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Cinema Papers #38 June 1982

Scott Murray

Peter Beilby

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Tony Williams' NEXT of KIN

The Man From Snowy River
Phil Noyce
Far East Reviews & more

June 1982

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Strickland Strikes

Scott Murray reports:

As predicted in previous censorship items, the Commonwealth Chief Censor, Janet Strickland, has finally achieved her ambition of removing the censorship privileges of film festivals. Not only has she effectively overridden the 1975 Film Festival Agreement, which gave festivals certain censorship exemptions, Strickland has also banned one of the 1985 entries at the Melbourne and Sydney festivals (Picture Post-winner of the 1981 New York Film Critics Award for Best Foreign Film).

On hearing of the banning, Melbourne Festival director, Geoffrey Gardner, said:

"The film has been shown at more than 12 major film festivals, and has been commercially released, uncut, in the United States. To suppress it is a decision grossly out of touch with what is happening in the best of modern cinema."

Gardner then went on to call for Strickland's resignation.

The Sydney Film Festival director, David Stratton, said the ban was "an outrageous interference in the selection of programming. Mrs Strickland has replaced the festivals in jeopardy, in total foreknowledge of the consequences... I cannot see the film festivals surviving without the immediate intervention of the Federal Attorney-General."

Perhaps the most direct response came from the Premier of Victoria, John Gandel, who opened the Melbourne Festival:

"I thought we had stopped all that nonsense 15 or 20 years ago. Believe it or not, I believe it should not have happened and will do all I can to ensure it does not happen for next year's festival."

The History

Trouble began soon after Strickland's assumption of office two years ago. Regarded as the 1975 censorship agreement for art films as "bolist", she vowed to bring festivals in line with regulations governing commercial importers of films.

The 1975 agreement says in part:

"(b) Every film will be registered without screening with 'Festival Conditions' except:

---- Registration will not be made of any film which has previously been rejected for commercial use.

Clearly, any film not already classified by the Censor can be shown in a film festival. This is the very basis of the 1975 agreement. But Strickland has, without consultation, abandoned that agreement.

Strickland's action in banning a festival film has long been feared and is part of a long campaign. Her first move came in the 1980 Annual Report of the Film Censorship Office:

"In 1975 it had become obvious that the new system [the 1975 agreement]... breeched... provisions of the Film Censorship Board's own regulations. This was nonsense. In 1975 the then Chief Censor, Richard Prowse, was only too aware of what constituted a 'breach'. The 1975 agreement was a "generator agreement", in its most correct sense, and found a way of being tolerant instead of insipid adherence to the letter of the law. Strickland knew this and her remark merely reflects her desire to abandon the agreement."

The next move came from the Attorney-General, Senator Durack, on August 25, 1981. In answer to a question from Senator Hamer about the need to amend regulations in favour of festivals, Durack said he was having discussions on the matter. His full reply left no doubts about his ultra-conservative views. These were spelled out even more explicitly in the Senate in October, referring to "absolutely ghastly material... produced by obviously unrestrained French films", and other French "Nile-like" asides. He concluded with, "the test of obscenity is that of the [Censorship] Board."

Durack also said (in August) that the Censor should have "the right to call in any film which might have difficulty obtaining commercial registration". Clearly that contradicts the section of the 1975 agreement quoted above.

Strickland's next move was in May 1982 when she called in films from the Melbourne Film Festival for approval (The Order The Babysitter, 1922), in reply to a May 7, 1982 reply when she called in films from the Melbourne Film Festival for approval (The Order The Babysitter, 1922), in reply to a May 7, 1982 reply by Geoffrey Gardner who wrote:

"I must confess to having little confidence in your action as it threatens the very basis of the film festival. I am, quite frankly, astonished to note these requests as it appears to me that you have either forgotten or overlooked the terms of the agreement negotiated by the festivals with you, in 1975, an agreement which, up to now, has worked quite smoothly as far as we are concerned.

"It is obvious that you are unilaterally disregarding the terms of the agreement and rendering it worthless. If you are of the opinion, as you seem to be, that the agreement should not be honoured by at least one party to it, then surely it is up to you to notify the other parties concerned of this so that all are aware of your actions and representations can be made to the responsible Governments for discussion."

Strickland replied on May 10, saying "...you state that you are 'astonished' to receive such a request and charge that having either forgotten or overlooked the terms of the agreement negotiated by the festivals in 1975... I draw your attention to sub-para. (ii) in the second paragraph of that letter in which I stated, '...that festival films are processed on receipt of applications and subject to revision while under censorship screening provided they are not called in for screening by the Chief Censor... in the light of this advice, your astonishment is a little difficult to understand."

"None of the conditions as set out in the 1975 agreement to which you refer affects the Chief Censor's right to require that the Film Censorship Board screen every film before registration may occur. Moreover, if the Film Censorship Board is of the opinion that Regulation 13(1) of the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations is applicable, the Board has a statutory obligation to refuse the film's registration."

"Any agreement, including the 1975 agreement, can invalidate the legal responsibilities of the Chief Censor or the Film Censorship Board, as laid down in the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations.

"Gardner has also raised the issue of time delays caused by the Censorship Board. This is a highly dangerous situation which would indicate that you are referring to the film The Order which was received for screening on April 27, 1982, screened five working days later and your office informed by telephone the following day of the decision to register. I enclose the Certificate of Registration."

Despite Strickland's protests, Gardner was given to reply:

"I must confess to having little confidence in this [getting films processed] can be done quickly especially in the light of the experience with the previous film, The Order, which I would point out has still not arrived back at this office, 17 days after it was received in your office."

Gardner continued:

"I believe strongly that it is time that the regulations were re-written to so-called 'independent fashion whereby recognised international film festivals and such organisations as the National Film Theatre of Australia, who I believe act responsibly, should be given the same freedoms as the other film festivals in other countries. I propose that the Film Censorship Act, and the regulations, should be amended to reflect the present situation."

On May 17 Gardner issued a statement of concern over Strickland's actions, and on May 20 issued a second statement. In his reply, he said:

"We remain strongly of the opinion that the Commonwealth (Cinematograph Films) Regulations should be immediately amended to a position similar to that which applies in Britain whereby British Customs and Excise Regulations permit the direct import of films for showing at approved Festivals."

Scott Murray, Attorney-General, Haddon Stoney, has sent a telegram to the Commonwealth Attorney-General, Senator Durack, who endorsed the view taken by the Victorian Premier, Mr. Cain, on Festival censorship. Mr. Stoney's telegram reads as follows: "I am concerned at the decision of Chief film censor to examine four films for the Melbourne Film Festival. This appears to depart from previous practice over many years and to be contrary to spirit of last Ministers' meeting. I urge maintenance of standing position pending resolution at next meeting, Haddon Stoney, Shadow Attorney-General."

But the matter didn't rest with Strickland. The next move came from the Prime Minister, Mr. Hawke, who said the film would be allowed for showing in the film festivals. As well, the remaining two films of the four called in by Strickland (Red Love and 1922) were cleared for screening. So, a few, small victories have been won. But the issue of festival censorship — and censorship in general — is unresolved.

Archive Crisis

Graham Shirley reports:

Grave concern at news that the National Film Archive of Australia may have to stop providing filmmakers with footage that it holds set the scene for a discussion on June 9, between the Documentary Division of the Film and Television Production Association on May 4. Special guests were Harrison Bryan, director-general of the National Library, and Ray Emmerson and Mike Lynas, both from the National Film Archive.

During an evening of discussion, producers mixed praise for the Archive's hard-working staff with alarm at the drawbacks of its paltry funding ($400,000 per year, nearly half of which is basic operating costs, relative to the film industry it is supposed to serve, its philosophical isolation within the National Library and its geographical remove from far away from all film production. Speakers including Tom Haydon, Peter Luck, David Salt, Bob Connely, Malcolm Smith, Brian Morris and Albie Thomas all agreed that the industry would have much to gain from closer ties with an upgraded Archive, not only..."
for the provision of archival services but for the nurturing of an Australian film culture.

One initial hurdle is that the Archive's isolation conceals evidence of its potential, not to say its plight, from most of the industry. The reasons for Archival access have doubled since 1976, yet the threat remains at its 1972 level of seven.

Considering the previous tendency of the Council of the National Library to dismiss any question of the Archive's autonomy, director-general. Bryan's admission that he had done so, more or less, was another on the subject came as something of a surprise. He doubted, however, that the Archive could survive outside the National Library. When this was disputed on my part, he added that it was up to the FTPPA to inform the Minister for Home Affairs (responsibility for the Library as well as film matters) of its members' unhappiness at the Archive's status.

From discussion on what action the FTPPA could take, it was agreed that the body should inform politicians of the desperate and immediate need for increased funds and staff, and should develop a policy on such issues as the Archive's future location, its organizational structure and what it needs to preserve the industry's current output.

Meanwhile, the industry-based National Film and Television Archive Committee established by the National Library has met regularly with the aim of improving communication between the Archive and the industry. The Library has also received a copy of the Archive written by Clyde Jeavons, deputy curator of the British National Film Archive, which was visited mid-1981. This report, which corroborates the concern felt by producers, will be published in the next issue of Cinema Papers.

Television Renewal Hearings

Peter Morris reports:

The chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT), David Jones, gave an assurance at the renewal hearings that he would approach the Minister for Communications, Neil Brown, about holding an inquiry into a caption service for the deaf.

Alexandra Hynes, the deputy executive director of the Australian Film Centre, put a submission to the ABT at all the stations, that there should be a new body to look on behalf of the Deaf Council and the Centre. Jones rejected the application, pointing to the threat of the ABT inquiring to the Minister to call an inquiry “in the near future.”

The Film Centre was established last year (with a $267,000 Federal Government grant) to provide a closed caption service for Australia's estimated one million hearing-impaired people.

The ABC has announced it will begin broadcasting captions in December but the commercial stations are arguing over which system should be used. They have all agreed that whatever system is chosen would influence their choices when the new general directory is implemented in June.

In one of his last decisions while holding the Communications portfolio, Ian Sinclair opted for the British Telecines but said he would ask the Minister for Home Affairs to inform the British Telecines, deputy curator of the British National Film Archive, which was visited mid-1981. This report, which corroborates the concern felt by producers, will be published in the next issue of Cinema Papers.

The ATOM Awards for Educational Short Films

Arnold Zable reports:

April 27, the Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM) held the inaugural presentation of Awards for Education Short Films. The event, attended the presentation at the Victoria State Film Centre, was attended the presentation at the Victoria State Film Centre, attended the presentation at the Victoria State Film Centre, attended the presentation at the Victoria State Film Centre, attended the presentation at the Victoria State Film Centre, attended the presentation at the Victoria State Film Centre.

Explaining the procedures for judging, Helen Ken, president of ATOM, and Bernadette O'Brien, the convener of the Awards, pointed out that only films produced in 1980 or 1981 were eligible. All the films entered were assessed for their relevance to specific aspects of the curriculum by practising classroom teachers and curriculum consultants working in the Victorian Education Department. More than 100 entries were narrowed down to eight films, which were viewed by a panel of five judges, which included experienced film makers with a special interest in educational films. In the present document, the maximum length for entries was 50 minutes.

Children's television producer and board member of the newly-formed Australian Television Foundation, Jennifer Hooks, spoke of the hazards involved in producing programs for children; finance is difficult to obtain, since children's audiences fall short of the number in other areas of television, there are many varied versions as to what is suitable for the audience, and government regulations seem inevitable (with approval required from the Children's Program Committee). This is one of the technological challenges facing the Australian Children's Television Foundation.

Jennifer Hooks commented ATOM on the work it is doing in media education, and in its encouragement of the production of better quality educational films through the ATOM Awards. The award for the Best Educational Film went to Pat Fiske and Denise White's "Pudding," produced and scripted by Murray Brown and directed by David Perry.

A Puppet Pudding combines a number of educational objectives, specifically in the area of arts education, and provides an introduction to the work of the artist Norman Lindsay. Imaginative drawings and paintings of Australian animals in their natural settings. An interview with his niece gives an insight into the circumstances under which Lindsay

Critical Indigestion

Dear Sir,

For several years I have been engaged in a noble pursuit. Like many serious minded people, I have been attempting to discover the meaning of life. Everything seemed to be going well, in fact I damn near fell for the answer when, regrettably, I became aware of the problem. A strange, curious cloud had settled over me, and as I gazed up at the sky, I could see it unfolding before my eyes. I was torn between the desire to seek answers and the fear of the unknown.

But while Australian product seems to have a certain cachet, many others find it hard to sell. A recent study conducted by the Australian Film Commission revealed that only one in ten films made in Australia is sold overseas. The reasons for this are many, but one factor that stands out is the high cost of production. Despite increased funding and staff, the body should inform politicians of the Archive's unhappiness at the Archive's status.

Of improving communication between the Archive and the industry. The Library has also received a copy of the Archive written by Clyde Jeavons, deputy curator of the British National Film Archive, which was visited mid-1981. This report, which corroborates the concern felt by producers, will be published in the next issue of Cinema Papers.

Token Ghettos

Dear Sir,

GeoF Gardner's gratuitous reference to "token 16mm Creative Development Fund ghetto films" in his review of Heatwave (Cinema Papers, No. 37, pps. 163-4) cannot be allowed to go unchallenged.

I suppose, that as a film festival director, Gardner would know all about culture and society, but I'm afraid he does. I'm afraid he does. I'm afraid he does. I'm afraid he does. I'm afraid he does.

But his remark is strangely at odds with his own reputation as one of the most prolific film makers in Australia. His record of 120 short films is quite extraordinary, and he has been awarded the Film Festival for the production of his early work, Backroads. I assume that the fact that this film has an honored place in Australia's recent history film will not wash with your reviewer. The implication that his "ghetto" productions in his filmography are merely token is not simply so.

I also note that his sideline in the stage business should occur within the context of a review of new work by a director who has been involved in film since the "ghetto" days. Her maiden film was actually made with care and love and great personal risk over long periods of time. They didn't have the luxury of budgets which could buy top stars, advisers and art directors. But they did tackle the subject from the grassroots, by enlisting the help of people actually caught up in the battle for their homes. They have since been awarded and seen by thousands of people in non-theatrical settings. In fact, Pat Fiske and Denise White's Woolloomooloo, a film about the BFL and citizens' struggle for inner-city Sydney housing, is one of the 10 most for the last year's Melbourne Film Festival, they have actually replaced life.

I suppose, that as a film festival director, Gardner would know all about culture and society, but I'm afraid he does. I'm afraid he does. I'm afraid he does. I'm afraid he does. I'm afraid he does.

But his remark is strangely at odds with his own reputation as one of the most prolific film makers in Australia. His record of 120 short films is quite extraordinary, and he has been awarded the Film Festival for the production of his early work, Backroads. I assume that the fact that this film has an honored place in Australia's recent history film will not wash with your reviewer. The implication that his "ghetto" productions in his filmography are merely token is not simply so.

GeoF Gardner should know better. There is no such thing as a "token" film. There is no such thing as a "token" film. There is no such thing as a "token" film. There is no such thing as a "token" film. There is no such thing as a "token" film.

Love Letters from Terazba Road (Stephen Wallace), Frontline and Public Enemy Number One (David Bradbury), My Survival as an Aboriginal (Epsy Cofe), Poor White of the Road (Ned Lander and Graeme Isaac), Stepping Out (Chris Noonan)

Token ghetto films, GeoF? As token as some of the D-grade tax-avoidance features that have sunk without trace? Or are there some ghettoes that we prefer not to see? Murray Brown, Creative Development Branch
"The Man From Snowy River" is one of the most successful films to be released in Australia. In its first eight weeks it grossed faster than Australia's biggest money earner "Star Wars", returning more than 3 million dollars in box-office.

It is producer Geoff Burrowes and director George Millers' first feature. Both began their careers at Crawfords. Burrowes has also worked as a press secretary for Moss Cass and in advertising with Monahan Dayman Adams. Miller has been directing television series for more than 10 years. His credits include the historical series "Against The Wind" and "The Last Outlaw".

Top: executive producer Simon Wincer, producer Geoff Burrowes and director George Miller. Above: "Thank you, Spur"; Jim Craig (Tom Burlinson) and the horse given to him by Spur. Left: the chase across the river. Far left: Clancy (Jack Thompson) and Spur (Kirk Douglas).
Two Men Behind Snowy River

Interviewed by George Tosi

When did you get the idea to film 'Snowy River'?

Burrowes: I was talking to a publisher friend about various projects when his wife said, as a bored aside to the wine-soaked conversation, "Why doesn't someone in the film industry do something that is central to Australia's heritage rather than always dealing on the edges of it?" I asked what she meant, and she said, "Take, for example, The Man From Snowy River. Why doesn't someone do that?": I jumped down her throat and said, "Oh, get out. It's too well-known. It's almost a cliche. Anyway, it's too short; it only runs five or seven minutes. How can you make a film out of that?"

Then, as I drove home that night, I wondered why I had rejected her idea so strongly. That's when I got the idea that the poem wouldn't make a film in itself, but what a superb end to a film. So I flew around to George's place, raced in the door and said, "Guess what? I've got a great end! All we need is another 90 minutes!" So, we sat down and plotted it out that weekend.

Miller: The idea came first from
George Miller and Geoff Burrows

Geoff's love of the mountains. I had also filmed there — probably more than anybody else — and had this rich, residual feeling about the place. Certainly, I had very strong feelings about how the film should look.

So, we applied what we knew of our craft to that concept. That is to what *Snowy River* owes its great success.

You had the ending, but how did you evolve the beginning and middle?

Burrows: We looked at the poem, but that gave us almost no clue as to what story might have preceded it. All one has is the gathering of a certain number of horsemen, and a wild and moving horse chase.

Miller: He is referred to as a lad in the early part of the poem, and at the end as “the man”. What does that tell you? That the ride is his passage into manhood, the definitive act of growing up.

Burrows: Once we had those three characters, we decided we much of Clancy in the film. He is too legendary, too big, and we felt he would eat Jim. If we brought him on too often, it would become a film about Clancy.

At the same time, we wanted to keep him as that legendary character, the catalyst who exercises not only a psychological prerogative on Jim but also a metaphysical influence throughout the film — similarly with Spur. It was important that Spur motivate Jim at exactly the right times.

Burrows: The horses aren’t just simply there because they look cute that third level gets out of control, it wrecks your film entirely; but if you haven’t got it, it makes it slight. It is these aspects and attitudes in the characters which help one understand a little more about the milieu. What values do these characters stand for? Or in its simplest expression: What are the values of a hero?

Is it fair to draw a comparison between Jim and the leader of the brumbies?

Burrows: No, I don’t think so. Some mad reviewer got off on that particular bike, but that’s just wank.

Miller: The brumbies are Jim’s nemesis. Jim represents civilization, and the brumbies the moun-

There are only three characters mentioned in the poem: Clancy of the Overflow, Harrison and the Man from Snowy River. Frankly, we know everything we need to about Clancy from the poem. He is already a legend, the consummate horseman. As for Harrison, he is “the old man with his hair as white as snow, but few could ride beside him when his blood was fairly up”.

We also know that he fortuitously needed to know a lot more about the Man from Snowy River, whom we called Jim Craig. We gave him that name because he is a fictional character. Paterson created him as a composite character, based on no one individual. So we built the character of Jim Craig as Paterson had — from our observations of a number of mountain horsemen.

Another decision we took early on was that we would not show too and make for nice visuals. They had to be characters in the same way that Jim or Jessica is a character.

If you like, there are three basic levels: an up-front, dramatic level which works at the simplest level of understanding; behind that are the various psychological underpinnings of the characters, for those who care to look; and then, over and above that, is the metaphysical level, which is the most difficult. If
Every time the brumbies appear, it is at a major junction in Jim's life. Was that deliberate?

Burrowes: Absolutely. The role of the brumbies, apart from the visual and specific plot aspects, is those second and third levels. We felt the horses had to exercise a malevolent and metaphysical influence on Jim's life. Jim is a man who goes to films and not horses, we needed a romantic interest for Jim.

Tom and Sigrid was absolutely perfect — well, that's great. I probably could not have cast her even if she wasn't beautiful. As for Jack Thompson, as soon as we came up with the idea of Clancy, we knew it had to be him. It was fairly obvious.

There are good reasons why, particularly in the case of Harrison. He needs to have an extraordinary physical presence, with an overwhelming, immensely-powerful personality on screen.

Miller: He is Jim's protagonist, so the more powerful he is, the more powerful Jim becomes by overcoming him. Again, it is an application of craft to casting.

Burrowes: Harrison is in an enormous number of scenes, so we needed a very competent actor. There are competent actors in Australia, in that age bracket, but we

How did you shoot in Mansfield and not on location at Mount Kosciusko?

Burrowes: Because he can beat the stallion. But, even that, I suspect is taking things too far. It's not as if Jim, too, is a young stud and he goes to fight the old stallion for the mares. That's a bit of your Meaghan Morris type stuff. It is simply that the brumbies are the epitome of a wild and free spirit which unfortunately mitigates against man's efforts to control an environment. And, since it's people who go to films and not horses, we decided to come down rather squarely on the side of people winning, not horses.

Why didn't you take screen credit for your contributions to the script?

Burrowes: We have credit in our own right; we don't need it. Those stupid, bloody credits of "Story by . . ." or "Concept by . . ." often sound like a pitiful cry for recognition from the wilderness. Screenwriters get screen credits.

So, Jim becomes a man because he can control the stallion . . .

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How long did it take to write the screenplay?

Burrowes: It took us a weekend to get the first rudiments of our character outlines and plot. Then we spent a year in plotting and developing characters. This is before we even went to a script. We wrote about 12 treatments, many of them 40 to 60 pages.

One of the key things was that it was unhurried. We didn't try and force a treatment by plot by a deadline. It would have been foolhardy. Deadlines have to be considered a force a treatment or plot by a dead-end. It would have been foolhardy.

Deadlines have to be considered a force a treatment or plot by a dead-end. It would have been foolhardy.

Miller: Geoff looked after the authenticity of the mountainmen, while I looked after the overlay of character, the historical authenticity. This is why Jim is a very sexy person. It is historically accurate.

Burrowes: Now came the time to have a screenplay written which conformed to our view of the film. There was no point having a writer do something that didn't suit us. I'm not interested in the writer as auteur; that's a total waste of time. That is not to belittle a writer. It is putting him on the appropriate pinnacle, but not on a pinnacle in a different mountain range to you.

Why didn't you take screen credit for your contributions to the script?

Burrowes: We have credit in our own right; we don't need it. Those stupid, bloody credits of "Story by . . ." or "Concept by . . ." often sound like a pitiful cry for recognition from the wilderness. Screenwriters get screen credits.

As for Jack Thompson, as soon as we came up with the idea of Clancy, we knew it had to be him. It was fairly obvious.

The most important thing about the cast was that they had to have fantastic ability as actors. I didn't really care what they looked like. Sigrid was the first person we cast, so we took her on all the auditions for Jim.

Burrowes: Sigrid sat through 45 screen tests and read a scene with each of the young guys we tested. And 45 had been narrowed down from about 2000, who had been checked by casting agents. Wall, Tom just cast himself. The relationship that sprang between Tom and Sigrid was absolutely magic. It required no rational appreciation of the screen test, no discussion or intellectual strain.

Miller: Again, an excellent tele-presentation level overseas. It evens out in the end.

What about Kirk Douglas?

Burrowes: Kirk we had to work on a lot. Originally our idea was to have two Australian actors play Harrison and Spur. We tested about a dozen actors, but we just couldn't get what we were after. There are good reasons why, particularly in the case of Harrison. He needs to have an extraordinary physical presence, with an overwhelming, immensely-powerful personality on screen.

Miller: He is Jim's protagonist, so the more powerful he is, the more powerful Jim becomes by overcoming him. Again, it is an application of craft to casting.

Burrowes: Harrison is in an enormous number of scenes, so we needed a very competent actor. There are competent actors in Australia, in that age bracket, but we

Locations

Mansfield Area

Miller: It is more beautiful in the Mansfield area and it is home ground. They are very much our people. Geoff's father-in-law lives there, and he helped take us into those mountains.

Also, from a director's point of view, Kosciusko doesn't look like a mountain — just a feature on a high plateau. When I went to look at it, I drove right past. I genuinely missed it.

Finally, Mansfield is logistically very convenient.

Burrowes: Even before we went to a treatment, we were drafting in terms of what we knew and understood of the mountains in that district. To some extent, the film conformed to what we knew existed around the Mansfield area. Then, as we got on to the fourth or fifth draft of the script, we went there again on a round trip through the mountain area. We wanted to prove to ourselves that we weren't being emotionally drawn to Mansfield, that we weren't being a bit lazy and going for somewhere we knew would be safe. But we couldn't get within a bull's roar of Mansfield on many, many scores.

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Miller: Again, an excellent television training showed through.

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To summarize, the brumbies play a crucial role in Jim's development as a character. They are a powerful force, and their appearance often marks significant turning points in his life. The brumbies are not just horses, but symbols of freedom and independence. The film's creators took great care to ensure that the brumbies were portrayed accurately and that Jim's relationship with them was authentic. The brumbies are a testament to the power of nature and the importance of respecting it.
take recourse in the fortress mentality of "Let's do this all-Australian because we are little Aussie bleeders" and end up with a second-class product, not through anyone's fault, but simply because of availabilities. Or we could do what we'd always intended, which was to do the best bloody thing we could and think outside of the fortress mentality.

When we started to think of Harrison, setting aside the question of a dual role, there are few actors in the world with that amount of power who can play a 60-year-old. You can think of George C. Scott, Sean Connery, Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas, then you start to hiccup, close your eyes and cough. There's not many that you can get. The possibilities of the dual role restricted it even further.

play was that he didn't want Harrison to be a cipher of a character. John wanted to make a statement about the kind of men who made Australia what it is today, irrespective of whether they were attractive or not — and most of them weren't. We were looking for the kind of person who laid the basis for the great agrarian industry upon which Australia depended for so long, and to a large extent depends upon now. We wanted someone analogues to the Duracks and the Kidmans, the men who, at whatever cost to themselves and those around them, forged empires and built Australia.

Are you happy with Douglas' performance?

Miller: Absolutely. It's stunning. I can truly say Kirk was not an easy man to work with, but I don't know anybody in the whole world who could have given us a better Harrison. He is such a powerful Harrison that when Jim overrides him, by Jesus, you know he has become a man.

The film was made the way we wanted and, despite a tremendous input from Kirk, the film is our film. That meant some clever footwork on our part. In many ways, handling Kirk was my passage into manhood. Nothing scares me now, like nothing.

Burrowes: The important thing is to determine whose film it is, and then you must make sure the film conforms to that vision. You must never allow the film to take its own life and run. That is a recipe for self-indulgence and disaster. So, we had to extract from Kirk his contribution — and it wasn't a question of extracting it. Kirk gives it to you — while all the time fighting to keep the perspective.

What was Michael Edgley's involvement in the production?

Burrowes: Michael's forte is not at the coal face. He's not a working producer in the sense that he gets involved in the actual production, What Michael brings to the production, firstly, is an extraordinary credential. People like George and I ostensibly have no track record — which, I take to mean, we have not failed five times in the film business. We lacked credentials.

So, about a year-and-a-half into the project we decided to get into bed with someone a bit heavier than us, who could give us some credibility and whose involvement would help to justify the need to spend several million dollars.

Up to this point, we had had the whole range of idiocy purporting to be sound advice thrust at us, like "Why don't you boys do it as television" or "I think this is a great film as long as you keep the budget under $750,000. Can you imagine the fatuity of that advice? We kept getting it from so-called senior figures in the industry — fatuous, infatuated reactions, like "Is it a musical?" From the head of one of the corporations. Holy Christ!

After a while, we realized these guys were playing in a different world. They're idiots. You can't discuss, articulate or advocate against that kind of crap.

Miller: We cured the problem with geography; we went around them.

Burrowes: So, the key thing was to involve someone with the right credentials.

Then, Simon Wincer, who is an old friend of George's, rang us and said he'd been working with Michael Edgley for about three months. Michael wanted to get into a big project which they had looked at a lot of projects. But none had excited them and they were keen to find a good project. This was at the very moment I had my finger poised over the dial to ring people like Michael Edgley.

So, Simon and Michael came down, we talked, and in half-an-hour we had a deal. We also had seedling finance and an expanded core group, with Simon joining George and I to make up the production team.

Marketing

Another aspect of Michael's involvement, and this is really critical, is promotion. The film industry in Australia knows little about promotion, and as unabashedly as that.

If we had not made a product that was eminently marketable, then it wouldn't have mattered how erudite our marketing strategy was. Marketing practice goes right back to what you're making and how you go about making it.

Michael Edgley and his organization was intrinsic to the development of our marketing approach.

So, you tailor the film to a particular market . . .

Burrowes: Absolutely.

And what is that market?

Burrowes: All Australians — the whole 15 million of them. As broad an umbrella as that.

Now, the way we sought to achieve that was to segment the market and to provide aspects of the film which would suit different audience segments. So you say, "Let's make this film comprehensible to kids." That's important. Then, "Let's make it appealing to people who are more to our needs.

The cinema market is undergoing enormous pressures and there are vast numbers of people who do not go to cinemas. Right, we have to get them.

By the same token, there is the very volatile and effective centre of the cinema market: the youth market. We must have something in it for them. Also, something in it for the cineastes and the family groups. You want a film that a mother and father can take their children to, not enduring what they think is going to be good for their children but enjoying it them.
by George Miller and Geoff Burrowes

Miller: They're going to slip and, "Ohhh!, her, that they are going to climb
know he is going to climb down to

Burrowes: If this film is a testimony to anything, it is to two things: (1) craft over indulgence, and indulgence can be expressed in many terms, like intellectual wanking, and (2) the vast, untapped talent that lies out there which has been passed over by the feature industry. This film is a first for George, for me, for Michael Edgley, for Simon Wincer as an executive producer, for John Dixon the scriptwriter, for Bruce Rowland the composer, for Keith Wagstaff the cinematographer, for Tom Burlinson the actor and for the guys that handle the horsework — and so on down the line. We so often found that the people we wanted were those who worked without any preconditioning as to how good they were, who hadn't been slapped on the back and told by their peers how brilliant and insightful they were. The ones who were best happened to be ones who had been passed over.

Burrowes: One of the main things we are lacking in the feature business is an ability at the narrative level, and television is narrative. It has to be to survive. People like George emerge from the ruck because they are adept at narrative; they can tell a story and tell it quickly.

Today's audiences, and particularly kids, are visual rather than literate. They can take in an entire lifestyle message in 30 seconds off the box. Commercials set the standard by which we have to judge what the audience can perceive. The old days of taking 10 minutes to play a scene no longer apply. After 30 seconds, the audience is scratching its bum. It knows what's going to happen, and you insult them by dragging it out.

Miller: When I was shooting Snowy, I was very conscious that the visual literacy of young people, especially is very high. That is reflected in the pace of the film. I would say, "Okay actors, read it through." Then 10 seconds into it, I'd say, "Too slow, too slow! This is giving me the shits. It's boring."

Burrowes: We had a big disagreement about this one day. George was going through rehearsals for the dinner scene and I thought, "Oh Christ, this is a gallop." I told George he was going too fast, but he said, "Too fast, be buggered. I'm not going fast enough." Well, when we looked at the rushes, I realized I was wrong. The lesson is get on with it, never hang around.

Take the scene where Jessica is on the cliff and Jim comes along to rescue her. Everyone knows how he is going to rescue her. They have seen it a million times before. They know he is going to climb down to her, that they are going to climb nearly all the way to the top and they're going to slip and, "Ohhh!, they've gone, oh no they haven't!" They know that.

Burrowes: On the cutting room floor is some of the most exquisite, exciting and beautiful footage, but it had no place in the structure of this piece of entertainment.

Miller: The instant Jim claps eyes on Jessica, end of story. Move on to the next point.

Burrowes: Yes. That was something that we set out to manipulate, to achieve. But it is not as simple as having, for example, "Waltzing Matilda" played in the end credits music.

Miller: I first heard the fully-orchestrated version of "Waltzing Matilda" when I had been away from home for eight weeks in the U.S. I nearly wept.

For me, Snowy is a love letter to Australia and, for Geoff, a love letter to the mountains. We can't understand why any filmmaker would want to depress an audience. If you want to get depressed, turn on the television and watch the news.

Burrowes: The film has been out now for six weeks and we have had a tremendous audience response. In Adelaide, they clapped Jim when he was bringing the horses back. Unbelievable. They weren't clapping the film, they weren't saying, "Good job, boys", they were clapping Jim, the hero, winning and bringing the horses back. And because the film is intrinsically Australian — it is socially and culturally specific to Australia — when Jim wins, Australia wins.

That seems unique about the film. Most Australian films tend to have very passive central characters . . .

Miller and Burrowes: That's because they don't apply their craft!

Burrowes: They don't realize what turns an audience on. They feel we wanted to generate in the audience, when Jim beat those horses and "alone and unassisted brought them back", was that similar to a team winning the grand final. When Carlton wins a grand final, 20 players don't win it — hundreds of thousands of people win it. When Jim beats the horses, everyone in the audience wins.

Another thing is that we avoided the pitfalls of Ockerism, which too many people fell into in the early days of the Australian film industry, and indeed even in television. Nobody likes Ockers. They are detestable characters. They have never worked in drama, and are box-office poison. So, it is important to maintain an Australian character in an attractive, not unattractive, light.

Another thing is that there are many ways in which you can address the Australian character. A number of people in Perth and Adelaide articulated this to me in a way I hadn't thought of before. A couple of girls came up to me in Perth after the premiere and I asked what they liked about it.
They said, “Oh, it made me so proud to be Australian.” I asked why, expecting Waltzing Matilda or Jim beating the horses. “No,” they said, “it was the elements of honesty in Jim, the honesty in the script. For example, when Spur gives him the horse, and he said, ‘Thank you, Spur’, you obviously felt he meant it. He wasn’t a smarty arse.”

These, incidentally, are the very lines that our erudite friends, the critics, leapt on and said, “How banal.” They just don’t understand! They have no comprehension of what makes successful drama, successful entertainment. They are the lines that really flesh Jim out. When he is chopping the wood, and he is serious about it, you can see there is a fundamental honesty and integrity in the guy.

That’s one thing that Australians have always had in them, a sort of open-faced naivety, an ability to survive gotterdammerung but still profess an openness, a lack of cynicism. Australians have traditionally not become cynical, although I think we’ve taken a bit of a course in it of late. Our knocker syndrome is very cynical and bordering on the old cultural cringe.

But there are many aspects to an audience’s response, like the scenery being so beautiful. It makes people proud to belong to a continent that is so pretty.

Miller: We rejoice at just being able to zoom out and see, as one critic put it, half of Victoria. That critic mentioned this as a negative thing, but my heart leapt when I stood on top of that mountain. One person sees beautiful scenery as a cliché; I see it as a national treasure.

Burrowes: George Lucas is the guy who, most of all, has it right. People who say the script is bad are wrong.

Miller: I think the most damming thing to the Australian film industry has been the auteur theory as a substitute for effort. Or Jim beating the horses. “No,” they said, “it was the elements of honesty in Jim, the honesty in the script. For example, when Spur gives him the horse, and he said, ‘Thank you, Spur’, you obviously felt he meant it. He wasn’t a smarty arse.”

Miller: That man is still employed by the paper, Christ! If we were that bad in our business, we’d never make another film. Thank Christ the audience has enough good sense not to be swayed by him.

Miller: The first function of any journalist is to communicate accurately and clearly. So I would commend anybody who wonders what the hell’s going on journalistically in Australia to read the review of Duet for Four in Cinema Papers. It is so badly written that it is being sold a bit of pompous, but it’s not intended to be — with the craft levels that this one has. This film breaks new ground in Australia in the way it intends to entertain. Most of the Australian film milieu, both in the making and in the critical appreciation of it, has been more in the area of film as art, than film as popular entertainment.

What has grown up among the critics is a reluctance to depart from the rantings and the renderings of the Melbourne critic who protested, methinks too much, that Australian audiences aren’t flocking to see such and such a film, which he thinks should be compulsory viewing. That is indicative of the depth of idiocy in a critic. I mean is the jury: him or the audience?

It is also unfortunate that he and his predecessor have fallen into the trap of simply viewing Australian film purely as culture, not industrial entertainment. The fact of the matter is, this is our daytime job. We don’t have a paper round. We have to make it pay. We had $3.5 million of other people’s money wrapped up in this, and it’s not for us to make profound statements. The only statement they want to see is positive.

Miller: One of my proudest moments was when Ken G. Hall said he thought the film was great. I don’t think anybody has addressed himself truly to the making of the public as much as Ken G. Hall.

Burrowes: George Lucas is the guy who, most of all, has it right. He knows intuitively where to apply his craft.

Miller: I think the most damaging thing to the Australian film industry has been the auteur theory of the director, which is just consummate bullshit. A director is part of a team.

Directing in Australia has attracted the wrong sort of people. Everybody wants to be the director as the pinnacle of the creative thrust of a film, the auteur. So it attracts people who have ego problems. Instead of “je suis un rock star”, it is “je suis un film director.” They are people so inextricably wound up in their own egos that they start telling their own stories.

By the same token, you can do both... Concluded on p. 283
A one-day seminar for lawyers sponsored by the Australian Film Commission and the College of Law in Sydney recently had to turn people away. More than 160 applications for the seminar, “The Law of Making Movies”, were received.

At the seminar, the general manager of the AFC, Joseph Skrzynski, told the lawyers he expected more private investment in future in development of film projects and in marketing. These two areas had in the past been largely supported by government finance. He said, “We would not expect that to continue. In early 1981, 23 features went into production between January and May. They had a total budget of about $36 million. We expect this financial year, 1981/82, to be about $35 million [budget total].

“On the basis of that figure, allowing about 10 per cent as development costs, $3 to $4 million [is] spent annually on developing projects. In the past, this has been met 95 per cent by government funding. We expect in future only 50 per cent government funding for development, with directors, writers and producers carrying the cost in deferreds, and investors picking the costs up down the line.”

In his historical analysis of the film industry, Skrzynski described the current tax incentives as an introductory offer with the hope of attracting investors to the film industry and keeping them. He said, “We are in Phase Two — trying to find the right relationship between private industry and government.”

The certification system administered by the Department for Home Affairs was designed to avoid the problems of tax-based support, as seen overseas, especially in Canada where there was no regulation. “We don’t want to be a bit parts industry with offshore operators who don’t leave much behind”, he said. It may be appropriate to introduce foreign elements, such as an actor or writer, into a film, but the litmus test of certification was creative control: is it Australian?

The certification system was “not set up to have overseas producers come in, put up a front of Australian control, write in the Opera House and kookaburras . . .” (laughter).

Skrzynski foresaw a review by Federal Treasurer, John Howard, in June this year of the tax incentives. With the news published in the Australian Financial Review the day prior to the seminar that the incentives have so far cost Treasury an estimated $34 million, 12 times the original costing by the then responsible Minister, Mr. Elliot, the promised review could be an unpleasant event for the industry.

Sydney commercial lawyer David Gonski explained the difficulties of using traditional ways of structuring investments to get the benefits of the new tax advantages. He said he was disappointed that the same approach had not been used in the film industry as in the mining industry, where the person who invests in company shares is eligible for the tax deduction. In the film industry, because usually a company is the first owner of the copyright, it is the company which is eligible for the tax advantages.

Because of the problems under the New South Wales (and other states’) Companies Act of forming an investment structure with more than 20 investors (commonly known as the “section 14(3) problem”), many films are using the Queensland Mercantile Act 1867 to set up their investment company. Gonski said it was upsetting and expensive to have to fall back on this out-of-date act in order to take advantage of the tax incentives. The problems he cited were:

- the limit of seven years’ life for the company;
- the high costs of advertising to conform with the act;
- lack of provisions for assignment; and
- doubt as to where liabilities and protection occur.

The general feeling among the lawyers present was that the Corporate Affairs Commission would not act on section 14(3), but having more than 20 investors could mean legal problems with contracts with third parties.

This session was clearly of most concern to the lawyers present, who included Ian Baillieu and Leon Gorr of Melbourne, both “film lawyers” of some experience and co-authors of the Cinema Papers’ The Australian Film Producers & Investors Guide. A guarded exchange of information ensued over rulings by the Taxation Department and the Corporate Affairs Commission, as well as over the meaning of an association under section 14(3). Gonski pointed out that, “One can be associated without being an association under 14(3).” As one of the significant criteria for an association was mutual rights and obligations, to avoid 14(3) problems one should avoid mutual rights and obligations in the investment structures in film production.

The other topical question discussed by Gonski’s associate, Philip Christensen, dealt with prospectus provisions which cover offering film investments to the public. All those vaguely-worded advertisements, appearing lately in the press, may not escape the severe penalties of the companies acts, he warned. The court looks behind the cover of the vague invitation at the whole process, of what is given to people who reply to such ads, and even to letters to select groups purporting to be an offer not to the public but to friends, say, of the promoters — even though they may never have heard of them. Stamping “Confidential” across the top, or even saying, “This offer is not available to the public”, is not going to fool a court either, Christensen said.

Concluded on p. 281

17 Contractual Steps to a Motion Picture by Tony Buckley

Step 1. The Option
Step 2. Writer’s Contract
Step 3. Contract with AFC* for Development Funds
Step 4. Contract with AFC* for Production Funding
Step 5. Contract with AFC*, Distributor and Production Company
Step 6. Contract with AFC*, Investor and Production Company
Step 7. Contract with Actors Equity
Step 8. Contract with Completion Guarantor
Step 9. Contract with lead cast
Step 10. General cast contract
Step 11. Contract with composer
Step 12. Contract with crew
Step 13. Marketing loan contract
Step 14. Contract with appointed agent
Step 15. Contract with purchaser of film
Step 16. The one you’ll never see!**
Step 17. Errors and Omissions policy

* Or a State Film Corporation
** Between distributor and exhibitor. Buckley challenged anyone present to a bottle of French champagne if they could produce such a contract. Apart from amused murmuring, no one did.
It would be a pity to write James Ivory off as a "literary" director. He has, somewhat daringly, a novelist's interest in and capacity for quiet, subtly-observed characterization; but he has none of the stiffness and self-conscious wordiness that are often the negative aspects of directors seen as having a literary bent. However, I would very much like to see Ivory (and his usual collaborators) address themselves to such disparate works as Jane Austen's *Emma*, E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* and Martin Boyd's "Langton" novels. He has shown himself unusually sensitive to the infiltration of one culture or class by another, and to the phenomenon of transition within a culture. This would not be enough reason for wanting him to have a go at two classics of the language or at the homegrown pleasures of the Boyd chronicles of a vanishing class in a situation of conflicting cultural mores. The fact is that Ivory has exhibited a sensibility sufficiently acute to the nuances of others without losing his own distinctive voice in the process.

As one speaks of Ivory in this way, it is important to draw attention to the team which has been responsible for most of the films he has directed. With a fine arts background from the University of Oregon and as a graduate of the film department of the University of Southern California, he had some brief experience as a maker of short films before going to India in 1960. He formed there an enduring partnership with the local filmmaker Ismael Merchant who has produced almost all of Ivory's subsequent films, and a perhaps even more important collaboration with Ruth Prawer Jhabvala. Jhabvala, a German-born author of Polish-Jew extraction, became Indian on marriage, and she is the author (or, with Ivory himself on several occasions, co-author) of all but two of his feature films. The Ivory-Merchant-Jhabvala team not surprisingly has access to a good deal of inter-
cultural understanding — not just, say, of Anglo-India, but of the phenomenon of cultural inter-penetration or of the impingement of one culture upon another. They seem to me as convincingly at home in Henry James’ New England, under siege to European sophistication, or the conflicting theatrical coteries of present-day New York, as in the echoing palaces of dispossessed Indian princes.

So much about their films is so attractive that there is a temptation to over-value them. There is something reassuringly civilized, perceptive and kindly about most of their films — or most that I have been able to see, and I regret distribution-imposed gaps. Undramatic auteur(s), their work remains persistently small-scale. I am idiotically and punningly reminded of that remark of Jane Austen’s about working with “the little bit (two inches wide) of Ivory”), and it is hard to imagine its ever reaching a large popular audience. I am not suggesting that all their films are delicate little artefacts born to blush unseen, only that they seem less concerned with gratifying audience expectations than most people currently — or at any time — involved in commercial filmmaking.

In their 12 feature films, there have been miscalculations: no one seems to have much liked The Wild Party (1974) set in Hollywood in 1929, an end-of-era account of a silent film comedian’s decline, and Quartet (1981) offers little scope for the team’s usual felicities. Nevertheless, even a failed Ivory-Merchant-Jhabvala film will not be vulgar, crass, glib or foolish. This isn’t intended wholly as praise; I’d rather see a lurid Vincente Minnelli ‘failure’ or a generous, sloppy piece of latter-day John Ford well below the master’s best than an Ivory failure. He and his partners have the kind of quiet intelligence and good taste that look sterile and centre-less when the enterprise as a whole seems outside the range of their sensibilities and temperaments.

The two latest Ivories have slunk into Melbourne, for fleeting visits, within weeks of each other. The newer film Quartet, a British-French co-production, was finished in early 1981, and had a deservedly brief season here at the Rivoli Camberwell in February 1982. The earlier — and, appetites whetted by overseas reviews, more eagerly awaited — Jane Austen in Manhattan, a British-American co-production which opened in London in September 1980, has been given a two-week Melbourne airing at the enterprising and pleasant Brighton Bay Twin Cinemas. Prior to these latest arrivals, The Europeans (1979) had a solid season of several months at the Rivoli — the best Melbourne screenings so far for an Ivory film — whereas Hulabaloos over Georgie and Bonnie’s Pictures (1978) and, the team’s masterpiece, Autobiography of a Princess (1975) comprised a week’s double bill at the Universal Theatre Fitzroy in early 1980. Not exactly Star Wars treatment as to distribution and rightly not, but it is a little sad to think that such attractive work as the best Ivory seems doomed to be peripheral to mainstream cinema.

In one way or other, within or between cultures or coteries, Ivory’s films have shown a persistent interest in exploring some of the subler — and sometimes not-so-subtle — forms of exploitation and manipulation that can color and muddy the waters of human relationships. Eugenia Munster (Lee Remick) and her brother Felix (Tim Woodward) set out unconsciously, and with a variety of motives, to woo their New England cousins the

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H. J. Heidler (Alan Bates) and his “waif-in-residence”, Marya Zelli (Isabelle Adjani). James Ivory’s Quartet.

Wentworths in The Europeans. Cyril (James Mason), the English tutor in Autobiography of a Princess, knows that he was played upon by his master, the Indian prince. The three theatrical producers (Anne Baxter, Robert Powell and Michael Shaw) in Jane Austen in Manhattan are professional manipulators of other people, sometimes in the latter’s interests, sometimes not. These films seem to understand that a degree of acquiescence on the part of the “victim” can make the latter an inappropriate word for those being manipulated.

Quartet, the most recent film, is clearly interested in this theme, and in other recurring motifs in Ivory’s films. In recording a scene of transience, it is a triumph of decor, mood and atmosphere. There is nothing permanent in this 1920s Paris where the cast spends most of its time at cafes and nightclubs. It is no more likely to survive intact than the British raj or New England rigidities under an invasion by Europeans.

But in Quartet nothing works except on the level of glittering surfaces. Unlike those earlier examinations of societies in late autumnal glory, Quartet offers essentially an example of the embalmer’s art. No flicker of real life, no vigor or passion threatens to disturb its exquisite art direction. It may be that the Ivory-Jhabvala sensibility is simply at odds with Jean Rhys’ original. I have not read Quartet (and feel strongly undrawn to it), but those Rhys novels I do know, angular explorations of put-upon waifs, depressed and depressing, sharp and grim, seem to have little in common with the perceptive, witty, quietly civilized works of the Ivory team.

The latter may have been drawn to the exploitative triangular relationship at the centre of the work. The husband of Marya Zelli (Isabelle Adjani) goes to goad for trafficking. She then is taken up by, and becomes waif-in-residence with, H. J. Heidler (Alan Bates) and his wife Lois (Maggie Smith). Each of these plans, in his or her way, to exploit her — he to seduce, she to paint Marya — but Marya’s plight seems almost purposely drained of feeling. She is not so much an enigma (that could be tantalizing) as a cipher. Perhaps Adjani is simply too lushly sensual to suggest Jean Rhys’ autobiographically-based orphan of the storm.

In theory, perhaps, there was the opportunity for an interesting tension between the muted glitter of Paris 1927 and the emotional violence of its heroine. A tension, that is, recalling that between the autumnal beauty of New England and the restless, disruptive emotions at work in The Europeans. In fact, it doesn’t work that way at all. The serenity/disruption dichotomy was as organic to Henry James’ original as it is to Ivory’s film; and the film kept finding cinematic ways of expressing the novel’s central tension.

In Quartet, one’s attention is constantly fixed on the muted tastefulness of the decor, and the expectation roused by the piercing score heard
over the opening discretions of the camera is never gratified. The film remains more interested in its lovingly photographed mise-en-scene, the camera dwelling for artefacts which resist revealing psychological and emotional states. For example: whereas Joseph Losey made a tea-pouring scene in The Go-Between imply a comment on the decorum of a way of life, a decorum at odds with its emotional instabilities, in Quartet a coffee-pouring scene is just — and equivalently — about coffee-pouring. It is unresonant.

Everything then in Quartet is superb to look at. Nightclubs, restaurants, apartments, hotels, streets, costumes, hats, make-up: all are as perfectly conceived and executed as art direction can manage. (This is a characteristic Ivory virtue, by the way.) But as the camera lingers over a breakfast table laid with jugs and cups and croissants prior to cutting to the go at which Marya's husband is detained, one is aware of the stylistic effect of the contrast without having been made emotionally concerned about anyone. The film's subdued grey-blue look catches, in a general and superficial way, Rhys' usual bleakness of mood, but Ivory and Co. have not been able to persuade us — perhaps not themselves — that there is any cause for pathos, let alone tragedy, in the aimless, dislocated life of Marya Zelli.

Though it seems to me his least successful, Quartet is still recognizably an Ivory film: thematically it is concerned with contrasting ways of life, with evanescence, with manipulative relationships; stylistically, it has the usual accurate sense of place and period; and, as usual, it elicits some subtly-effective performances (from Smith, particularly), largely through Ivory's reliance on his actors' faces, captured typically in close-ups and two-shots. That it doesn't work may be due in part to a too-stately, not to say lethargic, rhythm, but mainly, I believe, because the film's makers appear uninterested in the lives they put before us.

In the team's penultimate film, Jane Austen in Manhattan, a year-and-a-half late reaching Australia, all these elements fuse seamlessly to make a witty and elegant entertainment. The arena here for the manipulative games is the off-Broadway theatre scene and the McGuffin is a recently-discovered piece of juvenilia by Jane Austen — a melodramatic play, Sir Charles Grandison, based on Samuel Richardson's novel. The play is bought at auction by George Midash (Michael Wager), a mutton-chinned bachelor and chairman of a family art foundation which decides to give the play and a grant to stage it to Pierre Cartier (Robert Powell), charismatic leader of the Manhattan Encounter Theatre Laboratory.

The film's central conflict is that between Pierre and his former teacher and lover, Lilianna Zoska (Anne Baxter), who also wants the play and the grant to stage her own operatic version of it. A young girl, Ariadne (Sean Young), is drawn into Pierre's group — "kidnapped" by Pierre from her husband Victor (Kurt Johnson), a rising young musical comedy star. Ultimately, Lilianna entices off all Pierre's acolytes except Ariadne, and, we understand, her production is to be performed.

The Austen fragment is about kidnapping, about the forcible manipulation of lives. "You shall be mine. Your fate is determined. I won you from my rivals", sings Pierre as the abductor in an imaginary episode from Lilianna's production. At the first rehearsal of Pierre's modernist/absurdist production, Pierre urges Ariadne as the victim to "think of a kidnap scene in your own life", and he pushes her to recall that he "forcibly took [her] away from home". Manipulation and exploitation are not the same thing but they are related, and here Pierre manipulates Ariadne by exploiting a painful memory in her own life to achieve the response he wants in his play. As Ariadne recalls their first meeting, the day he "forcibly took [her] away" from Victor, a flashback reveals Pierre conducting a workshop session in which the actors, miming relationships, were then "split" apart at Pierre's command. He then asks with a smile, "How does it feel to be split from your other half?"
Anne Baxter as Liliana Zorska: "all the style and sharpness... that 40 years of Hollywood stardom might be expected to bring". Jane Austen in Manhattan.

accused her of "doing shabby third-rate plays" and drawn out her love for him while his dim protege Billy (Charles McCaughan) is listening. Pierre has thus insulted her both as a professional and as a woman.

The only manipulation that no one seems to mind — and it is part of the film's generosity about the theatre, and its variety, to include this — is that illustrated in the rehearsals for Victor's musical comedy, Here We Are Again. In the brief scenes devoted to this there is a convincing air of devotion to the routines devised by the choreographer, played by Michael Shawn as a satirical sketch of Bob Fosse (or of Roy Scheider as Bob Fosse). It is during the party following the successful opening night of Here We Are Again that Pierre, through the agency of Ariadne's gloomy folk-singing friend Katya (Katrina Hodiak), manoeuvres Ariadne away from Liliana and Victor.

Liliana's methods are less mesmeric than Pierre's but they are just as calculated. They are seen at their most successful in a scene with George, which begins with her saying, "Utter rubbish and nonsense", in close-up, in response to George's feeble defence that, when he is with Pierre, he is convinced that Pierre is right. In a virtuoso shot, the camera executes an almost 360° pan which dramatizes the idea of Liliana's encircling of George, as she, replying to his anecdote about a childhood seaside bully, lulls him with a promise to "help him fight bigger boys". At this point the fantasy opera sequence denotes that Liliana is a stage nearer her goal, the suggestion of her imminent victory over Pierre signified by his singing the abductor role. One by one she woos Pierre's followers to her purpose: as she washes Ariadne's hair, she complains that Pierre is using and ruining her, whereas "I could make something of you if you'd let me"; seeking out Katya in the cafe where she sings, Liliana seduces her with "I'm sure, so sure, you could be a great dramatic actress" and "I can't pretend I wasn't like you at one time" (an in-joke here since the actress is Baxter's daughter by John Hodiak).

Part of the film's success is the superbly-assured playing of Anne Baxter and Robert Powell as the chief theatrical gurus and manipulators. She has all the style and sharpness — and, it must be said, warmth — that 40 years of Hollywood stardom might be expected to bring, and she uses them to dazzle and sometimes touching effect. On a bare dark screen, her head rises up from the bottom of the frame as if from bowing to an imaginary audience, and in this gesture, and in the way she walks across the empty stage and surveys the auditorium, one feels that those 40 years have not been wasted. The older woman in love with the young man, who uses then finishes with her, is a character ripe for sympathy, but while Anne Baxter achieves this it is not at the expense of Liliana's more calculating elements.

Powell is equal to the challenge of this performance and it is important to the film's multi-layered tensions and conflicts that he should be so. Whereas Liliana is all expansive "theatrical" gestures, Pierre's charisma is a matter of the eyes, of a holding stillness, and Ernest Vincze's camera knows exactly how to deal with each. But though the two stars properly dominate, the entire cast — mostly youthful, mostly unknowns — is a pleasure to watch and listen to. The young ones are touching as they try to sort out their goals and allegiances; the older ones amusing, without resort to caricature, as they win from Pierre's production.

In fact, nobody emerges as a caricature. There is a pervasive warmth and generosity about the writing, the direction and the playing that resists stereotype and simplism, and scene after scene resonates with intimations of real experience. There is, for instance, a beautifully-played scene between Victor and Jamie (Tim Choate—Clifford in The Europeans), in which we rightly laugh at Jamie's line, "Pierre wants me to play this clergyman as a 10-year-old", but can still see there might be a satiric point to Pierre's interpretation. And we can feel for Jamie as he tries to work out the way "Pierre has that effect on people" as Victor recalls how Ariadne had come so wholly under his spell. This gets a deeper emotional toning from Victor's recollection of how they had first come to New York together, determined to make it in the theatre; she had been so "ardent" and, "The way she is about this [the play] is how she used to be about me." The film is suddenly very affecting about young lives and plans gone awry.

Like all the Ivory films I know, Jane Austen in Manhattan has a very sure sense of place. This is not Woody Allen's Manhattan we are given here but it is just as real and, in its own way, just as romantic. Avoiding the usual Brooklyn-side view of the Manhattan skyline, Ivory and Ernest Vincze's extraordinarily-delicate color photography creates images of rubbish-strewn streets, backstage entrances and alleys, late-afternoon skyscrapers glimpsed through studio windows, that are a constant ravishment of the eye. Inside, camera and art direction (Jeremiah Rusconi) combine to discriminate precisely among the Laboratory's rehearsal rooms, Liliana's studio and apartment, George's elegant dining-room, his loft nonchalantly stuffed with valuable artefacts, and the low-lit cafe where Katya sings.

The place ways look in this — and other Ivory films — is part of the way the film means: contrasting lifestyles are suggested through the film's unobtrusive, utterly confident attention to details of the mise-en-scene of which the characters are convincingly both extensions and producers.
As the camera tracks through and above Bombay streets, western music is heard on the soundtrack. The credits for Bombay Talkie, Ivory's 1970 film, are announced on a series of huge film advertising boardings stuck up in these city streets — and a red London bus arbitrarily appears. The recurrent thematic interest in the impingement of one culture on another is thus announced at the outset, visual and aural signifiers explicitly, but also unobtrusively, preparing the ground for the film's inter-social emotional intimacies.

"You want too much... but you must have had a lot of difficulties", a fortune-teller replies to Lucia Lane's (Jennifer Kendal) questions about her future. Lucia, a best-selling American novelist with four husbands behind her, has just written a book about Hollywood and has come to Bombay to write her next. Self-centred, vain and restless, Lucia is drawn to Hari (Zia Mohyeddin), an impoverished aspiring writer (his play is "symbolical of present-day India"), and to Vikram (Shashi Kapoor), the handsome, conceited star of a series of foolish-looking films.

Hari is the most sympathetic of these three central characters but even he, in his soulfulness and apparent idealism, wants Lucia's interest in and support for his work, and his sexual intentions towards her are not much different from Vikram's: he simply wraps them up in more poetic utterances. Vikram can never resist a poetic utterance. His concern is characteristically for himself and his status, not for another person.

But the centre of the film is Lucia, and Jennifer Kendal takes a superbly-written role by the throat and never lets go. She understands perfectly the compulsive predatoriness of this woman who regards other people — Hari, Vikram, even her daughter at school in Switzerland — and, indeed, India at large as being there for her gratification. She teases the besotted Hari by, for instance, asking him to zip up her dress or by twice asking him about the "very handsome" actor whom he jealously despises; and she has no intention of responding to Hari's passion for her. She exploits this, just as she exploits Vikram's supposed love for her, because it suits her inclination at the time.

Jennifer Kendal sparcs us nothing of Lucia's exploitiveness, or her romantic superficiality about either India or the "decadent West", or her vanity. Equally, though, she ensures that the audience will see the film's chief drama in her crumbling composure. Clearly aging, extravagantly dressed and coiffed, she is increasingly a pitiable figure. Both love and the serenity she exploits for her gratification. She teases the besotted Hari by, for instance, asking him to zip up her dress or by twice asking him about the "very handsome" actor whom he jealously despises; and she has no intention of responding to Hari's passion for her. She exploits this, just as she exploits Vikram's supposed love for her, because it suits her inclination at the time.

Jennifer Kendal's performance of remarkable detail and amplitude is by no means a failure; it is just less sure-footed and less resonant between its levels of interest than one expects of an Ivory film.

The indisputable masterpiece to have emerged so far from the Ivory-Merchant-Jhabvala stable is Autobiography of a Princess (1975). In just under an hour, a whole life and a whole vanished way of life are revealed with understanding, compassion and economy.

Behind the credit titles, the camera gracefully spans and tracks up and down, to left and right, through the halls of an Indian palace, noting here a portrait of Queen Victoria, there some traditional dancing. The scene cuts to the cluttered interior of a Kensington apartment, dominated by a too-large chandelier and a large portrait of a decorated Indian prince; there are...
also a laden tea-table, and — curiously — a film projector and screen. An Indian lady finishes dressing, and a denim-clad youth, talking to her with a cigarette in his mouth, re-arranges the equipment. The room is divided by the narrow windows which give on to other apartment blocks, these contrasting with the palatial spaces of the Indian scene. In narrative terms, the obvious question is: What is the connection between the two opening scenes? Ah, one feels confident, this is to be a tale of transition and decline — and so it is, but it is also more than this. The other narrative question is: What are these preparations (the tea, the screen) for?

In the third sequence, an elderly visitor in western dress arrives to be met on the stairs by the Indian lady whose hand he kisses. She is "My dear Princess", he is "Cyril Sahib", and in her servant-less flat they drink a toast in tea to her father. A pervasive air of ritual is confirmed when she says "Everything's ready for the annual treat." The annual event is a sharing of the memories of the old days in India, memories nudged by home movies of life in the Princess' father's palace where Cyril was tutor, and, this year, further kindled by wittily-contrived "BBC interviews" with disenchanted Indian aristocrats, peevishly describing the loss of their power and position.

The Princess maintains a running commentary during the home movies ("Papa loved parties and fun, but what did he do?" etc.), and her commentary and the movies recreate a luxurious and hedonistic past. But, as she chatters on, we are aware of waiting for some further tension to develop. Cyril, mouth slightly open, ready to laugh to please the Princess, kind, deferential, at first seems no more than an audience, a catalytic presence for the revelation of the glory that was India. Increasingly though, it is clear that the camera is evenly divided between their two faces (and the movies), and a new tension enters the film as the Princess urges him to write about her father and their way of life.

From this point, it is apparent that the film is as much — more? — concerned with Cyril Sahib's lost life as with the Princess'. He has spent years in patient unexciting research for a book on one Denis Lever, "an Englishman in India", but a different sort of Englishman who knew a different India from Cyril Sahib's. At the Princess' prompting, he begins to reminisce and his memories provoke pain as well as nostalgia: "I lived in India, but I was in India", he says, "I was living in luxury", and the picture he calls up is criticism as well as evocation.

This is a film which tempts one to describe it in detail in the hope of making its pleasures vivid to more than the small audience one fears has actually seen the film. It is not possible here to do more than suggest that gradually Cyril Sahib emerges as the chief character, that his quiet watchfulness and gentle agitation are at the heart of the film; that, as we watch him stir, politely at first and then unceasingly, by the home movies, we realize Ivory's Chekhovian skill in sensing the drama of scenes where nothing much seems to be happening; and, perhaps above all, that James Mason as Cyril Sahib is giving the performance of his career and indeed one of the great acting performances of the cinema. Faintly shabby, without pomposity, with a deference still for the Princess, Cyril Sahib is a relic trying now to live with dignity in quiet retirement. The annual treat means something different for him from what it means to the Princess. For Cyril, the movies create a montage of India: of appalling heat, of omnipresent crowds, of mystifying and mysterious ceremonials (weddings and burials now all mixed together in his mind), of the sadness of dancing girls no longer in their first youth, of the transience of so much within the life of an Indian principality and of the painful transition from that tradition-ridden way to the harsh facts of the new. But above all, the movies force Cyril — gently but inexorably — to evaluate his life in India and his association with the Princess' father, the Maharajah.

As the camera pulls back to show Cyril wholly surrounded by artefacts belonging to the past, the Princess asks him why he did not speak up for her father when he was involved in a London hotel scandal. (A flashback showing this is the one clumsy note in the film.) Cyril's plea that he was only an Englishman who had stayed in India too long, and was therefore powerless in the crisis, is only part of the answer. The truth lies in the complexity of his relationship with the Maharajah: recognizing his hanger-on status, he had nevertheless let Cyril, humiliated by the Maharajah in front of the English (for being no good at games, for being a "degenerate"), he has also received "the most delicate personal attentions from the Prince" (e.g., at the time of his mother's death). In the end, it doesn't matter much to us what the Maharajah was like; what does matter is that Cyril Sahib's life was wholly manipulated by him as he moved unpredictably between generosity and cruelty. In the process, Cyril has been irrevocably reduced, until now he has his "research, writing, and walks by the sea".

What has been revealed is not so much the autobiography of a princess (wonderful though Madhur Jaffrey is in the role) but the reluctant biography of an Englishman who had stayed in India too long. Ivory and Jhavvala have achieved a subtle triumph in making us aware of the texture of the life behind this grey-suited, elderly man for whom the Princess paces cackles for him to take home. It is his western life, more than hers, that has been utterly shaken up, and Ivory and Jhavvala, with flawless precision and tact, dramatize the manipulation by his friend/master/perhaps lover, and his sober acceptance of the transitoriness of all experience.

The persistent Ivory concerns are all here and, as Cyril Sahib walks off into the grey English twilight, one is left to re-arrange one's views on film narrative and film art. An elderly man visits a younger Indian woman, has tea, chats, watches home movies, recalls what was and adjusts to the dissolution of what is — and the result, as I began by saying, is a masterpiece, certainly one of the most nearly perfect films of my experience.

When I first saw The Europeans (1979), it was my introduction to Ivory and Co., and I concluded my review2 by saying: "The sensibilities are clearly in tune with what they are doing and the result is a civilized pleasure indeed." Having seen most of the other Ivory films since, I am happy to stand by that judgment; it was meant to suggest that James' range of interests — in individuals and cultures — is very congenial to Ivory. In fact, these interests in the way people exploit each other, in the way one culture works on another, are, as I have shown, endemic in Ivory's work. In the case of The Europeans he has met the challenge of a master and emerged with credit, because he (and Jhavvala) are emotionally in tune with the original, whereas they appear to be not so in the case of that minor idiosyncrat Jean Rhys in Quartet.

A great author's tone, the most intractable individual aspect of his achievement, tends not to be susceptible to visual translation. It would be surprising if it were. Other film versions of James' novels — William Wyler's handsome adaptation of Washington Square as The Heiress, Jack Clayton's The Innocents (from The Turn of the Screw), and Peter Bogdanovich's Daisy Miller — have all been intelligent and stylish films. Nevertheless, they have not found it easy to strike a visual equivalent for the fine ironic exactness of James' prose, and, in consequence, the subtlety of his discriminations sometimes eludes them. Ivory, Jhavvala and Merchant in The Europeans have come nearer.

How did "Heatwave" develop as a film?

The film was originally conceived by two architecture graduates, Tim Gooding and Mark Stiles. When I got to the script it was called King's Cross, Tim Gooding was no longer working on it and Mark Stiles had done several drafts by himself. That was in December 1979 and, at that stage, it wasn't set in a heatwave or around Christmas.

Although the central character was an architect, a consideration of the dilemma facing a contemporary architect was not as important to the screenplay as the political elements. For better or worse, I encouraged the screenplay to take the directions we see in the final film.

Mark Stiles worked with me on a number of drafts, and then Mark Rosenberg came into the project and worked with us. Eventually, Mark Stiles felt that the screenplay reflected more of our taste, that is of Mark Rosenberg and myself, so we decided, amicably, to take the principal responsibility for it.

To what extent was the film inspired by recent political events in inner urban conflicts, particularly the disappearance of activist Juanita Nielsen in the mid-1970s?

Many elements provided inspiration for the screenplay. The disappearance and alleged murder of Juanita Nielsen is perhaps the most controversial and well-known element. But just as important were such disparate events as the Hilton bombing, the crash of the Nugan-Hand bank, the death of Frank Nugan and discussions I had with dozens of people.

Originally, Mark Stiles set out to make a comment on the disappearance of Nielsen and the destruction of one particular street, but I felt that the film had the potential to be about a whole city.

This is reflected in the film by the emphasis on creating the atmosphere of the city. These social and atmospheric concerns seem to be just as important as the issues...

In Sydney, we are constantly scandalized by stories of alleged corruption, big business wheeler-dealing and deals that are allegedly being done between politicians, sportsmen, entertainers, ad infinitum. It is always going on; it is a very paranoid city. People are always looking over their shoulder and wondering who is up to what. And nobody, throughout all this maze of almost paranoid rumors, has been able to put it together. I didn't want to put it all together either, because I thought, if no one else has been able to, why should I presume that I could?

What I find interesting about all this is the atmosphere that seems to be so prevalent in Sydney, the paranoia of contemporary Sydney, where everyone has a little piece of information, but nobody has all the pieces that make up the jigsaw.

The film attempts, therefore, in its structure of almost clipped montage and in its visual style, to move cinematically from social realism — that is, a realistic interpretation of characters and events through to a much more disjointed type of surrealism.

The surrealistic aspects, created by elements such as the music and the camera movements, seem to be part of your attempt to emphasize a city sweltering in a heatwave ...

Yes, the music plays a very important part in the evocation of atmosphere; so do the camera movements. A number of pieces of music were recorded as guide tracks before the film was shot, and played to the crew and myself while we were shooting so we could sort of get into the same rhythm as the music we had planned.

Eighty-five per cent of the film is underscored by music of one sort or another, and the composer, Cameron Allan, the sound designer, Greg Bell, and myself had a very close relationship. We considered all the elements together in planning the whole soundtrack — that is music and sound effects — rather than one team working independently of the other.

I suppose one of the chief means by which a mood is created, and again it is tied up with an attempt to create this feeling of paranoia, is the creeping camera, which is almost like someone tip-toeing through a place he is not meant to be in.

You may have noticed that one of the visual motifs is a converging camera, but it is not a fast converging camera: it creeps forward slowly, which of course culminates in the final shot of the film.

These effects are apparent. The film has an almost hypnotic rhythm and a lot of care has been taken in the structure. Australian filmmakers have had, I think, quite a deal of trouble with structure, a difficulty in sustaining a rhythm ...

This is something about which I am well aware. One of our original ideas, conceived in conjunction with our director of photography, Vince Monton, was that with every minute of the film the size of each of the characters in the frame should change. The film should start out quite loose — and, of course, a loose frame doesn't communicate tension — and then slowly creep in. This way the tension builds up, until the last section of the film, which was to have been shot on long telephoto lenses that isolated the characters from their background.

I eventually shied away from that because we had gone to a lot of trouble to short-circuit characterization by using decor and visual elements within the frame to tell our story. I felt that if we started to isolate the faces from the background, we would lose another thing we had been aiming for: to convey the idea that people's actions are influenced by the decor and architecture of the rooms in which they live and think. So, in fact, we didn't follow those original ideas through as far as we could have.

By those visual elements I take it you are referring to settings, such as the head office of Hausman's empire, which had tiger rugs, and Kate Dean's flat ...

Yes, and her clothes, which may not be so readily recognizable to an audience outside Sydney. The T-shirt she often wears, with the Waratah emblem, comes from a very exclusive boutique. Although she has set herself up as a savior of the lower classes, there are visual hints in the first half of the film that she is in fact from a middle-class background. Viewers who are conscious of a costume would realize that she was not wearing a $1 T-shirt, and could not have, therefore, been genuinely a part of that working-class milieu.

Although those visual clues are present, on the other hand they are offset by the fact that she actually seems to be very uncomfortable in middle-class settings. In this respect, I was struck by the similarity between Judy Davis' performances in "Winter of Our Dreams" and in "Heatwave" — this feeling of her being out of place in more wealthy surroundings ...

Yes, but she is playing a character who is caught in a class vacuum. She has rejected her middle-class background and is trying to identify with the working class, which she would like to adopt. She is trying to change her spots, and a leopard can't do that.
So her chief characteristic would be her alienation . . .

Yes, very much so. In fact, they are the very words that finally provided the basis for Judy's performance. Judy said to me, "I take it that you are aiming for is to show my journey in this film as a journey towards total alienation." She summed it up better than I could have.

That puts the relationship between her and Stephen West in a interesting perspective . . .

Well, he is on a very different journey. He is, in a sense, an opposite, an upward mobile. They collide at Christmas, then everyone goes back to their real homes, whether they are living in a luxurious Harbour-side apartment or a tenement house in the inner city.

I often meet people who come from quite opposed backgrounds, and I am attracted to them for all kinds of reasons; they tend to have a certain magnetism.

To what extent does an actress like Judy Davis assume autonomy for the role? How strongly does the force of her own personality and acting style come through?

Judy Davis is a star. She will always be different, but she will always be Judy Davis. I think that when we look at her, we suspend our disbelief. For me, Bryan Brown is similar.

But the real question you are asking is: how much autonomy does an actor have? Under my direction, an actor has as much autonomy as I can give them. No one director, as far as I am concerned, is ever going to be able to come up with more ideas than any two actors. An actor studies his or her character, tries to work out a logic for the behaviour as detailed in the script, and tries to communicate, perhaps, a lot that is not written in the dialogue. Actors try to make sense out of the progression or journey they are asked to undertake from the first to the last frame.

The director sets up the facility for actors to study the background of their characters — talking about where they would have come from, where they will be in 10 years, what school they came from, their religion, what they have studied, the jobs they have done — all those sorts of things. If it is a professional interest, such as in Richard Moir's case, in acting the role of an architect, I would encourage him to undertake a fairly detailed study of architecture, and meet a lot of architects.

Still, you would like all your actors to take flight — that is, to inhabit the role, to take it over — and I guess Judy is more possessive than most actors. It is not that she is more dedicated, but that she almost becomes the character. She goes through a metamorphosis as she approaches a role. You can feel that the tensions running through her body are quite different as she approaches each film.

Richard Moir had a much more subdued, passive role in comparison to the one played by Davis . . .

Richard is playing a character that is the antithesis of the macho lead man we have come to expect in cinema. Most of his action takes place in his mind. He is not a strongly physical person. The experience of working with Richard was a very pleasant one.

Peter Hausman seems to be a likeable person, and very dynamic. What we didn't want was for the film to become a predictable goodies versus baddies television episode — the bad real-estate developer and the good lower-income workers who are his tenants. Life is a lot more complex than that — although finally, perhaps, it boils down to black and white. But there is hell of a lot of grey in between.

We deliberately set out to make the character most of the audience would identify as the bad guy as the most attractive character in the film. The audience then would be uncertain in their reactions to this character. So, although they might like to hate him, they cannot help but like him.

There were a couple of characters who did seem stereotyped: Barbie Lee, the King's Cross prostitute, and Dick Molnar, the shady strip-club owner . . .

I suppose these characters could have been more developed, but they deliberately weren't. Molnar, the strip-club owner, is a mythical figure in Sydney. Stories of Mr Bigs and Mr Sins are always around in that scene. We are always hearing stories that such and such a guy runs the brothel scene, and such
and such a guy runs the drug scene, or that this guy is the king of crime and vice. And all the kings of vice are shadowy figures about whom the public knows very little. We sometimes see their pictures in the paper, and there are allegations made about their associations with people.

We tried to make the character of Molnar a stereotype, inasmuch as he reproduced the average Sydneysider's relationship with a Mr Sin — a man who comes and goes, but about whom not much is known.

Barbie Lee is the one character we inherited from the original draft Tim Gooding worked on. Is she a stereotype? Well, I live in King's Cross, and I think I have met a lot of Barbie Lees. They are stereotypes because heroin does strange things to people, in that heroin addicts tend to act in similar ways. I am not suggesting that heroin leads people to commit murders, but there is a uniformity about their characters, their obsessions and their speech patterns. So, I would say that she is a justified stereotype.

Why have you chosen to live in King's Cross?

Most of my friends live there. I am a bit like Kate Dean; I covet a close neighborhood relationship with people, rather than the separateness of suburban living. I have lived all over Sydney, and in some beautiful places like Palm Beach. But I really like being a pedestrian and living in an inner-city life where people can meet and talk, and get to know each other. Also, I find that King's Cross is a source of enormous energy. It is the place where everyone in the country goes to get their rocks off in one way or another, whether they come from Broken Hill or Darwin. It is the focal point for a certain type of energy — it is all focused on that strip in King's Cross. It is just over the hill from there, which means I don't have to encounter it — I live in a quiet street — and yet I can draw from it.

Did you actually grow up in Sydney?

I grew up in Griffith, in the Murrumbidgee irrigation area, which is not your average country town, in that more than 50 per cent of the town is of Italian origin. The town is also surrounded by small landholdings of citrus and lettuce lots. So, it is a much more European setting than a normal Australian country town.

I moved to Sydney when I was 12. My father was a lawyer and a farmer; he grew up on a farm, but made most of his money as a lawyer.

Are you drawn towards a subject set in an area like Griffith?

Not particularly. Sometimes you think of an idea and you want to make it. At other times someone gives you a script and you can’t put it down. The next film I am going to do is called The Umbrella Woman and it was just such a script. It was given to me by Margaret Kelly, who wrote the screenplay for Puberty Blues, and it was written by Peter Kenna, the Australian playwright who wrote The Hard God.

In many ways, it is a sort of Antipodean Madame Bovary; it is about a woman's need to attain sexual fulfilment in what she perceives as being a void or a gap. She fixes her attention on a philanthrope who woos her and then rejects her. She pursues him recklessly and relentlessly.

The film is set in 1938 in a small northern New South Wales logging town, but of course the emotions it depicts are universal. So, it is going to be quite a different film to Heatwave. Newfront or Backroads.

In the films you have made, despite their different styles and structures, there has always been a fairly significant political content. You seem to be trying to get across certain social values. Do you find a conflict in the ways in which you have to commercialize and dramatize issues to make a marketable product?

Yes, of course. It is a conflict, and it makes films on these subjects difficult to finance and, to a lesser extent, to get audiences to see. Whether we like it or not, cinema, as opposed to television, is primarily used by the audience as an escape device. People want to escape the mundanity of their lives and buy a ticket to their dreams; they want to go somewhere else, and don't want to see their dirty linen. Therefore, films that are in any way confronting, but particularly when they deal with contemporary political or social issues, are even more difficult.

So, there is a conflict. Perhaps if we had a state-financed film industry, such as in a socialist country, and a socialized distribution industry, Heatwave might have turned out to be quite a different film, with different elements. Of course, we would all like to rewrite the Hollywood rules, but unfortunately we can't just do it overnight, because you can't change audience expectations. And if you attempt to do it too radically, you find that you have no audience, which defeats your whole purpose. So, you are communicating to no one, and I guess that in Heatwave there is an uneasy tension between those elements.

A striking feature of your work is its editing. "Newfront" was in a sense an editor's film, full of sharp cuts and a sustained rhythm. In "Heatwave" there is also a certain rhythm you try to get throughout the film, co-ordinating the music, soundtrack, editing and cinematography. How much influence did you, as a director, have on the editing and those other elements?

There was the need for originality in general, and not necessarily the establishment of a national style, because I think that is possible.

It is interesting to list the films that the cast and crew studied for months before the film. They were: Chinatown, Taxi Driver, Mean Streets, The Conformist, Parallax View, Big Sleep, Postman Always Rings Twice, Double Indemnity, The Fountainhead and a documentary made by Pat Fiske in Sydney called Woolloomooloo. You draw inspiration from many sources.

You have often used Vince Monton as your cameraman. Is this a collaboration that will continue?

Yes, as much as possible. It is really quite hard doing a film because you can be working with more than 100 people. The relationship you have with any one person is severely limited by your time and energy; you have to split yourself up into so many areas of collaboration. So you tend to have a fragmented relationship with people. This is especially the case when you are working with actors.
The actor-director relationship is based on trust. It is unlike on the stage where the actor has to have the audience as a litmus paper to guide him in the effectiveness of his communication and performance. On a film set, the actor has himself — and the director, who for better or worse is the person that the actor primarily turns to for guidance and assistance. And for an actor to really give all, to go out on a limb, to try the impossible, you need to have quite a close relationship.

In general, when I find people with whom I have a profitable relationship, I like working with them as much as possible — because the creative relationship develops over time. You can get to the stage where you can communicate in shorthand, and with cinematographers, editors and composers you start to know what hidden tricks they haven't yet pulled out, and you can encourage them to draw them out.

Of course, this could change on different types of projects where you want a fresh input, a different perspective. But generally you keep some collaborations going. Why should Peter Weir change Russell Boyd or Bruce Beresford change Don McAlpine as their cinematographers when together they have done their best work?

There are some similarities between “Heatwave”, and Peter Weir's “Last Wave”. In both films there is a concentration on creating atmosphere, and using the elements, such as water, as a recurring physical theme...

I wasn't consciously aware of it; but I must have been aware, because there are some similarities, as you have pointed out. One is influenced by all the films one has seen, especially by Australian films in my case, because they have more direct relevance to my work. If one wants to create an eerie feeling, one of the main methods is music. I guess a major similarity of both films is the electronic scores. But it was never conscious.

How did you arrive at the futuristic Eden design?

We invited a couple of architects to submit designs and, quite by accident, the one to which we responded best was designed by a man whose experience paralleled that of the film architect, Steve West. The designer, Paul Pholeros, became the alter ego for Steve West. He walked into our office, having prepared some series of crazy drawings and a futuristic design for a building, and within a short time he had convinced us that this was the one for us. So we gave him his blank cheque to build his 3-metre by 6-metre model, and he set to work with a team of model builders. It took them many months to build. Of course, the building could be built; it is practical.

Pholeros remained on the set to give advice on architectural matters. The character of West was also helped along by advice from other architects, and by Richard Moir's interpretation.

The overall feeling to the film, and this may fit in with your view of Sydney, is that ultimately everyone is locked into a game. No one really knows the solution — you can't pinpoint the real villain to the piece — and one can't come to grips with what is going on, even though there are some short-term resolutions. Do you see Sydney as some sort of interlocking set of power relationships?

To a degree. Of course, there is some sort of conclusion in the end: the strip-club owner is shot dead. But the story, in more ways than not, is open-ended.

Do you see any major responsibility on behalf of the Housing Commission, state authorities that have been involved in so many housing conflicts and scandals in recent inner-city politics?

I couldn't have brought in any more elements. We tried to deal with so many as it is, although we do refer briefly to the Housing Commission, Mary Ford says at the residents' meeting that if they can stall this a little longer Hausman will go broke, and the Government will take over, which is a reference to public housing, the only real solution to the problem of Edens being built. Edens are going to continue to be built, and that means lower-income earners, people who are disadvantaged for whatever reason, will continue to suffer without some form of intervention.

Violence is one form of intervention, which has been mainly practised, at least in the Sydney experience, by people who have wanted to build the buildings rather than those who have opposed them. But I think public housing is a more practical solution. We canvassed this only briefly.

Do you see a certain progression in your work, through the early documentaries to “Backroads”, “Newsfront” and “Heatwave”?

I don't see it, but inevitably there must be, because things happen by chance and they give rise to other events. But I just make them. I leave it to others to draw conclusions. ★

Phil Noyce

Noyce instructs Davis during a break between takes.
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SIGMA DATA CORPORATION
Many verbal brickbats were hurled towards Moritz de Hadeln in his third year as the director of this expensively-mounted, but artistically disappointing, Festival. However, he cannot be expected to run the Festival and make films for it. The brickbats should be directed at the Festival jury: in 1982, the grand prize, the Golden Bear, ought to have been withheld. But who could be nasty to gracious Joan Fontaine, who presided, or to ebullient Mitin Sal, or to Sydney’s David Stratton? All the same, they should not have given such a prestigious award to Rainer Werner Fassbinder’s Die sehnsucht der Veronika Voss, a clever-ennough pastiche of 1950s melodrama, which offered little beyond its visual flair in glittering black and white.

The characters in Veronika Voss are inexcusably one-dimensional. Their loveless passions or greedy cunning are the staple ingredients of all Fassbinder works, re-Sirked once again. One wet night in the park a youngish man (Hilmars Thalè) offers his coat to a drowned woman. She scatters hints of mystery as if she were setting up a beagle trial, and the young man, who strongly resembles James Mason when young, tracks her down in convoluted ways. Next time they meet, she is dolled up like a pantomime dame, in garments and make-up which spell allure. The reporter is duly allured, and the lady (Rosel Zech) turns out to be as tiresome as any ex-filmmaker who has taken to drugs could be. There is some by-play about a broken vase, concerning a sad old couple who are probably the blonde star’s Jewish parents. Whether they are blackmailed, or whether the daughter has mortgaged them for drugs, they are also in the power of the sinister dark-haired woman, somewhat like an up-market beautician, who turns out to be a capacious doctor ‘treating’ the addict, and whose ethics make the Mafia seem like the Girl Guides. The reporter checks her credentials with a leading specialist who, not surprisingly for a Fassbinder film, turns out to be the lady doctor’s chief accomplice.

Some of the shots, like diagonal streaks of light in a dark street, or of creamy women in creamy interiors,linger in the memory, and the soundtrack, too, is used with Fassbinder’s usual thumping-home skill. Besides, Fassbinder is very fashionable: his films seem to sell the largest number of tickets, and his secretary arranges the largest number of interviewsthat there can be a valid excuse for one-dimensional characterization; namely, to accommodate the larger-than-life personality of a star. Supported by Sally Field and Melinda Dillon, who are far from being mice, Paul Newman still towers as a star, the like of whom tends to be seen only in the retrospectives.

The Berlin retrospective was devoted to James Stewart, whose handsome, though ageing, presence still radiates stardom; and it was reassuring that even in Berlin The Philadelphia Story attracted crowds as easily as Fassbinder’s camped-up film noir.

Almost every film in Competition above the level of just-plain-awful received a Silver Bear for something or other. For instance, Wojciech Marczewski’s Dreßaece (variously mistranslated as Creeps, Shivers or Shudders) received its mantelpiece ornament for “originality”, a quality which, in this case, seems to have been confused with sincerity. Its subject has the hallmark of personal experience: it is about the indoctrination of a teenage boy in the Poland of 1955-56. His father is arrested, and his bookshelves reduced to rubble by the secret police just before the boy is chosen for a special training camp of Young Pioneers. The brainwashing is so powerful that, at a publicly-staged confession session, the boy betrays his closest friends, who have all been listening to Radio Free Europe.

Authentic as it is, to everyone who has seen Pal Gabo’s Angi Vera, Marczewski’s Creeps will seem a more diffuse, less dramatically-accentuated version of the same story. Even the preponderance of golden afternoon light, overhead shots of courtyards and stairs, and the film’s end with a journey away from the summer camp seem to stress the resemblance.

Similar, not particularly original, but well-made and moving, Hermann Zschoche’s Burgschaft für ein Jahr (On Pledge) is pleasingly intelligent and well-acted. The film’s heroine is a commonplace phenomenon: a woman who, in her late twenties, that she must start living like a grown-up woman if she accepts his claim on her children. To protect them from being taken into care, she should conform and be a good citizen. She wants to retain control of her children, though with the same inchoate, impulsive emotion which characterizes her love affair; but she begs for another chance.

An honest case of “please God make me good but not just yet”, it is touch-and-go throughout the film whether she reforms fast enough to be judged a responsible parent. Although she is living with a nice, reliable young man, she falls headlong in love with someone else; when he too leaves her, she goes on a bender; but she does bounce back.

As with most good films, the audience is left to decide whether her final compromises mean a happy ending, or a defeat of hope and high spirits. If, as society presumes, the children must come first, then all is well.

Anyway, Katrin Sass more than deserved her prize for the best actress. Once in a while, an off-putting synopsis and equally off-putting publicity stills are redeemed by the film itself, which deals with the uncompromising story with stylisitic consistency, and has an uncompromising integrity of script, direction and acting.

Hans Alfredson’s Den enalflige mordaren (The Simple-minded Murderer), with a story that sounds simplistic no matter how cleverly any synopsis would try to summarize it. However, the relationship between the clumsy hero, branded an idiot, but fully capable of learning useful skills, is searched in a period setting of the 1930s. The unscrupulous villain of a landowner and the boy’s clever, amoral sister end as Nazi; the well-meaning, honest peasant, who are the family of a para­plegic girl who befriends him and accepts his claim on her children, are presented with trench­ness.

Stellan Skarsgaard in the title role deservedly shared the prize for the best actor with the leading Eurostar, Michel Piccoli. Piccoli plays the enigmatic, entrancing businessman who distracts a young advertising accountant from his wife, his friends and even his gambling in Pierre Granier-Deferre’s Le grand crime, a Strange Affair, a period crime novel, a grand crime novel.

As a parable on how the world was, the film works with smooth, not to say slick, French savoir-faire.

Another Silver Bear, for the best script, was given to Zoltan Fabri’s Raquiem, a am handicapped, in appreciating this work by understanding every word of the Hungarian dialogue.
Above: Wojciech Mrozewski’s Dreszcze (Creeps): the brainwashing of youth. Left: Zoltán Fabri’s Requiem, the love-life of a beautiful Hungarian woman (Ede Fraj) during the 1950s. Below: Stig Rasmussen in Christian Brod Thomsen’s Kniven i hjertet (A Stab in the Heart), about a lonely, introverted postman.
without being able to believe a syllable.

The story, set in the early 1950s, raises some expectation of political interest. However, it is about the love-life of a beautiful young woman (Edit Fraj) whose first great love, a politically hasty marriage, was an underground Communist even before 1944, but he died in prison. It is only subtle signs which make us aware of his imprisonment and death occurred after the Communists came to power.

The woman is now married to an older lawyer who had helped the left-wing youngsters under Fascism, but who was powerless when they were arrested in the 1950s. One night a young man whose speech and gestures remind her of her first love arrives, fresh out of prison. The resemblance is not coincidental: the two were cell-mates, and the younger boy addressed to the point of copying his gestures, adopting his thoughts and quoting his favored poets. The lady is un settled, and decides to pack up and leave her husband, though whether to go with the boy, or just by herself, is not entirely clear. And it does not seem to matter.

As a love affair, their brief conjunction had every cinematic interest, and one single glimpse of mutual understanding. However, Requiem has been highly praised as stylized and impassioned.

This expectation, of seeing personal relationships handled with credibility and care by directors and budgets by producers, was disabused by two Danish films, presented in the market.

Stopping Out, directed by Esben Holmnd Carlsen, is a lightly-handled comedy about couples re-pairing after the damages of divorce. The story, of the postman who opens other people's mail, of a man who feels he has not done it better, or be so little than a character. As a love affair, their brief conjunction is disjunctive, what is left out as it is more with the articulation of space and time.

Who Speaks of Realism Here?

Every day, at the Berlin Film Festival, someone asks, "Seen any good films today?" It is a moment of terror; you are under interrogation and have no answer, no alibi. You (1) cannot remember which theatre you were in, what films you have seen and what gossip you have over heard. The context frames the films, and the way one responds to them in a particular way. There is so much on offer that images become detached from films; films run into and out of each other and the frenzied critic runs into and out of films. The most vivid memory one has, once it is all over, is of hysterical amnesia.

One way of accounting for this is to posit a festival like Berlin as a super-deluxe-market where items offered for instant gratification are rendered instantly perishable. If looks could kill, the look, in this context, kills the cinema and the cinema erases the viewer (as constituted by memory) in a gesture of visual outright. All that would remain is the blank page and a critic with nothing to say. But looking on the brighter side (the look, in this context, kills the cinema and the cinema erases the viewer), one is to be read through the logic of figuration. Memory works to screen the logic of memory are traced over the logic of technoprojection. What remains then is a memory screen, which can be read as an image. But, on another level, the languid, melancholic elegance of the act makes the words, insisting on the supremacy of presence, on the embodiment and personalization of absence. But the questions remain: Is your personal or impersonal? Is it a capital or a small "I"?

In Agatha ou les lectures illimites, L'Homme Atlantique is in fact composed of off-cuts from the earlier film, in which two voices retell, in various versions, their love, their memories. Although there are no characters as such in either film, actors do appear: in Agatha, predominantly Bliis Ogier, and in L'Homme Atlantique, Agatha ou les lectures illimites, Slingre valsen (Stepping Out), role, is in fact com-

The absence of the protagonist (absent from the screen, present off-screen) seems one way of responding to or reacting against the sovereignty of the present, the immediacy of the image. Yet in The Cold Eye, though the voice is disembodied, a process of subtitution seems to be effected whereby the voice and look of the camera take the place not just of the representational body, but also of the character. So that the film is structured around a singular consciousness, and, paradoxically, although the other characters appear as actors, acting out a scenario, the central character becomes very central as character.

If there is an attempt to effect a distance between the filmic voice and the voice of the artist-as-heroin it doesn't really work. What the audience is given is a very phenomenological exercise in point of view. But if the persistent self-consciousness of the artist becomes irritating, presentience, the attempt to develop a new kind of narrative is certainly intriguing — the intrigue having less to do with a formulated mystery and more with the articulation of space and place.

The spectator can be said of narrative cinema that events take place (adherence to the rules of continuity giving a place to the place) of events in a deviation from orthodox narrative? Avant-garde cinema has a language, and a short reply to this question: dispense with the human figure, dispense with all elements of plot so that place and story are reduced by the abstract articulation of space and time.

If, however, there is some concern with the way in which literary or artful figures in the cinema, the melodramas, and You, both personal and impersonal, a different way of figuring out space, of figuring the absence. What the audience is given is a moment of terror; you are under interrogation and have no answer, no alibi. You (1) cannot remember which theatre you were in, what films you have seen and what gossip you have over heard. The context frames the films, and the way one responds to them in a particular way. There is so much on offer that images become detached from films; films run into and out of each other and the frenzied critic runs into and out of films. The most vivid memory one has, once it is all over, is of hysterical amnesia.

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Babette Mangolte's The Cold Eye, framed in the same context as the Duras, can be seen to explore similar issues of address. The film opens with a naming and brief written description of the main characters. As the film develops, the practice of description itself comes under scrutiny, and the gap between the scriptural and cinematic writing is explored. The central character is never depicted, only given in her voice and her point of view.

The opening image is of a pair of hands sorting through painted canvases, while a voice muses on the colors, tones, combinations. It is not as though an identity is being posited between our point of view and that of the camera, so that the audience sees what the artist sees; rather, it is the space between that is marked out, for the different processes of painting, of filling up the canvas and of making the frame are seen as disjunctive. What is left out as it were, what is absent in this study in black and white, is color, and it is the memory of film colors, of reproduced paint, rather than paint itself that is called into play.

The absence of the protagonist (absent from the screen, present off-screen) seems one way of responding to or reacting against the sovereignty of the present, the immediacy of the image. Yet in The Cold Eye, even though the voice is disembodied, a process of substitution seems to be effected whereby the voice and look of the camera take the place not just of the representational body, but also of the character. So that the film is structured around a singular consciousness, and, paradoxically, although the other characters appear as actors, acting out a scenario, the central character becomes very central as character.

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Somewhere between the Duras films of the Festival and The Cold Eye came as a surprise hotel-film, Robina Rose's Nightshift, described as lying "somewhere between vaudeville and Last Year at Marienbad". The film, in color, has a strange look, as though it has been filmed in Super 8 and blown up. While this suggests a certain mood or atmosphere, it also works in with the discourse onłów. The night receptionist watches the comings and goings in a hotel foyer, while we watch her watching.

What is interesting about the film is that it manages to avoid the underline of moralizing with which such filmic discourses are often imbued. The film not only catches the tedium of suspended time, of empty space, but acknowledges the curiosity and superimposition of phantasm that accompanies the performances. The audience's retaliation. The performance, the audience's retaliation. The audience's retaliation.

The three women are given characters, but not filled out as characters. They refuse to comply and what arises from the sea, but definitely no Achttordite, gazed into Seyrig's eyes (Seyrig in pink turtleneck) and attempts to take her into her arms for a romantic waltz. The three women's films were set apart from Freak Orlando by a more overt feminism rendered in more orthodox narratives and dealing with the German experience. They included Helma Sanders-Brahms' Die beruhte (No Mercy, No Future).

Margaret Atwood's The Bones of the Time, of empty space, but acknowledges the curiosity and superimposition of phantasm that accompanies the performances. The audience's retaliation. The performance, the audience's retaliation. The audience's retaliation.

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Marlene Gorris’ De stille rond Christine M. (The Silence Surrounding Christine M.) ways of seeing under scrutiny.

processes of recognition and mis-recognition. Women and crime and detection figured elsewhere in the Festival. I did not see Angela Sommer-Reeder’s Zeichmeister, but by selected accounts it is a film to look out for. It is based on an actual case of a woman who in 1949 was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of her husband. “The text of the film predominantly consists of excerpts from the official record, summary positions of the attorneys, petitions, statements of witnesses and material which the participating witnesses, as well as Frau Zeichmeister, added anew as a result of their work with the ‘historical’ texts.” Melvie Arslanian’s Bilietto uses flashbacks and flash-forwards and a fragmented voice-over narration to piece together clues and evidence as blonde bombshell Nadja Vidal arrives in New York City to take revenge on the killers of her sister Sasha. The film is stylish, but the amnesiac drive.

Marlene Gorris’ De stille rond Christine M. (The Silence Surrounding Christine M.) ways of seeing under scrutiny.

Festivals like Berlin tend to register the national in a way that collapses the different production contexts and filmmaking practices of a given country into each other. There was an attempt to break out of this dilemma in an event organized within the framework of the Forum of Young Cinema—a conference on Independent Cinema, the first session dealing with questions of production, distribution and exhibition, the second with theoretical, an international video magazine of independent and experimental cinema, and with the role of critics and educators. Such a conference was a useful intervention, but in the context could only skat the surface. Mostly, the bewildered viewers/voyeurs have to figure out for themselves the cultural determinants of any given film, and to engage in this figuring-out process against the stream of images, of films that flow in and out of each other, against the amnesiac drive.

One can easily figure out that there is a substantial difference between New German Cinema and what is called the New Australian Cinema. Different funding policies, forms of state support (which implicate distribution and exhibition as much as production) and climate of film culture make all the difference between the German films and those like Gallipoli, Winter of Our Dreams and The Killing of Angel Street. In Australia, at present, the production of experimental feature films like Heinz Emigholz’ Normalzatz and Harun Farocki’s Etwa wird sichtbar is inconceivable.

Though the New German Cinema is not simply a paradise of heterogeneity, it has a history of organization, struggle, disobedience, a reminder of which was the new Straub-Huillet, Zu früh, zu spat (an Italian/French/German co-production). But there is another Australian cinema that is positioned outside the category of the New and which, in terms of exhibition at Berlin, becomes not an ‘other’ cinema but a pale shadow of the ‘real’ thing, the averted gaze of the public face of Australian cinema. That the independent and more experimental cinema should be thus positioned is less the fault of the Berlin organizers than of the Australian Film Commission.

The one independent film which was highlighted in programming was Corinne and Arthur Cantrill’s Second Journey to Uluru, stills of which were used for the poster and program cover of the Forum. It is a telling indication of Australian film culture, in its broadest aspect, that such cinema can only gain recognition elsewhere (where its screening at the Melbourne Film Festival paved the way for Berlin). It was also the only Australian film shown at Berlin that was produced without any subsistence from the AFC. In Britain, there is a much stronger tradition of independent cinema, of a political filmmaking practice informed by theoretical considerations and supported by the British Film Institute Production Board. Out of this tradition comes So That You Can Live, made by Cinema Action over a five-year period. It is set in South Wales and, through a particular family, explores the intersecting histories of country, industry, family, work, education and learning.

On first glance, it has the look of what is now a recognizable and established mode of the British alternative mise en scène. But what marks its difference is something that makes it simultaneously very British and also complicates notions of nationalism, of a national cinema, even if it be of an alternative variety. In paying attention to “a region first ruthlessly exploited and then deliberately discarded by market forces and a dominant metropolitan culture”, the film tentatively breaks with a practiced rigorously but audaciously privilege the notion of filmic discourse, where discourse as a theoretical issue (generated in the metropolis) subsumes all other issues. The film listens, and the viewer too has to listen very attentively to the Welsh voices, where it is not just a matter of tuning into a strange tongue but of listening to a different speech, a different mode of story-telling, one which affects the listener.

This applies too to Traveller, a film made in Ireland by Joe Comerford. It is an elliptical narrative about and with the co-operation of travellers or linkers—outcasts in an already divided society. There is an organized sound, snatches of dialogue ‘appearing’ in voice-over, and the film is prefaced by a quote from Hansjoerg Erbenburger: “There is a dark and intimate connection between murder and politics.” It is a fascinating film to take and look at something else in contemporary British cinema.

From India and Japan there were two particularly exciting films, which though differing from other films from the same countries were nevertheless strongly informed in context. Ketan Mehta’s Bhavni bhavai is based on an ancient folk tale which tells of the exploitation and oppression of the Harijans or outcasts. It utilizes forms of folk drama with a Brechtian slant, juxtaposing the past and the present through forms of parody, musical pastiche, spectacle, dramas of intrigue and news-reel footage. The story concludes with two endings, the viewer left not so much with a simple choice but with an ending that is open without being cryptic.

Suzuki Seijun’s Kageroza was one of the most stimulating and provocative films I have seen in years; a rapturous unfolding of images, an elastic elaboration of fictionality. I cannot remember the story (for the story is constantly being lost, revolving around the persistence of vision, the projection of phantasy and the treachery of memory) but images remain burnt into the mind’s eye, an eye left far from cold. The film is very much about representation, providing a number of two endings, the viewer left not so much with a simple choice but with an ending that is open without being cryptic.

This is a very selective and impressionistic account of the Festival, juxtaposing and pulling films in and out of their structured contexts. Berlin is in fact highly structured, providing a number of sections: the main Competition, the Forum of Young Cinema (which included screenings, the conference and a Super 8 screening), a market section, an Info section, New German Cinema, Kageroza, a Retrospective of Curtis Bernhardt, a Homage to James Stewart and a Festival of Children’s Films. It would be possible to confine oneself to one section, one place, thus ensuring clear vision and a clear conscience as regards critical judgment. But categories are always problematic, always posited on exclusion and absence. A film absent in one place may be present in another where presence is figured out differently by a different space.

Though amnesia and panic seem endemic to festival-goers, whose eyes are bigger than their stomachs, there is something exhilarating in being propelled by the tide of images, in the screening programme of the Festival but of one’s memory as it works in this context. Though it does not have a great deal to do with the mechanism of sequence towards the end of Kageroza, the hero is in a makeshift theatre which has provided a kabuki play performed by children, a bunraku play in which characters perform as puppets, and a site of a religious prophecy. As props disintegrate, as costumes float away, they are transformed by cinematic magic into part of the mise en scène (or super imposition) of the next scenario. The hero exclaims to no one in particular (or in particular to the audience), “Who speaks of realism here?”

Lesley Stern


Berlin Film Festival 1982

CINEMA PAPERS June — 229
A romantic drama set against a panoramic South East Asia background. It is the story of Morgan Keefe (Bryan Brown), proprietor of the Koala Club, who meets again Jo Reeves (Helen Morse), a former lover and wife of the ambitious Australian journalist Peter Reeves (John Bell). Far East is written and directed by John Duigan, for producer Richard Mason. It stars Bryan Brown, Helen Morse, John Bell, Sinan Leong, Raina McKeon, Henry Feist, Bill Hunter and John Gaden.

Clockwise from right: Former lovers Morgan Keefe (Bryan Brown) and Jo Reeves (Helen Morse) meet again; Peter Reeves (John Bell), a successful, ambitious, Australian journalist in South East Asia, and his wife Jo; Peter puts his life on the line to help political activist Rossa Constanza (Raina McKeon); Peter, Rossa and Morgan; Morgan at his Koala Club, part girlie club, part watering hole for Australians in South East Asia; Morgan and Jo.
Joan Fontaine’s career as a Hollywood star of the so-called “golden age” follows an almost archetypal pattern: brief apprenticeship in the 1930s; instant, secure stardom after a major popular success (in “Rebecca”); a range of rewarding roles with some notable directors in the ensuing decade; and a gradual tailing off in the 1950s and ’60s as the old Hollywood declined. Unlike some major stars, she did not have or seek a career as a character actress but chose to pursue a highly successful stage career — among a variety of other accomplishments. As a film star, she gave several of the most sensitive performances of the 1940s. Today, at 63, she is articulate and outspoken about the Hollywood system. She talks with Brian McFarlane.

In the pre-“Rebecca” days, it seemed to me there were three high spots: “A Damsel in Distress” with Fred Astaire, “Gunga Din” with Cary Grant, both directed by George Stevens, and “The Women”, directed by George Cukor. How valuable did you find it, at that very early stage in your career, working with such directors as Cukor and Stevens?

I learned nothing from George Stevens, except I was madly in love with him, as everybody was — Elizabeth Taylor, Shelley Winters. We all fell madly in love with this one-fourth American Indian. He was inscrutable, but he was God, and I suppose God is pretty inscrutable.

George Cukor had been a stage director and taught me much, much more than almost all the directors I have ever worked with. He was wonderfully warm and a person who was entirely for you and not in any way what we call front-office. He didn’t give a damn about billing or contracts or anything, but cared about you as a performer. He would bring out things in you that you didn’t even know you had. He gave you such confidence.

So his reputation, of being a great actors’ director and very sympathetic with women, is really deserved . . .

“Women’s director”! He was removed, if you will remember, from Gone With the Wind because Clark Gable and Leslie Howard went to David [Selznick] and said, “We can’t work with him, he’s primping the ladies all the time and bothering about their crinolines; we are not getting anything.”

The ladies then went for Sunday afternoon lessons with him, I understand . . .

True. But you can understand why Clark Gable and Leslie Howard wouldn’t understand him, or he them.

I particularly liked your performance as Peggy in “The Women”. How did you feel about playing that part among so many more flamboyant roles, with people like Rosalind Russell, Mary Boland, Joan Crawford and Paulette Goddard?

I hadn’t come out of the egg yet; I didn’t know what it was all about.
It was devastating, apart from anything else, to be with all these great people — not that I really knew they were great. How could I? I had been at school in Japan and never saw films or heard much about them.

I was not impressed by Hollywood, because in Japan you have lovely houses and servants and all that, and parties were much nicer in Tokyo than Hollywood. So I didn’t really know who these people were; nor did I understand that it was a very important industry. It seemed to me something lovely to do, which gave me moderate independence, and the ability to express myself in some way. But I had no idea it was an international obsession, because it wasn’t in Tokyo, where Kabuki was much more important than a local cinema.

You were really being thrown in at the deep end, in a way, with "The Women" . . .

“My God, he looks like a monkey!” Do you remember that? “Do something to his eyebrows.” Mr Goldwyn didn’t think Laurence Olivier was anything particular.

Do you think playing that role in “The Women” was influential in David Selznick’s decision to cast you in “Rebecca”? I know that it was George Cukor who said, “I have a young girl; take a look at her.” But I had met David anyhow. He was looking for a little, young, terribly naive English girl, which is exactly what I was. It was a case of absolutely the right place, right time, with the right sort of look and equipment, and everything else.

It must have been very striking because you were chosen in preference to, say, Margaret Sullavan, who was, at that time, a more established star . . .

I had known them socially; we were part of that British colony in Hollywood and, my God, they all seemed older than the world. You know, when you are 20 and somebody is 35, they have had it as far as you are concerned. They shouldn’t have been taking up room on the earth. I was surprised they could walk!

But was it an agreeable atmosphere?

No, because Hitchcock and Selznick made it very clear to me that Olivier wanted Vivien Leigh in the role, and that they were taking me on some sort of tolerance. I understand that in her book Gladys Cooper refers to “this little American actress”: well, I was English. So there was that kind of condescension before we had even met, because they wanted Vivien. Vivien was in the club, but I was not in that special club. That’s a very interesting aspect of the English — they are cliquey. So are the Germans and the Japanese. They made it very clear that I, at 21, was an outsider, an interloper, who had stolen this role from Vivien.

Well, whatever forces were at work, it gave you that marvellous impression of being overawed, vulnerable, shy . . .

Yes, but I really never knew about it. It didn’t hit me. For instance, when I did Rebecca I really didn’t know who Laurence Olivier was. He wasn’t anybody at that stage, was he?

On the stage, his reputation was something, and he had made "Wuthering Heights" by that time, which I suppose had made him a matinee idol . . .

He was not deemed by Goldwyn as being anything special; he said,

But she was not English and she was much older.

You know that legendary remark of Hitchcock’s about actors needing to be treated like cattle. What do you think about his methods of handling actors? Did you find him helpful?

Absolutely, though he was inclined to tear people down in front of others. As I say in my book, No Bed of Roses, he divided and conquered; he had that habit of saying “this silly old actor over there” or “that idiot” or whatever it was, and probably did the same about me. But it was a very clever device. On both films I did for him we all ended up hardly civil because of these tactics.

You were very young and acting with his distinguished cast of British actors: Olivier, Gladys Cooper, Nigel Bruce, George Sanders and so on. Did you feel overawed by this?

... and self-effacing and apologetic. All these things they actually did to me over and above the demands of the characters they were playing.

What about playing the role of Mrs De Winter when you must have known it was an immensely popular novel and everyone had ideas about this “lovely and unusual person with the lovely and unusual name”?

You are taking a lot for granted there because it was just another
book that was out. It wasn't at that time anything better or worse than Frenchman's Creek or whatever else Daphne did. It was simply one of the many romantic novels of that period, and remember they were coming out pretty fast. Forever Amber was to come soon, and so on. No, it wasn't a particularly over-exciting moment for that studio. All the other studios were grinding out other things.

It wasn't, for instance, of the order of playing Scarlett O'Hara, where everyone had an image of the heroine.

David made them as important as possible because he was a very good showman. But, other than that, he didn't think it was particularly special.

You got your Oscar the next year for "Suspicion", again with Hitchcock. Did you think you won partly because of your performance in "Rebecca"?

Yes, I think so. It's often the case, isn't it; Elizabeth Taylor and darling Ginger Rogers got it. You know there was a lot of sympathy in Ginger's vote. She had separated from Fred Astaire and everyone was rooting for her because she had made a success as an actress. It was done with affection. We were rather enraged that Astaire's wife had said Ginger really wasn't quite the social image she wanted for Fred. That instantly changed the vote.

In the post-"Rebecca" period, were you in a strong position to choose your roles?

Not at all. I was under contract to David and that meant I had no opinion or choice whatsoever. As a matter of fact, as I look back, I am appalled he didn't give me some of his other roles that were there to be had. David, having hired me for very little, was standing out for the most money he could, so he turned down all the other offers and kept me in a vault, as it were, until he got the price. He didn't help my career. I only made one film for him.

Yes, because you then went on to make quite different sorts of films. Up until "Frenchman's Creek", you seemed to be developing this on-screen image of a shy, unworldly, touchingly-restrained young woman . . .

I hated Frenchman's Creek and I went on suspension for months, but David had sold me to the studio for such an enormous amount that he wasn't going to let me work in anything else. And he was enough of a psychologist to know that, if actors aren't working, finally they burst at the seams. So, one day I called him up and said, "All right, I'll do the picture." But he didn't give me a raise. He didn't do anything.

So I just hated seeing in the papers that I was difficult and I was refusing roles that were offered to me. I had nothing to do with it. He used the press, which was a common thing in Hollywood, to beat down the actor/writer/producer/director, whoever it is, but that was part of the studio system, and he didn't care if I had made six other films. He wanted that amount of money, and he got it from Paramount. I think he got $500,000, or something like that, for me and he was determined to have his way with us and tell us what we would do.

Was he responsible for putting you into films like "This Above All", "The Constant Nymph" and "Jane Eyre"?

No, he didn't put me into Constant Nymph. I did that on my own. I met Eddie Goulding one day and he said that he was looking for some little, flat-chested, freckle-faced, 14 year-old girl who had also to be a star, because that was what Warner Bros wanted. I said, "Well, how about me?" and he said, "You?" Well, I had just won an Academy Award, but I was in pig-tails without make-up and he said, "You're perfect!" That's how I got that.

Goulding always sounded like a man of real culture . . .

I loved him, and he bucked the Hollywood system. His was one of the great tragedies — and there are many of course in Hollywood — where he told somebody off and, because of that kind of nepotistic thing that happens in Hollywood, he was barred from working anywhere. He died a very sorrowful man. It was a terrible system in many ways, good in others.

I'd like to take up your remarks about the studios because I am interested in your relation to them. Unlike some actresses, like Bette Davis at Warner Bros, Claudette Colbert at Paramount and Rita Hayworth at Columbia, you never . . .

Continued on p. 297
Film insurance is a subject usually taken for granted; rarely does it invite controversy or debate. But its importance cannot be ignored. The Adair Insurance Broking Group was the first local broker to specialize in local films; Cinesure is the most recent. While only two of several important and experienced companies, they provide a good base for this first look at the state of film insurance in Australia and the issues facing film producers and investors.

In future editions, the range of topics covered will expand to include completion guarantees, and representatives of other local and overseas broking firms will be interviewed.

**ADAIR**

The Adair Insurance Broking Group was established in 1961, when Australian insurance broking companies were only beginning to consolidate their position.

In 1972, Adair entered the Australian film industry as the first local broker to specialize in insuring local films, at a time when the film specialists were noticeably absent from the local scene.

In the past decade, Adair has insured dozens of Australian films. Beginning with *Wake In Fright* in 1972, the company has watched the insured value of Australian films jump from around $200,000 to in excess of $7 million per production. In the past few months alone, the company has insured more than $35 million worth of Australian film product. The stakes are high.

As the first Australian brokers to specialize in Australian film, Adair has recently expanded its base considerably through its appointment as sole representative in Australia and New Zealand for Albert G. Ruben and Co. of Los Angeles and The Fireman’s Fund Insurance Company. The Fireman’s Fund, founded in 1863, is the largest entertainment underwriter in the world today. More than 70 per cent of all insured films are covered by Ruben and The Fireman’s Fund.

Mike Channel talks to Ronald S. Adair, founder and chairman of Adair Insurance Broking Group.
Up to the time of entry by the Adair Insurance Broking Group into the Australian film business, what had been your personal interest in the development of the local industry?

I have been involved with the Sydney Film Festival for more than 20 years and been on the committee. There was a personal interest in Australian film, and the opportunity to become involved in the insurance side of the business was welcome indeed.

At the time, of course, film insurance didn't mean much in terms of premium income — and would not do so for some time. However, I decided to make the film business my specialty at a time when our company structure — and the film industry generally — was growing considerably. I personally handled all film matters for several years and remain directly involved today, although the division team has enlarged nationwide.

At that stage, how confident were you that ultimately there would be a reasonable premium income from the business, and that Australian film product would become a viable international commercial proposition?

There was no confidence in particular, and no real lack of confidence. At the time, it was something new for me, and at that time we were seeking many new areas of development in the insurance business. After all, our business as brokers was to develop any areas of insurance which were being neglected by other brokers — and few were interested in Australian film then. Naturally enough, we were also interested in our own growth.

Our philosophy was, and remains, that whatever a client's needs — particularly if they are specialized needs — it is worth our delving into the business to learn what it is all about, hopefully obtaining a piece of that market through the growth of our own expertise. Belief in the product was, and is, paramount to that commitment.

Were there many other Australian brokers operating in the business at the time?

No, except for one or two overseas-owned brokerages. Certainly, there were no specialist film insurance brokers in Australia. Overseas brokers such as Sedgewick Collins and Hogg Robinson were doing some business here, but the sphere was very limited.

What was the level of awareness of the need for comprehensive insurance coverage in the early 1970s?

As the needs arose, I think the industry was finding out for itself, as much as anything else, what it was all about. Australian investors were not conscious of the types of insurance packages which were available for their protection — at first.

Remember, in the early 1970s, it was all such a new market for Australia. As our film producers became involved with overseas interests — just as Lloyd Martin, then managing director of NLT Productions, had linked with U.S. connections — the international parties were requiring full insurance protection as part of the arrangement.

As Adair began to grow in the industry, began to understand these insurances and develop the market accordingly, we encouraged producers to approach a local broker such as ourselves for quotes, thus taking advantage of our local knowledge of the area. By the way we could word proposals, providing information for the underwriter that would not normally be given by an overseas broker, we were able to obtain competitive rates. And that was a recognizable benefit.

In today's terms, was such early insurance coverage relatively "superficial"?

It was not quite so sophisticated as today's insurances, but basically it was similar. Film Producer's Indemnity, Negative All Risk — the blueprint was available from the working model overseas.

How did you develop the capacity to provide these competitive insurance rates?

There were no specialist brokers around until I began developing our facilities through the Lloyd's brokers in London. I was surprised to discover, upon my first examination of the London market, that a number of the old, established English insurance companies carried specialist film divisions.

All international film business, however, had to go through London. Affiliates in Australia and elsewhere could not establish their own rates, or even quote on the business. The specialists offices in London kept direct control of the market; their own people outside London couldn't touch the business.

However, we found that once we established connections with the Lloyd's brokers to effect the necessary introductions in the London market, we could reap the benefits of their accumulated claims experience and specialist facilities for our own marketplace. And that was the way we went.

I also visited the U.S. on that first exploratory trip and continued to do so each year. I knew all about Albert G. Ruben and Co. in Los Angeles and their underwriter, The Fireman's Fund Insurance Company, which is the largest entertainment and film underwriters in the world. It would be many years, however, before they moved into the Australian market.

Apart from differing rates for productions, is there a percentage formula relating to the overall cost of a production which dictates the allocation for insurance expenditure?

Yes. A rule of thumb is two percent as a costing on film insurances. This includes all insurances to be placed, including Worker's Compensation and Public Liability, alongside the total protection coverage.

At what stage are you generally called in to consult on insurance

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Cinesure, a new Australian underwriting agency, was launched in April to act for the first Australian insurance market to provide the full range of insurance coverage for the film and television industries. Cinesure is a division of Terence Lipman Pty Ltd, a Sydney-based insurance consultant.

The companies involved in the new market are the Commercial Union Insurance Co. of Australia, QBE Insurance Ltd, AMP Fire and General Insurance Co. Ltd, and the Insurance Co. of North America (Australia) Ltd.

The following interview, with Terry Lipman, chairman of Terence Lipman Pty Ltd, and Neil McEwin, head of Cinesure, was conducted by David White.

What advantages, if any, are there in dealing with an underwriting agency directly rather than dealing with a broker?

Lipman: There are not necessarily any financial advantages, because the terms from an underwriting agency would be similar if negotiated directly by the client or indirectly through a broker. But, in practice, the client would probably have better communication and more flexibility in dealing directly because there would not be an intermediary involved and this would leave less room for errors and misunderstandings. I would also make the point that there are very few brokers in Australia who are proficient in the handling of film and television business. Therefore, there would be distinct disadvantages in dealing with an inexperienced insurance broker.

McEwin: Looking at the experienced brokers, Terry has made the point that they have had to place virtually all specialist film and television insurance with overseas companies, simply because, until we came along, there was no Australian insurance market in this area. Now, a broker's job is to shop around to ensure he gets the best arrangements and deals for his client. So, from this point on, any conscientious broker would have to check with us and not automatically place his client's business with a foreign company. In fact, already we have been delighted by the interested response by brokers.
At present the leading insurance brokers deal with some of the world's biggest insurance companies. Can Cinesure match the security that must flow from using such huge companies with enormous assets?

Lipman: Absolutely. The combined assets of the four licensed Australian companies for which we are acting are astronomical. The companies are the Commercial Union Assurance Co. of Australia; QBE Insurance; AMP Fire and General Insurance Co.; and the Insurance Company of North America (Australia). As everybody knows, the AMP is a household name in Australia. However, it is not just a big Australian company; it is a big international company. The Commercial Union is one of the largest insurers in the world. QBE Insurance is one of the major Australian companies, represented all over the world. And the Insurance Company of North America (Australia) is a subsidiary of probably the largest single insurance company in America.

How many of the four companies for which Cinesure is acting are overseas-owned?

Lipman: Out of the four, only one is overseas-owned. That's the Insurance Company of North America (Australia). The other three are all Australian companies, substantially or entirely owned by Australians. The AMP is by far the largest life assurance society owned by Australians. The Commercial Union, which is listed on the stock exchange in Australia, has a substantial ownership by the National Mutual, which is the second biggest Australian mutual life insurer. The QBE, as one of the largest general insurers, is also listed on the stock exchange here.

Doesn't a degree of overseas ownership of these companies somewhat dampen your claim to being Australian insurers?

Lipman: Not at all. Cinesure is a wholly Australian-owned agency. And the important thing about the companies for which it acts is that they are all licensed to operate in Australia by the Federal Insurance Commissioner who is there to regulate all insurance companies on behalf of the Australian public. They are, by the Commissioner's exacting test, Australian licensed insurers.

McEwin: They are also all Australian-based and this gives us a closer rapport than we would have if we were dealing with somebody sitting 15,000 or 20,000 km away.

Liman: I think that's the point. If a bloke has a claim and he wants a quick settlement of a loss, which is after all what we are talking about, he could go to the office of all of these companies if he chose to. They are right here. He could thump on the counter and say, "I want my cheque." No that he'd need to, of course, as Cinesure would be paying his settlement as quickly as possible. On the other hand, he would not have that sort of access with an insurer on the other side of the world.

Cinesure has only just been established. So how can it match the experience of firms already operating in this field?

McEwin: Cinesure certainly has only just been established but, as with any company, the experience comes from the individuals operating within the company. All people in Cinesure have had long experience within the film industry and have experience not only in underwriting but in understanding the needs of production companies. Lipman: Neil is being modest. There wouldn't be anybody in Australia who is more expert and qualified in handling film business than he is. Some of the films with which he has been associated before he joined Cinesure are Heatwave, My Brilliant Career, The Pirate Movie, Mad Max, Mad Max 2, The Year of Living Dangerously, Winter of Our Dreams, Far East, Puberty Blues, Starstruck, The Return of Captain Invincible, Now and Forever, Fighting Back and so on.

We would be the first to acknowledge that the major overseas groups who have been providing film and television cover until now are experienced and reliable insurers. But we believe our people have just as much sophistication and knowledge in this area. I think this country has developed to a point where we can offer services of this kind equal to anything in the world. If you want to insure your car, you don't go to an insurance company in Los Angeles. Now there's no necessity to take film and television insurance overseas.

You say in your literature that dealing through a broker with overseas insurers can mean delays in receiving documentation, settlement of claims and the like. Has this really been a significant problem for film and television producers in Australia?

Lipman: I believe it has and this is one of the reasons we established Cinesure in the first place. There had been in some cases substantial delays in getting documentation, which was embarrassing to people who were waiting for investment moneys from financiers. Claims payments had often been held up for two or three months, which brought a situation about where films were put in jeopardy.

McEwin: And there are natural delays. Brokers here have had to use overseas brokers who then have to place their business in overseas markets. When you make a claim here, you go to your broker who has to go to an overseas broker who has to get the money out of the insurance market and it then comes back via the overseas broker to your broker here. Add mail and paperwork delays and all of that takes time.

Lipman: We are not accusing anyone of inefficiency or negligence in any way. But there just are natural delays because of the insurers being so far away. One problem, for example, can be currency exchange delays.

Your literature has mentioned "competitive rates" and "keener" prices. Will Cinesure actually cost less for film and television insurance?

McEwin: Not necessarily so. Being an Australian underwriting agency means that at Cinesure we know the producers. We know their experience and what their capabilities are and certainly we'll be looking at rewarding people who have a very good track record. Not everyone is going to get a cheap rate. We are not here to give cheap rates. We are here to use our experience and expertise to make sure our clients receive the right protection at a fair price, which is the most important thing. A policy only becomes a correct policy when claims are made.

Lipman: With insurance, the price is obviously a very pertinent consideration but it is certainly not the most essential consideration. It means, when one buys insurance, one is buying protection. If you are

Concluded on p. 284
Until now, Australian film and TV producers have had to place almost all their specialist insurance coverage with remote foreign insurers. That's where the business has generally ended up, even when they've dealt with Australian-based brokers. That can mean delays, withholding taxes pushing up costs, as well as insuring with foreign companies which are often not authorised under the Commonwealth Insurance Act.

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Tony Williams talks about NEXT OF KIN

Next of Kin was originally going to be a horror film in the genre of Texas Chainsaw Massacre — quick turnaround and quickly financed. Michael Heath [scriptwriter], Tim White [co-producer] and myself had been influenced by what Tobe Hooper did with Texas Chainsaw and enjoyed the genre. But when John Carpenter started to make his films, and there was the deluge of Carpenter imitators, the whole thing got very sickening. By the time Friday the 13th had set the formula for the genre, we had turned completely off that style of film. We were faced with the decision of whether to drop the film completely or go off on another tangent.

It was about that time we were making contact with the U.S., and every time we submitted another draft to contacts over there, we would get replies requesting more violence, more shock, more horror. Finally, an American genre writer said to us, “Look, why don’t you do what you want to do and make a European-style film. Forget about the U.S. market, because if you are going to make an American horror film, you would be better off to go to the U.S. and use American actors.”

Was your first version a violent film or a send-up?

The original treatment was tongue-in-cheek, just like Texas Chainsaw Massacre. But something happens when committing a black comedy idea on paper to the screen. People recoil in horror, and the thought of having to out-do Texas Chainsaw Massacre, which is virtually what people were saying we must do, was too much. I just wanted out.

When you say more European than American, how would you define that in terms of genre?

The sort of films I used to enjoy
in the suspense genre were Les diaboliques, Blood and Roses and The Innocents — in other words, a more subtle, mysterious film, with little explicit violence and more teasing suspense.

Our film has gone through three phases. When we started off as "Sticky Ends", with money from the New Zealand Film Commission, it was about a catering company of madmen that went around the country poisoning people's 21st birthdays, weddings and such. It was quite funny and violent. Then, it became "slightly more respectable as "Before the Night is Out", but still definitely Carpenter territory.

By that time, we had approached the New South Wales Film Corporation for funds and their American advisers were trying to force us to become more violent. Finally, we ended up with Filmco, making Next of Kin. Even then, we have been under a lot of pressure to keep the action going, to get more violence into it.

Basically, what I wanted the film to be was a trip, a voyage, where you sit back and get sucked into the mystery, the suspense.

When you decided to change directions, did you change scriptwriters?

No, we struggled through ourselves. Maybe my only regret would be that we didn't completely bury "Sticky Ends", rather than try to retain elements of it.

What aspects of 'Sticky Ends' remain in "Next of Kin"?

I suppose the final revealing of Rita (Bernadette Gibson). I think it is going to work all right, but I would have liked, at that point, to have taken off and gone either totally supernatural or totally schizophrenic. Until the denouement, we avoided all the cliches of the shoulder coming into frame, or the hand with the knife quivering in the shadows. The aim was to create a claustrophobic atmosphere, in which you didn't really know if things were real or whether the whole thing was imagined by the girl. Then, all hell breaks loose.

It is a very strange kind of film to make because it is not until you get all the elements together, until the effects tracks and the music tracks have been laid, that you really know if the film works 100 per cent. When I saw Halloween the first time, I was on the edge of the seat and had goose-pimples up and down my spine. When I saw the film again at home on 16mm, I thought it was appalling. Suddenly I could see all the tricks and the games, and it had no interest for me beyond that.

In a way, there is a similar process with Next of Kin. We are dealing with people's fears and frights. And once you have made the film, you really don't know what is working until you see it in a darkened theatre with an audience. Even now, I am quite amazed if someone happens to suddenly jump out of his seat at a point where I had forgotten there was supposed to be a fright.

Some directors, like George Miller, have said that they view this type of film as a kind of cathartic experience. You take the audience close to death, they don't die, and they feel relieved afterwards. Do you see it in those terms?

I really don't want to be involved in making genre films, though the attraction of doing one was the manipulative force of the suspense film. It is fun to wave the wand and manipulate the audience, to see whether you can have them falling off their seats.

This type of genre film can be either terribly easy to make — if you just stick with the formula laid down by Friday the 13th, with a violent murder every seven minutes — or an extraordinarily difficult film, if you choose to ignore the formula, the cliches. This is the hardest film I have been involved with, because you are dealing with something that is supposed to be a mystery, supposed to be suspenseful, but without a strong plot or strong dialogue. You really have to use all the resources of the filmmaking technique to move the audience.

To help determine that audience reaction, are you audience-testing the film?

I don't think you can test it until all the elements are together, and by then it is often too late. If I ever do a similar type of film again, which I doubt, I would build into the budget a period of testing after the film is mixed, with enough flexibility to go back and re-cut some areas. When we did test-screen the film to ourselves, people didn't really get involved because there wasn't any music and it didn't have the right effects.

What we did find was that it was very finely balanced. If we put one shot in front of another, a scene would come to life. If we reversed the order, the scene would go flat. It is very hard to gauge what makes the goose-pimples rise.

Perhaps this is the sort of film that is largely made in the editing. You can arrange all the pieces until it creates the right effect, whereas with a straight dramatic film you can't change the linearity that much . . .

That is true; we spent hours on the editing, and it was interesting.
have seen any, except Nightmares, which I thought was dreadful. I may be speaking out of turn, but I felt that was an example of the easy-to-make horror film. However, if you are going to make a film to fill a gap with a certain kind of an audience, then that is probably the way you should go. I don't know if our film is going to be successful commercially, because we broke all the rules.

Were you tempted during the shooting to play it safe and show the needle go into Rita's eye, or have a bit more sex in it?

No. By that time we were aboard the train and going in the direction we wanted to go; we weren't prepared to deviate.

One thing your commercials and this film have in common is an element of black comedy, such as in the cafe or the talking koala...

I believe it is an important part of the whole process of making films and I can't escape it. I feel that was an example of the easy-to-make horror film. However, if you are going to make a film to fill a gap with a certain kind of an audience, then that is probably the way you should go. I don't know if our film is going to be successful commercially, because we broke all the rules.

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I was originally involved with Michael Heath and Tim White when it was just going to be a fast turnaround horror film and a bit of a laugh. Then it became obvious it was going to involve special effects and stunts, and it was going to be bigger than something that could be shot in four weeks. Because Tim, at that stage, hadn't produced a feature film, one of the conditions of my being involved was that we had another producer who had experience in the finance and legal side. So Tim agreed to involve Robert Le Tet. Robert then became executive producer as well, and really looked after that side of things. He was the strength behind keeping the production together.

How do you see the relationship between a producer and a director?

It changes on every film. Essentially, there are two types of productions: a producer's film whereby the producer has the inspiration, owns the property, contracts the director and essentially dictates what he wants; and a director's film where the director has the creative control, which is the way I prefer to work. This is not to say you don't respect the views of your producer, but ultimately the film becomes one person's vision. I would hate to have a film re-edited against my wishes or behind my back.

But whatever approach you adopt, it is essential the director and producer are sure they are making the same film before they start.

It is like a love affair: you meet, get into bed together, then end up at each other's throat. You have to survive the highs, the lows, the disasters, the critics, the box-office and so on. It can certainly put a friendship to the test.

One of the problems working with a finance company, when you don't have your own money, is that you can find yourself getting involved with committee viewpoints. The ideal situation is to be able to work with one producer who understands the needs of the creative side of the business and also has a very good grip on the financial and contractual side. The moment you start to involve more and more people, you begin to dissipate the personal time. I've seen too much of that in television production...
when I worked at the BBC, and in making commercials, dealing with agencies.

MUSIC

The music is being written by Klaus Schulze and one of the greatest buzzes of the film has been working with him. He saw our film totally in terms of sound, and immediately understood what we were trying to do. He wants to take effects that have been recorded for the film and turn them into music through a computer synthesizer he uses in Germany. It is an experiment, in that we don’t know what we will have until the tapes arrive in the mail.

Why did you choose Schulze?

When we were wrestling with the problem of writing the last version of the script, we found that when we tried to analyze the structural problems but came up against dead ends, a Klaus Schulze record would suddenly dissipate the problems and the way ahead seemed clear. The atmosphere of the music was what the film was all about. But even at that stage we didn’t consider Klaus writing the music. There were quite a few Australian composers we were interested in, but they weren’t available.

During the shooting of the film, we used Klaus’ music as playback for Jackie Kerin as motivation. Even so, it really wasn’t until we went to post-production that we thought of approaching Klaus. We felt he would be too busy, but he leapt at the chance of doing a suspense genre film.

What other films has Schulze done?

Apart from his own recordings, he has done a lot of documentary work. He also worked on The Man Who Fell From Earth and a film with Rainer Werner Fassbinder. He is about to do the music for Paul Mazursky’s The Tempest with John Cassavetes.

What sort of machine does he use?

Basically it is a digital computer. It is the only kind in the world, because it has been specially built for him. Among the electronic composers, he is considered by many to be the most advanced.

How does he score a film?

The same way as a normal composer. We went through the film; decided what themes were going to be used and where each theme should begin and end. We then transferred the film to videotape and, at his studio in Berlin, he will project the videotape on to the wall.

In computer music, nothing is written down. He can recall any sound he wants if it is stored on his floppy discs. Once he has found the theme, he can put that into his computer, recalling it later and doing variations of it.

So, from the timings that we have decided, and from having viewed the film, he will then compose a score on the keyboard which will be recorded on tape. In some cases, he will take a sound effect, and from that make a beat. This is then synthesized. When the effect is repeated over and over again, and it eventually becomes a tone, the tone can be stretched into chords. Then, all of a sudden, you can have a Wagnerian chorus — and all you actually started with was the sound of a water-hose splattering on and off.

It has been so fascinating working with Klaus, and I would really like to do another film, only this time start with his involvement during pre-production. All too often we leave the soundtrack until the film is shot. But you can consider the soundtrack from the start. And with computers, it is just amazing just what the possibilities are, because you don’t necessarily need an orchestra. All you need is one man and his machine. You can spend more time playing with ideas.

In fact, if we do another film, there is no reason why Klaus can’t travel with his computer. As long as he can lock into a studio somewhere along the line, he can just sit in front of the film and create any effect or sound you want.

LIGHTING STYLE

The film has a distinctive visual style, particularly in the lighting...

Yes. Well, the other buzz on the film was working with Gary Hansen, who shot it, Toby Phillips, who was the Steadicam operator, and Noel MacDonald, who built the special crane rig for the end shot. On the visual side of the film, those three people did

Composer Klaus Schulze at his digital computer.

Linda (Jackie Kerin) walks tentatively up the stairs. Who knows what evil hides at the top? Next of Kin.
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The Sony advertisement above that appeared last year in various U.S. magazines and newspapers stated more than just Sony's decision to put its efforts behind the promotion of video cassette (although Sony had considerable development money involved in producing optical video-disc players). The advertisement reflected the video-disc systems' promoters' main problem in gaining the widespread sales that they had gambled hundreds of millions of dollars upon, which was an inability to convince the public of the superiority of a replay-only video system that could only show a limited catalogue of software consisting almost entirely of entertainment movies.

Combined with a confusing battle for market share by three different systems (see inset boxes), there seemed little hope of any of the systems surviving based on home sales alone. All the manufacturers were involved in applying the video-disc research and development towards what seemed a super market of industrial and other applications. Phillips, which developed the laser-optical technique, has worked with Sony to produce a high-quality Compact Digital Audio Disc (CDAD), and the proponents of the VHD system have announced a decoder that allows digitally-encoded audio discs (ADH) to be played on their video players. IBM has taken its experience in the Discovision partnership into the rapidly-growing area of computer storage.

With the unstable consumer market and no sign of a release of PAL standard equipment suitable for Australian use, the announcement last year that Melbourne video production house AAV-Australia was producing, in quantity, video discs for General Motors-Holden dealers around Australia seemed like establishing Australia as the proving ground for video discs. GMH was the first big network user in the market. That was where some of their limitations. One of the people we had here was Theodore Konat, an American communications expert, who gave a talk about the future developments of optical video discs, which have since come true.

We were pushed into our involvement with optical discs by GMH, although we were keeping a watching brief on it. Bob Fine, who was brought out as a temporary chief executive when we first set up, and whom we still retain as a consultant, was keeping us informed with developments. Our own engineering people also go overseas regularly to keep up with developments, but we didn't believe that we would really be involved in video-disc production for a number of years yet. In September 1980, Kevin Hoolihan, the GMH sales promotion manager, came and looked around at what we were doing in audio-visual and video, and he seemed particularly interested in the frames-accurate computer editing. I didn't realize what was going on in his mind at the time, when he said he was investigating a project and he would be back. He went over to the U.S. to Discovision and had a look at how General Motors was using video disc, because GM was the first big network user in the world.

As I understand it, Pioneer was by contract not allowed to sell its players to the public until it had filled the GM order. GM was after a training and information medium to allow it to leap ahead of the old Super 8 system it was using and leap ahead of video cassette. GMH tested their "Yes it is working, it does have more to offer than video cassette, and if a way could be found to get over the problem of producing in PAL and finishing on NTSC then it is a goer." Kevin Hoolihan came to us then and asked if we could help. We sent two of our engineers over to the U.S. to study the process, and when they came back we went into a huddle with GMH and said, "If you give us some real indications of your intentions, we believe we can do it. We would then be prepared to invest in the considerable amount of equipment to allow us to be able to verify, once we have gone through standards conversion, all the frames and write a computer program for it and then play back on tape what we have programmed into it. It took a great deal of time to solve that problem and early in 1981 we said we could go. From the time GMH said go they had more than a week before we were shooting.

What was on the first disc?

A virtually straight consumer disc. On one side George Paterson's had produced a film of the Repco Round Australia Rally. It was a really nice production. Side two was made up of a number of sections of existing material on light commercial vehicles, and we shot a segment of the rally and a comment on the Commodore. So, you had all three uses on the disc: a straight consumer presentation, a general salesman's product information and technical training.

GMH then used that as a sell-in disc to get the dealers to invest in the equipment, with a demonstration of actual use and not just a promise. GMH hoped to get about 250 dealers in the network, but they are in the area of about 300 in the first year, which makes GMH the biggest single network of users outside of the U.S.

Some of the networks in the U.S. are enormous — for example, Avon has a 25,000 dealer network, IBM also has a pretty big network — and for a lot of industries it has become a way of life. It is not necessarily cheaper than the U.S. product. They shut down the U.S. factory for a short period and installed new equipment, which is now running.

One of the problems of the early video-disc production was to improve the yield of good discs as against rejects, even after they had launched it on the market. That was where some of their financial problems came, because they couldn't get the yield of acceptable discs that the Japanese have been able to.

The audio quality as demonstrated is excellent. Do the GMH discs use stereo tracks?

All the GMH discs are produced with stereo tracks.
null
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In November last the Film and Television Production Association of Australia and the New South Wales Film Corporation brought together 15 international experts to discuss film financing, marketing, and distribution of Australian films in the 1980s with producers involved in the film and television industry.

The symposium was a resounding success. Tape recordings made of the proceedings have been transcribed and edited by Cinema Papers, and published as the Film Expo Seminar Report. Copies can be ordered for $25 each.

Contributors

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developing an inexpensive, solid-state laser. Philips has just announced the successful development of a solid-state laser that also has the power to provide a strong enough burst to provide a burn in, for a record disc system.

I have no doubt that all the manufacturers are working on record discs. A newsletter we subscribe to in the U.S., which has a pretty good track record, claims also that there is a company in Florida that says it has the investment to set up a disc-pressing plant. If that is the case, although I have my doubts, it indicates the direction that things are moving.

The optical video disc is such an obvious answer to many audio-visual needs, and its ability to store frame-by-frame information that can be accessed faster than you can shuttle tape, gives it immense value for data storage. What are your feelings about the future consumer use of these discs?

My feelings are different to a lot of the advocates of home video disc. I honestly think that the interactive disc has a greater future than they are currently predicting for discs as a replay-only source of entertainment. The sound quality of disc is superb and with the quality of the pressings coming out of Japan, added to speed of search compared to tape, discs have tremendous advantages.

But I have doubts if that is enough to put discs ahead of tape at this stage. Though once people have had their tape machines for a few years, and have got a little bored with them as toys, maybe they can be persuaded to buy interactive disc. Tape machines are still being bought at a great rate, and they are still a novelty to consumers, so in the current market it is used for video disc to try and penetrate the discs to play, the public is not interested. The video-cassette market successes are still based on a large percentage of soft-core porn and R-rated films. The disc manufacturers must have regretted their stand to reject any such unsavory material from their releases. When Pioneer launched the LaserDisc players in Japan recently, the best-selling disc was a Japanese-made (very) soft core disc, and the U.S. market will probably follow. The sales of the sophisticated Philips/Pioneer systems could soon be matched by exclusive material aimed at the type of consumer who wants hi-fidelity sound and superior image quality. This, and special discs like the just-released interactive disc for children that contains games, cartoons and interactive learning segments, will be necessary if the home consumer market is to eventually become a reality.

Software and Soft Porn

The marketing of the various disc systems has often depended on what and how many film titles could be offered compatible with the system. Without the discs to play, the public is not interested. The video-cassette market successes are still based on a large percentage of soft-core porn and R-rated films. The disc manufacturers must have regretted their stand to reject any such unsavory material from their releases. When Pioneer launched the LaserDisc players in Japan recently, the best-selling disc was a Japanese-made (very) soft core disc, and the U.S. market will probably follow. The sales of the sophisticated Philips/Pioneer systems could soon be matched by exclusive material aimed at the type of consumer who wants hi-fidelity sound and superior image quality. This, and special discs like the just-released interactive disc for children that contains games, cartoons and interactive learning segments, will be necessary if the home consumer market is to eventually become a reality.

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Prod, designer ........................David Copping
Editor ............................................John Scott
Based on the original
Sullivan's "The Pirates of Penzance". Film

Ted Hamilton, Gary McDonald, Bill Kerr,

Catering .........................Harold Jene Koch

Stunts co-ordinator ................Grant Page

Best boy ...............................Peter Moloney

Dubbing editor ....................Terry Rodman

Carpenters ...............................Dennis Lee,
Scenic artist .........................Billy Malcolm

Standby props ..............................Barry Hall

Their relationship disintegrates as they

Key grip ............................................Ian Park

Focus puller ........................Barry Halloran

Producer's secretary .. Ginny Muldowney

Prod, accountant ........G&S Management

Director ....................................Ken Annakin

ment), John Ewart (Minister for Immigra­
Buchanan (Rebecca), Adam Garnett (Rod),

Catering ...................Sally Greville-Smith

Still photography ..............Garry Maunder

Mixer ...............................Julian Ellingworth

Scriptwriter ..........................Charles Stamp

Based on the original
Insurers ...................................................Adair

Asst model maker ......................John Cox

Bill Hunter, Graham Kennedy, Michael

crushes Nazis, threatens bootleggers, helps

Asst- construction manager .. Roger Clout

Props buyer .....................Derrick Chetwyn

Director .................................................Yoram Gross

Gauge ....................................................35mm

Budget...............................................$420,000

Leaving a lonely island by an illegal

Wranglers....................................................Jim Willoughby,

Wendy Chambers

Kolorkraft Lab.

Steve Hunter,

Paul Marron,

Ty Bosco

played/performed ..........Glora Feidman

Painters/tracers................Margaret Butler,

Neg. matching ...................Margaret Cardin

Music..................Vivaldi's "Four Seasons"

A young girl taking photographs

2nd asst editor.......................................Helen Zivkovic

Prod, secretary ........................Dean Hill

Facilities manager ...................Chris Short

Dist. company (foreign) ..............Hemdale

(Waddy).

With the help of a boy scout. Sympathetic to

Australians, decide on a ski holiday when they

White, (New York)

(Ike). Paddy).

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Prod, scriptwriter ....................Janette Ford

Prod, actor ........................................Peter Wight

Prod, director ..........................Igor Auzins

Prod, company..........................South Pacific

Prod, script writer .......................Igor Auzins

Prod, actor ........................................Peter Wight

Prod, set designer ...................David Silence

Prod, art director .....................David Silence

Prod, costume designer ..........David Silence

Prod, special effects ................David Silence

Prod, sound designer ...............David Silence

Prod, music ..................Vivaldi's "Four Seasons"

Prod, sound ..................................................Asher

Prod, music ..................................................Asher

Producers..................................................Asher

Prod, director ..........................Peter Wight

Prod, sound ..................................................Asher

Prod, music ..................Vivaldi's "Four Seasons"

Prod, sound ..................................................Asher

Prod, music ..................................................Asher

Prod, sound ..................................................Asher

Prod, music ..................................................Asher
**THE SHORTS**

**THE PERMANENT BOOKKEEPING**

- **Dist. company**: Roadshow
- **Prod. company**: Woodbee Films
- **Scriptwriter**: Anthony Bowman
- **Photography**: Hans H. Haddich
- **Sound recordist**: Ross Linton
- **Editor**: Ross Linton
- **Boom operator**: Allan Bevan
- **Cameraman**: Barry (Mac), Martin Vaughan (Dan), Lewis McNeil (Lewis)
- **Camera assistants**: John Ogden, Paul Howard
- **Sound engineer**: Louis Kramer
- **Appliance make-up**: Lewis Morley
- **Composer**: Peter Miller
- **Gauge**: 35mm

**THE BAKING SHARK**

- **Prod. company**: Seaweed Prods
- **Director**: Walter Deas
- **Gauge**: 16mm

**THE FRIGATE DARTMOUTH**

- **Prod. company**: Walter Deas Prods
- **Producer**: Walter Deas
- **Director**: Walter Deas
- **Based on the original idea by**: Jim Buchanan
- **Synopsis**: A documentary feature about the British departure of CNBC, which is the largest fish in the world. The documentary examines the sharks, their habitats, works with the scientist who knows them, and interviewed the people who depend on them for their livelihood.

**THE HIDDEN LAND**

- **Prod. company**: Walter Deas Prods
- **Director**: Walter Deas
- **Gauge**: 16mm

**THE OUTBACK AUSTRALIANS — A Harder Way Of Life**

- **Prod. company**: MacDonald Hunt Prods
- **Director**: John Hall
- **Sound**: Michael Minar
- **Still photography**: Martin Page
- **Editing**: Paul Howard
- **Camera assistants**: Daryl Pinder, Tim Parson
- **Scriptwriter**: Joe Closter

**THE INTRUDERS**

- **Prod. company**: Nomad Films
- **International**: International
- **Gauge**: 16mm

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**AGEING — SOME PROBLEMS, SOME ANSWERS**

- **Prod. company**: Metro Television
- **Director**: Tom Zulick
- **Gauge**: 16mm

**THE BASHING SHARK**

- **Prod. company**: Seaweed Prods
- **Producer**: Walter Deas
- **Director**: Walter Deas
- **Based on the original idea by**: Jim Buchanan

**THE HIDDEN LAND**

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The Man From Snowy River
Arnold Zable

The Man From Snowy River has received the thumbs down from many Australian critics. John Hindle of The National Times called it a "tragedy, a costly awful mess". Neil Jillett (in The Age) scathingly referred to it as a "Wallaby Western", and went on to dismiss the film with the terse statement: "The horses are good, the scenery is great, and that is all that can be said about The Man From Snowy River." The film has been ridiculed as soap opera in a bush setting, and as a crassly commercial venture, aimed at creating an Australian equivalent to the American Western, with a little help from overseas actor Kirk Douglas. Other critics have preferred to stay clear of it completely.

Yet, much can and should be said about this film, not only about its faults, but also about its virtues, for there are more positive aspects than most critics have been willing to acknowledge. But, above all, there is a need to probe its weaknesses because, failure or not, this is an important film to clear of it completely.

The film's best moments come in the climactic chase after the wild brumbies. These scenes are only marred by an abrupt cutting, which severs the flow at times, and there is an all-too-brief glimpse of the daring downhill leap that leaves the Man from Snowy River in lone pursuit of the wild brumbies.

There are other fine moments to do with horses — especially the magnificent colt from old Regret, a proud and fierce thoroughbred — and two of the actors: the little-known Sigrid Thornton as Jessica, and Tom Burlinson as Jim Craig, the Man from Snowy River. Both actors are able to transcend the banalities of the script — Thornton through her quiet passion and intensity in the role of a spirited and strong-willed young woman born and reared at the foot of the high country, and Burlinson as the raw mountain man, who gradually evolves into a man of independent strength and resourcefulness, not easily cowed by the more sophisticated lowlanders.

The photography is at all times adequate, and at times quite stunning in capturing some of the vast variety of terrain and the atmospheric changes that see the mountains change from glorious sun-bathed scenes of idyllic beauty to treacherous storm-lashed slopes barely visible through cloud, mist and hail. Those more familiar with the many moods of the high country may be a bit disappointed at the range of climatic change — one sees little of the extremes, such as the blizzards and snowstorms that have claimed victims over the years, and fiery heatwaves that have become raging bush infernos.

But, despite these virtues, and the inspired idea of taking a great ballad of high-plains cattleman and using it to give a glimpse of the rich tradition of Australian folklore and using it to give a glimpse of the rich tradition of the high-plains cattleman, the film goes wrong. The major problems are obvious. The scripting is riddled with cliches and soap opera banalities, except for some welcome moments of local humor, and the direction is unadventurous and lacking in drive. And one can add the music to this list of woes.

The soundtracks of films such as Picnic at Hanging Rock and Heatwave have employed music and sound effects to emphasize aspects of the Australian environment. The music is concocted to a Hollywood formula. It lacks a subtlety and, instead of complementing or emphasizing the formidable grandeur and mystery of the high country, words and music tend to pollute the atmosphere — the mountains recede behind the melodrama, and, when the grandeur is all too obvious, the words appear redundant.

Apparently, a lot of work went into the scripting — a year of plotting, and two dozen drafts over a period of two years — before Fred Cul Cullen and John Dixon settled for their final script. Using clues provided by the poem, and aiming to structure the film to climax with the epic ride, the plot centres on the tale of two American brothers, the Harrisons (both acted by Kirk Douglas).

One brother makes a fortune when, as the poet put it, "Pardon won the Cup, thereby winning the hand of local belle Matilda, and becoming a wealthy cattle dealer. The other brother, Spur, has unsuccessfully looked for his fortune as a prospector. After 20 years he is still up in the mountains looking for gold.

Spur is something of a 'character', a well-intentioned, likeable old chap who hobbles around, having had one of his feet shot off by the jealous brother who had suspected an affair with his wife Matilda many years earlier. This is the grim secret, held from rich Harrison's daughter Jessica, born to Matilda who died at childbirth. Harrison is
tormented by the possibility that Jessica is Spur's daughter.

This is obviously a very contrived script based on well-worn formulae with an eye to the commercial market. But even within this plot there is a lot of potential. The two Harrisons could be seen to represent two different views of the land, and man's relationship to it.

The rich cattle dealer and station owner, with his hardened views on development and exploitation of the land for profit, can be seen as the essence of the type of man that formed and continues to form the nucleus of the National Country Party, and the powerful graziers that have dominated much of Australian politics and economics. This is the line that leads to the Doug Anthosys and Malcolm Frasers of today.

Spur can be seen as the more environmentally-conscious man — a man that lives in harmony with, rather than trying to tame, the land. Clancy of the Overflow, who occasionally appears for a bush muster, and the Craigs also have this deeper respect, although they are also inevitably part of the world of cattle economics — as skilled horsemen available for musterings.

These themes emerge in the scripting, but all too briefly. Some of the potential is eroded with the use of Kirk Douglas as Harrison and Spur. He does a competent enough job in both roles, but surely Australian actors could have been found at much less expense and with much more potential at creating truly Australian characters. Spur sits uneasily close to a Disney concept of 'character', and Harrison takes one into the territory of the Texan rancher.

The raw material for a great film lies at the source. Just as the text of Paterson's poem provides the basis for the dialogue, it is in the stories of men such as the Lovick brothers, in finding suitable horses, and their insights into the enormous skills that bushmen, the early settlers quickly built replicas of the European city and humiliated in the urban areas. Very soon, in terms of the percentage of population, Australia was the most urbanized country in the world.

The essence of the Australian bush experience is one of remarkable dichotomy between city people and the bushmen, the early settlers quickly built replicas of the European city and humiliated in the urban areas. Very soon, in terms of the percentage of population, Australia was the most urbanized country in the world.

Hofgen is seen in Berlin, signing contracts in Berlin, edging his way to the top. He is a disaffected actor in Hamburg in the 1920s and, along with left-wing colleagues, he visualizes a 'theatre that proved,' he urges, 'that theatre has a political function.' Following his marriage to Barbara (Krystyna Janda), the daughter of a Jewish professor, he joins the State Theatre Company in Berlin, and when Nazi influence begins to be felt he is wholesomely hated, it seems, in his denunciation of "these murderous thugs".

Having left the comparative security of Hamburg behind, Hofgen is seen in Berlin, signing contracts in Berlin, edging his way to the top. He is a disaffected actor in Hamburg in the 1920s and, along with left-wing colleagues, he visualizes a 'theatre that proved,' he urges, 'that theatre has a political function.' Following his marriage to Barbara (Krystyna Janda), the daughter of a Jewish professor, he joins the State Theatre Company in Berlin, and when Nazi influence begins to be felt he is wholesomely hated, it seems, in his denunciation of "these murderous thugs".

It may suit one's purposes to believe that any right-thinking — that is to say, left-thinking — artist must have worried desperately about Nazi Germany. Istvan Szabo, working from Klaus Mann's novel, Mephisto, suggests a more complex reading of the situation than that in this brilliant Hungarian-West German co-production.

The film's protagonist is Hendrik Holgen (Klaus Maria Brandauer), an actor loosely based on Gustav Grundgens with whom Klaus Mann was closely associated. Holgen is an ambitious actor in Hamburg in the 1920s and, along with left-wing colleagues, he visualizes a 'theatre that proved,' he urges, 'that theatre has a political function.' Following his marriage to Barbara (Krystyna Janda), the daughter of a Jewish professor, he joins the State Theatre Company in Berlin, and when Nazi influence begins to be felt he is wholesomely hated, it seems, in his denunciation of "these murderous thugs".

Hofgen leaves for Hollywood to make The Man from Snowy River, directed by George Miller...
with the proletariat. The film builds up his leftist sentiments very skillfully, shows how he wins the Berlin workers’ hearts, and disturbs all this careful preparation by a marvellous montage of self-preening performances in all of which he looks identically pleased with himself.

Hofgen’s egoism and egotism have, of course, been adumbrated from the start; he is forever considering himself in mirrors; his black dancing teacher girlfriend Juliette (Klaudia Klein) tells him he can’t even order a beer without being actorish about it and taunts him during love-making by saying he only loves himself; in an after-performance, the camera insists on a contrast between the faces of the dour director and of Hofgen — of his pleasure; and Hofgen sums up these touches by saying, “The future of the Hamburg Art Theatre is me.”

Hofgen declares his love for Barbara in a tranquil forest, but now the film has suggested his capacity to love is dubious. He wants “an end to passive watching” in the theatre because the workers should see “total theatre”, not just a preachy but, nevertheless, he wants to be observed all the time. Hofgen is leaving Germany and urges him to do so. “Why?” he asks, “There’ll always be theatre whatever happens in Germany.”

Hofgen’s performance of Mephisto is greatly admired by a leading Nazi Künstler (Rolf Hoppe), a forerunner of the modern master of talking heads, but that Szabo trusts his cast to deal with the sustained argument of the screenplay. In Klaus Maria Brandauer, Hofgen to his box in a scene which, by its adroit use of alternate close-ups, creates the sense of confrontation and incipient complicity. The General talks of “foreign elements poisoning German culture” and asks, “Isn’t there a bit of Mephisto in every German?”

As Hofgen stands beside him, his no Mephisto cloak outspreads and seeming to embrace the General, the irony is that the roles are really reversing themselves. There is certainly more than a “bit” of Mephisto in the General. The film suggests that, if this is so, there is more than a bit of Faust in every actor, that the need to act (in his own language, in his own culture?) may well be his most irresistible impulse — his price, in fact. The need to act and the need for approval, even against a backdrop of Nazi flags prominently displayed, is stronger than any attachment to political views.

When his old colleague Miklas (Gyorgy Cserhalmi) tells him to go to the Devil, he has of course already done so. He now talks of having “flirted with the left” and he is powerless to save another old friend, Otto (Peter Andorai), from the Nazis. He allows the General to tell him that his background with the Revolutionary Theatre is to be forgotten — and that his wife is “working against the fatherland”. In professional and personal matters he has passed the point of compromise and given himself over to the one enduring role of his life.

“Why can you live in Berlin?” Barbara asks him, and his answer, “I live in the theatre”, carries its own weight. It may not do for most of us, but Szabo and his great star actor, Klaus Maria Brandauer, force us to consider it for Hofgen. It is his achievement never to let Hofgen totally lose audience sympathy. His quarrel in Les Deux Magots with Barbara, who has lost her country but kept her principles, is, like the film as a whole, toughly and intelligently written. She can see what he is achieving by staying in Berlin and his reply — that he must interpret his country — detains us because we can’t be sure whether this is sincerity or just self-delusion.

The Times’ critic turns up again and slaps his face, but when Hofgen asks, “What could I do in Paris?” — that is, as actor — there can be no easy answer, if his commitment to his profession is allowable. His commitment is not, the film makes clear, a matter of high-minded dedication. Hofgen is as he is because it is all he can be: this is, it is a matter of impulses that go beyond political loyalties that have been arrived at either cerebrally or emotionally. When he makes his vain attempt to save Otto by going on his behalf to the General, the latter tells him to “stop meddling” and screams at him “Get out actor.” As an actor he may have some political importance in interpreting the classics so as to suit the prevailing climate (Hamlet as “a populist work”), but direct political intervention is another matter.

In other words, having put his career as an actor before his integrity as a human being he has become a puppet for the Nazis and the film’s last episodes pull all this together with effortless power. The opening night of Hamlet is followed by wild applause and then a party in Germany’s for Hofgen where the architectural grandeur is dwarfed by huge red Nazi flags. Lajos Koltai’s camera pans and tracks, zooms in and out, as it fastens on close-ups of the gossiping crowd or pulls back in stunning overhead shots that reveal the dominating stage and the audience making their speech of thanks to the General as his patron and master, who removes him from the crowd to the top of the Berlin Olympic Stadium. Here Hofgen is caught in the dazzling crossplay of powerful lights while the General cruelly taunts him with, “How do you like this limelight?” Hofgen’s reply is plaintive but consistent: “What do they want of me? After all, I am only an actor.”

It is difficult in reviewing a film which is so densely textured in its writing and playing to give any satisfactorily full sense of its richness. One wants to detail scene after scene, whereas all I have been able to do is to give (I hope) an account of its irres­istibly-involving narrative, and its use of its central symbol — the stage and the Mephisto role — to illuminate a life and a response to life.

The film is perhaps still too long (its 160 minutes have been reduced to 142), but it is hard to trim any specific scenes for pruning. The camera is sometimes carried away by the bravura possibilities of the scene, and, just as one is admiring some marvellous effect, one occasionally wonders what its point is. These are, however, capitious nig­glings in the light of what Szabo has achieved.

Mephisto is simply the most intel­ligent film in a long time. Szabo has the advantage of a superb screenplay by Peter Dobai and treats it with the respect it deserves. That is not to say that Mephisto is a matter of talking heads, but that Szabo trusts his cast to deal with the sustained argument of the screenplay. In Klaus Maria Brandauer, Hofgen has found an actor equal to the complexities of the role of Hofgen, a man in whom moral choice is increasingly threatened and ultimately supplanted by ambition and by his actor’s needs. It is a great film performance in which Brandauer’s physical presence works with his emo­tional and intellectual control of the role to create a sense of a whole life.

The rest of an internationally chosen cast supports him admirably: Rolf Hoppe, as the Goering-like general, is almost as remarkable as Brandauer, in giving the nature of his vocation — is capable of political involvement on any but a superficial level.

Perhaps the film’s chief image is its
first one. It begins with a musical comedian singer (Nicoleta) singing of "love's sweet song", and an adoring audience responding to the star en- bates in their approval. The camera pulls back to suggest the enclosed-ness of the theatre world: it is a darkened box, lit at one end with characters moved around, in stylized patterns, to provoke applause. Nothing could look more insulated from the real world and Szabo contrives to make the audience appear as accomplices in creating this insulation. In doing so, he reduces our capacity for complicity in con- sidering Hogen.


A Most Attractive Man
Keith Connolly

Rivka Hartman's A Most Attractive Man has an unmistakable feminist theme, be it overt or covert. It is also subtle and moving, a little (47/12-minute) gem of which its director may take great pride — and others should take even greater notice.

On an obviously thin budget, Hartman makes the most of limited means and a capable cast. If, occasionally, cramped settings dictate a certain repetitiveness of movement (an impression heightened by some rather mannered editing), Erika Addis and Paul Tait's lighting tends to make a virtue of it.

A Most Attractive Man is a short-feature fiction debut comparable to Gillian Armstrong's The Singer and the Dancer and Stephen Wallace's Love Letters from Teralba Road, films with which it shares some common ground. Similarities with Teralba Road are the more obvious. Both are about estranged couples, even though Wallace's film deals with a broken marriage and Hartman's pair is near, but not at, the end of a very tenuous relationship.

Though more oblique, the affinities with Singer and Dancer (which also features a couple's reconciliation) and Wallace's film, are, in a broad sense, feminist. In both films, female characters who have been put down by men (in their looks and minds) are, in a broad sense, feminist. In both films, female characters who have been put down by men (in their looks and minds) are, in a broad sense, feminist. In both films, female characters who have been put down by men (in their looks and minds) are, in a broad sense, feminist. In both films, female characters who have been put down by men (in their looks and minds) are, in a broad sense, feminist. In both films, female characters who have been put down by men (in their looks and minds) are, in a broad sense, feminist.

But the main reason I read Attractive Man as feminist, even though the titular character is a rather pitiable male, is that it points us toward the conditioning — social, psychological, emotional — that prompts women to evaluate themselves in the eyes of men. The other side of this theme is that the "attractive man" has "vacated the earth" so that others, most of all women, accept his ludicrous, false front.

That this front, as conceived by Dorian, who calls himself a "presentation stylist", is one of the more pitiable things that others, most of all women, accept as accomplices in creating this illusion. In doing so, he reduces our capacity for complicity in considering Holgen.

Dorian (Grigor Taylor), the "presentation stylist", and Frances (Carole Skinner), "upon whom he batters", Rivka Hartman's A Most Attractive Man.

Dorian (Grigor Taylor), the "presentation stylist", and Frances (Carole Skinner), "upon whom he batters", Rivka Hartman's A Most Attractive Man.

through her children, friends and rose- colored ambitions of a legal career. But, in the odious words of a television commercial of a few years ago, "He lacks 'the thing that matters most' — the attention of an 'attractive man', " even a peanut like Dorian.

When the dogged Mick deliciously suggests that she needs someone like himself, Frances replies with an irony that belies her self-exasperation: "Ah, but I love another!" Yet, earlier, she can't bring herself to mouth that magic Mills' Boon password when Dorian demands it — even though she has just covered up for him over what could be grounds for a criminal action. And when, after an interval that briefly rekindles their old sexual camaraderie, Frances goes to Dorian's room only to find his bed already occupied, she is furious with herself.

Finally, as her friends urge, she gives him the boot and, surprisingly, he goes — to shack up with the simpering Sue (Anne Tenney), an even more pitiable example of sex-role conditioning.

The film's somewhat abrupt end (did Hartman have other ideas that were curtailed by limited means?) is wryly ambivalent. When Dorian begins to leave on a wave of indignation so intense that he mistakes Frances' distress over an accident to one of her children for regret about his departure, there is an apparent last-minute reconciliation. But the final shot is of Dorian walking away from the house. The implication, however, is that he will be back, and sooner rather than later. For a variety of reasons, most of them outside society's accepted tenets, the pair needs each other. But there is a further implication — that, though the sexes are more or less equal in emotional needs, one still has the clout to demand more of the other.


Absence of Malice
Debi Eaker

The title of Sydney Pollack's film refers to a legal defence which protects the news gathering media, in this case a newspaper, when a story that they have published is challenged and a law suit is threatened. The defence is based on the time-honored, illusionary concept, so effectively employed by the media, to suggest that isolated facts, even those gleaned by the most unorthodox and often dubious methods, can be objective and dispassionately stated and produce a form of truth. The entire
process of news gathering and publication, its ambiguous motivations, its unlimited licence to edit information that is deemed superfluous and even the fallacious notion of objectivity become irrelevant if the newspaper can prove that a questionable article was printed without malicious intent.

The title also delineates a number of relationships constructed by the film. Its examination of professional ethics, private motivations and their potentially destructive consequences underlies a narrative where even the most malevolent situations are the product of confused allegiances rather than malicious resolutions.

Megan Carter (Sally Field), a senior reporter employed by The Miami Standard, believes that she has discovered a leak from an FBI Strike Force team, led by Elliot Rosen (Bob Balaban). We become aware that Rosen has actually engineered the leak in order to publicize the investigation and harass its target, Michael Gallagher (Paul Newman). Megan knows that for the past six months the Strike Force has been exclusively involved in an investigation of Joseph Diaz, leader of the Longshoreman’s Union in Miami. She learns accidentally that they are viewing a surveillance film shot at the funeral of Diaz’s major rival, “Big Tom” Gallagher. When a fruitless interview with Rosen concludes, she notices a file on Gallagher’s son, Michael, on Rosen’s desk and assumes that he is a suspect in the Diaz case. Her subsequent article on the investigation of Michael Gallagher and casual dismissal of the possible motivations behind the leak, with the support of her editor McAdam (Josef Sommer), provide the narrative trigger for a film that examines and questions some of America’s most powerful organizations: the legal system, the media, the mafia and two of its revered icons, the cowboy and the career woman.

In a style that is characteristic of the director, and his ability to work simultaneously within and around traditional genres, the central narrative deals obliquely with the variety of themes that are evident in his previous films: the role of the past in Bobby Deerfield; the importance of loyalty and trust in Three Days of the Condor; the anachronistic cowboy in Jeremiah Johnson and The Electric Horseman; the dislocated society, dominated by self-serving political and legal institutions in The Way We Were and Three Days of the Condor; and the sensitive, yet unsentimental love story, occurring in a host of disparate environments, that concludes in separation or death.

In Pollack’s films, characters not only struggle against powerful, oppressive institutions, including the family in This Property is Condemned, but are simultaneously caught in relationships where one partner possesses a clear perspective on himself and his society, while the other contends with the complexity of issues that lead to self-awareness. The skill and subtlety with which Pollack enables his characters to interact within the love story allows these distinctions to establish themselves, and then to overlap, resulting in the type of endings that are on one level ambiguous, or fatalistic, yet clearly defining a resolution of the doubt and confusion that has plagued one of the central characters throughout the film.

Gallagher is thrown into a situation comparable to his predecessor, Turner (Robert Redford), in Three Days of the Condor, the unsuspecting victim of an action initiated by a seemingly omnipotent, unknowable organization that purports to perform a positive social function. Yet Absence of Malice begins at the point that Condor concludes, a newspaper office, and Gallagher is not simply reacting against a duplicitous agent of the FBI, but against a situation in which the law, the media and the mafia become synonymous. They are the powerful, well-organized, essentially self-regulating hierarchies with the resources and lack of scruples to define their own rules.

Ironically, in Absence of Malice, it is the law enforcement agency and the press which become partners in crime, by initiating the spurious campaign against Gallagher, while the mafia, personified by Gallagher’s corpulent uncle, Maldorone (Luther Adler), emerges as the only influential character with sufficient knowledge and insight to perceive the situation’s ramifications, and supply his nephew with information necessary for effective retaliatory action. When the film concludes, the law and media are discredited while the mafia sits amiable by, cognizant of the entire situation, yet untarnished by its outcome.

From his first entrance, Gallagher’s retaliation surpasses the blind, reactive pursuit of revenge that dominates Turner (in Condor) and his contemporaries in a series of films examining institutional crime (The Parallax View, Blow Out, Nightmoves). He strides purposefully through The Standard’s office, clad in Levi’s and boots, toward his first showdown. His demeanor and his direct, assertive questioning of Megan immediately throw her off guard. Our confidence in her capability as a journalist is eroded as she becomes cocky and defensive. Shielded by her status as a reporter and supported by her lawyer and editor, she is nevertheless threatened and disoriented when a confrontation is initiated in circumstances beyond her control.

This is a pattern duplicated in scenes throughout the film. Gallagher ceases to be the innocent victim as he systematically identifies his well-camouflaged accusers, adopts their tactics and, in the final showdown, triumphs morally and professionally. Virtually singlehanded, he discards The Standard, forces Rosen’s dismissal and the resignation of the District Attorney, Quinn (Don Hood), who had given Rosen’s campaign tacit support in the hope that pressure on Gallagher would result in a solution to the Diaz case, and improve his public image. Throughout the film, Gallagher takes people unaware, acting with independent strength and determination, resourcefully initiating action and forcing reaction on his own terms.

In attitude and appearance, he is the classic cowboy, transported to modern Miami, yet operating according to the values of a Western: challenging corruption, prematurely terminating the reign of unprincipled officials, and, in the final shot of the film, riding out alone at sunset. He is a man who “goes hunting” for information, who has rejected marriage and family life, yet as a result of his family and its past connection with the mafia finds it necessary to re-establish family contacts, in an effort to clear his name.

Gallagher’s single concession to the past is a boat called Rum Runner, owned by his father and previously used to ferry bootleg liquor into Miami. When he takes Megan to lunch on the boat, we witness a facet of his character that makes him a truly formidable opponent: skilful control balanced by an awareness of his environment. He knows when his conversations are being closely recorded, when he is being followed, yet his responses are controlled. The cowboy closely observes his environment and responds with intuitive action when required.

Our glimpses of his personal life complete the image. As his relationship with Megan develops, he admits to being in the “Stone Age” on the sexual frontier, feeling comfortable only when he takes the initiative. Her allegation
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that he prefers her manner and quiet speech accurate and incisive. In the scenes between Gallagher and his childhood friend, Melissa Elena Delilah, he is at his wittiest. Paternal and protective, he stubs his cigarettes with distaste, cooks her spaghetti with gusto and clearly adopts the role of guardian angel based on mutual respect and loyalty.

Teresa is the epitome of the vulnerable, passive woman; repressed and introverted, she is a vivid contrast to Gallagher's assertive career woman image. Her unquestioning loyalty to Gallagher and her willingness to trust in Gallagher, by providing a legitimate alibi that would end the FBI investigation and media speculation, makes her the film's true victim. Her suicide as a result of an article Megan publishes, announcing her abortion in the newspaper, and Megan supplies this information to the media is a form of truth, and that a blatant lie, a lie that Gallagher tells in order to protect Teresa, is a form of truth, that we recognize as valid.

When her retaliatory necessities an adoption of nefarious tactics and he resorts to illicitly tapping telephone conversations, his grief is real and genuine, a feeling that he expresses. The film makes it acceptable, even laudable, for Gallagher to select a weak link in the journalistic establishment to investigate her. Despite Gallagher's duplicity, the film presents a legitimate alibi from the perspective of the media and the public and the social ramifications of the articles that it publishes. While Brindle relentlessly pressures his colleagues for the names of his sources, and the implications of their work, McAdam carefully encourages Megan to submit stories that he recognizes may destroy innocent people without the preliminary research and analysis for which he is responsible. His approach to his work, and his implicit faith in its value, are comparable to Rosen's.

Both editors belong to organizations that purport to exist as guardians of the democratic system, yet their improper decisions affect individuals who are enrolled in the democratic process. Gallagher identifies and repress personal convictions when deemed necessary and even resorting to the type of truth that he sees fit. Gallagher's duplicity is viewed as commendable from the perspective of his Duplication of the story, flatly informing Teresa that she is not confiding in another woman, or even talking to an authority figure. By stating, "I'm a reporter. You're talking to a newspaper right now. Do you understand?", she conveniently renounces any personal obligation for her actions, and defines a conception of herself, as individual and separate. Megan is not simply willing to repress personal convictions when pressured. It is a form of truth, and that a blatant lie, a lie that Gallagher tells in order to protect Teresa, is a form of truth, and that a blatant lie, a lie that Gallagher tells in order to protect Teresa, is a form of truth, that we recognize as valid.

Angels of War

Curtis Levy

"The people of Papua New Guinea don't make things for fighting war with other countries. We just grow our own food and have sing-sings and beat our drums. We just live our own lives, that's all. Then, women are spoken by Sergeant-Major Yauwiga in Angels of War, a documentary film about the people of Papua, New Guinea.

Yauwiga's life was tragically changed by his participation in the war, when, like many young warriors, he joined the army. He lost several Japanese soldiers in the war, and many heroic actions in which he killed several Japanese soldiers, he ended up with a wound in his leg, a bullet in his hand, one with two hooks. Now he tells us, "I've lost the key and the hooks don't work."

Young Papua New Guinea men from the age of 14 or 15 were forced into the army by one side or the other. They had no choice but to obey who ever told the gun. Angels of War is a film which documents the contribution of these men as soldiers and carriers.

The sacrifice of Australian, American and Japanese soldiers in the Papua New Guinea war is recorded in our history, but little recognition has ever been given to the enormous sacrifices made by the soldiers who have carried ammunition to the front lines. This film provides a valuable record of the sacrifice made by the soldiers of the jungle trails to safety. These "angels of war" were paid a princely 10 shillings a month during the war, but since they have now been demobilized, some small token payments have been made. For the men who joined in the field without formally signing up, there is no bureaucratic means of compensa-
After an earnest introduction that places the film firmly in the 1950s, by the use of shots that act as references of ladies’ beauty products and period furniture, and sets the film noir-ish tone with its douring key-colored interior and subjective photography, worked in the quickens and purples of passion, the action crawls to a start. Androo’s overworked indicators of period and tone in the introductory shots, the opening action makes all-too-blunt attempts to create notes of suspense. The punch-boy stops and the timer of ‘Hilton’ on his world-weary way home; he has forgotten to deliver his paper. He suggests it must be interesting for Harry, “working with blades”. It is a solitary reference, not part of a body of imagery such as a device should be.

The boy also remarks to Harlan, “Say hello to your wife”. Other reference to Androo is Lillian (Deborah Harry) are built up throughout the film. All the main male characters ask after or make reference to her: the bar tender at Taty’s reminds Harlan, “You should be nice to her (a comment which is later reflected in Lillian’s own expression of wishes for herself; “I want a man who will be nice to me”).

Their references create an undercurrent of the potential for Lillian’s inner affair by building up a profile of her desirability and an index of male recognition, which is matched throughout the film by her own direct and indirect expressions of need for sexual recognition and attention.

More successful than the attempts to create a dramatic tone for the film, the opening scene also introduces the motif of Union City. A hobo slouches on a street corner. He sees one of the tenants from Lillian and Harlan’s apartment block coming home drunk. The drunk gives his cab driver a $25 tip. The hobo approaches the driver for a share in the tip, but is given the drunk’s hat instead. He tries it on with a grand gesture, paralleling the action of the character portrayed on the billboard above; advertising the development site of Union City — Mr Middle America.

Weiko is able to dissipate all awareness of the camera, and the casual outbursts of laughter and the often poignant personal stories are a testimony to this technique. The filmmakers sifted through thousands of feet of film stored in the archives of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and came across some unique and sometimes bizarre sequences. There is propaganda footage made by the Japanese to justify their attempt to widen their “sphere of prosperity”, and a bizarre American offering to the war effort, in which Gary Cooper and two swim-suited starlets are seen entertaining the troops in the steamy jungles. The archival sequences are skillfully entwined with the contemporary footage to create an effect of immediacy, and an involvement in events long past. The editor, Stewart Young, has created a strong unity of old and new footage, juxtaposing the material in such a way that the film never hogs down in over-indulgent reminiscences.

Perhaps the reason why Angels of War is such an effective film is that it is not just a story of war experiences; Angels makes a strong statement about the phenomenon of colonialism and, in particular, provides a telling portrayal of Australia’s relationship with Papua New Guinea. Obviously this relationship will be far more healthy in the future, if Australia is to recognize the contribution made by the Paua
Lillian to sing a popular tune about coffee but she begs incapable, another amused nod at the dual role of the performer as star playing ordinary housewife.

For Lillian, at the beginning of the film, her fantasy world extends to buying exotic shoes and going to the Friday matinee with Larry, with whom she will eventually have an affair and plan a movie-style life. Her fantasy life develops into the donning of the trappings of sexual and glamour fantasies which remain of an indeterminate nature, and which are partially and tentatively directed towards Harlan and specifically and directly towards Larry.

While Lillian develops a workable and eventually realistic outlet for her fantasy world outside Union City, characters like the Contessa have gone quietly crazy, with her spouting theories of reincarnation and draping herself in oriental silks. Harlan's escape from his pre-crime frustrations and post-crime anxieties is found at the bottom of a bottle.

While the theme of Middle American respectability and the role of fantasy in it is an interesting one, it is not fully developed in the film or very complex. The drama which surrounds it lacks suspense. Characters like the Contessa (Irina Maleva) don't work well in their dramatic function (it is the Contessa who first makes Harlan believe his secret has been discovered through her garbled messages of understanding his suffering), although they are quite effective in providing a glimpse of the other side of the American dream and the underbelly of Union City. The large Negro family who come to look at the spare room in the apartment block parody the American ideal of one room per person as Harlan tries to point out with their shy-cute sexuality.

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Freedom
Jim Schembri

It is perhaps thankful that, in spite of its symptomatic fast vehicles, high-speed chases, beautiful women and excellent stuntwork, Scott Hicks' ironically-titled Freedom does not subscribe to the car-film syndrome. Regrettably, however, the energy, interest and promise initially associated with its central concern are subsequently betrayed.

Ron Matheson (Jon Blake) is an unemployed youth whose domestic tension and dismal prospects on the job market nourish an increasingly-bewildering and engrossing fantasy, which he later realizes. The section of the film before this realization is not only a well-drawn, involving (though flawed) character study, but also serves as a commentary on what is probably the sentiment of many of today's unemployed.

Although occasionally ostentatious, some well-directed scenes in the early part of Freedom align viewer sympathy with Ron as they depict the gnawing frustrations, the inability to fulfill modest ambitions and the stunned opportunities that combine to nurture his corresponding desire to escape these pressures.

The film's opening credit sequence clearly conveys this juxtaposition of Ron's desire for escape and his thwarting reality. Throttling through an electronic racetrack in an amusement parlor, Ron is absorbed at the wheel as he weaves through the field of other cars. A semi-circular shot around the racing booth effectively encloses Ron in his concentration, accentuated by close shots of his taut face and eyes as they guide him precariously through the video course raceway. His friend Phil (Chris Haywood), having lost at Space Invaders, throws Ron's gears, causing him to 'crash' and land a narrow second placing on the machine's top five scores. Ron looks up at Phil, his face registering anger — and helplessness.

A slow pan across a stretch of working-class suburbia, which stops on Ron's home, asserts his plight of frustrated opportunity as being fairly typical in today's economic climate. It is in this portrait of his daily ordeals that viewer sympathies and concern for Ron polarizes — temporarily.

Ron exposes his employment officer (John Clayton) that he is a faceless, powerless victim of a ruthless money-saving attitude by employers who see fresh apprentices as mere commodities to be hired, fired and manipulated at their convenience. His recent sacking from the engine plant exemplifies this, and is sharpened further by his employment officer's subsequent advice that, "You must tailor your aspirations to job opportunities" because "employers can afford to be choosey these days."

Indeed, the degradation Ron suffers at this point is as apparent as he first rejects, then reluctantly accepts, a manual labor job at a cement works. Arriving there early next morning, a brief incident deftly suggests Ron's modest ambitions and his inadequacy to fulfill them as he accidentally bumps into another early arrival. A quick exchange of glances links the tattoo on the man's arm with a printed facsimile of a tattoo on the sleeve of Ron's T-shirt. This contrasts the man's significant level of personal achievement and Ron's deficiency of any such attainment as he subsequently dwells on the man's thankful wife and child while closing their car door.

This sensibility is paired with frustration when, due to his act of politeness, Ron is the 21st applicant for the 20-man vacancy. Upon insistence that he is desperate for work, the employer...
Ron (Jon Blake) "wrenches Sally (Jad Capelja) from her baby to flee the police". Scott Hicks' Freedom.

Ron's frustration and inadequacies are well encapsulated by his disparity with the over-contrived, under-developed, yet functional character of his friend Phil. Owning a shocking-red panel van (complete with fur-lined interior, Star Warsian mural and "Machismo" proclaimed gaudily on the side) that symbolizes his material wealth through conformity, Phil explains to Ron the virtues of "shit eating" and how "this great country of ours was built on the smiling little shit eaters."

During this advisory deluge, Ron envisions Phil's van being progressively crushed into a cube. Despite a surface impression of rejection, these images most probably represent Ron's inability to succeed, and the according envy he feels toward Phil's accomplishments in the system.

The anger infused by these relentless batterings of rejection and frustration is highlighted by Ron's stagey, yet powerful outburst at the CES office, and forces him to erect a metaphorical fortress against these pressures. His softly-lit bedroom, embellished with pop art images and centred on the sentinel of his sound system, provides him with a psychologically plausible niche into which he withdraws from his depressing reality.

Donning headphones and crouching embryonically against a wall, Ron displaces the ego-crushing frustrations of his reality with a corresponding ego-enforcing fantasy. Dressed in the height of fashion at the wheel of a Porsche, he glides effortlessly along a country road, a beautiful woman (Candy Raymond) by his side. These symbols of success, companionship, power and control counterpose the absence of these elements in his life (though, carelessly, Ron's interaction with girls is never established).

As the fantasy develops, Ron's gratification is marred by an obtrusive black vehicle that weaves portentously in front of him, before careering off the road and down a hill. As he stops to examine the wreckage, his companion drives off, leaving him stranded.

Though the Porsche in Ron's fantasy has its basis in reality (he fixates on it early in the film), the woman presents a jarring note. At first she seems to be imaginary, but later she is revealed to be both the owner of the Porsche and Annie Martin, an old friend of Ron's. This implies that Ron deliberately placed her in his fantasy, and results in an inexplicable lack of recognition when he meets her while caressing her car.

Arriving at Annie's apartment for a date, Ron overhears her phone conversation with her lover, Cassidy (a minuscule, meaningless role for Bud Tingwell), and is angered to learn that she plans to use him to ease her lover. In response to yet another scheme to exploit him, Ron steals her keys and speeds off with her car to no place in particular.

It is from here that a combination of elements effectively inhibits taking the film seriously and, indeed, provides some unintentionally laughable moments as Ron hits the round-Australia highway.

Ron's unsavory character reversal into his fantasy image, his association with Sally, a thinly-drawn, thick-set runaway mother in search of her child (played by a promising, better-deserving Jad Capelja), a squad of incapable, moronic policemen and the ultimate pointlessness of Ron's trek through the countryside sap the subsequent developments in Freedom of the slightest tension or concern.

Some obscure, nihilistic statement relating to how our society alienates the inadequate, rendering them powerless, and then hoards after them when they are compelled to escape their useless existence in the system is vaguely apparent. But viewer interest in Ron is destroyed. He becomes an unthinking, aimless fool who, after picking up Sally in a roadhouse cafe, forces a car off the road and has the long arm of the law — complete with five thumbs — after him.

Persuading Sally that he is a millionaire secret agent, Ron's unconvincing, uninteresting persona is supplemented by many incidents where he displays a remarkable lack of intention or destination. Indeed, he seems to agree to help Sally in the search for her baby in want of any other purpose.

Yet the emotionally involving concern is stultified by the lack of depth in Sally's character. Having located her baby's foster home, Sally leaves Ron sleeping to retrieve her child. When Ron wakes to see an approaching police car, he drives down and, in a clumsy scene of screaming emotion, wrenches Sally from her baby to flee the police.

Having just been separated from the one meaningful thing in her life, Sally expresses no remorse whatsoever about the incident for the rest of the film. Soon after, in fact, when the pair seek assistance from a helpful, elderly family couple, Sally is cheerfully critical of Ron's rude manners and positively joyful at the way the farmer's wife prepares a thermos of tea and a bag of sandwiches for them in about ten seconds flat.1

This dismal lack of emotional reflect...
tion is prominently displayed again when, being hidden in a hay shed, Sally and Ron embrace for a giggling roll in the hay.

Constant reminders of Ron’s aimlessness echo his ‘characterless’ persona from being one of color, substance and purpose to one of vacuous disorientation, and leads to one astonishingly meaningless anti-climax.

When Ron and Sally go ‘shopping’ after visiting her sister, Ron demands that she ‘get something for herself’ referring to her threat of his obsession to get her child imposing on what Ron wants. Yet he quickly agrees to ‘steal’ something for her. Sally, because she clearly doesn’t know what it is he wants to straighten out.

A well-evoked shot of aimlessness (with the Porsche parked roadside at the bottom of the frame, Sally looking at a map on the horse, open sky and country fill the rest of the frame). Sally defends, with some fairly abysmal dialogue, the search for her baby. Ron calms her, insisting that he is the one that will help her get the child, but that as soon as that’s done, “it’s my trip” — whatever that is. As the prepare to continue, Sally asks “Do you know of somewhere to go?” to which Ron aptly replies, “We’ll find somewhere...”

The futility of Ron’s escape is painfully stated toward the end of Freedom. Having climbed up a hill, Ron tries to outwit the police through countrysides which he soon recognizes as the locale of his fantasy. Predictably, he comes across a snapshot, stops the Porsche and stares down at the wreckage of the ominous black car. Realization dawns on him as he beholds the empty shell of his dream car over the edge and down the crevasse.

Finally, in an incredibly unconventionally denouement, a little van, proclaiming “Jesus Saves”, conveniently chugs up to Ron’s rescue.

“Where are you headed?” — the driver asks. Ron’s reply is a precise: “I don’t know.” Nor does the viewer know — or indeed care.

Ron’s insurmountable concept of the police as the ‘hunchmen’ of society is reflected in many unsubtle representa­tions, including a middle-aged couple, H. J. Heidler (Alan Bates), an arrogant art dealer of German ancestry, and Isabelle Adjani’s Marya, who is over­whelmed by circumstances with which she can’t cope, lacks a presence that her hideous behaviour is an index of her personality and motivation.

Quartet
Les Rabinowicz

The heroine of Jean Rhys’ novels — whose first, Quartet, has now been brought to the screen by the accom­plished team of James Ivory, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala and their Merchant — are often passive figures, inevitably hurt by the men with whom they are desperately in love. And James Ivory’s fascination with the story of one of these, Marya Zelli, whose aimless existence is shattered when she is taken over by a predatory young husband by whom her husband’s imprisonment, has much to do with the objectivity of Rhys’ prose.

Quartet also reflects another pre­occupation. Merchant-Ivory produc­tions, despite their wide range in subject matter, have been marked by the frequent focus on the tensions which spring when one culture encroaches on another. They are always set against a back­ground of a new, con­fident and youthful order and an insidious older one. To be sure, these themes, probably one of Rhys’ earlier films, have receded in their more recent ones, though without diminishing in signifi­cance. In Quartet they are echoed in the personal differences between Marya (Isabelle Adjani), a young Creole, her Polish husband Stephan (Anthony Hig­ginson), their mutual friend, a nightclub party, where a jazz singer, a small group of half-naked, dance-hall girls, who Lois has hidden in a shed, is introduced, do their routine, and during one number, are briefly interrupted by another smaller group of half-naked, dance-hall girls, who Lois has hidden in a shed, is introduced, do their routine.

Set in the famous Montparnasse district of Paris in 1927, Quartet charts the lives of two couples, more intimate and dynamic, each one in its own way, being involved in the same events and actions. Marya, however, is written in the third person, which brings the quartet together for a stormy row, and Heidler’s protest that Marya “isn’t playing the game”. This is given an unexpected twist. Rather than dwelling on the hypocrisy involved, Quartet also becomes a study of the Heidlers’ removal from their own feelings, by juxtaposing their behaviour with Stephan and Marya’s more intimate and dynamic, but still financially dependent on Heidler and clinging precariously to his affections, she allows herself to be kept in a hotel at his expense. Heidler, however, begins to lose interest which is only reawakened by Stephan’s release from prison.

In this story, ivory and scriptwriter Ruth Prawer Jhabvala have created a film which is less concerned with the threat of her obsession than with the meaning of this other, more important anti­climax.

If Quartet aims ambiguously by leaving the viewers to guess about Marya’s future, it focuses completely on the promotion of a film, which is a close up of a comic strip, poignantly captured in its last lines of dialogue. And if this has been foreseen from the start, Ivory and Jhabvala have succeeded in capturing something of Marya’s (and, comparatively, Lois’) feverish instinct for self-preservation.

Quartet


Quartet: John Gielgud, Maggie Smith, Isabelle Adjani, Alan Bates. 

CINEMA PAPERS June — 271
His Life and Films
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Nostalgia usually works as a divergent force, graphs of cherished and long forgotten tales, and skimming through rapidly-flowing personal and detailed writing. From flipping through pages of photo albums, like, coinciding with a favourite programme, quite often, an unabashedly nostalgic trip through a quarter of a century of television programmes, especially Davies', are little more than mundane critical monographs about Hollywood and America's lifestyle, as to whether life imitates art or vice versa, television has led or reflected the way to the society, rightly or wrongly, we thought we wanted to be. And because in the Menzies years from 1949 onward, we wanted to be a consumer society without end, all that we aspired to was reflected on our television screens, or could it also in part have been dictated by them? But that as far as Davies (or his publisher) allows himself to go. His text shies away from getting involved in anything but the most perfunctory commentary about television; after a while, this, the anecdotes, and a steady stream of mentions of programmes and people begins to bore.

Therefore, both books (especially Australian TV) are more attractive and impressive for their photographs than the text, and neither comes close to Sandra Hall's Superlou: 20 Years of Australian Television (1976), which may have lacked visual pizzazz, but more than made up for it with a substantial text. Hall has achieved the same standard in Turning On Turning Off: Australian Television In The Eighties, and this time the text is complemented by some nicely reproduced, if unmemorable, photos. The intention behind this book is criticism, rather than historiography (though in the future I am sure the book will greatly assist the latter). Her criticism transcends the usual "get response" variety which so many of this country's film and television reviewers still proudly acknowledge as the sort of critical writing they do.

Hall's writing reflects an appreciation for theories of different media, and an understanding that television is far more than a source of entertainment or recreation. She writes from a liberal perspective, but unlike most liberal writers she does not present society as being transparent, and makes a noticeable effort to place her comments in firm contexts. Thus, her commentary is carefully created so as not to threaten readers who are put off by up-front "serious criticism", but this does not undermine the impact of what she has to write.

So, in Turning On Turning Off Hall sets out to do two things: "by reviewing programmes and analysing trends, I have discussed what television is providing already; and by putting into perspective the main broadcasting issues, I have talked about the service we could see in the future." The strongest chapters are "News", "Public Affairs", "Documentaries" and "Sport", and in these she makes...
some astute observations. For example, her brief analysis of different station approaches to news coverage, and public affairs programs such as 60 Minutes, helps to deconstruct programming that is often accepted by television viewers as “the truth”.

“Sixty Minutes [sic] is not interested in anything as abstract as an issue. It is interested in specifics, in personalities and in narrative. If a story doesn’t have a hero and a villain preferably, though not essentially, a beginning and an end, it’s not worth telling.”

Also in these chapters Hall slightly shifts general critical discourse that we are used to reading in dominant press publications, thus opening a space for discussion of some important issues. For instance, in “Sport” she does more than lead the cheer squad for all that television has done in upgrading the quality of sport presentation. She also does a football boot and gets stuck into the television stations for their transformation from transmitters of sporting events to “expansive entrepreneurs”. However, she never fully tackles the implications of this in a culture such as ours where sport has distinct ideological functions.

The weakest chapters of the book are “The Future”, in which she deals with satellites, cable, tele-text and the video-cassette recorder, and “The Implications”. But then maybe this is to be expected because as Hall writes: “It will probably be some time before Australians come to terms with all the technology they will find it more comfortable to use.” Undoubtedly, many people will find it more comfortable to ignore the whole issue, rather than plunge into the mess of complicated questions that has characterised the debate so far — and they may be right, because the only certainty about the next ten years of broadcastcasting is that Australians are going to be offered a lot of technology they may well be better off without.”

Nevertheless, Hall doesn’t “ignore the issue”. In Turning On Turning Off she plunges into a “mess of complicated questions” dealing with the most important medium of our era, and in the long run Hall demonstrates how she has remained one of this country’s most consistently readable film and television reviewers in the dominant press.

**International Film Guide 1982**

Edited by Peter Cowie

*Tantivy Press/Space Age Books*  
*$17.95*  

James Manning

This annual reference work is now in its 19th year of publication. A valuable work, it summarises film production in all film producing countries and gives a good general view of cinema throughout the world. It does not focus just on English language output, as do other available yearbooks.

An important feature every year is the five directors of the year. The most astonishing thing about this section is how it reflects the strong grip that men have on film direction. So far there have been 95 people nominated as directors of the year, and only two of these have been women: Marta Meszaros and Lina Wertmuller.

This year the five men are France’s Maurice Pialat, Britain’s Karel Reisz, West Germany’s Volker Schlondorff, India’s Mrinal Sen and Hungary’s Istvan Szabo. Each winner of the award gets a short essay detailing his career, which is followed by a comprehensive filmography. And the IFG is often the only place a complete filmography can be found on a particular director.

Roy Armes writes a fine essay on Reisz calling him “very much the mainstream director, picking his own projects (though with what seems at times an almost perverse logic) and uncompromisingly filling the gaps between feature films and television productions and work on commercials”. Morgan, A Suitable Case for Treatment is called “a disparate work; part analysis of the ways in which society tames its rebels, part chic mid-sixties comic caricature”. Although a bad film, Dog Soldiers is given only five lines and dismissed with “it did little to resolve the contradictions of Reisz’s career.”

The next (and largest) part of the book is the world cinema survey taking up 279 pages and covering every country between Afghanistan (with the cryptic sentence, “Afghan Films is now in a position to make a film together with the U.S.S.R.”) and Yugoslavia (with a report on the most spectacular festival I have ever attended at the amphitheatre in Pula). The Australian chapter is, as usual, written by David Stratton. He says that the Australian industry is “for the time being” experiencing a boom. He says Harlequin got what it deserved (poor box-office) but “it seems to have done better in more credulous overseas markets.” He comments on the fact that a number of films have not yet achieved commercial release. What ever did happen to David Hemmings’ The Survivor? Surveying the year’s output, Stratton says, “After Gairpoli, there’s not much to write about.”

A chapter on animation follows the World Round. This is a much overlooked field (via the non-release locally, at the time of writing, of Heavy Metal) and it is good to see so much space (33 pages) devoted to the subject. But the absence of a color supplement means that this section lacks some of its usual visual splendor.

Included in the animation section is a five page summary of animation in Australia and New Zealand. Written by Bruce Boyce Ederer, it covers everything from Dot and the Kangaroo to the work of the Cantrills.

There are also short informative chapters on festivals, 16mm film archives, film schools (an ever-expanding chapter), film bookshops and reviews of books and magazines. In 1983 there will be the book’s 20th anniversary. I just hope they don’t change format or content to celebrate.

**Recent Releases**

Mervyn Binn

This column lists books released in Australia, as at April 1982, which deal with the cinema or related topics. All titles are on sale in bookshops.

The publishers and the local distributors are listed below the entry. If no distributor is indicated, the book is imported (Imp.). The recommended prices listed are for paperbacks, unless otherwise indicated, and are subject to variations between bookshops and stores.

The list was compiled by Mervyn R. Binn of the Space Age Bookstore, Melbourne.

**Popular and Garden Interest**

*The Big Book of Edward D. Wood Jr Low Budget Films*  
Robin Cox  
*Film Footscray/ANZ Book Co.,*  
*$13.95*  

A survey of cheaper films including thrillers, Westerns, science-fiction, fantasy and historical epics, and the people who made them.

*Bring on the Sun*  
Ian B. Jamieson  
*Rightway,*  
*$9.95*  

An illustrated book about suntans, how they are done and the people who do them. By a practising suntan man.

*Confessions of an Ex-Fan Magazine Writer*  
John W. Clarke  
*Double Doubleday,*  
*$19.95*  

A book of trivia about all the secrets an editor might tell you.

*The Future*  
Ian B. Jamieson  
*Double Doubleday,*  
*$19.95*  

A book of what’s happening at the moment.

*Cult Movies*  
Malcolm Vance  
*Severn House/Dent Aust.,*  
*$3.95*  

An illustrated collection of quiz questions about films and Marilyn Monroe.

*Movie Memories*  
Charles Lockwood  
*Viking/Penguin Aust.,*  
*$25*  

A book of film facts and memorabilia published in conjunction with a British television series.

*The Golden Age of ‘B’ Movies*  
Doug McClelland. new edition  
*Argus/ANZ Book Co.,*  
*$7.95*  

Fifty low-budget films are covered, giving credits, stills and story outlines.

*Grandpa’s Scrapbook* of Silent Movie Stars  
Produced by John M. Kudlack  
*Wallace Homestead Book Co./Dymocks,*  
*$3.95*  

A collection of old photographs of American silent film stars.

*The History of the World Part One*  
Mel Brooks  
*Virgin Books/Thomas Nelson Aust.,*  
*$8.95*  

A fully illustrated book of Mel Brooks’ crazy comedy film.

*The Illustrated Movie Quiz Book*  
Rob Bart  
*Severn House/Dent Aust.,*  
*$3.95*  

An illustrated collection of quiz questions about films and film stars.

*James Bond in the Cinema*  
Steven Jay Rubin  
*Talanta/LSP./Imp.,*  
*$14.95*  

An account of the making of the James Bond films, including behind-the-scenes photos, the personalities and the making of it.

*The Movie Ad Book*  
Mick Lock  
*Control Data/Imp.,*  
*$11.95*  

An illustrated history of how Hollywood film advertisements are created, science fiction and horror through drama, Westerns, make-up, costume and more.

*Movie Memories*  
John Brooker  
*Deakin Imp.,*  
*$17.70*  

A collection of essays, reviews and personal interviews that give an insight into the role of the film star, on and off the screen.

*Rock on Film*  
David Frampton and Bill Reed  
*Deakin Imp.,*  
*$14.95*  

A comprehensive survey of films featuring rock ’n’ roll music, with photographs and posters.
Screen Stare of the '70s

Clint Eastwood

LSP/Imp., $19.95
An illustrated, popular survey of the films of the '70s, by the editor of Films Illustrated.

Walt Disney's Treasury of Silly Symphonies

Disney Studios

Elaine Dundy

New Edition/Imp., $19.95

A summary of the most popular and best-loved of the famous Disney cartoons. An illustrated review of the work of the Soviet film director, whose most notable effort, based on Shakespeare, is King Lear.

The Man With No Name

A pictorial history of air films from 1928 to 1978. The comic art of Mel Brooks, from his television work to the film of the Berlin Olympic Games.

The Dark Side of the Screen: Film Noir

A critical survey of political films including Song of the Rivers.

Method in Madness

An outline of Bergman's life and work.

An Anatomy of the Movies

Delphi

An analysis of the major trends and the film of the Berlin Olympic Games.

The Dark Side of the Screen: Film Noir

Delta/Imp., $9.95

A collection of remarks on the life and work of Ingmar Bergman.

Redgrave/Petrie/Imp., $14.20

A collection of articles and written work of Ingmar Bergman including Make-up, and The Triumph of the Will, and the film of the Berlin Olympic Games.

G. K. Hall/Remal, $49.95

The life and work of the Soviet film director, whose most notable effort, based on Shakespeare, is King Lear.

A complete biographical survey of the career of Reynolds, who has enjoyed one of the most successful and longest careers in Hollywood.

The Films of Susan Hayward

Bertil Skogsberg

Wiedenfeld and Nicolson/Imp., $12.50

An illustrated biography of the popular film and television actress, Goldie Hawn.

Fyreside/Simon and Schuster/Ruth Walls, $13.50

A critical biography of the phenomenon of Walt Disney, from his television work to the film of the Berlin Olympic Games.

Delta/Imp., $9.95

A collection of articles and written work of Ingmar Bergman.

Pantheon/Imp., $37.50


G. K. Hall/Remal, $79.95 (HC)

A collection of essays, reviews and personal interviews on the role of the film star, on and off the screen.

Viking/Penguin, $25 (HC)

A collection of articles and written work of Ingmar Bergman.

Indiana University Press/Imp., $39.95 (HC)

An examination of various directors and aspects of the cinema.

DaCapo/Plenum/Holt Saunders, $15.95

A comprehensive survey of the life and work of the Soviet film director, whose most notable effort, based on Shakespeare, is King Lear.

A comprehensive study of the role played by film beginning with the feature film The Man with No Name.

A collection of articles and written work of Ingmar Bergman.

G. K. Hall/Remal, $49.95

A critical history of the Hollywood films made in the 1930s. A contrasting volume that is sure to become a classic in literature.

Hodder and Stoughton Aust., $19.95

The life and work of the German filmmaker, from the director of the famous Nazi propaganda film. The Triumph of the Will, and the film of the Berlin Olympic Games.

G. K. Hall/Remal, $49.95 (HC)

The life and work of the German filmmaker, from the director of the famous Nazi propaganda film. The Triumph of the Will, and the film of the Berlin Olympic Games.

Blackwell, $15.95

An analysis of the major trends and the film of the Berlin Olympic Games.

Frank Capra

Acme

An anthology of critical articles on the cinema, by a leading American critic.

Philips

A collection of critical articles on the cinema, by a leading American critic.

Oxford University Press/Imp., $18.95 (HC)

A reference and resources guide with biography, full filmography, and much more.

New English Library/Aust., $19.95

A reference and resources guide with biography, full filmography, and much more.

A pictorial history of air films from 1928 to 1978. The comic art of Mel Brooks, from his television work to the film of the Berlin Olympic Games.

The Man with No Name

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The Quarter
Continued from p. 205


The emphasis of the film on the adoption of the classic as a puppet play by the Marionette Theatre of Australia. One sees how the play is scripted and put on the program, and the behind-the-scenes work of the theatre company, including the puppet play, culminating in its live performance at the Sydney Opera House. The company’s moves, reactions to the audience, and behind the scenes, to create a montage of insights into the work as a whole.

Angels of War, a documentary produced and directed by Andrew J. Jacks, received the award for Best Educational Short Film in the Social Sciences. This film provides a model for ways in which a wealth of historical material can be brought to life on the screen.

Between 1942 and 1945, the Papua New Guinea campaign raged throughout the islands that make up that country. An estimated two million soldiers and Japanese forces were involved, bombarded and fought their war through dense tropical rainforests, jagged mountains and across remote tropical atolls.

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These villagers also speak angrily of the many promises made by the occupying armies of compensation and reward after the war. They are still waiting for the fulfillment of these promises.

A Special Award was given to Sally Hockett’s A Jury of Her Peers. According to the AFC, this film is a remarkable award because of its unique approach to a number of social issues, as well as the sensitivity and skill of the short story form into film.

Set in 1965 rural America, A Jury of Her Peers presents the viewer with the story of one woman’s efforts to create justice for her husband’s rape. As her wife, she is a victim of her husband’s own, and her husband’s own, undoing and the women’s struggle to keep justice.

Gillian Armstrong’s 14’s Good, 16’s Better gained the award for Best Educational Short Film, critical and educational. The energy that reflects the vitality of her subjects. 14’s Good, 16’s Better is a range of educational and social programs.

The film is a look at safe food handling in Tasmania, and the common mistakes people make. It is an educational documentary for the Tasmanian Division of Public Health.

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 SA. 239 Anzac Highway, Plympton 5038 Tel: 293 2692 Telex AA9800
## BOX-OFFICE GROSSES

<table>
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<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>Distributor</th>
<th>PERIOD 4.10.81 to 20.3.82</th>
<th>PERIOD 14.6.81 to 3.10.81</th>
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<tr>
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<td>SYD.²</td>
<td>MLB.</td>
<td>PTH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gallipoli</td>
<td>RS</td>
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<td>RS</td>
<td>(8)*</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Puberty Blues</td>
<td>RS</td>
<td>(10*6/6)</td>
<td>464,030</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Winter of our Dreams</td>
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<td>GUO</td>
<td>16,095</td>
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<td>Hoodwink</td>
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<td>GUO</td>
<td>11,644</td>
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<td>RS</td>
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<td>Grendel, Grendel, Grendel</td>
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<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>9,720,615</td>
<td>6,912,835</td>
<td>4,300,882</td>
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</table>

1 Not for publication, but ranking correct.  
2 Figures exclude N/A figures.  
3 Box-office grosses of individual films have been supplied to Cinema Papers by the Australian Film Commission.  
4 This figure represents the total box-office gross of all foreign films shown during the period in the area specified.  
5 Continuing into next period.  
6 Box-office grosses of individual films have been supplied to Cinema Papers by the Australian Film Commission.  
7 Figures in parentheses above the grosses represent weeks in release. If more than one figure appears, the film has been released in more than one cinema during the period.

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(1) Australian theatrical distributor only: RS - Roadshow; GUO - Greater Union Organization Film Distributors; HTS - Hoyts Theatres; FOX - 20th Century Fox; UA - United Artists; CIC - Cinema International Corporation; FW - Filmways Australasian Distributors; 7K - Seven Keys Film Distributors; COL - Columbia Pictures; REG - Regent Film Distributors; CCG - Cinema Centre Group; AFC - Australian Film Commission; SAFC - South Australian Film Corporation; MCA - Music Corporation of America; S - Sherman Films; OTH - Other.  
(2) Figures are drawn from capital city and inner suburban first release hardtop only.  
(3) Split figures indicate a multiple cinema release.
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Joan Fontaine
Continued from p. 299
degenerate grandmothers. I would rather not work in films and do stage work than do that kind of thing. And they have a terrible habit of putting a sharp lens on you and making you look like Bette Davis turned inside out. I don’t want that. I don’t want to play those parts.

The last thing I saw you in was a television film, "The Users," with Tracey Curtis and Dave MacLeod, but I didn’t greatly enjoy it. Were you attracted to the part there or did you just feel like working?

It was a good part — one that I wanted. It was Hedda Hopper, and all those journalists I really knew how they behaved, so it was not difficult for me to do. And, again, it was a political thing. I certainly understood the politics of the press in relation to films and film people, and what it’s like — society as well.

Do you regret not having worked with any particular directors?

I don’t think so.

How about Billy Wilder and Nicholas Ray, with whom you made one film each?

They were so foreign to me in their natures. Nick Ray was just a nice stuttering guy from Brooklyn and Billy Wilder had been a piano player in a whorehouse in Vienna. I thought I am remembered for pretty good."

Joan Fontaine
Continued from p. 212
After lunch, the session on industrial issues and policies was marked by a solid statement of opposition to foreign writers, actors, and film technicians from the unions, and a tense interchange between producer-director Mike Thornhill and Actors and Announcers Equity Association of Australia organizer Janette Paramore.

David Williamson, president of the Australian Writers Guild, told the seminar that negotiations with the Film and Television Production Association of Australia over a standard writers agreement had broken down over the issue of assignment of rights, and that producers want an assignment of all rights, the writers want to license specific rights only. Williamson predicted that the breakdown meant that producers will end up paying more for scripts and that there will be less good product around in future.

On foreign writers, Williamson said that the AWG’s opposition was unashamedly a defence of employment policy. “Many of us in the guild will go beyond a defence-of-employment policy. I believe that films which have a high percentage of Australian creative talent are the ones most likely in the long run to succeed, here and abroad. The American films, and other American genre films than we ever will,” he said. He then cited the British Industry’s recent Oscar success with _Chariots of Fire_ to back him up.

Paramore explained Equity’s policy on foreign artists and how it was arrived at as a result of members’ review. “It is currently underway to tighten the policy. Historically, actors have always had to fight for employment. I wonder how many other foreign artists have had one scene which was a displayer that the film was about Juanita Nielsen. Buckley told the seminar that certain property developers in the Kings Cross area were making heavy demands on their lawyers to check the script, but these demands were always refused.

The seminar, which had been planned for 40 lawyers, was initiated by the AFC as part of its industry training scheme. To quote the foreword to the reference materials:

“The continuing, education of lawyers in film law was considered an important part of film production, so an approach was made to the College of Law, an arm of the New South Wales Law Society, which specializes in continuing education. The AFC and the College felt that the seminar should increase the number of legal practitioners having some knowledge and experience in the legal problems and some of their solutions in the creative business of film production.”

Future seminars for Melbourne and perhaps Perth are under consideration by the AFC as the creation of a film law society. The reference papers, which include a valuable glossary of terms, index and bibliography, as well as examples of key contracts, will be available from June at the AFC and the College of Law.

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**The Law of Making Movies/Censorship**

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**Film Censorship Listings**

Continued from p. 241

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<thead>
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<th>Reason for deletions:</th>
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</tbody>
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**The Law of Making Movies/Censorship**

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**Joan Fontaine**
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George Miller and Geoff Burrowes

Book Reviews

Continued from p. 212

Burrowes: The two are intrinsically interwoven. I don’t believe it’s possible in this book, unless you are absolutely cynical, and we wouldn’t be in this position if we were, to separate the pursuit of excellence from one’s objective appreciation of the situation. The pursuit of excellence is as intrinsic to you as putting on your underpants in the morning.

We’re not talking about entertainment in lieu of craft, we’re not talking about entertainment in lieu of craft. It is art and craft disciplined, oriented, targeted and controlled.

It is not because we are dopey that we make something simple. To arrive at the result, we had to have a greater comprehension of art and craft, and to have more assiduously pursued excellence than the auteurs who eschew the implicit disciplines, who don’t recognize the bristles to which each craft can attach.

Simplicity and clarity of statement can only be arrived at after complex consideration—ask Alan Einstein or George Bernard Shaw.

What do you mean by “auteur”?

Burrowes: Well, its meaning is apparent, isn’t it? Miller: “A film by . . .” is almost a guarantee. There is only one person that ever did that well, and that was Alfred Hitchcock.

It is not coincidentally, a consummate craftsman. That’s why his reputation is as it is, not because he made artistic films or great statements.

But don’t you agree that a film or book can have meaning that even the director or author doesn’t see?

Burrowes: If something happens in a film that you don’t intend, fuck, what were you doing? Where was your mind? That’s why.

That’s not to dismiss moments of magic, when something happens that just performs a or changes slightly the way in which you see the scene.

How will people in 50 years view “Snowy River”?

Miller: People will be able to say, “That is what Australia looked like in the 1880s.” If the film contributed anything to Australian history, it is a freezing of what the 1880s and 1890s looked like.

It is also the culmination of 20 years’ research on the part of the director. It is real people. People don’t realize that now, but they may in 50 years’ time.

Burrowes: I think people will look back on Snowy as a rather quaint and amusing little film made by a bunch of funny people in the same way as one looks back on films that Ken Hall made, which were brilliant successes in their day but have stood the test of time.

Miller: If the Australian public looks upon our film as fondly as they looked upon Ken Hall’s, then I’ll be a happy person. He really knew his craft.

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The Thomas and Hudleston Manual of Film Editing

Roger Cottenden

Hamlyn and Hudson/Imp., $14.50 (HC)

A comprehensive introduction to the techniques and skills of film editing.

The Movie Business

Danae Finn-Slater

New York/Settings Press, $8.45

A guide for film students and young producers.

Wings of Desire and Television

Stuart Braddon

Thames and Hudson, $6.75

An introductory text.

Writing the Script

Patrick McGilligan

Coronet/Hodder and Stoughton, £2.95 (HC)

How to make a script and survive in films and television.

Non-Australian Associated Titles

A Better Class of Person: An Autobiography 1928-1956

John Osborne

Ebury/Penguin, $22.95 (HC)

The autobiography of playwright John Osborne, who writes about his early life and early success in the drama scene.

Diane Ross

Geoff Brown

Dag and Hodder and Stoughton Aust., $19.50 (HC)

A biography of singer-actress Diane Ross, illustrated.

Imagery

Roland Balser

Bloomsbury, $6.95

Essays on the structural analysis of narrative and issues on the representation of film and television; supplemented by illustrations.

How to Make It and Survive in Films and Television

St Martins/Imp., $14.35 (HC)

A guide to the making and survival in films and television.

Phil Maginnis

Michael Parkinson

John Gielgud/Joseph/Thomas Nelson Aust., $13.95 (HC)

Autobiographical reminiscences and anecdotes from the popular television interview show impart.

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Patrick McGilligan

Arsen/Prestige Press, $7.45 (HC)

The script of the classic musical starring James Cagney.

Television

The New Musical Express Guide to Rock Cinema

Ted Williams

Tevian/Hodder and Stoughton, £17.45 (HC)

A new guide to the making and survival of rock films.

The New Television Guide

Edward Albee

Focal Press/Butterworth, $27.95 (HC)

An inside look at the making of prime time television by Bernard Sandler, ex-PBS Director and Steve Posner.

Television’s Transformation: The Next 25 Years

George W. Meterk

Southern Illinois University Press/Imp., $3.95

An inside look at the making of prime time television by Bernard Sandler, ex-PBS Director and Steve Posner.

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An inside look at the making of prime time television by Bernard Sandler, ex-PBS Director and Steve Posner.
Film Insurance/Adair
Continued from p. 237
requirements for an upcoming production?

Hopefully, one would like to be called in quite early, when the budgets are being put together, and even before the final decisions about casting. Often, before finance has been arranged — by providing detail for the provisional budget — one can assist by indicating a rating structure according to
the script. Obviously, a film bearing a degree of hazard — with a number of stunt operations and exploding props — will carry a different rating structure to a film being principally shot in a studio. The use of helicopters and locations for filming, for example, also affects the rating.

So, the earlier we are called into the project, the better. Unfortunately, until recently, insurance was often the last thing considered by some film producers. Quotes were sometimes required in two days, with shooting scheduled to begin in three. The days of such productions have certainly gone by the board. Thankfully, solicitors, accountants, investors and especially producers now realize that the earlier a broker becomes involved, the better.

It doesn't matter whether you are dealing with a film insurer in Australia or overseas, the important thing is that the more information you can provide the underwriter, the more detail you collect, the more you can display an intimate knowledge of the script, the greater the chances of obtaining a better rate. And if we can't provide the underwriters with such complete details, they will quote a rate which builds in the possibility of risk. The more you tell them, the more accurate the rate will be and, as a result, we will look at the overall budget figures being prepared for investors and producers.

Provided we, as brokers, have all the information at hand, we can successfully advise our underwriters of the suggested rate. And it is very rare that we have that rate queried by them. In the event that there is any alteration, the producers will know about it within 24 hours. Distance between broker and underwriter is of no commercial consequence with this style of relationship.

How many types of insurance are there with which the film producer — and his investors — must be concerned?

There are two basic types of insurance, covering a wide range of implications. There are the Special Film Insurances, appertaining to the filming of the production, protection of the artists, of the negatives, sets, wardrobe, equipment, etc. Then there are the Film Companies Insurances, which comply with various requirements of state law. These insurances are the domestic types which apply to any commercial operation: Worker's Compensation, Public Liability, Motor Vehicle, Comprehensive, Payroll and so forth.

In the category regarding film production insurances, we initially cover certain key people, such as the director, perhaps the director of photography, and all important artists. The $300,000 a day is the $300,000 production period. If any mishap befalls those key people, it may affect the outcome of the project.

Next comes Film Producer's Indemnity (FPI), or Cast Insurance, which insures various actors, director of photography, the director, sometimes even the producer, those people who, if they become ill or were injured during production, could affect the continuity of the shooting schedule. Remember, the daily cost of production in Australia could be from $15,000 to $100,000.

Let's say it is $30,000, and our example production works a 10-hour day, six-day week. If something happens to a normally fit person and production around a certain situation cannot continue for several days, all wages, hiring costs, rentals and so forth must continue to be paid. This 10-hour day is still going out — and that is the basis of Film Producer’s Indemnity. Six days’ delay at $30,000 a day is a helluva lot of money. Think about a budget of around $100,000 a day...

Then we have Negative All Risk, or Negative Film Risk (NFR). This protects the film until answer print stage, during the period from raw stock through to the editing, mixing and marriage of music tracks. If anything happens to that material during the stage of production, the film may have to be reshot. Or, if sufficient of it is damaged or destroyed, abandonment may have to be considered.

This insurance is particularly vital. The FPI lasts only the period of the actual shoot, after which the artists go their various ways. The Negative would go on for six months or longer after completion of the shoot. This is why the budget figure for NFR is often the greater, because it is covering a greater piece of the overall production budget.

The next type of risk is called Props, Sets and Wardrobe, and covers the replacement of these items, which can run into several hundred thousands of dollars. Also insured is the hiring of miscellaneous items of equipment — cameras, booms, lighting gear and so on, equally expensive to replace or rehire.

Next, there is Extra Expense insurance. This covers the daily cost of the production company against something happening to the sets, causing the halting of the shooting schedule. If a particularly important set is destroyed and must be rebuilt, everyone must continue to be paid during that reconstruction. The set is covered, and so too is the extra expense incurred through its destruction or damage. With large

Film Insurance/Cinesure
Continued from p. 239
buying cheap, nasty insurance, there is very little benefit when a claim comes along.

McEwin: I would mention that we do have one financial advantage over foreign insurers; we don't have to pay any withholding taxes and, as a result, we don't have extra costs of this kind to pass on to clients.

How will your idea of rewarding producers with good track records work?

McEwin: On an individual basis for individual producers. It may mean rewarding them with keener rates because of their previous track record, or it may mean rewarding them with differential rates on a production with some sort of non-claim rebate.

Does Cinesure offer any services or advantages that are not already available for film and television producers?

McEwin: As a starting point, we can offer coverage as wide as that offered by any insurer in the world and that includes Errors and Omissions, Producers' Indemnity and Negative Film Insurance, for example. The fact that we are in Australia means that we are able to discuss fully with any producer his or her policy needs, which can't be done with overseas insurers many of whom will not even deal with small business. We are therefore better able to devise tailor-made policies to suit every producer. We think our service will prove to be more personal, as well as being speedier and more flexible.

Lipman: That's right. We are here in Australia. We can discuss their insurance needs and problems directly with our clients and give them immediate decisions, which can't be done when you are dealing with overseas insurers. More important, if there is a loss, we are here on the spot point. We can authorize to pay losses up to $100,000 immediately to any film producer who has a just claim. And larger claims will be processed quickly, but take his case to a court in, say, Los Angeles, which could happen with an overseas insurer. And it's obvious what an expensive proposition that would be.

But the 'Act' does not offer protection in the event of a dispute over a claim, does it?

Lipman: No it doesn’t involve procedures for the settlement of disputes but it aims to make sure that the insurance company writing the business is financially sound. And the key point is, we are here on the spot point. If anyone has a legal dispute with an Australian insurance company, it can be settled in Australian courts. The policy holder will not have to go over there, take his case to a court in, say, Los Angeles, which could happen with an overseas insurer. And it's obvious what an expensive proposition that would be.

You are aiming to service the film and television industry throughout Australia. Yet Cinesure’s only office is in Sydney, while a few of the brokers have offices in all the major State capitals. So how will you service clients outside Sydney?

Lipman: At present, Cinesure itself has only an office in Sydney, although the parent company (Turence Lipman Pty Ltd) is represented in all parts of Australia and throughout the world. The four companies for which we act have offices in all the major centres in the country. Nevertheless, we believe it is best that Cinesure itself operates from a single, centralized office. This is because we know from previous experience that specialist insurance is most efficiently handled by senior experts at a single point.

So, the presence of extra offices would only cause delays as any business would have to be referred to the central office anyway. After all, if you go to a broker's office in, say, Perth, that office is going to have to refer your enquiry to its head office in Sydney and, until now, of course, it would then have to be referred to an insurer overseas. Now, we are ready to hop on a plane at any time to do business with a client in any part of Australia. And, frankly, that's also cheaper than maintaining offices throughout the land. Those offices, if there were, would only mean extra costs which ultimately would have to be passed on to the clients.

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productions, Extra Expense may cover up to $1 million worth of additional expenditure.

In recent years, there has been a Third Party Property Damage and Loss of Use. Hiring of cameras and equipment is often a significant slice of the production budget. If something happens to that equipment and it must be repaired, the hiring costs must continue to be paid until that equipment is back in operation. The hiring company will, of course, supply another camera, but will want that ring fixed up and paid for both cameras until the first is fixed, and is therefore hireable again. This covers loss of revenue from loss of use to the hiring company, and is a typical example of this type of insurance cover.

There are two other areas of cover which were not always considered essential, but appear to have become so recently. The first is Errors and Omissions, which protects the production company — and thus the investors — against suits involving libel or defamation, plagiarism and so forth. This insurance may be taken from one to three years from the date requested, and continuously renewed if required.

The other area is not an insurable risk, but a financial risk, and is now becoming a necessary part of the business. It is called Completion Guarantee. This is generally a matter of great pride to ourselves that Adair was appointed sole representative for the companies in Australia and New Zealand. Such connections — considering The Fireman's Fund is the biggest in the business — are not inconsequential to our clients. Our base in this industry, which has been broadened considerably. We now have client production companies shooting as far afield as the South Pacific, Greece, Yugoslavia and Germany, and using various overseas laboratory facilities.

It is also important to underline that this recent liaison, in particular, has brought into Australia a long and established list of industry connections, and lines of personal contact with industry marketers, distributors, financiers, lawyers and producers. These connections are invaluable to any exporting industry, particularly in Australia.

For example, let’s say a client of Ruben and Co. and The Fireman’s Fund had a deal to produce a film in the U.S. These cover the best list of contacts in the business, contacts we utilize to our best abilities to the advantage of our Australian clients.

As an Australian company with substantial international connections and access to their facilities, why do you consider the overall benefits of such connections to your clients?

We have a wide range of facilities available, from local, to Lloyd’s and other London markets, to New York, Paris and Hollywood. These connections are essential in the U.S. These cover the best list of contacts in the business, contacts we utilize to our best abilities to the advantage of our Australian clients.

It is significant that last year Albert G. Ruben and Co. and The Fireman’s Fund made a conscious decision to enter the Australian market with the Fireman’s Fund in the U.S. We see this as a way to expand our business.

What business does Adair have at present?

Over the past few months, we have handled something in excess of $35 million worth of insured value of feature films, as well as a continual run of documentaries, commercials and small productions. Today, our client budgets range from $20,000, for the filming of two or three minutes in Paris, to a $7 million feature film.

When feature films are falling off toward the end of the financial year, film production crews become more available, and they are looking to work on other commercial business, which we will take advantage of. One of our clients, for whom we cover which were not always considered essential, has Errors and Omissions, which provides good rates.

The greatest benefit of such a liaison, however, is the strength of experience on both sides. The better the quality of information provided and assessment given, the better the premium rate from the beginning.

The experience has made an incredible difference to our growth. That is probably one of the reasons so much interest is now found in Australian film. It is a very good reason why Australians can secure good acting roles in foreign films, which Australian directors, cameramen and other professionals are being sought internationally. It is because they are very good at their craft.

Generally, the Australian industry is becoming a very sophisticated operation. And this will continue, provided we don’t get into the area of, how shall we say, featherbedding, as we have seen occur in the U.S. and Europe. Providing we don’t develop the type of temperamental artists who will walk off the set, thereby causing considerable costs through production holdups.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of our industry today is the level of dedication inherent in our artists and production professionals. If we can continue to work that way, with dedicated people working hard and being fairly remunerated, I can see nothing but a good and solid future for Australian film.

From your standpoint, what changes have you seen in production values over the past decade of close involvement?

The budgets in the early 1970s went as low as $200,000 for a feature film, and now we are dealing with $7 million and upwards. Back then, $500,000 was considered large.

Over the past 18 months, in particular, local budgets have increased dramatically in line with the increased number of films in production. We have been steadily, over the years as film crews become more experienced, and wages and inflation take their course. One of our clients, for whom we cover a film worth $293,000 in 1977, is now producing a film worth $3.5 million. That is indicative. It is difficult to produce a worthwhile feature film for less than $1 million today, considering the quality of sets, locations, crew, actors and equipment necessary to ensure a good chance at local and international commercial success.

Given your own and your company’s experience in Australian film, what is your opinion of the current state of the industry, and its likely future?

Perhaps only the Treasurer can prophesy the future of the industry; he is the only one who knows what is going to happen in regard to investment.

However, over the years I have seen the quality and expertise exhibited in Australian film improve out of sight. The change of experienced people — Australians going overseas and internationals coming here — has been of tremendous value to the industry. They are helping us improve out of sight. The experience has made an incredible difference to our growth.

That is probably one of the reasons so much interest is now found in Australian film.
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than their predecessors in achieving a genuine richness of emotional texture and a satisfying sense of the reaction of one nature, and of culture, upon another. That they render as much of James' vision as they do is not due just to the dialogue's fidelity to the original or to the intelligence with which it is spoken. It is essentially a matter of the sure, unobtrusive building of relationships as the "Europeans" (actually Americans returning home) and the New Englanders feel their way in and around each other's understanding. Eugenia (Lee Remick), the Baroness Munster, morganatic wife of a German princeling, and her brother Felix (Tim Woodward), an artist misadventure, approach their American cousins, the Wentworths, in different frames of mind. Each wants something from the visit: Eugenia wants a fortune ("That's always interesting", is her reply to learning that the Wentworths' neighbor Robert Acton has one); Felix is determined to be entertained and, though he will be pleased if his cousins are rich, it is not a condition of his entertainment. Eugenia, with her clearer sense of purpose, loses her chance with Acton (Robin Ellis) whose Yankee shrewdness is a match for her sophistication. Felix, ironically, finds in his love for Gertrude Wentworth (Lisa Eichhorn) the seriousness that has been missing from his life.

By somewhat surprisingly omitting the novel's opening chapter which so skillfully establishes the different approaches of brother and sister to America, Ivory and his collaborators have undervalued the narrative value James places on the cultural gap between them and their New England cousins. The novel is far from being a schematic treatment of Old World sophistication exploiting American innocence — or of the latter effecting moral regeneration in decadent Europeans — and the film certainly avoids any such simplistic sense of representativeness. However, it also loses a pressure that would make the finely-achieved individual relationships mean more if set more firmly in a context of cultural differences.

The American setting is exquisitely realized in Larry Pizer's glowing images of autumn brilliance declaiming the dignity of the solid, simply-elegant Wentworth house, and in a series of lovely tracking shots along streets, across fields, up staircases and over bridges. The European influence has to make itself felt in less tangible ways. It is hinted at in the opening shots of European statuary, which quickly give way to watercolors and sketches of sailing ships and New England scenes, all of these behind the credits. But it is more importantly to be felt in differences of dress (cf. Eugenia's blue-black ballgown contrasts with the pastel sameness of the Boston ladies), in ways of standing and sitting, of looking and walking. Nevertheless, the sense of these differences would have been strengthened by retaining James' opening scene. To begin as Ivory does, with Gertrude Wentworth's undefined discontent, certainly establishes her life as waiting for an experience which will give it direction; and Felix appears on the scene as if in answer to her unspoken need for a fresh impulse in her life. This is all played with delicacy and exactness, and the girl's restlessness is sharply and dramatically at odds with the film's visual and aural imagery — a serenely lovely setting and "Shall we gather at the river" on the soundtrack. Fine as this is, this scene works against the centrality the book gives to Eugenia — a centrality the film also wants to insist on — and slightly undermines Lee Remick's effectiveness in the role. Without seeing her earlier, bitterly unhappy response to America, we are less moved than we might be by her sudden access of genuine emotion when she says to her uncle (Wesley Addy): "I should like to stay here... Pray take me in."

This is my one serious complaint about the Jhabvala adaptation. The film is not perfect James: there are some inevitable coarctations, particularly in comic moments like that in which Felix asks Mr Wentworth if he may marry Gertrude; and Mr Brand (Norman Snow), Gertrude's other suitor, a charcoal sketch among watercolors, belongs to a darker New England tradition. It is not perfect Ivory either: it does occasionally linger when it ought to move on as if it could hardly tear itself away from the beauty of New England in the fall. However, The Europeans is an immensely attractive film, exhibiting Ivory's preoccupations and strengths at their most distinctive and distinguished. The cross-cultural tensions previously examined in the context of East-West relations in modern India, or in the allegoric situation of forest-dwelling savages in a deserted mansion in Savages (1972) (a film I have not been able to see and one which sounds tantalizingly typical), are here explored in a lovingly-recreated corner of America a hundred years ago. Essentially, though, meticulous as Jeremiah Ruscon's art direction is, it is Ivory's characteristic trust in his actors, in their faces above all, that allows him to approach the subtle shifts of James' prose.

The cast, especially Remick, Ellis, Eichhorn, Addy, and Helen Stenborg (as Mrs Acton), show a striking capacity to speak dialogue of a subtle resonance unusual in films. Perhaps even more significantly, I mean to draw attention to the faces — to the marvellous rightness of Helen Stenborg's Mrs Acton and the tender rectitudes of Wesley Addy's Mr Wentworth: these are discriminations achieved by a director and cameraman who know what a camera can make the right face reveal.
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characters' squabbles and discontent to insignificance."

**Hullabaloo** has been an unmitigated disaster in the cinema; even more than most, it is an utterly uncommercial venture. And yet, I can't help feeling that it is really best suited to television: it is essentially a small-screen subject, an utterly uncommercial venture. And yet, I describing it as "an exquisite little rondo". (In intimately and lovingly treated, even if one spite of this praise and three stars in its Film rejects evoked by Walter Lassally's camerawork and one of the most impressive films of the quarter.)

A summary makes it sound triter than it is, but there is no denying a certain sentimentality in the concept and some schematic touches in Tanveer Faruquiel's screenplay (a woman feeding a dalmatian refuses the boy food). It nevertheless offers some telling ironic observations on the way one cultural group can ignore another's needs, not wishing to be discomposed by signs of real deprivation. Perhaps in counterpoint to its sad little story, it is always lovely to look at in Subrata Mitra's gentle images.

**Helen — Queen of the Nautch Girls**, written by Ivory, produced by Merchant and directed by Anthony Korner, had a brief 'supporting' season at Melbourne's Longford Cinema. Though it is a documentary and not even directed by Ivory, it is a useful film to note in conclusion. The film's commentary (spoken by Korner) records — laments? — the unpopularity of Helen's films, much influenced, if often bizarrely so, by Hollywood, and they recall variously Ann Miller, Vera-Ellen, Jessie Matthews and Cyd Charisse, though Helen herself has real charm and character. These latter are set as she sits at her make-up table, talking about her difficult early years, her English father and Burmese mother, and her shrewd assessment of her future — "probably character roles", and perhaps "a boutique in the Sheraton Hotel — something groovy".

The film's irony is that, genuinely attractive and talented, and hugely popular, as Helen is, her films represent a Western debasement of an art form with a long history. Against this view, and perhaps more insidious, the fact is that, "Even intellectuals call these escapists fantasies a new folk art", when they are clearly no more than camp. Helen's films offer glimpses of luxury, beauty and sensuality, of a world that has now passed forever. They are frequently set in cabarets which allow the producers scope for the fantastic and which bring a note of forbidden luxury, liquor and western decadence. The big and perhaps more ominous — and the documentary makes generous use of Helen's films — is always the film's top spectacular moment and, a further irony, in its mindless, pretty way, is also the pinnacle of professionalism in Indian film.

**Postscript:**

At the time of writing, I have just learnt that the next Merchant-Ivory production, begun in February 1982, is a film version of Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's novel, the remarkable *Heat and Dust*, adapted by the author. The film stars Julie Christie, Christopher Cazenove and Shashi Kapoor who seem ideal casting for the central roles of Olivia Rivers, wayward wife of the District Officer, her husband Douglas, and the local Nawab with whom Olivia has an affair which alters her life.

**Acknowledgments:**

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Andrew Pike of Ronin Films, Canberra, in making several of the Merchant-Ivory films available to me, and for providing photographs and information relating to them. In particular, since I wrote the above article, he has supplied the following comments on the release history of the Merchant-Ivory films distributed by Ronin.

**Autobiography of a Princess** was screened extensively in Sydney as a supporting feature in "art" and repertory cinemas and received excellent reviews. It was never adequately released in Sydney but had great commercial success as a main feature in Canberra. It has been rejected repeatedly by ABC television, though it has been heavily used by film societies.

**Bombay Talkie** had universally hostile reviews in Australia, except in *The Canberra Times*. It had minor, commercially-disastrous first-release seasons at the Universal, Fitzroy, and the Walker Street Cinema, Sydney, and slightly better commercial results in Canberra. In general it has been "seldom screened and widely detected".

**Hullabaloo over Georgie and Bonnie's Pictures** had minor theatrical releases in Sydney (at Walker Street) and Melbourne (at the Silver Screen), with excellent reviews and very poor returns. Again, it had some commercial success in Canberra and very heavy demand from film societies.

**Jane Austen in Manhattan** suffered a commercially very poor season at Melbourne's Brighton Bay Twin, but had fair commercial results in Canberra. Its reviews ranged from respectful to positive, but it has so far attracted no interest from film societies or repertory cinemas.

**Ronin Films** is comfortably in profit with *Autobiography and Hullabaloo* but there seems little prospect of this happening with *Bombay Talkie* or *Jane Austen*. *
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Tony Williams

Continued from p. 245

extraordinary work within the time and budget available. I must admit I never believed we were going to pull off a lot of the shots that we did.

Gary Hansen is a true D.O.P. [director of photography] and is wonderful at pulling his team together and very creative to the camera director. Having just seen Bad Blood, which he shot in New Zealand, I think Gary will soon be recognized as one of the finest lighting cameramen in Australia.

Next of Kin is a stylish film and, before we started shooting, I storyboarded every frame of film, with a floor plan. And if you think it was the first time Steadicam had been used in Australia where it was totally part of the film equipment and not something called in for a special day. We used an Arri BL mounted onto the Steadicam, which Toby set up with the help of John Barry. John and his assistants were fantastic and really got the whole system going.

Toby had just come back from a week's course with Gareth Brown in Los Angeles, so he knew exactly how The Shining had been shot and what systems they had used. He felt it was not really worth doing Steadicam unless we did it totally. I wanted to use Steadicam all through the film, but not in such a way that people would know it was Steadicam. Also, I was worried it might take longer to set up than laying tracks and using a dolly.

A lot of Australian directors have found, including myself on commercials, that while it may look a simple machine to use, it can take so long to set up that you might as well use a dolly or a crane. So we decided that if we were going to use it, we would do so according to Toby's conditions and requirements.

It was fantastic because Gary and I were in a position to say, 'Right, here is the shot, as storyboarded. How best can we achieve it?' We would spend a couple of minutes on the decision, and then say, 'Let's go Steadicam.'

Toby then had five minutes to strap-up, wheel on the monitors and plug everything in. We found that he could move just as fast as it takes grips to lay tracks. In fact, in a lot of scenes in the film you wouldn't realize we were Steadicam because they weren't designed to be tricky Steadicam shots; it was easier than using them. In many scenes we used a combination of a crane, tracking shots, Steadicam and hand-held shots. Even some static wide-shots were shot Steadicam so that Toby could easily shoot it that way than take the Steadicam off Toby.

I am totally convinced this is the only way to use Steadicam.

What were some of the things Toby brought back from the one-week course?

Mainly the experience of being an operator. You find a lot of Steadicam people who say that unless you are running through a film, or moving it about, it is very hard to keep it rock steady. You can't do the sort of things you could with a crane or on a dolly. In some cases, that is still true. You couldn't use a machine to shoot a 180-degree track on an 85mm lens around somebody on Steadicam; you would use curved tracks and a dolly.

Against that, what Toby had sweated over and practised hard was being able to operate the Steadicam rock steady as if the plane on and it also had a transmitter, rather than cables. We had a master control monitor set with a video recorder, so that we could record the takes. There were also hand-held, battery-operated receivers for the sound man, continuity girl and the director of photography to see what was being shot.

The system worked so well that we ended up using it even if we weren't shooting on Steadicam. We would videotape scenes and then play them back. We found we were making decisions faster as to whether to go with a take or continue working for a better one.

Is there a limitation in the lens you can use on the Steadicam system?

Yes. You wouldn't use Steadicam if you were trying to shoot a very exact long lens shot; for example, an 85mm tracking shot around somebody in the bed, as we had in our film. It would be easier to use camera tracks. One of the problems is the focus puller has to see in 3 dimensions; he can't make marks on the wall as you would with a dolly, because there is always variance with the Steadicam operator. The focus puller has to learn a whole new system.

I have heard, for example, that the Steadicam is best suited with a 32mm lens, which is fairly wide angle.

Longer lenses do create problems from a focus point of view and they are harder to operate. But we did shoot some scenes with an 85mm, and quite a lot of scenes with a 50mm. Generally speaking, however, if you are going to do tracking shots across broken ground, you would want to stay 35mm or wider.

The film has an unusual light quality, such as the slightly surreal silvery light when Linda and Barney (John Jarratt) run across the paddocks...

Yes, it is typical Hansen lighting. I discussed light at some length with Gary, and we looked at a lot of tapes together. One was Last Tango in Paris, which is a film I enjoy very much technically. It is a sumptuous film — particularly from the point of view of lighting.

There are a lot of scenes in our film where we had worked out the lighting long before we had started shooting. All the scenes with rain falling on the bedrooms and on the girl's face, for instance, were designed to be part of the lighting. Beyond that, Gary used a lot of quarter blue filters to give the film a blue look, and prayed for overcast weather — very European. This was carried right through the props and the whole design of the film.

In the end it seemed to have worked. No one really believed that the shot had been shot until the dailies were seen.

What have you lined up at the moment?

I am ready to see what the future holds. I am ready to see what the future holds. I am ready to see what the future holds.

How do you rate the commercials as part of your filmmaking output?

I thoroughly enjoy them. They are well paid and I don't dread them at all. People like to say commercials are stepping stones to features, but commercials are stepping stones to commercials. There is a great shortage of good scripts for commercials in Australia and there are not that many people making the ones I like to make. What are they? They are dramatic, humorous and subtle. I hope.

Equally, features are stepping stones to features. Solo was a stepping stone to Next of Kin, and I don't want to cover that territory again. Next time I would like to have a stronger property, some name actors, a bigger budget and more time.
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Joan Fontaine

seemed to be associated with one particular studio . . .

No, Selznick rented me out all the time, and took the money. It was brilliant of him; instead of risking capital by putting me in a film, and, after a lot of work, the film may or may not be good, he would just hire me out and keep 95 per cent of the money. It was brilliant tactics.

Which of the studios did you enjoy working at best?

You don’t care about the studios; you care about the film. One studio looks like the other; it doesn’t matter. You don’t plan, no plan, no design. I was a serf and my producer, Mr Selznick, a czar. So what could I do? Just stand still and freeze, or go his way.

And you like to keep working. Actually, I enjoyed your four “roles” in “Affairs of Susan” very much. I wondered why you didn’t play more comedy . . .

They didn’t give it to me, dear, that’s the whole point. You seem to think I had any ability to guide my own career. I had none — none whatsoever. They told you what you were going to do, they selected the property. How could I go up to the head of a studio and say I want to play comedy? I was just sold to RKO for the role.

Coming to what I see as a couple of high spots, when I saw “Letter From an Unknown Woman” in the theatre. I was 14 and going through up to 40 all in one night, and took the money. It was a very clever and it was masterfully produced, masterfully thought out, the kind of thing that Selznick had done on “Rebecca” and “Gone With the Wind” but ceased to do. He was then playing baccarat in the south of France.

One of the marvellous things about “Letter From an Unknown Woman” is the way all the elements are integrated. For instance, you can trace what is happening to Lisa through the changes in the costumes . . .

And more than that. Starting at 14 and going through to 40 all in one film, it had never been done before. When you think that the film was not even up for an Academy Award! It is all political and that’s why I am always impressed when people are involved in great film enterprises, but it is only (as Hollywood has now become) a political, financial accident. It really is.

I am interested in what you said about the studios not really seeming to you to have any special personalities at all. But did you think the studio system had anything going for it?

It had continuity for an actor — if you had a producer who believed in you. Let’s just take Hal Wallis. I was working for him in “Affairs of Susan” when I saw [Dean] Martin and [Jerry] Lewis one night at a nightclub. I went to Hal and said I had just seen two swell new comedians, so he signed them and dedicated the next five years to doing their films. So they had the partners they needed. You have to do that, but it was the kind of thing I was certain not prepared to do. Being a woman, you don’t want to find a producer like that, because it becomes an essential thing and I don’t believe in mixing those two together, if I can help it. As a matter of fact, my husband was involved in the production of “Letter From an Unknown Woman” and it probably was rocky for our marriage because you can’t go home and say, “Look, I don’t like this.” He would say, “Look, I am your husband, and you do what I tell you”, and the balance was gone. You are no longer a person able to talk about your career. He says, “I don’t want to do it this way or that way” to the man who is a husband at night and a producer by day. You are caught between those two and there is no way out.

At the beginning of the 1950s, you worked again for George Stevens in “Something to Live For”, which is a film I am very fond of, but I gathered it wasn’t big at the box-office . . .

My clothes were worked out very carefully, step by step, the blacks and the whites, and all that was one. He kept me in all this black and white, which was a lovely thing to do. It was all very clever and it was masterfully produced, masterfully thought out, the kind of thing that Selznick had done on “Rebecca” and “Gone With the Wind” but ceased to do. He was then playing baccarat in the south of France.

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He was having studio problems and he took a very long time; he was adamant. He later became pretty much his own producer without using a studio. His idea — and it worked for him — I can't tell you how political this is — was to take as long as possible. I always used to accuse him of having a lot of Kodak film stock. He was punishing the studio, and they would come on the set and say we would have to finish in two weeks. He would say nothing at all, drag on his pipe and he'd take a month. If they sent somebody back and said we would have to finish the day after tomorrow, he would take another month. By gosh, it worked for him. He became an all-powerful man by doing that.

He took six months to do I Remember Mama, in 1947. Deliberately. Getting his way with the front office, teaching them a lesson. And those poor actors got made up every day and sat there and he would not shoot.

In the 1950s, many of the big women stars of the 1930s and 1940s became considerably less active. For example, Bette Davis, Katharine Hepburn, Claudette Colbert and Merle Oberon made films in that decade, but you made as many in the 1950s as in the 1940s . . .

Oh, but I didn't. In 1954, I went to New York to do a play. I wasn't getting roles.

But in terms of numbers of roles, you played as many in the 1950s as in the 1940s — 14, in fact, though many were bunched around the early years of the decade. You continued to work for some very interesting directors and one whom I would describe as great. What can you tell me about working for Fritz Lang in "Beyond a Reasonable Doubt"?

Not very much. He was pretty much a beaten man by that time. He was told that he had to be on his best behaviour. He was a very Prussian man, as was Ophuls: "You will do vat I tell you." Well, he was on his best behaviour and perhaps that didn't help.

The leading man [Dan Andrews] was getting over having drunk too much for years and he was on the wagon, so there was a lacklustre performance there. The eyes were blank; the film was not anything at all. It was a step backwards for me.

What about working with Anthony Mann in "Serenade", not to speak of Mario Lanza?

Oh, my God! Mr Mann had fallen in love with the Spanish girl [Sarita Montiel] and they were holding hands in the projection room when you went in the evening to see the rushes, which I don't really think is cricket. He never paid any attention to anybody but her. They did marry I believe.

As for Mario, he was always trying to commit suicide. Oh, it was too awful! If it had not been for Vincent Price and marvellously directed scenes by Howard Shoup, it would have been awful. I knew it was not going to be a good film. Again, this was a studio commitment.

I have never seen it . . .

No! I haven't seen half the ones you are talking about.

One I am particularly fond of and wanted to ask you about was Robert Wise's "Until They Sail" . . .

He tried to fire me because one day I realized in the poem that when somebody — Jean Simmons, I think — recites, "How do I love thee? Let me count my quatrains." I told Bob Anderson screenplay, but he said, "No we haven't." I said, "Yes you have," and he found that I was right. I don't think that endeared me to them exactly.

Also, they were all sitting around and drinking after the day's work over. I never drink and drive, and I had to get home to my family. There was a little cliquey thing, too. No, I didn't like it at all.

It comes over in a low-key intelligent way; it is really quite moving . . .

Well, Robert Wise was a cutter, and during rehearsal he literally took a stopwatch and timed a scene. When I saw that, I knew he really could not be a creator of any kind. He was a mechanical man.

Of course, he had cut his teeth on Orson Welles' and Val Lewton's films at RKO . . .

That's right. Imagine somebody taking a stopwatch and timing a scene. You are not even playing it. He was just timing, doing camera moves. Well, they can get stand-ins to do that, but it's heartbreaking when that takes place. I had no respect for him after that.

What about Jean Negulesco, for whom you worked in "A Certain Smile"?

He was a dear man. He had been best man at my wedding years ago. He had been in the Cads' Club in Hollywood. Always a professional cad. By political manoeuvring, he got the job and he also had a great deal of artistic talent. He was a very good painter, and was intelligent, but nobody, as you know, is trained to be a producer or really trained to be a director. It is all accidental, experimental. You make a couple of good films and you are a genius like Orson Welles; you make a couple of bad films and you are box-office poison. There is no consistency here whatsoever. There isn't even the consistency in talent. It's a nerve-racking profession; very scanty. You are lucky one day, unlucky the next.

You only played one character role on the screen, and it was so good I wonder why you have never done any more. I mean Baby Warren in "Tender is the Night", where you were the one who had obviously read the book . . .

It's odd that you should say that, because I was reading an article on me by John Russell, the New York critic, and he described my career as "From Soft Girl to Tough Girl", and he said that, as a soft girl, I used to understand me: as a tough girl, I was only run of the mill. Well, I don't think Baby Warren was run of the mill. But that's his opinion.

Did you enjoy doing that film? A lot of the things don't seem to me right about it . . .

I never saw it, but when we were on location in Switzerland, Jennifer Jones was calling David Selznick every day in Hollywood. He was not allowed to produce it, but was actually the producer. Here again you have the producer-married-to-the-leading-lady thing. He had found this film for her and she was to act in it. She was not right and neither was Jason Robards, but he had to cast somebody of her age. I am not saying anything against Jennifer and I am very fond of her, but she was not quite right for it. She was 10 years too old at least.

I think this is one of the very finest performances you ever gave — this kind of role, anyway, at the other end of the spectrum and Lisa at the other . . .

It's a pity there aren't many chic tough roles. That's a special thing in itself — well-dressed and bland attitude and all that. Leopard skin and long cigarette holders.

"Tender" was one of Henry King's last films. Did you enjoy working with him?

Henry King! Somebody brought out the fact that these two, before their marriage, were not going in on each other's bedrooms and they asked why not. I mean, it was obviously so in the book. He said, "It may be obvious in the book, but in my films they don't, until they are married!!!" Now, rewriting Scott Fitzgerald — and the essence of Scott Fitzgerald, moreover. I mean, here we are. Ridiculous.

I am fascinated to hear that. Your last film, on big screen that is, "The Devil's Own", as far as I know, has never been shown in Australia and I can't imagine why. It got good reviews and has an excellent cast:

Concluded on p. 281

Joan Fontaine

Gwen ffong-Davies, Alec McCowen, Kay Walsh . . .

And Cyril Franklin directed.

Did you enjoy working in Britain again, for the first time since "Ivanhoe"?

I had a lot of union problems. I just did not understand the unions. But in the middle of a strike at 11 sharp, they would pull the light plugs on the set and say, "It's our tea-break." I found this very hard to accept. It seemed very difficult for the directors at being absolutely murderous for the actors and the whole idea of acting. You cannot, as Mr. Wise did, use a stopwatch on it.

Recently, as you said, you worked more on the stage in between filming, ballooning, flying, cooking and writing. What difference do you find in preparing a role for a stage piece or in relationship with the director on the stage? Do you find it a notably different experience from working on a film?

I love being able to have a consecutive go at it. With acting for the screen, as you know, it's bits and pieces, out of character whereas in the theatre you have this lovely ability to rehearse a character, let it grow and then to do it. I really get rather bored with a character after about six weeks of doing it, because the audience has taught me a great deal and then it becomes a matter of doing it really without any of your creative instincts. You really can't rebake the cake as it were, so it's just rote; it becomes tedious.

I would have thought, for an actor, the stage, in a very major sense, is more an actor's art, whereas the film is more a director's art. Would you agree with that crude distinction?

The trouble with films is the director is right over the camera and he tells you when to lift your eyebrow and that's very difficult, unless you have a director like Cukor. He is there milking your performance, and you can see him and you are pleased. You find you are doing things you never thought you could do before. Eddie Goulding was the same, but it's very seldom you find a director with whom you could feel his creativity.

What do you think of contemporary American cinema; would you like to be part of it?

Oh, yes, but to find a role is very difficult — one that I could be proud of. It sounds vain, but I do have a certain following like you. I mean, God bless you, and I don't want to disappoint these people. I really don't want to play old hags and
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