and devices that you find your intelligence being insulted. If you have read James Bond and those kind of things, then you are willing to allow that to going on.

There is another end to the spectrum — like John le Carre, whom I always find brilliant. There is super intelligence at work in his books. But then The Spy Who Came in from the Cold didn't do too well at all commercially — nobody wanted to see it. It was so intelligently done that it robbed the audience of all the thrills they expect in a spy film.

So, the difficulty of working within this genre, for me, is to blend the two: to give the audience the specific in their money's worth in terms of a visceral experience and still not insult everybody's intelligence. That's a difficult thing to do and is one of the reasons why I didn't want Faye and Bob to end up going off together into the sunset.

One can't generalize, but it seems hugo was right after all. Our hours with her she will change her entire life. I am not saying that couldn't happen, but it wouldn't necessarily be the reality of the situation.

One could claim, however, that such an ending leaves one dissatisfied...

I don't feel satisfied either, but that dissatisfaction for me is a plus. In other words, I like that dissatisfaction. I prefer to make an audience want more than err in the other direction. I've had a lot of fantasies about what happened to her: will they ever see each other again? Is he on the run now? Will he leave that head, head for Vermont and try to find her again? And if he did, what would her attitude be if she had to confront him with the guy that she's with now?

All those things are interesting to me, more interesting than had they spent the rest of the film together. Sometimes less is more; it just is.

What exactly was your intent when the CIA agent turns to Redford at the end of the film and says, "Poor fool"??

You don't think the stories we are reading about plots to kill Jack Anderson and plots to assassinate Castro aren't damaging to the CIA? You don't think that curtails CIA activities and that the CIA doesn't believe that jeopardizes the United States security?

I don't believe it's damaging, but I certainly understand how a CIA man would feel. I do believe that all these stories leaked to the New York Times are seriously hampering the good work, as well as the bad, that the CIA has to do. I don't believe that the CIA is just a bunch of terrible moustached-twirling villains. I believe that they have a function and a purpose, and that all the attendant publicity is hurting them very badly. The other intelligence agencies are functioning like crazy now and we've got to be very, very careful that we don't do something that's going to come out again in the newspapers.

That attitude is also very strongly supported in the film, by there not being a good guy and a bad guy...

I hate that in films and I have never done it, though I often get criticized for not doing it. People say it wasn't clear who was the villain. "How can you have a spy film with no villain!" Well balanced.

The villain is larger than the phenomenon of needing to have an intelligence agency. We are the ones that finance the CIA and the first ones to scream when a Pearl Harbor happens. We want intelligence gathering, but all their official cheaters, I certainly want a CIA, but I don't want one that's going to tap my telephone because I made an anti-CIA film; and I don't want an agency that is going to assassinate Castro just because of his political ideology.

I didn't want to take a cheap shot at the CIA in Condor, that would have been too easy.
ON WRITERS

Let's talk briefly about your relationship with writers, since none of your screenplays are by yourself. There is a saying in West San Diego Freeway that "writers should write and directors direct" . . .

I am very sympathetic with that point of view, except it is impossible within the medium of film. Even if I absolutely worship a writer, there is no way I can do him justice if what he is writing doesn't express my concept. The only way I can direct well is if the screenplay is an extension of what I think and feel at a given moment. It's not a question of just rewriting; it's a question of storytelling. And in order to do that, I have to modify what the writer wrote. Film is not that verbal a medium, necessarily, it is not that verbal. There are other tools to converse ideas. Words are only a part of it; so is the soundtrack, so is a succession of images. There are long, silent sections in Condor, particularly from the point where he kidnaps her*, when the story is literally told by the soundtrack and images. I can't defend the fact that writers feel raped by filmmakers. I don't know what the answer is, but it's not going to change. They can legislate all they want, but there is no way that someone is going to tell me I have to have some actress say a particular line. I just won't do it if I don't believe that's what she should say at that point.

It's not that I don't have any respect for the written word — I do — but there is a definite art to screenwriting. There's such a thing as a super screenplay and a Rayfield who worked on Condor, is a super screenplay writer. One of the comments that keeps cropping up in reviews is how literate and intelligent the screenplay is — and it is. But he wasn't the first writer, he was the man brought in to rewrite the first writer.

Do you feel any qualms about bringing in another writer?

Yes, but I don't usually hire the original writer. What happens is that I get a project with a writer already on it. I may like the project, but not think the screenplay is quite right. I then feel obligated to make one, two, three attempts, at least, with that writer since it's his baby. I do feel qualms absolutely. I hate to fire people — it's not an easy job — but under no circumstances would I not fire them; it's too important. It's one of the most unpleasant parts of being a director.

To what extent do you have a strong vision of the final product when you look at the first draft or novel?

Strong vision is not the correct phrase for it. I have a feeling which has various levels of clarity. In certain sequences I see very clearly what should happen, in others I see that it's not working and maybe know the general direction it should take. But when it's unborn, I really depend on the writer to objectify it for me.

For example, I said to David Rayfield that I didn't want the assassin Joubert to be the moustache-twirling victim that he was in the book and screenplay. Now I didn't write the speech where Max turns around at the end, but I said to David that there's something about an honest crook that's better than a lying good guy — it has got to be that point of view. How to say it came totally from the screenwriter.

What are you working on now?

I have a couple of projects, but nothing definite for the next film. I have firm commitments with James Bond to do a nice short story of Lily Hellman's from Pentimento, called "Julia", and with Fox I have Tom Mix Died for Your Sins, which is a novel by Darrell Potters who wrote The Last Detail and Cinderella Liberty.

I have a Hemingway project in development at Universal, and John Vivian and John Dunn are working on an original screenplay for me that has to do with the Alaska pipe-line. There's also a Peter Matherson book, a brilliant novel called Play in the Fields of the Lord, which I am trying to find a writer for.

I also bought a book recently written by Sterling Hayden, and an autobiographical piece called The Wandering Earth. But none of these are my next film.

You certainly have a lot of projects in the works . . .

Yeah, but I'll be happy if two of them make it to the screen. The mortality rate of projects is particularly high at the moment.

Why?

Because middle-ground films have all but been eliminated. Studios are making fewer films; they are going more for the home-run. They would rather make three $15 million films a year, than 25 $2 million films. That means you have less possibility of getting a project onto the screen, unless it's filled with giant stars, or has some new gimmick to it.

But isn't there a great shortage of product?

Yes, an terrific shortage — for exactly that reason. As there are fewer films being made, they hold them on longer, and longer. Audiences are getting to the point where they have seen everything.

It must be rather frustrating for a director who is renowned for his experimentation?

It is, because all the time you find material that fascinates you personally, but you damn well know that it doesn't qualify as one of those giant event films. ★

FILMOGRAPHY

1965 The Slender Thread
1966 This Property is Condemned
1968 The Sculpeythers
1969 Castle Keep
1969 They Shoot Horses, Don't They?
1972 Jeremiah Johnson
1973 The Way We Were
1974 The Yakuza
1975 Three Days of the Condor

* "Without a word being spoken, you see a helicopter landing in Washington, a guy gets into a limousine, a jet plane lands in Washington D.C., a guy gets out whom you recognize, he then gets into a cab, a shot of a bridge, a shot inside a car with two people riding in it (the kidnapper and the kidnapppee), a shot of a car riding up in an elevator and getting out in a strange deserted warehouse, a man walking into what is obviously a cover and showing some identification, the car with the kid­napp people pulling round a corner and riding up to a house."
A suitable beginning, or rather a convenient one, was the Arts Conference '70. It was then recommended that a New Zealand Screen Organization be established and charged with the administration of the country's public film utilities, the implementation of film awards, a New Zealand Screen Finance Corporation and a National Film Theatre. Traditional recommendations relating to fostering aesthetic appreciation of film via educational institutions were also recorded. The conference having then placed its order for a film industry, left it to the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council to come up with the design.

That august body responded in the only way it could (considering its own chronic poverty) by setting up a special committee to study the matter. During the latter part of 1972, John Reid presented to this committee a background paper entitled "Some aspects of film production in New Zealand". This well-researched work adequately profiled the problems restricting indigenous production and distribution, and posed a few suggestions for raising money for film production.

The Arts Council Special Committee then became the Film Industry Working Party to study the Reid Report and use it as a basis for formulating definite recommendations. In late 1974 the working party report saw daylight. Compared with the competence of the Reid Report it was an effete document. At the time they pleaded that the changes occurring in broadcasting and the Cinematograph Films Act made the whole area of discussion uncertain, so only a statement of policy was possible. They recommended an Interim Motion Picture Council under the guidance of the Department of Trade and Industry to find ways of facilitating their other recommendation that the state should support a film industry.

Except for label changes to the body responsible for the establishment and administration of the machinery of a local industry, nothing much had been achieved since 1970. Even the questions of what form this body should take and exactly how it might assist local production were still vague. In his report, John Reid had rightly pointed out that "if sums of official money are to be spent on the financing of film projects, and some guarantee that this money be spent wisely is demanded, then a careful and exhaustive examination will have to be undertaken with a view to obtaining the co-operation of exhibitors and distributors within New Zealand."

This and other important considerations were passed on to the Trade and Industry Department. After a bit of discussion, revolving around "the film industry", in the press and on television, the report plummeted from public view.

To the Department of Trade and Industry went a copy, where presumably it has followed some mysterious path of progress. So far nothing has emerged, although there have been rumors that the Department and the Arts Council are preparing another report. Just what it will say remains to be seen. What it will achieve can only be guessed. More than discussion papers are needed now; needed are clear viable propositions, or at least a body with the resources to formulate such proposals and the power to carry them to people capable of initiating them.

So much has happened since 1970, that a solid new drive is required. For starters, there has been a new television broadcasting structure since April 1, 1975. The two earlier reports frequently pointed at European national subsidy schemes — schemes since modified to EEC directives. Legislation is being drafted to crack the big exhibition/distribution cartels, and even censorship took a step forwards with the passing, uncut, of Lenny.

Despite changes in circumstances, and the resultant need to gather more evidence and argument, one thing remains constant — the New Zealand film industry has been starved of opportunity. To get anywhere in this morass we must address ourselves to this question: can a country of three million people, with about 10 million annual cinema attendances, support, need or even want indigenous feature film production?

Discussion of need inevitably gets bogged down in a utilitarianism vs national identity vs "really wants" argument. Let us just say that need may be indicated by the persistent disquiet felt by many over the foreign dominance of our cinema and television screens, and the periodic attempts by our existing smaller films industry (television documentaries, dramas, commercials) to move up to features.

The question of support is more complex. How do we raise the money and how do we spend it? How must we restructure existing facilities and organizations to encourage growth?

To call upon government participation in production is not to ask for anything new. The two major producers of screen material in New Zealand are government created organizations — namely (a) the National Film Unit and (b) the television corporations. Independent production has been unnecessarily debilitated by the monopolistic activities of these organizations.

(a) THE NATIONAL FILM UNIT

The National Film Unit, as such, came into existence in 1941. It operated under the Prime Minister's Department until 1950 when it passed to the Department of Tourism and Publicity — where it has remained. In Wellington, the Unit operates the principle laboratory in the country, processing both 16mm and 35mm. In 1972 it put through 5 million ft of film, of which approximately 2 million ft was for television. The present staff is about 130, with an annual produc-
tion of 100 thousand-ft reels; two thirds of which are contracted directly by government departments, and the rest being house productions.

John Reid had difficulty in ascertaining the financial workings of the unit, but he put the annual vote from Tourism and Publicity between $750,000 and $800,000. This presumably covers operating costs and goes towards the 30 or so house productions. The auxiliary services of the Unit appear to bring in something like $150,000 per annum from television and at least $3 million from independent producers. If these figures are anywhere near correct, the Unit is getting quite a large sum each year from the taxpayer to enable it to engage in its own activities.

Because there is a ban on government departments contracting film production work to anyone other than the Unit, the Unit has an assured work load while other production houses must ignore an important area of film activity. Reid concluded: "The control by the civil service of this agency of filmmaking, and the public resources of film production have so far proved an ineffective method of ensuring that those citizens who are the most capable are in fact being given the chance to do the work."

The Kerridge-Odeon chain, part owned by Rank, exhibit the Unit's 35mm productions, most of which run about 25 minutes. These films have never tackled any issue more controversial to the water pollution or unplanned land development. Occasionally, one that is particularly well produced will win an award at some obscure film festival — but they are hardly world shakers. The Unit management and apologists would claim, naturally enough, that is not their job. While they have such a stranglehold on facilities and contracts, it's not going to be anyone else's job either.

Something has to be done about the Unit. As a laboratory it has been responsible for some dreadful processing, and many producers now prefer to send material to Australia. It is also extremely slow and limited in its capabilities. There have been suggestions that the Unit's profits be put back into independent production. It would seem a better idea to use this money to build a decent laboratory once and for all. For a laboratory it has been responsible for some docs. Something has to be done about the Unit.

The releasing of contracts to independent producers would also go some way to improving things. When the Unit is full booked it does occasionally pass on a few jobs. However this practice is because of necessity, rather than administrative design, and there is, therefore, no guarantee of continuation. To ensure a continuous share of this work, a redefining of the Unit's role in relation to the private sector is necessary. A directive such as this would have to come from government, and requires a reappraisal of state involvement in film production. Does the state want only bland infor-

(b) TELEVISION

The other area of state involvement in film production, television, has undergone a basic change since the Reid Report. Universally, like it or not, television has come to play an increasingly important role in film production. New Zealand is no exception; in fact it is true to say that the crumbs from the television till have kept the local film industry teetering on the edge of solvency.

Television began in New Zealand in 1961 and was run by a public service body until April 1, 1975. The New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation operated two national radio stations and a variety of local stations. Its television service was built from four regional channels into one national channel operated from Wellington and linked by microwave. You watched the NZBC or you didn't watch television. In radio, the monopoly was broken in 1970 when Radio Hauraki, a pirate station, was finally given a licence and came ashore in Auckland. Today, eight of the 33 regional stations are private commercial radio.

Television remained the domain of the NZBC until the Labour government came to power in November 1972 with one of its planks being a second channel. The previous Conservative government had already moved in this direction by allowing the Broadcasting Authority to call applications for running a second channel. The NZBC was naturally in with flags flying against the private concern that intended to run the channel on straight commercial lines. The previous Conservative government had already moved in this direction by allowing the Broadcasting Authority to call applications for running a second channel. The NZBC was naturally in with flags flying against the private concern that intended to run the channel on straight commercial lines.

The private organization won the case only to go down when Labour won the election. Suddenly it was a whole new ball game.

Radio became a separate operation under Radio New Zealand, the existing television channel became an independent corporation known as Television One, and another corporation, Television Two, was set up to establish a second national channel operated from Auckland and Christchurch. The whole deal is overseen by a Broadcasting Council and financed by licence fees and advertising. All this came by licence fees and yet there seems to be no way of stopping anyone producing material here, nothing. The NZBC claims there will be money next year, but doesn't know how much. TV2 needs every penny to expand its service to cover the country. Rates for programs purchased for as little as $700 an hour and this is what one has to compete with. There is nothing to stop anyone producing material here, nothing. A request will hardly be paid print costs, and the high local content quotas on other English-speaking markets, makes sales there a matter of uncertainty.

Consider also the absence of New Zealand independent producers, most of whom are resigned to forever producing short films for television. When the Adams Committee (the body which drew up the legislation for the new broadcasting structure) took submissions, many people stressed the need for a quota and for some sort of protection for local material generated outside the television corporations. These requests never became law, nor are there any restrictions on foreign advertisements, a situation particularity strange in a country with an uncommon predilection for import licences. The releasing of contracts to independent producers would also go some way to improving things. When the Unit is full booked it does occasionally pass on a few jobs. However this practice is because of necessity, rather than administrative design, and there is, therefore, no guarantee of continuation. To ensure a continuous share of this work, a redefining of the Unit's role in relation to the private sector is necessary. A directive such as this would have to come from government, and requires a reappraisal of state involvement in film production. Does the state want only bland infor-

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The independent film producer, therefore, finds himself excluded from both areas of state involvement in filmmaking. You get the distinct feeling that he has nothing to contribute.

Before I attempt to say anything constructive about this mess, there’s one relevant and unfortunate development. Recently introduced into Parliament is a new Cinematograph Films Bill, which, among other things, will restructure the censorship authorities. This doesn’t mean that censorship will improve from its extreme puritanical position, for there is nothing in the Bill to ensure that it will; the censor’s decision-making role is still tied to “public standards”. Another part of the Bill deals with the establishment of a Film Industry Board, which sounds fine until one reads the small print. The Board will make recommendations to the Minister of Internal Affairs on matters concerning the film industry. The board will have eight members — producers are explicitly excluded.

At this point, I can hear people asking just what have independents done to deserve all this? Did someone long ago say something rude? Well no, they didn’t, but things might have been better if they had. The situation results simply from massive public apathy under which the politicians have been able to bask and yawn to their hearts’ content. Generate public interest by pointing out the way in which the need can be done and you are half way there. So far this has not been achieved. The final report of the Film Industry Working Party came out and bluntly asked for a $300,000 fund, and it’s been a bad year to ask for anything. What needs to be done is for the film industry to point out the extent of state involvement, then ask for a rationalization of this to facilitate expansion into feature production.

Reid’s opinion that distributors and exhibitors must be involved is correct. The two big cinema chains, both owned by foreign distributors (Kerridge-Odeon — 50% Rank; Amalgamated — almost totally 20th Century Fox), are assured of seats on the new Film Industry Board. Distributors here are really just receiving-stations; they have never been involved in sending anything abroad. Of course, one gets into problems immediately because it’s certainly not going to be in the interests of the foreign owners to encourage too much independence down here in the South Pacific. Quotas don’t solve the problems given the present state of affairs; it would be like watering a seed with a monsoon bucket. A tax on profits from foreign films, to be re-allocated for distributing local ones, may go some way. And you could give added points for sending a film abroad.

Having brought distributors to attention, the next step would be to deal with exhibitors. One outstanding feature of the new Cinematograph Films Bill is the abolition of exhibitors’ licences after 1978. Until now, the two big chains have used the licensing laws to shut out competitors. A few independents in this area may give the local product a fairer go. The inducement to exhibit local films could be strengthened by the re-imposition of an entertainment tax of 10 cents a seat, refundable to the exhibitor of a local product. Ten cents a seat is not asking much considering seat prices are at most $1.75.

The working party report was right, as were the Reid report and the Arts Conference ’70 — there has to be a fund. Refundable Entertainment Tax does two things: it raises money and offers incentive to release that production. The amount raised this way would be dependent on how much the entertainment tax is and how much is left with the exhibitor. Given that the annual production will always be a minority of the total exhibition, we needn’t worry about exhibitors taking the kitty. The figure of $300,000 referred to by the Arts Council report was the film hire tax, presently syphoned off into the consolidated fund for road building or whatever. A figure of approximately three times this could be generated by an entertainment tax, and we would need all of this to instigate an aggressive production campaign.

These suggestions don’t work unless the distribution side is sorted out. It may be possible to persuade distributors to put money up once a fund is going, but so far there has been no discussion on just how the distributors are to be roped in to the operation. This will not be done while film industry boards are being set up which are exclusively concerned with the trade side of the business. Without some co-operation in this area, all the money in the world generated for production will simply disappear without rejuvenating itself. Proponents of the fund wave the example of Barry McKenzie around, gurgling over the fact that it made its money back, but forget the earlier experience of They’re a Weird Mob.

Okay, given that something positive can be done with the distributors and exhibitors and a decent-sized fund got going, what next? Make films: sure, but how do you put the money where it’s needed? There are a number of ways to distribute money and they all boil down to the question of who gives to whom.

Prizes and awards inevitably encourage the production of certain types of films and require a jury of integrity. However, a limited use of this system allows some money to pass to producers without repayment provisions. A regular changing of this jury and a limitation on the number and size of prizes, should ensure that no particular type of film dominates the awards.

The Film Fund can be used as a bank on which filmmakers can make overdrafts; then the problem of assessing the borrowers’ collateral (the chances of their film’s success) arises. This situation requires the stewardship of someone well aware of possibilities and potentials. Such a person or group of persons is required for any funding method. They would have to act as executive producers, which means not only a film’s commercial viability, but also its aesthetic merits. It is a difficult balance to decide upon, one which must be extremely sensitive to changing circumstances and needs. No formula is available other than common sense. In some cases, non-refundable grants can be made for all or part of production. In others, interest-bearing loans would be the right course; and yet again, the fund could go in on a profit-sharing deal. The more one alternates, the greater the chances of effective action.

The people running such a fund would naturally be issued with a sign saying something like — New Zealand Film Institute, Film Fund, Screen Organization—it doesn’t really matter. Under such a banner, and with financial resources, they can offer other forms of assistance, apply pressure to ensure suitable distribution arrangements, act as an overseas marketing agency, or make equipment available where needed, thus saving the present wasteful duplication.

Continued on P.380.

The Shiner, one of Aardvark’s six television dramas based on New Zealand short stories. The location is Orewa, north of Auckland.
Soviet Cinema
An Interview with
Sergei Gerasimov

By Susan Dermody.

Sergei Gerasimov is a significant figure in Soviet film, both as a reasonably prolific director for the past 40 years and as a teacher of film direction and acting. His sway within Soviet film training has increased to the point where, as head of the department of directing and film-acting in the Cinematography Institute in Moscow, he is St Peter to the heaven of Soviet film theory, and the critical reception in the Soviet Union of both Russian and foreign films. The informality of the situation, and Gerasimov's habit of pouncing on his interpreter's choice of wording just when intelligibility was imminent, meant that his remarks were friendly and unperturbed, but unstructured and sometimes conflicting. Probably just the balance he intended.

He began by describing the decision-making process by which film projects receive consideration for approval of funds. (Naturally, all filmmaking is funded by the State.) At the top of the structure is a commissioner who reports to the Soviet ministry; he is flanked by a sort of electoral college — his job is to acquire or commission scenarios, prepare, discuss and defend projects proposed for the studio and submitted to the watchdog "college". The state commissioner is a final court of appeal for any project.

Each of the 27 studios throughout the State draws its annual budget according to approval from this hierarchical tribunal. Mosfilm is the largest, producing 40-45 large-scale features every year, but its largeness does not eclipse smaller, but significant, studios like the Gorky in Moscow, where Gerasimov has worked as a writer-director for about 20 years. (Gerasimov's filmography reflects the particular orientation of this studio towards films about and for young people.) An artistic director is appointed for each studio by the "college" — his job is to acquire or commission scenarios, prepare, discuss and defend films by the major directors who head different departments. Throughout the course they are involved in the making of three "small" and one "almost full-length" film.

Student selection is tough. Anyone can apply and many applicants come after already completing higher education. For example, Gerasimov's last graduating class had a doctor, a cyberneticist and a psychologist among the students. Students are normally 22 or 23 years old, at admission, and apply from all over the Soviet Union, as well as from other countries. (No Americans at present, but "why not"?) Gerasimov asked, in English. Ten students are selected at each five-yearly intake (from about 500 applicants) for the directing master-class, and seven or so last the 4½ years distance.

For acting classes, the competition is even more stiff — 15 selected, 150 apply. The head of each department has final say in the selection process, which makes Gerasimov's position, as head of the direction and acting department, one of considerable influence upon the nature and style of Soviet film as it emerges from his graduating students.

From this point, Gerasimov invited questions. The questions are reproduced in full, but Gerasimov's answers can only be paraphrased after the fact of the interpreter.

To what extent is there an adherence between members of working groups — say a director, cinematographer, and certain actors — over more than one film? Are groups assigned, or can a writer, for example, approach a particular director with a script idea?

The director, and not the producer (whose role is taken by the "state") has creative control in this area. The director is usually the initiator of a film idea, in fact he is with few exceptions a writer as well as a director. For me, cinematography begins with literature. The composition of the script is the most interesting stage of the process, the film imagined in its most ideal form. Then the work begins. Here you can't get what you want, there you lose out again. Where the director is not the writer, he may seek out a particular author, or a novelist may come to him proposing a film, or the artistic "college" may bring together a writer, a director, and a good idea.

The director has complete freedom in selecting his crew — he naturally wants the best people who report to the Soviet ministry; he is flanked by a sort of electoral college — his job is to acquire or commission scenarios, prepare, discuss and defend projects proposed for the studio and submitted to the watchdog "college". The state commissioner is a final court of appeal for any project.

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SERGEI GERASIMOV

available — and at this stage terrible arguments may break out between people who are at other times very good friends...

Then, of course, recent students are always coming up, diploma in hand, with someone saying, "this one will go a long way", and you saying, "Oh God, you said that last time!" But, you give them a chance, and turn your face away.

Does film teaching at present still place an emphasis on formulas derived from theatre, as Eisenstein’s theory of film practice encouraged?

Eisenstein has been the established authority in Soviet film, and always will be, in some areas. But there are some areas where Eisenstein — because he was a human being — changed his mind as time went by. When he made Strike he was an 'old' man of 24 years. As a member of the FEX group (which Gerasimov insisted on calling the Leningrad School for Eccentrics) he was bent on breaking all the traditions. If he could have seen Ivan at the time of making Strike, he would have said: "That's not me!" Everything changes, even for Eisenstein, and so we can see complete turnabouts in his theory — such as the idea of staging "attractions" which gave way to other ideas. But Eisenstein is still the number one director.

Could give a lecture in reply to this, and I'd love to, but instead I'll recount a conversation I once overheard between Dziga Vertov and Esther Shub. Vertov unearthed an incident that had occurred in a little-known, little-visited town in Georgia, accessible only by steep and dangerous mountain passes. Georgia is the country of legends, and stories; the earliest kind of lifestyle is still preserved there. Vertov heard about the incredible effort taken by the townspeople to get a grand piano into their mountain kingdom. This struck Vertov as a miracle of the stubborn desire of people to partake of the fruits of civilization. Esther Shub immediately said: "We must buy a second piano so that we can film them dragging it up to the town". Vertov exploded: "I expected that from you. That's the whole shame of your approach. Documentary cinematography must be dedicated to that second of reality, and only that second. These sets, this staging, it's impossible, it's not real..."

Are the questions raised by Vertov concerning the bond between form and content still of interest?

How much critical and theoretical work are production students encouraged to undertake?

It is understood that there is a dialectical relationship between theory and practice, although practice typically runs ahead of theory. The twenties was the exception, a tabula rasa. Then theory was obliged to run ahead. Now it is proportionately more difficult to do something completely new. Even in pornography, Godard is perhaps interesting — criticism and theorizing preceding action — but you find similar attitudes in Ford, Chaplin and Dovzhenko.

Do students hold screenings of the films of other countries?

No, this doesn’t happen. We can enjoy even people you might expect us to find "extremists" — Kubrick, Coppola, Kramer; even though they are not on the friendliest relations with our country.

What about Godard and his Maoist, anti-Soviet stand?

Well, I've seen Godard. Of course Godard has been lately somewhat confused, somewhat complex, for us and for France, and America. He's very talented, but so mixed up — he has kosher in his brains. There's not enough time for us to decipher him. The students are excited by Fellini, Kurosawa (who recently directed a film in the Soviet Union), by Antonioni — although they've gone cold on his recent films. But there are very good conversations after screening such films.


Compiled by Ross Cooper.
PIER PAOLO PASOLINI 1922-1975

By Noel Purdon

When I wrote in Cinema Papers last July on Pasolini’s sexuality and politics, I little realized that within three months he would be dead; murdered precisely because of those qualities. For some years he had been target for the lunatic, fascist fringe (“Write PPP for Piss Pot Pasolini on the houses of all Jews, communists and perverts. Heil Hitler! Viva Mussolini!”). The last time I saw him he spoke with despair about the growth of neo-fascism in Italy. That his murder by Giuseppe Pelosi had part of its origin in fear and hatred of homosexuality is obvious. But the circumstances of his death, as several of his friends have noted, are too “Pasoliniian”: they come straight from Accattone or Una Vita Violenta. They seem too easily concocted and organized by someone who knew his public reputation, but not the personality of the man himself. For Pasolini was the most gentle of people, inward to the point of dark glasses and neurosis.

Pelosi’s account of his pick-up behavior reads like a script prepared by someone else, and comparisons with the case of Feltrinelli, the left-wing publisher “found dead” beside explosives and pylons outside Milan, are inevitable and instructive. However the occasion here is rather to pay tribute to his artistic skill, to acknowledge his creativity, is summarized below:

SCRIPTS: Between 1954 and 1975 he collaborated on more than 15 scripts and films taken from his novels. The most important of these are: La Donna del Giorno (1954); Soldati; Le Notte di Cabiria (1956) dir. Fellini; La Notte Brava (1959) dir. Bolognini (from Ragazzi di Vita); La Giornata Balorda (1960) dir. Bolognini (from Moravia); Una Vita Violenta (1962) dir. Heusch and Rondi; La Commedia Piccola (1962) dir. Bertolucci; Bawdy Tales (1974) dir. Citti.

PERFORMANCE: He appeared as an actor in Il Gobbo and Requiescan, both directed by Lizzani, and in his own Edipo, (in all three roles, as a priest); later in Decameron and Canterbury Tales, as an artist.

DIRECTION: Accattone (1961); Mamma Roma (1962); La Ricotta 72, episode in Rogopag: La Rabbia (1963); Sopraluoghi (1963-64); Comizi d’Amore (1964-65); Il Giorno Secco (1964); Uccellacci e Uccellini (1966); La Terra Venta dalla Luna (1966) ep. in Le Streghe; Edipo Re (1967); Il Fiore di Campo (1967) ep. Amore e Rabbia; Che Cosa Sono le Nuvole 68, ep. in Capriccio all’Italiana (1968); Teorema (1968); Porcella (1969); Medea (1970); Il Decameron (1971); Il Racconti di Canterbury (1972); Il Fiore della Mille e una Notte (1973); Salo e le Centoventi Giornate di Sodoma (1975).

Among ideas for films which he abandoned were several on the lives of saints (St. Paul and
St. Francis), a film on Socrates, and one on the plight of the Third World. At the time of his murder he was planning to shoot a new film, Ta Kai Ta, with the famous Neapolitan actor, Eduardo De Filippo, in which one of the scripted scenes had a man being martyred in a public square. Salo, his last film, almost never saw the projection room — first stolen from the labs in Rome, then, when reconstructed, banned. Bertolucci, Antonioni, Liliana Cavanni and Belloccchio instantly clamored for its release. Critics (as distinct from filmmakers) who have seen Salo in Paris have reacted with distaste and bewilderment. How could Pasolini decide to visualize the scabrous words of a man whose name in western civilization has replaced that of Machiavelli as a synonym of the devil? Was it not bizarre, obsessive and self-destructive of him to choose such a subject?

We need to ask another question: was he unaware of what it is like to be tortured, or, for that matter, to desire to torture? This question comes up in the light of his several arrests and prosecutions for blasphemy and indecency; his fight to get his friend Ninetto out of the clutches of the military; his constant persecution by the censor and the Church; and his attempts to find sexual and affectionate pleasure in a hostile society. He said in London once: “My ideal society is anarchic. You can't have ideas so violently against society as mine and expect to be left alone.”

Salo is not set in de Sade’s pre-republican France and Switzerland, for by the same process of analogy that made Jerusalem of Sicily in the Gospel, Sade’s ideas are given expression in the Nazified alpine Italy of World War II. Four politically powerful men, (modern, civil, religious and educational counterparts of Sade’s characters) have secluded themselves with four storytellers, here decayed bellesdames of the thirties, and a sexually chosen collection of adolescent boys and girls. What follows is faithful both to Sade’s plan of ever-increasing savagery and anarchy, and to Pasolini’s life-long attempt to make sense of the food/excrement, sex/thought, love/power confusions which have haunted him.

Certainly after Canterbury Tales, his own scripts were becoming blacker. The Bawdy Tales he wrote for Citti, for example, are as depressing a collection of existential terrors as you could find in any nightmare, in spite of the attempt to set them in the popular ottocento world of Belli and the Trastevere. However, without Pasolini’s visual genius, they remain untransformed.

Besides Salo, the most significant events of his last year were the columns in Corriere della Sera; and the Filmcritica article identifying death as the central aesthetic and emotional point in film — he had been watching the super-8 footage of Kennedy’s assassination. (Antonioni’s first impulse on arriving at Pasolini’s murder-scene in Ostia was to film it, thus fulfilling the last theory of his colleague.) The Corriere articles were influential and controversial. They urged the disbanding of schools, and the dissolution of television. His repeated declaration in such a newspaper of his own homosexuality, his articles on the new ferocity of urban crime in Rome, and his rapprochement with the Italian Communist Party, all earned him enemies throughout the Italian Right and Centre.

Never accepted by the established Roman intelligentsia, Pasolini was mourned by the ordinary people of Rome, the Communist Party, and the Italian gay organization FUORI (“outside”) in a massive street demonstration at his funeral. I join them in mourning this maker of visions, this courageous fighter.

Let the good Christians who admire The Gospel and Theorem, the straight aesthetes who get away on Medea, the Marxists who are moved to tears by Accattone, the Italophiles who nod eagerly at the mere mention of his name, never forget that they are watching the works of a murdered poofter. Let them have his pain, his genius and his gayness waved in their faces like a flag.
Unfortunately people do not realize how essential these descriptions are for the understanding of the soul's development; our vast ignorance of this science is simply due to the stupid circumspection and false modesty of those who write on the subject. Enchained by the most absurd fears they tell us of childish things known to every fool; and, not daring to lay a bold hand on the human heart, they likewise do not dare to reveal to us its gigantic aberrations.

* La Nouvelle Justine, ou les Malheurs de la Vertu, suivie de l'histoire de Juliette, sa soeur. Marquis de Sade, 1797.

Pasolini's Salo is based on Les Journées de Sodome, ou l'école du libertinage by Donatien-Alphonse-Francois, Marquis de Sade (1785). This 500 page, but only one-quarter completed novel concerns the sexual excesses of four prominent debauchees secluded in the remote Monastery of Sainte-Marie-de-Bois. These episodes of ever-increasing anarchy have been seen by many as a prophecy of the French Revolution four years later. Pasolini, however, has set his film in the Nazified alpine Italy of the war years (1939-45).
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DEVELOP YOUR IMAGE
David Williamson's "Don's Party" is probably the most famous Australian play since Ray Lawler's "Summer of the Seventeenth Doll", and certainly one of the most acclaimed. It first surfaced at the Pram Factory in August 1971, but was later revised and re-opened at the Jane Street Theatre in June 1972.

Set on October 25, 1969, the play is a caustic description of an election night party, where all but two are Labor supporters. That night was of particular importance because it looked as if Labor could return from 20 years on the opposition benches and form a government. And as the night progressed, hopes ran high. However, as the late returns came in, a swing against Labor became apparent — much as in 1974. So even though the Liberal-Country Party coalition was returned with its lowest ever post-war majority, for Labor supporters the night was a bitter one.

The most disturbing element of the play, however, is not the increasing doom of the night, but the tragic awareness one gets of how transient beliefs can be. If the guests are living in Lower Plenty now, it was not so long ago they were in Carlton; and if they voted Labor in 1969, there is no guarantee they would again. As Peter Nixon once said: "Today's radicals are tomorrow's conservatives. The change comes when a young man marries, has children and takes on responsibility".

"Don's Party" has been adapted for the screen by its author David Williamson, and for it producer Philip Adams and director Bruce Beresford have gathered an extremely varied cast — from Pat Bishop, who played Kath in Sydney and London, to Graham Kennedy, who is acting in his first serious role.

The entire film is being made on location in Sydney, and with a budget of $275,000.
What made you choose “Don’s Party”?

I didn’t choose it — it chose me. I was handling the mop-up on Barry McKenzie in Britain, the U.S. and Canada, and I was approached by Jack Lee, who had been trying to float the film for sometime.

Did he hold the rights?

Yes. He’d been interested in Don’s Party since seeing the Sydney production.

At the time, in 1974, it seemed to me that comedies were the only genre of film likely to redeem themselves financially in Australia. After all, in so far as there’d been a history of successful films in this country, it was a history of comedy going back to the Sentimental Bloke, the Dad and Dave films, Stork and Bazza. Furthermore, I’d had bitter experiences trying to raise money for dramatic films, but I did know that our unimaginative Australian investors would respond to comedy. In fact, I’d received a lot of unsolicited phone calls from would-be investors who’d heard wild rumours about Barry McKenzie’s profitability. So I foresaw no problem in raising the $300,000 for Don’s Party.

Unfortunately, things didn’t happen as quickly as I’d hoped. As you know, I was foundation chairman of the Film and TV Board, and a member of the Australia Council, which was taking up at least 2 days a week. I was also spending quite a lot of time trying to raise money for other people’s films. So the project had to wait until I resigned 12 months later. But by then Australia was in the middle of a credit squeeze and my investors had lost much of their enthusiasm. While everyone I approached agreed to participate, most of them offered just a fraction of the sort of money they’d originally proposed. So instead of getting a cheque for $50,000, I’d get one for $5,000.

Although somewhat dispirited, Jack Lee and I had a number of meetings with David Williamson on the script and we went through a number of rewrites. First of all, we went through the inevitable exercise of trying to “externalize” the drama, of trying to escape the stage set. But we found that it didn’t really work — it was just tokenism. In any case, a drama like Don’s Party, concerning a seething hot-bed of interpersonal conflicts, requires a high degree of claustrophobia. It’s like a domestic argument — if you step outside into the garden the issues seem less important.

So, although a few additional scenes involving voting on election day and some skinny-dipping in the neighbour’s pool have been added, the screen play is close to the original play — except that the offstage scenes, which are implied in the original, now take place on camera.

There does seem to have been some reworking of characters and dialogue, however — especially with Cooley. His opening ‘G’day cunt features’ has been deleted, for example . . .

I think you’ll find that “cunt features” was back in the last draft, and I certainly gave no instructions to bowdlerize it. However, it’s fair to say that a line like that could so enrage Mr Prowse as to jeopardise TV sales, and they’re a major source of income for the local film-maker.

I’ve already sold the film to television — to the 0/10 Network — with the promise that it will be cleared for transmission in about three years time. That may seem optimistic on my part, but the fact is that Australia now has the most liberal television censorship in the world. There’s no way a film like Don’s Party could ever be screened on American television, or, for that matter, the BBC. As a matter of fact, the BBC told me to bring Barry McKenzie back in 10 years time. Prior to that, they saw no possibility of screening it.

There was talk of Cooley being played by Paul Hogan, wasn’t there?

Yes, I wanted him for the part very much. I’d also wanted him to play Curly in the original Barry McKenzie. When he was just down from the bridge, and before he’d assumed superstar status, I had a great admiration for his comic gifts, but he was very wary of the role. Finally, the rationalization for him refusing it was financial, but I suspect he was concerned over his ability to work with professional actors.

As well, I know that John Cornell was worried that the film might have a bad effect on Hogan’s mass audience. Mind you, he had some cause for concern — Barry McKenzie hasn’t exactly helped Barry Crocker’s record sales. Little old ladies won’t buy albums performed by young men who take their trousers off on television.

There are quite a few surprises in the casting . . .

I hope so. First of all, we’ve included Ray Barrett as Mal, even though Barrett played Cooley in the London stage production. But he is, of course, far too old for the part, especially on a Panavision screen for which, Ray claims, he has to fill in his face with spackle.
Anyway, we've re-written the part of Mal so that he is no longer an ex-student, but a university lecturer. You'll always find one of them hanging around the younger students trying to con their birds.

Then we're using Graeme Blundell against type — at his request. Graeme was so sick of playing appealing, Alvin-type parts that he asked to play Simon, the young Liberal who sticks out at the party like a sore toe. And Graham Kennedy, for whom I have a great admiration, is playing a drab, beaten-up, little sad-sack. It's the very antithesis of the role he had, for example, in The Box, where he was milked for his public image. And although the critics will all have their pre-conception about Kennedy, he's emerging as a very good, naturalistic actor — with just a hint of the grotesque, and that's appropriate given that the character has a penchant for photographing people in a sexual congress.

As you know, at the last moment we had to replace Barry Crocker with John Hargreaves, who has the part of Don — and that's in complete contrast to his part in The Removalists. There, he was an inhibited young policeman — here he's the full extrovert rat-bag. For Cooley, the part originally planned for Hogan, we've got Harold Hopkins. You might remember Hopkins playing Billy Hughes' private secretary in Billy and Percy. He's a damn good actor but he's not the sort of guy you would readily associate with the part. He's not as physical; he's more intellectually complex.

By casting people against type, we are hoping to get something extra from them in performance. David and I have talked about the style of acting a great deal, and we both wanted it to be very naturalistic, almost Czechoslovakian. At the same time I wanted the camera to be as mobile as possible, which is very difficult in a tight location. Nonetheless, I watched the shoot for a couple of days last week and was very pleased at the degree of mobility Bruce and Don were getting.

Jack Lee finally pulled out of the film, didn't he?

Well, yes. It took such a long time to get it going, and Jack had family commitments in Europe. So, although Jack retained his equity in the project, we agreed to find another director. At first I wanted to use Ken Hannam, who directed Sunday, but Hannam was out of sympathy with the urban characters, preferring more rural archetypes. Hannam found the dialogue too aggressive, too ugly. Obviously, the man's a raving romantic.

However, Bruce Beresford arrived back from Britain and responded to the project with his usual enthusiasm. We'd worked together
very happily on Barry McKenzie and so I asked him to take the film on. At the same time, we were working on a number of other ideas for subsequent collaboration.

Was there any temptation to change the period of the film?

Yes, we were going to re-set it at the last federal elections. That was the plan right until the eleventh hour, but then we realized that no Labor supporter in his right mind would have been throwing a party to celebrate Gough's "certain" victory. All of us knew that we were going to get trounced — it was just a matter of degree.

So we returned to the original 1969 setting.

The politicians referred to in the play are now somewhat forgotten. Did anyone conceive of introducing more familiar names?

No, but we shot a scene with John Gorton the other day because I wanted to have "Introducing John Gorton" in the titles. After all, without John we wouldn't have had a local industry worth two bob.

When we visited the set it seemed as if the film would have a more suburban character than the play. It had less of a Carlton feeling ...

Well, David saw the play as being set in Lower Plenty, not Carlton, which is a new suburb for the upwardly mobile. So I think your perception of the play as Carltonian was rather subjective.

As you know, we are filming on location in a New South Welsh version of Lower Plenty, but the domestic details are identical — right down to the mandatory Brueghel print.

Will you be distributing the film yourself?

Yes, I will be using the same system as with the first Bazza. This means I won't be signing any long-term contract for the distributors, which I regard as lunacy. I suspect that the situation with the Great MacArthy is that David Baker probably signed a five-year contract with Seven Keys. And after the film's failure in Melbourne, I would be very surprised if they haven't lost interest. However, unless Seven Keys are willing to waive the contract, Dave will be unable to get his hands on it for a second try.

How will the film be released?

First of all, many of the investors in Don's Party are exhibitors. We have major exhibitors in NSW, Canberra, Perth and Victoria — which gives us the bulk of the market.

Incidentally, exhibition has never been easier, because there is a severe product shortage in Australia. As a result of color television hitting cinema audiences, there had been a rapid turnover in films. This accounts for the sudden vogue in revivals and for the readiness of Australian cinemas to handle local product. Moreover, my independents are people who like to have long runs. They work hard to make a film a success.

Who are these independents?

In Canberra it's Darrell Killen, who owns some of the major cinemas and drive-ins. In Perth it's the TVW group, the major television station who have gone into exhibition in partnership with MCA. In Sydney it's MCA themselves, and in Victoria its Messrs Sharpe & Sellect, who've the Capitol, the Bryson and the Century theatres. Most of the people involved are old friends from Barry McKenzie days. Having made money out of McKenzie they were willing to invest in a new project.

What is your role on the new film?

Producer — not to be confused with production manager. I think that Australian filmmakers very often confuse those roles. As producer, it is my responsibility to package, to choose the director and principal cast, and to promote.

I also think Australian producers fail to realize that their job is only just beginning when a film is finished. The nature of the publicity is crucial, as is the selection of an outlet. Make the wrong decision and you court disaster. For example, I was always opposed to the premiering of Sunday Too Far Away in suburban theatres. I know it's given the film a long run, but that's no guarantee of profitability. In fact, a long run is often quite useless to a producer — he can run 12 months without the production, as opposed to the cinema, earning anything at all. In my view, a film has to take a lot of money quickly for the production to have any hope of getting into the black. Australians have to learn a lot more about these aspects of production, otherwise their first film will often be their last.

One of the problems with "Sunday Too Far Away" was that many distributors saw it and claimed that it wouldn't make a penny. That's reputedly why it ended up in the suburbs ...

Why on earth wouldn't Sunday be successful? God knows it's not a Wake in Fright, which challenged the audience too much. Sunday is a very nice, likeable film — in a sort of Lawsonian tradition.

Obviously there is an advantage in trying things up at script stage, long before you've a final product. However, if distributors keep being pessimistic about the potential of films like "Sunday" and "Picnic", then they are going to always play...
safe and release films in cinemas like the Double Bay and Rivoli...

Exactly. However, with regard to *Picnic*, I always knew that it would be a roaring success. I did quite a bit of back-stage work with Pat Lovell in the early stages when the film establishment was doing its best to discourage her. Conversely, the second I saw *The Great MacArthy*, I warned David Baker that he had a major problem on his hands because of its idiosyncratic and complex nature.

Also, we must remember that it is far, far more difficult to market an Australian film than it is to market an import. Overseas films are pre-sold before they get here and it’s simply a matter of the local distributor unpacking the publicity kit from Los Angeles. It requires very little work.

Have you ever thought about distributing other Australian films?

Yes. In fact I put a proposal to the AFC that we form a sort of distribution co-operative, because, obviously, the costs of doing it solo are significant. The staff I had to distribute *Bazza* could have easily handled two or three more films without an increase in overheads.

And if you are distributing a single film such that the money isn’t exactly rushing in, you have got the problem of paying salaries and sustaining yourself.

Pat Lovell has made a similar observation. She believes that the AFC is too strict on producers in terms of what they are allowed to pay themselves. She says that unless producers have outside incomes, they just can’t keep going...

Quite true. My fee from *Don’s Party*, after tax, will be around $3000—which isn’t a lot of money for 4 to 5 years work. So I couldn’t contemplate an involvement without having other sources of income, which is why I think that an alliance between the John Lamonds, the Thornhills and the Bakers might be a good idea. We could pool information on deals, on contracts, on marketing strategies. And we could save ourselves that 30% distribution fee into the bargain. In my experience, making a film is relatively easy, but finding an audience — that’s the problem.

Will “Don’s Party” find an audience?

I think so. As I said, it comes from the mainstream of Australian comedy. At the same time, it’s a deeply emotional film and its political undercurrents have even more significance since the December coup d’état. However, I’ll certainly research the film carefully before release — just as I organized research on *MacArthy* and many other local features when I was with the Film Board.

You have also, I believe, some theories about pre-researching film ideas...

Yes. I am intrigued with the Tape system from England, which is a predictive technique based on the historic performance of thousands of feature films. It was developed by a media expert in Britain from a statistical study of films made over a 20 year period and is now being used by a number of major U.S. studios — and by one of our own television networks in assessing possible projects. I don’t place too much faith in the notion, but I have been impressed by Tape’s record. Certainly a producer needs all the help he can get in an industry that’s as high-risk as films. And I’d certainly like to see Tape augmenting the old system of assessment in Australia, wherein some embittered film critic vents his spleen on this or that.

Generally, the broad assessments I’ve seen over the years have been nothing short of scurrilous — moralistic, malicious documents that should have been put in a shredder. Yet all too often they were the bases of funding decisions. Frankly, I’d take the Tape system a damn sight more seriously than the opinions of local assessors who have negligible film experience.

However, in the final analysis, it’s one’s own opinion that really matters, and one of the problems with the Australian film industry is that it is so small and incestuous. The level of jealousy is very high.

And what’s next? Do you have any other films planned?

With Bruce, I hope to go straight into a production of Henry Handel Richardson’s *The Getting of Wisdom*. As well we are trying to finance a multi-million dollar epic, *The Break*, about the mass-Japanese escape from a prison camp in Cowra during World War II.

Have you got the rights on “The Getting of Wisdom”?

Yes, we’ve got an option. Eleanor Whitcombe, who wrote the *Seven Little Australians*, is finalizing the first draft, and as soon as I have it I’ll be out knocking on the investors’ doors. Funnily enough, we planned it years before the success of *Picnic*. However, the broad similarities (both films are set in girls’ schools) may be a two-edged sword: some will no doubt say the films are too similar, while others will be reassured by *Picnic’s* success — as they reach for their cheque books.

Is it going to be a big film?

Certainly much bigger than *Don’s Party* in terms of budget. I think we’ll need $350,000-$400,000.

That seems quite light compared to *Picnic’s* $455,000.

Continued on P. 347
DON McALPINE
Director of Photography

You are shooting on location and not in a studio, largely I am told to save money. How do you find it?

Well, money is still a problem, but I would prefer to do the whole thing on an actual location regardless. Bruce and I have worked on three films now: the first, The Adventures of Barry McKenzie, was a sort of a fantasy based on fact, the second was a fantasy based on fantasy, and this will be a reality based on reality — or in other words, total realism. Now, even with all the experience in the world, sets still look like sets, so I was keen from the very beginning to shoot in a real house.

Other Williamson plays have been filmed, and for me they were all a bit theatrical: not in performance, but in appearance. If we can shoot on location, and have views through windows — even at night with lights outside — then we can begin to defeat the problem of everyone knowing it’s a film of a play, and degrading it because of that.

Also Bruce is demanding complex camera movements to keep the film moving: ever changing angles, perspectives and so forth. Unfortunately this compounds the inevitable lighting problems, because on a set you can’t always get your lights up over the dolly, and you must avoid tracking through your light sources. By the time we finish filming, I should imagine every bit of the house will have been seen, and not only seen, but tracked past.

Therefore I have to maintain a continuity of lighting throughout the shooting that will enable all these camera movements to occur. It’s far beyond anything I have tried before.

How have you gone about it? Have you drawn up a basic lighting plan for the whole house and, with modifications, stuck to it?

Well, once again it is a question of realism: the house we are using is lit with an immense number of practicals. We are largely using No. 1’s — that’s the 275 W photo-flood. They have a short life of three hours and you can only leave them on for a take. We have run tests and found we can burn them for five minutes, but we never do that because of the overheating problem: the lamps just blow. There are a couple of those big Chinese paper lanterns in the house and we have maintained those as sources for a lot of the lighting in the living area. Basically we are just enhancing the practicals.

We are also trying to maintain this realism by making certain all the rooms are lit like they are in a normal house: the kitchen is lit moderately well, the big living area is a little bit brighter, and the patio is bloody near a blackout.

What sort of stop are you getting?

Bruce wanted it to be four because, being a situation drama, a lot of it is played in long, complex takes: the camera moving instead of cutting. Consequently we need to hold a reasonable depth of field, and that we get by shooting at four.

We have been greatly aided by the week’s rehearsal we did with all the actors. The whole film has been plotted, with every camera angle worked out. This is saving an immense amount of time in set-up because there is none of the usual discussion about what to do next. Unfortunately we sometimes forget the poor old crew wasn’t in on it and they occasionally get a bit lost. But we usually ask the talent to do a walk through for them.

Was the rehearsal at the house?

Yes. We played through the whole script as it will be filmed, seeing how the lines would fall with each shot, and so on. The rehearsal wasn’t to polish the acting or anything like that.

How have you been affected by the heavy rain?

Well, it has held us up a bit, and we’ve had to re-organize some of the shooting. We can’t do any shots that face onto the patio because the
rain is blowing all the globes in the Chinese lanterns — even the 100 watters. Had we not preplanned we would have probably doubled the shooting time.

All the same you must be throwing away a lot of your planning by shooting around the patio?

Well, not really. All it means is that we have to shoot out of continuity. It would have been wonderful to start at the beginning of the script and work our way through because that would have helped the actors and crew enormously.

Another point to remember is that Don's Party is a sort of period film; and being set in 1969 we felt it should have a reasonably hard and clear look. So I couldn't use diffusion or low contrast, though I consider them ill-used and in-vogue tricks anyway. I guess people will think I am having a shot at Russell Boyd, but Russell used it excellently in Picnic — I must make that clear. It is just that a lot of other people are using it without any real motivation: they are just degrading techniques to a point where they could just as well have shot it on bloody, 16mm and blown it up.

Anyway, with the inevitable softness of enhanced, practical lighting, I think we made the right decision by shooting on straight, clear lenses.

Given most suburban homes have lots of white walls and soft backgrounds, have you had a glare problem?

No. The big white lights are, of course, just big masses of white, but that's the way they look to the eye.

What I meant was, that sort of effect would soften it up a bit anyway.

Oh yes. In a studio you have got your incandescent top lights, and direct lights all up along the top — bloody lovely. And you drop it from the gantry, and it's great fun, but it always looks like studio lighting. Almost all Americans, when they get on the set, light as if it was lit from the floor, except they do have the added advantage of having that special extra when they want it. But realism is what it is all about, and that's it.

What sort of stock are you using?

Eastman 5247. But we very strongly considered using Agfa stock. Basically it was a question of costing and though this film is fully professional, it is low budget. We would have had a considerable saving by using Agfa, but unfortunatenly they weren't carrying any 1000 footers.

Is this the new Agfa reversal stock?

Oh no, this is the Agfa stock that is compatible with the old Eastman 5251.

Would you have had any processing problems with that Agfa in Sydney?

There is a rumor that we would have had, but I cleared it first with our lab. Anyway, the cost savings would have compensated for any hassles; but they didn't have 1000s.

One thing I must say is that although I have only been with Colorfilm on this job, and I don't want this to sound like a bloody commercial, they have been marvellous. My experience in Australia goes back a fair way, and to put it nicely the Australian labs used to process film — full stop. They weren't concerned about what you were on about, or what part they could take in the filmmaking process. Now that's history.

When I went over to England to do the two Bazzas we worked through Rank. We used to have a contact man and the back-up we got from him was incredible. He would comment on everything from the technical, through to the performances. He did it discreetly and we appreciated it because it was offered constructively.

This never happened in Australia: you just send your film in and got it back. But now Colorfilm, and particularly Bill Goolie, are giving me as good, if not better, service, back-up and support than I got at Rank. I believe Aplab are moving in this direction also.

What about your screen ratio?

Well, Bruce and I had a bit of a battle over this because I wanted to shoot it anamorphic, like the second Bazzas. But Bruce didn't for a couple of reasons: one was because it has got good potential for television release, and although they can fiddle with anamorphic, it is still a bit of a punt job; the other is that a lot of it will be played on singles, and singles always present a problem with Panavision, because it is hard to exclude the other actors — especially in a confined area like this.

My argument was that one of your biggest problems shooting 1.85 with television in mind, is that you have another seven or eight per cent above the frame that you have to always keep functional. It's mike out, lights out — the whole bloody thing out. It would be marvellous to only have one type of frame — at the moment I have got two.

Will it be printed masked or un-masked?

I don't know if it is a rumor or not, but I think the film has been presold to television; so obviously we wouldn't mask it. I shoot full aperture anyway because I can see no advantage in encroaching on the frame area. If you pick up a hair in a Panavision aperture it may not even make television, but if you start using an Academy aperture and you pick up a hair, it could ruin your entire take.

I have never had any problems with instability because of the wider aperture, so why the bloody hell stuff around with the release print. After all they put the Academy in and got it back. But now Colorfilm and particularly Bill Goolie are giving me as good, if not better, service, back-up and support than I got at Rank. I believe Aplab are moving in this direction also.

How do you find Bruce having been a cameraman himself?

The more the director understands what I am doing, the easier my job is. I don't particularly admire a director who doesn't understand what a cameraman is doing, and think it is part of his craft. He doesn't have to be a cameraman but he should know what I am talking about.

This idea of me being some sort of magician is a load of shit. I believe I know my job, and if Bruce understands my problems, which he does — though he often doesn't admit it — then the better it is.
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A. Don McAlpine ACS

1974 THE REMOVALISTS
S. Graham Lind ACS

1974 RIDE A WILD PONY
S. Jack Cardiff

1975 PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK
S. Russell Boyd ACS

1975 HIGH VELOCITY (MANILA)
A. Bob Paynter BSC

1975 CADDIE
S. Peter James ACS

1975 MAD DOG
A. Mike Molloy

1976 DON’S PARTY
S. Don McAlpine ACS

1976 HARNESS FEVER
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Phil Adams

Continued from P. 343

Well, I thought that Picnic's budget was excessive. For a start they had the problem of shooting in South Australia, plus an incredible surplus of producers. If you look at the titles there was Pat Lovell, who really set the film up, the McElroys, and any number of SAFC people, like John Graves. Talk about a cast of thousands—they had producers coming out their ears.

Where will "Don's Party" make it's money?

In my experience we can expect 80 per cent of the revenue to come from Australia, with 20 per cent from Britain and New Zealand. As I've already said, I am very pessimistic about world sales and have discovered that even a similar market like Canada is totally disinterested in Australian work. Canadians tend to bracket Australian films with their own home-grown product, which they are very supercilious about.

If the Americans won't cooperate by releasing Australian films in the States, do you think that justifies some sort of political action against the distributors—perhaps following the Tariff Board recommendations?

Boyer's Tariff Board Report embodied a great many of my suggestions, including group buying for television and the notion of partially dismantling the exhibition-distributor nexus. Like everyone else, I argued that we were all victims of a sinister multi-national conspiracy, that we were being kept off our own screens by the dreaded Americans. With the wisdom of hindsight, however, I don't believe that was true. At best, it was a half truth. And now that a succession of governments have done everything we've asked of them, I think it's safe to say that wasn't the case at all. Yet in any case that never happened because we didn't have a film industry, because we didn't want one badly enough. We didn't have enough people with the guts of Tim Burstall, who really went out and fought for it. Oh, we had an infinite number of posers and bellyachers and self-pitying, gutless wonders, but we had very few who were willing to mortgage their own future. So we just didn't have the lucky country which will throw up one giant to prime the pump. If that doesn't happen, I'm afraid the whole exercise would have been a waste of time, a lot of wind-polishing.

What we're seeing now might very well turn out to be a false dawn, like the boom in drama in the 1950s, when Lawler produced Summer of the Seventeenth Doll, etc. For a while it was all euphoria and excitement, but then everything faded away and it took almost 15 years before any new playwrights and screenwriters emerged. And for all my enthusiasm when selling the ideas of the local film industry to Gorton and Whitlam and Dunstan, I've always had a secret fear that history might repeat itself. And that is why I once suggested at an Arts Council meeting that we spend our entire annual budget in importing some American shockers, or a ghetto full of black panthers.

Isn't it funny? For years Australia was one of the hardest places to mount a film, but now it would have to be the easiest place on earth—and that goes for the experimental filmmaker and the feature producer. Yet, in some strange, unaccountable way all that Government help could turn out to be counter-productive. One thing's for sure, the local filmmaker has long since run out of excuses; he can no longer blame any lack of achievement on an American conspiracy, or a disinterested Government—as one could in the fifties and sixties.

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35mm PREPRODUCTION

THE BIG FELLOW

Screenplay: Paul Martin
Production Companies: Commonwealth Film
Synopsis: The film is about an ex-Premier of NSW, the late Jack Lang, and his second and most turbulent term of office (1930-32).

Budget: $350,000 approx.
Feature Length: 90 mins.
Feature Progress: Pre-production

No further details available.

BREAK OF DAY

Director: Ken Hannam
Screenplay: Cliff Green
Producer: Patricia Loyal
Associate Producers: Cliff Green, Geoff Burton
Production Company: Arts Film Productions


Budget: $400,000 approx.
Feature Length: 100 mins.
Feature Progress: Pre-production

PHAR LAP LIVES

(working title)

Director: Ian Macrae
Screenplay: Gary Hutchinson
Producer: Ian Macrae
编剧: Gary Hutchinson

Synopsis: Story of the attempted shooting of Phar Lap and the efforts of the owners to protect the horse over the next 10 days leading up to the 1930 Melbourne Cup.

Budget: $200,000 approx.
Feature Length: 85 mins.
Feature Progress: Pre-production

THE PICTURE SHOW MAN

Director: John Power
Production Company: Limelight Productions Pty. Ltd.

Synopsis: A rock and roll road movie.

Budget: $300,000 approx.
Feature Length: 90 mins.
Feature Progress: Pre-production

STORM BOY

Director: Henri Slattery
Production Company: South Australian Film Corporation

Synopsis: The film explores his relationship with his fellow students, the Brothers and his parents.

Budget: $700,000 approx.
Feature Length: 100 mins.
Feature Progress: Pre-production

HARNESS FEVER

Directors: Don Chaffey, Paul Martin
Production Company: Wall Disney

Synopsis: A young man and his father who live in an isolated coastal wilderness, known as “the Coorong” rescue and raise a young pelican. The bird changes both their relationship and their future.

Budget: $240,000 approx.
Feature Length: 80 mins.
Feature Progress: Editing Stage

35mm IN PRODUCTION

DON’S PARTY

See Production Report, pages 339-347

THE FOURTH WISH

Director: Don Chaffey
Executive Producer: Jill C. Robb
Producer: John Morris
Associate Producer: Matt Carroll
Production Manager: Matt Carroll
Location Manager: Beverley Davison
1st Assistant Director: Mark Epton
2nd Assistant Director: Greg Hocking
Art Director: David Copping
Camera Operator: Brian Allcorn
Make-up: Helen Dyson
Production Accountant: Amy Pule
Music: Bernard Taylor
Publicity: Peter Weall
Editor: G. Turner-Smith
Assistant Editor: Vito Jagla
Dubbing Assistant: Carl Hagedorn
Continuity: Caroline Stanmore
Make-up: Heleen Dyson
Wardrobe Assistant: Wendy Milligan
Make-up Artist: Lloyd James
Grip: Phil Walter
Hair Stylist: Barry Brown
Clapper Loader: Darrin Dunstan
Gaffer: Tony Tegg
Boom Operator: John Seal
3rd Electrical: Emeka Adesi
Best Boy: Ian Dunstan
Carpenter/Laborer: Phillip Scurry
Location Hairdresser: Rachel McCall
Location Costumes: Pam Bertram
Location Props: Marc Meiklejohn

Synopsis: Story of a father and son's journey to accept the inevitability of the son's death through leukemia, the father defies authority and convention in order to make his son's life as full as possible. Eventually, the boy discovers the depth of his own courage and determination and is "born" a man.

Budget: $150,000 approx.
Feature Length: 90 mins.
Feature Progress: Shooting Feb./March

THE SECRET OF PARADISE BEACH

Director: Jim Sharman
Production Company: Wall Disney

Synopsis: The film explores his relationship with his fellow students, the Brothers and his parents.

Budget: $300,000 approx.
Feature Length: 90 mins.
Feature Progress: Pre-production

For details of the following 35 mm films see the previous issue.

Cadle
Let the Balloon Go
Med Dog
The Troubleshooter
End Play
Give the Dog a Good Name

Design Consultants: Michael Ramsay
Research: Stuart McDonald
Grip: Georgie Dryden
Asst. Grip: Paul Gardner
Sound Recorder: Ken Hammond
Boom Operator: David Cooper
Gaffer: Brian Bangrove
Sound re-recorder: Peter Fenton
Best Boy: Paul Ganne
Assistant Editors: Ian Plummer
Cast: Arthur Dignam, Rufus Collins, Neil Campbell, Andrew Sharp, Kate Fitzpatrick.
Synopsis: Not available.

Budget: $300,000 approx.
Feature Length: 90 mins.
Feature Progress: Pre-production

PRODUCTION SURVEY 35 MM

THE DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND

Director: Fred Schepisi
Production Company: The Feature

Synopsis: A film exploring the rare nature of a father/son relationship. Initially refusing to accept the inevitability of his son's death through leukemia, the father defies authority and convention in order to make his son's life as full as possible. Eventually, the boy discovers the depth of his own courage and determination and is "born" a man.

Budget: $300,000 approx.
Feature Length: 90 mins.
Feature Progress: Pre-production

For details of the following 35 mm films see the previous issue.

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Sound re-recorder: Peter Fenton
Best Boy: Paul Ganne
Assistant Editors: Ian Plummer
Cast: Arthur Dignam, Rufus Collins, Neil Campbell, Andrew Sharp, Kate Fitzpatrick.
Synopsis: Not available.

Budget: $300,000 approx.
Feature Length: 90 mins.
Feature Progress: Pre-production

PRODUCTION SURVEY 35 MM

THE DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND

Director: Fred Schepisi
Production Company: The Feature

Synopsis: A film exploring the rare nature of a father/son relationship. Initially refusing to accept the inevitability of his son's death through leukemia, the father defies authority and convention in order to make his son's life as full as possible. Eventually, the boy discovers the depth of his own courage and determination and is "born" a man.

Budget: $300,000 approx.
Feature Length: 90 mins.
Feature Progress: Pre-production

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Gaffer: Brian Bangrove
Sound re-recorder: Peter Fenton
Best Boy: Paul Ganne
Assistant Editors: Ian Plummer
Cast: Arthur Dignam, Rufus Collins, Neil Campbell, Andrew Sharp, Kate Fitzpatrick.
Synopsis: Not available.

Budget: $300,000 approx.
Feature Length: 90 mins.
Feature Progress: Pre-production

For details of the following 35 mm films see the previous issue.

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Asst. Grip: Paul Gardner
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Boom Operator: David Cooper
Gaffer: Brian Bangrove
Sound re-recorder: Peter Fenton
Best Boy: Paul Ganne
Assistant Editors: Ian Plummer
Cast: Arthur Dignam, Rufus Collins, Neil Campbell, Andrew Sharp, Kate Fitzpatrick.
Synopsis: Not available.

Budget: $300,000 approx.
Feature Length: 90 mins.
Feature Progress: Pre-production

For details of the following 35 mm films see the previous issue.
BIO-GAS

Director: Mike Rubbo
Distributor/Production Company: UN Habitat with the assistance of the Fill Government

SYNOPSIS: A film that explores the use of pig excreta to produce fuel for rural communities, and possibilities of the role of pigs in rural development.

Production Company: UNHabitat
Director: Mike Rubbo
Gauge: 16mm

FOR WHAT

Director: Paul F. Ruckert
Production Company: Invincible Pictures
Screenplay: Peter Kingston, Jack Hannon
Synopses: A story of a Sydney man whose clothes are washed in the Clarence River, which provides fuel for rural communities, and possible future applications of this technology.

Budget: $3000
Length: 25-30 mins.
Color Process: Eastman
Progress: Final editing

THE LAST DRINK

Director: Kendal Flanagan
Assistant Director: Chris Pitchett
Screenplay: Kendal Flanagan
Lighting Cameraman: Elery Ryan
Art Director: Meg Stallkamp
Continuity: Julie Bales
Sound Recordist: Graham Irwin

Cast: Susan Dobson, Nicholas Flanagan, Gary McKechnle, Steven Millichamp

Budget: $2000
Length: 16 mins.
Color Process: Eastman
Progress: Final editing

LITTLE CREATURES

Production Company: Invincible Pictures
Screenplay: Paul F. Ruckert
Art Director: John Shew
Music Directors: John Shew
Sound Recordist: Michael Cremers

Assistant Directors: John Rane, Tim Smart, Chris Peters

Synopsis: A story of the struggle of an actor who plays the role of a large insect, with adaptations from the Dulcie Knight novel.

Budget: $2500
Length: 50 mins.
Color Process: Eastman
Progress: In release

MELANIE AND ME

Director: Chris Pitchett
Screenplay: Elery Ryan
Art Director: John Shew
Sound Recordist: Michael Cremers

Assistant Directors: John Rane, Tim Smart, Chris Peters

Synopsis: A story of the struggle of an actor who plays the role of a large insect, with adaptations from the Dulcie Knight novel.

Budget: $2500
Length: 50 mins.
Color Process: Eastman
Progress: In release

ON THE BALL

Director: Gavin Wilson
Screenplay: Peter Kingston
Assistant Director: Martin Hughes

Production Assistant: Hugh, Armin, Grant

Cast: Peter Kingston, Susan Dobson, Nicholas Flanagan

Budget: $1500
Length: 16 mins.
Color Process: Eastman
Progress: Final editing

FAVORITE

Director: Richard Franklin
Production Company: TNL Films
Screenplay: Ted Mulder

Producer: Anthony I. Dinmore
Assistant Cameraman: Tom Marshall
Sound Editor: Graham Irwin

Budget: $2500
Length: 20 mins.
Color Process: Eastman
Progress: Final editing
OUT OF THE PAST
Director .................................................. John Hughes
Production Company ................. Film Noir
Producer ........................................... Ross R. Campbell
Production Manager .................... Adrian Pickering
Production Secretary ............. Elizabeth Whiffin
Screenplay ........................................... Peter Cox
Lighting Cameraman .......... John Ruane
Camera Assistant ......................... Brett Southwell
Editor .............................................. Jan Murray
Colorist ............................................. Ian Stocks
Sound Recordist ......................... Peter Gawler
Boom Operator .......................... Peter Gwynne
Gaffer ............................................. Chris Olver
Cast ......................... Daryl Strachan, Ellery Ryan, Ruth Brown
Production Company ................. Film Noir
Cast: Daryl Strachan, Ellery Ryan, Ruth Brown,
Lighting Cameraman .......... John Ruane
Camera Assistant ......................... Brett Southwell
Editor .............................................. Jan Murray
Colorist ............................................. Ian Stocks
Sound Recordist ......................... Peter Gawler
Boom Operator .......................... Peter Gwynne
Gaffer ............................................. Chris Olver
Cast ......................... Daryl Strachan, Ellery Ryan, Ruth Brown
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Above: Surrender in Paradise, Assistant Director, Toivo Lember, with lead actor, Errol O'Neill.
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By Ian Griggs

Introduction by Graham Shirley

If the early Australian feature, Will E Twist, had reached the hands of a distributor and staved there, the chances of its survival today would be slim indeed. But Will E Twist has remained in private hands since its completion in 1919, and its rediscovery by Ian Griggs is as fascinating as the circumstances of its production.

Two aspects give Will E Twist a degree of relevance for film historians today. First, it was produced with great verve and optimism by a true "primitive" of the cinema, who, knowing little of technique or marketing, did everything from the ground up, including the construction of his camera. Secondly, the film's rediscovery in the 1970s was at a time when the survival of any Australian silent film could only be regarded as a lucky accident.

The trail to rediscovery was typical of many film archival searches, but the initial unravelling of its background was harder than most. Here was a film neglected by all prior listings of Australian film, and at the outset even its date was hard to determine. The search for the actual film began when I learned of its existence through some relatives of its director, Bill Barter, at a screening of "Salute to the Australian Film" at the Sydney Film Festival. There they told me that Bill Barter's grandson, Ken, still had the film, as well as the camera gear.

Ian Griggs then visited Ken Barter, who presented him with a fragile cinema poster which advertised the film as "Parramatta's Own Comedy Production in 3 reels". This was for use during its run at the Butterfly Theatre, Parramatta, in 1919. But who, or what, constituted Will E Twist was a question not easily answered, and the extent of Barter's activity was even more obscure. Nevertheless, a recent article in the local Parramatta newspaper jogged a few memories, and Ian was besieged with phone calls from people who remembered the Butterfly Theatre, Bill Barter and the extent of his film activity.

He was also visited by relatives of the leading actor and the brother of Roy Barker (who managed Barter's Comedies). These interviews probably did most to piece together the story of Bill Barter.

Persistent questioning of Ken Barter finally brought the film to light, and after 60 years of neglect, two cans of the original camera negative were copied and projected. However, the fragments of negative (about 500 ft of 35mm nitrate, in excellent condition) gave little idea of the story-line, and in fact contained only one complete scene: a hilarious slapstick dinner-table sequence where the ghastly wallpaper of the outdoor set must ascend at least 20 ft into the air.

After the villains have been dispensed with, happiness reigns and Willie is given Enid's hand in marriage. Eddie Dale (left), Enid Lofberg, Alf Weekes and Adelina Lofberg.
William Thomas Barter was born in Parramatta in 1887, and died in 1965. His chosen trade was carpentry, but his exceptional bright and inventive mind was apparently not satisfied by it, and he turned his hand to spare-time photography. With his large Thornton-Pickard plate camera, Barter was a familiar sight around Parramatta and district.

In January 1911, Parramatta's first theatre, the Butterfly, was opened by H. A. Mainsbridge. It was an open-air, tin-fronted structure with a brick floor and canvas walls. Barter became operator there with his friend, Wal Niddrie, as assistant.

During those early days of suburban cinema, Parramatta had no fewer than five cinemas operating seven nights a week, with Saturday matinees. The Butterfly was graced with an orchestral accompaniment on Saturday nights, and a piano one during the week. Two Pathe "Exhibition" projectors were installed with a Gaumont on stand-by. Power was supplied by gas engine and dynamo, a fairly common set-up in the suburbs at this time, and in June 1911 a roof was added. There was no choice of films, you simply took what was sent you.

Sadly, not one of Parramatta's original cinemas has survived the years. The last to go was the Star, later Parramatta's Cinema No. 1, and known prior to its demolition as the Rivoli. The early type of suburban cinema is now very difficult to find, although the Liverpool Butterly and De Luxe is possibly the oldest operative cinema in Parramatta district, which remain today, and is extremely noisy.

As money allowed, film was bought from Kodak in lots of 400 ft, and filming took place every 2nd month period. In the meantime, Barter and Niddrie used home-made wooden developing tanks to process the film, and a home-made printer to strike the positive. The quality of the remaining negative left much to be desired — something later Australian labs fell down badly on, much to the detriment of film restoration in later years. The two rolls of negative found in the original Kodak tins were complete with emulsion number and date.

On February 28, 1919, the completed film was exhibited before the State Censorship Board, and was passed, subject to the deletion of 20 ft from reel three, which was considered "unduly vulgar". The Under-Secretary's report on March 3, 1919, stated that it was "an extremely poor production, both as to photography and plot".

Nevertheless, the Butterfly Theatre gave the film its one and only public season on May 29 and 30, 1919. The audience loved it. The piano tinkled away in the pit, the children squealed with delight, and Barter constantly crept from the box to gauge the public reaction, only to return grinning with satisfaction.

This was it, he thought. Barter's Parramatta Comedies would inevitably go on to bigger and better things. But not so. The potential backers kept their wallets folded, and the company disappeared as fast as it had appeared.

Using home-made exterior sets, the film was shot entirely in local backyards, as well as in Parramatta and Fairfield parks. Barter's wife Agnes was at the camera, while Bill raced around shouting directions to the cast. Shouting was a necessity, for Barter's camera still runs today, and is extremely noisy.

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During this period Australian production was fast improving (The Sentimental Bloke was released the same year), and better quality American films continued to strengthen their grip on local markets. What chance was there for a small-time suburban company? Not much, as it happened.

Bill Barter went on to make screen ads, including one for Peter's Ice Cream, and another for a brewery. Later, on the roof of the Cumberland Cafe, in Church St., Parramatta, he erected a daylight screen for his ads, but eventually replaced them with glass slides fed by an automatic still projector he had designed himself. He pre-dated Leica in his building of 35mm still cameras, but in spite of work on shutters, lenses, film advance mechanisms, and countless other technical aspects of photography, he had surprisingly little contact with the Patents Office.

Barter offered to sell his film equipment to Niddrie, but without success. He subsequently returned to carpentry, and when war arrived in 1919 he was foreman on the enlargement of the Liverpool Butterfly De Luxe. In later years he was head carpenter with the Goodyear Tyre Company in Sydney, retiring in August 1951.

 Though what survives today of Will E Twist is crude, to say the least, the film, along with the existence of Barter's company, has a definite place in the history of Australian cinema. The country and suburban producer is often overlooked and seldom documented. Many country and suburban cinemas produced their own newsreels (hardly a weekly review), and the travelling cameraman often recorded scenes of local interest to be later sold, or presented, to the Town Clerk. Vague details have also come to light on Phillip Lytton's production company, especially regarding his rumored production in 1914 of a "Rudd Family" film at Castle Hill. Little survives of such work; time is our enemy, and nitrate deterioration waits for no one.

So, when we think of the Australian film, we should spare consideration for those gallant and enterprising local producers such as Barter, whose output, save for a few hundred feet of fragile nitrate, has disappeared to dust, and whose efforts in the feature film industry, though meagre, at least gave enjoyment to the residents of a NSW town for 30 comic minutes.

SYNOPSIS (1), as submitted to the State Censorship Board on Feb. 22, 1919.

"[At a country town, John Lade was a proprietor of the Local Dining Rooms. A small dramatic company arrived in the town, but their show was a success, and the company was forced to break up: the leading man of the company obtained a position as waiter at the Long Rooms, and was very much taken up with the proprietor's granddaughter. A picnic is arranged in honour of the girl's birthday next day, and while swimming, the girl's father is saved from drowning by the leading man, who eventually receives consent to marry."

SYNOPSIS (2), as related by Wal Niddrie, Nov. 20, 1975.

"Willie (Eddie Dale) and Luke (Cliff Lucky), are both farmhands on Farmer Giles' dairy farm. Both are in love with Giles' daughter (Enid Lofberg), but nasty Luke and his mate Sluggar (Picker Nickles), are determined that Willie will not win her. At a picnic, Willie saved Enid's grandfather (Ray Baker), from drowning in the lake, during a lightning storm, which was broken up by the accident. Later Willie decides that he will win the girl, and he 'twists' to get his way. In the final scenes (lasts in the surviving negative), Luke and Sluggar are caught by the boy scouts, and after ducking in the river (Parramatta Weir), are hustled off in a spring cart, leaving the hero Willie and his girl happy ever after.

APPENDIX Original length: 3000 ft. Surviving: 500 ft; negative. Release print: apart from a few title frames and very short excerpts, the positive is non-existent. Advertising: Original poster exhibited at the Central Museum.

Story .................. Written by Ted Niddrie (Eddie Dale).
Titles written by Ted Niddrie; photographed by Bill Barter, Producer and Director: Bill Barter, Camera: Agnes Barter.
Manager, Parramatta Comedies ... Roy Baker.
Cast: Farmer Giles .................. Alf Weikes
Willie .................. Eddie Dale
Mrs. Giles .................. Adelina Lofberg
Mrs. Baker .................. Enid Lofberg
Mrs. Baker's Daughter .................. nave
Lucky .................. Cliff Lucky
Sluggar  .................. Picker Nickles
Willie's Grandfather .................. Roy Baker


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: Ken Barter, Louise Little, Reg Niddrie, Ted Niddrie (jnr), George Baker, Parramatta District Historical Society, Bill Card, Graham Shirley, Ross Cooper, Gwen Gledhill and Tom Barter.

Cinema Papers, March-April — 357
The lean, mean 30's, when America laughed...to keep from crying!

BROTHER, CAN YOU SPARE A DIME?

The mad world of Hollywood in its heyday... G-Men and Dillinger... the silver screen and breadlines... movie stars and millionaires... the laughing, crying, never-to-be-forgotten 30's!

"Brilliant... captures with astonishing fidelity, the vitality and vulgarity of the 30's."
- WASHINGTON POST

"SPELLBINDING!"
- CHARLES CHAMPLIN, L.A. TIMES

It was the decade when America escaped the blues... with

THE GREATEST STAR STUDDED CAST EVER!

THE GREAT APE ON THE SKYSCRAPER • THE HE-MAN HEARTHROB WITH THE BIG EARS
THE MOVIE TOUGH GUY FROM THE DEAD END STREET • THE RADIO ACTOR WHO BROUGHT US MARTIANS
THE GERMAN SIREN WITH THE FABULOUS LEGS • THE BULB-NOSED COMIC WHO HATED KIDS
...AND MORE!

Produced by Sandy Lieberson and David Puttnam. Written and Directed by Philippe Mora

A DIMENSION PICTURES Release
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Films Reviews

ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST

Jan Dawson

Surviving the transition from Czechoslovakia to the U.S., Milos Forman's special gifts as a director have hitherto lain in his ability to turn every disaster into a genial social event, and every formal celebration into pure embarrassment. The rather dour cynicism with which he showed up each pimple, dental brace and flat note in the opening auditions of Taking Off, each false step, roll of fat and frustrated wish in The Firemen's Ball, was balanced by the bemused affection with which he charted the yo-yo mechanism of his characters' ups-and-downs.

The fact that their every aspiration doomed them to fall, or prattle, contained within it no potential for tragedy. Their single common, and dominant, characteristic was irrepressibility — the inability to comprehend that "no" could ever constitute a final answer. And the accentuated irony in which Forman engulfed them allowed no place for either major heroes or minor characters.

On the face of it, his singular qualities make him an unlikely choice to direct the film of One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest, for Ken Kasey's 1962 novel lends itself easily to allegorical interpretations. Its hero, McMurphy, a former lumberjack, gambling man and convict, is a larger-than-life figure who, to avoid hard work, makes insanity and gets himself transferred from a prison farm to a mental hospital. There he incites the other patients to show for the hospital's regulations and tidies-the-tables the same contempt he has himself shown for social conventions outside.

The ward to which McMurphy is allocated is tyrannized by one Big Nurse — ample bosom encased in white starched apron and surgical gloves. Kesey makes her a symbol of America's castrating matriarchy, and the battle for power between her and McMurphy is sexual as much as anything else. He arranges for the expert deflowering of a retarded 30-year-old; she shames the boy into cutting his throat; he retaliates by attempting to rape and strangle her. At which point punitive surgery is enlisted in the cause of asexuality, and McMurphy is lobotomized. He dies, but his virile myth survives him and Big Nurse gets hers.

A hero of superhuman proportions restoring self-respect and individuality to a group of faceless and defeated outcasts: a symbolic conflict between good and evil; human eccentricity observed in the formally eccentric setting of a mental hospital; the Kafkan nightmare of the sane man trapped in an insane asylum; even (to some) a political allegory of the anti-authoritarian revolt that swept across the U.S. in the sixties: none of these marks out Cuckoo's Nest as likely Forman territory. And to a large extent, Forman himself seems aware of this.

Even while protesting his unstinted admiration for the book, he expresses his dislike for and suspicion of, allegory: "I have yet to come across a kind word in print about Michael Douglas. Like much of director Richard Fleischer's previous work, it has been greeted with an unmitigated critical response. And the basis for this contempt appears to be the sensationalist aspect of the subject matter towards which Fleischer has been drawn.


MANDINGO

Tom Ryan

I have yet to come across a kind word in print about Mandingo. Like much of director Richard Fleischer's previous work, it has been greeted with an unmitigated critical response. And the basis for this contempt appears to be the sensationalist aspect of the subject matter towards which Fleisher has been drawn.

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His films are full of violent men who cannot be contained by any social structure. Whether they are the mystic figures of The Vikings (1958) and The Grimes Gang (1974), the criminals, murderers or psychopaths of Violent Saturday (1955), Compulsion (1959), Crack In The Mirror (1960), The Boston Strangler (1968) and 10 Rillington Place (1971), or the law enforcers in The New Centurions (1972), the world of Peckinpah fails to contain these men. And while this is clearly the day-to-day routine of 'normal' existence, it is not too hard to hazard a guess as to why most critics have had little time for it.

I must confess that I hold no brief for Peckinpah's films — with the exception of The Grimes Gang (1972). If it were possible to probe beneath the spectacle in Fleischer's work — which has much in common with Fleischer's — still manage to keep the viewer on the edge of his seat. On the surface, Mandingo appears to belong with its turbulent predecessors. Set in Louisiana in 1840, its elements of violence, sex and racism would seem to make it the delight of any advertising campaign. Curiously, it is being primarily sold as 'in the tradition of Gone With The Wind', which it is not, for the South that it depicts is as far from the romance of Selznick's production as it could possibly be.

The film opens on the lush green vegetation surrounding an ill-kept mansion, before the red titles virtually bleed on to the screen. What follows is an extraordinarily complex depiction of humanity in ruins, to which a review of this length can scarcely do the justice it deserves. This becomes clearer once one reaches beyond the superficial response to the form of the melodrama, one which takes its drama and its violence all the way, confronting its audience in a manner that it might not have expected and, finally, assuming proportions that are nigh on tragic. In contrast with Fleischer's earlier films, the characters here are contained by a rigid social structure, one in which racism is a norm and in which both white and black are imprisoned within set patterns of behavior and expectations.

Brutality is a social ritual, affecting both body and soul, and black submits to it as readily as white administers it. The impulse to humanity of those who submit is negated; and those who oppose are destroyed. What is remarkable in Mandingo is the perspective we are offered on this situation, our sympathy being placed as much on the side of the brutalizers as the brutalized, to the point where we recognize that Muddy Waters' intonations on the soundtrack ('I was born in this time/To never be free') apply as equally to white, as to black.

Warren Maxwell (James Mason), ruler of Falconhurst, prides in his slave-breeding as any man does in a profession he enjoys. He is interested in his kingdom to be carried on by those of his seed, and urges his son Hammond (Perry King), to ensure this. There is no animosity in his attitude to his slaves, and though we can see that his affection for them is as objects, trapped inescapably in his ideological assumptions and their attendant superstitions, he cannot. The world to which he belongs is an inceptious one (there are numerous references, both implicit and explicit, to incest), where characters feed on others of their kind and on the corrupt tradition which has created them.

Hammond is presented almost as a Hamlet figure: on one level aware of the corruption that surrounds him, but unable to act on that awareness. Somewhat ironically, he is the film's major destructive force, setting in motion the chain of events which bring Falconhurst down around him. Initiated into his relationship with Ellen (Brenda Sykes) in the context of "wenching", he cannot come to terms with the implications of the tenderness they share (beautifully evoked in their two central love scenes) and, in the moment of crisis near the end, he retreats to the safety of his Falconhurst education, brutally rejecting her. "Don't think 'cause you can get in my bed, you're anything but a nigger".

Similarly, he cannot conceive of his contact with the prize Mandingo Mede (Ken Norton), as anything other than that of a master to his slave, in spite of their mutual affection (the same applying to Mede in reverse).

In his relationship with his wife Blanche (Susan George), Hammond's learned double standards again demonstrate his destructiveness as he rejects her sexually after discovering she was not a virgin at marriage. And when she seduces Mede, the consequent half-caste child allowed to die at birth, is the stimulus to the final
MANDINGO

comprehendingly invokes does, within the drama, the personal cost has been great. conventions of narrative closure, wrench the dead in the foreground of the film's last frame, Hammond, through whom the future has still to be seen, slumps bewildered and without direction deeper into the image.

It is a disturbing climax that allows for no simple response, and in it lies the clue to why MANDINGO is the most exciting film to come from the U.S. in the last year.

BIOGRAPHY

Written, directed and produced by Louis Malle

Jan Dawson

"If I wasn't real," said Alice — half laughing through her tears, it all seemed so ridiculous — "I shouldn't be able to cry." "I hope you don't suppose those are real tears?" Tweedledum interrupted in a tone of great contempt.

The first impact of Black Moon is of Alice in Wonderland revisited by the Ingmar Bergman of The Shame. On the one hand, Falco's "The dream-child moving through a land of wonders wild and new..."/In friendly chat with bird or beast...", the adult who shrinks to infancy; the picture which comes to life; the talking flora and fauna; and, at the stuborn centre, a blonde child-woman who asks a lot of nosey questions and attempts to apply to a differently ordered universe the cut-and-dried logical rules trans- sported from her own. On the other, the background of a raging civil war (this one to the death, between men and women), the theme of escape from it, and of escape as a journey of discovery — all of them bound together by Sven Nykvist's breathtaking camerawork, which bestows a separate, distinct identity on every blade of grass, each leg of the millipede, and which can abruptly turn the rosiest corner of an amber-stoned country mansion into a seat of Gothic horror.

But unlike Alice, Louis Malle's dream-child does not wake up, or rather, she no sooner wakes up from one dream (of children, heavily laden with jewels and make-up, performing Wagner's Tristan and Isolde) and finds a rational explanation for it in the details of a picture on the wall, than the dream and picture prove equally prophetic, a premature reflection of the next 'reality'. Far from returning, at the end of the film, to whatever world she left behind in her little yellow Honda, she has moved deeper into the alternative reality at the end of her paranoid odyssey, at best, perhaps, moving round one or two more places at the Mad Hatter's tea party, so that it's now her turn to pour.

No is it a simple case of transference, of exchanging the old world for the new, for Malle scrupulously eschews all those tired 'explanatory' devices which make the surreal acceptable to the troubled bourgeois sensitivity. In the old lady's room where the prattling dream-child spends much of her time, there's a moment where the two adjacent windows reveal dissimilar views: through one, the war-wounded, bloodied and broken; through the other, naked children frolicking. Throughout the film, there's the unforced suggestion that reality is merely the particular window you look through; and also a question of how you look through it. The suggestion that good and evil lie resolutely in the mind of the beholder (the snake which terrifies the girl when — fearful in a hostile, anthropocentric universe — she finds it under a stone, is later welcomed into her bed). The suggestion that all things are simultaneously present (front-line news from the Trojan War transmitted by short-wave radio).

If all realities are co-existent, and visible, the all-seeing few spend their consciousness "yearning for the eternal blindness", knowing for certain that, if everything is real, "all is illusion". The catechism for the new nirvana is recited in another short-wave transmission but, characteristically, the bemused heroine falls asleep before the message is clear.

On one level then, Black Moon is the film Malle might have been expected to make at the time of his stay in India: indeed, it could even be read as a belated dip into the mudded waters of hippie mysticism, about which — in the Indian films — he expressed a certain scepticism. Yet looked at more closely, Black Moon becomes not a contradiction of Phantom India, but rather a transposition, from fact to fairytale, of its themes: the alien intruder tempted to explain an unfamiliar society according to his/her received sensibilities and constantly confused in his attempts to append meanings to signs.

"What we see as spectacle is in fact a ceremony", The warning which Malle repeated to himself from Calcutta to Bombay also holds true for the reviewer from one end of Black Moon to the other.

The scenario weaves enough tempting patterns for any aspiring theorist (it would even be possible to view the relationship between the girl and the unicorn as the latest of the socially unacceptable liaisons central to nearly all Malle's previous fiction films), but the patterns belong to the reconstruction of the film, rather than to the experience of it.

The latter is of a spell-binding concreteness, with humor and horror finely balanced to carry a weighty sense of what is meant to be kept at bay — along with its twin demon, 'message' — and the fear and tensions of entering an alien universe built up by the audacious device of having the first 20...
minutes without dialogue, unless one counts the audible sighing of the flowers, or the scrambled words from the car radio where a doowop disc maintains a steady chatter about "the crime and vice that have been committed in the large cities of the world." The strangeness of the long and wordless chase is somewhat punctuated by the bizarre balance of the post-synchronized sound, on which every animal cry, rustle of leaf or snap of twig is so amplified as to assume a dominant role. Even when the hunt's prey, the ill-mannered dream-child, reaches the sanctuary of the big country house, its comforts prove more anorropomorphic to the human a kick at reading the piano keys, a pig in a high-chair awaiting its glass of milk, a petulant rat, Humphrey, who chatters in squeaky English. The English spoken by Humphrey's bedridden owner (the late Therese Giehse, the grandmother from La Cime Lucien) is produced with an effort that seems not to be heard from any of the friendly pigs; while the house's other adult occupants, the liefer-singing gardener (Joe Dalessandro) and his sister Lily (Alexandra Stewart) eschew speech entirely and converse through their fingertips. Apart from the sullet heroine, only the unicorn speaks in plain, old-fashioned English, and he only visits every 134 years.

Perhaps a part of the joke is that the setting for this unfamiliar world is Malle's own home, with some of the more eccentric happenings taking place in and around Malle's own bed. Inevitable from the slyly surface is the countryman's sense of nature's superiority over urban development, and his awareness of the extent to which the animals, birds and insects out-number us frail humans. In the what-if world beyond the looking glass, amid the wishful fantasies (childhood, war etc.) of the period back to life, we are given a poetic glimpse of what life might be like if man could adapt and assume a different nature, if he could lie down with both lion and lamb. The automated world outside is characterized by dirt, noise and bloodshed; inside the magic domain, all forms of life are equaled sacred. Which is why, perhaps, brother and sister, after killing the eagle, are cast outside the grounds to join in the war to the death.

Astrologically, the black moon signifies the period of chaos which precedes some cataclysmic change and the emergence of a new order. Malle has imaginatively conjured both the chaos and the nature of the change to come. It is also a masterpiece of surrealist, exquisite, witty, poetic and concisely, skilfully, it imposes its logic on us.

Well, now that we have seen each other," said the Unicorn, "if you'll believe in me, I'll believe in you." (L. Carroll).

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LOVE AND DEATH

John C. Murray

No one in his right mind should try to summarize the nature of Woody Allen's humor, but two quotations from a collection of his writings may, in the words of E. E. Cummings, be the nearest to the two main comic threads in Love and Death. The foreword to the book notes that Allen's one regret in life is that he is not someone else; and an aphorism in an essay, "My Philosophy" states: "Not only is there no God, but try getting a plumber on weekends!" in other words, Love and Death brings us, yet again, Woody Allen as the eternal loser, dogged on one side by physical and social ineptness, and on the other by a mentality whose aspirations are anchored down by a tangle of urban neuroses.

The sprawling plot-line of Love and Death, almost inevitably forced upon War and Peace, allows Allen maximum elbow-room for these two modes of humour. There are, for example, the near slapstick segments where Allen as the cowardly Boris Grushenko, unwillingly drafted into the Czar's army, goes through his basic training and shows a limitless incapacity to do a right turn, hold a musket, or even keep his helmet on when moving at anything faster than a slow walk. Grushenko's fumbling efforts to clean his musket and present it for inspection culminate in every part of the weapon falling off, leaving only a decidedly undaunted barrel bravely held up for examination. And later in the film, in much the same Sad Sack vein, Grushenko's ceremonial sword manages to gore every woman in touching distance as he tosses off courtly bows during a Mozart concert intermission.

But funny though these sequences are, and thoroughly in keeping with the physically spastic persona Allen projects, he and the film are at their best when it is Grushenko's intellectual pretensions (and the pretensions of intellectualism in general) that are parodied. Love and Death abounds in moments of this sort. Given the slightest occasion, Grushenko and Sonja (Diane Keaton) soar off into the headiest reaches of philosophical paradox ("Is knowledge knowledgeable? If not, how do we know this?"), matching ontologies and epistemologies to the point of utter and mutual confusion. Having witnessed a leaven sex-hygienic playlet put on for his squad before they all go on leave (a playlet remarkable for its total absence of information), Grushenko is asked by a fellow trooper what he thought of it and Allen launches into a perfectly parodic of the literary magazine review: "... a dull little pastiche which strikes just the right balance between the head and the heart.

While generally more aural and visual in form, the lancing of intellectual gymnastics takes at a number of very clever, even inspired, cinematic parodies, with Eisenstein, Chaplin and Bergman all getting guest-star turns. A Seventh Seal Death figure makes recurrent appearances ("Hey look — there's Death!") and the film ends with Grushenko wafting off in the footsteps of the Grim Reaper. At one point an earnest meaning-of-life colloquy terminates with a reproduction of Persona's two-heads-compounded-as-one; but possibly the neatest allusion is to Potemkin: Allen intercuts a cycle of shots which harks back to the "rusted lion" moment in the Odessa Steps sequence, but in this case the interruption occurs at the end of a seduction scene, and the stone lion passes from a noble erect stance to a posture of dead-beat exhaustion.

The humor wanders further afield than on just these two broad paths, however, ranging from the Goonish to the ethnic-Jewish. Grushenko's father (faithful to literary tradition) is the proud owner of small plot of land, and small it is — about six inches square. Grushenko and Sonja, forced by hardship into domestic economies, feast on a meal made wholly of snow; and Grushenko's irritation that the snow-steak has been over-cooked disappears when Sonja tells him there's sleet for dessert. Grushenko remarks that a close friend of his was bayoneted to death by a Polish conscientious objector and that another was executed by being made to inhale deeply while standing next to an Armenian. The young Grushenko, having asked his mentor about these Jews' he's been hearing so much of, is surreptitiously shown some sketches. Marvelling that they have horns, the lad is told that it's only Russian Jews who look like that: you can pick the others by their stripes.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Love and Death is the way in which the film is kept under control. In contrast to say, Monty Python and the Holy Grail, where the gags are almost unrelatedly ad hoc, Love and Death possesses a manic internal logic, due no doubt to the strength and definition lent by Woody Allen's presence in the film as well as his writing and direction of the film. The humor emanates from him or from the perspectives that Allen as writer/director imposes on the organization. As a notable instance of this, Diane Keaton is given a much heavier comic burden than has been the case in earlier Allen films, yet her playing of Sonja (as written and directed) is wholly in tune with Allen's Grushenko, not only offering an excellent foil for him, but also sustaining the comic momentum when she is on screen apart from him. Indeed all the roles in Love and Death, whether central or cameo, like Harold Gould's, function as different sorts of projections of Woody Allen's self-inflating or self-deceiving loser. If it isn't too pompous to express it this way, every element, character and situation in Love and Death is consistent with Allen's sardonic comic vision.

There are only two reservations that might be held about the film. The first is that, inevitably, not all the gags work with equal success. Often one sees the point of a joke without actually responding to it, as perhaps when Grushenko, having decided to give his life to poetry, pens what are in fact some lines from The Waste Land and then judges them to be much too sentimental. As a type of joke it fits the way the film is working, but it fails to amuse as effectively as most of the other intellectual gags do. Yet one ought not to be surprised that in a film which scatters aural and visual jokes around like buckshot, not all of them strike the target. The other point — an arguable one — is that Woody Allen's humor has the potential to be touching, to have a shade of melancholy to it. Without lapsing into indulgence, we can draw us towards the Allen persona if only for a moment or two. But to achieve this, it needs to be a certain narrative rigor: one which builds on conflict or crisis situations in some degree familiar to us out there in the real world. Again, Sam had this characteristic, for, while never losing its sardonic edge, it gave Woody's Allen Felix a dimension and an interest missing from Love and Death, where Boris Grushenko is a more distanced creation. But maybe this is simply a roundabout way of wishing that Woody Allen's picture of how the world is, was less tough — even less cruel— than Love and Death suggests it has become. After all, Grushenko cheerfully faces a firing squad at the end of the film, trusting the angel who promised him that he would be reprimended before the order to fire was given. But the angel was a liar and Boris is gunned down neatly, efficiently, and unmourned.
BARRY LYNDON
Jack Clancy

After the mystification of 2001: A Space Odyssey, and the confusions of A Clockwork Orange, Stanley Kubrick seems to have staked everything in his latest epic on an excess of simplicity. Barry Lyndon, the whole three hours of it, has barely a moment of ambiguity, hardly a scene which fails to give up its meaning at the first glance, just as it has hardly a scene which is not, in purely pictorial terms, utterly ravishing; hardly a frame in which the attention to detail is not attended to with awesome thoroughness.

After three trips to the future (if one includes Dr Strangelove), Kubrick has returned to the re-creation of the past—a recreation which his directorial independence has enabled him to carry out with a total authenticity that was impossible on Spartacus. His eighteenth century world of landscapes, houses, manners, clothes, make-up and light, emerges with all the more force for being free of the leftist banalities which Trumbo's script inflicted on the Roman world of Spartacus.

But the most immediate of the many questions we are left with, after the experience of the film, concerns the choice of this subject in the first place, and the questions which follow—questions which are central to the issue of Kubrick's place in film history—are related to the same problem. For the ambitiousness—if not pretentiousness—of Kubrick's projects over the past decade constitute a claim to greatness, the validity of which may well be tested by a verdict on Barry Lyndon.

Thematically, the appeal of this first novel of Thackeray to Kubrick is fairly clear. The picaresque hero, Barry Lyndon, is a solitary voyager, a gentleman, and not so much a rogue as an amoral striver. In a world where feeling is subservient to the most immediate pressures of money and position, and their consequence, power, where wars are fought brutally, clumsily and stupidly for ends that are at best elusive or confused, at worst callous and venal, and where life-and-death duels settle points of illusory honor, there is scope enough for the bleak pessimism which has marked most of Kubrick's work so far. And the further attraction of the Thackeray novel must surely have been the possibilities of a purely cinematic exploitation of a novelistic character whose lack of self-knowledge, and capacity for self-deception, must emerge for the audience by slow revelation. If Barry Lyndon represents an advance, in anything more than mastery of technique for Kubrick, it is precisely in his attempt to close the gap between the novel's and the film's capacities to force audiences to reflect creatively on a hero with whom they are at first encouraged to identify.

But the choice of the Thackeray novel brings temptations which the film has not avoided. And the definitive summation up of Thackeray by Leavis—"nothing has been done by the close to justify the space taken"—is a pointer to a great deal of what is wrong with Kubrick's film. In particular, two things are wrong with it—what is being done and how it is done.

To take the "how" first, one can only say that in spite of the extraordinary visual qualities already referred to—there are miracles of lighting, composition, atmosphere, behavioral truth (consider for example the superb portraits of two of the Chevalier's opponents at the gambling table)—and of dramatic intensity (the climactic outburst by Lord Bullington and the subsequent brawl which disrupt the musical recital, or Barry's duel with Bullington, his stepson, or Barry's deliberate taunting of Lord Lyndon, literally, to death)—there are hugely slow passages where the film is swamped by indulgent pictorialism.

The first half-hour is slow at the first viewing; at the second, it is agonisingly so; the pictures are beautiful, but they are so barely moving pictures that one sighs for the crowded energetic montage of, say, the first five minutes of almost any Raoul Walsh film you care to name. The "space taken" is very large indeed, and all of the pictorial delights that suggest deliberate copies of Gainsborough, Hogarth or de la Tour are no substitute for cinematic movement. Kubrick admittedly gets remarkable performances from his cast, (though Ryan O'Neal is another example of his tendency to miscast), and there are memorable achievements by, among many others, Patrick Magee as the Chevalier, Leonard Rossiter as Captain Quinn and Murray Melvin as Chaplain Runt.

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**The Trespassers** is a film about relationships and personal politics. Richard (John Derum), a journalist, and Penny (Briony Behets) live together, but when they become involved with Dee (Judy Morris) their precarious relationship is threatened. The film follows a period of fluctuating warmth and distance, closeness and conflict, between the three — a period which demands of each a deep personal re-assessment. **The Trespassers** is photographed by award-winning Vincent Monton, the executive-producer is Richard Brennan and the writer-director John Duigan.

Middle and Top: Judy Morris and John Derum.
Left: Judy Morris and Briony Behets.

Cinema Papers, March-April — 365
THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING
Jim Murphy

After a not undistinguished spell as an actor, gracing such films as The Wind and the Lion and Chinatown with his crusty presence, John Huston has returned to his rightful place behind the camera, writing and directing The Man Who Would Be King with the dash and vigor that would have pleased Rudyard Kipling.

The idea for this film was nurtured by Huston for over 20 years (it was originally planned as a Bogart-Gable vehicle) and it is easy to see why he did not let it wither. After all, there are many affinities in Kipling's adventure story with his own classic, The Treasure of the Sierra Madre — two ex-British Army lads are driven by a dream of riches to pursue a lunatic plan to set themselves up as kings of the inaccessible, unfriendly Kafiristan.

But in this case, it is not greed per se that brings about the downfall of Peachy Carnehan and Daniel Dravot — the rather gauche heroes so winningly played by Michael Caine and Sean Connery — it is the good, old-fashioned ironic twist in the plot (somewhat unfashionable in these more sophisticated days).

Danny, gropping for some of the mysticism that surrounds him in the holy city of Sikanderghul, attempts to repay the Kafirs for their devotion (in believing him to be a god) by taking a wife and ensuring a succession of 'gods' like himself. But, in doing so, he provokes a situation that betrays his mere mortality to the simple-minded, but not very forgiving natives.

The film is an unashamed throwback to the high adventure yarn that seems all but forgotten by today's filmmakers. Huston's script (in collaboration with Gladys Hill) mixes comradeship, sentiment, romance, spectacle, warfare and comedy, and does it with the true Kiplingian jingoism that is bold and fanciful, and sketched by Huston in broad strokes. He is not afraid to include lines like: "Keep looking at me ... it helps to keep my soul from flying out", or to introduce the film with the much-abused lines like: "If a Greek can do it, we can do it". Daniel Dravot (Sean Connery) and Peachy Carnehan (Michael Caine) prepare their entry into Sikanderghul. The Man Who Would Be King

But no white man has ever been there — whether black, white or brown — until "contrack" (to swear off liquor and women succinctly: "If a Greek can do it, we can do it")

And hope eventually to rule the whole civilized world. They plan to become deportees from India by writing the Afghanistan plains and the glacial Hindu Kush to Kafiristan, where they will win over the Kafiri warriors' diversion of playing polo with the head of an enemy suggests a much more youthful demeanor.

It's a film for weighty, impressive moments, but Huston manages some telling images nonetheless; the reluctant bride, eyes rolled back with fear, being escorted to her god-husband by her wailing, black-hooded family; the treasure spilling from its packs and scattering down the mountain in the frantic escape bid; the shots of the looming stone idol that portends disaster.

One masterful example of Huston's eye for the exact way to shoot a scene is a relatively minor moment in the treasure house. He shoots over Peachy's shoulder to Danny's incredulous face as he holds up a huge ruby. "Look at the size of that," Danny gasps. There's a pause, then Peachy's hand glides into view holding a gem twice as big. It's simple and economical and susceptible to no improvement whatsoever.

Huston's fidelity to Kipling's style, his expansive treatment of a fantastic tale and his ability to tell a good yarn make The Man Who Would Be King a film that is different, and unfailingly entertaining. And the flashback device is vindicated (as it should always be) by the epilogue: Peachy depositing on Kipling's desk the decomposing head of Danny, still wearing its Sikander crown. With one deft stroke, Huston seamlessly lifts the film into the realm of the tall story.

It is tempting to see Antonioni's latest film, like Chung-Kuo and Zabriskie Point before it, as part of a European conversation about the possibility of achieving a "personal revolution", of rubbing out the misplaced commitments of the past and facing the future afresh.

In the late 1960s, and into the early 1970s, the films of Jean-Luc Godard, the most influential of all the directors of the nouvelle vague, presented us with figures constantly striving to "return to zero", to remake a world untarnished by traditional ideological systems, the film generally traces the sexual revolution of Miss Virgin 1984 (Carole Laure), akin to Pasolini than to Godard.

Antonioni gives his film a far more introspective, probing inwards into the personal, disinterested political reporting means to this release from the past, while both the structure and method of Godard's and Makavejev's work invites, even demands, that we extend our understanding of its meaning beyond the work itself into a concrete world of political and social realities. Antonioni's film is far more retrospective, probing inwards into the psyche of its central character, Miss Virgin 1984 (Carole Laure), demanding that its audience openly embrace the world's natural functions and the neuroses, commonly finding expression in self-dissatisfaction, are to be exorcised, while WR-Mysteries of the Organism was concerned with the means to this release from the past.

The opening passages of the film, up to the point where Locke abandons his identity and profession as a reporter, clearly indicate the man's limitations as a human being, and establish Antonioni's visual method, both of which remain largely the same throughout. Locke arrives in a North African village in search of a band of guerrillas and fumbles his way towards a finally unsuccessful rendezvous. The use of the locale with its desert wastes and the impenetrable black features of its inhabitants bears the stamp of the experience Antonioni had undergone in China, and offers an interesting retrospective view of Chung-Kuo: the impossibility of ever catching anything more than a glimpse of the essence of a place.

Antonioni simply shows it in order to allow it, in all its mystery, to speak for itself. His camera is constantly and insistently moving away from or past Locke to his surroundings, when we might have expected it to concentrate upon him, in accord with the conventional mode of introducing the character who is to be at the centre of the subsequent drama. It is the sense of the place and the people in it which one takes from this opening. Only when Locke, frustrated after his Land Rover refuses to budge from the sand bank in which it had been caught, delivers the ultimate cry of existential arrogance, "All right! I don't care" — as if the whole world has levelled its hostility at him — does he become the focal point of The Passenger.

As the film progresses, it becomes clear that it is Locke's inability to recognize his own limitations within a foreign place that underlines the moral vacuum of his existence. This is established both by his depersonalized, disinterested political reporting and by his never noticing where he is. The newsreels of his interviews and his visit to Gaudí's magnificent Palacio Güell (where he first meets the Girl), both convey his unwillingness and his inability — the two are inextricably linked — to see. And so, his adoption of a new identity, while it might initially have appeared to be the first step in a quest towards a new life, becomes the beginning of the final chapter in a retreat from reality. That chapter comes to an end when he gives in passively to the death that has haunted him, to 'fate' as he seems to see it, as one of the people who, the Girl observes, "disapear every day".

Locke, lying on his bed in his room at the Hotel de la Gloria, rolls over to await his expiration, turning his back on the window and on the world outside, as Antonioni's camera begins the long rake which has aroused so much admiration and hostility. Unlike the magnificent explosion which comes near the end of Zabriskie Point, and which seems a facile resolution of the problems the film has confronted, the circular movement of Anto­nioni's camera here consummates the pans and tilts around which the film is constructed. Like them, this crag-pan moves away from Locke, arbitrarily taking in the events outside the hotel and finally assuming a position outside the window from where it had begun, looking in as his wife declares that she does not recognize the body on the bed.

The Passenger constantly functions in a limbo — it is full of unanswered questions about characters and their motivations, and Locke's destiny is determined from the start. Because he is as he is, there is no way he can escape the course of events laid out before him. He is morally dead from the beginning — Jack Nicholson's restrained performance is an extraordinary submerging of the familiar screen persona — and his surrender to physical death, nigh on suicide, is a logical outcome (a marked contrast with the passionate death by firing squad of the revolutionary in the newsreel footage). He dies in virtually the same position as that in which he had earlier found Robertson.
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THE WIND AND THE LION

Continued from P 367

Antonioni's 'coda', as the final credits roll up, observes dawn activities around the Hotel de la Gloria as 'life goes on', but it allows us little refuge from the bleak vision of existence which has preceded it. In a sense, Antonioni's reflection upon man is little different from that of the reporter in his drama, but unlike Locke, through his art he is able to come to terms with it.

THE WIND AND THE LION

Marcus Cole

John Milius likes a man with grit. He is interested in archetype rather than character, action rather than analysis. He has an armchair affection for the manly virtues of honor, integrity and chivalry, courage, and just plain old reckless derring-do.

An eye for a eye, respect for a worthy foe, death before dishonor, love of one's native soil, "Is not a man better than a town?" — all of that. And Milius loves it. The feudal combat, the weaponry, the elements, the blood and sweat — and in The Wind and the Lion he serves it up with immense relish.

It is splendid entertainment: on one level, a clever comic-strip fable about the beginning of modern American imperialism and the decline of the anarchistic frontier spirit, on another, a robust action spectacle reminiscent of the films of Michael Curtiz and Raoul Walsh.

It is 1904, Tangier, Morocco. Mrs Edith Pedacaris (Candice Bergen) lunches in the midday sun with a British attaché, her two children wandering listlessly about the well-scrubbed exotica of an embassy garden. Abruptly the scene changes into one of terrifying mayhem as a band of Berber brigands attack the peaceful luncheon, and Mrs Pedacaris and her children are abducted by Raisuli the Magnificent (Sean Connery), Lord of Er Rif and the last of the Barbary pirates, no less!

It is a magnificent opening sequence, stunningly executed, and with the most beautiful and powerful images of horse and rider I have ever seen on screen.

The Raisuli's plan is to ransom Mrs Pedacaris, finance an arsenal, unite the foreign takeover, and Raisuli, unversed in military and ambassadorial rednecks decide to do a San Juan Hill assault on the Royal Palace of the Basha ("Teddy would like that") and they successfully overthrow the Moroccan government. Naturally, Mrs Pedacaris is used as the reason for the foreign takeover, and Raisuli, unversed in the ways of the new imperialism, sees his ransom plan come to nothing. Only his honor remains.

The film has one minor flaw: inspired by the Warner spear and sabre epics of the thirties, Milius' crafty historical fantasy is a Hollywood anachronism acutely aware of the seventies. And as the current trend is for films about survivors rather than heroes, Milius senses a problem in giving credibility to an heroic action film without sacrificing the unfashionable virtues in which he revels. He, therefore, endeavors to defuse our disbeliefing laughter at his bold and true men by encouraging us to laugh at his cleverness with a use of 'pop' one-liners and throwaways whenever a situation looks like becoming too heroic, romantic or emotional and, therefore, unacceptable.

Consequently when Raisuli is flustered by the hot temper of Mrs Pedacaris, he warily retorts: "It's been a bad year"; or when an imperturbable Brit is about to be cut to pieces by the attacking Berbers and his revolver runs out of bullets he mutters: "Oh, damnnn!" Comic, maybe, but appropriate? Similarly, when Raisuli single-handedly rescues Mrs Pedacaris from a gang of pirates, in a superb sword battle on horseback, he caps his feat with the throw-away: "Mrs Pedacaris, you are a lot of trouble." By lightly spoofing the scene at scene's end, Milius reassures the audience with a wink that he/her really know it's all merely Boys' Own Annual. Sometimes it works, most times it is a laugh at the expense of the film's central integrity, that of straight, exhilarating action for its own sake.

Ultimately it contrives to keep us just outside the picture when all but the most hardened of us want to get inside and believe in the great physical beauty, swashbuckling sweep and color of it all. Perhaps filmmakers believe it isn't possible any more to make a film with heroic characters and situations and do it straight. Maybe they're afraid we'll feel our intelligence is being insulted and walk out? So, who can blame Milius — unless he honestly believes spoofing epic themes is the best use to which he can put his undoubted talent? Happily, the film's major performances could not be bettered. Sean Connery, in spite of his impeccable Scottish burr, is a potent matinee presence as Raisuli. He galloping about spouting florid Milius-Muslim aphorisms — "The blood of the Prophet flows in me," et al — and curving up evil wrongdoers. It is his best role and performance since he broke with Bond.

Candice Bergen is not as well served by the role of Pedacaris, but her intelligence and beauty help her largely to transcend the superficial underwriting. Milius seems a little unsure about what to do with his heroine in a world of swords and horses. It is 1904, but in 1974 a woman doesn't necessarily go weak at the knees when a sheik whisks her off into the desert. So Milius bestows a token feminism on Mrs Pedacaris: she can handle a shotgun as well as any man, and talk, the leg off any Arab. Romance is out, sexual politics are in. Another Milius concession to the age.

The film's best performance, and best written part, lies with Brian Keith and his superb impersonation of Roosevelt. His "T.R." is a grand creation: bucolic stoic, battling "trust buster", defender of the great unwashed, full of flesh and fire. Everything "Teddy" was meant to have been, and of course wasn't.

In the film's final images, the days of Milius' Raisuli and Roosevelt are shown as numbered. Each man is out of step — Roosevelt must yield to the future, Raisuli cannot maintain his past. Both men are redundant "lions". Milius lament's their passing. We lament their passing too, even if we suspect such men never really existed. But then Milius' only interest in history is that it furnishes him with malleable material for myths: a time-honored film tradition.

THE WIND AND THE LION


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Looking Back at Picnic at Hanging Rock

At the end of The Pied Piper of Hamelin, the little crippled boy who couldn't go under the hill is left alone in the mundane world of adults, dazed and set apart by his vision of the other world. I also remember a science-fiction film from the fifties where some people go to a beard under the promise of ascension. Time passes, nothing happens and finally one or two get up and leave. As soon as they do, there is a strange noise, and when they re-enter the barn, everybody has vanished. They also are set apart, possessed by their loss.

Recently, 20 or so followers of a couple promising transcendence via flying-saucer vanished. No doubt they will turn up on communes, or south of the border, or in mortuaries.

In Picnic at Hanging Rock, Michael, who was left outside when the girls vanished, is also dazed by his vision of the other world and returns to the rock to seek admission, or to bring the girls back. The human face shapes its expressions of extreme pleasure and extreme pain almost identically. (This convention is connected with the Elizabethan pun on ‘death’ and allows Chabrol to picture the death of Jacqueline in Les Bonnes Femmes as a kind of orgasm.)

Michael's face has this look of mortal ecstasy at the climax of his return to the rock. He is framed by a cleft in the rock, and although the slope he is on doesn't appear very steep, he is prostrate before the cleft, moving his hips and hands as if about to get off through the keyhole to heaven. Michael doesn't quite make it.

The conditions of entry are very tight, as we shall see. However, when he is found, he has a scrap of skirt in his hand — evidence of the girls' disappearance. Time passes, nothing happens and finally one or two get up and leave. As soon as they do, there is a strange noise, and when they re-enter the barn, everybody has vanished. They also are set apart, possessed by their loss.

As a work of art it is honorary Pre-Raphaelite, in spite of the gum-trees. Having said this, one must acknowledge that the film could be made, and that critics could accept it, as relevant to contemporary reality, and show that our culture is still bound by the deforming ties of the Victorian era.

Picnic at Hanging Rock is not a whodunit, and the way the film labor this point is interesting. Only the lower-class and comic characters make up causes for the girls' disappearance. The upper-class characters, and the director, know intuitively that causation is too crudely rational and proletarian for the refined realms of the spirit and art. (What a bizarre irony that Philip Adams finds himself back on the right side by his acceptance of time-warp as cause. Even if he has to invent his own dialogue — "What's that strange sound down there?" — to prove it.) Accepting in-trinsic class differences is one of the conditions for accepting the film. Being upper-class is one of the conditions for entry to the other world.

The girls are swallowed up, ascended not because of anything they do, nor anything done to them, but because of what they are. They are well on the way even while at school; and Sarah, Miranda's lover, gains access without ever leaving the school.

Victorian girls were meant to be delicate—a word which binds the ideas of social and spiritual refinement to the idea of sickness. Corsets and other bindings for the body, which abound in the film, are in fact the physical expression of this deformity in the culture. Binding the female body, preventing its free movement, hopelessly deforming it, was the way the culture enacted the myth of the young girl as spiritual redeemer of society.

The ideal beauty is corpse-like. Ophelia has great social vogue, and Peter Weir'sleading ladies are possessed of the same gale, fever beauty as Pre-Raphaelite maidens. Fat, homely girls like Edith can't get in because their bodies aren't deformed enough to refine their souls. So, Edith can only complain as the girls ascend the rock, while the others start swooning and emitting metaphysics.

The wasting of the body and the freeing of the spirit into the realms of vision and transcendence are equated in a sequence that would be ludicrous if it wasn't so immoral and so heavily endorsed by the film. The ladies have their corsets, the director his punishing, but rewarding, art. And, of course, the image of the skinny corpse is still peopling the store-windows and footpaths of Bourke St.

Lesbianism in the film is the same way as the disappearance is. Not to be thought about as a human reality, but as an emblem drawn from Victorian art, from Coleridge's Christabel or Rossetti's The Bower Meadow, where girls embrace and dance with their eyes fixed dreamily on the other world. The lower-classes, on the other hand, are pictures of guilt-free, rollicking eighteenth century heterosexuality. This is fun, the film suggests, but likely to result in rustic idiocy and good-natured brain-damage.

The idea that children are part of nature, outside civilized society, gives rise to the apparently contradictory feelings that they are absolutely innocent, or absolutely evil. Being both spiritual and bestial means that children define and unite the opposing poles of being human, hence, their use by adults as scapegoats for warding off the extremes and creating the center.

This seems to be the main force behind the myth we are examining. It seems to explain this ghastly yearning of the desire for discipline and mortification of the body to the notion of spiritual refinement. It reconciles the twin views that children are both blithe, natural spirits and strange creatures requiring constant supervision and discipline. The tension of this paradox generates the public-school ethos, the sports and games ethos and the boy-scouts and girl-guides — where communing with nature involves paramilitary conformity and discipline.

There is no contradiction between the harsh, civilised discipline of Mrs Appleyard's boarding school and the soaring 'natural' beauty of Hanging Rock. The sublime transcendence into nature offered by the rock is equated with the suffering and death of Sarah, 'caused' by Mrs Appleyard's harsh strictures. The unearthy beauty of Miranda's hourglass figure, which leads Michael on his ecstatic quest, is the beauty of pain — the corset. Tight-lacing causes swooning, so discipline and suffering intertwine with the dreamy heat-shimmer of unnatural forces to extrude the gigantic baneliness of the girls' growing insight.

"Everything begins and ends at exactly the right time and place", and so on. Far from being Australian, the heat-shimmer is simply the pictorial incarnation of that notorious Victorian malady, 'the vapors'. Landscape doesn't embody time and place, but myth.

The worship of beauty and nature in this scheme of things has its roots in the love of suffering and death. This is the ghastly truth squeezed in the pretty guts of the film. The thrill we get from the mystery is the thrill of queering all we value with all that's evil. Sexuality with necrophilia. Love with death.

Ian Hunter

The above letter is published as a provocative and dissenting review of Picnic at Hanging Rock. Being a letter, however, it is not subject to the normal Editorial constraints of accuracy and style.
FILM EDITORS' GUILD OF AUSTRALIA

The object of the Guild is to ensure that the true value of film and sound editing is recognized. To this end, we lobby for support for those engaged in it, but by the whole of the film industry — as an important part of the creative and artistic aspect of film production.

The membership of the Guild has been limited to senior and junior editors currently engaged in film editing, with an associated membership covering a large cross-section of people working in other sections of the film industry. Basically, it is an Editors' Guild, and control will always rest in the hands of those senior in the industry.

The Guild meets once a month and meetings are designed to stimulate interest and inform. Visitors address the Guild on many aspects of film production; producers/directors present their new films and answer questions. Guild members visit the various laboratories, editing is recognized — not only by the lustiest offspring, but members of those senior in the industry.

The Guild was formed in 1971 and is based in Sydney. The Guild has always been possible, in part, by assistance from the Film and Television School.

In the past, the workshop has been conducted over three weekends, with each student handling his own rushes from the set commercial, drama or comedy segment they have seen grow up from an original concept.

During these weekends, a senior editor is on hand to detail work, space, and possible settings this year — at no cost to themselves. The Film Workshop has always been made possible, in part, by assistance from the Film and Television School.

The Sydney Filmmakers’ cinema is going strong, and this year we are preparing a “growth plan”, which will be taken in Ireland. The key to Australia is to have a national film and television archives comparable with those existing in every other major country in the world. Copies of this plan, together with the Association’s quarterly newsletter, may be obtained from the Secretary, Association for a National Film and Television Archive, P.O. Box 137, Gordon, NSW 2072.

THE AUSTRALIAN WRITERS’ GUILD

Things have never been so bad for the Australian screenwriter. With the market for first-release Australian production houses, Film Australia, The Film and TV School, as well as the television channels. So the experience of members is widened beyond the limitations of their at-work set-up.

Juniors have, and we hope, that part in another of the Guild’s Fega Film workshops this year — at no cost to themselves. The Film Workshop has always been made possible, in part, by assistance from the Film and Television School.

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Born in Victoria, the NSW branch is the lastest offspring, but members of our craft are invited to join us as “country” members, if the Guild is not functioning in their area. We are always putting out a newsletter and, perhaps, can help you organize or re-italize your own local Film Editors’ Guild.

If you are a film editor, we are interested in hearing about you and your activities, so drop us a line to:

The Secretary, NSW branch.
Film Editors’ Guild of Australia.
P.O. Box 195 — Roseville NSW 2069

ASSOCIATION FOR A NATIONAL FILM AND TELEVISION ARCHIVE

By the early 1950s, of the 17 features produced by Australian director Beau­mont Smith, nearly all were destroyed. For many years the films had been stored in a garage behind Smith’s house, and after his death in 1950, an insurance company advised that the seemingly worthless collection be destroyed. It had represented a fire hazard. Then, with the death of the even more prolific Ray­mond Longford eight years later, it was found that only four of his original 34 feature films had survived, but a fragment remained to re­present some of the most important Australian film work before the coming of sound.

The loss of the Beaumont Smith footage was reported and lamented, but such public notice is in itself a rarity. Very few of the films of another pioneer, John F. Gavin, had vanished by the late 1940s, along with all but two of those by the talented Franklin Barrett. In fact it can be gauged that of all the features made here in the two most prolific decades of production (1906-26), less than 0.5 per cent were surviving by the 1950s.

Large-scale loss was caused by no means ended by the arrival of safety base film in the early 1950s. Right now, in the early 1970s, many of the negatives of the Sydney-based UBU filmmakers of the 1960s are reportedly missing. For these impressions, the last known positives were at Bellmeri and Boltenri. No trace are shed today for the loss of The Story of the Kelly Gang, produced 70 years ago, but just imagine today’s outcry if it were thought that the negatives of The Birthday Party, a 1970s feature, had vanished. None have trace of Picnic At Hanging Rock. Picnic At Hanging Rock, no doubt preserved, and correspondingly so, but what of the commercially lesser films whose seasons might not outlast two to three weeks? Like Australian filmmakers of the period, independent film­makers such as screenwriter John B. Yribar, and their trách, and still leaving their sound mixes on top of a cabinet or under a bed. We have no trace of Picnic At Hanging Rock.

The Association for a National Film and Television Archive of Australia, which has been large-scale loss. The solution to this problem would seem to be the preservation of negatives, prints and video tapes by a national film and television archives. But, in order to campaign for a comprehensive and conveniently located archive, the Associa­tion must know the needs of the producer who wants his output to sur­vive for at least as long as he does, and hopefully well beyond.

If you would like to voice any doubts you might have over the future survival of your work, write to the secretary of the Association atting who you are, what you have produced and how it’s being stored at the moment. If you have an agreement with the National Library (or other body) and would like to ex­perience to an institution or department is available, we would be interested to hear what you have to say.

The Association has regular contact with producers, writers and directors as well as with the Australian Film Commission, and both organizations are receptive to comment on the current state of Australian film archival activity.

For further information, write to The National Film and Television Archive, P.O. Box 195 — Roseville NSW 2069.
between. February's program is "Melanie and Me," by Chris Hill, which takes the opportunism and viciousness beneath Carlton's trendy gentleness, supported by Elrey Ryan's "The Times," Michael Carman's "What a Drag" and John Ruane's "Near Duck.

The 10 p.m. program is "Dreamlife," Mireille Dangereau's feature, fresh from rave notices at the Sydney International Women's Film Festival. First entry will be "Betty Davey's Last Try," which draws definite responses with Farrow's "Night Serr's Arts and Poets," and Richard Llewellyn's finely-tuned Group Experiment in Painting. The Australian Retrospective Season has been postponed pending a grant.

In March, Frank Shield's documentaries will be shown for two weeks, followed by Jim Clayton showing different experimental films every night for six nights, then repeating them the following two weeks.

April, David Hay's "The Spirit of '76" should bring the disenchanted and disillusioned flocking for a damning indictment of capitalism — this time featuring the celluloid — as well as watching an animation. "Mireille Dansereau's feature, fresh from rave notices at the Sydney International Women's Film Festival."

The Australian Cinematographers' Society is being started to involve women in the industry. It's supported by We're Alive, a hard-hitting film on women in prison.

AUSTRALIAN CINEMATOGRAPHERS' SOCIETY

The Australian Cinematographers' Society in Melbourne has been deeply concerned and grieved by the loss of the television crew in Timor — one of whom was our esteemed secretary, Garry Cunningham. The members of the society wish to express their gratitude for the unending effort and comradeship Garry always displayed, both as a cameraman and our secretary.

In their profession as cameramen or journalists, there are few rewards. But the reward comes from unearthing the truth behind the news.

However, I would like to honor and remember those men who have died while gathering the news, the Australian Cinematographers' Society has decided that the Melbourne branch will originate an annual "Memorial Award". This Australia-wide award will be presented to, and retained by, the news cameraman whose achievements of that year are adjudged worthy of the award.

A WOMEN'S FILM GROUP . . .

is being started to involve women interested in all aspects of film: discussion, filmmaking, writing, production, exhibition, acting etc.

If you are interested contact
Cinemaconop
191 McClean St.
Fitzroy.

Or
Helen Hooper
278 Cardigan St.
Carlton.

A meeting will be held on March 16 at 8 pm at 191 McClean St, Fitzroy.

SERGEI Gerasimov
Continued from P.331

In the twenties there was much antagonism towards Stanislavsky among film directors. Are there any remnants of this now?

There was a reaction away from Stanislavsky's insistence on psychological discussion and analysis of characterization. The nature of film did not need it, or encourage it. But the most basic original theory of Stanislavsky was the idea that an actor's consciousness was a product of loneliness, that he kept an imaginary fourth wall up against the audience, who in turn peaked in upon his secret life. This and the illusion of film. There are there, is the tormented director and the interested lens of the camera. Suddenly, the director will leap up and clap, after a lapse. That happens very rarely, and he will usually say: "Very good, once more please". Sometimes the actor will react: "I'm not a horse!"

And of course Stanislavsky underwent changes too. At first it was utter authenticity, towards the end it was bright theatrical spectacle. At first it was all analysis over the table, later it was small pieces, etudes, trying it out, up there on the stage.

Fundamentally, he was correct in insisting that you cannot be permitted to divorce yourself from the natural sense of things. There is no current in Soviet thought that is likely to overturn Stanislavsky, but his theories are not "followed", but "interpreted", by the best directors.

What is the proportion of women to men engaged at all levels of filmmaking in the Soviet Union?

There are very few women directors; in fact there are five women who have been important in the field. The list included Yulia Solntseva and two of Shukh, Gerasimov's memory began to break down and he couldn't remember the fifth name he had in mind. There are, however, many exceptional women writers and art designers. The majority tend to become critics — and that's where they even up the score.

To what extent is this scarcity of women directors a function of your selection process as head of the school?

I have to admit that yes it is partly the result of the selection process. I think it takes muscles, it takes cruelty, to be director. Four or five may apply each time, but they usually decide it is too physically demanding.

In the Soviet Union, does the public go to a film to see the work of a director, or to see a particular actor?

Maybe five in a hundred people enjoy a film on the basis of having identified it as the work of a director. But the public want to buy pictures of the actors, not directors. And then again, people don't try to publish the pictures of directors — like me. ★

FILMOGRAPHY

Sergei Gerasimov (1906-)

1930 Twenty-Two Misfortunes

(co-directed with S. Bartenev)

1931 The Forest

1931 The Day of the Don.

1932 The World of Solomon.

1934 Do I Love You?

1936 The Bold Seven.

1937 Komolshkaya.

1939 The Teacher.

1941 Maskarad; Film Notes on Battle

1942 The Invincibles (co-director Mikhail Kalatozov)

1944 The Cinema of the 25th Anni-

1945 The Great Earth

1948 The Young Guard.

1950 Liberated China.

1951 Country Doctor.

1954 Nadezhda.

1957-8 Quiet Flows the Don.

1959 The Spunik Speaks.

1962 Men and Beasts.

1967 The Jerusalem.

1970 By The Lake.

*From 1967 onwards, not complete.

FOOTNOTES

1 Also spelled Gerasiminov.

2 Also known as the Film Institute.

3 (However, at another point in the discussion, Gerasimov stated that 80% of the directors of scientific and documentary films in the Soviet Union are women; apparently directing this kind of film is different, less muscular, more gentle, and therefore ideally suited to women.)

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The Hindenburg is Robert Wise's re-creation of the last air voyage of the famous luxury German dirigible. The film stars Anne Bancroft as the Countess (right) and George C. Scott as Colonel Ritter (below). It was shot in Panavision and Technicolor by Robert Surtees, ASC.
BERNARD HERRMANN

Ivan Hutchinson

The sudden death of Bernard Herrmann on December 24, 1975, at the age of 64, came at a time when he seemed to be entering a most active and fascinating period of an already fruitful career. A series of recordings of his work, plus others displaying his skill as a conductor, have recently appeared on the London label. And, of late, he had been more active than ever in scoring films, and had only just completed the recording for Martin Scorsese’s Taxi Driver, on December 23.

His work as a composer of film music has been admired for many years, but more by other musicians, perhaps, than by the public. While the names of Victor Young, Alfred Newman, Max Steiner and others gradually filtered through to the public consciousness (generally when one of their film themes was yanked out of context and re-orchestrated in the vogue of the day), Herrmann remained a sort of second-string, talented, but somewhat behind the great Hollywood film composers.

Since only a comparatively small percentage of an audience is ever aware of a film’s music, it would be true to say that for the greater part of his career—a career which began in 1941 with Welles’ Citizen Kane—he has remained unknown to the public, with very little of his film music available on record.

Today, all this has changed, and there is probably no composer of those great film music years better represented on disc than Herrmann.

Unlike many of the great names of film music, Herrmann was American-born: in New York, June 29, 1911. Neither his Russian-born father nor his mother was musical. His only brother, Louis, is an optometrist.

Herrmann’s interest in music began even before high school. He took courses on composition at New York University while in his early teens, and he continued as a fellowship student at the Juilliard School of Music. By the time he was 18 he was earning a living as a professional composer-conductor. He did not appear to have been proficient at any particular instrument, although his knowledge of their capabilities was prodigious.

He composed music for a ballet in a Broadway musical called Americana, and also formed, while still at Juilliard, a chamber group called the New Chamber Orchestra, which performed in major U.S. cities under his baton.

At 20 he joined the Columbia Broadcasting System to write and conduct background music for their wide-ranging radio programs, and a year later he became a staff conductor for C.B.S.

He composed a number of works over the next few years (another ballet, a symphonic poem, a cantata, a concerto, a symphony for strings), but his climb to world fame began in 1936 when he was assigned to supply music for a radio program called The Mercury Playhouse Theater, a program designed by Orson Welles. Thus began the collaboration—short-lived and stormy, but very productive—of two young, but temperamental geniuses.

From the beginning of his screen career, Herrmann seems to have been associated with superior films: certainly more than any other composer of his rank working in Hollywood. There are at least two reasons for this: after Citizen Kane, and that neglected piece of American fantasy All That Money Can Buy (or, in the U.S. The Devil and Daniel Webster), he was again associated with Welles on The Magnificent Ambersons. However when R.K.O. re-edited and cut the film, he returned to New York. Secondly, he decided not to return to the West Coast unless the film subject was of interest to him personally. He also accepted only one film offer a year and never became part of any of the major Hollywood studio music departments (although, between his next assignment, Jane Eyre in 1944, and Garden of Evil in 1954, all of his films, with one minor exception, were for Fox Studios).

In this period he also wrote the following major scores: Hangover Square (1945), in which he supplied a piano work for Laird Cregar (as the lame composer) to play; The Ghost and Mrs. Muir (1947), a romantic and delicate score among his liveliest works for the medium; and The Snows of Kilimanjaro (1951).

In 1955, Herrmann wrote his first film score for a Hitchcock film, the uncharacteristic The Trouble with Harry, which, though not successful at the box-office, was happily the beginning of an association which gave birth to some of the most fascinating and imaginative soundtracks in modern cinema.

From about this period, whether or not the result of a growing interest by the public in the older films and the concomitant recognition of this by the record companies, Herrmann’s output increased threefold and continued until his death. He wrote music for seven Hitchcock films, but it is his work on three—Vertigo (1958), North by Northwest (1959) and Psycho (1960)—which shows the collaboration at its most fruitful.

If his work with Hitchcock had tended to obscure his other writings over this period, the record companies (and Herrmann himself) have, to a large extent, rectified this in the last two or three years.

Commencing in 1958, Herrmann involved himself with fantasy filmmaking of a particularly imaginative kind. In films such as Seventh Voyage of Sinbad, The Three Worlds of Gulliver, and particularly Journey to the Centre of the Earth and Jason and the Argonauts, the composer created elaborate and innovative scores of a complexity and ingenuity unmatched in modern cinema.

These films needed a continuous flow of music, almost from beginning to end. And, dealing as they do with some of Ray Harryhausen’s grotesque creations (sea-gods, giant men of bronze, prehistoric monsters, sword-wielding skeletons, etc), they also needed a musician of extraordinary imagination and skill to match the images with equally vivid sound. Those who have tapes or records of these films will know how superbly Herrmann conquered all the difficulties these films presented.

However, Herrmann had a special affinity for films of horror and fear, and films whose principal characters were psychologically abnormal. If his score for Psycho is his masterpiece in this vein, there are others not far behind. Cape Fear (1961), Marnie (1964), a film in which the score is arguably better than the script, Endless Night (1971), a far more ingenious Christie than Orient Express, and Sisters (1972), De Palma’s Black Hitchcock take-off, are just four in which Herrmann’s intense and unnerving music may be heard. It is music which combines dark colors, subtle melodic shapes, and transparent scoring in a manner rare in films of this type.

Such well-known musical devices as pedal point, tremolando and rhythmic agitato patterns, repeated by differing instrumental groups, are always used in these films with a skill unmatched by others who have written for thrillers, and who seem to equate continuous volume and constant discord with excitement and tension. Herrmann’s harmonies are often classically simple, and on paper some of his most effectively chilling writing looks unbearably uncluttered.

For readers of this column who may not know just which music of Herrmann’s is recorded, here is a partial list, including one or two recordings that are probably not easy to obtain:

Herrmann on Records

There are at least four different versions of the music from Citizen Kane on disc, two conducted by Herrmann, one by Charles Gerhardt on the “Classic Film Scores” series and one conducted by Le Roy Holmes. The earliest of these is on Pye (Virtuoso Series) TPLS13010 and consists of a suite called “Welles Raises Kane” (written by Herrmann in 1942, as a tribute to Welles) in which some themes from the film have undergone a considerable re-arrangement, quite often far removed from their original use in the film. It is coupled with a suite from The Devil and Daniel Webster (his only Oscar-winning score, which he composed in 1943). Both receive spirited performances from the London Philharmonic, under Herrmann himself.

An even more splendid-sounding performance of the music is available on London Records (though containing not quite as much of it as the others). The disc is called “Music from the Great Film Classics” (SPA4144) and also contains his atmospheric score from Jane Eyre (the Welles-Fontaine version) and Waltz from The Snows of Kilimanjaro, (the 1951 Fox version of the Hemingway story).

The haunting waltz from this last score is recorded on a Columbia record (SBPG62246) called “Music from Hollywood”; a live recording from the Hollywood Bowl in 1960, in which the Hollywood composers conduct excerpts from their works. A further suite of themes from this film was recorded on RCA LPM1007, but I doubt if this record is still available.

Continued on P.378

Cinema Papers, March-April — 375
The Last Newsreel
Continued from P.305

During this period both reels reached larger audiences than they ever had before, or would again. And in addition to normal theatre screenings in Australia and New Zealand, the two companies compiled a joint reel (News from Home) comprising the best weekly items for screening to the Australian troops overseas. These reels, and footage from them, also found screen space in other Allied countries.

After the war, it was back to business as usual, and the reels emphasized the problems of rebuilding and rehabilitation, and the hopefulness of post-war economic expansion.

There were some new ideas, such as the recording of color (the bi-back Solarchrome system) for some sponsored items in the Cinesound Review.

And with the closure of feature production at Cinesound, there was also, perhaps, a growing awareness of the significance of the two weekly newsreels as steady employers, and a continuing reminder to theatre audiences that the local industry, if visibly contracting, was none the less still active.

Prime Minister, Joseph Lyons, talks with Charles Kingsford-Smith in front of the Herald camera.

Around 1948, a newcomer even briefly joined the field, the Perth based Westarlan News, which was aimed at local audiences who were not seeing much of themselves in the Sydney produced reels. Though of good quality, the reel lacked the economic base and production facilities necessary for survival (sound recording and printing had to be done each week in Melbourne) and it quietly foundered before its first birthday.

The fifties brought television and the beginning of the decline of newsreels. The new medium decimated theatre audiences, and the grand movie palaces began to close in increasing numbers throughout the country. Television showed the newsreel's previously unique ability to present news visually and it had an immediacy which a newsreel could never match. Moreover, it was free, and quickly captured the mass audience for which the newsreels had catered for decades.

In December 1956, Ken Hall resigned from Cinesound to become a chief executive at TCN Channel 9 and, throughout his career, had always retained personal supervision of the Review, it now lost his guiding hand and, in subsequent years, much of its flavor. Not long after, Jack Davey’s death removed an essential part of the character of Movietone News. Both reels endeavored, with some success, to recast themselves as cinemas and in spite of the increasingly unfavorable economics of their situation, there were innovations: in April 1961 Movietone News released an all-color, CinemaScope edition (on the Sydney Royal Easter Show), which it claimed as a world “first”; and in February 1968 Cinesound released its first all-color edition of the Review.

The reels began gradually to diminish in length — from the full 10 or 11 minutes to six. To bolster the budget, there was an increasing reliance on items, and sometimes entire reels, clearly paid for by a sponsor, and — not surprisingly, perhaps, in view of the age of both reels — a growing preoccupation with recalling the past through the use of old footage. This resulted in some of the best (and worst) reels of the sixties and seventies: for instance, Bill Cart­ty’s outstanding Symphony in Steel for the Review.

In October 1970, with a brief announcement in the press but little else, the rival companies merged. National News and Cinesound Review abruptly ceased and were replaced the following week by the new Australian Movie Magazine working out of Movietone’s premises in Camperdown. Under Frank Killian and later, Harold Dews, the production of the reel was supervised by veteran newsreel man Sid Wood, who had first joined the infant Movietone unit in 1921.

In order to survive, the Movie Magazine needed to reverse the trend which brought it into being, winning an audience from a new generation of filmgoers raised on a tradition of television news reporting. Given its necessary restrictions, that may have been an impossible task: perhaps, simply, the change in cinema-going habits has now made a weekly reel of any kind inappropriate.

And so the age of the newsreel passes. The night after the closure of the reel, old hands from Cinesound and Movietone gathered at the Campersdown theatrette. Ostensibly it was a farewell to Sid Wood on his retirement, but it was also a wake for the newsreel — and, for all the camaraderie, a sad occasion. Sid Wood’s comment, on being presented with his retirement gift, is worth recording: “A newsreel cameraman has to learn to expect the unexpected — that’s his business. When it happens, he just adapts to it and keeps going.”

Acknowledgements: Stills from the Film Archives, National Library of Australia, and published by permission of copyright owners: Cinesound Movietone Productions, and The Century-Fox Film Corporation, Mr Roy Driver.

This article has made use of material collated by Andrew Pike for his article “Cinesound Review — End of an era”, Lumiere No. 8, 1971.

And special thanks to the many individuals who provided information.

SOUNDTRACKS/BERNARD HERRMANN
Continued from P.375

To get back to Citizen Kane, Gerhardt presents a selection from the film on ARL1-707. This includes a splendidly sung version (by Kiri Te Kanawa) of the aria from Salammbo, the only version of it on disc.

The Battle of Neretva (1969), a Yugoslavian war epic, for which the composer wrote a score of appropriately epic proportions, and Sisters (1972), where he was, appropriately, in his most Hitchcockian and macabre vein. Everything from Gerhardt’s music collection (P.O. Box 261, Calabasas California 91302) will shortly illustrate what is certainly my favorite Herrmann score: the delicately melancholy and romantic music for The Ghost and Mrs. Muir (1947).

A complete Psycho has been recorded by him, and there are one or two more film scores completed and recorded which may eventually be released. His Pye-recorded opera Wuthering Heights, a symphony for clarinet quintet and the cantata Mob Dick have been recorded, and there are possibly other works under way.

The new Entracte Recording Society (P.O. Box 2119, Chicago Illinois 60690) has issued two recent scores by Herrmann — The Battle of Neretva (1970), a Yugoslavian war epic, for which the composer wrote a score of appropriately epic proportions, and Sisters (1972), where he was, appropriately, in his most Hitchcockian and macabre vein. Everything from Gerhardt’s music collection (P.O. Box 261, Calabasas California 91302) will shortly illustrate what is certainly my favorite Herrmann score: the delicately melancholy and romantic music for The Ghost and Mrs. Muir (1947).

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We’re ready ...
New Zealand Film Industry
Continued from P.328.

The need for such an organization is borne out by the activities of Alternative Cinema, the filmmakers' co-operative. Formed in Auckland as an incorporated society late 1972 and in Christchurch mid-1973, the co-op has attempted to fill the institutional gaps of the filmmaking establishment. Lack of finance, other than membership fees, until the eventual granting of money from the Arts Council in 1975, made it very difficult for the co-op to carry out half the things it obviously needed to do. Before that grant, equipment pools were the only way young filmmakers had of getting to the equipment, but now the co-op has two-pic-sync editing rooms operating in Auckland, and Christchurch is setting up one. The bringing together of filmmakers for the first time, with the resultant realizations of common handicaps and frustrations, may have been the most useful contribution the co-op made. This drive also brought about the publication of the magazine, Alternative Cinema. Though not published as frequently as originally intended, it has given filmmakers a badly needed forum. Moves to get it on a regular basis are being made in Auckland.

Test Pictures, the country dance sequence.

The co-op has also been the focus of a lot of filmmaking activity, both professional and otherwise. Several television documentaries, as well as several shorter films have been produced by members. The co-op was closely linked with the feature Test Pictures, only the fifth New Zealand sound feature to be made. Budgeting out on just under $14,000, this black and white film has had a limited number of screenings in Auckland, and Christchurch is looking towards to formulate and push for a wider distribution. The series of six was jointly established, the Arts Council can be assigned the credit. It became a bit of a joke with his continual rushing into print with various projects and then coming unstuck over little things like copyright or availability of international stars. All the loose talk, apart from being amusing, does raise the level of frustration, which in the long term would seem to be a prerequisite of action. It may also loosen up people like John O'Shea of Pacific Films in Wellington. O'Shea pre-empted a broadening of information flow to obtain a true reading of needs, ideas and aspirations is necessary to gain that sense of identity from which a pivotal group emerges. It looked for a while as if Alternative Cinema would be the umbrella group the support base, but unfortunately hasn't done much about it yet, probably because it has not been able to define its own role in this whole scheme of things.

So we come back to the Arts Council, slowly becoming the umbrella group that co-ops, professional commercial companies and others are looking towards to formulate and push for an industry struggling to contribute more than frozen food commercials. The Council does put up money for films, and lately has even spoken of money for feature scripts which have an independent chance of being produced. The Council can offer only small sums of part finance to a project. It may also loosen up people like John O'Shea of Pacific Films in Wellington. O'Shea pre-empted a broadening of information flow to obtain a true reading of needs, ideas and aspirations is necessary to gain that sense of identity from which a pivotal group emerges. It looked for a while as if Alternative Cinema would be the umbrella group the support base, but unfortunately hasn't done much about it yet, probably because it has not been able to define its own role in this whole scheme of things. The talk, as I said, may be a stage we have to go through. If it is, then an important function of the Arts Council would be facilitating communications, a job it has not as yet fully accepted. A broadening of information flow to obtain a true reading of needs, ideas and aspirations is necessary to gain that sense of identity from which a pivotal group emerges. It looked for a while as if Alternative Cinema would be the umbrella group the support base, but unfortunately hasn't done much about it yet, probably because it has not been able to define its own role in this whole scheme of things.

Another group has done work on a script for a film about Stanley Graham, the quarry of New Zealand's largest armed manhunt. In 1941, Graham, a farmer in a small rural community on the West Coast of the South Island, went berserk and shot seven men. Graham was eventually shot after 12 days which saw hundreds of armed men searching for him. Last year I produced a television documentary about the Graham subject could yield a feature film capable of huge returns to its producer.

International Film Industry: "That a government is or is not financially involved in film is a reflection of the basic assumptions underlying that government's existence. If the state is held responsible for the maintenance and perpetuation of national culture, it is because it is the only institution representative of its people and their traditions." Unfortunately, government involvement in New Zealand film has been to create a structure inhibitive to a meaningful development of national heritage and culture.

PROPOSED NEW ZEALAND FEATURES

Because of the fragmentary nature of the industry here, and the consequent reliance on gossip for information, it is difficult to say which films stand a chance of completion. However, the following list will serve to adumbrate the ethos of the nascent industry.

George and Associates of Auckland are negotiating two co-productions. One is based on Donaldson's novel, The Scarcecrow, and is 50% financed by British money. Estimated budget is $4 million. The other is a $9 million venture, 100% American financed, on the story of a German convicted of anti-war activities. This project is said to involve a prominent American actor who is very interested in the subject. Aardvark Films is lining up more television dramas, and intends to feel the international interest in the six-dramas based on New Zealand short stories which it produced last year. The proposed feature, The Scarcecrow, has been put aside for the moment to see how the land lies in other areas. Another group has done work on a script for a film about Stanley Graham, the quarry of New Zealand's largest armed manhunt. In 1941, Graham, a farmer in a small rural community on the West Coast of the South Island, went berserk and shot seven men. Graham was eventually shot after 12 days which saw hundreds of armed men searching for him. Last year I produced a television documentary about the Graham subject could yield a feature film capable of huge returns to its producer.

Reynolds Television of Auckland have had an Arts Council grant of $2,000 for Michael Noonan and Keith Ahern to develop a feature script described as a "psychological drama". The projected budget of this film is $1 million plus, and it will be completely financed within the country. The film will distribute the film themselves and have an assurance from Kerridge-Odeon for national exhibition (a major breakthrough). Hopefully then, Reynolds will recoup their costs domestically and then profit from foreign distribution. The involvement of a couple of foreign actors will be used as a bait for international release. If this film breaks even, Reynolds have another two planned. It is still undecided whether to shoot on 16mm or 35mm. The proposed director, Wayne Torell, is soon going to the U.S. on a short study tour financed by the Arts Council, and shooting will commence when he returns in the middle of the year. Reynolds are also installing new processing, and printing machinery, which may relieve the load on the National Film Unit to bring a more efficient and swifter service to producers.

The unexpected decimation of the New Zealand film industry last November may ultimately affect the film industry. It is too early to forecast what will result from the change of government, other than to say that if the re-elected Fiordland Government decides to apply a bit of the old cost accounting to television, the independent producers will be the first overboard.
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"Willy Dynamite" I've never seen, and I don't think it's been released in Australia. . .

Brown: A good black picture by a very gifted director named Gilbert Moses. Fine actors too, out of the Harlem workshop and other places. I think one of the problems we had with genre films like the snake film and Willy Dynamite is that we made them too good and a little too expensively. It limited them in a sense, because we were unable to capture the excitement in fact the outrageous badness of a successful genre film like Mandingo.

I'm interested in how you actually go about choosing talent for your films — specifically directorial talent. For example, why did you chose Spielberg for "Sugarland Express"?

Zanuck: His agent had sent in a screenplay that I liked and insisted, as part of the purchase, that Steven be given an audition in terms of directing it. So he came in, I ran his little sheet and I liked it. We had a couple of very nice, long meetings. I found him tremendously gifted, at least from a conversational point of view. But I decided not to use him as director of the film because it was a highly physical and complex film, and I didn't think he had the experience to do stunt flying and all that. At any rate, that was our first introduction to Spielberg. Then, during this six week period between Warners and Universal, Steven sent us Sugarland Express, which he had evolved at Universal but which had been put on turn around. We liked it a lot, and when we came to Universal we made our deal there. Sugarland Express was one of the projects we laid on Wasserman's desk.

It went on to win an award at Cannes . . .

Brown: Yes. It's our favorite film.

Somebody once said, and I don't know whether it was attributed to either of you or to Steven Spielberg, that there was some dissatisfaction over Universal's handling of the film . . .

Zanuck: Steven said a lot about it. We certainly are not yes-men and we don't have to be, but we think that Universal handles these pictures probably better than any other company — certainly as well. It's easy to blame a picture's failure on bad handling, or bad ads, and maybe they weren't the greatest in the world, but they were ours. Steven, David and I sat around and discussed the ad, and Steven even shot it; so were were aghast when later he denounced the advertising campaign.

But none the less you were sufficiently pleased with your relationship with him that when you acquired "Jaws" as a project, you considered him for the director . . .

Brown: We persuaded him to do it. He got off the film three times because he feared that he would be categorized as an action director this time directing sharks instead of cars.

Or trucks . . .

Zanuck: He literally thought the truck and the shark would come out as some sort of crazy parallel.

Brown: We wanted him because we knew that Spielberg would give us something fresh, something inventive. We could have gotten a mechanic, a very safe, reliable and veteran director, but we knew we had a commercial subject and we wanted it to be something more. It was a big challenge for Steven because he had to work with us, and with a number of writers, on some very substantial changes to the basic material.

Were you in attendance for most of the shooting?

Zanuck: Every day. There wasn't a day that either one of us, and in most cases both of us, wasn't there.

Of course it doesn't make any difference now, but the budget went substantially over. Did that worry you at that time?

Zanuck: Oh sure it did. We saw our careers going down with the shark.

It is rumored that after the film was finished, some Universal executives looked at it and thought it would be a cult film, like "Duel", and were reluctant to put it out with a very big push . . .

Brown: Perhaps what you are referring to was Universal's plan for a massive release pattern across the United States — perhaps 1,000 theatres. But when the completed film was seen by Mr. Wasserman, Mr. Scheinberg and other associates, a conference was held to modify the release plan in favor of fewer theatres and longer playing engagements. It was handled with complete equanimity and confidence, rather than with a quite understandable desire to take a number one best selling subject and push it very heavily.

Obviously this is a question that nobody can put their finger on, but perhaps your two opinions are worth more than anybody else's: to what do you attribute the incredible success of the film in such a short time?

Zanuck: I think that the question could be better answered by a psychologist. It is a phenomenon. It is more than a film, it's a mania. I wouldn't presume other than to say the obvious: that it hits some kind of primal nerve.

Brown: I have a theory. I'd presume to say that one reason is that it is an extraordinarily good movie. It really engages the audience. There is also a universality of appeal which permits this film to play before both avant garde audiences and semi-literates. David Brown, Steven Spielberg and Richard Zanuck made Jaws, a film of such universal appeal that it can play before both avant garde audiences and semi-literates. David Brown, Steven Spielberg and Richard Zanuck.

Making Jaws, a film of such universal appeal that it can play before both avant garde audiences and semi-literates. David Brown, Steven Spielberg and Richard Zanuck.

Brown: I would like to answer that. I think that I may be hanged when I return to the United States, but I think the elimination of tax shelters will result in better films, because the tax shelter is set up with the premise that one is going to lose everything, but gain more through the tax deduction — in the Doomsday sense. Our approach to films, and MCA's also, is to make substantial profits. After all, there are tax advantages in investment credit in the United States. The notion that one can deduct more from one's tax than one has actually put at risk is something that attracts a kind of investor who is really not looking at the script so much as his taxable income.

Given the enormous amount of money that goes out of Australia in producers' and overseas distributors' shares of films here, do you feel that multi-national film production/distribution/exhibition units have a responsibility to nurture indigenous film production?

Zanuck: I don't think there is an obligation in that respect. Frankly, I'm not very familiar with what your industry has been doing, but the same applies to Canada. Your filmmakers are probably as good as any in the world, as they are in Britain, but the British film industry made a mistake in producing films only for their own market. It is the selection of subject matter that is important.

Are you suggesting that there should be a search for internationalism, rather than nationalism?

Brown: Exactly. I'd like to say that we consider ourselves international filmmakers, not American filmmakers. We have never produced, or even been executives of, a purely parochial or national film entity. At 20th Century-Fox we placed a substantial investment in Australian theatres and it is to our advantage to find subjects for countries where we have substantial markets. If I were a member of the Australian film industry I would seek out somebody who knows the world market in terms of material. There is no reason why the British film industry should be making films which don't sell in France. There are countries like France and Italy which can produce national films and recover their cost and profits in their own market, but we say unequivocally: show us a subject that has world potential and we will be in Australia next week, buying the book or screenplay (as we did Jaws). We never think of making a film in any place except where the story takes place. . . .
PRECEDENT 2: LITERARY PURCHASE AGREEMENT

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT made this the day of 1976 between [Author's Name] (hereinafter "the Author") and [Publishing Company's Name] (hereinafter called "the Publisher").

WHEREAS, the Author hereby grants to the Publisher the exclusive right to publish, produce, adapt, sell, lease, rent, reissue, perform and/or reproduce in private homes, theaters or elsewhere if any viewing fee or similar charge is imposed or collected as consideration from the persons observing, reproducing or viewing, the work described as follows:

2. The Owner shall not authorize or permit the transmission or projection of any adaptation or version thereof (including, but not limited to, any motion picture film or television program produced hereunder and/or any script or other material based on or suggested by the Property), in whole or in part, or likewise to exercise, either in whole or in part, any rights granted to the Purchaser hereunder, the Purchaser agrees to pay to the Owner, and the Purchaser with respect to the Property.

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17. The proper law of this contract shall be the law of the State of Victoria.

16. Wherever the context of this agreement requires it the masculine shall be deemed to include the feminine and the neuter, and the singular shall be deemed to include the plural, and when more than one person or party executes this agreement as the "Owner" then each and all of the persons, firms or corporations executing this agreement as the "Owner", shall be deemed to have jointly and severally made and entered into all of the terms, covenants, agreements, representations and warranties heretofore contained and shall be jointly and severally bound and obligated thereby, excepting only any written otherwise indicated to the contrary herein.

15. All notices or payments which the Purchaser may be required or may desire to give to the Owner hereunder may be delivered personally to the Owner personally or sent to the Owner by mail or telegraph at such address as Owner may designate in writing.

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The date of mailing or delivery to the telegraph office, as the case may be, of any notice or payment hereunder, shall be deemed the date of service of such notice or making of such payment.

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OUR ASIAN NEIGHBOURS is a program of films which aims to convey everyday life in Asia. The first of the series, covered Thailand. This series is devoted to Indonesia and brings to life its people, customs and their music. Each film captures the lifestyle of the people in their own environment and vividly identifies with the viewer. These films are made so as to stimulate interest in and to promote a greater understanding of our asian neighbours.

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AUSTRALIAN FILM COMMISSION
Entries are now being invited for A76 - The Philip Morris Arts Grant International Festival of Animation. All animated film - cartoons to commercials - is eligible to compete for cash awards and trophies. Entry forms may be obtained by writing to A76, PO Box 93 Moorabbin Victoria 3189, before April 5.

The South Australian Film Corporation is a total film enterprise involved in film research, production, marketing, distribution and library services, established by the state government and operating both nationally and internationally.

Produced by McElroy & McElroy in association with Patricia Lovell. Filmed with the South Australian Film Corporation and B.E.F. Distributors.

SUNDAY TOO FAR AWAY
Producers: Gil Chealby, Matt Circle.
Director: Ken Hannam
Original Screenplay: John Dingwall

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