Cinema Papers #67 January 1988

Description
Content

4 BRIEFLY

6 FROM GLASNOST WITH LOVE: Themes in recent Russian cinema

DIRECT SPEECH:__________

12 Miller's guide

17 Duigan's moral tales

20 Jarmusch's mongrel dreams

26 GHANA DO IT: Filmmaking in Ghana

28 NO-FUNDS SITUATION: Under-represented, under-funded — what now for women in film?

32 BOND AGE GIRLS: Is there a stereotype?


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FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

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BRIEFLY

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DIRECT SPEECH:
12 Miller's guide
17 Duigan's moral tales
20 Jarmusch's mongrel dreams

26 GHANA DO IT:
Filmmaking in Ghana

NO-FUNDS SITUATION:
Under-represented, under-funded — what now for women in film?

32 BOND AGE GIRLS:
Is there a stereotype?

38 REVIEWS:
52 SHORTS CIRCUIT:
  Kick Start, Looking For Space Things,
  How The West Was Lost

54 VIDEO:
  Censorship, new releases

58 NEW ZEALAND REPORT:
  When in doubt, send a gorilla

60 TECHNICALITIES:
  The Showscan must go on

66 PRODUCTION SURVEY:
  Who’s making what in Australia

79 CENSORSHIP:
  The September and October decisions

80 BACK PAGE:
  January and February film buff’s diary
KEITH GOW

The obituary of Keith Gow in the Sydney Morning Herald in November described him as a "cameraman with a conscience". He died on 5 November 1987 aged 66. His loss leads us to recall a unique life's work and a deeply significant contribution to Australian documentary.

Keith contributed to the making of more than 90 Australian films — among the documentaries were many dramatic works. His prolific output as writer, director and editor was evident from the 24 films he completed in his last six years at Film Australia prior to his retirement. One, The Women Of Utopia, which received standing ovations at the Moscow Film Festival in 1985, was coincidentally broadcast on SBS on 10 November, the night of his funeral in Sydney.

He'll be remembered variously for his dry good humour and his determination. Some will recall his incredible recovery after he was hit by a light aircraft which suddenly dipped during take-off as he was filming it on location in New Guinea.

Others will remember him from his time at Cinesound, the Ampol Film Unit, the ABC, or as senior cameraman and director at Film Australia. Everyone who knows his work recognises the foregrounding of a social perspective and those who have worked with him remember in particular the co-operative spirit which ran through his life and work.

During his career at Film Australia he contributed directly to rank-and-file trade union training through work for the Trade Union Trading Authority (TUTA), while his film on the introduction of talks, Now You're Talking, was a very popular one with audiences. In the mid-fifties Keith, with Norma Disher, made the beautifully evocative short film, The Forever Living, commemorating the Sydney campaign against the death sentence imposed on Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in the US.

The basic body of trade union work, which begins with Pensions For Veterans and includes Hungry Miles, Three's A Crowd, Hewers Of Coal and other trade union films, will be remembered for a clear commitment to the interests of working people and a vigorous and exacting craft.

Controversy frequently surrounded projects in which he was involved; he didn't shun political responses to political interference and censorship which sought to silence his work.

After retiring from Film Australia a couple of years ago he kept on working. At the time of his death he was engaged on a film history of the Waterside Workers' Federation.

His work represents memories which are too easily forgotten. There is a generation of committed Australian documentary which precedes that of the 1970s. Keith Gow was a filmmaker who continued to work through thick and thin, with a commitment to social change and a firm grasp on his documentary method. We are in debt to his inspiration.

John Hughes

—  JANUARY —
38. INTERNATIONALE FILMFESTSPIELE BERLIN

FEBRUARY 12-23, 1988
FROM RUSSIA WITH GLASNOST

Soviet films like Letters Of A Dead Man and Repentance are being hailed as examples of a new cinema of glasnost. IRENE ULMAN looks at the themes that are emerging in recent Soviet cinema, in particular the epic Repentance, a prizewinner at the 1987 Cannes Film Festival.

In the changing climate in the Soviet Union, cinema has been rapidly acquiring an unprecedented role. The realisation that repressed speech is a major source of stagnation has opened up possibilities of expression that stunned the Soviet Union. Russian critics have claimed that cinema turned out to be better prepared for change than any other sphere of the arts. If cinema is indeed the vanguard of the social and cultural change in the country it's partly because it is, in a sense, the voice of glasnost. The etymological root of glasnost (glas) means voice. Cinema speaks to millions.

Some films have only recently come off the shelf after years of oblivion. Among them are Repentance (directed by Tengiz Abuladze in 1983), My Friend Ivan Lapshin (Alexei Gherman, 1983) and The Theme (Gleb Panfilov, 1979). The release of these films coincides with the moment when people are coming to terms with their problematic history, and grappling with such concepts as individual conscience and guilt. In this atmosphere Repentance has acquired the status of a modern epic.

In a television interview Gleb Panfilov has said that there's always a possibility that glasnost might fail. Although hope and enthusiasm abound, some directors who have experienced direct repression will take a while to believe that they can make films without fear.

Panfilov's Theme self-consciously breaks into forbidden ground. A successful playwright faces the fact that none of his writing has been sincere; that his subjects serve to glorify national heroes and are of no importance in real life. He searches for a new theme but is unable to go beyond the "art" of uninspired myth-making. The "problem" subject, a man emigrating to Israel, is introduced carefully. The gradual build-up of detail is a nice rendering of a taboo (self-censorship and artistic ellipsis are sometimes hard to distinguish).

The conscious preoccupation with theme is echoed in Fouette (directed by Vladimir Vasiliev and Boris Yermolaev, 1986) which opened the Soviet film festival in Australia in May 1987. The central character is a prima ballerina (Yekaterina Maximova), a symbol of the institutionalised world of classical dance. Her dream is to dance in a new ballet based on Mikhail Bulgakov's Master And Margarita. At an executive meeting an administrator comments wryly on the ballet: "Yes, but what about the theme?" Films like The Theme and Fouette register a turning point: a change of canon and a disturbance of convention have become possible. Action may be imbued with personal meaning and officially nurtured truths may be open to personal interpretation.

Alexei Gherman's My Friend Ivan Lapshin is a highly personal view of life in the 1930s. Partly based on a short story by Yuri Gherman, the director's father, it is a nostalgic depiction of Russia before the climax of Stalin's purges of 1937. But if Gherman the father wrote his stories in the spirit of optimism and belief in the Bright Future, Gherman the son has the knowledge of history which is superimposed on the original perspective of the story.

Ivan Lapshin, the inspector of criminal police, vows to clean up the country and plant gardens for all to enjoy. His determination is characteristic of the society that cultivates patriotic enthusiasm. But we know that Lapshin's professional zeal and unscrupulous exercise of power for the good of the country are a prelude to a reign of terror.

The Russian scholar Dmitry Likhachev (who has proclaimed that repentance is the dominant force of change in Russia today) said that no individual can be altogether innocent of what went on during Stalin's rule. The people in the film are ignorant of the "greater history". But in the 1980s Gherman cannot make Lapshin's purity credible without moving the action back a few years.
This small poetic licence underscores the moral issue that confronts a director who may simply want to make an autobiographical film. To Gherman the 1930s represent his childhood. But the act of bringing together history and personal memory can turn a tribute to the people he loved into an accusation.

Lapshin is a lovingly faithful document. Gherman looks for the essence of the period and finds it in his own memories: in small incidents, in background dialogue, snippets of conversation. Music, mostly marches, recreates the spirit of the time. The film is in black and white, except for the opening and closing moments, where the narrator’s voice reminds us that what we’re seeing is a memory: the street we are looking at through the window exists in another temporal dimension.

There is no defined narrative; the most important thing to Gherman is atmosphere and characterisation. Ivan Lapshin himself is a fine illustration of human complexity, eluding definition. The camera follows him like an eye. The observer is probably the boy (Gherman’s autobiographical self and the viewer’s link with the present) who lives side by side with Lapshin in a communal flat. A peculiar feeling of intimacy develops between the viewer and Lapshin. Lapshin may not be liked, but there is a sense of a deeper understanding of the man and his time.

When Gherman was asked whether he would consider making a film about the present, his answer was: “I would first have to make sure that contemporary problems can be talked about out loud.”

Gherman’s film about the thirties is in some respects strikingly similar to Vadim Abdashitov’s Plumbum, Or The Dangerous Game (1986). Plumbum is an example of a new kind of directness which is reflected in its clearly defined narrative. It does not look to the past in order to comment on the present. It is set in today’s Russia. The hero, or rather the anti-hero, is a 14-year-old schoolboy who possesses exceptional qualities: a devout enthusiasm to rid the country of vagabonds, delinquents and petty criminals, as well as a peculiar physical condition. He feels no pain. His name is Ruslan Chutko (an evocative name to the Russian ear: Ruslan sounds like Russia; Chutko has something to do with both sensitivity and vigilance). The nickname he has thought up for himself is Plumbum: lead, the metal. He proves so useful to the criminal police that they use him in their clean-up campaigns.

It’s a fine line between life and play and between role-playing and real drama. In a scene bordering on grim comedy (many scenes do) Ruslan catches his father doing a bit of smuggling as a hobby, and files a statement on him. The father tells the boy that power combined with moral immaturity is dangerous (the only overt moral statement in the film), and Plumbum does indeed end tragically — and unexpectedly.

The film is well-paced, the plot is tight. But the message is elusive. Ruslan’s boyish features are both appealing and repellent. Mostly they’re impenetrable. By making the audience question its emotional response to the boy’s enigma while intellectually acknowledging that he is a moral cripple, Abdashitov forces us to discover in ourselves a soft spot for a charismatic monster.

Letters Of A Dead Man, Konstantin Lopushansky’s first film (1986), has probably the most chances of addressing the Western audiences directly, without having to break through a number of cultural and historical barriers. It goes right beyond the problems of period and generation. History has come to an end in the aftermath of a nuclear disaster, but an elderly scientist (living in an underground shelter with his dying wife and a group of colleagues) writes letters to his son whom he
who has written popular science fiction together with his brother Arkady Strugatsky (Tarkovsky's scriptwriter in Stalker). Tarkovsky used black and white dream sequences as images of apocalyptic premonitions; Letters is totally enveloped in these gloomy washed out tones. Destruction is no longer a mere threat. But in spite of this, the children's dance of death in the end is not entirely devoid of hope.

**REPENTANCE**

*Repentance* has been hailed as an expose of Stalinism. But director Tenghiz Abuladze's preoccupation with a phenomenon called "Varlamism" goes far beyond one particular personality cult. Stalin was exposed once before, but was subsequently buried in a hermetically sealed box, while the empire modelled in his image continued to exist. In *Repentance*, a woman digs out the body of the tyrant Varlam Aravidze who had killed her parents, along with masses of people, many years before. In court she claims that Varlam will remain alive until he is exhumed. Her words seem absurd only because she does not spell out the obvious. But an incomplete statement is all it takes to create a metaphor.

For Abuladze, metaphor and reality are not that different. The preposterous sight of a dictator's corpse turning up in front of his family mansion belongs in the realm of the absurd. But the act of disinterment is based on a real event, as is the story of a woman who lost her family in Stalin's purges and later earned her living by baking cakes. Knowing this makes it easier to see that *Repentance* reveals documented reality in a poetic form. If it seems obscure, it is so only insofar as poetry is.

The film opens as the woman, Ketevan Barateli, lovingly adds finishing touches to one of her cakes made in the shape of a church. A visitor informs her that Varlam, head of the city, a great leader and a man of goodness, has died. She looks at the black-rimmed newspaper photo, the camera zooms in on it and we are now looking at the dead man lying in state, surrounded by flowers and a company of mourners. The opening provides a kind of frame: we will return to the cake-filled room. The action mostly takes place in court where Ketevan is tried, but in fact we are carried away by a flashback as she begins to narrate the story of her peculiar crime. The story is about a dictator who likes playing games: one of them is his cat and mouse game with Sandro Barateli, an artist lobbying to preserve the town's sixth-century church.

The opposition between Varlam and Sandro is established in a feat of cinematic storytelling. There is a cheerful street scene, reminiscent of Fellini's small-town carnivals. There is a burning effigy; onlookers stand around, a march is playing. A moustached demagogue is making an enthusiastic speech, but emits no intelligible sound; Varlam has not yet made his mark and his words are unimportant. What's much more fun to watch is the battle between a couple of plumbers and a broken pipe which is showering everyone present with water. Umbrellas open, but the effect of rain just adds to the festive animation. The camera freely moves from one detail of the scene to another, until a small event takes place.

Facing the spectacle in the street a young girl blows soap bubbles from an open window. It's the eight-year-old Ketevan Barateli. Her parents join her. Her father firmly shuts the window. The three remain there, but the affront has not escaped Varlam. His spectacles are aglare as he looks in their direction. The glance will follow the Baratelis like a curse.

Abuladze's images invite strong reactions. Sandro is unequivocally a Christ figure. As a painter he represents tradition in the form of both religion and art. He also >
Agfa-Gevaert congratulate Kennedy Miller, Network Ten Australia, the cast and crew of “The Year My Voice Broke”.

Agfa is proud to be associated with this award-winning film. Director John Duigan, and Director of Photography, Geoff Burton, chose AGFA XT 125 and XT 320 film for the production. AGFA XT 125 is a medium speed colour negative film and XT 320 is a high speed colour negative. Both are used together without any perceptible difference in photographic quality.

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stands for integrity. In a sense, by refusing to dance to Varlam's tune he sacrifices both himself and the church he is trying to save. Ketevan's cream churches are a reminder that human constructions, even sacred ones, are less important than spiritual integrity. (Similarly, in Tarkovsky's Sacrifice a little boy makes a present for his father: a small replica of their house. The next day the father destroys the real house. Is it because he doesn't want his son to inherit the compromises he has had to make?)

On the other side of the spectrum, Varlam stands for the death of the individual and culture. He recognises only the kind of history that marches on in a straight line, refusing to acknowledge the ancient symbols that provide humanity with constant points of reference.

Abuladze makes full use of these symbols. He blends history and myth, which does not mean that he mystifies. His use of universally recognised signs has the effect of defining archetypes stripped of particular historical specificity. In this way he exposes the myth that there exists a qualitative difference between one dictatorship and another. In many ways Repentance is similar to some South American films, particularly in its tendency towards the surreal. It's not just a question of satire, which is a form of criticism. It's a more subversive kind of laughter. As a Soviet critic put it, it's a question of polarisation. Repentance has to match the scale of the thing it opposes, yet one of the weapons it uses is a practical joke (and the joker's weapon is a simple spade).

This carnivalesque freedom of expression applies to Abuladze's generous use of symbolism. We must not forget that all those things were excluded from the Soviet worldview for a long time. The system was supposed to be complete in itself, its ideological borders marking the boundaries of possibility. Abuladze does in film what Mikhail Bulgakov did in literature, revealing other points of reference and other worlds. Usually this was done only in the guise of children's literature or science fiction.

Similarly, Abuladze invokes images from other films. There are glimpses of Chaplin's Great Dictator; Fellini is a frequent presence (in the circus music leitmotif, among other things). In one scene, the dying Varlam wants to shoot the sun because, he says, "when it rises I bleed to death". He then falls asleep on bare ground dressed in a sack, an archetypal destitute king. One thinks of both Lear and Kurosawa at the same time.

The numerous references do not diminish the originality of the film. For the Western audience, especially, it offers the additional pleasure of recognition.

The film is so visually striking that the often clear moral overtones never become the primary concern. One of the most memorable sequences is Nino Barateli's dream. She and Sandro are running, followed by Varlam in an open car, his armoured soldiers coming from all directions. They run through abandoned streets, through long flooded corridors and out into an open field. There they stay, buried in earth up to their necks. Varlam is there too. Standing in the car, his black uniformed figure cut against the piercing blue sky, he looks down on them and then suddenly, with perfectly cruel timing, he breaks into a bombastic Verdi aria. Nino wakes up to a reality that is an extension of her nightmare. Dreams are not mere asides in Repentance.

In Ketevan's story Varlam looms large as the central figure of evil. But when the flashback is over and we are back in the courtroom, we realise that Varlam himself is no longer the issue. He has passed the legacy of his crimes on to his son Abel and his unsuspecting grandson, and what's at stake is whether they accept or reject it.

In Tarkovsky's Sacrifice, a boy mute throughout the film says: "In the beginning was the word. Why is this, Papa?" His father is not there to answer. If he were, all he may be able to communicate is his enormous confusion and an undefined sense of guilt. It appears that the older generation has committed some kind of sin and is no longer eligible to teach the young. In Repentance, too, sons reject their fathers. Is this not the ultimate violation of natural order? But in both Sacrifice and Repentance the violation has a cathartic function: it liberates.

The film ends with a question mark that complicates the moral fable, making it soberingly real in the Soviet context. It encapsulates the moment where silence is on the verge of being broken. But in the end, Abuladze refuses to point out a direction. He chooses the static structure of an allegorical dream where fantasy is used to extend the possibilities of the real. The position Abuladze settles on is also a recurrent image in Repentance: an open window, be it into the past or onto other dimensions.

Repentance ends with the image of an open window in Varlam Street with a view onto the winding road that used to lead to a church. The question is, where does it lead to now?
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G eorge Miller speaks energetically about his films, even if he'd prefer to remain silent on the subject. “I truly hate doing interviews, especially the short ones. You never have time to think seriously about the questions or your answers and, as a result, you find yourself saying things you don't really mean at all. And, besides, a movie finally isn't an intellectual process. It's the variety of emotional levels on which it's working that have to really matter to you. And there I don't think that you're dealing with the rational. I know that's anti-critic, because critics rely on being able to explain things. But it's the intuition that's really in control and many critics can't touch that part of it.”

Of primary importance to Miller is that his audience should be swept along by the kinetic flow of his images and by the story that emerges from them. “Right from the start, even going back beyond the planning of Mad Max, I've been in love with the actual plastic form of film. For me, the great master of film was Buster Keaton, and through him I've learned that film can be like visual music. He only had the silent medium, but he understood how images could be manipulated. And so, when we came to Mad Max, the first thing that Byron Kennedy and I wanted to do was a chase film. We got a lot from action comedies like Bringing Up Baby and What's Up, Doc? but Keaton was the major source of inspiration for us.”

Miller’s feature films to date — Mad Max (1979), Mad Max 2 (1981), the fourth segment of Twilight Zone — The Movie, called “Nightmare at 20,000 Feet” (1983), Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome (1985), co-directed with George Ogilvie, and The Witches Of Eastwick (1987) — all explode with the violent eloquence of their making and their matter. Their roots can be found in the slapstick tradition, but their visual force grows from the kind of filmmaking that has become known as “exploitation”. All of them, to varying degrees, conjure up desperate circumstances that challenge the security and the sanity of their male protagonists, driving them to the edge of madness and sometimes beyond. The worlds that the films create are certainly larger than life, but the dramas they offer centre upon a question that transports their “fantastic” qualities back to the everyday: on what terms can I survive to see tomorrow?

The films have won wide critical admiration and popular endorsement, but there are some who have been less than enthusiastic about their success. Phillip Adams, Max Harris and a number of others have taken Miller’s films to task for what they perceive as mayhem and mindlessness, discovering a failure of taste and morality instead of a joyful plunge into the realm of the comic strip. Perhaps this is inevitable, given the way in which the films refuse to distance themselves from the frantic excitement of the action that is either visible or, as is more often the case, felt in them.

Miller's response to the hysteria is surprisingly restrained: “I'm not naive enough to think that, if you have fairly confronting material, it's not going to produce a mixed response. I was, in fact, surprised how, in Japan and Europe, and particularly in France, the 'Mad Max' films acquired something of the status of high art. We had less lofty ambitions, but that the films have attained some critical approval is nice.”

CINEMA PAPERS JANUARY — 13
Of course, there are always going to be people who'll see the films simply as exploitation, as the kinds of films that maybe shouldn't be made. On my wall at home, I have a review of Mad Max by an Indian critic who says, 'The perpetrators of this film should be taken out into the street and hung.'

This review clearly caught Miller's attention, but he is more interested in the kind of analysis of his work that goes beyond what he sees as "the primary level". "When you prepare a film, you talk about its ideas. You feed your intuition. Then, occasionally, someone comes along and echoes the kind of conversations you had in the planning of the film. It's happened to me a number of times. It's like someone has had access to your dreams. The French critics are good at this and the work on the last two 'Mad Max' films has been really interesting. I read a review of Witches in 'The Globe And Mail' in Toronto and that seemed to get onto it too."

But The Witches Of Eastwick has also sustained the divided response to Miller's films. An essentially comic Daryl Van Horne has replaced the warrior Max and the battleground is fertile New England rather than wasteland Australia, but questions of taste and excess continue to limit much of the discussion of Miller's films. And, indeed, Miller concedes that the elaborate special effects do run the risk of overwhelming the more interesting aspects of The Witches Of Eastwick: "They became my biggest battle. As the studio got more nervous about what we were doing — and I can understand their nervousness — they kept giving us more and more money for special effects. And I confess that I was a bit of a sucker. Initially I took the bait and had some wonderful fun until, suddenly, I realised I had a battle on my hands, that this shouldn't finish up a special effects movie. And so I had to fight to cut out as much of them as I could. I would love to have been able to cut out more, because I do think they trivialise... But when we had the first test screenings, I know that the studio expected the audiences to reject all the talkie bits and love the action stuff. But the reverse happened and that helped me, to a degree, in my battle to eliminate the effects that were irrelevant."

Miller does not, however, include the intertemperate cherry vomiting parade amongst the effects that he fought to remove. "That was something I wanted to do and it was there from the start. And, certainly, it was dangerous ground. One of the things that you try to do in cinema, as distinct from television, is take your audience into the experience that your ciphers, the characters, are going through. It's like my flight simulator theory of the cinema: for the audience, it's like sitting down and being swept along on some sort of ride, like in Brainstorm. When you're dealing with vomiting, though, you're dealing with a very tricky physiological reflex. It can be induced simply by watching someone else do it and there's no way of predicting how an audience is going to respond. People have different thresholds for that sort of thing. In fact, we had more vomiting in the movie, but very quickly we saw that it was being rejected. So we toned it down. But it is intrinsic to the level of excess which is part of the humorous tone on which the drama sits. It was meant to be satirical. John Williams' burlesque music certainly invites us to see it like that. And since, as a narrative obligation, we had to get rid of the Felicia character, I thought it was an interesting and logical way to do it. I guess it's easier to do in a Monty Python kind of context."

Yet, despite the film's exposure to the extensive "testing" procedures that have always dominated Hollywood's pitches to its audience, Miller remained uncertain of the kind of response that it would receive on its release. "We didn't think of it as a mainstream summer American movie... except that it has Jack Nicholson, Cher, and an embarrassingly large budget (which I stopped counting at $30 million, most of which was above the line). But it did come out in the summer and it has been successful. I think that maybe the audience is getting more sophisticated as we baby boomers are getting older and it's fed up with the kiddie junk it's been getting for so long. Witches is essentially an ironic fable and the positive reaction it got surprised me because I think that the Americans have very little sense of irony. In fact, that terrified both me and the writer, Michael Cristofer. We have a much more developed sense of irony in Australia, even if some of the local reviews missed that aspect of the film. They saw it how the Warners people saw it. They knew it was supposed to be funny, but they wanted it to be like The Exorcist or Aliens."

Nevertheless, it could be said that what is interesting about The Exorcist and Aliens is not the special effects but the family dramas that are being played out through them and which are responsible for the place both films occupy in contemporary mythology. In the same way, it can also be said that what is at stake in The Witches Of Eastwick is not to be found on its surfaces. "What I found compelling about Michael's screenplay was the undercurrent, the subterranean material. In preparing the film, we went to Geoffrey Russell Burton, a professor of history at the University of California at Santa Barbara. He's a medievalist who's written four volumes on how the devil has appeared in various cultures. We went back to the pre-Christian era where, every winter, the satyr or Pan figure would visit the Mother Goddesses. He was always a lesser god, even though he was a well-meaning fellow. His problem was that he was a compulsive and indiscriminate seducer, declaring his undying love at the same time as he was a terrible flirt. He'd impregnate everything, and then, almost on their whim, the Mother Goddesses would send him away. When he was gone the spring would come and his seed would give flower. As Christianity emerged and became very male-dominated, at the same time as it tended to suppress the Mother Goddesses it also turned this satyr, this sexual creature, into a figure of great terror. They made him into a dark figure with horns and cloven feet. Later, especially during the French Revolution, a lot of literature and some of the theatre transformed the Christian devil, Satan, into a kind of cultural hero, an anti-monarchist. And then, as resistance grew to the fire and brimstone kind of fervour that surrounded him, he became that foppish figure of fun with the moustache and the cape. It was Burton's help with this kind of background that led us to create this eighteenies devil. We made a very conscious decision to resist the kind of devil they had in The Exorcist and to model him on the Pan figure."
Miller's fascination with mythology and with the passing down of stories from generation to generation and era to era has long been evident. In Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome, it is closest to the surface of the film as Max is rescued from the moral darkness by the tribe of lost children. Through their stories, they teach him of the continuity of the life cycle, of the way the route to hope for the future is embedded in their stories of their past: "Every night we does the tell to remember who we was and where we came from."

The film, which ends with the dedication "... to Byron", is one about which Miller remains passionate. "Of the three 'Mad Max' films, I love it the most. It's flawed, but it's much richer in its ideas than the others. We were so overflowing with ideas at the time that we almost had too much..." The best sequences, I think, are the ones around the children's stories. With them, we were really conscious of the different levels on which we were working. We were attempting to really push it out there, and that's why I love it so much."

But there's also the behind-the-scenes incident that was important to Miller: "Even though we shot the film at Coober Pedy, we had originally planned to use the Olgas. We had a terrific location manager, George Mannix, who went out and spoke to the Aboriginal elders there. Through a translator, he told them the story of the film and they got very excited. Mannix, who went out and spoke to the Aboriginal elders there. Through a translator, he told them the story of the film and they got very excited. Many of our simple storytelling motifs were identical to some of the ones in their culture. For me, that's also very exciting and I wish I'd been there. It proved what people like Joseph Campbell knew — those things are lurking in our collective unconscious, everywhere, in every culture."

Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome seems to bring the 'Mad Max' cycle to an end, and, even though Miller is leaving his options open, it is hard to see another 'Mad Max' film going anywhere but backwards. "I seem to have spent my life making 'Mad Max' pictures. After the first one, for a long time I never wanted to consider another one because it had been such a debilitating experience. But I did and Mad Max 2 became an attempt to do it right, while Thunderdome was an attempt to do something completely different from 1 and 2, with the lone, wandering, disassociated character as the only connective tissue. I think that with it we were consciously designing an end for the character. I should add that we never saw ourselves making sequels and I see the films as more of a trilogy than anything else. I had endless discussions with Terry Hayes and George Ogilvie and even with Mel about Max dying at the end of Thunderdome. Interestingly enough, it didn't quite fit the story. But, in a way, he does die when his part in the story changes, when he loses his power, and, even with him still alive, the story somehow seems finished. Still, that was our feeling after we did the second one. And I suppose that if we came up with something that was really exciting, that was different from the other three, and if we could get the creative juices flowing again, we'd do a fourth. But there are so many different directions we could take at the moment that I can't see it happening."

One of those directions found him producing and then working on the promotion for the October release of John Duigan's The Year My Voice Broke. The film was made for the Sydney-based Kennedy Miller production company formed by Miller and Byron Kennedy in 1980. It gathered five AFI awards just prior to its release, despite the Screen Production Association claim that it should have been excluded from competition because it was made as a telemovie. Miller is disappointed by what he sees as an unnecessary controversy, even if the storm never really got out of the tea-cup. "It's true that we approved John's screenplay as part of a package of four films that we're doing as a 'Festival of Australian Films' for the 10 Network for the Bicentenary. But, from the outset, it also recommended itself very much as a feature film. We decided to shoot it in 35mm rather than 16mm and came to an arrangement with Equity and the actors that, if it worked out, it would get theatrical distribution."

He's also concerned to set the record straight about his involvement in the film. "For me, it was simply a matter of saying to John, 'Oh, yes! That's terrific,' and letting him go off with a wonderful crew to spend five or six weeks in Braidwood. What they came back with is something that I wish I'd done, and, finally, I care about it more than I do..."
Eastwick. But I’m embarrassed by the suggestion that I had anything significant to do with it because I didn’t... unless you count looking at rushes as significant. What I do hope, though, is that it’s the kind of product that is representative of Kennedy Miller, of the sorts of things we do."

It’s clear that his partnership with Terry Hayes and Doug Mitchell at Kennedy Miller is not just something that he does to pass the time when he’s not working in Hollywood. “It’s the ideal filmmaking situation where you work in a truly collaborative way. Doug’s background is in business and he’s mainly involved in that side of the process. He’s set up a computer system that means we can get the most immediate feedback and refined information about any production’s progress. But even though he’d never lay claim to it, Doug has a fine instinct for story and ideas. And Terry does just about everything. I think that, in the end, it’s a mistake for anyone to become expert at one thing to the exclusion of the others. You become unable to recognise the broad evolution of a process. The thing that mainly distinguishes Australian filmmaking from American studio filmmaking, and that I’d like to think distinguishes Kennedy Miller, is that we’re all multi-disciplined filmmakers.”

Miller, in fact, finds his work at Kennedy Miller a liberation from the hard labour of directing. “It’s much easier producing. Sometimes, it’s just a matter of watching what’s happening, though you can also get intimately involved. On Phil Noyce’s film, Dead Calm* I helped out and had a great time doing some second unit work. It’s a wonderful life, second unit — you have a small guerrilla unit of people who really pride themselves on doing more with less and you have time to pull off some terrific shots. And the funny thing is that you find yourself over-covering in order to please the directors, hanging on every word he says and desperately needing his approval.”

But Hollywood, on the other hand, has not been a particularly happy experience for Miller, even though he recognises that he’s learned from it. “It’s essentially a specialised bureaucracy there. It’s a very fragmented, clumsy machine. There’s no organic approach. I think that’s why, by and large, the most interesting films made in America in the last decade or so are always independent, or at least made outside this inner-sanctum Hollywood. Unless someone is an extraordinarily brilliant executive, like a Thalberg, the kind who only comes around very rarely, they’re just not big enough or brilliant enough to handle the system. I think that, now, the studios would prefer not to make films, though they love distributing them. That gives them some guarantee of fiscal control. Production is very mysterious and terrifying to them and that’s why they react in very silly ways sometimes.”

Miller recalls that he approached The Witches Of Eastwick like an innocent. "I went from Twilight Zone, which was wonderfully collaborative, terrific fun and very relaxed and open because of Spielberg and the people he has around him, to Witches and to five producers and umpteen studio executives who know little more than fragments of the process. It was almost shocking, in fact, to find how little they knew. And it all became very political, which takes the fun out of filmmaking. The irony is that both films were for the same studio: Warner Bros. The major difference, of course, was the production team. In order to get what you need, you have to spit the dummy, as they say. You can’t be collaborative. The most efficient way to work in America is to fall into the cliche of the autocratic, temperamental brat. I remember Jack Nicholson took me by the hand early on and said, ‘You’ve got to hold them in contempt, George, or they won’t respect you.’ It’s a very common experience. Roger Donaldson said after No Way Out, ‘You know, they mistake politeness for weakness, and if you try to be collaborative it opens the floodgates.’ The only way to cope is to be a real bastard. I’m sure that applies in most bureaucracies, but it’s not a way to make films. Filmmaking has to be tough, otherwise, you’ll never do it right. But it doesn’t mean it can’t have its exhilaration and dignity..." I was sounding-off about the Hollywood problem during the Witches sound mix, and Jerry Stanford, a wonderful sound editor who worked on most of Peckinpah’s films, said, ‘Be careful that your anger doesn’t distort your filmmaking.’ He held the view that Peckinpah’s rebelliousness got to the point where he took on film assignments simply to screw ‘them’ and destroyed himself in the process."

It’s scarcely surprising that Miller is full of admiration for those who’ve been able to make their way successfully through the mire. “The filmmakers who can work the system are those who started off in the film schools, especially those of the unofficial kind, like the Corman one. When you worked for Roger Corman, you had to do everything, literally everything. One of the most impressive filmmakers I’ve met in America is Jon Davison. He worked on Twilight Zone, Airplane!, Robo Cop... He started off in publicity for Corman and learned his way along to become one of the great hands-on line producers. He’s truly a filmmaker, at the same time simply a director or a producer or an executive producer or any of the various kinds who always seem to happen to a film. Maybe he can’t change the system any more than David Puttnam could — it changes only by dint of economic forces — but he knows how to use it to his advantage.”

But Davison’s not the only one who’s won respect from Miller for the way he’s been able to survive the Hollywood nightmare. Jack Nicholson stands out for him, not only as the one who mediated on the set of The Witches Of Eastwick when the going got tough — Miller, in this benign way, discreetly avoids saying much about the reported tensions between him and Cher — but also as a deeply committed filmmaker. "He sees his job as getting the film made. You know, meeting him was one of the biggest surprises I’ve had in my life because I did him a real disservice going in. I’d expected an erratic, flamboyant, brilliant actor, drugged to the gills, hedonistic, and basically a frivolous man. It was startling how much he was the opposite. He is very fun-loving, but what struck me was his intelligence. He has a great wisdom and life is anything but frivolous for him. Behind the sense of fun, there’s this You better make a decision about what life’s about and what your place is in it about him. He cherish the audience; it informs his work. And, unlike many of his contemporaries, as he gets older, he gets more fearless and passionate. There’s no cynicism at all. He’s a gift for a director to work with, such a wonderful acting machine. He equates his working methods most closely with those of the athlete — there’s all that pain of training for the moment of the event where there’s nothing but the performance, where everything is forgotten and you ‘let it be’, where you become entirely free, open, centred. He understands that this can only be earned by all the hard work that comes before, and when he succeeds it’s never by accident. He may not always hit what Greg Lugunis, the champion American diver, calls ‘the sweet spot’, but he’s what Lugunis sees as the real champion: the one who can just miss the spot, but who’s able to recover and turn that into close to a perfect performance."

The opportunity to work with people like Nicholson will take Miller back into the maelstrom again. The dream of what could be remains an attractive one for him. But, somewhat unexpectedly for one so excited by the possibilities of what you can do on the big screen, Miller is enthusiastic about television. “Before I started work on The Dismissal, I was one of those rather patronising, narrow-minded people: if you really wanted to be serious, you had to do feature films. But what I discovered was that television, for all its visual limitations, is where the most interesting ideas tend to be. Something like Max Headroom, which was an American ABC prime-time network television experiment, makes the point. Even though it failed, at least they tried. It’s rare to find a feature film doing things like that. But because it’s so competitive on television, they’re forced to make it interesting. You talk to network executives in the States, and they’ll be saying, ‘We don’t want these hackneyed ideas. Bring us something exciting and new.’ You talk to the studio people and they say, ‘Oh, it’s a bit dangerous to make a feature film like that now. Give us the hackneyed ideas; the safer the better.’ And if you look at American series and telemovies, at least until recently, you’ll see that they’ve covered just about every social aberration or disease that you can think of. This ‘serious’ television has been spurned on by shows like Hill Street Blues and St Elsewhere. It’s often very informative and sometimes very powerful and it’s successful on prime-time. Yet no-one on earth would go to see a movie like Something About Amelia on a Saturday night, unless it had something else to it. It took Ted Danson from Cheers and made him a child molester. In my view at least, television lends itself to this kind of work and to the kind of documentary naturalism that goes with it, though there should be no hard and fast rules. Movie-making seems to be different in scale, more attuned to fantasy. Film is the flight simulator in the dark, public-dreaming palace, and television is more like a window through which you watch another world from your safe home environment. While and the form is more exciting in the cinema, and even though you can’t invite your audience into an all-consuming experience on television, the raw subject matter there is more interesting. It’s like spying over your neighbour’s fence at another life.”

*This forthcoming release is written by Terry Hayes and is based on Charles Williams’ novel of the same name which was the source for Orson Welles’ unfinished film, The Deep.
In the early 1970s Dennis Hopper co-wrote and directed a "spectacular failure" called *The Last Movie*. "The thought was," he said in a recent interview, "to deliberately alienate the audience, tell them they're idiots sitting there watching a movie. Every time I got them involved in the movie as a story, I'd come back and say, 'Ha. Ha. Ha. You're only watching a movie.'"

While *The Last Movie* died the death of many a radical venture, Hopper lingered on, picking up some 16 years later right where he left off. And to judge by his recent success, the time is finally ripe for black humour and audience alienation, for self-conscious, anti-romantic filmmaking.

But not everyone likes the kind of movies with which Hopper is associated, movies which are frankly decadent, not in the luxurious manner of Ken Russell, but in a gritty, post-apocalyptic, distinctively American way. To some people's way of thinking, the glorification of Feck and Frank, or the best of American neo-gothic, is just plain ugly, not to mention mean. John Duigan, whose recent film, *The Year My Voice Broke*, cleaned up at the AFI awards, is one with serious doubts about the "almost amoral stance" of some of the year's most controversial films.

"It's pushed to the point where they're thumbing their nose at an audience's moral response to the material," he tells me. "They're saying, 'If you start judging this material, if you feel squeamish about it or awkward in the face of it, that's your limitation, that's your problem.' I'm thinking of a film like *River's Edge* and also *Blue Velvet*, but particularly *River's Edge*."

*River's Edge*, like *The Year My Voice Broke*, is a film...
about adolescence — but there the resemblance ends. In all other respects
the two films could not be more dissimilar, and Duigan makes no secret of
his belief that the amorality of River's Edge is more akin to immorality.

“It appears, on the surface, that it’s starting to make a critique of American society, or certain aspects of American society, saying, ‘It’s come
to this, it’s totally amoral, people can find nothing to value at all.’ But then
it seems to me to depart from that and start to wallow in this perception,”
he says.

“I think that there are some very unpleasant aspects of that film, like the
way the camera seems constantly to return and linger over the body of the
dead girl. And there is very definitely that sense that the filmmaker draws
back when there is any possibility of warmth between some of the
characters. That suggests to me an extremely cynical and almost despairing
view of the world.”

Before he became a filmmaker, John Duigan did a Master’s degree in
philosophy at Melbourne University. Not particularly interested in the
philosophy department’s strong suit, logical positivism, he altered the
design of the course to meet his own interests in continental philosophy
and, above all, ethics. His preoccupation with the latter is, he concedes,
evident in his films.

In a 1978 interview Duigan said of Mouth To Mouth, “I certainly hope
people will perceive the optimism which is crucial to the film. I wanted to
generate a lot of warmth between the characters.” He was trying, he said,
“to involve a fairly wide-ranging audience in the experiences of four
sympathetic characters.”

Nine years, five movies and a miniseries later, these words describe quite accurately what Duigan is up to in The Year My Voice Broke.

Fourteen-year-old Danny (Noah Taylor) is in love with 15-year-old Freya
(Loene Carmen). But Freya is in love with 16-year-old Trevor (Ben
Mendelsohn). Danny and Freya have been friends since childhood and she,
sympathetic to the hopelessness of his infatuation, tries to knock him back
gently. Trevor, for his part, has a hero’s natural inclination to defend the
underdog and, despite the tough-guy facade, he’s incapable of
sympathy for the competition.

Like the plot, the relationship dynamic is archetypal. “On the one
hand you’ve got the character of Danny who’s this natural observer of the
world, who exists on the fringes, who is ostracised at school because he’s
different. He likes poetry, he speculates about hypnosis and telepathy,
and all these sorts of things, but he’s a very cerebral character,” explains

Duigan.

“And on the other extreme there’s Trevor who’s a much more dynamic,
spontaneous, wild character who hurls himself around and doesn’t think
about what he’s doing particularly or analyse it at all.” Freya, he
concludes, is “somewhere between the two, finding both men interesting
for completely different reasons, her own personality having certain
similarities to both and something else again.”

The story, set in the early sixties, has all the ingredients of a classic

teenage tragedy: adolescent dreams squelched by authority in the form of
parents and police, all against the backdrop of a nerdy, narrow-minded
country town. I asked Duigan if he didn’t think The Year My Voice Broke
had noticeable affinities with a whole slew of American films from East Of
Eden and Rebel Without A Cause to The Last Picture Show.

“I wasn’t consciously aware of operating in an American style or genre
because I’ve always felt that my films were closer to European styles of
films than American. And in terms of the pacing of a film like this, and in
its more gentle emotionalism, it seems to me to be dissimilar to American
films that probably have a more strident edge to them.”

Duigan hasn’t got much time for films that are either ‘strident’ in tone or
‘cynical’ in motivation. He does not believe in poking fun at his audience,
nor in subjecting them to an all-out assault on their basic humanist values,
however tarnished those values may be. Because the fact of the matter is
that those are values Duigan shares, that his ethics are those of a liberal
humanist.

In many ways, Duigan is a traditionalist; Good and Bad in The Year My
Voice Broke fall out in familiar camps. On the one hand there is honesty,
charity, strength of character, and on the other, vanity, egotism, meanness
or weakness of spirit. The Good is associated with individuality, the Bad
with the nastiness of the pack.

To highlight the opposition, each of the Individuals is cast as an
Outsider. Danny’s idiosyncracies, Trevor’s rebelliousness, and Freya’s
dubious parenting and unseemly behaviour, place each of them beyond the
pale. Alienation as an experience figures as centrally for Duigan as it does
for, say, David Lynch, but it is something you suffer, not something you
inFLICT.

Duigan says he wanted to examine how people who have not been
assimilated into society perceive the world. “Because I think that they
perceive both the society of which they are on the fringes, and also the
world in general quite differently. I think there is a sense in which the
characters that Noah and Loene play have preserved elements of their
childhood longer than most people do. That gives them a sort of breadth
and, in a curious way, sophistication or complexity in the way that they
perceive things that people whose heads are filled with the multi-various
aspects of our culture lose.

“Like, I think there are sections of our heads that go to sleep as we
become obsessed with the manufactured elements of reality, so for them,
they have what could be described as an almost mystical relationship with
their world, in particular with the land, the hill, and the haunted house, and
so forth. And this aspect was a very strong starting-off point for me, that
area of their reality is to me very real.”

I think it would be far from unfair to describe Duigan as a romantic,
though not perhaps, in the field of Australian filmmaking, quite so
incorporated a romantic as Peter Weir. From some points of view, however,
romanticism is utterly inappropriate to the world in which we live. This
surely is the perception of some independent American filmmakers who
may be driven to de-romanticise and ironise their movies by Hollywood’s
increasingly hysterical and wildly romantic myth-making.

Romanticism is characterised by a preoccupation with interiority as
opposed to social and physical reality, by nostalgia and a tendency to focus
behind, ahead or over the horizon, anywhere but here and now in the
material world. Certainly The Year My Voice Broke fits the bill. Narrated
in the past tense by a grown-up Danny, it has strong elements of the
other-worldly.

One of the finest minor characters is a fringe-dwelling mystic weirdo who
lives in a shack by the railroad line. Jonah (Bruce Spence) functions as a
kind of spiritual adviser to the troubled kids, telling them strange truths
about the way in which rooms record the events which happened in them,
about how shadows or echoes of human emotions are imprinted on the
physical world forever, and about how, if you are sensitive, you can feel
those imprints of the past. “The points of view that are expressed by
Jonah,” says Duigan, “seem probably quite eccentric. I, in fact, share
many of them.”

There’s been a lot of talk about a tendency in recent Australian film to
locate the subject away from hard core contemporary realities. Ground
Zero, the stiffest competition for this year’s Best Film, has been
appreciated particularly for its head-on confrontation with a topical issue.
In America, of course, few enough people would even consider this kind of
criticism because rarely in America are films made that have what you
might call a ‘social conscience’. One exception might be, ironically, River’s
Edge, the film Duigan feels fails to live up to its promises in this regard.
But moral accountability is something Australian artists and critics seem quite comfortable with, and Duigan is no exception. Those "four sympathetic characters" in *Mouth To Mouth*, for instance, were in Duigan's words, "characters whom the middle-class audience generally reads about as numbers in the unemployment figures, or kids in the juvenile courts."

The *Year My Voice Broke* is, comparatively, rather light on social commentary, possibly as a function of its spatial and temporal setting. I asked Duigan how he might feel about the charge that his film was nostalgic and therefore critical only about social realities that were safely distanced from most people's experience of life.

"To me the temporal setting of the picture is largely irrelevant. I wanted to make a film that had the first-person character looking back and trying to make sense of a very important formative relationship. I simply chose that period because it was the period I grew up in so I knew it well and was able to observe the correct kind of language and I knew the music of the time and so forth.

"But really, as far as I'm concerned most of what it's about is translateable to now or any recent time. And I don't think the sociological idiosyncracies that are described in the society are now absent at all. So, if people are critical of the film on that level, to my mind they have completely missed what the film is about."

And as for the choice of a country setting, Duigan says, "I've made a number of films about urban subjects and the Australian rural reality is just as valid a part of the Australian experience. But also, again, I don't particularly think that what goes on in the story is especially a rural situation. It's a lot easier to identify some of the patterns because it's a society in miniature. But it has a lot in common with urban realities as well."

Duigan would, in the end, have it both ways. On the one hand a retreat from the material, sociological, historical and economic world into a magic world of lingering childhood and mystical adolescent fantasy. And on the other, an acknowledgment that the desire for such a retreat (and the glamour associated with it) is a product of the very social realities it denies. In this sense, *The Year My Voice Broke* is very much a movie about adolescence, perched rather precariously not only between youth and maturity, but between the romantic and realistic ideologies which are associated with those different stages.

Duigan was so singularly unimpressed with the nostalgia question, however, that it prompted me to ask what he thought about Australian film criticism in general. I had overheard him the night before in conversation with a couple of journalists articulating the position that, all in all, it was a pretty shallow business.

"I think that one of the things the film industry suffers from is that it's fashionable among intellectual circles in Australia to be blindly uncritical of Australian films and generally lump them all together and write them off. I certainly think that there are very few writers who give the same kind of attention or diligence in their analysis of Australian films that they would give to films by people with esoteric-sounding names from Germany or France," he says.

John Duigan is a very serious fellow. Hopeless romantic that I am, I have great sympathy for the vision which gave us *The Year My Voice Broke*. But I confess to surprise at his high-minded and rather puritanical response to what seems to me one of the most interesting recent developments in film.

I am reminded, however, of a similar debate between Emile Zola and Anatole France. Zola, the father of Naturalism, was felt by many of his contemporaries to have an 'obscene' mind. He chose to portray only the sordid aspects of life; he wallowed, they said, in filth. When *La Terre* was published in 1887 France responded with the following review:

> There is in all of us, in the humble as well as the great, an instinct for beauty... M. Zola does not realise this. In man there is an infinite need to love which reflects godliness. M. Zola does not realise this... In this world there are some magnificent forms and noble thoughts, as well as pure souls and heroic hearts, but M. Zola does not realise this... He does not seem to know that it is the decent things in life which grace it, nor that philosophical irony can be both indulgent and gentle. As for common decency, it can inspire only one of two things in humanity: admiration or pity. M. Zola is worthy of our profound pity.

Duigan's position on the neo-gothic is not without precedent. May the debate rage ever on.

MONGREL DREAMER? MARK MORDUE TALKS TO JIM JARMUSCH

Jarmusch is the guy who came to the party with his shirt inside-out. He's gonna be great. He's got all these Russian films coming out under his hat. He's very funny, funny like Buster Keaton. It's like Lord Buckley. You have to stay on that line — I think it's an important line — between comedy and deep, deep sadness. Deep and dark. It's like sitting in a dark room with a glass of Scotch in front of you — that and the guy walking down the street talking to himself.

At 34, Jim Jarmusch's vision of a "sad and beautiful world" sees him firmly at the forefront of a new dreamtime for a more maverick American cinema: a cinema rediscovering new ways of storytelling, new forms, attitudes and reflections, that provide relief from the market-bound strategies of the mainstream where the popular imagination has been captured and atomised by fantasies of power and success.

Broad proclamations of a New American Cinema, though, are perhaps too neat an ingenue's rallying call, but the scattered signs of life are inevitably encouraging. Away from the Top Guns, Rambo and Rockys, the American anti-hero and his cinema of doubt, questions and, now, even triumphs of a kind, sees a political shake-up of vision being given, at the very least, a chance.

This is the significance of success stories like Blue Velvet, She's Gotta Have It and Down By Law. Jarmusch's importance in this canon is that while he is not as overtly political as Spike Lee, he is equally as optimistic and grounded in the process of struggle; and though he lacks David Lynch's disturbing metaphysical grasp, his finer, purer, if you like, sense of fantasy is not without its own subtly ironic gestures. It's also gifted with the charm of a reluctant faith in humanity that exhilarates where Lynch prefers to disorient.

Jarmusch is a director with a promise: a promise born out of re-examining the world through a battered humanism that draws new strength from old stories reshaped into a truly contemporary form. And in reclaiming the potency of storytelling, of fantasy, he takes on the stereotype of art cinema and its more futile deconstructive excesses, opting to reconstruct a language back into life from the apocalypsis of meaning under which so much European and European-influenced filmmaking appeared to be collapsing. A process mirrored, coincidentally, in Wings Of Desire, the work of one of his major influences, Wim Wenders.

In this sense it's no surprise that Jarmusch's latest effort, Down By Law, should open in a graveyard, cruising through the limbo of New Orleans where a failed DJ called Zack (Tom Waits) and an egotistical pimp with delusions of grandeur called Jack (John Lurie) prepare for the big breaks that will serve as their final slump against fortune. Some 100 minutes later they're free not only from prison, but from the recalcitrant masculinity and stunted imaginations that had brought them so inevitably to failure's door. Liberated both physically and spiritually by the hyper-active innocence, love and faith of an angelic (again the Wenders coincidence) Italian tourist called Roberto (Roberto Benigni), a happy ending is discovered as they walk off into the forest light, a straight track to eternity that recognises an essential human aparnce which need not deny itself the communion of experience fellow men can passingly provide.

If that all sounds terribly idealistic and wet, don't be misled. Jarmusch's deadpan humour and world-weary urbanity are sharp enough to avoid the lachrymose pitfalls of letting dreams deny the duplicities and ambiguities of a harsher, lived-in world. What he really does is create a fairy-tale for adults, a hip eighties hybrid of The Three Stooges, On The Road and Alice In Wonderland that wryly comments on modern "awareness".

Jarmusch's story begins in Akron, Ohio, an industrial area in the Midwest, heartland of American dreams and relatively homogenous white middle-class aspirations (one and the same thing?). Deviating from the mean in his artistic ambitions, Jarmusch originally wanted to become a writer.

Travelling in Europe in the early seventies, particularly his heavy exposure to film through Henri Langlois' Cinematheque in Paris, the largest film archive in the world, changed this. Inevitably, his writing began to take on an increasingly cinematic form. After he returned to New York in 1975 he applied to the NYU Graduate Film School, submitting only writing and photographs, and was accepted without having made a film of any kind.

At that time Laslo Benedek (director of The Wild One) was director of the school, and he in turn introduced Jarmusch in his third and final year to...
Nicholas Ray. Jarmusch became Ray’s teaching assistant, a formative period of influence powerfully marked by the fact that Ray was dying of cancer.

Ray’s last film, *Lightning Over Water* (*Nick’s Movie*), was a collaboration with his ardent admirer Wim Wenders. Wenders brought his own European crew; Ray brought Jarmusch. Two days after Ray died in June 1979, Jarmusch started on his first film, *Permanent Vacation*, a 16mm 80-minute effort made in 10 days for about $15,000.

Described by one cynical critic as “a plodless portrait of a teenage drifter, half post-punk verite, half Lower East Side tone-poem”, it was eventually sold to German television and displayed on Jarmusch’s abilities, even if he had blown his tuition money to complete it; he would never gain his degree. The German sale would also help him with his work on *Stranger Than Paradise*.

The German connection took on a more personal level with the friendship of Wim Wenders and his producer Chris Sievernich (Jarmusch’s own producer, Otto Grokenberger, is Munich-based, and was met during attempts to keep the project running), who gave Jarmusch left-over film stock from *The State Of Things* which allowed him to make the opening sequence of *Stranger Than Paradise*. Neither Wenders or Sievernich were prepared to go any further than this as they were locked into supporting the making of a Chris Petit film and getting funds for *Paris, Texas*.

Enter Paul Bartel (director of *Eating Raoul, Lust In The Dust, Deathrace 2000*), who liked what little he saw of the incomplete *Stranger* at a film festival and lent Jarmusch another $15,000 interest free in order to keep things rolling. Shot in 19 days and edited in two weeks over a two-year period for a total cost of $125,000, the full-length *Stranger Than Paradise* took the Camera D’Or at Cannes in 1984, the most coveted prize in the world for a first feature film. Jim Jarmusch had arrived.

Before this he’d worked on such projects as Eric Mitchell’s *Underground USA* (1980) and Howard Brookner’s documentary, *Burroughs* (1982), as a sound recordist (the latter virtually a two-man project for much of its duration). He’d also passed through the highly fertile New York scene of the late 1970s, experiencing at first hand and becoming friends with some of the musicians of the era like Patti Smith, Television, Blondie and Talking Heads, as well as filmmakers like Eric Mitchell, Bette Gordon, James Nares, Charlie Ahearn, Beth B and Scott B., among Poe (whose film *The Left-Handed Woman* he still regards as “important for the spirit of the time”).

Much later, after the success of *Stranger Than Paradise*, he would connect again with Talking Heads to make the video for ‘The Lady Don’t Mind’. Repulsed, however, by “the whole concept of rock videos”, he has not bothered exploring that field. The “MTV disease” of rapid-fire editing, with its advertising consciousness and shallow sense of time and place, is completely at odds with Jarmusch’s sense of style and politics, which implicitly rejects the culture of speed and the verticism of distraction for a more reflective content. Aside from the more obvious European existential influences in the pace of his filmmaking — slow and minimal — there’s also a gentleness and sense of human spirit suggestive of Japanese influences at some secondary level. More specifically, the wide-angle camerawork of Yasujiro Ozu, admired by both Jarmusch and cinematographer Robby Muller, is clearly appreciated in the composition of both *Down By Law* and *Stranger Than Paradise*, where viewers are given the opportunity to choose what they want to examine, often talking in the whole mise-en-scène with a gradual sense of its stripped-down riches, rather than being bombarded by close-ups. In that way Jarmusch’s black-and-white vision arrives at a photographic stillness, a distillation of action through the appreciation of one moment unfolding into another.

It’s this unhurried style that takes a little getting used to, but that is Jarmusch’s style is always worth it. In *Stranger Than Paradise* it led us into a downbeat quest for freedom and communication, the myth of American dreams, that saw Willie (John Lurie), Eddie (Richard Edson) and Eva (Eszter Balint) fail to realise their common bond till circumstances had scattered them. In *Down By Law* Jarmusch allows his characters to depart from each other after the realisation. And in both we see a director grinning fantasy with reality’s kick, showing us stories of people who discover themselves through experiencing a sense of story.

What was it about Robby Muller’s style that made you want to use him for *Down By Law*?

Well, I’m a big fan of Robby’s work. I don’t think, though, that he necessarily has a signature. In other words, he’s worked with Wim Wenders, he’s worked with Peter Bogdanovich (*They All Laughed*), he’s worked with Peter Lilienthal (*The Country Is Salty*), he’s worked with Hans Geissendorfer (*The Glass Cell*), as well as many other people . . . Barbet Schroeder (*A Question Of Chance*), Peter Handke (*The Left-Handed Woman*) . . . it’s difficult to explain . . . he doesn’t really light from the outside in like most people. He doesn’t think of trying to light the characters at a dramatic moment or line. He lights instead, in a way, from what he interprets the emotional content of a scene to be, discussing it with me — which I found rare and interesting. I learnt a lot from him. In America the tendency has been, especially from Hollywood photographers — at least it was fashionable in the last 10 years — to pre-flash things and soften and mute everything. A kind of backing away from the sharpness of the lens, which I never understood at all. Robby’s aesthetic is the opposite to that, I think.

Did you discuss making *Down By Law* in black-and-white with him, and what is it that attracts you to using it?

No, I decided on that as I was writing the script. As for the attraction, I think there are some people like Woody Allen, for example, or Scorsese, who make an occasional film in black-and-white and the rest in colour. I’d probably like to do the reverse. I’m planning my next two films — one is in colour and

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THREE MEN IN A BOAT: Tom Waits, John Lurie and Roberto Benigni get that

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the other in black-and-white. So for me it's a consideration of
how I see the story in my mind when I'm writing it.
I think black-and-white is very interesting and more abstract
by being minimal and having less information. It seems like
people of my generation and younger grew up seeing newsreel
footage in colour, so we associate colour with reality. Whereas
most older people associate black-and-white with a kind of
reality. But for me it's not as realistic.

And there's that whole period of classic film noir in the late
forties that's very unrealistic. That's a style I love. Not to
imitate, but to get lost in.

You're in Berlin at the moment. Have you found the
environment there helpful for what you're writing?
Well yeah. But the film's not to take place here. I just came to
get out of New York for a while. Berlin's a strange city because

it's really just an island in the middle of East Germany. We're
not on the border of West Germany, we're inside East Germany
in a walled-in city — it's a strange atmosphere. But New York
is also a kind of island, and it doesn't really have anything to
do with America. I don't know . . . I love New York, it's my
home, but I just needed to get away from the mass environ-
ment. I like being in other cultures too because you misinter-
pret things and somehow it helps your imagination. I wrote
_Down By Law_ when I was in Rome.

I was curious about your work process for scripts. You've
said in the past that, to an extent, you almost approached
writing backwards, starting off with little details, impres-
sions or characterizations, and that the story sprang out of
that rather than starting off with the story first.

Yeah. The story is, in a way, secondary to me. And the charac-
ters are most important. And the atmosphere. Then the story
suggests itself: the playing out of all the details I've selected. It's
then I tell the story, as opposed to telling the story, then filling
in all the details.

From having seen _Stranger Than Paradise_ and _Down By
Law_, it seems to me that process is reflected in what
happens to the characters too. It's like they experience a
whole lot of events, small details and more significant
ones, and by the end they've come to a story of sorts.
But that seems more accessible to me. Maybe that's just objec-
tive, but it seems more like life. I don't see life as a very struc-
tured, big dramatic story — it's more a collection of events that
you interpret, depending on chance and your emotional state.

You don't seem to deal with existentially tormented
figures so much as people who accept, perhaps fatalistic-
ally, what's happening around them . . .

Yeah . . . but that gets complicated. You can find instances of
existential thought in these kinds of characters. But at the same
time I think of my films as comedies — they're dark comedies.
I'm interested in the sense of humour and emotional qualities of
the characters rather than the existential distancing which
seemed to be very fashionable in the cinema of the late
seventies.

Unfortunately that notion of existential distance has also
become a tool of reaction. It's led to a kind of ugly
fatalism.

Well, I'm very cynical anyway. And I think we have pretty
much destroyed this planet, and I don't really understand it.
Certain solutions have been offered throughout history — and
thinking — and they've not been able to be applied. So I'm at
the point of cynicism where I think that the small things which
happen between people are very beautiful . . . the very special
things that happen on this planet. And if we experience them as
humans, at least we're still here to experience. But in general I
don't have a lot of respect for the way governments have treated
this planet, my own country in particular.

In light of your successes and added pressure or interest
from major film groups to come over to their side, how do
you feel about that whole politics of film?
Well I've certainly changed since _Stranger Than Paradise_ in that
I'm not blind to the politics of making a film, in that films cost a
lot of money. What I'm interested in is doing my own work,
not working with someone else. And therefore it seems like the
best way for me to continue is to produce my own stuff, which is
how I plan it to be for my next film, with my partner Otto
Grokenberger. But I have another film planned after the next
one which may require a bigger budget . . . not big by Ameri-
can standards, but maybe $3 million.

With that film, I don't know. I keep my options open. But
what I will _not_ do is be subject to some producer who should be
running an underwear factory telling me how to cut my film or
who to cast in it. I'm not about to compromise that stuff. I'd
rather be a motorcycle repairman than make some kind of film
I don't believe in or feel good about.

At the same time I do want to reach some kind of audience,
even though I don't think about the audience very much when
structuring the films. I do still get a lot of interest, and there are
a lot of possibilities for production, but I'm not ready to com-
promise to those people and that ends a lot of possibilities
immediately. They say they're interested but I don't really trust
them.

When you say 'they', you're obviously talking about
Hollywood?
I'm talking about people who think of films as packages, and
therefore want to control how the package is put together.

How alive, then, do you think the American underground,
left-of-field, low budget cinema is at the moment?
Well I don't think underground films exist anymore. If they do

CINEMA PAPERS JANUARY — 23
exist it’s on the Super 8 format, and therefore underground by format alone because they can’t be shown in the conventional cinema . . . . The term independent is relative because you’re not independent unless you’re independently wealthy and produce films with your money — which no-one in their right mind does. So you’re not independent financially.

I don’t really know what the state is. I mean, I see interesting directors like Susan Seideman make a fairly large budget film and I don’t see that it has hurt her style or what she wants to do. So it depends on how people want to work. Spike Lee has just made a new film for Columbia Pictures. I know he was in vogue and formerly considered as an underground director. Same for Alex Cox.

So I don’t really know of any underground ‘scene’. I just hope these so-called independent directors want to protect their own ideas and are able to make films any way they can, even in the studios. As long as their ideas are protected. We’re at an interesting stage right now in that regard — we can see what happens to Spike Lee and his new film. I’m real happy when I see a film like Blue Velvet doing well in the States commercially at a time when Top Gun is the major money-making film. The thing is, if ideas are protected then life is breathed into the American cinema. It’s essential to protect those ideas in order to breathe with life. I don’t know if that will happen or if those ideas will just get compromised.

In your films you lean towards using people who aren’t strictly actors — people who come at acting from a skewed perspective, such as musicians.

Well I think that helps because I have an odd sense of constructing a film, and also of directing. So, for example, the long takes themselves allow certain actors without a very strong method to be stronger because they’re able to maintain their character over a longer period of time without their being cut-up every five minutes for the camera positions and repeating the same things from different angles.

There are a lot of actors who are just actors and are always acting. That’s something that annoys me — when I see an actor’s method going outside the character, then I’m not involved with the character, I’m involved with them as an actor. I think that certain people who have, somehow, a broader sense of performance, like musicians, or Roberto, who is also a comedian, are sometimes able to bring something to the style of acting or to the character that actors aren’t. It’s nothing against actors, because I think some actors are really great — someone like Ellen Barkin for example. But it’s rare. There are so many bad actors, and the style of acting in American commercial films at the moment isn’t very good at all.

Well it’s television acting, isn’t it? Looking at American TV from an Australian perspective, seeing what they’re supposed to represent, it seems that year by year the reality and morality become less and less real. It’s hard to believe that audiences can accept them at any level.

Yeah, and it’s getting worse and worse. It’s very sad to think that American TV audiences are just mesmerised by something that is so condescending. And there’s so much of it, especially with cable and video as well. In the States everyone watches television constantly — they don’t read books anymore. That’s partly why there’s no underground cinema. It’s also affected people politically — things are not polarised anymore. It’s all homogenous. A wash of mediocrity over everything that emanates from television.

Well television is so physically small and confined — it shouldn’t be that way, but the ambitions and fantasies are similarly confined. Whereas cinema is such a large and total experience. Television diminishes the dreams. That’s true. When you see a movie it’s very magical, because you’re watching it in a theatre, a darkened room, with other people. Somehow it’s like Plato’s Cave. With TV everything’s interrupted. Your attention span is reduced. I like what Godard said once when he was asked about the difference between cinema and television. He replied, “When you watch cinema, you look up at the screen. When you watch television, you look down at it.”

Is that sense of something foreign and magical why you seem to be attracted to Europe and/or European characters as a kind of pivot for the dreams of the people around them?

Well, not specifically. I think that America is a country that doesn’t really have its own culture, and is made up of the various cultural influences of the people who inhabited it. I’m like a mongrel. My family is Czech, German and Irish. So I’m all mixed up. And American culture is made of those strange mixtures. That’s something which is very American.

So I’m drawn to European characters because, in a sense, they’re the essence of America also. And I’m influenced by the style of film directors from Europe or Japan, in a way, more than I am from Hollywood. So I’m also in the middle of the Atlantic floating around somewhere when it comes to the themes in my films.

It’s funny. I feel like I’ve been exposed to some American directors only through being in Europe. I became interested in Samuel Fuller and Nicholas Ray through Godard and Wim Wenders’ writings. So it’s kind of a strange circular pattern, coming back to directors in your own country through directors in Europe.

And I hope that some younger American directors, in a way, will move it back again. Reflect those ideas again. Create an interesting circular pattern. Because Godard, in a way, his mis-application of American style in terms of Breathless and Alphaville is very fascinating. It’s like a misinterpretation that brings something new.

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Detailed information in the first section of this piece, relating to Jim Jarmusch’s background and early career, came from an extensive interview in Notes From The Pop Underground (ed. Peter Belals), available through The Last Gasp Of San Francisco, 2180 Bryant St., San Francisco, CA 99110.
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We choose to fly **Australian**
Francis Kwakye's face twisted into a wry smile as he gave the story line to the latest film the Ghana Film Industry Corporation (GFIC) had produced.

It was one of six films the Ghanaians produced in 1987, although it is unlikely that many locals will see it. Unlike other films shot in Ghana, this one has been taken to Germany and given the treatment reserved for big productions. It was the latest exotic adventure from Werner Herzog and Klaus Kinski.

Behind Kwakye, in the huge studio set in the Ghanaian capital of Accra, a trunk containing the last of Herzog's film waited to be shipped home to Munich. When it returns as a finished film, Kwakye's face may bear more of a grimace, as did the faces of many Australian Aborigines when they saw the fruits of Herzog's Australian sojourn, Where The Green Ants Dream.

Putting together a package of production facilities that can entice foreign filmmakers and their currency to Ghana is now something of a priority for the GFIC. Herzog's film, Corporal Verdi, provided a major impetus to this change in the GFIC's approach to filmmaking, which, before 1986, was restricted to documentary filmmaking alone.

But who could resist Herzog's story line as described by Kwakye: "Someone from Brazil comes to Africa where there is a chief's dispute, so the guy from Brazil helped another chief from another tribe train women warriors and defeat the other chief." Suitably Herzog. Suitably similar to Fitzcarraldo etc. Suitable for a struggling African film industry to enter into as a co-production.

At present, all movie film processed in Ghana is black and white: "We plan to have a colour laboratory in Ghana," Kwakye, the corporation's head recordist said, adding that distribution of Ghana's films happens mostly through its embassies. (The nearest Ghana embassy to Australia is in Tokyo.)

He spoke enthusiastically of the quality of the studio set, with its air-conditioned comfort, and facilities for creating almost any kind of light, with no extraneous noise. But like many things in Ghana (and Africa, for that matter), the studio is not used to full potential. "Generally in Ghana we don't shoot films in the studio. We shoot outside in the normal environment," he said.

Creating something artificially is not an easy thing for Africans in these post-colonial days, as they struggle to find forms of social organisation and government that reflect their own history, rather than that of their past colonial masters. According to Kwakye, the feature films in Ghana are "mainly stories that are set around the general environment of the country. They are (intended) to build up the people's mind about the country and what we believe". He had no hesitation in recalling the history of the GFIC and describing it as "a unit for government propaganda documentaries".

It has fulfilled this role since it was established 30 years ago when Ghana received its independence from Britain. But filmmaking still has its problems. Not only do the Ghanaian filmmakers have to restrict their activities to black and white film, but they also have to share the GFIC's mixing and recording facilities with Ghana's recording artists.

The day I visited the GFIC facilities, one of Ghana's high life groups was putting down the vocal tracks for its next record, using the best sound facilities the GFIC can offer: a 10-year-old four-track studio with its four auxiliary lines. "It's small in comparison with Europe," Kwakye said. "We need more effects to boost the quality of the recording."

In an effort to make the facilities available to Ghanaians, the recording facility, for example, is rented for 12,500 cedis (approx. SA$80) for six hours. A record takes about three days to make in Ghana.

Despite these obstacles, Ghana has produced some fine films and some less attractive ones as well. Doing Their Thing, a 1971 docudrama, directed by the now managing director of GFIC, Rev. Chris Hesse, explains the role of traditional and tribal music. It tells the story of two young people who enjoy the life of the nightclubs which used to flourish in Accra before the fall in world commodity prices decimated and demoralised the economy and much of the creative activity of the people.

The lead female character, whose father is a well-heeled businessman, cannot agree with her father's attitude to her music, which is the modern high life, with imported soul and disco.

Her father sees this music simply as post-colonial 'stuff', while the girl and her boyfriend see it as their links with the modern world. Under direction from her father, the couple go on a tour of rural Ghana and discover traditional music and dance.

Mundane as it sounds, the story line is engrossing, as the film does what many recent Japanese films have done — especially those of Shohei Imamura (The Ballad Of...
Narayama) — it describes the conflict between the new and the old and then, unlike Japanese cinema, prescribes a synthesis, where a solution to the conflict can be found.

This is the new Africa, the Africa Europeans rarely see or experience and which is scoffed at, paternalised and exploited.

In contrast, Fleetwood Mac: The Visitor, a 1982 documentary, shows how co-productions can work against the Ghanaians and their quest for a leading role in an independent, anti-imperialist Africa.

The film shows this 'super-group' working together with Ghanaian musicians in preparation for a huge concert in Accra. It is a film that is especially instructive for musicians, who see Mick Fleetwood, the group's drummer, trying to orientate African musicians to a western rock 'n' roll beat, amidst the poly-rhythms of Ghanaian drumming and percussion.

The result is a film that again shows up westerners, even with the best intentions, as having little sense of the African reality. The film is shot in colour, indicating that the band provided the film for the GFIC.

With only six picture theatres and a few mobile film/movie systems that travel the country, Ghana will find it difficult to maintain its film industry, as well as its own African values.

For example, at the Ghana Film Theatre, Kanda-Accra, local people were lining up for a film, the only one advertised in that day's newspaper. It was Ashanti, starring Michael Caine, Peter Ustinov, Kabir Bedi, Beverly Johnson, Omar Sharif and Miss Busia as the Senufo girl. The sub-title of the film was "Slave trading lives today".

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IT SEEMS likely that an important report on women in the film industry will be shelved. The Report on Women in Australian Film, Video and Television Production, published jointly in 1987 by the Australian Film Commission (AFC) and the Australian Film, TV & Radio School (AFTRS), is a follow-up to a survey conducted in 1983. The findings of the 1983 survey, like this report, help to counteract the prevailing mythology that women have succeeded in breaking down traditional barriers in the industry.

The recommendations of the report's authors, Marion Marsh, formerly the affirmative action officer of the AFC, and Chris Pip, a researcher, are based on statistics indicating that "...women are still proportionately under-represented in the industry compared to their representation in the general workforce," and that there is a "...high level of occupational segregation" in the feature film industry. Some improvements have occurred, but overall these are marginal, and striking inequities persist, particularly in technical areas and what are termed the "key creative" roles. There are also an important set of preliminary statistics tucked away in the report under the heading of "Demographic Details". These reveal that women in the industry are predominantly of Anglo-Celtic origin. The authors feel that this probably reflects the industry as a whole.

Subsequent to the 1983 survey, administrators of the various training and funding bodies hoped that structural impediments to women would be overcome fairly rapidly through the implementation of specific programs which concentrated on training and skills acquisition. (The most prominent examples are the women's film units.) Such programs were based on notions of social and industrial equity and on development of long-term career paths for women. Contradictions emerging in feminist discourses about the category of "women's films", and the conceptual, theoretical or political arguments originally connected with women's agitation for training, are evaded in this formulation. The result is increasing polarisation of these discourses.

My main purpose here, however, is to look at the report and the neglect, even silence that follows it from the very organisation that commissioned it in the first place — the AFC. The findings of the 1987 report are provocative and deserve wide discussion. The report is a witness to the entrenched and continuing marginalisation of women.

The AFC commissioned the report in 1986, in response to one of the recommendations of its own internal affirmative action program which referred to the question of women's participation in the industry generally. Based on crew listings from feature film credits in Cinema Papers during the 1985-86 financial year and a survey of women in the industry, the 1987 report extends the scope of its predecessor by covering women in video and television, as well as film, and by tracing career patterns. Marsh and Pip were assisted by the social researcher, Eva Cox, in the development of the methodology and sampling techniques, and a steering committee met occasionally in an advisory capacity.

What does the phasing out of the Women's Film Fund mean for women in the industry? ANNETTE BLONSKI looks at the report whose findings confirm that women are still significantly under-represented and segregated; SOPHIE CUNNINGHAM and DEBBY VERHOEVEN write about some strategies for the future.
particularly if script editors were included but, surprisingly, thought that the figures for writers in feature films were rather higher than she expected. A pitiful 6.8 per cent of directors were women. There has been virtually no improvement in the percentage of women as directors in the past 12 years. As for the jobs considered to be 'male', women were excluded. In the same year, there were no female gaffers or location managers, and no female camera operators, although 31 per cent of clapper/loaders were women. For editing, where in Europe and the US women have a long and illustrious history, only 17.9 per cent of women were editors in Australia, whereas 50 per cent of assistant editors and 61.5 per cent of editing assistants were women.

Marsh and Pip conclude, however, that there is some evidence to support the observation that women involved in training schemes and women's roles are moved into non-traditional areas of employment. But the improvement is clearly very slow.

A number of contributing factors emerge. One problem is the absence of child-care. Women with children 'are more likely to experience disrupted employment than childless women and men, or men with dependent children'. In response to this, Marsh and Pip recommend that on-site child-care should be provided by industry employers such as the ABC, large production houses and training bodies, and on long-term location shoots. They recommend also that child-care costs be exempted from the fringe benefit tax. Given Senator Walsh's widely publicised attacks on child-care, one wonders what kind of support this modest proposal would receive if it ever reached Cabinet, let alone how the film industry will react to the proposals as a whole.

Child-care and child-rearing are problematic for women in all spheres, and are central to contradictions experienced by women confronting gender expectations within both the domestic and industrial sphere. There are other areas of the report which deal with the less tangible, but crucial issues of self-perception and the attitudes of others. The findings suggest that women continue to suffer systematic discrimination, devaluing of their skills by employers, and a lack of self-confidence. The vast majority of women were pessimistic about the likelihood of achieving their stated aspiration, yet 92.4 per cent of the women who responded earned their total income from the industry and regarded it as their long-term career.

In their introduction, Marsh and Pip make it clear that the report and its recommendations flow from a specific sample and focus. Women involved in what they term 'satellite jobs'—administration, marketing and distribution—were not included, nor were women in the cultural sphere such as critics and writers, those involved in cultural organisations like researchers, or teachers of media and film. Both Pip and Marsh agreed that these areas are important to the larger question of whether any change will take place to the conceptual basis of filmmaking (what kind of films are made and how), a change that will not necessarily follow from an increase in the proportion of women in the 'key' positions. The report's restricted focus is reflected in the steering committee where no screenwriter or 'cultural worker' (for want of a better title) was represented.

The force of the report is undeniable, and its recommendations are sensible. The first step in implementing the recommendations, according to Marsh and Pip, is the encouragement of wide industry discussion. Part of this would involve the employment by the AFC of a consultant to an independent organisation to investigate the findings of the report, and establish a working party of industry representatives and other associations, including cultural groups. This would seem a relatively simple matter to initiate and a probable consequence of the report's publication.

In October 1987, concluding an item on the report in its own newsletter, the AFC states that 'structural discrimination...on the basis of sex has meant that women have been less able to bargain effectively for their own career advancement.' It concludes, quoting from the report: 'This situation should alert the industry to the need for vigilance to ensure that present levels of progress for women are not eroded, and equal employment opportunities on the basis of skill and ability become commonplace practice.' And yet, when the report was completed and launched by the Minister for the Arts, Senator Richardson, Marion Marsh had already left the AFC, leaving the position of affirmative action officer vacant. No discussions had taken place on the distribution or follow-up of the report prior to, or to my knowledge, subsequent to her departure. The only firm action so far is the establishment of a national training fund for women in the industry that was announced by the AFTERS at the launch of the report. By throwing responsibility for vigilance onto the industry', the AFC suggesting that it is not a part of that industry? The AFC has not initiated discussion of the report's recommendations. Why?

The federal government passed the Public Service Reform Act four years ago as part of its policy to eliminate discrimination against...
women and disadvantaged groups. In 1984 the AFC established an affirmative action working party. In 1985, it initiated an in-house affirmative action program and Marion Marsh was appointed affirmative action officer. In 1986, after research into staffing and hiring within the AFC, a report prepared by her was presented to the Commission. It is not freely available. This report deals with the status of women, migrants and the handicapped. A separate report was being prepared on Aborigines.

The AFC's record has been quite positive and women have been appointed to senior positions. However, the internal report noted, not surprisingly, that women in the AFC tended to cluster, numerically, in support and secretarial roles, particularly in the production division of the AFC (Film Australia). A high degree of sex segregation and segmentation, it noted, also exists in the film industry as a whole. A number of programs and initiatives were recommended for internal reforms within the AFC, but the working party no longer exists to monitor these reforms. No replacement for Marion Marsh was found. The position has been converted to part-time. The personnel manager, Yvonne Ryan, is now required to undertake the duties previously administered by a full-time specialist officer. No affirmative action officer will be appointed at Film Australia, according to Ryan, until after July 1988 when it will become a wholly-owned government company. When asked for more detail on current plans for implementation of the "affirmative action plan", as it is known, Ryan only commented that all aspects of the plan would be "re-assessed in the light of what's happening at Film Australia".

It was bad timing or pure coincidence that, as the statistics for the report were being prepared, early in 1987, it was announced that the Women's Film Fund (WFF) would be wound up by 1990. This decision has been met with a mixture of resignation and alarm. The reasons for its abolition after a lengthy review seem to be based on two assumptions. The first is that women now gain proportionately equal access to funding within the AFC, particularly within the Creative Development Unit. (At the very least one could point to the structural impediments to women in the feature film industry and I suspect that the figures for the Special Production Fund would be less than encouraging.) The second relates to support for women filmmakers, advice, training and the monitoring role associated with the fund. These duties are to be "devolved" to the affirmative action officer and others within the AFC. The WFF's manager is the sole project officer with an extensive brief and tiny funds ($190,000 per annum). The findings of the report suggest that the level of monitoring of industry and internal AFC funding activities, provided by an over-worked and under-funded full-time manager, will be necessary for many years to come. Marsh, when asked about the fund, stated that "The report (1987) destroyed the myth that we don't need the Women's Film Fund... or training schemes such as the women's film units", because the support offered here "opened doors and gave women confidence".

But the much-vaunted plan upon which these actions are based appears to be in suspension, shoved into the closet, along with a myriad of other reports on the state of the industry. It might emerge some time towards the end of 1988 at an independent Film Australia, brief unknown, a bicentenary gift to women, Aborigines and migrants, courtesy of government legislation, but hardly a gift from the heart, and a gift all the same. That still leaves the AFC itself.

The WFF continues for the moment. The current manager, Penny Robins, stated that she used the 1987 report and its recommendations as the basis for the WFF's more interventionist role. The manager's responsibilities revolve around the initiation and administration of a range of programs and projects. (For details, see right). This is in addition to the on-going advice and assistance provided by all managers of the WFF who had been appointed because of their background in film production. It is difficult to see how the role of the affirmative action officer, whose responsibility is to oversee the implementation

THE history of the Women's Film Fund may be characterised as shifting in emphasis from the closed history of Caddie (1976) to the critical histories of Nice Coloured Girls and With Inertia (1987). This move from The Depression of the 1930s to "the depression" of the marginal feminist subculture described in With Inertia can, paradoxically, be viewed with optimism. The fund's recent encouragement of a broad range of perspectives indicates its ability to respond to the changing constituency of feminism.

The films With Inertia and Nice Coloured Girls indicate a trend towards a plurality of possible feminist representations. Nice Coloured Girls has been described by its maker, Tracey Moffat, as a film that questions not only the history of encounters between white men and Aboriginal women, but which also "questions the now established genre of the 'Aboriginal Film'."

With Inertia draws out a series of impasses within feminist approaches to representation, and the frustration of the women confronted with these problems. As one of the film's makers, Margie Medlin, appropriately put it, "we thought it was about depression, but if it had gone on for much longer it would have been more about depression".

Following the Australian Film Commission (AFC) announcement that the fund will be wound down over the next three years, and closed in 1990, supporters of the fund have every reason to be depressed.

Reasons for the winding down of the fund are complex. In part they represent a protest against inadequate funding. Co-ordinators can no longer be expected to work under the pressure that results from administering the

With Inertia
The Women's Film Fund — Some Current Initiatives:

1. A proposed series of six half-hour low-budget television dramas is now in development and draws together teams of writers, producers and directors;

2. Instituting writer's workshops and writers-in-residence programs in South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland, with a view to developing ideas and scripts for possible funding;

3. Subsidies will be provided, on application, to women who wish to attend approved technical training short courses on a limited number of places;

4. Establishing, with short-term financial support, a women's video workshop at Open Channel in Victoria, for women wanting experience in video production, hopefully to be repeated in NSW;

5. Paying for production of teachers' notes to accompany the Film Victoria production of I Wanna Be, a teaching tape about women working in the technical areas of the film industry.

of legislation and other institutional responsibilities. Can absorb the role of the Women's Film Fund Manager when "devolution" occurs in 1990. One does not make the other redundant.

The decision to abolish the WFF, seen in the context of the uncertainty surrounding the affirmative action plan within the AFC, suggests a lack of commitment on the part of the AFC, political naivety on the larger question of structural change and a rather futile attempt at cost-cutting. (And who knows, maybe the joke circulating around the industry, that the "AFC" stands for "Australian Feminist Commission", really hurt.)

Equal opportunity and affirmative action programs are bound to be controversial in an industry where the agenda is dominated by commercial considerations and concerns about the autonomy of the local industry (eg co-production agreements, foreign artists etc). In a climate of uncertainty regarding the fundamentals of film financing, notions of equity and social justice, or the fundamental structural bias of the industry, come a poor last.

The current report demonstrates that rapid structural change through short-term programs is the fantasy of well-meaning liberals. Many women working in the industry knew it all along. Despite hopes to the contrary, no comfort can be gained from the statistics.

There are other voices and they are asking other questions. "terrible" questions. As Liz Jacka observed recently, what are the options for women filmmakers at the present time?

With limited support. Other reasons have included the belief that conventional avenues of funding are now more open to women, and that it is appropriate that affirmative action measures be taken by larger institutions such as the AFC.

Implicit in this concern is that the existence of the Women's Film Fund has allowed the film industry to continue to marginalise the women who work within it.

We wish to particularly examine this last criticism of the fund. Does the existence of the Women's Film Fund effectively marginalise the claims of women on funding institutions?

One response to this criticism is that if larger institutions did not themselves marginalise the Women's Film Fund the problem would never arise. Since the government and large film bodies do not take affirmative action seriously enough to provide more than $190,000 a year to the fund, can we really expect them to support other affirmative action policies? As Annette Blonski suggests in her article in this issue of Cinema Papers there is already cause to question the AFC's commitment to affirmative action.

Another response would be to question the terms of the criticism itself, its understanding of the 'margin'. Where is it, and what defines its boundaries? The 'marginal' feminist subculture which is the focus of With Inertia would perceive the Women's Film Fund as a privileged bureaucracy. In contrast, the makers of films such as Crocodile Dundee would certainly see the fund as on the fringe.

To accept claims of marginalisation is to accept the authority of those who decide where those boundaries lie. We would argue

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without skills and experience, and schemes like the women's film units, women remain marginal to the mainstream industry; but they are equally 'ghettoised' within 'women's cinema'. if women do enter the mainstream in greater numbers, particularly as directors, jacka asks, "how can women's filmmaking emerge into the mainstream without weakly imitating it, as women feature directors have so far been forced to do, for the most part?' as for the report, few people have read it or even seen it. you can buy it from the afc, but it deserves far more than a casual read. the document alone is evidence of a particular kind and so it cannot stand alone. i can only end this piece at the beginning, like so many others, with an exhortation to extended, serious discussion about women's filmmaking.

1. marion marsh & chris pip, report on "women in australian film, video and television production, 1987", published by the australian film commission, in conjunction with the australian film, television and radio school, 1987. all quotations in the text are from this report, unless otherwise stated. the report is public and can be purchased for $5.00.


5. cinema papers 65, september 1987, pp55.
In the first part of this article, published in the previous issue, there was a short analysis of how various authors have viewed James Bond's rise to the status of popular phenomenon. In particular, there was an examination of the contention by writers Tony Bennett and Janet Woollacott that this was due to Bond's "ability to co-ordinate . . . a series of ideological and cultural concerns that have been enduringly important in Britain since the 1950s" (p18). The two issues already looked at are "relations between West and East" and "nation and nationhood". SCOTT MURRAY examines the third concern, the "relationship between the sexes particularly with regard to the construction of images of masculinity and femininity".
T
here are many myths surrounding the 'Bond girl'. These range from her physical characteristics to her role in the narrative, from the state of her sexuality to her relationship with Bond. It is hard to know why so many myths persist; more particularly, why writers such as Umberto Eco and Bennett and Woollacott should reinforce so many of them.

In *The Bond Affair*, Eco posits a model which he argues fits all the Bond women except Vivienne Michel and Mary Goodnight. Eco writes:

Dominated by the Villain, . . . Fleming’s woman has already been previously conditioned to domination, life for her having assumed the role of the villain. The general scheme is (1) the girl is beautiful and good; (2) has been made frigid and unhappy by severe trials suffered in adolescence; (3) this has conditioned her to the service of the Villain; (4) through meeting Bond she appreciates human nature in all its richness; (5) Bond possesses her but in the end loses her. (p49)

As this model is essentially supported by Bennett and Woollacott, the main points are worth examining here individually.

**Bond’s sexual partners are young, hence “girl”**.

Bennett and Woollacott write, “It is . . . always a girl [Bond] encounters, never a woman.” (p115) Furio Colombo goes even further and uses the term “girl-child”!

Yet, the average age of Bond’s female companions in Fleming is 25. She is, then, a woman, not a girl. That Fleming used the latter term almost exclusively, one presumes, was because he felt “girl” a more erotic description. It is not an option for academics.

As to the films, producer Albert R. Broccoli says that Bond’s love/sex interest must be a woman, not a girl, “Otherwise it becomes rape. Bond’s ladies must give the impression of being experienced with men.”

Character ages are rarely given in films, but the average age of those actresses selected for Bond films is about 25.
The 'girl' is "beautiful and good".

Response to physical beauty is, of course, subjective. However, it is clear that Fleming wished that most of his female characters be viewed as physically attractive. And in his attempts to so render them, Fleming perhaps inadvertently created a physical type to which most of Bond's romantic interests conform.

That type can be paraphrased as: Dark (not blonde) hair; blue eyes; high cheek bones; small nose; wide, sensuous mouth; clean, sweeping jawline; lightly suntanned skin; little to no make-up and jewellery; about 5'7" in height; and with "fine, firm, faultless, splendid, etc., breasts".

As to the adjective "good", it is used by Eco to describe an inner goodness that may not at first be apparent, given that some of the Bond women are working for a villain. However, "good" is an arguably accurate description of all 15 Bond women.

Female beauty on screen is again a subjective issue, but it is different with film in that one watches an actress playing a character and one responds primarily to the actress, rather than the scripted character. With a novel, one imagines a character's physique, based on the author's descriptions, and responds to that imagining.

Surprisingly, given the currency of the blonde myth (see note 2), the most common hair shade of the Bond screen women is dark, not fair. Given also the number of actresses, it is perhaps unwise to generalise further.

More important, the films differ from the novels in that several of Bond's bed companions are in no way "good" morally. One thinks of Miss Tarlo (Zena Marshall), Fiona Volpe (Luciana Paluzzi) and Fatima Blush (Barbara Carrera). When Fleming created a truly evil woman, such as Rosa Klebb, he never put Bond to bed with her. The films take a different position.

The Bond 'girl' is a spy or in the service of the villain.

Eco argues this is true of 13 Bond women. But he is clearly wrong: Gala Brand, Honeychile Rider, Tilly Masterton, Ruby Windsor, Tracy di Vicenzo and Kissy Suzuki are at no stage in the service of any villain. In fact, there are at best only seven possible candidates for Eco's model.

Vesper Lynd and Tatiana Romanova are spies; Domino Vitali is Largo's mistress; and Pussy Galore, Solitaire, Tiffany Case and Jill Masterton are, to a lesser degree, working for villains. But Domino is quite innocent and ignorant of Largo's treachery, and Jill's only crime is to help Goldfinger do a little cheating at cards.

Thus, only Vesper, Tatiana, Solitaire, Pussy and Tiffany can be meaningfully said to be on the 'wrong' side; that is, in only five of the 15 cases.

The film count is more balanced: in the Conny- and Moore-Bond films, 20 of the women Bond sleeps with are associated with villains; 18 are not (see chart). And two of the 20 are the twin manifestations of Domino (Claudine Auger in Thunderball and Kim Basinger in Never Say Never Again). In each case Domino is unaware of Largo's usurpation (p57). In the process, she goes through an ideological transformation: that is, she now sides with Bond instead of the villain.

As for Bennett and Woollacott, I can find no passage which clearly states their position, but it is amply clear that they support Eco on this. For instance, they write of Gala: "since she is already 'correctly' in place both sexually and ideologically, Bond's services are not required" (p116).

Now, as seen above, there are five Bond women on the 'wrong' side ideologically. Vesper, a double agent, sleeps with Bond only near the end of Casino Royale, and after the mission is completed. But she does not have a complete ideological transformation and commits suicide. So, in Eco's terms, it is a failure for Bond here.

Solitaire, a card reader for the sinister Mr. Big, has already decided to leave before meeting Bond; she has just been waiting for someone to help her escape. And when she decides that should be Bond, she blackmails him into aiding her. Thus, her ideological conversion is quite independent of Bond. Tiffany ideologically abandons her employer after meeting Bond, but well before sleeping with him. However, Fleming makes it clear that she is partially attracted to Bond by the fact he is not a criminal like those she works for and with. It is telling that, when she later suspects Bond of being a crook, she immediately loses interest in him.

Tatiana sleeps with Bond on their first meeting; she has been ordered to do so by SMERSH, just as Bond has been so instructed by M. Her ideological conversion is post-sex, but Fleming tosses in intriguing hints that Tatiana may have planned a defection to the West before meeting Bond (a result of Klebb's and Ideological transformation. Whatever, the decision was made entirely by Pussy, her contact with Bond to this point having been only minimal and non-sexual. It is thus quite incorrect for Bennett and Woollacott to write:

in repositioning Pussy Galore sexually, Bond also repositions her ideologically, detaching her from the service of the villain and recruiting her in support of his own mission. (p117)

In summary, probably only one woman changes ideological sides after sleeping with Bond; two do so independently of him; one doesn't at all; and one does after having spent time with Bond, but not having slept with him. This is scant support indeed for Eco's theory.

Fiona Volpe says to Bond in Thunderball, James Bond, who only has to make love to a woman and she starts to hear heavenly choirs singing. She repents and immediately returns to the side of right and virtue. This may be the perception of Fiona and several critics, but again the evidence doesn't support it. Of the 18 true associates of villains, eight don't change sides after having had sex with Bond and three cases are ambiguous. As well, two others experience ideological conversion before getting the hero into bed.

Of the five women discussed above, the first to be transformed to the screen was Tatiana (Domino Bianchi). Her ideological conversion is left until the last moment, no doubt for reasons of suspense. When the evil Rosa Klebb (Lotte Lenya) enters the hotel suite, Tania looks as if she has no intention of giving Klebb away to Bond. It is only after she has left the room that she takes the step of siding with Bond (ie, the West). Her attraction to Bond must be regarded as a primary factor in her decision.

Pussy (Honor Blackman) converts after sleeping with Bond on the stable hay. Unlike in the novel, here she is sexually and ideologically repositioned by Bond.

Tiffany (Jill St John) begins on the 'wrong' side and ends on the 'right', shifted by Bond.

BOND WOMEN IN BOOKS

- Casino Royale – Vesper Lynd
- Live And Let Die – Simonne (Solitaire) Latrelle
- Moonraker – Galatea (Gala) Brand
- Diamonds Are Forever – Tiffany Case
- From Russia, With Love – Tatiana (Tania) Romanova
- Dr No – Honeychile (Honey) Rider
- Goldfinger – Jill Masterton, Tilly Masterson, Pussy Galore
- Thunderball – Dominetta (Domino) Vitalle
- The Spy Who Loved Me – Vivienne Michel
- On Her Majesty’s Secret Service – La Contessa Teresa (Tracy) Di Vicenzo, Ruby Windsor
- You Only Live Twice – Kissy Suzuki
- The Man With The Golden Gun – Mary Goodnight
But she is such a twitty character that no-one knows in what direction she will flit off on next.

Solitaire (Jane Seymour) does not appear to have planned to escape from Mr Big/Dr Kananga (Yaphet Kotto) before meeting Bond, though she is clearly scared of her boss. And she changes sides long before sleeping with Bond: in fact, she lies to Mr Big about a tarot reading on Bond’s first visit. It is true she is unsettled by having drawn the Lovers card, but Bond can hardly be held responsible for that.

As to others on the ‘wrong’ side, interesting non-Fleming examples are Fatima Blush, May Day, Anya Amasova and Pola Ivanova.

Fatima ‘seduces’ Bond on a boat, Bond agreeing because he suspects her motives. Later, Bond kills her with the Q-designed pen, having failed totally to reposition her ideologically.

May Day (Grace Jones) does change sides, and (much) after a session in bed with Bond. But there is no indication that it was the motivating factor; rather, it is because she has been abandoned by her boss.

Anya Amasova (Barbara Bach) is a Russian agent ordered in a temporary spirit of detente to work with Bond. She is hardly on the ‘wrong’ side, though, because the tone of The Spy Who Loved Me, as with several others, suggests that deep down Russia and Britain are really allies (especially where SPECTRE is concerned). However, Anya has a second purpose in that she wishes to avenge her lover’s death at Bond’s hands. But she weakens in her resolve after having slept with Bond — an ideological success of sorts.

Pola Ivanova (Fiona Fullerton) is another Russian spy who sleeps with Bond in a time of detente, but with double-cross in mind. She fails to cheat him out of a recording, just as he fails to reposition her.

**Bond repositionings girls of “dislocated” or “deviant” sexuality.**

This is a myth maintained by Bennett and Woollaccott and, in different terms, by Eco. First, from Bond And Beyond:

What, then[,] is the function of ‘the girl’ within the narrative? . . . First, she constitutes a problem of knowledge, a troubling enigma which Bond must resolve. This enigma takes the form of a disturbing ‘out-of-placeness’ in the respect that, to varying degrees and in different ways, ‘the girl’ departs from the requirements of femininity as specified by patriarchal ideology. (p115)

Further on the authors write:

Once the mystery of ‘the girl’s’ displaced sexuality has been accounted for, the problem she poses is one of action: will Bond successfully respond to the challenge of effecting her sexual readjustment and, thereby, ‘correctly’ realigning her within the patriarchal order? Usually, of course, he does. In thus responding to the challenge posed by ‘the girl’, putting her back into place beneath him (both literally and metaphorically), Bond functions as an agent of the patriarchal order . . . (p116)

Of the 15 Bond women, the label of sexual ‘out-of-placeness’ applies meaningfully to only five women.

Pussy Galore was raped at 12 and is a lesbian. She finally sleeps with Bond, as seen above, after having changed to the side of ‘right’ and after Bond’s mission has been
completed, her boss sucked out into space. She enters Bond’s cabin on the ship which has rescued them. She was wearing nothing but a grey fisherman’s jersey that was decent by half an inch . . . She said, ‘People keep on asking if I’d like an alcohol rub and I keep on saying that if anyone’s going to rub me it’s you, and if I’m going to be rubbed with anything it’s you I’d like to be rubbed with.’ She ended lamely, ‘So here I am.’ (Goldfinger, p316-7) Clearly it is Pussy who is making the moves, free from any pressure from Bond. It is she who has independently opted to try heterosexual sex. How then can Bennett and Woollacott claim that Bond has repositioned her sexually? How can they write of ‘the challenge of ‘complete conversion’ which he faces in relation to Pussy’ (p118), or refer to it as a “task”? The text does not read that way.

Tiffany Case was also raped, by a gang of hoods when she was 16. She is lonely and scared. And, as mentioned above, she finds Bond attractive as much for his moral rightness as for his sexuality. Tiffany and Bond are much delayed in making love and, despite her being tortured by gangsters straight after, it is a happy sexual relationship that develops. They even discuss marriage, after having lived together for some time, but she finally decides to marry an American Marine Corps Major (British values don’t triumph here). It is odd, then, that Bennett and Woollacott should write, the mould in which the Bond girl is cast is not archetypally feminine. Constructed to the formula ‘equal but yet subordinate’, her destiny is not to be a housewife — in Diamonds Are Forever [actually, From Russia, With Love], Tiffany Case flirts with this possibility, but only to reject it . . . (p123)

One should note here, too, that Bond married Tracy and was accepted by Vesper, but she died before the wedding. There is no evidence that the other Bond women remain unmarried, or should wish to. Honeychile Rider was raped at 12 and is a ‘virgin’ at 20. Fleming may portray her as an innocent, or “unformed”, but she has no sexual hang-ups. And when she finally meets a suitable partner, she has no hesitation about sleeping with Bond, or even sexually teasing him. But she is delayed in consummating her interest by Bond’s broken finger and then by his being bitten by a barracuda.

Vivienne Michel was orphaned at eight and has had two unhappy love affairs (by 23), one ending in an abortion. Fleming, continuing his ‘negative’ description of Domino² as being 'virgin' at 20. Fleming may portray her as an innocent, or “unformed”, but she has no sexual hang-ups. And when she finally meets a suitable partner, she has no hesitation about sleeping with Bond, or even sexually teasing him. But she is delayed in consummating her interest by Bond’s broken finger and then by his being bitten by a barracuda.

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BOND WOMEN? George Lazenby and his coterie
trying heterosexual sex, and she emerges from the stables a ‘new woman’. Tilly (Tania Mallet) is not represented as sexually confused, or lesbian, so there is no chance of Bond repositioning her. Anyway, he fails in his attempts to seduce her.

In Dr. No, Honey (Ursula Andress) does tell Bond of how she had been raped, but there is no evidence of her being a ‘virgin’, or of her being inhibited about sex; the impression is quite the contrary. The casting of Andress is significant in this respect.

Of the Connery-Bond women, Fatima Blush is the only one exception. (Tiffany and the two Dominos certainly don’t beg inclusion.) Fatima appears to have put her sexuality totally in the service of evil ends, a case, as it were, not of domination but of self-alignment. And she certainly doesn’t seem too keen on Bond’s genitals, pointing her gun directly at them. Though Bond does sleep with her, he fails, in Bennett and Woollacott’s terms, to reposition her within the patriarchal order.

Tracy (Diana Rigg) in On Her Majesty’s Secret Service is independent, intelligent, scared by a bad marriage and possibly a touch neurotic. She is, then, a close approximation of her novelistic counterpart. And she does seem happily repositioned by her relationship with Bond (George Lazenby), though one often senses in Rigg’s performance a grim forbearance of her partner’s screen efforts.

Where the film differs significantly from the novel is by having Tracy and Bond begin their affair prior to his visit to Piz Gloria. His sleeping there with Ruby (Angela Scoular) and Nancy (Catherine Von Schell) makes one rather uneasy about his purported love for Tracy. As to the Moore-Bond women, Solitaire and Octopussy are the possible “dislocates”.

There is much discussion about Solitaire’s virginity and how she will lose her occult powers once she sleeps with a man. This has led several writers, including Robert Sellers11 and Sally Hibbin12, to claim that she loses her powers when she sleeps with Bond. But such a reading is incorrect: Solitaire fails to notice that Bond has used a rigged pack of tarot cards, and this is before she has slept with him.

Octopussy (Maud Adams) is an interesting case, not that she lives surrounded by women there is no evidence that she is not attracted to men. And after a night with Bond, she behaves not at all like one repositioned. There is, in fact, an archetypical Bond girl.

I don’t believe so. The 15 Bond women in Fleming may share certain physical characteristics, and a few have had similar traumatic experiences in their youth but they remain unique and individual.

If one must generalise, then one can say they are independently minded, sexually healthy, uncowed by moral conventions and male codes, natural, unaffected and caring. In short, they are remarkable literary creations in a period not known for favourably portraying women happily independent of male support and conventions.

Bennett and Wooliacott in effect acknowledge this, but with their usual disingenuity write:

If ‘the girl’ abandons the traditional restraints, and claims, of a sexuality confined to the marriage bed, she is in fact only the fantasy object of the male reader, licensed, through Bond, to go whoring by proxy (p123).

Professor Stephen Knight in his review of Bond and Beyond writes:

Details of possibly great significance are raised, teased out and interrelated throughout this thoroughly interesting book.

If the arguments are sometimes condensed and complex, so they are in any worthwhile area of analysis. The language and approach of this study are here to stay, whatever might be thought by those too indolent or incompetent to master it.

It is a depressing thought.

NOTES


2. Almost all writers on Fleming, for example, claim that he prefers blonde women. Amis states this in The James Bond Dossier, Jonathan Cape, London, 1965, and this view is reiterated by Lt.-Col William (“Bill”) Tanner in The Book Of Bond Or Every Man His Own 007, Viking, New York, 1960. Yet a study of the novels shows that Fleming has a clear preference for women with black or dark-brown hair. It is curious, then, that this blonde myth should persist.


4. Eco essentially confines himself to the Bond novels, as does this article, though he does exclude the “untypical” The Spy Who Loved Me.


6. Fleming gives nine specific ages; the average is 24½. There are 30 clues to the ages of five others. Taken together, the average is 25.


9. For an example of the confusion one can get into by falsely equating the views of the omniscient narrating voice with those of Bond see Bennett and Wooliacott’s theorising about Bond’s erotic desires in Dr No (p126).

10. As for Domino, Fleming is taken to task by Bennett and Wooliacott for “an odd piece of carelessness” in the way he introduces Domino to Bond. They write: Bond reflects: This was his first sight at the town and already he had a case for the girl [Thunderball, p116]. At this point, Bond has no reason to suppose that Domino is in any way connected with the chief mission, but he fails to extend his reason to suppose. Prior to his first glimpsing Domino, he has been told that she is in the service of the chief mission’s chief suspect, Largo (p128). Fleming has not been “careless”, merely inventive in his use of flashforwards to play with linear narrative.

11. Not only are her riding outfit and pant suit stereotypically given to lesbians in 1960s films, there is her all-girl crew, whom she eyes quite unsympathetically. Most explicit is the dialogue, ranging from her “I’m strictly the outdoor type” to Bond’s “You’re a girl of many parts, Pussy.” This is said while Pussy is not dressed in a single piece and points straight out at Bond. Not exactly subtle, but amusing in context.


Corrigenda
In the first part of this article, Fleming’s home “Oldeneye” was mistakenly located by this author on the island of Oracabessa, with its additional vowel, is the fishing port near the Fleming house.

The bottom caption on p22 incorrectly refers to a 1985 Pan edition of Casino Royale. In fact, the captioned image is a detail from the 1955 Pan edition. The error was made by the editor.
The first Bushfire Moon miracle occurred some 30 years ago when a little American boy called Jeff Peck — the creator and writer of the film — penned a letter (Jeff does not just write, he 'pens letters') to Walt Disney telling him that his films were terrific and that some day he would like to work for him. In reply he received an encouraging letter and an autographed photo as well.

The next miracle occurred when Jeff Peck, now adult, living happily in Australia and still treasuring that photo, gave us our own Australian Christmas schmaltz in the form of Bushfire Moon, and sold it to — go on, guess — Walt Disney!

The film, set in 1891 and packed with still more miracles, follows well-worn tracks, tracks worn by Dickens, Barbara Cartland and an eternity of family films from our cultural hero, Walt Disney.

Patrick O'Day is married to Elizabeth, who is American, and they have two children; Sarah, who is 17 and "blossoming" and the eight-year-old Ned. They all live together in drought-induced poverty on land which has been compulsorily acquired from their neighbour, the rich Mr Watson.

Scrooge — I mean Mr Watson — having lost his wife some years before, is vile to all and particularly vile to Patrick, Elizabeth, Sarah and Ned which seems a pity as he has a presentable 18-year-old son called Angus and, as we know, Sarah is blossoming. Moreover he (Mr Watson) has a lake and they (the O'Days) have a drought and no money for the Christmas presents Ned wants so badly. Mr Watson is British to the boot straps (or wants to be), rich, powerful and a bully, and the O'Days are virtuous, down on their luck, downtrodden and presumably of Irish extraction.

Onto the scene comes Max Bell, a swaggy and a lovable rogue who proceeds, with the aid of a little blackmail, to right the wrong, bring out the best in everyone and effect a happy ending. (An ending which despite Jeff Peck's stated rejection of 'simplistic solutions in films' could be predicted within the first 10 minutes.)

George Miller directs Bushfire Moon with the professionalism that one would expect from one who has The Man From Snowy River to his name, and manages (most of the time) to make a plot which lurches between dramatic tension, farce, corn and satire, all heavily encrusted with good old tooth rot, into a rolling story. The Australian backdrops really are breathtaking, the pace is fast with no time wasted in setting the scene and a smashing bit of slapstick demonstrates that George Miller can handle comedy with ease. (The suckling pig will probably turn a generation of Australians into vegetarians.)

The period clothing is a bit odd. The virtuous poor seemed over-clean and 'over-dressed while the wicked rich went right over the top in the vulgarity stakes. Doubtless it was all supposed to add up to something but it reminded me painfully of amateur dramatics.

John Waters plays Patrick O'Day, giving the part every gram of his strong silent masculinity. Dee Wallace Stone does her apple pie-motherhood thing for the American market (she previously appeared in E.T.). Nadine Garner makes Sarah blossom with charm. In fact all are more than equal to the demands placed upon them, but two are outstanding.

Charles (Bud) Tingwell as Max Bell is, as he often is, exceptional. He looks at home in his stagey getup from his big black boots to his Chips Rafferty hat and the challenge of being Father Christmas, an Australian Swaggy and a Lovable Rogue rolled into one is met with a relaxed and amused charm. As always, he can upset everyone, including an enchanting dingo pup whose performance, as the dingo pup, is to be commended.

Andrew Ferguson as the eight-year-old Ned is also remarkable. It is not an easy part; Ned does not resemble any eight-year-old Australian male of my acquaintance — for one thing he is positively chatty whereas most of the eight-year-olds I know communicate in the 16 grunts of the chimpanzee. But for all his verbal sophistication Ned is a remarkably naive child compared to the sophisticated TV child of today. With an infectious zest Andrew makes it all look easy.

I have no doubt that this film will add to the kitsch of an Australian Christmas for years to come. It is well made, well acted and highly commercial. But whether it displays old-fashioned virtues and prejudices which have stood the test of time or whether its morals and assumptions are as out-of-date as its wardrobe I leave to the next generation of grandmothers.

It is not a film made specifically for children but a film in which children play their parts — perhaps for the amusement of adults. Any eight-year-old can safely take his or her great-grandmother to see it... so long as she is not craving the stimulation of ideas
appropriate to the 1990s. If you have the right sort of great-grandmother for this film take a large box of tissues, and see that she cleans her teeth afterwards.

Sarah Guest


COMRADES

In 1834 six Dorset labourers were arrested, not for forming a Friendly Society, which was their right, but for the swearing of illegal oaths. As a result of the trumped-up charge (glancing reference is made to the King’s brother and the Orange Lodge, with its secret oaths and meetings), the Tolpuddle six were transported to Australia. They were pardoned two years later as a result of agitation from the London-Dorset Committee and others.

Their story is rightly seen as a landmark in the trade union movement and Bill Douglas’s film pays austere tribute to the solidarity of the working class then, and by implication, urges such rigorous coherence now. Against a background of changing seasons, as lowering skies and sodden roads give way to the lushness of spring and the gold of summer harvests, Douglas invokes a life of grinding work and of desperate poverty as well as, say, the sudden gaiety of a sailor dancing a hornpipe at the village fair. That is, he is careful and honest enough not to depict these lives as joyless: they are too rooted in home and family and community for that. Rarely, though, has the sheer arduousness of physical labour been so convincingly depicted on the screen: the film takes work and working lives with absolute seriousness, in ways that recall both Hardy and Brueghel.

The first half of this immensely long film slowly and painstakingly builds up the background to the arrest of the six labourers. There is an intense realism, visual and almost tactile, it seems, in these scenes of haymaking, of carpentry, of sparse family meals, but ultimately it is not realism which Douglas is primarily after. What in fact he seems to have sought is a genuinely epic quality, achieving a Brechtian interplay between realistic enactment and distancing observation. One is moved by the individual lives dramatised before one, but is constantly made aware of the element of illusion so potently at work in their presentation.

The chief means by which this is effected is the use of an itinerant lantern-ist who arrives in Tolpuddle after seeing the brutal suppression of an outburst of machine-smashing by labourers whose wages have been cut to below subsistence level. The lantern-ist, played by a Douglas regular, Alex Norton, turns up in various guises, most often in connection with the film’s insistence on the apparatus of illusion. He is, for instance, a silhouette artist in colonial New South Wales, an outback photographer whose heliotypes are inadvertently destroyed, as well as engaging with other pre-cinema optical devices and presenting various theatrical performances. As well, there are carefully composed and magically lit shots of silhouetted figures, a fluted glass door which reveals three different images, depending on the angle of viewing, and an animated map which records the journey from England to Botany Bay.

Douglas himself has claimed: "...what I wanted to suggest was the magic..."
of things, rather than just depict them accurately”. The lanternist is sometimes part of the action (e.g. as a policeman), sometimes a commentator on it. In the latter role, one of his functions is to draw attention to the fictional, magical elements of the narrative process. Douglas achieves a real involvement with the lives presented but never lets the viewer forget that that is what he is: a viewer manipulated by processes of illusion-making.

The second part of the film is set in Australia and pursues the fortunes of the transported Tolpuddle Martyrs. It is still absorbing but it is so in more conventional ways. One works on a chain-gang making an outback road; one evades seduction by the rich widow who has concealed news of his pardon; one is bought by a fop; and so on. It is more obviously a many-stranded narrative, individual protagonists replacing the earlier sense of a class at bay, and with some predictable anti-colonialist swipes. It is also more obviously spectacular than the British section: this is partly perhaps the result of a shift to a bolder landscape, but is more subtly to do with the loss of the delicate balance between realism and the display of illusionism which has characterised the film’s first half. The acting has become bolder, with somewhat florid cameos from James Fox (as the Governor), Vanessa Redgrave (the widow), and Arthur Dignam (the fop), and though these have their pleasures they belong to a different tradition from the more nearly minimalist acting styles of the Dorset section.

However, all this, in the context of the film as a whole, is not much more than a quibble. Further, the film ends back in London with a celebration of the return of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, one of whom, George Loveless, in close-up on a darkening stage, calls on “every working man in England to shake off that supineness . . . that leaves them in the position of slaves”. And he thanks the lanternist who has “told the story today — it was almost as if he had been present throughout himself”. The film ends unequivocally on the didactic note it has so frequently struck before. Not just in dialogue, but in the sudden juxtapositions created by editing (between, for example, the establishment clergyman urging “us to be satisfied with our lot” and the chapel congregation singing “We’ll win the day”), in the willingness to hold shots so long that we begin to notice the length (the images of the chained men whom the film insists we remember), in the use of the lanternist’s devices. The lanternist may trade in illusion but, in the end, it is a version of reality he brings to his audiences.

Even the casting seems part of the didactic intention. The heroes and their families are played by largely unknown actors: they might be anyone and their importance is to represent a class rather than individuals. They are supported by ‘stars’, most of whom appear briefly as oppressors of this class, the exceptions being Michael Hordern as Pitt, a leading member of the Committee that secures pardon for the men, and John Hargreaves as the convict who fails to escape, having been warned that he can’t achieve anything alone.

Douglas has made a major film in Comrades and, if the British cinema is indeed to enjoy a renaissance of some kind, one would like to think such a film might be in its forefront. However, it is uncompromising in ways which will probably not ease its commercial path: its first two-thirds resists the conventional lines of narrative; it is prepared to risk slowness and didacticism, and it keeps exposing its own apparatus. For those prepared to stay with it, it is also one of the richest film experiences of the year.

Brian McFarlane

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Number 58 (July 1986): Woody Allen, Reinhard Hauff, Orson Welles, the Cinematheque Francaise, The Fringe Dwellers, Great Expectations: The Untold Story and The Last Frontier.

Number 59 (September 1986): Robert Altman, Paul Cox, Lino Brocka, Agnes Varda, the AFI Awards, The Movers.

Number 60 (November 1986): Australian Television, Franco Zeffirelli, Otello, Nadia Tass, Bill Bennett, Dutch Cinema, Movies By Microchip.

Number 61 (January 1987): Dogs In Space, Alex Cox, Roman Polanski, Howling III, Philippe Mora, Martin Armiger, film in South Australia.


Number 64 (July 1987): Nostalgia, Dennis Hopper, Mel Gibson, Vladimir Osherov, Insatiable, Brian Trenchard-Smith, Chartbusters.

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Jean De Florette

In 1986, Claude Berri’s diptych, Jean De Florette and Manon Des Sources, was the cinema sensation of the year in France. This adaptation of Marcel Pagnol’s novel L’eau des Collines was a $17 million project, which took 36 weeks of filming, a crew of 500 extras, 15,000 ft of vegetation, 12,000 carnations, 2000 rabbits and 12 ancient olive trees—not the usual requirements of French cinema. The two films were shot simultaneously.

Both Jean De Florette and Manon Des Sources are, for French audiences, unmistakably French. Marcel Pagnol is still widely read, and considered the best advocate of his native Provence, but the story goes beyond cultural boundaries. It deals with the essential ingredients of tragedy in the classical sense.

The moving demise of the idealist in the face of greed and cunning against a background of hostility, both from the village and the elements, could be relegated to the category of family feud, if it weren’t for the interaction of forces which are bigger than the human character. The central theme of Jean De Florette is the human condition itself, struggling with titanic hostile forces. It concerns the battle between good and evil, and the human dimension is but one factor in this Manichean vision. The naive, good, articulate Jean Cadoret (Gerard Depardieu) taunts the gods with his quixotic quest to live off the land, and his pantheistic adoration of nature. He is a city man—he does not belong, because he does not understand. His knowledge is scientific and rational, but he does not know the land or the elements. Jean also carries a hereditary burden. His mother, now dead, left the village under a cloud.

The tragic trap is set before he arrives, with the death of his relative Pique-Bouffigue, which the audience witnesses as a murder, or at least as manslaughter, perpetrated by Papet (Yves Montand) in the presence of Ugolin (Daniel Auteuil), because they both want his land.

Jean, by claiming his inheritance, represents not only the innocent in the wilderness but a genuine obstacle to Papet and Ugolin, and he unknowingly brings back from the past a feud between families and villages of which he seems to know nothing, but which ensures his ostracism.

The mechanism of the tragedy is set. It needs only a little prod to get the juggernaut in motion, and Jean is only too willing to provide it with his innocence, enthusiasm, naive ambition, and especially with his trust in Ugolin. Once in motion, there is no turning back, and we watch the tragedy unfold to its inexorable outcome. Even the respite provided by the temporary success of the new settler does not allow us to hope, because of Papet’s comments running like a leitmôtiv through the film.

Like vultures, Papet and Ugolin spy on their prey, and watch and cheer as one misfortune after another befall the unwary Jean. The whole village is watching also; some have suspicions about Papet, but they express this among themselves. The outsider has no place among them.

There is an order of things, of people, a network of belonging to a group, to a land. The relationships are curt, fiery, violent sometimes, but everyone stands for something. The land is harsh, but it is in the order of things. Knowledge of the land means survival. Defiance means death.

Jean, with his utopian vision, defies the order, where the elements, people and the land, have a specific place and relationships. In time, he must be crushed.

We witness every stage of his destruction, through a dramatic compression of time, in the exhausting and repetitive tasks of fetching water—hoping against hope, watching for a sign from the heavens, in which he has invested so much trust, and resorting to all measures of human ingenuity to avoid the inevitable disaster.

As the pace of human efforts and the struggles against the breaking spirit become more intense, we see Jean drinking more heavily, digging furiously the parched earth, and using dynamite to defeat the rock and release the life-giving water.

The angels of death, Papet and Ugolin, are watching, commenting lucidly on the destruction of Jean, nowhere more acutely than in the scene where Jean is digging a well, and looks up to Ugolin standing on the edge, talking and discouraging him. Gerard Depardieu’s rendering of the character’s vulnerability is nowhere more apparent than his moving smile and imploring eyes, when he still attempts to convey hope in this final enterprise against the elements.

The final climax is reached when the thunderstorm brings rain only to the other side of the mountain, and Jean, overwhelmed by anger and failure, screams out to the heavens: ‘I am a hunchback, do you think it is easy for me? There is no-one up there! No-one!’ It is a defiance to God by the broken hero, reminiscent of other defiances to other gods by the tragic heroes of antiquity.

The denouement is expected, as in a Greek tragedy. Jean has been defeated and has paid with his life, for disturbing an order, which he did not know was there.

We feel that the story does not end here. There is a witness to the animalistic rejoicing of the two accomplices.
< Manon, Jean's daughter, who by instinct has always distrusted Ugolin, now understands why her father died. As mother and daughter leave the ill-fated under the blackness of Ugolin's hut and the dazzling whiteness of dawn in the opening scene, and the subtle transformations in colour as the day rises. Light is not used only to set a scene, or create a mood, but as an integrated part of the cinematic language. Light changes and gradations are used to compress time, as in the blue darkness of the opening scene, and the sandstorm outside when his door is burst open, or the diffused light filtering through the foliage, as Papet and Ugolin spy on Jean, or the frightening yellow light during the sandstorm. He has managed to capture the full colour and density range of Provençal light.

Light is used to build up climaxes, such as the sandstorm, the thunderstorm, or the implacable brightness of Ugolin's spying game. We, the spectators, see what Papet and Ugolin see, yet we identify with Jean. Claude Berri achieves a remarkable balance between the characters in the story. Jean is supposedly the protagonist, after all the story is named after him, but he shares the focus with Papet and Ugolin. Right through the film there will be point of view shots, as if the spectator were part of Papet and Ugolin's spying game. We, the spectators, see what Papet and Ugolin see, yet we identify with Jean.

When Berri was asked in a recent interview why such a classical film had made such an impact on today's audience, he replied: "It's due to the power of the story. It is a fresco of life. After all it is not just any story, all the ingredients of tragedy are there: greed, land, water. This genre preceded the Western in firing the imagination of the people. It is timeless, because tragedy is part of humanity."

Daniele Kemp


Suddenly, from above, The Lost Boys are upon us. These boys are vampires and they have found a temporary abode within a Multiplex near you. Of course this observation may be of little consequence to certain sections of the moviegoing public, considering that The Lost Boys could be seen as just another horror film, but this feature is a relatively big budget vampire film and therefore occupies a rarely-filled space within the cinema.

So far this decade, the horror film has utilised the image of the vampire on only a few notable occasions. On budget alone The Lost Boys could be compared to the 1983 effort from Cannon and Tobe Hooper that is now known as Lifeforce but was once entitled Space Vampires. Although the former title of Space Vampires may demonstrate a connection to science fiction that The Lost Boys doesn't possess, it is interesting to note that both films were projects that went through different periods of major re-conceptualisation. Apart from The Hunger, Fright Night or Vamp (with which The Lost Boys shares the work of special effects creator Greg Cannom) the cinematic image of the vampire has remained dormant.

This may lead one to ask whether The Lost Boys could possibly alter any commonly-held precepts of the cinematic vampire. On the short term and perhaps most superficial basis the answer is unequivocally yes. What we have here now is a vampire film that is designed to look and sound good in every aspect. From the young handsome faces with designer stubble, to their unkempt but ordered hair and clothing, these mainly adolescent vampires are made up to ooz seventeenthanden. Not only do these particular children of the night look stunning but their musical soundtrack is assembled with careful attention to modern pop charts that probably don't fully appreciate the ironic relevance of such lists to the vampire film. Undead songs for films of the undead. Just note the number of cover versions of older songs on recent charts: 'People Are Strange', provided exclusively for The Lost Boys by Doors fanatic Ian McCulloch and his band Echo and the Bunnymen, and 'Good Times', for example.

These few elements of popular culture are neatly placed within a narrative that never diverts from convention. Basically, the story of The Lost Boys involves a family of three, a recently divorced mother and her two teenage boys (separated by a few years) who travel to the seaside resort of Santa Carla to live with the boys' grandfather (her father). While settling in, the older boy, Michael (Jason Patric), meets the vampires of the title through a girl called Star (Jami Gertz). Michael spots Star at a rock concert on the boardwalk and she rapidly becomes his love interest and main connection to the lost boys. At the same time Michael becomes a potential recruit for the vampire gang and after dining with the boys on Chinese food and human blood he begins to develop all the traditional symptoms of vampirism. This occurs in front of the younger brother Sam (Corey Haim) who spots Michael's reflection fading in a mirror. This motivates Sam into the traditional Van Helsing role — that of the fearless vampire killer — with assistance from resident vampire experts Edgar and Alan Frog (Corey Feldman and Jamison Newlander). At this point the film enters the 'destroy all vampires' mode that speeds towards the inevitably thrilling but predictable, effects-laden conclusion.

If taken solely as a horror film The Lost Boys may be disappointing to some viewers, even though it can produce a few good scares. It considered alongside such recent examples of the horror film as Evil Dead II and Hellraiser, The Lost Boys becomes a model of quiet
THE YEAR MY VOICE BROKE

In many ways, The Year My Voice Broke is as unfashionable a film as one might expect to see emerging from the Australian film industry. From a modernist perspective, it is one of the few films to tackle issues of identity and the search for the self in a way that is not immediately obvious to the viewer. The film follows the story of Danny, a young man who is trying to find his place in the world, and who is about to embark on a journey of self-discovery.

The film is set in a small Australian town, and follows the story of Danny as he tries to make sense of his life and his place in the world. The film is a mix of drama, comedy, and romance, and is directed by John Duigan, who is known for his work on films such as The Year My Voice Broke and The Year My Voice Broke.

The film is not without its flaws, however. The dialogue is often stilted and the acting is sometimes wooden. Nevertheless, the film is a unique and thought-provoking work, and is a testament to the talent of its director and cast.

Michael Helms


Duffield. Vampire prosthetics and effects: Greg Cannom. Lost Boys is not a splatter film, or for that matter even a slime film. Its most graphically disturbing scene — the destruction of a vampire in a bath full of holy water, stolen from a church by the Frog brothers while a baptism was in progress — takes precious little screen time and is more memorable for the one-liner spoken by one of the Frog brothers, who claims to have just killed a member of Twisted Sister.

The Lost Boys consistently uses humour to offset its horrific aspects and the one-liners rest securely in the hands of the younger cast members. On this level Sam and the Frog brothers refocus the aspects of horror in the film to the point where you wonder if this film could be described as a John Hughes film with fangs. Perhaps it is no surprise then that St Elmo's Fire is a previous work of the director of The Lost Boys, Joel Schumacher.

If you can stand a relatively lame horror film that is more interesting as a comedy then seek out The Lost Boys. Who knows, it may even become known as the first horror film of the eighties for the whole family. That is, if House II hasn't taken the title.

CINEMA PAPERS JANUARY — 43
● THE TIME GUARDIAN

The Time Guardian, Australia’s first attempt at high technology science fiction, is one of those unfortunate formula films betrayed by a serious mis-understanding of the genre. It follows the typical ‘adventure film’ graph — a battle in the first five minutes, a handsome hero who meets a beautiful girl, a fight for survival against time. But in meeting these requirements it neglects more fundamental concerns such as a plausible plot, character-defining dialogue, convincing acting and coherent direction.

The problems start with John Baxter and Brian Hannant’s script. The opening voiceover/titles tells us that in the aftermath of global nuclear destruction in the 24th Century, one city survives by learning to travel through time. They are pursued by the villainous Jen-Diki, a race of cyborgs (part human/part machine) who, having no home of their own, are bent upon ransacking the City.

In their penultimate battle, Ballard (Tom Burlinson), the good guy/stoical macho hero, is forced to blow up one of the City’s legs (it is propped up on four legs). It cannot land in the next era, so Ballard and Petra (Carrie Fisher) are sent as the advance guard to build a mound of rocks for the City to land on. They are beamed into a pond near an outback town called Midas where they are immediately befriended by Aboriginal men doing a corroboree, then attacked by the Jen-Diki, who have followed them. Somehow they destroy the Jen-Diki time travel device, which causes the Jen-Diki to give up fighting and sit in a nearby cave.

Petra has been wounded in the battle but Ballard finds female companionship with beautiful geologist, Annie Lassiter (Nikki Coghill). Petra befriends Annie and offers her a mysterious armband whose only function in the plot is to arouse the slumbering Jen-Diki, who then pillage Midas. Ballard and Annie escape to where the City has landed. Despite the lowering of their time travel device, Jen-Diki appear from every nook and cranny, besiegising the City in the final showdown. However there is a way to save the day, and Ballard is the only hope.

Science fiction, like any other form of narrative cinema, must establish an internal consistency in its logic to keep the audience satisfied. A problem with The Time Guardian is that its plot devices lack subtlety or coherent integration into the dramatic structure. One feels that the film was written with a stopwatch in one hand and the adventure film manual in the other. Sixty-three minutes into the film, time for some gratuitous sex! Annie impetuously takes off her clothes and jumps into a pond.

The film also has an unfortunate tendency to substitute confusion for intrigue. This is partly due to Brian Hannant’s direction. Not enough attention is given to important plot points and too much time is wasted on red herrings. The audience suffers from spatial dislocation because there are an inadequate number of wide or establishing shots. At one moment the enemy are a few feet away, the next moment they appear to be two miles away. The lack-lustre action sequences particularly suffer from this and are cut so awkwardly that the Jen-Diki often appear to be shooting themselves.

The actors would have been better off if they had not taken their dialogue so seriously. Tom Burlinson, determined to break out of the ‘cute’ mould, snarls at everyone indiscriminately but has problems finding a further dimension. Nikki Coghill is competent, says her lines with a smile and has the sincerity and conviction of a Vogue cover. Dean Stockwell, as Boss, the City’s leader, never recovered from the shock of seeing himself in his sky-blue romper suit and acts like a man in a coma, and Carrie Fisher uses her role as if it were a warm-up for her own sit-com.

George Liddle’s production design ranges from imaginative to extremely tacky. While individual sci-fi props are witty and well executed, (especially the make-up on the Jen-Diki) the overall ‘look’ of the film is patchy and far less convincing than one would expect from an $8 million budget. In particular, a lack of attention to details is most irritating. An example of this is the finishing on the town, Midas. None of the surfaces have been convincingly aged, the costumes are creaseless and look like they were bought the day before, even the boot soles are brand new. All of these details erode the authenticity of the set.

The only areas which come away unscathed are technical ones such as the cinematography, the special effects, make-up, and sound. It is a shame that these underestimated departments will probably not get the attention they deserve.

Tony Ayres


THE TIME GUARDIAN: Tom Burlinson

Fot. 44 — JANUARY CINEMA PAPERS
Joe Orton was on the crest of a wave — his second play *Loot* had only recently won the 1967 *Evening Standard* and *Plays And Players* Best Play of the Year — when his lover of 15 years, Kenneth Halliwell, bludgeoned him to death with a hammer. An exotic gay love story gone wrong; and one of the more profound losses modern British theatre has had to sustain.

It's a substantial tribute to those who have made the film of Orton's life (or death) that they have not been afraid to be frank, without ever resorting to the sort of sleazy and opportunistic sensationalism to which Fassbinder has recently been subjected. The film is, from this point of view, a model of its kind.

It's also witty and intelligent. It ponders the ironies and contradictions of life and art, yet never labours these themes. A difficult film to make, though you'd hardly notice watching the deft treatment it has been given by director Stephen Frears and his team. A lot of the success rests with Alan Bennett's masterly screenplay, 10 years in the making.

Orton grew up in boring working-class suburbia in northern Leicester (as did Frears, coincidentally). His mother pushed him to become something, but going down to London on a scholarship to London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Art was not what she expected. He was a boy with nothing much to offer swinging London in its heyday but talent.

Normally that is not quite enough, in a place where class and connections still count for a lot. Orton's bold play was to turn what others saw as his shortcomings into a devastating armoury of weapons, which transformed what could well have been a passing wit into the most powerful satirist of the age.

It was at RADA that Orton met Halliwell, also a student, but 15 years his senior. To a naive young lad, Halliwell had a lot to offer, besides the small bedsit they shared for the duration of their relationship. Both nobodies with fertile imaginations, they set to co-writing novels, defacing library books, and creating a mural from images cut out of these books which covered a whole wall in their tiny room. They went to jail for stealing and defacing the books, caught in a manner befitting one of Orton's best scenes. Such moments are handled boldly in the film; Frears lifting the style a little higher than the rest of the film — bringing to life themes another filmmaker might have been happy merely to describe.

Their's was for a long time a totally enclosed world, where Halliwell traded education and art for human contact. Trouble started when Joe's writing began to attract attention. Or Ken and Joe's, as Halliwell would have had it — but that's not how many others saw it. Peggy Ramsay, a leading agent, spotted the talent; and from that moment Halliwell's life was reduced to shadows. It was this status, and the daily humiliations which went with it, which probably drove Halliwell to the brink and beyond.

In an interesting writerly stroke, Bennett reinforces this line of the story in a subplot. Biographer John Lahr, played by Wallace Shawn (with some wit) has a wife who helps out but is never recognised either.

In other ways, Bennett works boldly to reduce the swirling crowded world of sixties London to a few key, cinematic manageable people.

In an equally inspired stroke, Frears casts Gary Oldman as Joe — Oldman having been so successful in that other recent 'real-life' role, Sid, in *Sid and Nancy*. It's another superb portrayal, cocky, relaxed, always on the edge of improvisation — what a great way to capture Orton's subversive way of life.

One can see why Alfred Molina might have been cast in the Halliwell role. Not just imposing, he brings with him a sort of European formality. Halliwell was formal, different; but for some reason, and all due respects to the actor, the strategy doesn't quite come off. Something must have bound these two men together — yet, on the screen, one never manages to find out exactly what. Perhaps they simply, in the avoidance of sleazdom, just don't touch enough.

While the film assiduously avoids moralising, Molina's Europeanness seems to give rise to a situation where, without much else to go by, one sometimes forgets this is sixties London. One would hardly suspect Frears would overlook such an issue carelessly, given the trouble he went to and success he had in showing a different London in his previous film, the delightful, powerful, *My Beautiful Laundrette*.

This time again, there's the wit and whimsy, the eye for detail, the precise intelligence, and what looks very much like a genuine care for the subject. There's also, within the current tradi­tion of British realism, more eccentric, inventive touches to the filmmaking itself. Especially the way one suddenly finds oneself, just occasionally, subtly moved into what looks and feels very much like a scene in one of Orton's own plays. Art eats up, not just life, but other art too.

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**James Waite**

• INNERSPACE

The Pick-Up Artist

There are a few good reasons for combining Joe Dante's Innerspace and James Toback's The Pick-Up Artist in the one review. Firstly, both are less successful works by directors who are always fascinating and have at least once in their careers thus far produced brilliant, unforgettable films (Gremlins and Fingers respectively). Both projects can be imagined as having once been wilder, tougher, less compromised projects — subject to the same film industry forces that elicit The Color Of Money from Scorsese or The Untouchables from De Palma. And looming behind each of these new films, at the dark heart of compromise, is a powerful, charismatic producer figure — Steven Spielberg for Dante and Warren Beatty for Toback. (Beatty's name does not appear in the credits of The Pick-Up Artist but his decisive role in the production is colourfully outlined in David Thomson's Beatty biography to be reviewed in the next issue.)

Innerspace causes one to seriously wonder whether there is anything productive in the Spielberg-Dante partnership beyond the one-off wonder of Gremlins — a film which is, after all, as much anti-Spielberg as it is Dante obviously craves to make: a human body: gastric acid is employed as a labatory rabbit named Bugs; a cameo appearances by the woman he meets (Molly Ringwald), her father (Dennis Hopper) drinks. Something of the characteristic Toback male-centered, Oedipal intrigue lingers in the plot — Harvey Keitel as the criminal 'father' who must be transgressed in order that the hero win the woman-object from his clutches — but here, for the first time, the woman is not an object, she has something to say and reciprocate. (A distinct advance on Exposed where Toback merely foisted his neurotic formation upon a female hero.)

I haven't mentioned that The Pick-Up Artist is a comedy; at least, I think it's meant to be so. Toback's humour has previously always been of the particularly grim, dark kind; here he joins on the trend of lightweight films trying to take teen stars (like Ringwald) and teen movie styles into a new genre of 'young adulthood'. Toback appears ill at ease with both a hero not his own age, and the mechanics of light comedy. This is where some of the uncertainties and
confusing overlays appear: why must this hero be an obligatory Toback hero with a love for doo-wop music? Many of the ongoing comic premises — such as Downey and his best friend Danny Aiello never stopping to imagine that Hopper is Ringwald's father — are delivered heavily and somewhat implausibly (Toback is neither a Rob Reiner nor a John Hughes with this material). When Toback tries to flip his typical signature scenes — such as when the winning hero tries to bluff his way out of a tight spot, and falls miserably (see Fingers) — into positive, happy, triumphal moments, it only half works.

Given these problems (and what I feel is the miscasting of Downey, who never quite finds the right tone for the role), there is a lot of good news in The Pick-Up Artist. Toback's filmic style has previously lurched from excessive experiment (the relentless long takes in Exposed) to flat narration (Love And Money). He's discovered some fine new angles here; in particular a stunningly expressive use of locations (subways, car parks, hotels, Coney Island). When he can bear to tear the same old doo-wop off the soundtrack, Toback invents some startling image-sound rhythms and relations in 1940s (amongst other things) rap and funk music. Themente wise, Toback explores with full strength what has always been his most unique interest — the relations of main characters to their taciturn, highly individualised parents — and uncovers an affinity with the most complex ideas of the great 1940s romantic comedies. In this regard The Pick-Up Artist evokes both McCarey — the two principal characters having both to learn something and give up something, finding the midpoint between playing too much and not being able to play enough — and Cukor. What with Molly Ringwald having to move beyond a certain frigid emotional (not sexual) reserve, and the womb-like relationship with a loving (not tyrannical) parent — The Pick-Up Artist is a little like Toback's version of The Philadelphia Story. You don't believe me? Well, check it out — and pay strict attention to that grandmother.

Adrian Martin


On being interviewed for a secretarial position, Polly agrees to be used rather than employed. She teams up with Gabrielle St-Peres (Paule Baillargeon), curator of a trendy art gallery known as The Church. Mesmerised by Gabrielle's elegance, sophistication and apparent intelligence, Polly falls in love — "not kissing and all that stuff" but idola trous awe. At the gallery Polly witnesses, with gleeful fascination, pompous intellectual art talk. She's amused at mistaking "acute awareness" for "a cute awareness". She also observes, through a security camera, the lesbian relationship between the Curator and a young artist named Mary Joseph (Ann-Marie McDonald).

In order to escape the relative tedium of her own life, Polly slips into and out of a world of "fantasy". In this world, which is delineated by granular black and white footage, Polly flies, walks on water, hears the mermaids singing and even astounds Gabrielle with her esoteric utterances. Although eloquent in discussing art, Gabrielle frets that she is unable to create it. But Polly, when shown some of her work, is bowled over, and in an attempt to rid Gabrielle of her self-doubt, grabs one of the paintings and shows it to a critic. The Curator's work attracts immediate acclaim. Inspired by the sequence of events, Polly — a closet photographer — sends Gabrielle some of her photographs under a pseudonym. The Curator dismisses them as "the trite made flesh", without potential. Polly is devastated. She burns her pictures and destroys the camera. Later, she discovers that the woman she has worshipped is a fraud, and her interest in photography returns.

On a thematic level the film brings to the surface, but often fails to pursue, a diverse range of engaging issues. Rozema draws analogies between Christianity (religion), High Art and the propensity for idolatry. Art is revered. It's housed in "The Church". Gabrielle St-Peres (Archangel Gabriel/St Peter) is the messenger/interpreter of the word to humankind (Mary Joseph/ the masses (Polly).

Implicit in these situations is an examination of the mechanics of belief, the status of knowledge. For instance, there are three separable strata of belief that alternate throughout the film — video address, the black and white sequences, central narrative — but none of these is ever allowed to assume a higher or more secure status of veracity. When Gabrielle is exposed, we're reminded that what looks certain is just the product of what we're prepared to believe. "We don't see things as they are, but as we are," in Rozema's words.

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I'VE HEARD THE MERMAIDS SINGING: Paule Baillargeon

I'VE HEARD THE MERMAIDS SINGING

In her feature debut, I've Heard The Mermaids Singing, writer and director Patricia Rozema introduces us to Polly (Sheila McCarthy). She's quirky, a kind of urban innocent whose clownish, inquisitive face and charming naivety remind us of Giulietta Masina.

In a video-taped 'documentary style' confession, Polly addresses the audience. She introduces the characters and narrates the events.

Polly describes herself as a "gal on the go", but envisages a journey without a destination. She has neither ambition nor direction and, despite working as a secretary, is not the least bit perturbed by being described as "organisationally impaired". She's your bumbling happy go-lucky type who prefers canned peas to sushi and who when asked (in a Japanese restaurant) what she wants from life, quips: "A fork."

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CINEMA PAPERS JANUARY — 47
The implications for the activity of criticism itself are clear.

In numerous ways the film is emphatically gynocentric. As critic, artist and photographer, the three women are vehicles of the film’s “look”.

By positioning Polly as the narrator relating her experience, the audience adopts her point of view. The filmic assumption that women are the passive recipients of the male gaze, that the spectator is, or should identify with a male, is undermined.

The film furthermore overturns and inverts patriarchal domination innate in the traditions of Religion and Art. Gabrielle St-Peres replaces St Peter. Mary Joseph suggests an exclusively female identity in the representation of (holy) family. Lesbian sexuality replaces the dominance of male sexuality inherent in the idea and representation of the love of God/Christ etc for “Mankind”.

The film makes other references to the representation of women in cinema. Rozema refuses to classify women as one-dimensional “types”, to locate them in Nature rather than Culture. Whilst rejecting the patriarchal assumption of heterosexuality, she dares to clothe lesbianism in stylish European fashion. But in this depiction, Rozema is careful not to replicate conventional titillating pleasure systems. She declines to present women as titillated, sexualised and on display, to illustrate lesbianism and thereby reduce it to a spectacle.

The style of the film is substantially whimsical, its tone occasionally offbeat. The performances are skilful and the direction, particularly astute in the way that it delivers complex issues in an accessible fashion. The film sometimes falls into unsubtle romanticism, and some may find the namings and metaphors contrived. It’s a film, however, that’s likely to both engage and charm.

Sandra Skaufug


- ISHTAR: Hoffman and Beatty in a sequins sequence

Crosby, Lewis and Martin. Why this neglect has taken place should not be a cause for lament but an opportunity to speculate why this subgenre is ‘on the bench’ (with the proviso, of course, that something can be said about its comic underpinnings).

But such has been the state of affairs that the buddy comedy is not only ‘on the bench’ but appears as an aberration within more ‘legitimate’ forms of film comedy. The comic genius of Lewis, for instance, is generally considered to emerge post-1956, and therefore post-Martin (with the exception of some Tashlin-directed comedies) where Lewis can be more closely appreciated as the by-product of the silent comic. Hope, if considered at all, could not rely on the Road pictures for comic acclaim, quite the reverse; while Abbott and Costello barely rate a mention. There seems to have been an undisclosed law operating which displaces the buddy comedy from the ‘serious’ of film comedy to the ‘trivial’ of entertainment, with the fact of their serialisation (The Road To . . . Abbott And Costello Meet . . .) adding to this conception.

If, only for expediency’s sake, we cite Kaminsky’s two dominant modes of American film comedy — “the individual out of keeping with society” and “the man versus woman mode” — then we can see that while the buddy comedy shares in both, it belongs to neither. And for the comic teams mentioned here, it is never all that clear how the buddy comedy — the extension of the radio or nightclub routine — is integrated into film. It is likely that the films’ settings would have been elaborations of the nightclub act, their (threadbare) narratives nothing more than supports for a string of one-liners. And it’s therefore likely that the buddy comedy would have been regarded as separate, marginal and/or provisional, bearing little relation to the development of film comedy in Kaminsky’s sense.

But the buddy comedy is a hybrid form, like most other comic forms. What tends to go unnoticed is that the nightclub routine was easily assimilated into film through peculiar self-reflexive mechanisms, even direct address. The playfulness of the nightclub act allowed for calculated playfulness with the medium. Take, for example, Bob Hope’s refusal to end The Road To Bali by pushing “The End” off the screen, and his protestations — “Call the producer”, “Call the writers” — at the sight of Bing exiting the picture, not only with Dorothy Lamour but Jane Russell as a bonus. If comic self-reflexivity has never been as direct as in this case, it cannot be absurd at least to propose that film comedy, in most of its varied guises, strives to integrate its subject matter with an understanding of the medium and what can be done with the medium, for transference is never pure and simple.

This provides a good enough point to begin to talk about Ishtar, for everything is so up front that it’s likely to be missed or misinterpreted. Centring on the two co-stars, Warren Beatty and Dustin Hoffman, and their respective characters, Lyle Rogers and Chuck Clarke, it seems inevitable Ishtar will at first offend, given the premise of two undeniable winners playing two abject losers. As Andrew Sarris puts it in the Village Voice, Hoffman and Beatty indulge in an indirect form of self-congratulation for having become big stars that makes fun of all the poor wretches in the world who haven’t. But Ishtar doesn’t ask of its audience to believe in Beatty and Hoffman as the down-and-out songwriting team of Rogers and Clarke. It’s inconceivable. Ishtar, rather, isn’t authenticating, it’s satirising, and hammering it up to the point where what shows through is the authenticity of the spectacle of winners playing losers.
From this angle then, there aren't two central characters but four. There is someone called Warren Beatty who bears little relation to Clarke. This can be more readily discerned in the conscious playing against persona, especially as regards Beatty: Rogers as awkward and sexually naive runs counter to Clarke. Like the audience members who stare with mouths agape at the unbelievability of the team's nightclub act, a "willing suspension of disbelief" is something Ishtar refuses to engage in; it's this whole shuffling spectacle of (dis)authenticating that May is definitely aware of. Hence, the relevance of the Rogers and Clarke tune which both opens and closes the film — "This is the truth can be dangerous business."

The buddy comedy tends to fall out of favour by the early sixties (although a more or less hardy sort through the seventies was the team of Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau). But, of course, the new morality of the sixties gives cause to re-sharpen the romantic comedy along new and more daring lines, leaving the buddy comedy to sever the partnership or, more precisely, shift ground — to the policer, for instance.

It is in this climate that Jerry Lewis' *The Nutty Professor* (1963) puts the buddy comedy through the wringer, giving insight into the darker 'chemistry' between buddies: friendship that also involves rivalry, mistrust and backstabbing.

It is worth mentioning at this time Elaine May's earlier film *Mikey And Nicky*, which uses a recognisable team of sorts, John Cassavetes and Peter Falk. In a sense, *Mikey And Nicky* could be described as a topos-turvy buddy comedy which shows what happens when the loser of the team finally gets the upper hand. The two central characters are small time hoods and long time friends. Cassavetes-Nicky is the winner but out of favour with the mob, and in hiding; while Falk-Mikey is the loser, the butt of Nicky's pranks, but the one who is setting Nicky up for a hit. When Mikey asks Nicky, "Do you think I'm fingerling you?", to reassure Nicky of his trust, the sad truth is not so much that he is, but that he is going to go through with it to his bitter conclusion — Mikey barricading the door as Nicky takes the hit on Mikey's door step.

But is always fingerling Lou, Bing is always fingerling Bob, and Bob is always trying to finger Bing but ends up fingerling himself, and Dean fingers Jerry but only to the point where he realises he needs Jerry more than he knew, and more than Jerry needs Dean. *Mikey And Nicky*, in this sense, could be about the straightman getting his come-upance.

*Ishtar*, then, comes to us via this same route. But if *Ishtar* does not manage to exercise the figure of the straightman, it does manage to devalue and destabilise this figure.

*Ishtar* is in this respect three or four moves away from the Hope-Crosby *Road* pictures (its closest companions), where it doesn't just invoke them, it resituates their terms. When the exotic Isabelle Adjani character (the Dorothy Lamour of *Ishtar*), with tears in her eyes, admits by the end of the film to loving both men, there's been a whole inverted process at work (and by association the loser) has gone through for her to be able to say that.

"Most guys live lives of quiet desperation. Not us," is something Clarke tells Rogers in cementing their friendship. Both are losers, but between them Clarke is definitely perceived as the straightman, and the dominant figure of the two. There are a number of instances which establish this. A running gag early on in the film is where, with each and every proposal or suggestion made to the duo, Rogers follows Clarke's lead by responding with, "Me too". Another scene has Clarke attempting to correct Rogers' pronunciation of "schmuck", which he pronounces "smuck". And, not only is Clarke the womaniser, he is also the decision-maker — it's he who assumes the responsibility of deciding whether to take the booking in Morocco over the less lucrative deal in Honduras.

But it's in the nature of this film to be somehow self-effacing. The sequence which precedes Clarke's decision is an extraordinary flashback which begins by fading out with Rogers, and concludes by fading in with Clarke. It seems Clarke is always taking the lead, and taking it away from Rogers. The flashback, however, reveals an important aspect of their friendship — a scene has Clarke on the ledge of his apartment building in a feeble suicide attempt just after his admission to Rogers that he is really a failure, even with women. Out on the ledge, Rogers physically takes Clarke's lead by responding with, "Me too". Another scene has Clarke the womaniser, he is also the decision-maker — it's he who assumes the responsibility of deciding whether to take the booking in Morocco over the less lucrative deal in Honduras.

We can divide *Ishtar* equally into its New York segment, on the one hand, and, on the other, its *Ishtar* segment; and if we can propose that the New York segment is dominated by and belongs to Clarke, then the *Ishtar* segment must certainly belong to Rogers. A central scene occurs after the pair are duped — by Adjani's revolutionary group and the CIA — into taking to the desert with a blind camel. The scene repeats the central gag: as the pair stand in the wide expanse of the desert, a CIA helicopter descends for the kill, but when the pair finally realise what's happening, Clarke, in exasperation, complains about the camel, "He'd rather just sit there and get shot!" Rogers replies, "Actually, I kind of admire that." To which Clarke adds, "Me too." That, in the film's subtle manoeuvring, it is actually Rogers who has taken the lead, is further reinforced when he happily exclaims, "This isn't living lives of quiet desperation!" as a second CIA assassination attempt is met by the pair armed and fighting back, and this time with Adjani at their side. If both are losers then they're also both winners; hence the importance and condition of Adjani's admission to loving both of them is the condition of destabilising Clarke's confidence — not bringing him down necessarily, but raising him to Rogers' level. Thus, a film that can say you're a winner even if you're a loser isn't all that bad, even if it took $40 million to say it.

It's ironic, however, that within the terms outlined, it's Rogers that buys >

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**ISHTAR: Hoffman, Beatty and the blind camel**

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**CINEMA PAPERS JANUARY — 49**
and leads a blind camel into the desert; but then again, when Clarke collapses in the desert, a swarm of vultures hovers and prances around him — and this for a man whose nickname is Hawk.

**Raffaele Caputo**


**FULL METAL JACKET**

Stanley Kubrick ends *Full Metal Jacket* with Mick Jagger singing “Paint It Black” as the final credits roll. Only then does his theme become clear: that men destroy each other when they deny the female in themselves. From the first image of the new recruits being shorn of hair and individuality as we watch the breakdown of American boys and their reconstruction into killing machines on “the Island,” the Marine Corps training gulag. At one stage the recruits march around in their underwear, a rifle in one hand and their genitals grasped in the other, chanting, “This is my rifle, this is my gun, for killing, one is for fun.” The links between sex and battle have rarely been as explicit.

Gunnery Sergeant Hartman (Lee Ermey) drills the platoon to Marine Corps songs which set up the whole sex-war dichotomy: Mamma and Papa were lying in bed Mama yelled “Tell me Papa how do you do it?” He said what she said Ho Chi Minh is a son of a bitch Got the blue balls, crabs and the seven year itch.

The connection is made visually when the film’s narrator, Joker (Matthew Modine) and fellow recruit Cowboy (Arliss Howard) are mopping out the toilet block. Joker quips, “I want to stick this up my sister. What do you take in trade?” Cowboy: “What do you got?” Cut to bullets hitting targets on the rifle range. In the second half of the film, Joker meets Cowboy in Hue, and Cowboy says, “Getting any?” Joker: “Only your sister.” Cowboy: “Well better my sister than my mother.”

The claustrophobic first hour of the film has the gangrene pallor of all total institutions — prisons, asylums, hospitals and military training camps are all physically interchangeable, lit by bare bulbs and smelling of antiseptic.

The symmetrical second half of the film follows Joker into the purgatory of the Tet offensive, in the burning city of Hue. Kubrick here forsakes the lush and psychedelic colours of the tropics for washed-out, overcast, grey skies which are the same drained colour as the bodies of the dead.

Joker, detached and sardonic, wears a peace sign and his helmet bears the words “Born to Kill.” An annoyed colonel demands an explanation, and Joker tells him that it stands for “the duality of war. You know, the Jungian thing”.

The duality which both Joker and Kurtz face is that while in running the business of war, they are fascinated by it. A war photographer in Vietnam was asked why his photos seemed so glamorous. He replied that trying to take the glamour out of war was like trying to take the glamour out of sex. The camera is attracted to action, not to philosophical arguments.

As the disturbing images of war are also an adenalin buzz, so too the poetic profanity of Gunnery Sergeant Hartman is both brutal and funny. He destroys a recruit with his invective and we laugh: “You climb obstacles like old people fuck... I’m going to rip your balls off so you can’t contaminate the rest of the human race.”

We do not see a woman in the first half of the film. The only references to women are obscene. In the second half we meet three: two are prostitutes and one is the sniper who kills Eightball, Doc and Cowboy. We only discover the sex of this angel of death in the penultimate scene of the film, when she is wounded. Joker shoots her to put her out of her misery. She has her face twisted in orgasmic rictus as he pulls the trigger. Cut to Marines marching past the blazing backdrop of Hue, singing not Hartman’s Marine Corps ditties but the Mickey Mouse Club theme song: “Come along and join the fun with all the family...”. Voiceover from Joker: “My thoughts drift back to the great homecoming fuck with Mary Jane Rottencrutch...”

By concentrating on war as Eros denied, defamed and deflected, Kubrick has little room to explore the wider political issues. He uses interviews with a film crew roving during a lull in the battle to make a few points. The soldiers spot the camera and yell, “Vietnam the movie. We’ll let the gooks play the Indians.”

John Wayne is the point of reference, hero of countless Saturday afternoons at the movies. But as one of the black Marines complains, “We get killed for these people and they don’t appreciate it.”

Joker grins at the viewers back home and explains, deadpan, “I wanted to go to exotic South East Asia and meet interesting and stimulating people and kill them. I wanted to be the first kid on my block to get a confirmed kill.”

Vietnam has dared filmmakers to make use of its drama. It was the first fully televised war, and its images are etched on the modern consciousness, but a decade after the Vietnamese army defeated the American war machine, filmmakers are still trying to come to terms with the subject. *The Deer Hunter, Apocalypse Now and Platoon* all contained fine sequences but were ultimately disappointing. Kubrick said all that needs to be said about militarism in *Paths Of Glory*. In *Full Metal Jacket* his final panning shot of marching men takes us back to Barry Lyndon and the lines of soldiers, shoulder to shoulder, marching to their deaths, ranks unwavering.

In *Full Metal Jacket*, the Marines stride to perdition with the sounds of Walt Disney on their lips and the thought that the dead know only that it is better to be alive. As the US falls towards another war in Central America, Kubrick offers only the despair of a latter-day Conrad.

**Campbell Thomson**


**RECENT RELEASES**

A Supplementary Guide

**November:**

Three For The Road (Village Roadshow)
Matador (Hoyts)
Hotel Colonial (Filmpac)
The Squeeze (Filmpac)
Lady Beware (Village Roadshow)
Evil Dead 2 (Hoyts)
Body Slam (Filmpac)
Cherry 2000 (Village Roadshow)
The Living Daylights (UIP)
Back To The Beach (UIP)
Hearts Of Fire (Village Roadshow)
Hamburger Hill (Filmpac)
Who’s That Girl (Village Roadshow)
The Last Emperors (Columbia)
Big Shots (Village Roadshow)
With Love To The Person Next To Me (AFI)
The Funeral (Ronin)
The Magic Toyshop (AFI)
The Right Hand Man (Greater Union)
Manon Des Sources (Greater Union)
Kamikaze (Hoyts/Premium)

**December:**

Space Balls (Hoyts)
Jaws: The Revenge (UIP)
A Night On The Town (Village Roadshow)
The Princess Bride (Filmpac)
Harry & The Hendersons (UIP)
Revenge Of The Nerds 2 (Fox Columbia)
Dark Eyes (Filmpac)
Leonard Part 6 (Fox Columbia)
Planes, Trains And Automobiles (UIP)
Throw Mamma From The Train (Village Roadshow)
Benji The Hunted (Village Roadshow)
Wish You Were Here (Greater Union)
Fatal Attraction (UIP)
The Family (AZ)
Summer School (UIP)
Rita, Sue And Bob Too (New Vision)
The Good Father (New Vision)
Salvation (New Vision)
Tampopo (Ronin)
The Black Cannon Incident (Ronin)
Belly Of An Architect (Hoyts/Premium)
Superman IV (Hoyts)
Made In Heaven (Village Roadshow)
FILMWEST

- Equipment Rental
- Production facilities Rental
- Production
* T.V.C’s - Corporate Videos
- Documentaries

Equipment & Facilities List

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Revpod
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Video and Sound Transfer Suite
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New and unusual soundtrack recordings from our large range

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PLUS A NEW BOOK

AUSTRALIAN PERFORMERS AUSTRALIAN PERFORMANCES
A Discography from Film, TV, Theatre, Radio and Concert 1897-1985 by Peter Pinne

READINGS — SOUTH YARRA

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WE have survived the white man's world
and the torment and the horror of it all,
WE have survived the white man's world
and you know you can't change that.

So wrote Bart Willoughby,
Aboriginal musician and the
driving force behind the band that
sang those words, No Fixed Address.
They are words that seem
appropriate to How The West Was
Lost, a documentary that identifies
a struggle in the Pilbara, in central Western Australia, that has seen Aboriginal people turn their backs on "the white man's world", while using the best that world has to offer.

Indeed, it is this fact, that
Aborigines took industrial action
and withdrew their labour from
cattle stations in 1946, that makes
the film a remarkable testament to
the people who were involved in a
campaign for humane working
conditions and their own dignity.

Central to it all was Don McLeod, a remarkable white character who once took a black person to hospital and thus earned the respect of the Aborigines. He led the campaign, cycling
hundreds of kilometres to organise
meetings of workers in outstations
so that strike action would be co-
ordinated and consultative or, in a
word, democratic.

By using re-enactments of
walkouts, interviews and voiceover
narratives, the film puts a major
industrial event into the conscious
history of Australia. And this
is necessary for an Australia that is
generally ignorant of history,
particularly the history of remote
regions and the native inhabitants.

It is a film that tries to do justice
to the issue and the people, a
people whose values have little in
common with the dominant respectability of middle-class Australian capitalism and whose
history and culture is oral rather than written.

Director David Noakes, who has
worked with Aborigines before on
the film Two Laws, was aware of
this tradition, this conflict within a
country that really doesn't care —
a country where a film about
Aborigines is made knowing that
audiences will be minimal, responded to minor and impact
negligible. Such a film, such a
committed documentary, is better
described as a campaign film. But
if it is a campaign, it is one fraught
with minefields and these are
clearly evident in How The West
Was Lost.

If Aboriginal culture is primarily
oral, how is it to be filmed? How is
the significance of objects, words,
relationships, the geiselschat of
Aboriginal life to be presented?
This is something that Aboriginal
filmmakers can best present to
European Australians. This
significance, or subtext, is the
disturbing absence in this bold film
from the far western reaches of the
continent.

The narrative line in the film
is adequate, but many meanings are
left unexplained. Take for example,
the shots of tribal elders teaching
children to write in Aboriginal
dialects: a wonderful development,
in the face of State Government
plans to teach only English writing
to Aboriginal children in state run
schools. And all this in a school
run by Aboriginal people for
themselves.

But what is the impact of
teaching Aboriginal writing when
the culture has previously been
oral?

On another level, what is the
impact of capitalist relations on the
Aborigines that led to the strike
in the first place? Was Don McLeod
really doing the best possible thing
by the Aborigines and their culture,
by passing on to them his skills as
a prospector, after they went on
strike? (He probably was. The film,
by describing the working lives of
the Aborigines, counteracts the
prevailing stereotype that
Aborigines are incapable of work
in a market economy.)

Unfortunately, it is difficult to see
answers to these questions within
the film. If they were asked and
the exposure of how the story is
told in the present.

It is possible that the film
attempts to enter into this
exposure, with its multi-faceted
approach to the material: white
female voiceover reading important
government documents that appear
on screen; Don McLeod's
voiceover together with interview-
talking head shots; Aboriginal
people being interviewed; Super 8
footage from the past, shot by
white station personnel; re-
enactments of the events of 1946;
the contrasts between the small-
scale mining of the striking
Aborigines and the large-scale 'rip
and tear' method used by the
companies that took over the
Aborigines' mines.

But the contrasts between all
these images are implicit, rather
than exposed or interrogated, and
the content, in fact the overall
message and clarity of the film,
suffers as a result.

The fact that Noakes made the
film in co-operation with the
Aboriginal people is important and
gives the project added poignancy.
It gives the Aborigines a chance to
tell their history in a different way
from white Australians, using white
Australian methods.

Perhaps the film's major
contribution, though, is that it raises
questions about narrative, historical
documentary filmmaking and the
very history it seeks to describe.
And the band played:
You can't change the rhythm of my soul,
You can't tell me what to do,
You can't break my bones by putting me
down
or taking things that belong to me.

All song lyrics by Bart Willoughby,
reprinted with permission of Mushroom
Music Pty Ltd.

Marcus Breen

HOW THE WEST WAS LOST: Elder
Thomas points out the strike leaders

Snowy Jittermara and Billy

HOW THE WEST WAS LOST: The Strelley community re-enacts the 1946 walkout.
Two not-so-nice little old ladies, a would-be biker who still lives with his grandmother, a bar-side Black Marketeer; a bleeding burglar and a gang of bikies, lie, cheat and steal their way through Kick Start, a comedy that restores faith in the sight gag.

The hapless Billy has just wheeled home another decrepit bike that promptly deposits all its oil onto the bedroom carpet. "Look Gran," he beams. "Does like stink!" But Ruby, celebrating another birthday with her crony Lil over the races, cream cake and a few beers, is unimpressed. "Looks as bad as the last one," she croaks to Lil. "It never went, and neither did he!" What she really wanted for her birthday was a radio...

Out in the alley, in a classic slapstick ruse, a desperate burglar hides $5,000 in the back of a radio and shoves it in a hole in the fence—right between the legs of the bewildered Billy. Gran's birthday doesn't get a look in as Billy passes it to his heart-throb Carol, the local buyer and seller of stolen goods. She sells it to Ruby; the burglar comes looking for his money and tips off Carol—and then it's on. Everyone, including the local bikies, head for Ruby's, for free piss, $5,000 or the last leg; and the loser now is later to win, but with this bunch of losers, that could mean anyone.

The Kick Start characters never miss a trick, and neither does the comedy. The intricate plot is fast-paced and well-sustained; the slapstick impressively executed. Some well-known faces of the Melbourne comedy circuit feature: Tim Scally as the gormless but cool but determined young crook; Jason and the inept Mr Flinders, go somewhere again, and Jason must have fallen asleep under her pyramid. And Jason, heading through Carlton, has an "animated" conversation with a girl who explains 10-year-old Jason, and he literally instantly, as John Armstrong's Looking For Space-things uses jump-cuts and a zappy soundtrack by Urban Principle to move the action even faster, as Jason and the inept Mr Flinders, go looking for a real live spacething that fell to earth. Jason, ably played by young Jay McCormack, seems to be a shrewd businessman disguised as a child in a bike helmet—he swindles $7.50 an hour out of Mr Flinders for letting him come on an expedition, aided by a special pair of glasses. More impact and colour and movement is provided by Julian Rex's animation. Coloured sparks fly from the wheels of Jason's skateboard when he demonstrates to Nina ("she hates it when I call her Mum") the effect of leaving it under her pyramid. And Jason, heading through Carlton, has an "animated" conversation with a girl who explains that a man and a dog not only passed by, but were eaten by a giant Pac-Man.

Plot and sub-plot both provide laughs as the "spacey" Nina and Mrs Flinders discover that stripping the pyramid to the Fiat makes it go as fast as a V8, and their own search for Jason and Mr Flinders is forgotten as they drag custom cars around the city. Joy Dunstan, as Mrs Flinders, makes a wonderful transformation from harried Sunday housewife to drag queen.

Tracy Hayward

Some unobtrusive editing and additional incidental music since the film was first screened at the Swinburne Graduation in 1986 have removed a certain sluggishness that was evident then; and although Charlie Sarks, writer and director, says these changes are minor, they have turned Kick Start into a terrific short film instead of a good one.

It was a boring Sunday morning, explains 10-year-old Jason, and he was just about to go for a walk to see if any Zogdorian Bogbeasts had moved into the neighbourhood, when he spotted Gonzo, the next-door neighbour's bull terrier, trotting home alone. This meant Mr Flinders must have fallen asleep somewhere again, and Jason instantly appeared at Mrs Flinders' door to extort the fee of $3 an hour and a Tim Tam to find him.

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But sooner or later the spaghetti must be cooked (the best way to describe this film is to pinch its lines), and when the spacething is eventually unearthed, it looks remarkably like a cheese grater.
What's new in video censorship and video releases? PAUL KALINA looks at the parliamentary committee examining video censorship, and previews some of the latest titles in the video stores.

Since its inception the video market has been constantly affected by the fluctuating moods of censorship. In 1980, only 47 feature films on video were registered with the Censorship Board, but by the end of 1981 this figure had rocketed to more than 5000 imported video tapes. The free-market nature of the video industry has thrived on the assumption that it can cater for the tastes of the widest possible audience. While the libertarians point out that the domestic privacy of video viewing should allow adults to make their own decisions about what to watch, the inexpensive and easy accessibility of video has caused much concern about potentially 'harmful' material when it can be viewed by children and minors.

In 1983, a system of censorship was proposed that would, in the words of the then-chief censor Janet Strickland, "ensure maximum freedom for adults to view what they wished in the privacy of their homes — and, at the same time, give guidance to consumers as to what they were buying or hiring — as well as place limits on what could be openly displayed or sold to children."

The aim was for a uniform and voluntary system that included a further 'X' category for sexually explicit non-violent material, while certain material, such as child pornography, bestiality, and instruction manuals for weapons, would be refused classification.

But by June 1984, the voluntary system was replaced by a compulsory system, while some states made it clear they would not abide by the intended uniform system. The Commonwealth Government set up a Parliamentary Committee on Video Classification in August 1984. This committee has been superseded by a Joint Parliamentary Select Committee on Video Material, which has been sitting for more than 2½ years and which was, at the time of writing, expected to hand down its report shortly.

The committee is comprised of 11 members, chaired by Dr Richard Klugman (ALP, Victoria), and includes conservatives such as Tasmanian Senators Shirley Walters (Liberal) and Brian Harradine (Independent) on the one hand, and Victorian Labor Senator Olive Zakharov on the other. According to Klugman, the committee has garnered submissions and evidence from various groups all over Australia. "My own view," he said, "is that much evidence has been given by people who don't know the guidelines [of censorship]."

He points to the difficult distinction between explicit sex and violence in the 'X' classification, pointing out the anomaly that the 'R' rating does allow for depictions of rape. "From a rational point of view, it’s difficult to see why violence with implied sex is allowed when it is banned from the explicit act.

Earlier this year Klugman cast doubt on the validity of evidence submitted by the South Australian Council for Children’s Film and Television. He claimed that the evidence suggesting a high level of young children watching 'R' and 'X'-rated videos was due to boasting on the part of the children. Though this question of children gaining access to unsuitable material is paramount to the present debate, the oft-made claim of children watching naughty films "at a friend's place" has long been recognised as hard to verify.

In Western Australia, legislation has already been introduced to cover one of the areas under scrutiny by the select committee. All 'R' rated titles in video libraries must now be seen to be segregated...
from other titles. Though it is not necessary to keep these films in a separate room, the law will certainly upset the organisation of libraries in which movies are usually placed according to genre, incorporating 'R' rated movies. Of 2081 videos submitted to censorship in 1986, 382 garnered 'R' certificates, 544 'M', 402 'PG', 583 'G', 134 'X', while 36 were refused classification. 

Janet Strickland, who is presently a consultant to the film and video industry, views this measure — which will presumably make it easier to control access to 'R' rated movies — a "responsible view... in line with Government policy". Joanna Simpson, chief executive of VIDA (Video Industry Distributors Association), is circumspect: "This is the best situation that could have occurred given the circumstances that prevail," she said.

During 1987, VIDA embarked on a campaign aimed at reminding both the public and video retailers of censorship and their respective responsibilities. Kits, comprising stickers, posters and stands with clearly-worded explanations of what each classification means were sent to video shops throughout Australia. Under prevailing laws it is an offence for a video retailer to lend an 'R'-rated video to an underage customer. All advertisements for videos must include the censorship rating.

As many libraries — especially the smaller ones — lend tapes in boxes other than the distributor's, both cassette cases and display boxes must be labelled with the film's title and rating. Apart from pirated tapes, it is impossible to borrow a legitimate tape in Australia without the viewer's awareness of its contents and censorship rating. This pertains to the 'X' classification as well, which is only available in shops in the Territories, and through mail-order services operating in the ACT. John Lark is president of AVIA (Adult Video Industry Association) and manager of one such distribution company. He claims that these tapes are sold directly

CRIMES OF PASSION: At risk if censorship standards change?

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON VIDEO MATERIAL
TERMS OF REFERENCE
That a joint select committee, to be known as the Joint Select Committee on Video Material, be appointed to inquire into and report upon the operation of the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations, Regulation 4A of the Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations and the ACT Classification of Publications Ordinance 1983 in relation to videotapes and videodiscs and in particular;

(a) the effectiveness of such legislation to adequately control the importation, production, reproduction, sale and hire of violent, pornographic or otherwise obscene material;

(b) whether the present classification system, as applied by the Film Censorship Board, is adequate as a basis for import and point of sale controls;

(c) whether video retailers are observing the conditions of sale or hire attached to classified material, particularly in relation to children under 18 years;

(d) whether 'R' rated videos should be permitted to be displayed for sale or hire in the same area and side by side with 'G', 'PG' and 'M' rated videos and, if not, what restrictions should be imposed on the display of 'R' rated material;

(e) whether Regulation 4A of the Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations is adequate in identifying categories of prohibited material, and operating effectively in preventing the importation of videotapes/discs falling within the prohibited categories;

(f) examine the extent to which videotapes/discs containing pornographic and violent material are available to the community in general;

(g) whether children under the age of 18 years are gaining access to videotapes/discs containing violent, pornographic or otherwise obscene material;

(h) whether the ACT Classification of Publications Ordinance 1983 should be amended to make it an offence for persons purchasing or hiring videotapes/discs classified above 'R' to allow, suffer or negligently permit children to view such material;

(i) whether the sale, hire, distribution or exhibition of films and videotapes/discs that would, under existing laws, be accorded a classification above 'R' should be made unlawful;

(j) whether cinemas should be permitted to screen for public exhibition material classified above 'R', subject to prohibition from entry of persons under the age of 18 years;

(k) whether films which would merit a classification above 'R' are being produced in Australia and if so whether Australian men and women are adequately protected by existing law from pressure to act in such films; and

(l) the likely effects upon people, especially children, of exposure to violent, pornographic or otherwise obscene material.
to the public, not retailers, and that birthdates, bankcard numbers and drivers' licences are used to check customers' ages. As these tapes are often sent COD, identification must be provided when the tape is collected. Lark says, "it is not a small market and cannot be swept under the carpet. It's an industry that needs to be internally policed and controlled." This, he maintains, cannot happen if it is outlawed. As a timely example he points to current legal proceedings against a dealer allegedly trafficking in unclassified tapes which faces severe penalties of $10,000 per tape.

According to Dr Paul Wilson, assistant director at the Australian Institute of Criminology, the hire of 'X' rated videos accounts for a mere seven or eight per cent of the ACT market. He maintains in a newspaper report that the hard-core videos incorporating violence were not getting through the system. He is quoted as saying that there was no "convincing criminological or psychological evidence" to demonstrate that exposure to sexually explicit material produced measurable harm to society.

In its submission to the Senate Select Committee, the Institute of Criminology stated: "It is the view of the Australian Institute of Criminology . . . that the available evidence cannot be said to establish in general terms a causative link between 'pornography' and media violence on the one hand, and sex offences and violent offences on the other. The statistical data are too frail and the intervening variables too numerous."

It is generally agreed, however, that the primary focus at present is on the level of violence permitted in films bearing the 'R' rating. Recently, Attorney-General Lionel Bowen said, "I think the community is probably more worried about 'R' rated films than 'X' rated films at the moment because there is more violence in the 'R' rated films."

The committee is being closely monitored by the Film/Video Coalition, whose members include the Motion Picture Coalition Association, VIDA, Village Roadshow Corporation, Greater Union Organisation and Filmpac Holdings. Its submission to the committee was made at the height of a concerted media campaign that strained to link recent atrocities such as the Hoddle Street killings to popular movies, in particular Rambo. It is prefaced by concern "that the Video Committee . . . will be swayed by the more emotional messages emanating from those minority groups who believe that a more restrictive censorship regime is the panacea for all of society's ills."

The Film/Video Coalition has carried out a survey of 2025 adults into public attitudes to censorship classification, which it claims is the most comprehensive of its kind in Australia. Of total survey respondents, 57 per cent want either current censorship to remain unchanged or would prefer less censorship; 31 per cent favoured more censorship; and 12 per cent had no opinion. Interestingly, "Those in favour of more censorship and who were able to correctly identify films as being an 'R' classification represented only 13 per cent of all people surveyed."

For her part, Strickland opposes increases to levels of censorship, and believes that 'X' material should be available in special sections of video shops where its access could be controlled. On the committee's recommendations she says: "I suspect that there will be a reduction of violence in the 'R' classification. This may filter to other classifications." (She believes that more stringent labelling and marking of cassettes will also be recommended.)

The real worry, she admits, is that films presently with 'R' ratings could be banned or cut to 'M'. Apart from the commercial repercussions this would have for distributors, the Film/Video Coalition's concern is that films such as The Deer Hunter, Taxi Driver, Crimes Of Passion and Straw Dogs would be affected. It is a concern shared by many.

TRADITIONALLY, the video industry fires its 'big guns' during the Christmas season. This year it started when CBS-Fox Video shipped more than 31,000 copies of Crocodile Dundee to video outlets in the middle of November. It has already become the biggest selling video in Australia, easily eclipsing the previous record of about 20,000 copies of Top Gun and Back To The Future. The Australian video rights were negotiated through a deal with 20th Century Fox, which secured foreign theatrical rights to the film — excluding all North American rights, held by Paramount Pictures. Interestingly, the video distributor has already foreshadowed that the megahit will become available as a collectible in 12 months time, though it is highly likely that this will happen 'unofficially' as soon as demand in stores drops and retailers sell their excess copies to customers.

Following its theatrical outing earlier this year, Paul Cox's Cactus, the saga of the relationship between a blind collector of cacti (played by Robert Menzies) and a partially-blind French woman (Isabelle Huppert) will have a video release through Premiere. The New Zealand film Mr Wrong (Crystal Screen Entertainment) was screened at Cannes in 1985. Director, co-producer and co-writer Gaylene Preston describes the tale of a woman who buys a haunted car as a "whimsical thriller and a ripping yarn — no sex, no violence: it's basically about fear and the victim/predator relationship."

It is Preston's first feature following a background in drama, Super 8 movies and producing and directing the documentary Making Utu. And finally, on the local front Kaboodie (CBS-Fox) makes a
very hasty segue from television screen to video library. Produced by the Australian Children’s Television Foundation (with the assistance of the ABC, the AFC and Film Victoria), the 32 ‘stories’ comprise locally-made live action shorts and animation, and will be released on six cassettes.

While the season guarantees that the past year’s best known films will be released to video — such as Platoon (RCA-Columbia-Hoyts), Aliens (CBS-Fox), Children Of A Lesser God, Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home (CIC-Taft), The Color Of Money, Outrageous Fortune (Disney) and Lethal Weapon (Warner) — the Christmas spirit will also be represented by the sequel Silent Night, Deadly Night 2 (Palace). Now it’s younger brother Ricky’s turn to kill, kill, kill. The film, like its predecessor, is distinguished by a ban from Queensland’s state censorship board. “This is one Santa story you won’t want to tell your kids,” gleefully boasts the publicity blurb.

Like Re-Animator, From Beyond (Vestron) is based on a story by H.P. Lovecraft and directed by Stuart Gordon. It is described in Monthly Film Bulletin as “a richly loathsome carnival of invention . . . wriggling wraith from Ghostbusters, a touch of cannibalism from the Living Dead series, a left-over sandworm from Dune, a sprouting decapitation from Alien, together with a fine miscellany of flying jaws, amorphous flesh, and obscene liquids . . .” Joe Bob Briggs, the infamous ‘drive-in movie critic’ from Grapevine, Texas, would probably suggest you check it out.

As usual, there are a number of films that have bypassed the cinema circuit. The Allnighter (CIC-Taft), in which Bangles singer Susanna Hoffs makes her film debut directed, produced and co-written by her mother Tamar Simon Hoffs. Recent and vintage rock’n’roll features prominently in this graduation night party film which harks back to the style of 1960s beach party films. Daniel Petrie produced and directed Square Dance (Roadshow) with Rob Lowe, Jane Alexander and Jason Robards. Emilio Estevez makes his directorial debut in Wisdom (Warner), which he also wrote and which he describes as a modern-day Robin Hood tale about a strong-willed petty criminal who “decides to be a criminal for the people.” Co-starring with Estevez is Demi Moore. With all these films it would seem that the casting of stars with a marquee value is no guarantee that they get released in local cinemas.

Though nearly a year separates their production, Blake Edwards’(CIC-Taft) in recent offerings That’s Life! and Blind Date will arrive simultaneously in video shops. Described in Variety as a film that is “personal virtually to the point of being a home movie”, That’s Life! (Vestron) was written by Edwards and his analyst Milton Wexler. Jack Lemmon plays a despondent architect who, on the eve of his 60th birthday, nervously awaits the results of his wife’s biopsy and contemplates the woes of ageing. With a cast comprised of the director’s friends and family, it was made on a very low budget under the apt original title Crisis. In contrast, Blind Date (RCA-Columbia-Hoyts) sees Edwards at work with a traditional Hollywood score of mismatched romantics and a havoc-filled plot that serves to unite, then separate, the unlikely couple. Uneven, but occasionally hilarious, Bruce Willis plays the guy who seems to have it all together, with Kim Basinger as the skittish aloof counterpart — until, that is, the tables begin to turn.

Comedienne turned director Elaine May wrote and directed Mikey And Nicky (Seven Keys) in 1976. According to Leonard Maltin, it spent several years in the editing room. Peter Falk, John Cassavetes and Ned Beatty are cast in this story of small-town hoodlums and their tenuous childhood friendship. Made about the same time and finally due for release is The Tenant (CIC-Taft). Director and writer Roman Polanski cast himself in this horror film, made during a slump in his career.

Most worthy viewing without commercial interruption is Nicholas Ray’s sombre and bleak In A Lonely Place (RCA-Columbia-Hoyts), a mournful lament on Ray’s troubled relationship with Hollywood. He cast Humphrey Bogart as the dour screenwriter accused of murder and embroiled in a lusty romance with Gloria Grahame (at the time Ray’s estranged wife), claiming “I took the gun out of Bogie’s hands.” Thankfully, the film is in its original state, which is more than can be said of The Angel And The Badman and Otto Preminger’s Saint Joan (both CEL), two new casualties of colourisation about to be released on video.

Shot on 35mm, ostensibly for theatrical release, I Live With Me Dad (CBS-Fox) will debut on home video during January. This Crawford Production is directed by Paul Maloney from a script by Peter Pinney, based on the short story by Derry Moran. The story of a six year old whom the authorities want to separate from his vanguard, heavy-drinking father features Peter Hehir and Haydon Samuels as the father and son, Dennis Miller, Rebecca Gibney, Robyn Ginnes, Gus Mercurio and Essien Storm. Watch The Shadows Dance (Crystal Screen Entertainment), produced by James Vernon and Jan Tyrell and directed by Mark Joffe, also debuts. Set 15 years in the future, it concerns a group of children who invent ‘The Game’, which becomes a true life and deadly-serious encounter.

Other recent and forthcoming arrivals in video libraries worthy of mention are Extreme Prejudice (Roadshow), director Walter Hill’s mighty return to form in a raunchy hybrid Western; Bette Gordon’s enquiry into a woman’s ambiguous involvement with pornography in Variety (CEL); Ingmar Bergman’s 1980 German production From The Life Of The Marionettes (Crystal Screen Entertainment) and the recent theatrical hit Mona Lisa (RCA-Columbia-Hoyts) from director Neil Jordan. Gary Sherman’s 1972 British film Death Line (Vestron) has been recently released. This film — which has also appeared in a bastardised form as Raw Meat — warrants several mentions in Robin Wood’s books Hollywood From Vietnam To Reagan and The American Nightmare. In the former, Wood discusses the film’s account of cannibals preying on travellers in London — the film is set entirely in Russell Square Station — as a metaphor of the war experience in which the younger generation is devoured by the past. Elsewhere, the film is discussed as the most recent embodiment of the Descent myth.
THE BULL, THE BEAR AND THE GORILLA

The New Zealand film industry's reaction to the stock market upheavals of October/November, which saw the Bull give way to the Bear, was to Send A Gorilla.

This first feature project for the Pinflicks Company of producer Dorothee Pinfold began on schedule at October's end, even though the investment climate was beginning to freeze over, given a NZ$12 billion white-out of New Zealand share values during those disturbingly nervous initial weeks.

Pinfold, who has moved into independent production from a marketing background at the New Zealand Film Commission and the Gibson Group, is not disclosing the budget of her "anarchic femme comedy".

But the confidence evident among crew and cast during the seven-week shoot was a sign of the security of the package she has put together with Energy Source Television (EST), the film commission and Television New Zealand.

For 75 per cent of the budget, EST has world rights to this second feature of Melanie Read (Trial Run), who also is credited as writer.

The industry has not emerged entirely unscathed.

While it is generally agreed the production arm of the industry is unlikely to be greatly affected in the months ahead, loss of investors is given as reason for delay of a new Geoff Murphy film.

Producer Don Reynolds, an executive director of Mirage Entertainment Corp (MEC), had hoped to get Murphy's The Paranoid Man rolling on 7 November. He has since set about devising an alternative plan involving an offshore pre-sale to fund the project.

Although he had no new start date at the time this column was written, Reynolds is confident the production will get under way.

MEC floated in August and is the only New Zealand film production house publicly listed on the New Zealand stock exchange. It received slight buffering at one point during the stormy days when a parcel of 25-cent shares was sold off at a low of 15 cents.

Says Reynolds: "Our shares are in the hands of so few people that we have not been heavily affected."

MEC completed the main shoot of Larry Parry's A Soldier's Tale in northern France in late October, and reports best business ever — "over NZ$1,000,000 worth of sales" — for product it was touting at the October Mifed in Milan.

Pinfold says Send A Gorilla will be ready for the Cannes market in 1988.

"Who knows what will be highly successful? But what attracted me about this story is that it made me laugh a lot. It contains characters and scenarios I can relate to and is set in an area or milieu of a city that could be anywhere to more than 93 per cent. The value of the group, as measured by the takeover, is about NZ$150,000,000.

The initial Pacer purchase stimulated a marked change of approach among KO executives, suggesting a more aggressive approach to the distribution and exhibition of films by what the executives themselves acknowledged as "the sleeping giant". KO owns and operates 37 cinemas throughout the country with 13 others operated in partnership with New Zealand's other major chain, Amalgamated Theatres.

New film distributors are also entering the New Zealand market with Australia's Film-Pac Holdings setting up here in association with Endeavour Entertainment Corp, a product of the amalgamation of Rank and Mirage.

Film commission chairman David Gascoigne is trenchant in his criticism of the past track record of the two exhibitor chains and the industry's aggressive move in exhibiting offshore productions with track records that effectively need no special promotion within New Zealand.

He says it has often been difficult to convince either chain of the merits of exhibiting a particular New Zealand film and the special promotion that film will need to make sure it gets to its audience.

The consequence of this commission in 1988 is to concentrate on exhibition aspects of the New Zealand film industry, to see what it can do to improve the availability of local film to local audiences.

This could involve making sums of money available to publicise films made under its aegis, as happened late in 1987 with Barry Barclay's Ngati. In this context, Gascoigne says, the commission is already talking with the changing guard at what is to become Pacer Kerridge Corp. Ltd.

Mike Nicolaides
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THE SHOWSCAN

Celebrating Us is a panoramic documentary short made for the first Australian 70mm Showscan system. FRED HARDEN talked to the crew and found out about the fear and loathing, as well as the satisfaction, that came with the project.

BIGGER AND BIGGER

Even with the advances in high-definition video systems the image quality obtainable from film is still much greater. That may be why in the face of these threats to its supremacy the process that is known as 'cinema' continues to develop, but it is more likely, I believe, film is only now starting to deliver its full potential. These improvements in equipment and film stocks affect the content and creative applications of the filmmaking process. In the pursuit of quality and in the godlike attempt to re-create the life outside our darkened auditorium, filmmakers have stretched the size of the screen and the film itself. Big pictures from big negatives have a lot of detail, and the lust for ultimate film image quality has pushed the motion picture into some strange directions. After the hype for the early 'ultimate' 70mm systems — Todd-AO, Super Panavision, and the Ultra- Panavision 70 — had died down, it seemed that we had gone about as far as we could go and still lift the spool onto the projector. There are some 70mm showcase cinemas but 35mm is still the preferred practical projection format.

70MM, IT’S NOT

The practical considerations are important. The widest colour motion picture print stock that Kodak makes in commercial quantity is 70mm. As a production medium however, the film stock and camera for 70mm isn’t actually 70mm. It is actually 65mm wide, using a five-perforation pulldown, with perforations vertically spaced as they are on 35mm film (as one concession to the laboratory handling on dual 35/65mm processors). When this is printed onto the projection release print that extra 5mm leaves room for magnetic stereo and surround sound tracks. Showscan uses the extra area for an even higher quality image, and syncs the audio from compact disc.

Not content to leave it there, and working with the same physical parameters, there is a part-Australian-designed system called Imax that uses a special camera with the 65mm film turned on its side and then printed the same way onto 70mm to give a negative 52.63mm high by 70.41mm wide. That’s almost three inches wide and the Imax (or slightly different Omnimax) systems require specially built projectors with custom designed transports to shift that large floppy frame through the gate. The Imax theatres have highly curved surround screens, great for short documentary “My-god- ncl-down-the-rollercoaster” type presentations in exhibitions and theme parks.

FASTER AND FASTER

Douglas Trumbull has been using 65mm film for special effects work in films from 2001: A Space Odyssey and the first Star Trek movie through to Close Encounters Of The Third Kind, the masterful Blade Runner, up to his present work. For optical effects work, the large negative helps to maintain finer grain before the final reduction to a 35mm release print.

As well as working with the big 65mm negative, he was involved in experimentation on decreasing the perceived flicker of film projection by increasing projection speed. Even the cinema standard 24 frames a second projectors use multi-bladed shutters to flicker each frame twice to push the rate over the point where the brain accepts the images as continuous. With a lot more frames presented on screen something special happens in the eye and brain that smooths out the intermittent light and dark process that is the basis of our art. The images look sharper, grain almost disappears, and motion blur is reduced. Trumbull found an optimum point running at 60 frames a second, and developed his Showscan system.

He patented the process, found financial backing and there are now a number of Showscan theatres across the USA and Canada. The first Australian theatre is scheduled for Sydney and is due for completion in early 1988.

The Sydney company Heliograph Pty Ltd, in association with Look Films, was commissioned to produce the program for its first screening and it was through associate producer Will Davies and cinematographer Peter James that I first heard of the project. As the film and theatre was to be part of the NSW Bicentenary offering there was a lot of “Yes we can talk about, no we can’t” while shooting was going on. What did come through were the stories of quite incredible technical problems.

MAY YOU HAVE AN INTERESTING LIFE (old Chinese curse)

The shooting began with a Showscan-modified 65mm Panavision camera in December 1986 with Peter James as director of photography and Andre Fleuren on second camera. Having been warned about camera problems by the Canadians who made the Showscan film for the Expo in Vancouver, the company considered they were well covered by assembling a package of two complete camera systems (and later a third body) and enticing top camera technician Rob Hunter from Samuelsons.

The problems began to be noticed immediately. The rushes were initially projected (at 24 fps) in GUO’s new theatre complex in George Street. A camera sharpness problem was detected and Rob Hunter and Samuelsons started the first of many weeks of work on both of the cameras. Because they were covering unrepeatable events such as the Sydney to Hobart yacht race, the production continued with the handicap of a turnaround time of almost 10 days for rushes from the MGM lab in Los Angeles.

By the time they had exhausted all the repair possibilities and found a replacement camera, Peter James was unable to finish the film because of commitments to another production and Andre Fleuren continued as DOP.

I had to wait until the end of the shoot to talk to producer/director John Weiley and Andre Fleuren. Although they had finished shooting, editor Nick Holmes found that the problems that had plagued them were not quite over. Just as the article was finished they returned from Vancouver, where the cut workprint was projected in the cinema that will be a model for the Sydney one. After the long haul of the production
they had some more positive comments to make and I have added these to a behind-the-camera story that, as the curse says, was "interesting". (And not without its share of local innovation.)

THE SHOWSCAN EXPERIENCE

I asked the director John Weiley why Showscan was chosen over the other available big screens systems. "In the planning stage, an interest was expressed in Showscan and Imax. So I went to the States to check it out and, having seen both, I thought Showscan was better. The quality is better and I prefer the theatre — it is not as radical as the Imax theatre. The Imax has a radically raked audience seating arrangement. You have to turn your head to see all the screen, and I found that I didn't enjoy the experience. I felt that I was too close to the screen. When you look at the Showscan screen it takes up your full field of view, so your eyes are moving constantly across the screen but your head doesn't have to move. I feel that it concentrates your attention better."

As Weiley explained, improving the experience of the viewer is the most important factor in Showscan. You don't just talk about the screen, but the whole cinema because it is all designed as one piece. The angle of projector to screen, the relationship of the seats to the screen and the angle of view, are all calculated carefully. It's a single viewing machine that you sit in and it is all beautifully worked out so that every seat in the house is a good seat.

Learning what does and does not work on the Showscan screen was an important part of the process but it was often overshadowed by working around the physical restrictions. Because of the 'spectacle' nature of the large-screen presentations like Showscan, where shows run for a long time before audiences become saturated, there are only a few short programs available for study, and they did not fit the kind of film that Weiley wanted to make.

"I was very scathing about the early films when I saw them, because cinematically they are unambitious. They start every sequence with what's basically a studio set up, on a sort of life-raft, then launch off the life-raft for two or three strokes then go back to it. When you look at the film it is basically 50 per cent studio set up from which you depart briefly for the Showscan experience then jump back to the studio. Someone will say "Where are we now?" and you go on to the next scene. Mind you when I tried to shoot the bloody thing I developed a great deal more sympathy and understanding!"

"We started out," Weiley continued, "thinking we had a firm idea of what it was going to be. After a while there was what, on a better day, you'd call 'feedback' from the system and that really blew the original intentions to pieces. We found it almost impossible to shoot interiors. It is hard to believe that anything is impossible nowadays but, for example, you can't shoot anything with a fluorescent light or video screen in shot. Because of the frame rate, they strobe and flutter badly. We tried to shoot in a currency dealing room in a bank and it was unusable because of all the computer screens in the place, and even then we had to pump an enormous quantity of our own light on it. It's quite unbelievable, just to do a set up of two girls near a piano you were lighting it as if you were lighting a stadium to get any depth at all.

"And depth is so terribly important because everything has to be in focus, you can't even use half the techniques that are commonplace in filmmaking. Like having hard focus on someone walking past in the foreground and let the rest of it go. Because Showscan is so sharp whenever anything is out of focus, it's like your eyes have broken!"

This requirement for absolute focus affected the
options available to the director of photography, making things we take for granted in 35mm impossible to do. Andre Fleuren explained that he couldn’t use any diffusion and had limited his effects to grads.

He was concerned that “because shooting even normal ‘easy’ set ups was so difficult, we worried that we wouldn’t get the shots that everybody expects you to get with 35mm. Because the audience is so spoiled with 35mm, where you can almost get anything you want, they would be upset if they couldn’t have had the same sophistication. But with Showscan, the normal 35mm support systems aren’t there. Just physically rigging the camera is difficult. If you want to put it on a helicopter you have to make your own mount. The same if you want to put it on a plane, or underwater, everything has to be redesigned. Because the camera is so big you design something as small as you can so that you just fit in to say, the Jet Ranger. Then when we changed cameras, the dimensions were different again.”

**CHANGING CAMERAS MIDSTREAM**

The camera problems and breakdowns were part of the whole Australian Showscan production story. Bolts would sheat, screws come loose and the replacement parts always had to come from America. The major loss of the first months of filming, however, was due to a fault in the Panavision equipment that cannot be explained. As John Weiley said, “It is a mystery. The most coherent theory we had was from Rob Hunter from Samuelsons who said that because the camera had a pellicle between the lens elements and the film plane, the pellicle was vibrating in sympathy with the camera and that was somehow scattering the light to the emulsion.

“Everyone has their own description of how it looked, but it was just unsharp. The delay in seeing our rushes didn’t help. It takes about three or four days to get a rushes report from the US lab and they are pretty enigmatic. It takes about 10 days in all for the rushes to get back here, and because the locations are so scattered for this film you were never in the place where you shot it when you got the rushes. You go out, try and see through the viewfinder which is pretty poor anyway. You expose the film and send it away and two weeks later you find out if you’ve shot something.”

“It’s a tough way to work and I’ve made documentaries for the BBC for a long time, in some out-of-the-way places. Often you are trying to shoot a film that is responsive to what you’ve already done. You are trying to build it in your head as you go along. In distant places you weren’t seeing rushes but there you could simply assume that the equipment was doing its job, and say, well if we shoot this way it will cut with yesterday or last week. With the equipment we had for the Showscan shoot you couldn’t make that assumption, but you still had to make it.”

The lack of rushes feedback was tough on the DOP as well. As Fleuren said, “As a cameraman you’re always guessing in a way, and you can’t hold yourself responsible for every little thing in the chain but in 35mm and 16mm the chain is so strong and it hangs together, so that you can reasonably predict the outcome. With the cameras we had the chain just drops out, nothing hangs together. We were standing way out in the country in front of 200 acres of sunflowers and we had done one shot and the drive belt just snapped. There was no spare belt, so you just had to go home not only having lost what would have been a beautiful shot but worrying about all the earlier stuff and you hadn’t done anything. The belts was falling apart.”

Because they had lost so much time and so many unique filming opportunities the decision was made that, despite Panavision’s and the company’s best efforts, they should find another camera. It was not to be such a simple answer to their problems, however.

“As soon as the new camera arrived,” John Weiley reported, “we headed off to Broken Hill. Peter James was with us at the time and on the first day of shooting with the new camera it broke down three times. We gradually got it to work.”

The relatively poor camera equipment comes, he believes, “out of the way the Showscan has been developed. Understandably, all the money and effort initially went into the presentation side, because that’s what the backer and the audience are interested in. They don’t care about the crew on location. When Doug Trumbull was trying to get the system going it was essentially the exhibition side of things he had to conquer to get acceptance. The new projects, sound systems and theatres were very well designed. In Vancouver where a show was running ten hours a day for six months they never lost a screening, it was 100 per cent reliable. But with the production side they were depending on cameras that had originally been designed to run at 24 frames a second and supercharging them to run at 60 and they all hate it. They scream, bellow, whine and complain, they throw bits at you, anything than rather run at 60 frames.”

Showscan are now having a few purpose-built cameras made. A prototype has been demonstrated and has been pulled apart to copy and build the first four dedicated Showscan cameras. Weiley and Fleuren both agree they wouldn’t attempt to do another film without a purpose-built camera.

The other thing they discovered was that the camera was very noisy. With a laugh Weiley said, “You can hear it clearly a hundred yards away. We wanted to get a sticker for the camera that said ‘Turns grass into lawn!’”

“Showscan have always had problems with blue sky everywhere and the off-sun side of the face just went so dark. When you see the rushes you think, ‘My god this is terrible’. Even when you filled it, it would go dark. So I had to look into it. I went to Kodak here and in LA, they did tests and told me that it’s all the same. I checked as much as I could. I had processing at MGM with Colorfilm here — it’s hard to try other processing because only MGM and Tokyo do 70mm. Colorfilm said that they believed the processing was OK but the difference is in the printing. MGM uses a ‘hot’ printing system that is a bit faster than here which should add a bit more contrast, but not the enormous amounts we were getting.”

“I resigned myself to the fact that it was the lenses which are Pentax still camera lenses. Still lenses are always more contrasty than specifically designed cine

**TAKING STOCK**

The filmstock used was the normal Eastmancolor ‘47 and ’94, only it’s 65mm wide. Fleuren explained, straight-faced, that they shot ‘47 in broad daylight and ’94 when the sun was behind a cloud. No-one knows if the difference in the grain will be noticeable on the big screen with the two stocks intercut. Both Peter James and Fleuren commented on what appeared to be an excessive buildup in contrast in the first rushes, and Fleuren was even concerned whether they really were the same emulsions that we all know in 35mm.

“The first results we got were very contrasty,” he said. “It was a shot at midday on a beach at Byron Bay side lit by the sea. A sandy beach with blue sky everywhere and the off-sun side of the face just went so dark. When you see the rushes you think, ‘My god this is terrible’. Even when you filled it, it would go dark. So I had to look into it. I went to Kodak here and in LA, they did tests and told me that it’s all the same. I checked as much as I could. I had processing at MGM with Colorfilm here — it’s hard to try other processing because only MGM and Tokyo do 70mm. Colorfilm said that they believed the processing was OK but the difference is in the printing. MGM uses a ‘hot’ printing system that is a bit faster than here which should add a bit more contrast, but not the enormous amounts we were getting.”
Shakes and Superstitions

"We were told that these were the best lenses," Fleuret said. "They’re the Pentax range of 21/4-inch lenses and range from 24mm to 600mm, but we soon realised that we couldn’t use the 300 or the 600 because the camera shakes so much that you can’t get a steady picture. We had to put the camera on a Super Panahc and an O’Connell 300 and we tried a number of times to use the 300mm lens. If you were on sand you could sometimes get away with it but on concrete, forget it! So we used sandbags on the concrete floor and depending on how tight the film is in the magazine you could sometimes accept it. But the very last stuff we shot was on a 45mm lens and it shakes!

"I don’t know why it is. Maybe it is the wind of the film that sometimes put extra strain on the camera. It was modified to run at 60 frames a minute and sometimes you see the vibration in the viewfinder or you feel it in your head because your eye is right there and you feel your head shaking. You see the crosshairs moving and think, no this is not right, and it always happens when you are shooting something you can’t repeat! The City to Surf, the start of the Sydney to Hobart yacht race, anything that is a ‘once’r. The camera somehow knows and runs for just two seconds. "Weiley added, "We’ve all become very superstitious."

The length limitations in the choice of magazines were also a frustration. There were two sizes: the 1000-foot magazine which holds three minutes of film or the 350-foot which gives a minute.

Weiley found that restrictive in many situations such as long tracking shots where "the 30 seconds you might use may turn anywhere in your mind in 10 minutes of action. You’d roll on an aerial, hit a few bumps and just when the air would smooth out you’d be out of film! This happened also with the special underwater housing we built for the front of the jet ski to shoot in surf. We couldn’t see what we were getting and the guy on the jet ski can only approximate it and with the small mag he had only 60 seconds of film. That 60 seconds might be spent getting just into position. It was really frustrating.

"It spoils you for looking at movies in cinemas and on TV," he continued. "I sit there feeling shocked at what they use. How can they use a shot like that! It’s so rough... That shot’s out of focus! And everyone else is just enjoying the movie!"

Handling 70mm

Just physically handling such a large width of film was difficult. John Weiley jokes that when they’re asked about what sort of film they’re making they say, "Oh the film’s very heavy! There’s a lot of compo claims from the assistant editor from lifting the films up onto the bench."

Each 5000-foot projection reel weighs about 30 kilos and the assistants say that just winding the reel can take skin off their knuckles if they aren’t careful. And they try not to drop it!

Even a normal reel spinning in the camera produced a gyroscopic effect that had major implications for using it in a helicopter. It didn’t want to move out from its position, and the operator had to fight to tilt it the other way.

John Weiley said, "I used to feel for the loaders because you’ve got a reel of film that weighs nine pounds or so that you are trying to get into a magazine that has a quarter-inch tolerance on the edges and you can’t tell that you’ve got the centre right over the spindle. So you have to just drop it with your heart in your mouth knowing that that roll of film cost a thousand bucks! If you drop it the wrong way it dishes and it’s gone because you can’t close the magazine."

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Cinema Papers January — 63
You come back to the production office saying, 'I've screwed up the equipment spec.'

Because of the width of the film it is very susceptible to tearing, and it scratches easily. Fleuren said, "And it always scratches in the best spot. On one of the US Showscan films there was a great shot from a flying fox over Niagara Falls and you just get to the middle and there's this great tramline of a scratch down it. It's there, in their film.

There are other problems caused by the sheer size of the film. The width of film across the gate is greater than 35mm, with the only support on the edges, which means that it is also more likely to bend and sag. The sprocket holes carry more strain so they are more likely to break and there is the added strain of travelling at 60 frames a second through the camera. Thirty-five millimetre film by comparison is a pretty tough stuff. Fleuren adds "If you got a fresh 1000 foot of film up to speed, especially with the Panavision, and then you stop but the roll in the magazine doesn't! It was a real problem and you could tell when the camera wasn't accessible. You had to keep inching it on to take up the slack or when you started again it would just go whack and splitt!"

**ADVANTAGES**

With all the restrictions placed on them by the system it is surprising to find that they had anything positive to say about the equipment that gave them a creative advantage. John Weiley mentioned that "there are two things that were against us that we have turned into advantages. The first was when we couldn't even shoot a normal shot in a rain forest, we just couldn't get the exposure." The widest stop on the Pentax lenses was f2.8, and at 60 frames you are losing stops, but you must shoot as deep as you can, which means a minimum of about f5.6. Faced with not being able to shoot in shadows or much past sunset, they modified a Noris "mechanised" camera and allowed them to expose at up to eight seconds per frame and the result, Weiley said "has ended up giving us something special".

"The second thing was that we had to give up the convention that the camera wasn't there, that it was an invisible presence. There is nothing less invisible or inaudible than that bloody camera! So we realised that we would just accept that and make it part of the story. Everybody in the film knows that the camera is there and acts accordingly. And that's one of the things that is really nice, there's this real eye contact by the people on the screen with the audience. It's charming and it's now an essential part of the style of the film."

**THE SOUND**

The sound, Weiley says again, shows up the contrast in the Showscan system.

"The sound reproduction in the theatre is probably the best known to man. It is six digital discrete tracks off Compact Disc and it sounds fantastic. Yet when you are shooting you can't stop because the camera noise is phenomenal, so we've had to create everything. Michael Gissing has recorded everything digitally on PCM and the whole sound path of the film will be digital to the compact disc. Roger Savage is putting it together, and it will sound great."

"It was disturbing for me because with this sort of impressionist documentary style you would normally expect to have sound coming out of the people. With the limitations of the machinery we had to find ways like shooting to playback, to get the feeling that you weren't cut off from the images."

**EDITING WITH 30-FOOT VISUAL LEVERS**

There is no 85mm editing equipment. The procedure used to date was to make step-printed 35mm reduction print rushes to convert the 60 frames to 24 frames a second to cut conventionally. This means cuts are not frame accurate and it is hard to judge quality. It was also expensive — so the production devised their own method of projecting the 70mm workprint and recording it with a video camera to produce a time-code-displayed cassette that is cut on a conventional off-line system. A computer program then relates the code to the film edge numbers.

Editor Nick Holmes said, "Cutting on video isn't my preferred mode but it is the best we can do. At least we have looked at a fairly big picture from projecting the 70mm rushes. The Americans and the Canadians who worked on 35mm reduction prints couldn't see the brushing and the imperfections until it was conformed. Even with our shaky projector we can see the technical quality."

"When I came onto the project my concern was how accurate the transfer to tape was. We have sync marks at the beginning and end of each roll and used a computer program that correlated the timecode to edge numbers. The printout will be in edge numbers to conform the 70mm workprint to the video. When we tested it we found that the result varied with the tension on the take-up reel, the amount of electricity being used in Balmain that day etc. The speed varied up to six or seven per cent faster or slower. With so much stuff cut to music, different shots in a sequence would have been out of sync depending on when they were transferred."

They decided to get Editrone's Graeme Thirkell in to solve the problem. Thirkell fitted a disc to the projector with a hundred holes in it and an optical sensor system that counted the rotations. This was compared to the scan rate of the camera and the voltage going to the projector was altered.

Unfortunately it was too accurate, going out of sync when it drifted just by three-thousandths of a second. Thirkell went back to Melbourne for a re-think and came up with the present system that uses only 10 holes. Now it is accurate to about three-hundredths of a second, which is approximately a fifth of a frame and Holmes says "it works like a charm". The 25 frames of PAL video correspond exactly to 60 frames of film a second, with a not too objectionable blurring or flicker on the tape.

Weiley feels that they will be breaking new ground because the existing Showscan films are edited so conservatively with only brief excursions into montage. They are not chains of simplified images as this is, with the movements of offshore. We could not get much information from Showscan about what to do or not do in editing and it is a different grammar. We are just making assumptions about it on the video; when we see it projected we will change things when it's confirmed. We're learning now that when it is enlarged on the big screen there is a leverage effect. The apparent movement is enormous and the speed of movement radically increases on the screen so that you have to override the response looking through the lens or when you are cutting and say, 'I'll have to make it slower'."

According to Holmes, "I've sat and watched the rushes themselves for that I'll give you a fair idea of what will work and we've got the option to re-cut after assembling the workprint and screening it. When I first started to edit I began cutting much slower to make allowances for the size, but now I'm saying if it doesn't work on my screen who is to know if it will work on another. We're just going for it, if it's exciting on the TV screen then it's going to be incredibly exciting for a thousand times bigger!"

It must have been an incredible relief to Weiley to have watched the film projected in Vancouver. He described the result as breathtaking and found that, "Our experience was very like that of the Canadians. They too cursed the system every day — until they saw the finished product. Then the pain begins to fade and be replaced by something else which we at these huge crystal-clear images. The audience don't know or care that the camera exploded seconds after the shot, and after a while the Showscan story deserves to be treated in full. The sound track, projection and theatre are all technically innovative. As I write this I still haven't seen the result and there is a new concern that the theatre being built in the Darling Harbour complex will not be finished on schedule. Although we may have to wait a few months to see the results, there is one high tech junkie who is lining up early for a ticket.
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Executive producer .....................................Anthony J. Gymnich
Director .....................................................Shelley Nettel
Screenplay .................................................David Temple
Ex. producers ..........................................Deborah Warner, Bruce Spence
Editor .........................................................David Temple
Music ..........................................................Brian Gaffney
Production design ....................................Charles Wilder
Costume designer .......................................Donna Jaffe
Make-up ......................................................Noriko Spencer
Scenic artist ..................................................Rod Wotton
Make-up supervisor .................................Jill Eden, Leigh McKenzie
Make-up assistant .....................................Barbara Dair
Make-up assistant .....................................Barbara Dair
Sound ..........................................................Dale Lass
Production manager ...............................Jill Eden, Leigh McKenzie
Production manager ...............................Jill Eden, Leigh McKenzie
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Dist. company ...............................................Bert Flanagan
Prod. exec .....................................................Peter Boyle
Prod. co-ordinator .......................................David Temple
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OUT OF THE BODY
Prod. company: David Hannay Productions Dist. company: Premiere Film Marketing
Prod. director: David Hannay
Director: Brian Treach-Smith
Scriptwriter: Kevin G. Ross
Sound recordist: Kevin Lind
Script editor: Tim Uren
Editor: Brian Kavanagh
Prod. designer: Tom Brown
Exec. producer: Tim Bridge
Line producer: Lyn Bunker
Prod. coordinator: Stephen Taggart
Prod. manager: Julie Ritchie
Prod. manager: Barry Taylor
Prod. secretary: Debbie Samuels
Prod. accountant: Elaine Crowther
Accounts acct: Linda Whitley
1st asst director: Janis Ablett
2nd asst director: Danielle Lias
2nd asst director: Dave Alexander
 Casting liaison: Lesley Jenkins
Focus puller: Rob Norgard
Clapper/loader: Michelle Pap
Key grip: Brian Curran
Boom operator: Mark van Kool
Art director: Marc Ryan
SPFX make-up: Derick de Nie
Sound post-production: John Dennisson, John Vacch
Editing assistants: Allen Woodruff, Peter McIlvan
Still photography: Cora Ancle
Wardrobe: Kim Bromberg
Safety report: George Mann
Publicity: Lidl Molloyn
Catering: Fiona Angel
Length: 90 minutes

Gauge: 35mm
Shooting stock: Kodak

Prod. company: Charles Hannah Productions Dist. company: Premiere Film Marketing
Prod. director: Charlotte Hannah
Director: Chris Roache
Scriptwriter: Chris Roache
Sound recordist: Paul Bodger
Supervising editor: Brian Kavanagh
Prod. op: Mark Lane
Exec. producer: Tom Broadbridge
Prod. co-director: Lesley Parker
Prod. co-producer: Julian Stott
Prod. producer: John Ritchie
Prod. secretary: Debbie Samuels
Prod. assistant: Earl O_SANITIZE
Accts assistant: Linda Whitley
1st asst director: Janis Ablett
2nd asst director: Charlie Revai
Contemporary: Kevin J. Moore
 Casting liaison: Lesley Jenkins
Focus puller: Rob Norgard
Clapper/loader: Michelle Pap
Key grip: Brian Curran
Boom operator: Mark van Kool
Art director: Marc Ryan
SPFX make-up: Derick de Nie

BOUNDARIES OF THE HEART
Prod. company: Production Line Dist. company: Premiere Film Marketing
Prod. director: Frances Walker
Director: Frances Walker
Unit manager: Doug Smith
Location manager: Brian Reaton
Prod. assistant: Robbie McPhail
Location manager: Barry Wood
2nd asst director: Paul Wood
Focus puller: Jan Pettigrew
Clapper/loader: Vassilis Vassilakis
Clapper/loader: David Stott
Props: Nigel Dowsett
Runner: Richard Gordon
Casting: Pussyculture
Laboratory: Moviestar
Lab. manager: Geoff Full
Budget: $855,000
Length: 105 minutes
Shooting stock: Kodak

Prod. company: Charles Hannah Productions Dist. company: Premiere Film Marketing
Prod. director: Frances Walker
Director: Frances Walker
Unit manager: Doug Smith
Location manager: Brian Reaton
Prod. assistant: Robbie McPhail
Location manager: Barry Wood
2nd asst director: Paul Wood
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Clapper/loader: David Stott
Props: Nigel Dowsett
Runner: Richard Gordon
Casting: Pussyculture
Laboratory: Moviestar
Lab. manager: Geoff Full
Budget: $855,000
Length: 105 minutes
Shooting stock: Kodak

BOULDER HARM
Prod. company: Smile Films Dist. company: Premiere Film Marketing
Prod. director: Thomas Hendry
Director: Mark Jeffreys
Based on the original idea by
Wangari
Photography: Ken Ryan
Sound recordist: Andrew Hamage
Assoc. producer: Mark Van Burkle
Prod. designer: Roger Ford
Assoc. producer: Andy Ginn
Camera operator: Chris O'Connell
Assoc. producer: Ben Monten
Location finder: Ruth Catin (Kingscliff Pty Ltd)
Assoc. producer: Rowena Talacca
Art director: Mike Stevens
Assoc. producer: Donna Mitchell
Camera assistant: Even Keddo
Assoc. producer: Sarah Lewis
Casting: Michael Lynch
Assoc. producer: Kim Williams
Camera: Allegra
Assoc. producer: Andrew Hii
Sound: Neill Kenney
Assoc. producer: Simon Knight
Extra casting: Virginia Everingham
Assoc. producer: Jayne Mitchell
Camera operator: Dave Williamson
Assoc. producer: Rosemary
Focus puller: Tracy Kubler
Assoc. producer: Phil Murphy
Hair stylist: Carolanne
Assoc. producer: Peter Round
Hairdresser: Danielle Wright
Assoc. producer: Rob Lowe
Art director: Steve Devine
Assoc. producer: Stephen Bevis
Wardrobe supervisor: Louise Wakefield
Assoc. producer: Stephen Bevis
Make-up supervisor: Jonathon Malone
Assoc. producer: Bob Levin
Upholstery: Julie Legge
Assoc. producer: Julie Pask
Props buyers/set dressers: Donna Brown, Eugene Taintt
Assoc. producer: John Clarke
Stunt coordinator: Collin Gibson
Assoc. producer: Rod O'Hare
Assoc. producer: Kim Lennion
Assoc. producer: Julian Stott
Stunt co-ordinator: Rob McFarlane
Assoc. producer: Brent Reardon
Assoc. producer: Jamie Jaffe
Assoc. producer: John O’Farrell
Assoc. producer: Paul Menton
Assoc. producer: Danny Burton
Budget: $2,400,000

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Assoc. producer: Paul Menton
Assoc. producer: Danny Burton
Budget: $2,400,000

SYMPHONY: A contemporary drama set in Melbourne, it tells the story of the character Thomas, whose most successful author, who returns to his homeland after 10 years of Hollywood acclaim, is trapped in a series of events that threaten to unravel his life.

SYMPHONY: A contemporary drama set in Melbourne, it tells the story of the character Thomas, whose most successful author, who returns to his homeland after 10 years of Hollywood acclaim, is trapped in a series of events that threaten to unravel his life.
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<th>Camera assistant</th>
<th>Malcolm Robertson, Darryl Emmerson</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sound best</td>
<td>Dean Markey, John Hargraves</td>
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<td>Best boy</td>
<td>Darryl Emmerson</td>
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<td>Hairdresser</td>
<td>Michele Day, Peta Black</td>
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<td>Wardrobe asst.</td>
<td>Fiona Nicolls, Lisa J. Stockwell</td>
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<td>Wardrobe runner</td>
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<td>John Hargraves, Paul Booth</td>
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<td>Props assistant</td>
<td>Neate (Bradley), Darryl Emmerson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Production manager</td>
<td>Tony Biggs (Slob), Mark Carraud</td>
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<td>Casting</td>
<td>Darryl Emmerson (George)</td>
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<td>Make-up</td>
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<td>Location manager</td>
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<td>Boom operator</td>
<td>Malcolm Robertson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Script editor</td>
<td>Denis Whitburn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camera assistant</td>
<td>Claire Gate, Francoise Dolce</td>
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<td>Film Dept assistant</td>
<td>Paul Booth, Matt McCann</td>
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<td>Boom operator</td>
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**PRODUCERS**

**OUR TEAM**

- **Craig Laffin**, Chair of Directors
- **Brett Godfrey**, Chair of the Finance Committee
- **Paige Hatcher**, Chair of the Marketing Committee
- **Michael McMillan**, Chair of the Production Committee

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- **Michael McMillan**, President
- **Paige Hatcher**, Chair of the Finance Committee
- **Brett Godfrey**, Chair of the Marketing Committee
- **Craig Laffin**, Chair of Directors

**EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS**

- **Dallas Jones**, Executive Producer
- **Jeremy Fisher**, Executive Producer

**PRODUCTION MANAGER**

- **Thomas Gilmore**, Production Manager

**PRODUCTION STAFF**

- **Michelle Chen**, Production Assistant
- **Alexandra Lee**, Production Assistant

---

**CONTACT**

- **Office**: 318 Willoughby Road, Naremburn, Sydney, NSW 2068
- **Phone**: 02 439 4590
- **Email**: info@producers.com
- **Website**: www.producers.com
GHOSTS

Synopsis: A contemporary thriller set on a remote island off the southern coast of Australia.

MULLAWAY

Synopsis: Two men of opposing viewpoints fall headlong into the shadows of their own psyche.

RATS

Synopsis: Two kids steal a mailbag for the thrill of it, but are forever affected by the letters it contains.
Help us make this produc­tion survey as comprehensive as possible. If you have something which is about to go into production and you think we should know and we will make sure it is included. Call Kathy Bail on (03) 429 5511, or write to: Diary of Events, 2 Charles Street, Abbotsford, Victoria 3067.

NINETEEN PERCENT MEN

BARADINE

PRODUCERS

DIST. company ARHS Vic./Div. Coore Films

Producer Rhodes

Directors Anthony Bowman

RUNNER Torquil Maclean

MIXED at Laboratory

Director Reg Christie

LENGTH 90 minutes

SHOOTING stock Kodak Eastman 7292

Gauge 16mm

SYNOPSIS: A futuristic adventure set to power­ scape, history and mythology of the area.

STILL PHOTOGRAPHY Peter Figesigars

OPTICS Roger Cowland (Colorflex)

ACTORS

runners John Duttine

JACK DAVIS

(Working title)

Producer company Arcana Productions

Director Michael Buckley

Screenwriter Michael Buckley

Editor Michael Buckley

CINEMA...FILM

POSTER...FILM

LABORATORY Colorfilm

LENGTH 80 minutes

SYNOPSIS: The content of this film will be limited to the interaction of two Moray and a friend. The picture will be set in the world of the New World and the near­ future. The project will be limited to a two­part series of episodes to Baradine, a timber village in the Baradine area of Australia.

EDE-N-TOT

PRODUCER Ingoo Kleinert & Khan Ross

PRODUCER Ingoo Kleinert & Khan Ross

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER Ingoo Kleinert & Khan Ross

SCREENWRITERS Ingoo Kleinert & Khan Ross

SOUND RECORDISTS Ingoo Kleinert & Khan Ross

ART DIRECTOR Kathryn Bird

COSTUME DESIGNER Justine Pearsall

COMPOSITIONS

PRODUCERS

Dean Davis

Stills

Timothy White

ASST. PROD. DIRECTOR Sue Stephen

PROD. MANAGER Lynda House

PROD. CO-ORDINATOR Jody Lawrence

UNIT MANAGER Leanne Bidwell

PROD. ACCOUNTANT Mandy Carter

MONEY’S SERVICES

ACCOUNTANT Monika Gehr

ASSISTANT PROD. DIRECTOR Hamish McEwan

ASSISTANT PROD. MANAGER Mark Marfell

CONTINUITY Karina Parkinson

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Margaret Brown

Casting Nadia Tass

CAST RAPPER

FOCUS Puller Nick Nelson

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Camera Yvonne Chambers

Camera attachment Corinne Watson

Key grip Brendan Shankley

Astrup Neville Cameron

Gaffer Ian Dewhurst

Generator operator Tim Morgan

Boom operator Greg Goldsmith

Art director (Broken Hill) Graeme Duasus

Art director (Sydney) Paul Kullack

Costume designer Phil Eagles

Makeup artists Sarah Dalling

Hairdresser Will Kenrick

Wardrobe supervisor Amanda Ramon

3rd asst director (Melbourne) Darren Pan

2nd asst director (Melbourne) Joseph Winters

Standby props John Stobie

Script supervisor Virginia Mill

Cinematographer Steve Stubbs

CONSTRUCTION

Construction ass’t 1st McLa

LABORATORY

Colorfilm/Cinevex

CUTTER Ken Pecke

LABORATORY CUTTER Liza Janofsky

LENGTH 30 minutes

SYNOPSIS: The life and work of Western Australian author, Jack Davis. The profiles have attracted the interest of the European Film Festival as part of Australia’s Bicentennial.

BARADINE

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Director Michael Buckley

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Editor Michael Buckley

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Matrice — A tribute to Cartier Bresson
Prod. company	Ingo Kleinert
Photographer	Ingo Kleinert
Art director	Jorandy Bordin
Lab. liaison	Ian Anderson
Gauge	16mm
Cast: Gillian Jones (Sally), Noah Taylor (Mick). Synopsis: Sex and death in the western suburbs.

An ordinary woman
Producers	Sue Brooks, Alison Tilson
Director	Sue Brooks
Scriptwriter	Alison Tilson
Photography	Nicole Freuden
Length	30 minutes
Synopsis: Through the examination of the life of an absolutely ordinary woman, this film seeks to raise questions about truth and perception in relation to identity.

The Photographer
Prod. company	Barorna Films
Photographer	Larry O'Shea
Director	Larry O'Shea
Sound recordist	Robert Ludwig
Editors	Viv Scouli
Post-production sound	Robert Ludwig
Length	20 minutes
Gauge	16mm
Synopsis: A story about a small-town newspaper photographer who stumbles on a mystery surrounding a country farmer and his wife. The farmer's wife has not been seen for over 20 years, but the photographer is curious to find out why she has not returned to the town. His investigation leads him to discover the mysteries of the past. The story unfolds the story of Grosmond, supposedly a mysterious identity. Grosmond's mysterious identity is eventually revealed, and the photographer confronts her husband about her true identity, and the farmer denies her existence.

Salt, Saliva, Spemand Sweat
Prod. company	Dumb Blonde
Photographer	Rod Bishop
Director	Rod Bishop
Scriptwriter	Phil Boyce
Post-production sound	Richard Dyer
Length	30 minutes
Gauge	16mm
Synopsis: The story of a young foreign woman who visits a beautiful Italian town. As they talk, fragments of the Young Woman's life leave, will she follow him, does she love him?

You're complete Negative Matching Service, including:
- Time Coding onto 8” Floppy Disc
- Super 16mm
- Syncing Neg or Pos Rushes
- Edge-Coding Service ("Rubber Numbering")
- Tight deadlines our speciality! 24 hours a day, 7 days a week if required. Contact Greg Chapman on (02) 439 3988.
3.5mm Production

PRODUCTION

P R O D U C T I O N

$24,710. Grieve, 16mm comedy/drama, 26 minutes, Shelter. 30 minutes, production grant of $23,256. The truth is slipping out the back. from a failed marriage in Europe to a father

To FORGET GHOSTS

Dennis Hopper, 16mm comedy, 26 minutes, production development investment of $100,000. tickets: Toby Zoates, 16mm animated film, 50 minutes, production investment of $95,000. The Lonely Ones (David Glazer and Mark Chapman), 40 minutes, production investment of $50,478. 50.1 minutes, production investment of $12,928. August 6th: Peter Jordan and John Hughes, 16mm documentary, 52 minutes, production investment of $5,000. 1981: St. Mary's, 16mm animated film, 50 minutes, production investment of $15,000. Shadows & Fractals: Sue Weiss and Sue Spurrier, 18mm dramatised documentary, 30 minutes, production investment of $450. The Gemmon: Rick Cavagna, video, 30 minutes, production investment of $5,000. 30 minutes, production investment of $5,000. Synopsis: A clan leader invites Film Australia to consider the first ceremony to be held at his homeland settlement in northeast Arnhem Land. The film shows the organisation's commitment to new programs, and explores the significance of the clan homeland movement. EUROPEAN TRADE MARKETS

THE AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Product company........... Film Australia Dist. company........... Film Australia Product director........... Ian Dunlop Product producer........... John Russell Product Accountant........... Janet Bell

THE BIG GIG

Product company........... Film Australia Dist. company........... Film Australia Product director........... Ian Dunlop

FOOTBALL

1.5mm Production

PROJECTS FUNDED BY AFC
CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT FUND

October 1987

What Women Want: Kate Blackadder and Brookes McTavish, 16mm, 12 minutes, post-production sound.

To Forget Ghosts: Alexander Broun and Caroline Milward, 16mm, 20 minute script development investment of $3,000.

Debacle: Beth Baidon, 16mm, 20 minutes, production grant of $3,256.

The Death of God: Geoff Clifton, 16mm animated film, 8 minutes, production grant of $2,740.

The Wrong Foot: Jinken Dullnyn and Anna Grieve, 16mm comedy/drama, 26 minutes, production development investment of $4,000. casts: Mandy Walker, 16mm, 50 minutes, production development investment of $5,000. Shri: David Male, 16mm documentary, 50 minutes, production development investment of $5,000.

FULLY ORDAINED MEAT PIE

Product company........... Film Australia Dist. company........... Film Australia Product director........... Michael Green Product producer........... Janet Bell

A M E R I C A N C H I N S E

Product company........... Film Australia Dist. company........... Film Australia Product director........... Tom Zobrycki Product producer........... John Russell

F I L M A U S T R A L I A'S A U S T R A L I A

Film Australia's 12 director, Graham Chase.

ECOLOGY

Product company........... Film Australia Dist. company........... Film Australia Product editor........... Judi Phegley Product director........... Ian Dunlop Product producer........... Janet Bell

LEARNING

Product company........... Film Australia Dist. company........... Film Australia Product director........... Joe Reading Product producer........... Janet Bell Product secretary........... Margaret Crewes

F I L M A U S T R A L I A

Film Australia's National Education Program. The film presents an overview of existing Film Australia programs are used.

GOING STRONG

Product company........... Film Australia Dist. company........... Film Australia Product director........... Mait Tannant Product editor........... Martha Barlowe

MARKETING

Marketing & promotions officer............. Debra Mayrhofer

FOOTBALL

1.5mm Production

PROJECTS FUNDED BY AFC
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F I L M A U S T R A L I A

Film Australia's National Education Program. The film presents an overview of existing Film Australia programs are used.
MEETING THE CHALLENGE

THE BUILDERS

A four-part series for television that takes a new look at the dynamic interchange between Asia and Europe in the modern world. It explores the changing relationship between the two regions, and the impact of this change on the world economy and culture.

Synopsis: A four-part series for television that takes a new look at the dynamic interchange between Asia and Europe in the modern world. It explores the changing relationship between the two regions, and the impact of this change on the world economy and culture.

Length: 8 minutes

The series is produced by Film Australia and is distributed by Film Australia.

INFORMATION MACHINE (1) —  ROAD’S DAY

PRODUCTION

Gauge ........................................................Video

Synopsis: A documentary about the problems faced by the Australian business person when entering the world of interactive video.

Length: 9 minutes

The series is produced by Film Australia and is distributed by Film Australia.

GOVERNMENT FILM PRODUCTION CORPORATION

Gauge ........................................................Video

Synopsis: A program produced for the Powerhouse Museum’s Bicentennial Exhibition, which is a multi-screen video that illustrates the use of computers in our daily lives. It shows the world to the many ways in which computers are used, as her father goes about completing the program's profile.

Length: 10 minutes

The series is produced by Film Australia and is distributed by Film Australia.

GREEN ENGINEERING

Gauge ........................................................Video

Synopsis: A program produced for the Powerhouse Museum’s Bicentennial Exhibition, which is a multi-screen video that illustrates the use of computers in our daily lives. It shows the world to the many ways in which computers are used, as her father goes about completing the program's profile.

Length: 10 minutes

The series is produced by Film Australia and is distributed by Film Australia.

INTEGRATING DISABLED CHILDREN

Gauge ........................................................Video

Synopsis: A compilation of footage provided by television channels and ‘Integration’ — a program previously produced for the Department of Education — these three community service announcements for the NSW Department of Community Services on integration of disabled children with non-disabled children.

Length: 2 minutes

The series is produced by Film Australia and is distributed by Film Australia.

PEOPLE TEEPEE LODGE (CADET UNIT)

Gauge ........................................................Video

Synopsis: A film, for the New South Wales Tourism Commission, highlights the variety of tourist attractions available and their accessibility. It is unique in that there is no dialogue: the original music tells the story. It is shot along the coastline, to the Blue Mountains and in the Southern Highlands. A Bicentennial project, this film is being released worldwide.

Length: 16 minutes

The series is produced by Film Australia and is distributed by Film Australia.
A CRAYON
Director: Concerned with the problems of Australian forestry. The program

ART IS SERIOUS FUN
Director: S. Barrett
Synopsis: A refection essay on the imposition of individual freedom and time to know each other. Neither want children and traumatic con­

NO EYES OF A CHILD
Director: Gilles Chamerois
Synopsis: A blue-screen television adaptation of the music-drama by Igor Stravinsky, updated and retold for the 1980s. A soloist returning from a war, the developers who persuade him to sell his soul — an untrue transaction.

BAD ATTITUDE
Director: David Richardson
Synopsis: A suspense film centred around Dick, a man with a mind who has just broken up with his girlfriend.

BOSS BOY
Director: George Vasca
Synopsis: The story of two children, a 14-year-old boy who accepts his national background, and a 13-year-old girl who cannot accept her background. Both are made fun of by the school. On younger Greeks at school, including Yanni, with the help of his Aussie gang.

CABARET'S THE LIFE
Director: Bettina Spivakovskaya
Synopsis: A young man and a woman who are obsessed by the Virgin Mary.

MINGA: A PRIMITIVE CULTURE
Director: Gordon Taylor
Synopsis: The Aboriginal people (Anuquo) who inhabit the land around Uluru. Their language and culture is a name for this world's place. The film looks at Uluru and Uluru, and "how the rock" has become a symbol for "the dead."

MARY IS YOUR TICKET TO HEAVEN
Director: Peter Aquila
Synopsis: What does the day have in store? Will a UFO crash through your window? Will you be caught between two worlds, and the world will explode. Some days it pays to stay in bed!

THE BIG ICE
Director: David Richardson
Synopsis: Another situation where love and laurces Eric to manipulate his own macabre victory. A story of deception and revenge.

THE SANTA CLAUS TEST
Director: Peter Long
Synopsis: The story of Eric, a boy, and his sweet young babysitter.

SHOOBY DOO DAGTIME
Director: Cameron Clarke
Synopsis: The story of Eric, a boy, and his sweet young babysitter.

WHO HAS MY HOUSE ON MY BACK
Director: Gordon Taylor
Synopsis: A fairly young boy in an established country house has an orchestra encounter with a possessive alien life form.

GUILTY DUBBE
Director: Cameron Clarke
Synopsis: The story of two children, a 14-year-old boy who accepts his national background, and a 13-year-old girl who cannot accept her background. Both are made fun of by the school. On younger Greeks at school, including Yanni, with the help of his Aussie gang.

HISIN-CHAN-SHANI (NEW GOLD MOUNTAIN)
Director: Joshua Reed
Synopsis: This afternoon John was a model citizen. But tonight he's been battled and now he's after blood — only thirteen.

ANGEL CITY
Director: Joshua Reed
Synopsis: A refection essay on the imposition of individual freedom and time to know each other. Neither want children and traumatic con­

FITTING IN
Director: Philip Watts
Synopsis: Simon tries to settle into a new town, but runs into trouble with Blacky and his friends. Not going along with gold mining, Raymond, the school wimp, but Simon is deter­

Pleysure Domes
Director: Maggie Fokie
Synopsis: A refection essay on the imposition of individual freedom and time to know each other. Neither want children and traumatic con­

THE SEANNAICH
Director: Lynn Hargreaves
Synopsis: The story of two children, a 14-year-old boy who accepts his national background, and a 13-year-old girl who cannot accept her background. Both are made fun of by the school. On younger Greeks at school, including Yanni, with the help of his Aussie gang.

SWEET FODDER
Director: Rebecca Chapman
Synopsis: You have to sort of let go and put yourself in these funny situations. So you just find yourself in one of those feeling-like you're really open and vulnerable, and doing your thing to someone when you're probably not.

THE SWIRL
Director: Simon Gauntlett
Synopsis: There is a very strange world and it is in quite a state.

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THE SWIRL
Director: Simon Gauntlett
Synopsis: There is a very strange world and it is in quite a state.
PRODUCTION REPORT

Length: 22 x 30 minutes
Gauge: Video
Cast: Robert Hughes, Julie McGrifer, Simone Buchanan, Sarah Monahan, Caroline Chisholm, Dave Asprey, Mylène Dewit
Synopsis: A satire about a widowed father trying to raise his children with the help of the family's crazy cousin.

HOME AND AWAY

Prod company: Amalgamated TV
Distribution company: Pre-sale Network
Art dept runners: Deke Dvrece
Scriptwriters: Bevan Lee
Script editors: Greg Haddrick, Mike Perjanic
Synopsis: A weekly serial about Tom and Willits, Sharyn Hodgson.

RAFFERTY'S RULES

Prod company: ATV
Producer: Mike Smith
Director: Graham Hallett
Synopsis: The trials and tribulations of stipendiary court magistrate Michael Aloysius Rafferty.

MICHAEL WILLESEE'S AUSTRALIANS

Prod company: Roadshow
Commissioner: Mike Perjanic
Producers: Pamela Vannick, Roger McDonald
Directors: Bill Brealey, Ken Dobson, Rod Hardy, Mark Callan, Iain Gilmour
Scriptwriters: Mary Wright, Julianne Comyn
Synopsis: Michael Willesee's Australians is a drama series of monumental events, unsung heroes and buried surprises of history from Australia's penal beginnings to the present day.

NEIGHBOURS

Prod company: Grundy Television Pty Ltd
Producer: Marie Trevor
Directors: Tony Olszczak, Adam Croft
Additional directors: Stephanie McAlister, Sara Montgomery
Composer: Michael Little
Synopsis: This new Australian serial bares the passions of Australian families... and their adventures around a cast of delightful characters.

RICHMOND HILL

Prod company: Grundy Television Pty Ltd
Producer: Sue Masters
Director: Reg Watson
Synopsis: The trials and tribulations of two young girls coming to a large country town to continue their education. Each episode will pertain to the adventures and misadventures told in a humorous and active manner. The series gives the audience the opportunity for fun and entertainment.

WESTEND HO

Prod company: Belinda Films
Producer: Rodney Laver
Scriptwriter: Peter Jenkins
Synopsis: The series tells the stories of two young girls coming to a large country town to continue their education. Each episode will pertain to the adventures and misadventures told in a humorous and active manner. The series gives the audience the opportunity for fun and entertainment.
DAD AND DAVE
Prod. company: Yoram Gross, Film Studio
Producer: Yoram Gross
Director: Yoram Gross, Donn Walters
Scriptwriter: John Palmer
Based on the novel by: Hilda Groves
Composer: Guy Gross
Actor: Sandra Gross, Janet Fielding, Martin Sacks, Joy Smithers, Diana Dallas, Lisa Hoffman
Art director: Jack Monckton
Costume designer: Ben Mendelsohn
Synopsis: DAD AND DAVE is the story of a father and young son who accidentally join a 350-strong guerilla unit which contains three of their sisters who struggle to make a new life for themselves amid the dangers of the war.

FIE LS OF FI RE — THE SEQUEL
Prod. company: Peace Palm Pictures Pty Ltd
Dist. company: Zenith Pro.
Producers: Andrew Greenspan & The Nine Network
Producers: Irene Coral
Scriptwriter: Patricia Johnson
Director: Guy champagne
Photographer: Rob Marchand
Sound recordist: Peter McFall
Film editor: John Ashley
Sound editor: Guy Campbell
Audio post-prod: Soundfix
Make-up: Lorna Ferguson
Sound recordist: Peter McFall

HILLS END
Prod. company: Revue Productions Pty Ltd
Producers: Nick Hornby, Ronald Nielson, Phil Hagan
Director: Charles Watt
Based on the novel by: Sir Bernard Callinan
Photographer: Mark Savage
Sound recordist: Sean Meltzer
Prod. designer: David Vassiliou
Prod. manager: Brian Thomson
Stunt co-ordinators: Brian Thomson, John Ashley
Editor: Christine Kiddle
Costume designer: Sue McClelland
Make-up: Vivien Miller
Tox. operator: Tony Birt
Synopsis: Based on the book by Sir Bernard Callinan, HILLS END is the story of a father and young son who accidentally join a 350-strong guerilla unit which contains three of their sisters who struggle to make a new life for themselves amid the dangers of the war.

No Time for Games
Prod. company: Albert Street Productions
Producer: Stephen Luby
Director: Charles Watt
Based on the novel by: Tony Cronin
Photographer: Stephen Luby
Scriptwriter: Stephen Luby
Sound recordist: Sam Savage
Prod. designer: Sadao Seno
Prod. manager: Peter McFall
Editor: Christine Kiddle
Sound editor: Tony Birt
Make-up: Vivien Miller
tSynopsis: Based on the book by Tony Cronin, NO TIME FOR GAMES is the story of a father and young son who accidentally join a 350-strong guerilla unit which contains three of their sisters who struggle to make a new life for themselves amid the dangers of the war.

Synopsis: The 22nd Independent Company was a 350-strong guerilla unit which contained three of their sisters who struggle to make a new life for themselves amid the dangers of the war.
**Production Survey**

**PRODUCTION**

**Title**: TOUCH THE SUN — DEEvil's Hill

**Type**: Series, 13 episodes

**Length**: 52 minutes

**Synopsis**: The story of Spit MacPhee centres on the struggle of a young orphan to be accepted by his relatives. When he becomes an orphan, an issue which is closely watched by the town, he is befriended by a young Aboriginal man. They are both seeking a simple life, but the glorified tales of the bush are about to separate them from the others who have to work with each other. They retrieve the help and get back to the farm safely.

**THE TRUE BELIEVERS**

**Type**: Documentary

**Length**: 8 x 52 minutes

**Synopsis**: The story of Spilt MacPhee centres on the moral and religious attitudes of the Australian labour movement in the 1930s. The town is polarised by various factions who seek to become young Spit’s benefactors. The story of her search for her real mother and the relationship she develops as she gains new insights.

**A WALTZ THROUGH THE HILLS**

**Type**: Documentary

**Length**: 1 hour 40 minutes

**Synopsis**: A miniseries which chronicles the life of Robina Sands, beginning in the time, the near destruction of the Federal Labor party in 1945 with the party in power it ends in 1955. The great figures as Prime Minister.

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**Production Information**

**Product Company**: Revcom Production Pty Ltd

**District Company**: Reventcom Television Pty Ltd

**Producer/Director**: Marcus Cooper

**Screenwriter**: James Aldridge

**Sound Recordist**: Phil Tippens

**Editor**: Andrew Glasser

**Assistant Producer**: Sandra Alexander

**Producer**: Paul Bennett

**Co-producer**: Edward Nicolls

**Unit Manager**: Christian Hoppenbrouwers

**Location Manager**: Stuart Williams

**Scriptwriter**: Moya Wood

**Based on the novel by**: James Aldridge

**Production Company**: Revcom Production Pty Ltd

**Producer/Director**: John Mcclelland

**Screenwriter**: Moya Wood

**Editing Assistant**: Andrew Glasser

**Editor**: Graham Mulder

**Production Designer**: David Copping

**Production Assistant**: Jane Pepper

**Gaffer**: Graham Mulder

**Con: Production Manager**: John Tiley

**Costume Designer**: Louise Fanning

**Casting Assistant**: Iren Gaskell

**Synopsis**: Sam comes from the city, but when he becomes an orphan, an issue which is closely watched by the town, he is befriended by a young Aboriginal man. They are both seeking a simple life, but the glorified tales of the bush are about to separate them from the others who have to work with each other. They retrieve the help and get back to the farm safely.

**THE TRUE BELIEVERS**

**Producer/Director**: John Mcclelland

**Screenwriter**: Moya Wood

**Editing Assistant**: Andrew Glasser

**Editor**: Graham Mulder

**Production Designer**: David Copping

**Production Assistant**: Jane Pepper

**Gaffer**: Graham Mulder

**Con: Production Manager**: John Tiley

**Costume Designer**: Louise Fanning

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**Editing Assistant**: Andrew Glasser

**Editor**: Graham Mulder

**Production Designer**: David Copping

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**Gaffer**: Graham Mulder

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**Screenwriter**: Moya Wood

**Editing Assistant**: Andrew Glasser

**Editor**: Graham Mulder

**Production Designer**: David Copping

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**Synopsis**: A miniseries which chronicles the life of Robina Sands, beginning in the time, the near destruction of the Federal Labor party in 1945 with the party in power it ends in 1955. The great figures as Prime Minister.
**FILM CENSORSHIP LISTINGS**

Films examined in terms of the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations as States' film censorship legislation are listed below.

An explanatory key to reasons for classifying non-"G" films appears hereunder:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Explicitness/Intensity</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infrequent</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S (Sex)</td>
<td>V (Violence)</td>
<td>L (Language)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D (Other)</td>
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**Films Registered Without Deletions**

- **G (For General Exhibition)**
  - **Dot Goes To Hollywood**: Y. Gross, Australia, 2002.9m, Yoram Gross Films Studio
  - **Link Up Diary**: T. Milne, N. McDonough, Australia, 921.48m, Ronin Films

- **PG (Parental Guidance)**
  - **Backstage**: G. Burrowes, Australia, 2578.42m, Hoyts Distribution, (Si-mg)
  - **Back To The Beach**: M. Cassino, USA, 2468.70m, United International Pictures, (Oadut concepts)
  - **Bar BQ**: (said to be main title not shown in English): R. Schwary, Canada, 2899.03m, United International Pictures, (Li-mj)
  - **Carlton De Famille**: M. Ray, France, 2770.43m, Hays Distribution, Ordut concepts, (Li-mj)

- **Ernest Goes To Camp**: S. Williams, USA, 2416.00m, Hoyts Village Roadshow Corporation, (Li-mj)

- **Introvern**: S. Finnell, USA, 3264.17m, Village Roadshow Corporation, (Li-mj)

- **Masters Of The Universe**: M. Golan, USA, 2860.00m, Hoyts Distribution, (Vfi-m-j)

- **Monster In The Closet**: D. Levitt, USA, 2496.00m, Tall Hand Pictures, (OQidt honor)

- **My Sweet Little Village**: J. Suster, Czechoslovakia, 2743.00m, Hoyts Distribution, Li-mj (Ordut concepts)

- **North Shore**: W. Finnegan, USA, 2855.65m, United International Pictures, (Si-mj-li-mj)

- **Pee Wee's Big Adventure**: R. Shapiro, USA, 2496.00m, Newvision Film Distributors, (Oadut concepts)

- **Port's Mettalls** (said to be said title not shown in English): J. Kuk, Hong Kong, 2578.42m, Chinatown Cinema, (Si-mj-li-mj)

- **Superman IV** (said to be main title not shown in English): M. Golan, USA, 2535.26m, Hoyts Distribution, (Si-mj-li-mj)

- **T economies** (said to be said title not shown in English): Y. Gross, Australia, 2688.14m, Seven Keys, (Oadut theme) (Si-mj)

- **In Excess**: J. Leather, Canada, 2578.42m, Golden Reel Films, (Si-mj-li-mj)

- **I've Heard The Mermaids Singing**: W. Zuckerman, USA, 2475.67m, Filmipac Holdings, (OQidt use)

- **Juggernaut**: (said to be main title not shown in English): B. Schroeder/F. Ross/T. Luddy, USA, 2578.42m, Hoyts Distribution, (Si-mj-li-mj)

- **Kama Sutra**: (said to be main title not shown in English): J. Suster, Hungary, 2770.43m, Village Roadshow Corporation, (Si-mj-li-mj)

- **Kung Fu**: (said to be main title not shown in English): K. Hayashi/T. Uchida, Japan, 2194.40m, Ronin Films, (Vfi-m-j)

- **M (For Mature Audience)**
  - **Adventures In Babysitting**: D. Hill, Obst, USA, 2797.96m, Village Roadshow, (Li-mj-li-mj)
  - **The M. Phantom, USA, 2416.00m, Hoyts Distribution, Autumn's Tale, An (said to be main title not shown in English): J. Shaw, Hong Kong, 2680.71m, Chinatown Cinema, (Li-mj)

- **Big Town**: The M. Phantom, USA, 3071.36m, Hoyts Distribution, (Vfi-mj-mj-li-mj)

- **Chinese Ghost Story**: A. T. Hark, Hong Kong, 2578.42m, Chinatown Cinema, (Vfi-mj-lj)

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**Films Refused Registration**

- **FILM STUDIO FOR HIRE**

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1902: G.R. Aldo (Aldo Graziati), distinguished studio cameraman of Italian cinema (La Terra Trema, 1948; Umberto D, 1952), born Scorzè, near Treviso, Italy.

1934: NSW Government opens inquiry into film industry, with particular focus on the desirability of an Australian quota.

1980: The British Consul General, knights Alfred Hitchcock on a sound stage at Universal Studios, only months before the director’s death.


1926: Charles Vauvet’s The Moth Of Moombi premieres, Majestic Theatre, Melbourne.


1911: Butterfly McQueen (Thelma McQueen), black actress memorable as Prissy in Gone With The Wind, born, Tampa, Florida.

1936: Actor John Gilbert dies, of heart failure, Los Angeles.

1985: Anton Karas, composer of haunting Harry Lime theme for The Third Man, dies, Vienna.

1929: First musical with an original score, MGM’s The Broadway Melody, premiers, Grauman’s Chinese Theatre, Hollywood.

1921: Frank Hurley, pioneer Australian documentary maker (Pears And Savages, 1921) and cinematographer (The Silence Of Dean Maitland, 1934), dies, Sydney.


1989: Georges Auric, prolific composer whose work can be heard in many films (Coclea’s Orphée, 1951; Chichon’s The Lavender Hill Mob, 1951; Huston’s Moulin Rouge, 1952; Preminger’s Bonjour Tristesse, 1957), born, Lodeve, France.

1931: World premiere of Chaplin’s City Lights, Los Angeles Theatre.


1927: Harold Lloyd’s The Kid Brother released.

1987: Paignton Zoo in southeast England announces the death from old age of Elsa, the lioness used to portray her famous counterpart in Born Free (1966).


1913: Jimmy Van Heusen (Edward Chester Babcock), composer who scored such musicals as the Crosby-Hope Road series, The Bells Of St Mary’s (1945), and Thoroughly Modern Millie (1967), born, Syracuse, New York.

1920: John Box, art director (Lawrence Of Arabia, 1962; Doctor Zhivago, 1965; Oliver!, 1968), born, London.

1908: Paul Misraki, composer (for Vadim’s And God Created Woman, 1968; Chabrol’s The Cousins, 1958; Godard’s Alphaville, 1965), born, Istanbul.

1923: Paddy Chayefsky (Sidney Chayefsky), screenwriter (Marty, 1955; Network, 1976), born, the Bronx, NY.

1931: World premiere of Chaplin’s City Lights, Los Angeles Theatre.

1958: Michael Sinnott (Michael Sinnot), producer/director who made the early films of Chaplin, Keaton, Langdon and Mack Sennett, and created the Keystone Kops, born, Richmond, Canada.


1897: Alberto Cavalcanti, documentary filmmaker (Went The Day Well?, 1940), born, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

1919: Jock Mahoney (Jacques O’ Mahoney), former stuntman who succeeded Gordon Scott as the screen’s 13th Tarzan, born, Chicago.

1931: James Dean (James Byron Dean) born, Marion, Indiana.

1984: Dita Frame, legendary ‘Lady In Black’ who made annual pilgrimages to Rudolph Valentino’s grave to leave a single red rose, dies, San Jacinto, California.

1926: Rex Ingram, director (The Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse, 1921; The Garden Of Allah, 1927), born, Dublin.

1909: Kazuo Miyagawa, director of photography (Rashomon, 1950; Yojojojojojo, 1961), born, Kyoto, Japan.

1925: Louis Feuillade, pioneer director of French cinema (Les Vampires series, 1915-16), dies, Nice.


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I was able to use bolder, simpler lighting without sacrificing shadow detail or image sharpness. Night exteriors, which were demanded by a good portion of the film, were exceptional. The negative truly amazed me for its capacity to hold detail while tolerating such moments of extreme brightness as passing headlights or explosions.

As a Director of Photography "I must know that what I see in front of the camera is what I'll get on the screen. AGFA XT 320 with its improved color reproduction and sharpness assured me of that. I counted on XT 320 and all of the 1,500,000 feet I exposed delivered consistently day after day, roll after roll."

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