3-1-1990

Cinema Papers 78

Scott Murray

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Publisher
MTV Publishing Ltd, Richmond, 96p

This serial is available at Research Online: http://ro.uow.edu.au/cp/78
CINEMA Papers
MARCH 1990 No. 78
$5

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THE COOK, THE THIEF ...
Peter Greenaway talks artistic

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INCORPORATING FILM VIEWS
MARCH 1990 NUMBER 78

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ITALIAN PLEASURES

MARINA PIERO IN WALERIAN BOROWCZYK’S MASTERPIECE, ARS AMANDI: AVAILABLE ONLY IN AUSTRALIA FROM YOUR LOCAL ITALIAN VIDEO STORE.

CASE 1: In 1965, Italian producer Dino de Laurentiis decided to make a film star out of Princess Soraya of Iran. He flew her to Rome to star in a compilation film, I tre volte (Three Times), with fictional episodes by Mauro Bolognini and Franco Indovina. He also chose to begin the film with a documentary account of Soraya’s arrival and subsequent grooming for stardom. The documentary section, “Il Provino,” was directed by Michelangelo Antonioni and photographed by Carlo di Palma.

Seymour Chatman in his book, _Antonioni or the Surface of the World_, talks about I tre volte as one of the “lost” films. The negative has been destroyed and the one known print lies under lock and key at the Film School in Rome. What chance, then, any interested viewer seeing it in Australia?

CASE 2: In the early 1970s, Walerian Borowczyk was hailed as one of the world’s greatest animators and feature directors (the best according to Philip Adams). But after _Blanche_, his films became harder to see and his career ventured towards obscurity. Then, in 1984, Borowczyk made _Ars Amandi_ in Rome. With its glorious and obsessive plays of light, with its rhythmic and inverting patterns of cutting, this is a dazzling tale of love at the time of Ovid. With _L’Argent_ and _El Sur_, it is one of the great films of the 1980s. But how is anyone ever going to see it in Australia?

CASE 3: And what of the films based on the novels of the late, great Sicilian author Leonardo Sciascia. The Melbourne Festival tried to bring in the film based on his penetrating account of the Moro affair, but it never arrived. What hope of seeing it now?

The answer to all above dilemmas is in fact simple: go to your local Italian video store. All the above films are there, along with innumerable other, seemingly-impossible-to-see films. These video stores are a gold mine for Australian cinephiles, but how many are aware of it?

Alerted by Rolando Caputo, I ventured out to one in inner-suburban Melbourne and began the search through endless racks of lurid cassette boxes. If there is a sex scene in the film, it is certain to be depicted on the cover (or slick); if there isn’t one, the graphic artist will invent one anyway. So don’t be surprised if some PG-rated European classic has an image on the slick of a half-naked schoolgirl removing her face stockings.

Italian copywriters also seem willing to bend the odd truth. The video slick for a film called _Dressage_ claimed it had been produced by French photographer and filmmaker David Hamilton; the cassette label inside claimed Hamilton was the director; the film itself carried neither his name nor his imprint. So, one must be wary, but as the cost is usually $1 to $3 a week, it is really only one’s time and expectations that suffer from false leads.

But back to the successes. The other day was found Georges Franju’s _La Faute de l’Abbé Mouret_, screened at the Melbourne Festival in the early 1970s and never seen since. It is a “lost” film, but there it was, scratched, dubbed and missing the odd minute. But purists shouldn’t complain when the choice is between seeing a classic film in some form or not at all.

Of course, some may find the whole idea untenable because the films are dubbed (usually crudely) into Italian. Don’t despair, study the images instead, the editing patterns, the use of sound—all far more important to the cinema than words. Dubbing does offend, but do so sub-titles: there is a sad irony in sitting in a darkened cinema busily reading words at the bottom of the screen. It is often so consuming a process that what is being told visually can be easily missed.

In Cannes and at other festivals, critics become used to seeing films without sub-titles. One soon realizes how much false importance is placed on words, as if the other senses can’t be trusted as much. An interesting verification of this was the screening in Cannes in 1981 of Marco Bellochio’s _Salto nel vuoto_ with Michel Piccoli and Anouk Aimée as lovers. Watching without sub-titles (it was in Italian), it became obvious within minutes that they were brother and sister in an incestuous relationship. This could be discerned from many visual things, such as the way they touched—there was a tentativeness foreign to normal lovers. However, for an audience trusting only its ears, they sat unaware until all was revealed by dialogue near the end—occasioning loud gasps.

Dubbing in an unknown tongue forces one to trust other instincts, one dulled by the word-bound American cinema. So, one way of regarding a visit to your local Italian store is as a challenge, and also a lesson. Anyway, what is the choice, if one wants to follow the careers of Borowczyk (and all his films have made it via this route), Dino Risi, Claude Chabrol, Francesco Rosi, Luigi Comencini, Luchino Visconti, Elio Petri, Ingmar Bergman, Antonioni, et al.? The pleasures are great; the inconveniences small.

TELEVISION ADVERTISING

The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal is undertaking a review into advertising on television. The ABT’s research has found that viewer tolerance of advertising has decreased in the two-year period since advertising time regulations were lifted. The number of commercials on the three networks increased by 8.6 per cent, though the number of programme interruptions remained fairly consistent.

As part of the review, the ABT will assess whether the amount of interruptions to feature films and drama has increased. Producers and filmmakers who are upset by such interruptions should make submissions to the ABT by 5 March.

Of particular interest here is the recent court case in Italy where it was ruled illegal under the Berne Copyright Convention to interrupt a film on television with advertisements. The Convention protects an author’s (and filmmaker’s rights) and quite rightly the court ruled that ads inserted into a film destroyed the integrity of that film and, thus, interfered with the maker’s rights. Variety, in covering the story, wrote that legal advice suggested the court ruling would hold in any country which is a Berne signatory, such as Australia and the U.S. Hopefully there will be a test case here soon and ads permanently banished from films and drama.

The approach of French national television is the ideal: ads appear only at the end of programmes. The claim that people wouldn’t watch French television if there was a sex scene in the film, it is...
LETTER

WHAT BUDGET?

The following letter was received from Stephen Wallace, director of Blood Oaths:

DEAR EDITOR:

In your article by Andrew L. Urban in the last issue of Cinema Papers, "Scripting Blood Oaths," there was a reference to Blood Oaths' budget being $10 million. This is news to me. The film I directed had a budget of $7 million, which I had to strictly adhere to. Where did the other figure come from?

Yours

Stephen Wallace

THE EDITOR REPLIES:

As Stephen Wallace knows from past experience, every Australian interview in Cinema Papers is checked by the interviewee before publication. In this case, both Andrew Urban's lead article and his interview with Denis Whitburn and Brian Williams were checked by them. They did not query the budget figure. As they are joint producers, with Charles Watersreet, it was only reasonable to conclude that the widely-publicised figure of $10 million is correct.

That $7 million is most likely innaccurate is also surely obvious from the fact the FFC invested $6,986,602. As is well known, the FFC, with the exception of the Trust Fund, does not invest more than 70 per cent of a budget. The resultant calculation is easy.

The inevitable question is: Why was Wallace told he had to work to only $7 million?

... ... ... ... ...

INDUSTRY STAFF CHANGES

CATHY ROBINSON has been appointed Chief Executive of the Australian Film Commission. Robinson had been acting Chief Executive for the past six months. Originally from Adelaide, Robinson has extensive experience in the film industry, particularly in the area of film culture. She had been Director, Cultural Activities at the AFC for more than three years and was formerly Manager of the Media Resource Centre in Adelaide. The Chairman of the AFC, Phillip Adams, said, "Cathy has been outstanding and the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to make her appointment [as Chief Executive] permanent. She will do a splendid job of steering the AFC through the period of change ahead."

JOHN MORRIS has been appointed Chief Executive of the Australian Film Finance Corporation Pty Ltd (FFC), effective late January. Morris was previously a director, producer and Head of Production at Film Australia; a producer, Head of Production and Managing Director of the South Australian Film Corporation; and, most recently, a Director of the New South Wales Film and Television Office. Morris has also served as a Council member and deputy chairman of the Australian Film Television and Radio School, as Chairman of the Australian Education Council's Enquiry into children's television and as an inaugural member of the Board of the Australian Children's Television Foundation. Morris said: "The industry has been through a difficult period for more than two years and the FFC is central to resolving those difficulties."

CINEMA PAPERS READERSHIP STUDY

Cinema Papers recently ran a Readership Study, funded by the Australian Film Commission and compiled by Newspoll. The main, simplified findings are:

- 27% of readers are employed in the film industry. In addition, 12% are teachers or lecturers. A further 39% are employed in other white-collar positions. Hence, 78% of readers are white-collar workers.

- Readers are generally young: 67% are aged between 15-34. In Australia, of those over 15, 42% are aged 15-34.

- 59% of readers are male.

- The average reader has read 5 of 6 issues, showing a loyal base.

- The average reading time per issue is 2 hours.

- 66% would like to see the magazine published more often.

- Readers are relatively heavy viewers of the ABC and SBS.

- Readers prefer mainstream cinema and go at least once a month; art-house and Australian films are also popular.

- Readers are active consumers of goods and services. In the past year, the proportion of readers doing the following is:
  - Travelling interstate: 66
  - Attending film festival: 43
  - Buying TV/video: 34
  - Travelled overseas: 32
  - Obtained loan: 21
  - Bought fridge/stove: 19
  - Bought computer/fax: 17

These values are high.

- 87% of readers drink wine; 75% beer; and 75% spirits.

- Only 22% of readers smoke (amongst film industry workers the figure was 28%).

The results on contents basically mean readers would like more of everything. However, one doubts there is much support for an even smaller type size.

AUSTRALIAN FESTIVAL IN PARIS 1991

The Australian Film Commission, in conjunction with the Pompidou Centre in Paris, will be mounting its most ambitious cultural programme to date with a two-month-long programme of Australian films to be seen at the Centre in 1991. The programme will encompass a comprehensive selection of films, from archival material to contemporary features and documentaries.

The Cinema Section of the Pompidou Centre has achieved international acclaim for its presentation of various national programmes over the past years. Given that the French public has had few opportunities to appreciate a diverse range of Australian films, this prestigious event should radically alter the perception of Australian Cinema, not only in France but all over Europe.
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MEG (DANIELLE SPENCER),
CAUGHT UP IN THE TURMOIL OF
YOUNG LOVE, TORN BETWEEN
(INSET) JOHNNY (RUSSELL CROWE), LEFT,
AND SAM (ROBERT MAMMONE),
GEORGE O'GILVIE'S THE CROSSING.
[ALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM TOWNLEY]
THE CROSSING is a study in how three young people cope with the effects of an unstoppable yearning, a love that divides as well as unites. It is set in the mid 1960s, in a small New South Wales country town, and ends in a heart-stopping car chase near a railway crossing.

Eighteen months ago, Sam (Robert Mammone) had left suddenly for the big city. His girl, Meg (Danielle Spencer), waited a while, broken hearted, but he never wrote, never rang. In that absence, their common childhood friend, Johnny (Russell Crowe), dared to step across the line, and friendship with Meg moved to romance.

But now Sam has come back, his return motivated by his love for the girl he couldn’t get out of his mind. Wrenched by his arrival, Meg finally submits to that sweeping love, but not before the whole town has shuddered in its shadow.
The Crossing is a universal story, told within the perspective of a single Anzac Day, at a time when the 1960s revolution was but a stir in San Francisco and Carnaby Street, and not even contemplated in Sam’s home town.

After some years of doing the rounds, Ranald Allan’s script was picked up by producer Sue Seeary and offered to the Beyond International Group, which had been reading dozens of scripts in search of its first feature film. (Beyond had grown to prominence worldwide, first as producers of the television show Beyond 2000, and later of an expanded programme catalogue.)

Beyond’s head of film production and development, Al Clark, chose to go with the project, though some re-writing was commissioned. Clark, as executive producer with Beyond’s managing director, Phil Gerlach, spent fifty per cent of his time on location with an enthusiasm only equalled by Gerlach, who is convinced The Crossing deserves to be in Competition at Cannes this year. They have reason: in director George Ogilvie, they have a guiding force that actors universally admire.

Ogilvie stays very close to the actors, coaxes and guides them privately, never shouts, never gets angry: his sensitivity builds trust, the trust builds confidence, the confidence generates effort and energy.

In the lead roles, the three young actors have very little track record, no instantly recognizable name, and no formal training from any major acting school. Yet, there is a buzz.

Adelaide-born Robert Mammone had been in Sydney for five years, where his most satisfying work was with Not Another Theatre Company. Says Mammone:

George gives you everything: that’s the beauty of it. But it’s a bit of a worry sometimes: you want to come up with something yourself, and he says it before you can. He’s steps ahead. He sees it all.

Mammone, with the classic dark looks that could earn him a place in Hollywood’s brat pack, speaks quietly but directly:

The most important thing George has said is that this character, Sam, comes from the heart. He loves. When most people are confronted by things, they block them; but he absorbs them and loves.

But what about Sam’s leaving the town? Why did he just up and go? Mammone replies:

We never actually settled on why he originally left. If we had, it would have taken away from it. So, there were different possibilities... Often in life you find yourself doing things without knowing why. He just had to go. His perception of what he wanted from life was so different to everyone else’s, he would have hated everybody if he stayed.

Playing Johnny, the childhood friend, Russell Crowe had just come from a smaller role in Blood Oath. He was anxious to work with Ogilvie. Asked what it’s like, now that he is, he grins and breaks into the verse of an old pop tune: “Heaven ... I’m in heaven...” (from “Dancing Cheek to Cheek”). The answer is indicative of Crowe’s other great love, music: he began professional life as a musician and songwriter: “I used songwriting to help prepare ideas about the character, to help set it down.”

Naturally mischievous and very alert, Crowe hangs on every word Ogilvie tells him:
He said something very interesting to me at the beginning. He wanted us all to read some poetry because it distils things. That's what he wanted from us as performers. And you get essence through suffering. It just hit me when he said it.

Danielle Spencer, who plays Meg, is equally in awe of Ogilvie’s abilities:

He’s a genius ... He has the knack of pushing you to actually feel things, so, when you’re on camera, he talks about seeing it in your eyes. He actually brings the emotions out of you. It makes it easier to get you where you’re supposed to be.

Spencer, who trained as a dancer, is excited by the medium, having experienced some television, (“where you don’t get a chance to actually feel things”) and wants to continue:

I’m probably not the right ‘type’ for this role; I’m really a city girl, and very much of the ’80s. So yes, I have to act.

I’m not as innocent as Meg: can’t be, in this day and age ... And I’ve travelled a bit with my parents when I was younger, so I guess I’m more worldly. Meg is from a decent family, well brought up, with strict morals, yet very natural and down to earth. She is strong willed, with a foul temper if pushed. She is independent, and doesn’t need a peer group.

She was a little shocked at Johnny’s first approach, because they had been close friends. But it grew slowly and naturally – he’s a really lovely person.

The film was shot mostly in Junee and environs last November-December. The townspeople were most helpful and generous: the money spent locally was very welcome, and there was a genuine interest in the process. Nobody complained, even when the town was effectively shut down for the Anzac Day march, with 350 extras in 33-degree heat standing around until take 6.

Of particular interest to the people of Junee was the way the crew manipulated time – both the micro-time of Anzac Day, and macro time of the era. Production designer Igor Nay, and costume designer Katie Pye, recreated a subtle blend of 1940s, ’50s and early ’60s, which is often seamless with the town’s reality. Says Nay:

We are saying the film’s set in the mid 1960s, but it’s an Australian country town, and a lot of the fashions and styles are still of the ’50s. Some of the cars are even from the ’40s. They haven’t rushed out to buy the latest models; country people tend to hang on to their cars a bit longer.

But there is another reason: “It’s a style thing; there’s more of an austerity about the earlier eras”, says Nay. American painter Edward Hopper was a reference point, his expressionist style echoed in the uncluttered approach:

I wanted to give the town an attitude, which gave the characters strength. So the design’s strong but simple. I basically covered up all the advertising hoardings, and made it plain and unspecific in place.

Street signs were cut down, and the local hotels used variously for interiors and exteriors. The Hollywood Cafe was refurbished, with black-and-white Hollywood pin-ups on the wall above the tables, and an aged look of the 1950s drifting into the ’60s.

Capturing it all on film (Kodak 5247 for exteriors, 5296 for interiors) was Jeff Darling, a laconic, inventive and respected professional who shot Ogilvie’s The Place at the Coast and Yahoo Serious’ Young Einstein. He is using black and white and colour prints mixed in varying percentages, echoing the time span of the film: “As it all takes place in 24 hours, we begin before dawn when it’s all dark ... black ... and of course it ends at night.”

Controlling the colour saturation will create a subtle visual effect. A similar process was used in Sophie’s Choice, for the Auschwitz sequences, but for different reasons and with different results.

The various elements are intended to come together, along with a good deal of music (directed by Martin Armiger), as an intense and emotional film, both satisfying and achingly real.
George Ogilvie, one of Australia’s most regarded theatre directors, has made a highly successful transition to film, first on the television mini-series The Dismissal, then as co-director on Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome and, perhaps most notably, as director of The Shiralee.

The features, Short Changed and The Place At the Coast, followed and Ogilvie is now in post-production on The Crossing.

Can you remember the first time that a film made an impact on you?

It was a horror film, The Spiral Staircase [Robert Siodmak, 1946], with Dorothy McGuire as the innocent girl and George Brent as the murderer. The moment you asked that question, I had an immediate recall of the girl’s rattling sticks along a pavement to make a noise because she was so scared. I will never forget it as long as I live.

How old were you?

Seven or eight. I remember because I had nightmares for a long time afterwards. I also never went to the cinema again without knowing that just being there could affect my life. It is a very powerful memory.

When I first went to London, where the film is set, it was a very bad winter. There was a lot of mist and fog around and as I walked past some English railings I vividly recalled that scene. That moment still affects me very much today. If I am alone at night, in a misty street, the mood and the image return to me.

What was the next thing that affected you about the performing arts?

The “professional first” was as a performer. When I was a small boy, I was at a school where the teachers were very drama and music conscious. I learnt the piano and was a boy soprano. Then I was discovered by the local repertory society and I began to play juvenile roles in their productions. From then on there was no question: I was going to be an actor. And I was for some ten years before I began directing.

Was this in London?

Yes. At that time, there was little theatre happening in Australia. There was no Melbourne Theatre Company or Sydney Theatre Company. One had to go to England to learn.

When I did return to Australia in 1955, I became a member of the first Elizabethan Theatre Trust Drama Company soon after that.

From acting, you progressed very successfully to stage directing. What triggered the move?

While I was working in Melbourne as an actor, Wal Cherry, a director who is now dead, asked me whether I wanted to direct a play. I said no and that I was perfectly happy as an actor. But he persisted, so I chose the most difficult play I could think of to show him that I was no good at it; it happened to be Lorca’s Blood Wedding.
That experience absolutely capsized me, I couldn’t believe how much I enjoyed it, because I wrote the music, got the thing going and even choreographed the dances. I suppose to some degree my musical education helped, plus I had always been interested in dancing... though never as a professional dancer, mind you.

All this I think had something to do with my parents being very broad Scots people from the north of Scotland. I had a very Scottish background: my brothers played the pipes, and three times a week at least the house would be filled with 40 people singing and dancing. That had a big effect, as you can imagine.

You then moved from stage to film.

I had always been a tremendous movie fan and, in fact, I preferred going to the cinema than the theatre. I have always found going to see plays I hadn’t produced or directed a very painful experience. I am much more nervous than the actors, always terrified the thing is going to fall apart. But film I love: just to be able to go into a darkened cinema and fantasize.

It was George Miller who then approached you to workshop the actors on *The Dismissal*. He also asked you to direct an episode, which must have been quite different experience to working in theatre.

Actually, it took me quite a while to give in to George’s constant request for me to direct an episode. As I've said, I love movies, but I had never thought about how they were made. So I asked George, “Can you possibly be on the set with me and tell me where I go wrong?”, to which he very generously said he would. To have such a generous mentor is amazing; he was constantly willing to show, to teach, to provide.

I knew also I was working with a fine group of directors and technicians who, if I had a question, would answer it; I had a director of photography in Dean Semler of whom I could ask, “What do I do here?”

So, life was filled with questions and answers as I went along – it had to be, considering my first day as a director was with the entire Australian Senate!

Did you find a repeat of that scenario when Miller then suggested you to work on the feature, *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome*?

George said to me, “You will co-direct this film with me.” I said, “No.” But he finally convinced me.

Did Miller say what he sought from you?

That’s an interesting question; but I don’t think I have an answer to it. It never came to that, to summaries and conclusions.

Presumably one aspect was your experience with and understanding of actors. Can you explain your approach in drawing performances from actors?

It seems to me that the essential quality required by an actor is the ability to be spontaneous. It is a very difficult skill in terms of art. We are all spontaneous as we go moment to moment in life, but when you are on a set, and you’ve had to wait 12 hours to be spontaneous about a scene that you’ve gone over and over again in rehearsal, it is a very difficult thing to achieve. It seems to me that everything I do in terms of workshop is based on how to become empty and, therefore, ready to be filled up – the preparation in other words. I can’t teach actors to act; that’s impossible. I can only help them to prepare to be what they have to be.

Is there a technique an actor can learn to use on an on-going basis?

Yes, indeed. It is a form of meditation. That is a very broad word, but I think it’s the right one. In other words, it is preparation which involves trust, whereby you drive away all fear. After all, it is fear which produces those tensions.

I recall a workshop I did with some directors a few years ago and one of my first questions was, “Who is scared of actors?” There was a forest of arms. That showed a problem in the area of communication between an actor and director; and if there’s no trust, there will always be a barrier.

THE CROSSING

You are now directing a film which is totally different from your television work. How would you summarize the story?

It is a story about loving, where the loving is an essential need rather than a game being played; where, in order to go on living, loving is needed.

The author [Ranald Allan] has put the loving into young people, 19 year olds, and he takes that sense of loving very seriously. The author says that it’s possible for three 19 year olds to love and to know that loving can then end in total disaster, unless it’s fulfilled. It’s not something that can be passed over or got used to; adolescent love is a traumatic experience which can last a lifetime.

So, in that respect, it is a serious film.
To what extent is passion and that energy specific to Australian kids, or is it a universal theme?

I think you have already answered it: it is much closer to a universal idea. But all the actors are Australian and the sentiments and attitudes are Australian.

At the same time, it is a very ‘vocal’ film and not many Australians talk. They generally keep their problems to themselves. In Paris, you see all of life being discussed in the local cafes, but not here. It is a bit of a British overhang, I suspect.

The film is set in the 1960s: is there a specific reason for that?

I hope so. But I don’t think about such things; I’m just making a film. It’s a film I believe in. It does suggest to parents that if a child is in love, then that child should be taken very seriously.

Ah yes, it’s certainly that.

You have chosen three as-yet-unknown leads. Has working with them been a challenge?

Yes, for all of us. I love working with the three young people, but I also love working with the actors who play their parents. They too are fine actors, who, in five words, can do what I want.

You have two streams of actors: the experienced and the novice?

That’s right, and to have them both is wonderful because one supports the other. It’s great to see the young people working with...
the parents and to see them get so much from the experienced actors, to see Johnny [Russell Crowe] work in the scene with his mother [Daphne Gray] and to see in his face that sense of adoration for what that actress is doing. That’s great.

What qualities were you looking for amongst the hundreds of young actors that you saw?

Well, taking Meg [Danielle Spencer] to begin with: I was looking for someone who was a secret person, who was difficult to read, difficult to know what she thought or felt. There had to be a sort of depth within her, like a deep running feeling. She is a girl who on the surface seems fine, no problems at all, but with a disturbance below. She has been living with this fantastic need for a particular love that she has. She needed to be able to hide that.

Did you focus on a particular person or actress that you knew as a model?

No, I must admit I didn’t.

The two boys are totally different, one from the other. In a sense, I suppose I investigated my own life and wondered what part of me was Johnny and what part was Sam [Robert Mamone].

Johnny has a physical approach to life, although that is a fairly mundane way to say it. He has an explosive thing in him, that at times has to be released physically. At the same time, he had to be played by somebody with a very gentle nature. There is that duality.

As for the other boy, Sam, the best word I have is “quiet”. He has a stillness inside and is somebody who has a long way to go, and knows where that is. But he is also somebody who loved this girl and discovered, to his surprise, that he could love no one else.

Is there an emotional direction in which you to move the audience?

Absolutely. That obviously comes from my theatre background as well: you don’t direct a play without thinking about that part of it. A film has to be a personal experience, even more than theatre, where you can put on the mask a little. In film, that’s very difficult.

I think the director’s attitude comes through all the time in film. That is why, I suppose, Renoir would have to be my most beloved filmmaker. I love what he does, because I love the man that comes through. That I find very strong: his humanity, his love of and joy in people; the fact that there is never a villain in any film he made.

Does the idea of directing a film which you regard as important create any special needs? Is there special disciplines that you feel you have to impose on yourself?

That is a very good question. Once again, it is like meditation. Having decided it’s an important film, you throw that away. If I keep thinking of that while I was making it, the experience would be deadly. You have to throw all that importance away and just enjoy each day as it comes.

And, of course, there is the craft side, the day-to-day work. You seem a very controlled person in the sense that you know what you want.

Oh, it’s all worked out, yes, but it’s worked out so that when I walk on to the set I can change the whole thing. I believe in spontaneity, but that only comes about with great preparation – the same for actors. Do your homework, do it really well, and then throw it away. You will find that which works.

Do you always think that the film you are doing now is the most important one for you?

Oh, yes. It really is like getting on a ship and there’s no land in sight until you finish the bloody thing. Nothing else exists. I mean, I get a phone call from Sydney and it wrenches me. I can’t lift my head until we finish shooting. So you say to people, “Don’t ring me.”

Does this sort of interview intrude?

Yes.

So, you are really immersed in the story and the emotions.

I have to be. I was up early this morning, on my day off, going through what was shot and changing this and that. It never stops; it can’t stop. I go through as much as the actors go through; you have to. You go through such turbulent times when you question yourself and your own experience when you are an adolescent. You have that constantly on hand. When they cry, I have to cry as well; if I don’t, then I’m not involved in the right way. I would be just looking for an effect. I have to trust my actors to know that if they have the right feeling then the effect will be there.

It is a 40-day shoot. Do you find that draining?

It’s really exhausting and you need a good sleep. Every day is exhausting.

I believe that there is enough energy in a human being to allow that to happen as long as in the evening you can release it and let it go. But I don’t mean by that that I need distraction. That’s not necessary, but meditation is. It is something I believe in and do a lot.
Love stories have been told on screen a million times, yet they always fascinate. Why do you think that is?

We truly believe that as human beings love is the ‘strongest’ – and also the most ennobling, if you like – thing that can happen in life. To reach the height of that sense of love is a fantastic achievement.

Those who appreciate it are very close to the mythology of Tristan and Isolde and others; that’s where it stems from.

Is that because when we are occasionally fortunate enough to enjoy love, we do understand its powers?

We achieve a sense of knowledge.

Have you experienced this sort of passionate love?

Yes.

And do you recall it with pain or with pleasure?

Both. It’s an almost insane time in life, where nothing else exists and you ricochet around hitting your head against walls; you’re not quite sure what direction you are going. It’s very painful at the time but, in retrospect, it’s a very wonderful thing. You realize that you have experienced some tidal wave of feeling, and you are very grateful for having had that experience.

How much of the craft intrudes into the art?

I don’t know, really I don’t. Every day of this film is the most extraordinary mixture of that.

So you can just concentrate on what you do best?

Exactly. I don’t subscribe to the auteur theory because I truly believe that a film cannot possibly be the work of one man. That’s pretentious nonsense.

How important do you think film is socially to Australia?

Fantastically, unbelievably important. That’s why I am keeping on with it. It’s the very devil to do, but somehow or other ...

How do you strive for that in this film?

No, I can’t. I can only make the film. I have absolutely no idea what the result is. If I thought about that, I would run away. I’m just making a movie, working day by day. We have Scene 37 to do tomorrow, and so on. That’s all you can do; you have to throw away everything else.

Obviously, you have time to think and consider and look: that’s when it becomes technical. You have to distance yourself and ask, “My God, what did I do with the film today? Is there anything there that has connection with what I did yesterday and will do tomorrow?” That is a very draining thing that happens at the end of each day. It’s very important to say to Henry Dangar [director], “What you saw today, is it still to do with the film? Does it seem connected?” Then it becomes a wonderful technical exercise and you can let your emotions drain away: that’s when you separate yourself from the work.

GEORGE OGILVIE

THEATRE

1953 Went to England and began acting in repertory theatre
1955 Returned to Australia; joined Elizabethan Theatre Trust Company (under Hugh Hunt)
1957 Joined Union Theatre Repertory (under Wal Cherry)
1958 Began directing at UTR
1960 Left for Europe. Studied mime in Paris with Jacques le Coq
1960-62 Formed "Les Comediens-Mimes de Paris" with others; made series of television programmes in Switzerland; invited to make programme for BBC
1963 Created with Julie Chagrin mime programme for Edinburgh Festival; later had five-month run in London West End
1963-65 Taught at Central School of Drama, London
1965 Returned to Australia and became associate director of the newly-formed Melbourne Theatre Company (under director John Sumner)
1965-71 Produced 25 plays at MTC; winning three Melbourne Critics’ Awards for Best Director of the Year
1972 Appointed artistic director of the newly-constituted South Australian Theatre Company
1976 Left SATC to work as freelance director. Credits include: Il Seraglio, Falstaff, Lucrezia Borgia, Don Giovanni (Australian Opera), the latter two with Joan Sutherland; The Cakeman (Bondi Pavilion); Dusa, Fish, Stas and Vi (MTC); Widowers’ Houses (Old Tote); The Kingfisher (Malcolm Cooke Productions)
1979 Coppelia (Australian Ballet), with Peggy van Praagh; No Names ... No Pack Drill (Sydney Theatre Company)
1981 Otello (AO), with Sutherland; The Hunchback of Notre Dame (AB)
1982 You Can’t Take it with You (STC); revived Lucrezia Borgia and Falstaff (AO); Death of a Salesman (Nimrod)
1983 Re-directed Don Giovanni (AO)
1984 Re-directed Coppelia (AB)
1987 Pericles (STC); revived Don Giovanni (AO)
1988 Shirley Valentine (STC and touring)

FILM AND TELEVISION

1982 The Dismissal (mini-series) – director episode 3
1984 Bodyline (mini-series) – director episodes 3, 5, 6
1985 Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome (feature) – co-director with George Miller
1986 Short Changed (feature) – director
1986 The Place at the Coast (feature) – director
1987 The Shiralee (mini-series) – director
1987 Touch the Sun (series) – director “Princess Kate” episode
1988 Willem’s Australians (series) – director “Soldier Settlers” episode
1990 The Crossing (feature) – director

Hamilton. It has been touring over Australia for the past 12 months, and Julie has received incredible mail from people everywhere. Some have been to see it five times and written to her, “This has changed my life.”

So, if you really believe in the work you are doing, and the work is great enough, then it will change people’s lives. And that’s the most extraordinary – the ultimate – experience.

LEFT: SAM COMES BACK TO TOWN ON ANZAC DAY.

WITH NIV, POP (LES FOXCROFT) AND JID (GEORGE WHALEY).

BELOW: SAM MEETS THE “OLD GANG” IN THE TOWN’S CAFE.

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Aspects of Technology

IN THE FIRST 100 YEARS OF AUSTRALIAN FILM

DOMINIC CASE

IN 1932, a young camera assistant was on his first newsreel assignment with cameraman Frank Hurley, the Antarctic explorer and Cinesound’s chief cinematographer. The story they were covering was an ice-hockey game in Canberra. They set up the camera. There was no exposure meter; no one in Australia had seen one in those days. Hurley told his assistant, “Never mind the camera, just fix your eyes on the lake. Don’t look away for a second.”

The assistant stared steadily for about three minutes while Hurley fiddled with the camera. Then Hurley came back and said, “Now — look straight at me, boy — into my eyes. Okay ... it looks like about f/8!”

The assistant was John Kingsford Smith; he would be a leading player in the Australian film industry through many of its leanest years before the so-called revival of the 1970s.

But, despite the lean years, filmmaking in Australia has a history as long and rich as any in the world.

Motion picture film was first exposed in Australia as early as 1895. The story goes that Walter Barnett, a photographer from Sydney, was returning by ship from a trip to London. In Bombay he met Maurice Sestier. Sestier was in Bombay for the Lumière company of Paris, and, unable to test and process his film, had reports back from Paris that his film so far was quite useless. One account has him being reprimanded by the Lumière brothers. Barnett saw his chance, and shipped Sestier, his camera and raw stock back to Sydney.

On the 28 September, they opened their Salon Lumière showing the same programme that had been shown at the Grand Café in Paris ten months before. In late September or early October, they spent a day shooting scenes around Sydney Harbour. Back at Barnett’s studios, they unspooled 60 feet of film and tried to dunk it into a tray of developer. Whatever the pair were like as cameramen, they weren’t much good in the darkroom. Most of the film never got near the developer, and it was all ruined.

Arthur Peters, the darkroom supervisor, went home and thought the problem through, and spent the night building a wooden drum big enough to take a full roll of 35mm film. It worked, and so the first truly indigenous part of Australia’s film industry — the laboratory business — was born.

Although we have their titles, those first scenes of Sydney are lost, but the National Film and Sound Archive does have some of Barnett and Sestier’s film shot the following year, 1896, of the Melbourne Cup. Most of the film shows the crowd and glimpses of Barnett himself arranging celebrities for the camera — the race itself was too fast for the slow stock to capture.

Four years later, in 1900, came a multi-media event, at Melbourne Town Hall. It was entitled “Soldiers of the Cross”, produced by the Salvation Army under Herbert Booth — son of the founder of the Salvation Army — and shot by Joseph Perry. Its spectacular story of the early Christian martyrs used more than 200 lantern slides, sound effects, music and 15 rolls of 35mm motion-picture film, all mixed together, and ran more than two-and-a-half hours.

Much of this work was quite original, and pre-dates similar techniques in Europe and the U.S. by several years. Unfortunately, Herbert Booth left Australia the following year, taking the film with him, and it is now totally lost.

Filmmaking boomed in Australia faster than almost anywhere else. By 1905, feature
films of 3 or more reels in length were being produced. In 1906, the five Tait Brothers made a six-reeler, *The Story of the Kelly Gang*. It was screened with hand colouring, sound effects and a narrator. Only part of one reel of the film survives today, but the story itself was to be reshot at least six more times over the years.

The big bright skies and long summers in Australia made photography on slow film stocks easy and most of the companies boomed. Most photography was outdoors, and interiors were filmed on sets under enormous muslin awnings to soften the light. The stories were often rustic: so much so that in 1912 legislation was passed in an attempt to restrict the number of convict, bushranger and “country bumpkin” scripts.

Techniques, on the other hand, were quite advanced, and devices such as the close-up shot were in evidence perhaps earlier than corresponding work by the much more well-known American and European filmmakers, such as Griffith and Hepworth.

The pace didn’t last. By World War I, exhibitors were locking in with the major American and British distributors. The war itself drastically slowed down production, and the stream of product from the U.S. increased steadily. By the 1920s, production had become very sporadic. Even so, Australia produced some excellent films: Raymond Longford’s *The Sentimental Bloke* of 1919 is arguably one of the great classics of the silent era worldwide.

Other forms were also successfully developed in Australia, and Frank Hurley’s *Pearls and Savages*, made in 1923 in New Guinea, is a milestone in dramatic documentaries.

In 1927, the biggest production ever in Australia was released: *For the Term of His Natural Life*. Costing 60,000 pounds, it was directed by the American Norman Dawn and the cameraman was Len Roos. The film was adventurous in its use of special effects. Dawn specialized in painted glass mattes, and he used this technique to “rebuild” a ruined Prison settlement at Port Arthur in Tasmania, with great success. It was to be the last big Australian silent film.

Sound films had been around since the early days, and the De Forest Phonofilm Company of Australia had started producing short films in 1926. Unfortunately, its sound-on-disc equipment ran into difficulties when its American technical operator returned home. The company did not last.

Warner Bros.’ *The Jazz Singer* usually billed as starting the talkies era. Certainly it caught the popular mood, despite its very limited use of sound, and within a few weeks cinemas in Sydney and Melbourne were packed out. Live theatre took a tumble, and on one Saturday night in Sydney not a single live stage was open.

Now it was a race to equip theatres for the talkies. But the cost was high—eleven thousand pounds for one unit. Several Australians had been experimenting with their own systems, and, before long, Raymond Allsop had produced the “Rayco-phone” system, for one thousand seven hundred pounds a unit. Many of the smaller theatres, unable to afford the imported equipment, and lacking the expertise to maintain it, were facing ruin until Raycophone arrived. Naturally his system did well. Even then, distributors blacklisted theatres that installed Raycophone, in order to protect the rights of Vitaphone and the other imported product. However, Raycophone was vital in bridging a gap until sound-on-film became established.

It took a couple of years before a complete sound feature was made in Australia. Meanwhile, there was much experimentation with shorts and newsreal items. When the Duke of York opened the new Parliament House in Canberra in 1927, government security intervened, and the speech had to be recorded from the official radio landline 200 miles away in Sydney, while the film was shot in Canberra. Close-ups were not allowed. This turned out to be a good thing, as the poor sync between image and sound was less obvious.

Apart from features, Newsreels have always been a mainstay of Australian production. *Australasian Gazette* had been in continuous production as a weekly silent newsreel since 1910, and was in fact the world’s longest running silent newsreel. In 1929, Fox Movietone imported a sound truck to produce talking newsreels, having already established similar set-ups in France, Germany, the UK and the U.S. The silent newsreels disappeared, but other companies established
themselves very quickly. Australasian went into partnership with a record company, Vocalion Records, to produce Australian Talkies Newsreel. Soon production was to switch to a sound-on-film system, and the newsreel would become Cinesound Review.

Almost the entire collection of newsreel material shot throughout this period by Cinesound and by Movietone survives today and is in excellent condition; it forms an unparalleled visual history of our country for much of its life. The 1978 feature, Newsfront, dramatized the story of the Australian newsreel companies, incorporating much of the genuine footage of the 1940s and 1950s.

Meanwhile, by 1931 several attempts had been made at sound features, using sound-on-disc. Various local systems had also been tried, and all had indifferent results. One story tells how, one day, a young radio engineer from Tasmania arrived at the door of Union Theatres in Sydney, with the immortal line: “I can make your pictures talk.”

That engineer was Arthur Smith. He had a sound recorder built on the “glow-lamp” principle, an idea that had been around since 1919 in Germany, and which the American Theodore Case had developed into the Fox-Movietone system. Union Theatres took Smith on. Union’s assistant manager of that time was Ken Hall. He was enthusiastic about the system, and in no time found himself directing a feature with veteran writer and actor Bert Bailey. The Australian production company Cinesound was born. The film was On Our Selection, a remake of a classic silent film; its budget, 8,000 pounds. It was a smash hit.

Smith’s glow-lamp recorder was remarkably free of the ground-noise that was a bugbear for so many of the sound systems then being used. It was used on all of the Cinesound productions and continued to be used through the war years. In the 1950s, when magnetic recording was introduced, Arthur Smith was still at the forefront. He developed a portable location recorder for magnetic film which was smaller, lighter and better than any other. He obtained licences from both Western Electric and RCA to use his recorder in conjunction with their system. In Australia, the recorder was used by the visiting American crew to shoot On the Beach in 1959.

In Melbourne, Frank Thring Sen. started production with his company Eftee Films. His enthusiasm, flair for publicity and connections with the Hollywood system were believed by many to be the greatest hope for the Australian film industry. But business wasn’t easy. Distributors were all American or British-owned, and naturally favoured their own product. A tariff was placed on imported prints in an attempt to support local production; it wasn’t much help directly, but it did encourage local release printing of imported product. It was this, more than anything, that kept local laboratories in business. Without them, the outlook for film production would have been even gloomier. Thring’s sudden death in 1936 brought production at Eftee to a halt.

Amidst the difficulties, the one shining light was Cinesound, and in the period from 1932 to 1940 Ken Hall directed upwards of 20 features: all but one of them showed a profit for the production company. But they were a brilliant exception, and, when Cinesound stopped producing features in 1940, the Australian feature industry would not flourish again until the 1970s.

Behind the scenes, technical developments continued. For example, in the 1960s Brisbane engineer Ronald Jones developed a new system of film transport, replacing the claw pull-down and the Maltese cross. This was the rolling loop system, in which the continuous movement of film from feed and take-up rolls is transformed to a static position in the gate by a sort of wave motion. The film moves along its path much as a caterpillar moves across a leaf.

Jones published his invention in the SMPTE journal, suggesting that, if it had an application, it might be in the field of medical technology.
But the paper was seen by the Canadian inventors of Imax. At the time, they were stymied by the need to pull 70 mm film through a projector, 16 perforations at a time, without ripping it to shreds. The Australian rolling loop proved to be the answer.

In the mainstream of film production, with work fairly intermittent and unreliable, stability was provided by one studio, Supreme Sound Studios, and a number of small laboratories, including Supreme’s own lab, and another one called Filmcraft, owned and managed by Phil Budden.

Supreme was the first laboratory with a colour process, shortly after World War II. The process was a Cinecolor type. One of the stages of colour development involved floating the film on the surface of a red dye. At Supreme, this was done in a 14 foot length of roof guttering. The machine turned out about three thousand feet per day—mainly of cinema commercials, produced to accompany the Technicolor features being shown in the cinemas.

The first Australian colour feature was made in 1955, and used the new Gevacolor process. It was titled *Jedda* and directed by Charles Chauvel. The location, deep in the Australian outback, proved to be quite a challenge. Chauvel was shooting in sun temperatures of up to 60 degrees Centigrade in the Northern Territory. The negative had to be sent to Rank Laboratories, in England, for processing.

The negative was shipped out to the location using a series of ice-boxes lodged in caves and under rock ledges, and some in native canoes covered in paper bark. Ice was flown out from Katherine, six hundred miles away, twice a week. Stock was exposed quickly, then shipped back along the same relay route, and eventually to the more temperate climes of the Rank labs for processing.

The results rewarded all the effort, and, for the first time, the incredible richness of colour of the Northern Territory was shown to the world. Years later, disaster nearly struck when it was found that the early colour negative had faded to a single dye. Eventually, some old tri-colour separations were discovered in London and the original colours restored.

The first Eastmancolor process was set up in 1958, at Filmcraft laboratories. But still production limped along, unable to compete with the overseas-dominated distribution companies. Eventually, in the early 1970s, Prime Minister John Gorton introduced government assistance for the industry.

Filmcraft became Colorfilm and, needing to install more colour processing capacity, designed and built its own machines, rather than face the costs and delays of importing everything. This seemed like a good idea, and the engineering division became Filmlab Engineering, which now has supplied Australian-built processing equipment to every continent.

In the past few years, Australian filmmakers and technicians have found recognition that has eluded them for most of this century. The pattern that emerges is one of a country that has produced far more than its share of great film artists and technicians. With limited resources, Arthur Smith designed sound equipment that was world class. Ken Hall made pictures that never failed at the box-office. Frank Hurley excelled at documentary and feature photography for three decades. Australians are known as innovative, as resourceful, and they don’t give up easily. But there is only one film capital. In a business that has been led almost from the outset by Hollywood, filmmaking in Australia has been a constant struggle, with a lack of capital and with distribution geared almost entirely towards the overseas product. It is an irony that in this worldwide industry of communication, so little is known of how our part of the industry grew up.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


TIMELINE: 1895-1930

BY FRED HARDEN

THE FOLLOWING is a timeline of original Australian developments in cinema technology, as well as of Australian use of overseas equipment and film stocks. Researching the timeline proved difficult. American and British developments were relatively easy to find, but the lack of Australian material, and the difficulty in tracing it, was sobering.

Listed below is what was gleaned from a few reference books on the Australian cinema (with thanks to the Australian Film Institute Research and Information Centre). Most books gave only passing references to technology when writing about the films themselves.

There are large collections of motion-picture and sound equipment at the National Museum in Canberra and the Powerhouse in Sydney, as well as documents in the National Film Archive, Canberra. As these are catalogued and made accessible, they will become a vital part of our cinema history (and self-respect). This article, then, should be taken merely as a basis for more detailed later work, and hopefully will inspire others to research and write up new sources.

As the period from the early 1930s onwards is covered in detail in industry craft journals, this project has been split at the beginning of sound in 1930. A more detailed coverage from then on will appear in a later issue.

TIMELINE OF AUSTRALIAN CINEMA TECHNOLOGY

TIMELINE OF TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE AND THE U.S.

Pre-1895

1885-87 Louis Aime Augustin Le Prince projected a short strip of moving pictures in New York. They were taken of Le Prince’s house in Leeds, England.

1887 First public performances of Emile Reynaud’s animated, hand-drawn films on the Praxinoscope film strip projector.

May 1891 First private demonstrations of the Edison-Dickson Kinetoscope. On 1 April 1894, the first models were installed at 1155 Broadway, New York.

1893 Eadward Muybridge showed his sequential photographs on glass discs with his Zoopraxiscope projector at the Chicago World’s Fair. His first sequence of 24 photos was taken in 1878.

1893 W. Dickson convinced Edison to build the “Black Maria” studio, a timber and tar-paper building that revolved on tracks to follow the sunlight that came through its open roof. Dickson was the cinematographer of most of the early Edison films; the stock was Kodak. (See details in previous issue of Cinema Papers.)

1894

30 November 1894 James N. McMahon set up five Edison Kinetoscopes in Sydney and the first moving pictures were seen in Australia. When the public tired of the five different 40-foot peep-show titles, he moved the machines to Melbourne in March 1895.

1895

January 1895 Kodak Roll film in use by still photographers, one user complaining of the marks left by the creases around the spool. The Pocket Kodak was introduced in October 1895 and was an instant popular success.

1895

1895 The Latham family gave a public demonstration of their projected pictures, which were filmed at forty frames a second. Their contributions to absorbing the effect on the filmstrip of the jerky pulldown and the intermittent projector movements were a bottom sprocket and the “Latham loop”. The Lathams were in patent litigation from 1902 until 1915, as the loop was used by Armat in Edison’s Vitasecope, and in a number of other projectors.

1895 Demonstrations of projected moving pictures in Germany (Max Skladanowsky with a projector that required two films and two lenses), and by C. Francis Jenkins in the U.S. (using a continuously moving film and revolving lenses).
1896

August 1896 Carl Hertz projected the first moving pictures in Melbourne, advertising his projection equipment as Lumière’s Kinematograph. Apparently, it was actually one of the copies made by R. W. Paul. Hertz had to modify the sprocket holes to be able to project the films from the Edison Kinetoscope.

28 September 1896 Marius Sestier and Walter Barnett opened the first ‘Salon Lumière’ in Sydney. The programme was the same as the Lumière brothers’ first screening at the Grand Café in Paris. The Lumière equipment was designed as a camera-printer-projector. But Sestier had little experience in developing, so it was Barnett, who owned a photographic studio in Sydney, who supplied the expertise to make the first films around Sydney Harbour in September and October. The Lumières must have approved of Sestier’s partner, because they continued to provide films and film stock. The negative stock was almost certainly made by the Lumière factory, which at the time was purchasing the cellulose base material from the U.S.

31 October 1896 Sestier and Barnett filmed the A.J.C. Derby at Flemington, but the earliest surviving film material is their coverage of the Melbourne Cup a week later. The fragments provided were by the Cinématheque Française to the National Film Archive; although from the original negative (?), they are contrasty and grainy. There is little evidence of the quality (or the scene of ladies’ alighting from the train) that was described by Arthur Peters, who developed it: “a splendid shot ... as good as any film you see today. To us who made it, it was magnificent.”

1897

‘Early’ 1897 Major Joseph Perry of the Salvation Army Limelight Department purchased a Lumière Cinématographe and a collection of films. (In 1900 his equipment included three Cinématographe.) When audiences tired of the films, the Army began (in October 1897) shooting its own, processing them in a laboratory and studio in Bourke Street.

1898

February 1898 After travelling the programme to Melbourne and Adelaide, the Salon Lumière returned to Sydney. But it was closed two weeks later. Sestier travelled back to Paris and there was an advertisement for his camera and 63 “magnificent” short films. One source says that John J. Rouse bought “two Lumière cameras” and that one was used by Albert ‘Mons’ J. Perier of Baker & Rouse. Baker started the Austral Plate Co., manufacturing photographic dry plates in 1884. He was joined by photographic dealer Rouse in 1887. Baker & Rouse was later bought by Kodak (Australasia) and (son?) Edgar J. Rouse became chairman of directors at Kodak.

1899

1898-99 Alfred Cord Haddon, the British Anthropologist, filmed and made phonograph recordings in New Guinea and the Torres Strait Islands.

1900

June 1900 Advertisement appeared for “Robert W. Paul’s Animatographe” at the Tivoli.

1900 Impressed by the work of his friend Alfred Haddon, Walter Baldwin Spencer purchased from Charles Urban’s Warwick Trading Company in London a camera and 3000 feet of 35mm negative in twenty 150-foot rolls. In March 1901, he filmed a corroboree and made phonograph recordings of the songs on a 5-inch diameter wax cylinder machine. In his 1928 book, he describes the difficulty in operating the camera and of only being able to get a sideways view of the small focusing glass, and of using a blank spool for practice. The
camera is described in one reference work as a Warwick Cinematographe. The film was sent back to Baker & Rouse in Melbourne for processing, the exposed footage placed in cardboard boxes sewn in a calico bag. (More than 2500 feet of this film is in the National Library collection.)

13 September 1900 “Soldiers of the Cross” premiered.

1900 Perth photographer Dennis Deace, using a second-hand Edison Kinetoscope (?), projected films from the balcony of the (now) Perth Hotel in Murray Street on a screen across the street. The police tried to stop his mix of short films and advertisements, as they caused crowd problems on the street below. On 25 May 1901, Mr Higgins (one of the three famous Higgins brothers cinematographers ?) of Elizabeth Street, Hobart, was warned by police for a similar disturbance of the peace with his “Electric Sight Advertisements.”

1900 Newspaper advertisement appeared for Gaumont Cinémagraphe “for limelight and electric light: cost 400 pounds ... will accept 160 pounds. Baker & Rouse Sydney.”

1904

1904 Mention made of “colored bio-pictures” being shown in Sydney. Perry had sent “Soldiers of the Cross” overseas to be hand tinted (at the Pathé plant?).

1904 William Alfred Gibson joined his brother-in-law, chemist Millard Johnson (who supplied chemicals for photography), and formed Johnson & Gibson. With the purchase of an “Englishmen’s magic lantern that projected moving figures”, they started showing films. They then employed a projectionist, before hiring out equipment, projectors and films. They were billed as the “best bioscopic operators in Australia”. With J. & N. Tait, they made The Story of the Kelly Gang in 1906.

1905

April 1905 The Sydney Cyclorama announced it had imported a “professional Chrono Cinématographe”. Cyclorama proudly announced some months later that its cinématographe machine didn’t flicker.

October 1905 At the Centenary Hall in Pitt Street, Sydney, J. S. Phelan used electricity to run his Big Biograph.

1906

1906 George Hubert Wilkins (later Sir Hubert) worked as an electrician for a film company in Sydney. Wilkins became an expert documentary cameraman. In 1912, working for the (now British) Gaumont Company with his camera on the front of his motor-bike, he took some of the first front-line pictures of the Balkans War. He was an official AIF photographer in World War I (his film is in the War Museum Canberra), he covered Antarctic expeditions and was another of the cameraman adventurers like Frank Hurley. As a pilot, he made many contributions to early aviation.

1908

29 December 1908 The Stadium screened a film of the Johnson-Burns Fight which had taken place three days earlier at the same venue. This film brought its cinematographer, Ernest Higgins, the compliment, “The greatest series of pictures since motion picture photography became fine art.” Higgins was a bioscope operator in Hobart when, in 1904, he purchased a motion-picture camera and began documenting his town. He moved to Sydney where Cousins Spencer was quick to recognize and employ his talents, as well as those of his two brothers, Arthur and Tasman, who also became cinematographers. The Higgins brothers’ credits include many of the Spencer features and newsreels, and others over the next thirty years.

1909

January 1909 The Salvation Army erected what is acknowledged as the first purpose-built Australian film studio in Caulfield, Melbourne.

1910

October 1910 Englishman Alan Williamson, son of James Williamson (who made the Williamson movie cameras?), reorganized Spencer’s darkroom on the fourth floor of the York. The system used an endless 50-foot loop running over bobbins. Unlike Edison’s efforts to control the Kinetoscope business, he sold the new projecting Kinetoscope outright.

1900 The Lumières revealed their giant 70-by-53-foot screen for the Paris Exposition of 1900. They were also experimenting with 75mm film, but didn’t exhibit it publicly. (At that Expo, Danish engineer Valdemar Poulsen demonstrated steel-wire audio recording.)

1900 Bausch & Lomb (also a Rochester-based company) supplied lenses for Edison’s Kinetoscope, Cinephor projection lenses and Raytar & Baltar camera lenses.

[Images of historical film footage and equipment shown.]
Lyceum theatre. He then became a producer, first on the film Captain Midnight. His recollections of this time tell of the haphazard nature of the filming, often with doubt about the camera's having functioned properly forcing retakes of the five or six scenes daily: "The cameraman would develop the negative so that on the next day anything unsatisfactory could be retaken. This process would be repeated each day until it was considered that sufficient negative had been secured to be joined up into something approaching a consecutive story." Then it was up to the title writer to bridge the continuity gaps with a clever caption.

**1911**

1911 Australian Life Biograph established a glass-roofed studio at Manly.

1911 Most of the eight features made this year for Amalgamated Pictures in Melbourne were photographed by Orrie Perry, son of Joseph Perry. Orrie and brother Reg worked from a courtyard studio behind Johnson and Gibson's oxygen and boracic manufacturing factory in St.Kilda. The brothers did all the processing, titling and editing.

1911 Arthur Higgins, then nineteen years old, was cameraman on Raymond Longford's directing debut, The Fatal Wedding. The studio was an artist's studio in Bondi with its roof removed.

**1912**

1912 Gaumont staff cameraman, Richard Primmer, photographed Francis Birtles' bicycle journey for Across Australia with Francis Birtles.

September 1912 Cousens Spencer spent 10,000 pounds building an elaborate glass-roofed studio with its own laboratory at Rushcutter's Bay. The event was significant enough for the Premier of NSW to open the complex; film coverage was screened at the Lyceum that night.

**1913**

1913 Longford's Australia Calls included an elaborate model shot of the attack on Sydney by the "Asiatics". Cardboard planes swooped down wires over a large scale model of Sydney, creating, when intercut with actual Sydney locations, "a sea of fire where tower and spire come tumbling down".

1913 Frank Hurley made his 4000-foot documentary, Home of the Blizzard, of Douglas Mawson's Antarctic expedition. Hurley became famous for his actuality filming and still photographs. His 1917 film, In the Grip of Polar Ice, of the two-year Shackleton expedition, is his most famous. Hurley had to dive into the interior of the ice-trapped ship to retrieve his film negative. It was developed in the tent and dried over Primus stoves. He had to leave his movie camera behind and destroy "four fifths" of his glass plates. The film neg was saved because it was part of a 20,000-pounds advance for the film rights that helped fund the expedition.

Arriving safely in London at the start of World War I, Hurley reported to Australia House and was made an official war photographer. One report of Hurley's carrying the movie camera at the front lines said it was some new type of machine gun.

Hurley took pictures of Ross and Keith Smith from the wing of their plane on their first England-to-Australia flight. In 1922, he photographed underwater scenes on the Great Barrier reef and, in 1929, returned to the Antarctic with Sir Douglas Mawson. He joined Cinesound in 1936 and was again an official war photographer in 1939. In 1941, he received the OBE.

July 1913 W. J. Lincoln and Godfrey Cass formed Lincoln-Cass Films and produced eight features in a small, glass-roofed studio in suburban Elsternwick.

**1908**

1907-8 Pathé introduced its stencil-tinting service for film.

1908 The Williamson slow-motion, hand-cranked camera became available. Emile Cohl's Fantasmagorie used 700 animated drawings traced over a light box; at eight drawings photographed for two frames each, it was true fluid animation.

**1909**

1909 Charles Urban developed his Kinemacolor process, by photographing alternate frames through red and green filters then projecting them with a revolving colour wheel.

1909 The first Bell & Howell silent camera was sold; its steady pilot-pin registration built an industry reputation.

**1911**

1911 Charles Urban produced a record of the crowning of George V in G. A. Smith's Kinemacolor.

**1912**

1912 Zeiss manufactured wide-angle lenses (35mm, 40mm), but most cinematographers preferred 50mm or longer.

1912 First sales of Williamson hand-cranked box camera, with internal magazine, single lens and internal 400-foot magazine.

**1913**

1913 Leon Gaumont demonstrated a colour system.

September 1913 Eastman Kodak Panchromatic released but it was 1927 before it replaced orthochromatic stock. There was a big price reduction in 1926. It was revised in 1927; there was no identification name, but that stock later became known as Negative Film Pan Speed (Type 1201). Panchromatic film was almost certainly introduced to allow the experiments in colour-separation processes. It was slower, physically unstable and expensive.

**1908**

THE PATHÉ COLOR PRINTING ROOM.

CINEMA PAPERS 78 • 23
1914
While travelling as cameraman with Birtles on Into Australia’s Unknown, Hurley processed and despatched the negative en route to Australasian Films and was paid 1/6d a foot.

October 1914 Cameraman Bert Ive filmed on-board the troopship taking the First Expeditionary Force to Egypt and Gallipoli. He was to extensively cover the war at home.

1917
Australasian Gazette used the animation of Harry Julius in a series of propaganda conscription films. Animation sequences have been mentioned as early as 1912.

1919
Prizma colour released a process that used different coloured filters (like Kinemacolour), but stuck the two tinted prints back-to-back in a single projection print.

1921
Ray Allsop made his first experiments with sound on a wax cylinder synchronized to film.

1923
Frank Hurley hand-coloured every frame of Pearls and Savages for his overseas lecture tour.

1914
Earl Hurd’s patent lodged for the use and process of cel(luloid) in animation.

1915
Max Fleischer awarded patent for first rotoscope projector.

1918
Bell & Howell automatic splicer released. Most editing had been done by scraping and cementing by hand, pressing the film (even negative) together with the editor’s fingers. The first “splicer” was the Edison Film Mender, actually a splicing block mounted on the Edison Universal Kinetoscope Projector.

1920
A resin-backed version of the Eastman ortho stock called “X-back” was introduced for the colder East Coast filming conditions to help control the problems with static marks. Also released was a pre-tinted base print stock in a range of colours (blue for night, gold for sunset, red for fires, etc.).

1920 (?) Introduction of Kodak Reversal stock.

1920 First Moviola.

1921
Mitchell’s first rack-over camera released. Its movement was potentially quieter than the Bell & Howell Studio.

1922
First Williamson “Craftsman” slow-motion, hand-cranked camera with double-claw pull down.

1922-23 German sound on film system Tri-Ergon released (the “work of three”: Joseph Engel, Joseph Massole and Hans Vogt).

1922 The two-colour Technicolor process used a similar double-thickness print to avoid the need of special projection methods. It was expensive and the colour was often called “a one-and-a-half colour process”. 

1923
Bell & Howell released the Eyemo hand-held 35mm camera, with a 200-foot magazine and clockwork motor.

1924
Moviola Midget, a table top editor, released.
1925

September 1925  De Forest Phonofilms (Australia) was formed and the first sound-on-film shorts were made.

1925 Freelance cameramen Claude Carter and Ray Vaughan established Filmcraft Laboratories and began to process U.S. Fox News issues until Fox Movietone (Australia) was formed in 1929. Vaughan was sent to the U.S. for training in sound newsreels.

1926

1926 Norman O. Dawn, independent producer, cameraman and director, started filming *For the Term of his Natural Life*. Dawn was well known in Hollywood for the pioneering of special-effects techniques – miniatures, mattes and glass shots – and he used them all in the movie. His cameraman was Len Roos.

1927

1927 The Sydney Capitol theatre was the first of the ‘atmospheric’ auditoriums to use projected stars and drifting clouds on the roof of the cinema.

1928

29 December 1928 Sydney premiere of *The Jazz Singer* at the Union Theatres’ Lyceum. By March 1936, Australia’s 1334 cinemas were all wired for sound, and the travelling picture shows brought sound to many country towns. The Western Electric sound system cost 10,000 pounds to install and the contract included a weekly service charge bound for ten years. Australian engineers designed their own systems to break the monopoly.

1929

10 June 1929 Ray Allsop’s Raycophone system was first demonstrated.

8 August 1929 Filmcraft founder, cameraman Ray Vaughan, returned to Sydney from Hollywood with an American sound engineer Paul Hance, and Australia’s first Movietone sound truck.

2 November 1929 The first Australian issue of *Fox Movietone News* was released, featuring a speech by Prime Minister Scullin.

1930

June 1930 Premiere of the first Australian Talkies Newsreel, initiated by Bill Lyall of Union Theatres Melbourne. This used a sound-on-disc system.

1930 *Showgirls Luck* premiered, utilizing an Arthur Higgins sound system.
THE IDEALISTIC GARAGE OWNER.
STEVE (FRANKIE J. HOLDEN), AND HIS
APPRENTICE, GARY (BEN MENDELSOHN).
RAY ARDALL'S RETURN HOME.
INSET: DIRECTOR RAY ARDALL
One of the great joys for any film-lover is to discover a new and promising director. Inevitably, that resultant enthusiasm can lead to an over-rating of what appears to stand out from the rest. However, there is no danger of false praise in heralding Ray Argall and his first feature as writer-director, Return Home: quite simply, it is one of the finest Australian films made in the 1980s.

Argall is well known as the director of photography on films of Ian Pringle (Wronsky, Wrong World and The Prisoner of St Petersburg) and others (Mary Callaghan's Tender Hooks). With Andrew de Groot and Sally Bongers, he heads the new wave of Australian cinematographers. But Argall's interests lie wider than that. He has made several short films and edited others, including three features. More important, he will be remembered from the start of this new decade as a filmmaker of real note, one with an exceptional maturity and a sure grasp of technique.

For many, Australian cinema had soured badly as the flavour of the month, but in the last years of the 1980s along came a batch of films that gave hope and restored enthusiasm. Return Home is yet another reason to approach Australia's cinematic future with a renewed confidence.
RAY ARGALL INTERVIEW

EARLY DAYS

In 1973, Argall attended the Brinsley Road alternative school and was in the same film class as fellow directors Richard Lowenstein and Ned Lander. After graduating, he made several films in Super 8, before applying to the Experimental Film Fund and getting money for his first 16mm short, *Morning Light*. Says Argall: “All my Super 8 stuff, and I guess some of my 16mm, was pretty self-indulgent. Hopefully, I have worked it out of my system.” At the time, Argall supported himself by working freelance as a boom swinger and camera assistant. His next film was *Parnassus* – “a dreadful name”.

In all those early films, I used friends and people I knew. That means you get a certain dramatic style. It was really good training because you actually had to work a lot on the drama to get what you felt was dramatically right. It was quite amazing to work later on with professional actors and see how much further you can go – not that I want to put down the others, because some people are naturals and do a terrific job.

But people who haven’t acted before on film don’t know about how to move, how to react to and work with a camera. I found this on a lot of the cinematography I have done. On *Prisoner of St Petersburg*, for example, Katya Teichman was a very experienced theatre actor, but she hadn’t done film before and didn’t have the technical experience. On a performance level, theatre people tend to go too large and it takes a while for them to settle down and discover what works well on film. They have to learn about eye-lines and what you can do in front of a camera, like the difference between a close-up and a wider shot, what you have to do to make the performance read. That is why I’ve always had, even on the earlier films, a long rehearsal period.

After debating whether to go to Swinburne or the Australian Film, Television and Radio School, Argall finally opted for Sydney:

*“I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN CRITICAL OF THE CLICHED, STEREOTYPED WAY AUSSIES ARE PORTRAYED. IT IS NOT TRUE TO MY UNDERSTANDING OF AUSTRALIAN WORKING-CLASS PEOPLE.”*

I was there for three years and made one film, *Dog Food*, which I really like. It is one of the few films where I felt I’d achieved what I had set out to do. It was probably quite influenced by the fact that [later producer] John Cruthers and I used to watch a lot of Bresson and Ozu films.

Unfortunately, the Film School hated my film. They hated the way I made it and didn’t want to know about it. But I was still very happy with it.

Argall was not the only student to find his work less than enthusiastically received: many of staff at the AFTRS, for example, didn’t want Jane Campion’s *Peel* completed because they thought it was incompetent.

And there is this other guy, Mick Clarke, whose films were dramatically some of the best the Film School has ever produced. But he must have done something wrong – he was arrogant or he offended someone, I don’t know – because he had a very hard time of it.

The School can be so bureaucratic. At the time I was there, it had twice as many staff as there were students. It has changed a lot since then, however, and I have been impressed by a lot of the stuff that has come out of it. And the fact remains that a lot of good people go to the Film School; it is where I met people like John Cruthers, whom I’m still working with. In that sense alone, bringing good people together, the Film School has made a contribution to the film industry.

After the AFTRS, Argall came back to Melbourne and worked as a sound editor, before moving into the then new field of rock music clips.

There were quite a few independent filmmakers around, and they tended to slip in and out doing them. There was Richard Lowenstein, Andrew de Groot, John Hillcoat, Paul Goldman and Evan English, all out of Swinburne and all working for absolute peanuts. I don’t know how many of them are still doing clips. I’m certainly not. Maybe the feeling is mutual – me and the record companies.

In 1982, Argall made another short film, *Julie, Julie...*, about a girl who has left home and is riding around Australia on a motorbike.

We didn’t have funding for that, so it was a matter of getting people together who were prepared to work for $100 a week. It was only a two-week shoot and I used some of the money we’d made out of rock clips.

I really enjoyed doing that film, but nothing really came of it. It is very hard to do anything with shorts.

At the same time, Argall had begun shooting features for some of Australia’s leading independent directors.

I did Ian Pringle’s second film, *Wonds*, while I was still at Film School, even though they wouldn’t let me do it as an attachment. They didn’t think – what an irony – that it would be a learning experience. They wanted people to go and work with professionals, but, from my point of view, the best way to get experience was to go out and shoot 60 to 70 rolls of stock.

I have kept doing Ian’s films over the years: *Plains Of Heaven* in 1982, *Wrong World* in 1984 and *Prisoner of St Petersburg* last year. I also did Tender Hooks for Mary Callaghan. I was in a great position, because these were films I really wanted to do. From a cinematographic point of view, they were quite challenging.

Argall also worked extensively as an editor, cutting some of the Pringle features and also Brian McKenzie’s *With Love to the Person Next to Me*. “Editing is a fantastic grounding, and that is mostly what I did at Film School.”

It was also there that Argall wrote his first feature screenplay, the still-unproduced “Dog Food No. 2”. It was his second screenplay, however, written in 1982, that would mark his breakthrough as a writer-director.
Return Home is the story of one man’s coming to terms with his past and the responsibility and rewards of family love. Noel (Dennis Coard), in his late thirties, is a successful insurance broker in Melbourne who returns home one summer to the Adelaide suburb of his childhood. There, he stays with his elder brother, Steve (Frankie J. Holden), wife Judy (Micki Camilleri) and their two children. Steve runs a garage in a shopping centre that is going backwards financially in the age of American franchises and a dearth of customer service. Steve is a gifted car mechanic with a real love for his job, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to make ends meet. Both he and the ideals he stands for are on borrowed time.

Argall sets up this tale – of the negative forces of progress held tentatively at bay by one man’s inherent goodness – as a metaphor for Australian society today. Values are changing in the face of altering consumer demand: local shopping centres are being replaced by impersonal supermarkets and a wasteland of drive-in food and video marts.

These ‘generations’ of Australian consumerism and service are linked with generations of ‘family’. Argall begins his film with a brief scene of Noel, Judy and Steve in their late teens, when the local paperboy was a young Gary. Now Gary (Ben Mendelsohn) is an apprentice mechanic (when he is not absent, fretting about his stalling relationship with Wendy [Rachel Rains]), Steve is his struggling boss and Noel the emigré who left family and home. But Noel soon senses within himself emotional changes set off by the economic and social changes around him. And when he returns to his Melbourne office, the once seemingly irrelevant family snapshots now resonantly imbued with meaning, one senses a stand will be made.

Simply but effectively shot (Argall cuts and tracks only when he really needs to), with a subtle and affecting screenplay, and an understated level of performance rare in Australian film, Return Home is deserving of every bit of praise it will undoubtedly receive. That is not to say it is perfect – the otherwise carefully judged pace falters momentarily past the middle, some scenes drift a fraction too tentatively at bay by one man’s inherent goodness – as a metaphor for Australian society today. Values are changing in the face of altering consumer demand: local shopping centres are being replaced by impersonal supermarkets and a wasteland of drive-in food and video marts.

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Before leaving for overseas, and, as it would later turn out, a visit to the Berlin Film Festival, where his film was screened in the Panorama section, Argall spoke with his former Brinsley Road film teacher.

One of the unusual aspects of Return Home is that you have written a first film with characters older than yourself. The Wild Strawberry-like concept of a man’s returning home and being affected by all the changes is generally associated with directors of an older age group, ones who have perhaps reached a more reflective point in their lives.

[Laughs] Maybe I will go backwards and do kids’ films when I get old! When I first wrote Return Home, the characters were even older. Maybe that came from observing a lot of people in that age group who had reached the point of not knowing where to go with their lives. I felt I was in the middle, between the young petrol-head apprentice and the older two brothers.

I had met some people who’d run a little service station in Burnie, Tasmania, and the stories they told were very colourful. That is probably where the original idea germinated.

In terms of what ended up on screen, the film is no longer based on them specifically, although the setting is. However, I did go back to them for more research, to find out how they actually operated, what sort of pressures they were under and so on.

Your film can be read as a metaphor of economic and social changes within Australia. Most pointed is the scene where Steve says he doesn’t want to make money, he just wants to stay in business. He stands for a work ethic that has been largely eroded by progress.

Exactly. Progress has a momentum that cannot be stopped. It just rolls along, taking a lot of people in its stride. In the years to come, people will probably look back and say, “Gee, I miss that little garage that used to be on the corner. The people were always really nice to me.” Maybe the garage has been replaced by a McDonald’s store. In fact, the site where we filmed – it was an empty service station – is now a Hungry Jack’s.

It is sad that these people who were providing a service are pressured by diminishing profits into surrendering to a finance company. It is a major problem.

There is something noble about Steve’s resistance to progress, though he presumably adapts a little to it after film’s end. Without being sentimental, you detail a fineness in the man that resists being crushed.

I’m glad that has come across, because it is difficult portraying something like that. One accepts that progress is inevitable, which is not all bad, but there are aspects which are, such as the effect on people like Steve. That is why others, particularly Noel, are trying to find ways to mix the two. Sadly, there may not be a point at which they can meet.
You do, however, end on a note of optimism, which is unusual in that most films about the negative effects of progress end on a sour note, as if believing it makes the point more forcibly.

Personally, I think there was no point being negative at the end of this film. The whole point is that Noel realizes that what he is doing in life has limitations, and that he could apply some of what he knows to help his brother. You do not know what will come of it, but Noel has made the step to try and do something, no matter how little, that might actually affect people for the better. And because it is with people he feels close to, it is probably more rewarding than pulling off a few really big insurance deals in Melbourne.

So, I went for an optimistic suggestion at the end, hoping that might make people think a little more about things. People like to be rewarded at the end of a film.

Another aspect that remains quite subtle is the sense of generations passing. The film opens when Gary was a paperboy; you then cut forward to him as an apprentice, while a new paperboy rides his bike past the garage.

That stuff is touch and go, and again is really hard to get right. It was one of several things I was interested in showing about the shopping centre which surrounds the garage. But it’s very difficult to show the subtle changes progress imposes on the small group of shops without making the film look like a documentary or a soap opera.

You mentioned earlier you always like to rehearse your actors extensively. Did you do this on Return Home?

Yes, we had nearly four weeks of rehearsals, which is quite a lot. I really wouldn’t want any less, because that is where we ironed out all the bumps.

I have noticed from shooting other people’s films that actors tend to get rather frustrated if they don’t have enough of the director’s time. If they do get a lot of it in rehearsals and pre-production, most of their questions will get answered.

To what extent did you rewrite the script during rehearsals?

Not a lot. It depended on whether things were working or not, whether actors wanted to re-phrase lines so as to feel more comfortable with them, which sometimes works.

Quite often, when you edit a scene after the shoot, you find that what you developed in rehearsals is the key to that scene. They are the moments you really want to keep, and some of the stuff you previously thought essential can be cut.
It is, on the whole, a precisely acted film. You detail aspects of Australian behaviour without ever slipping into ocker caricature.

I have always been critical of the clichéd, stereotyped way Aussies are portrayed. It is not true to my understanding of Australian working-class people. I don't know if it comes from the television soaps, and it is actually found most often in our films.

Maybe it is the actors, maybe the directors. I don't know if it's the writing, but probably not as much as people think; after all, it is the directors and actors who interpret the script.

During rehearsals, all the actors on Return Home slipped into that ocker style. The swearing, for instance, was just incredible. Unfortunately, I didn't pull it back early enough, and during filming I had quite a few problems with the “bloody” and the “mate” — “How ya bloody going mate?”, and that sort of thing. It sounds okay on the street, but not when you hear it all the time in a film.

In many Australian films, the language reeks of affectation, as if the middle-class director is assuming a working-class pose.

I think you're right. If you have been through the private-school system and university, you can easily gain a narrow view of the working classes. It is not as if such directors are not broad-minded, it is just that their understanding of others is sometimes limited by their upbringing.

Making our film in Adelaide certainly made it a lot easier for me, because that is where I went after leaving school. I got a car, hotted it up and did all those sort of things. Although I had been making films, they were almost a hobby. It wasn't like I went to Adelaide to find out about this way of life. I went there because I wanted to have a car and do those sort of things.

FACING PAGE: TROUBLED LOVE: GARY AND WENDY (RACHEL RAINS). RIGHT: NOEL IN THE GARAGE WORKSHOP, REFLECTING ON HIS LONG-AGO-MADE DECISION NOT TO BECOME A MECHANIC. BELOW: STEVE AND GARY AT WORK. RETURN HOME.

Why is Adelaide the hot-rod capital of the universe?

I really don't know, but it sure is. The car culture there is quite incredible. You may find it a little in Tasmania, but in Adelaide, with those wide open roads, it almost feels and looks like L. A.

I first went to Adelaide in the mid 1970s. The funny thing is that when you go back there now, whole slabs of the place are just as they always were. It is a wonderful sort of time warp. You can go back to a fruit juice bar in an arcade that you remember from 20 years ago, and it is still there. Maybe it is not run by the same people, but the new owners haven’t renovated it or changed the layout. It is like one generation grows up and the next follows. Look at the obsession with Elvis and spray-on pants, and ripple-soled shoes. It is still there. Quite incredible.

So, if the film had been shot, say, in Melbourne it would not have had the same generational aspects.

Yes. I don’t think I could have made the same film in Melbourne or Sydney, which are big cities. Adelaide has something very unique. That is why it was fantastic to shoot the film there. We stayed out at Glenelg, where we were filming, and there were cars continually going by doing all the things that are in the script. That was great for the actors, because they felt and understood the integrity the script had.

Your editor is Ken Sallows, one of the under-appreciated talents in the Australian industry.

Working with Ken was just terrific. He is a very perceptive editor, who can look at a film as a whole. When I was an editor, I was good on individual scenes, but I always had trouble with directors and producers actually getting the whole down to a workable length.

Return Home is a carefully structured film, both overall and within scenes. Did you go onto the set knowing precisely how you would shoot each sequence?

It varied. With some scenes, I thought it was best to wait until the editing stage to find out how to structure them. This was particularly the case when two characters were just talking to each other and there was not a lot of movement.

It is terrific to be able to go on to location with an editing background, because you know how things are going to be put together. Without that knowledge, people can find eye-lines and things like that very frustrating.
You use many long two-shots in the film, particularly at the garage doors, where Noel and Steve watch out over the shopping centre. Generally we designed the two shots we were going to use, and choreographed them specifically. Quite often in the garage we would have a two-shot where one person was in the foreground and another in the background, then someone would walk over to the bench or a car. At that point, we would cut to another two-shot. That took quite a while to set up, because it is not just as simple as having two people in frame. To cover ourselves, we would do a point-of-view cut-away or a close-up.

Mandy Walker, the director of photography, is very good on that stuff. She knows how to balance up a frame, which is a big help to me as a director; I can concentrate on everything else that is going on. With some of the dramatic scenes, when two people are talking to each other, it is nice to cover it in just close-ups. Matching close-ups is just wonderful; you can really pick the moments and stretch them. Take for example the scene with Gary and Wendy on the porch. We did a two-shot for the opening and the ending, but the rest is all close-ups. It is really nice to be able to hold, or play an off-screen line on an actor. You can maximize the whole performance from each of the actors.

There are several brief montages in the film, generally of two or three shots, which set up the next scene. This is a technique Ozu uses and which Paul Schrader paid homage to in *American Gigolo*. Did you use them consciously in that way?

Probably not consciously, but certainly it is very nice to have those allusions. Those little montages were very hard to get right. We spent a lot of time shooting them. Mandy and I went out on our weekends off and shot what we could, like the kids jumping off the pier. Which is one of the most moving images of 1980s Australian cinema. That’s great, because that is exactly what we wanted to get out of it. It’s wonderful when you get a shot that works.

The opening of your film is like an industrialized version of the beginning of *The Year My Voice Broke*, with the combination of classical music and the evoking of a time past.

The placing of the music was really tricky. Originally it was a pop song from the era, and for a lot of people it worked well. But it set up expectations of a teen pic, which the film isn’t. Audiences may then have felt that what followed was a let-down.

I then thought of the Dvorak [Symphony No. 9] and I think it helped give the impression of its being a memory.

You get that with the sound mix, too, when the realistic sounds of the carpark are faded in for a few seconds.

We wanted that slightly subjective aspect to the soundtrack. I like to isolate sounds and play with them, bringing them up and down.

Dean Gawen, who did the sound recording and also mixed the film, did a really good job on that. Overall, and especially given the difficulties, the sound department did a great job.

Which raises the question of the film’s very small budget ($350,000, from the AFC). Despite what must have been inevitable production problems, the film never feels as if it suffered.

More people say that, which is good. I think the tag of low budget is really bad, and I avoid it at all cost. If people ask me what the film was made on, I say, “Under a million.”

In the end it didn’t hamper things. The cast and the crew agreed to work under the conditions, which were basically union minimum. We had a fairly reasonable schedule: it was tight, but we had time to do what we wanted to do. Also, Mandy and I didn’t want a hand-held, grainy look, but one that was really clean and sharp. That decision greatly helped the overall look of the film.

There is very little camera movement in the film.

I do not use a lot of tracking, but, when I do, it is good to have a nice long one. There are only two crane shots in the film.

We didn’t have a grip on location, so we chose in advance the three or four scenes where I wanted to move the camera. We then hired a grip for those days. It was the same when we were doing the car stuff. We had trouble doing that, but we managed to get the extra people for it.

Most of the films I have done have been with small crews. In Europe, of course, they make their 35mm features with small crews. But out here we have the Hollywood attitude of big crews. On *Return Home*, we probably were a bit short in the art department, and we didn’t have continuity or make-up, except for one day, when we had to make the characters look a lot younger.

All the same, there is no reason why low-budget films have to look low budget. I certainly know that.
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It was inevitable that these two mini-series should be compared: not only are they about the same subject (Australians facing the death penalty in an Asian gaol for drug running), but writer Terry Hayes made the connection explicit by stating in an interview that his inspiration for the story of Bangkok Hilton (Ken Cameron, 1989) was his dismay at the dramatic deficiencies in the story of A Long Way from Home: Barlow and Chambers (Jerry Landon, 1988). He went on to suggest that the latter was doomed from the start "because how are you ever going to get audience sympathy for a couple of guys who are drug runners?"

Certainly, Hayes was right to suggest that the key to the dramatic structure of both narratives is the guilt/innocence of the main characters, but the comparison between them is rather more complex than Hayes suggests, and deserves some more detailed examination.

To some extent, Hayes answers his own question, with the characters of Mandy (Joy Smithers) and Billy (Noah Taylor) in Bangkok Hilton. Both are technically guilty, but neither is entirely responsible for his or her actions. The drug-dependence of their mother ensured that Mandy was born addicted and Billy mentally retarded. Feeding her habit is, then, not entirely voluntary or self-indulgent for Mandy: she cannot be simply condemned for her weakness. Neither can Billy. His simple-minded cheerfulness led him to insist on carrying Mandy's bag for her, so it is he who is caught 'red-handed', and is technically the guiltier of the two.

Added to the plea of 'diminished responsibility' is the sheer likeableness of the characters, and the sympathy evoked by the strength of the bond between them. Mandy's love for Billy is one of the reasons for her breaking the law in the first place (she was going to use the money to pay for a trip on an ocean-liner, his highest ambition), and it leads her to take great risks to protect him while they are in jail and to bargain with her captors, offering her life for his. Viewers, therefore, are completely upon their side as the horror of the execution scene unfolds.

The writer of A Long Way from Home, William Kerby, did not have the freedom to invent such circumstances, to play upon the emotions to gain the sympathy of an audience. Through the press reports, both of the trial and of the efforts of Barbara Barlow to achieve a reduction of the sentence, the Australian public knew the end of the story before the series opened. Constrained (at least to some extent) not only by the 'facts' of 'history', but by the public's knowledge of these 'facts', the most Kerby could do was manipulate within certain pre-established boundaries. There are several strategies he chose to employ.
The first was to apportion blame (and so, sympathy) between the two characters: in the mini-series version of the story, both are guilty, but Barlow (John Poison) is less so than Chambers (Hugo Weaving). Chambers is a seasoned drug courier; Barlow is a novice, forced into a life of crime by social circumstances (poverty, lack of rewarding work, persecution by the police for crimes of which he is innocent). Chambers is cold and calculating, entering willingly into the scheme; Barlow is ill, frightened and forced to participate against his will. Chambers takes a part in persuading Barlow to enter the project; when Barlow’s illness and fear lead to their capture, the audience is invited to sympathize with the weaker of the two characters.

The second strategy was to shift responsibility from the two young men to the women who have ‘let them down’. Barlow would never have done it if his girlfriend had not had an abortion against his will and left him shattered by her betrayal. Chambers was in shock after the death of his innocent girlfriend in an accident for which he feels responsible. The suffering of each is clearly presented (there is no attempt to suggest, for instance, that Chambers’ grief is anything but real and very painful), but the difference in these two stories also contributes to the apportioning of sympathy between them: again, Barlow is an innocent victim of the perfidy of others, while Chambers is suffering for his own stupidity.

The third strategy was to introduce an aspect of moral growth into the character of Barlow, while at the same time denying such change to Chambers. So Kevin Barlow, who till almost the end of the story had been shown as weak, easily-led and amoral rather than immoral, undergoes in prison a conversion to high moral principle, rejecting his mother’s offer of poison as a way to cheat the hangman on the grounds that it is his own problem which he must face himself, and learning to pray (just as Chambers refuses that comfort).

Finally, racism became a strategy for extracting sympathy from at least western audiences: the programme implies that even when westerners (whites) are guilty, they do not deserve to suffer at the hands of Asian legal systems, with their odd courtroom procedures, inhuman treatment of prisoners in gaols and barbaric penalties.

Clearly, all of the above are narrative strategies, with no necessary connection to the ‘facts’ of ‘history’. These strategies however, even at the narrative level, are never more than temporarily successful, because they are constantly undermined in the interests of other threads of a narrative which cannot make up its mind whether it is a police story about a drug bust, a melodrama about a mother’s fight to save her son’s life, or a polemic about the rights of westerners caught in Asian justice systems.

Take the question of Barlow’s guilt, for instance. The ‘police story’ aspect of the narrative always admits that Barlow did what he was accused of – in fact, in the opening episode the viewers actually see him do it. But in the ‘family melodrama’, Barbara Barlow (Julie Christie) maintains her son’s innocence to the last.

In the book which was ghostwritten for the real Barbara Barlow, a story is told which explains her apparently perverse insistence on her son’s innocence. In that story, Kevin did go to Malaysia to collect drugs, but he did not meet the courier, and was on his way home again, completely ignorant of the drugs hidden in the new suitcase by his casual companion Chambers, when he was stopped by Malaysian Customs officials with a bag which he rightly insisted belonged to his travelling companion. No matter how far this story strains a reader’s credulity, it does provide Barbara Barlow with a justification for her insistence on her son’s innocence. The mini-series, on the
other hand, does not allow this possibility, and so leaves the character of Barbara Barlow in an impossible position: despite Julie Christie’s best efforts, the Barbara Barlow of the mini-series appears shrill and shrewish and irrational, stubborn rather than brave.

There is a similar problem with the film *Evil Angels* [aka *A Cry in the Dark*]. In John Bryson’s book, the ultimate question of the guilt of the Chamberlains is left open, despite the overwhelming weight of circumstantial evidence which leads a reader inexorably to the conclusion intended by the writer. Fred Schepisi’s film, however, visualizes Lindy Chamberlain’s version of the story and, once the viewer has seen the dingo leave the tent, the rest of the film is almost superfluous: at this point, when we are shown ‘whodunit’, it shifts from being a mystery story and becomes instead a story of the wilful persecution of innocence.

Dramatic subtlety is lost along with moral ambiguity: the story is reduced to a simple confrontation between good and evil. This is not necessarily a bad thing, as in this case the film becomes a first-rate melodrama: the problem is rather with the denial by the filmmakers and by most of the critics that this is what they are actually dealing with now, rather than with realistic drama.

In the case of *A Long Way from Home*, the moral confusion leads not simply to a shift of register, but rather to unresolved contradictions between different threads of the story, preventing the narrative from settling down to be (family melodrama) fish, (courtroom/legal drama) fowl or good (whodunit) red herring.

It need not have been this way. True, the guilt of Barlow and Chambers prevents them from ever being any more than, at best, flawed heroes. And yes, by making their guilt so obvious, Kerby prevents the character of Barbara Barlow from functioning as a clear moral centre of the narrative. But despite all this, there is still one viable narrative perspective available: the debate around the legal aspects of the story. And it need not have had the racist overtones which it was in fact supplied with.

Once the narrative has elected to depict Barlow and Chambers as guilty, and to leave the viewer in no doubt of that, then the focus of dramatic interest inevitably shifts to the process of capture, trial and punishment. There were a number of possible routes through this area. The differences between national criminal codes, and the problems of the rights of foreign nationals within the legal system – the courts and gaols – of another country, are real problems. Equally significant are questions of the possibility of buying justice: Barlow

indicates that he has been offered a gaol break if he can raise the money. But the ultimate, and most important, question is capital punishment, and specifically the death penalty for drug running.

It is at this point that the mini-series sinks disappointingly into an emotional morass – dwelling on the horrors of the physical process of hanging and on the family’s pain – instead of confronting head-on these important moral and social issues.

Is society ever justified in claiming the death penalty? If so, which crimes is it to apply to? Is it intended as a punishment for the guilty party or as a deterrent to others? And is it an effective deterrent anyway?

How can crimes associated with the drug traffic be measured against other crimes considered particularly heinous – in our society, offences like child molestation.

The final credits say that 62 people have been hanged under this particular Malaysian law. It is reasonable to ask: How effective, then, has that law been as a deterrent? How far are the drug couriers – the lowest ranks of the drugs industry – being made to act as scapegoats for society’s inability to deal with those who employ them as couriers and make the really big money out of the traffic?
These are significant moral questions that could have been (as they have been in other films and television programmes) the basis for great drama. And it is here that I disagree with Terry Hayes. He assumed that the problem was that Barlow and Chambers were guilty — and of a crime that has little sympathy in the general community. I consider that, in fact, the story of Barlow and Chambers offers to a writer a limit case for confronting some of the issues surrounding capital punishment.

To once again draw on a film analogy: Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner (Stanley Kramer, 1967) has been frequently criticized for painting a sanitized picture of racism, by depicting the prospective son-in-law as Sidney Poitier – charming, handsome, well-educated and with a good income in a respected profession. But to have done anything else would have been to muddy the waters, to provide the prospective parents-in-law with some other excuse than racism for their reluctance to accept him into the family. If it is Sidney Poitier, then it is racism.

Similarly, to provide an innocent heroine facing the death penalty (Kat [Nicole Kidman] in Bangkok Hilton), or to create sympathy for the guilty through diminished responsibility (Mandy and Billy), is to allow the viewers an out on the moral issue: in these cases, the penalty is obviously unjust, and the viewers can come away feeling morally outraged. But the issue has been softened into a miscarriage of justice; it does not approach the core of the problem: the moral justification for such a penalty in the first place. Of course, it would have taken an expert writer (or writing team) to have coped with this issue without alienating a large section of the audience. So many Australians are fiercely committed to the support of capital punishment, or have so little sympathy with drugs that in the case of drug runners, they are willing to suspend their scruples over the death penalty. I can only regret that the story did not find writers equal to this challenge.

So, the dramatic impact of Bangkok Hilton is a result, not only of technical effectiveness (the skill of director, actors and technicians) but also of the fact that Hayes knew what he was doing: constructing a family melodrama around the myth of persecuted innocence. And he did it well.

Unlike other narrative forms, the goal of the family melodrama is not necessarily the establishment of a heterosexual couple – certainly not in this case, where Kat’s parents allow themselves to be separated, and Arkie (Jerome Ehlers) turns out to be a con merchant, quite willing to sacrifice Kat. Instead, the narrative aims at the reconstruction of the damaged family, allowing the reconciliation of Hal Stanton (Denholm Elliott) with his brother after a break of more than twenty years, and the final reunion of Hal and Kat as father and daughter. This resolution of family crisis is even less ambivalent than in some of the other Kennedy Miller stories, including The Dirtwater Dynasty and Vietnam.

Myths explain the world to us. They not only describe what is happening around us, but also why it is happening — the gods are smiling, or they are angry and must be placated by a sacrifice. In Bangkok Hilton, the primary myth was that of persecuted innocence: the gods demanded a certain amount of sacrifice, but allowed the final restoration of justice, both through Kat’s escape and through the arrest of Arkie Regan.

The audience had seen this (family melodrama) form and these myths (of persecuted innocence) many times. They were also familiar, if not through direct experience then indirectly through other representations (including film and television representations), with the aspects of the real world that were woven through the story — a world of drugs, of easy travel for westerners into Asia, of sexual predation. History and myth fit comfortably together.

A Long Way from Home deals with these myths and these realities too, but less expertly, failing to recognize (let alone resolve) the conflicts it sets up between them. But, most significant, it fails to take advantage of the opportunity offered by its lead characters’ guilt to confront, at the limit case, some of the great social issues of our time: the death penalty, and the economic and social base of the drugs traffic. Terry Hayes hasn’t done this either. I wonder who of our current crop of writers might be game to tackle it?

NOTES
2. These arguments about narrative structure do not relate in any way to the other arguments around the programme, about its relation to the ‘truth’ of the events upon which it is based.
AFTER A CAREER as a painter and maker of obdurately esoteric short films, British director Peter Greenaway leapt to prominence with that stylish jeu d'esprit, The Draughtsman's Contract. The stanchless loquacity of its dialogue and the exhilarating musical soundtrack worked in tandem with the flow of enigmatic visual images to keep up an attack on its audience which was both seductive and minatory. Not, one might have thought, the stuff of commercial success, but that is exactly what it did enjoy.

Since then, Greenaway has gone on to make four more features: A Zed and Two Noughts, The Belly of an Architect, Drowning by Numbers and The Cook, the Thief, his Wife and Her lover. It is a production record more usually associated with the mainstream than with the art-house brigade.

The Cook, the Thief, His Wife and Her Lover is, according to Greenaway: "...a melodrama. It is an extravagant but not impossible tale set in a restaurant where it is appropriate that all things should be eaten, if only experimentally ...

"It is a love story between the Wife [Helen Mirren] of the Thief [Michael Gambon] and Her Lover [Alan Howard]. The Cook [Richard Bohringer] owns a large restaurant called Le Hollandais after the large Dutch painting ["Banquet of Officers of the St George Civic Guard Company" by Frans Hals, 1616] of a dining party that is hung on its walls and after whom the Thief and his gang model themselves. The cuisine is cosmopolitan French, the action is set in the 1980s and the restaurant could be situated in any large city in Western Europe or North America."

Although it is a rich and complex film, The Cook, the Thief, His Wife and Her Lover is also your most accessible. How do you feel it compares in narrative difficulty with your earlier films?

This is still very recognizably a Greenaway film: the same sort of metaphorical language, the same sort of exterior characteristics which make you feel as if you're always watching a film and not doing anything else. It's not a slice of life, not a window on the world; it is certainly an artefact.

However, I can understand why the question is so often asked because the film has a lot more passion, more emotive association between an audience and a screen. There are many reasons for that. Basically, my cinema likes to address the fact that the only legitimate relationship between a film and its audience does not have to be an emotional one. I started life off as a painter and I have always been very aware that when you stand in front of a painting you do not emote. You don’t fall around on the floor in laughter, crying your eyes out or jumping up and down in anger. It is a different sort of approach, one much more to do with contemplation, with form and surface as well as with content. I have always tried to get those sorts of relationships into my cinema.

I have always enjoyed those artefacts which make me work, not only in terms of the cinema but also novel-writing, painting and all the other arts. I likewise believe that audiences have an attitude towards cinema which does not necessarily correspond to the dominant Hollywood influence. So, I have always used all sorts of distancing devices – quite obvious things like no use of close-ups, very little editing, a concern with static frames and complex soundtracks, and so on. All those characteristics are still present in The Cook, the Thief, but what has happened is I have legitimized for myself a much stronger emotional use of the content in terms of the melodrama, the acting, the violence and the sexual passion. I have allowed these to well up through the other concerns to make a film which a lot of people have found contacts them in the traditional Hollywood fashion.

There’s one major reason why I have done this. The film is a very angry one. The political situation that currently exists in Great Britain under Mrs Thatcher is one of incredible sense of self-interest and greed. Society is beginning to worry entirely about the price of everything and the value of nothing, and there is a way in which The Cook, the Thief is an exemplum of a consumer society, personified in the
Thief, Albert Spica. He is a man who is thoroughly despicable in every part of his character. He has no redeeming features, and is consumed by self-interest and greed.

However, I don’t wish the film to be seen particularly as an anti-Thatcherite essay. It also has heroic qualities which can be understood from Tasmania to Tierra del Fuego, from Addis Ababa to Vladivostok. It is a film which I hope works on a more personal level, as well as in terms of late-1980s British politics and social conditions, which have much wider overtones.

What was your aim in establishing so firmly the connection between eating and sexuality, which is one of the film’s central motifs?

That is, of course, an old connection. On a really basic level, and in Darwinian terms, the reproduction facilities of the human body, and also presumably of the human spirit, have very much come from the digestive tract, as an anatomical examination of the facts will indicate. As well, sex and the hunger for food are, in a peculiarly metaphorical way, intimately related.

This film is a very physical one. It is based on a large series of ideas, one of the most important being a concern for Jacobean English drama, the drama that came directly after Shakespeare. In fact, late Shakespearean plays are often described as Jacobean. They examine very harsh realities, often taboo subject matters, which are sometimes regarded as being on the edges of our experience. Western literature and cinema use at times extreme situations to throw light on more ordinary situations.

The extreme situation in this film is cannibalism. Very rarely do we come up against it any more: a small plane goes down in what’s left of the Amazonian forest, the pilot eats the passengers or vice versa. So, it is a peripheral event. We have no doubt some sense of frisson of horror at the idea, but it is forgotten quickly. And, by and large, the State and religion no longer penalize cannibals.

What I wanted to do was take that situation and use it both literally, for the ending of the film, and metaphorically. Imagine there is a huge mouth at the back of the screen into which everything is being pushed. Also consider the idea that all of us are very small children, exploring the world with our mouths. There is a way in which the ultimate obscenity of the consumer society, when we have eaten up everything, is that we turn and eat one another.

Of course, that idea is used with great irony. After all, the concepts of this film are absolutely preposterous, although nothing is really impossible or improbable, except perhaps for the ending. I don’t mean the actual cannibalism, the putting of meat into the mouth, but Albert Spica’s being killed: it isn’t possible to eradicate evil so easily.

The dialogue, which is not particularly conversational but quite
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“Most cinema, and certainly the dominant American cinema, deals with people essentially as personalities, with psychological cause and effect. I am very concerned to not only do that, but also concern myself with them as being a body, an object, a bulk, a form, a shape, something that throws light, makes the floorboards creak, indicates volume.”

literate and metaphorical, is also about extremes of human behaviour. For example, a small boy is tortured by being forced to put buttons into his mouth; there’s the grand guignol gesture of the fork that misses the woman’s mouth and goes into her cheek; and there’s the very strong beginning of the film when the man is forced to eat dog shit. There is also the suggestion that the apogee of sexual pleasure, in the conversations between the Wife and the Cook, is associated with fellatio. So constantly there are references to the mouth and its being fed with all sorts of objects, and not necessarily with those that are nourishing.

Another preoccupation your films have in common with Jacobean drama is the connection between sexuality and danger. Is this something of which you are conscious?

Yes, indeed. In The Cook, the Thief, I was especially concerned with the great physicality of things. Jacobean drama is very physical: the body is at the centre, an object which bleeds and has bile, spit, vomit, shit and semen. The body is seen very much as an image of an alimentary canal wrapped around with flesh.

Most cinema, and certainly the dominant American cinema, deals with people essentially as personalities, with psychological cause and effect. I am very concerned to not only do that, but also concern myself with them as being a body, an object, a bulk, a form, a shape, something that throws light, makes the floorboards creak, indicates volume. Consequently, the characters are choreographed very carefully in these big, fixed empty spaces of the restaurant, the kitchen, and so on.

There are several reasons for this interest in the physicality of these creatures. There have been 2000 years of image-making, and the centre of that image-making has always been the human figure. Painting doesn’t deal with personalities, it deals with figures. For example, one of the central images of all European paintings is the bloodied, naked, very physical body of Christ. I want to get those sorts of physicalities into my cinema practice.

There is a contrast between, on the one hand, the sheer beauties of colour, lighting and composition, and, on the other, the ferocious ugliness of much of the story.

Again, that is a characteristic of all my cinema. There are lots of ways I could discuss that. Maybe the most banal is: Why should the devil have all the best tunes?

There is a mediaeval-like feeling in The Cook, the Thief about this rotten, worm-infested body which is covered in an extraordinary gloss of elaborate clothing, feathered hats and that sort of thing. It is as though there is an attempt to try and hide the horror, the despair, the sense of violence and lust that’s contained only just underneath. The very title of the film indicates the mediaeval parable or fable, as does the very moral ending. And the four characters are set up to be easily representative of certain vices and certain virtues.

There is also the way in which I use colour coding to draw attention to the artificiality of the subject. The film opens with curtains and closes with curtains, as if saying, “You are about to watch a performance.”

One of the amazing characteristics of cinema is you can every now and again be sucked completely into the illusion, but I can’t really use devices. For example, when the Wife walks from one room to another, her clothing changes, which immediately brings you up sharp. It’s certainly not reality; it is an artifice which I hope is well wrought, well organized and entertaining. Even though you are watching actors behaving like human beings, the film has a very allegorical, metaphorical sense which undermines the illusion and makes you realize you are sitting in a dark space, watching a beam of light project shadows on a screen.

I have often been accused by those people who do not like my cinema, and there’s a great many of them, of over-concerning myself with what might be described as large subject matters. English cinema is very parochial, often dealing with very local, political, anecdotal situations. My interests are much more to do with the European cinema of ideas, which is quite prepared, maybe arrogantly, to take on ‘big’ ideas. And these ideas, which follow through from The Draughtman’s Contract, and, indeed, from before, are to do with the questions of immortality and mortality.

Most cinema has basically two subject matters: sex and death. In the 1980s and ’90s, we think we have some knowledge of and control over sex; but we will never have any control over death. All my films address that situation, in terms of irony and black humour. Sometimes they are facetious, sometimes very flippant, but always the central core is concern.

Another subject matter, which is a very local one, and which makes my films very much a part of the latter half of the 20th Century, is the idea that the world is a most magnificent, munificent, amazing, varied place. The surfaces of my films, from The Draughtman’s Contract onwards, are very baroque. They use every device I can think of to indicate the richness and munificence of the world, but always with – and again I’m often accused of this – the central characters behaving in a misanthropic way. If you want to extract some meaning from this, it is that the world is a most magnificent place but people are constantly fucking it up. The Cook, the Thief is just another example of that.

To go back to the colour coding and the Wife’s costume changes, is the notion of the singing boy also a distancing device? It comes as a shock that the beautiful voice is not just on the soundtrack, but belongs to a character, as is revealed by the track through the kitchen. Exactly. And there are many other devices like that throughout the
film. Mostly it is because I feel that the great works of European culture which I admire most are those which balance content and form, which always acknowledge their own artificiality. For example, the Sistine Chapel is not just a magnificent examination of Christian and Jewish mythology but it’s also very much a painterly, artificial organization. Equally, Shakespeare’s Hamlet is a play about the theatre, Rembrandt’s “The Night Watch” a painting about painting.

That duality, between form and content, will always be part of my filmmaking. But it is something which can be self-indulgent, which can put people off with elitist knowledge and intellectual exhibitionism.

Your features are beautifully composed and lit. What sort of working relationship do you have with your superb director of photography, Sacha Vieny?

Sacha, who has worked with me since A Zed and Two Noughts, is about 75 years old. He has a long history which goes back to associations with people like Jean Cocteau. Probably he is most famous for having worked with Alain Resnais, whose movies I regard as the most important of European cinema. But Sacha has also worked with Luis Bunuel—they made Belle de jour together. So, he’s a man of enormous cinematic experience.

Sacha is very modest and retiring, and would certainly shun any sort of public celebration. He puts an enormous amount of imagination and excitement into his work. His English is not absolutely amazing and my French is even worse, but we do seem to be able to communicate very successfully.

Also very important are my Dutch collaborators in the art department, Ben van Os and Jan Roelfd. We have made three features together, and are about to embark on another. They have this tremendous excitement about what they do.

My films are made very cheaply. The Cook, the Thief was made for just over a million pounds, which is extraordinarily cheap. Apart from Sacha, Ben and Jan, the most important figure is my producer, a Dutchman named Kees Kasander. He manages to draw the money together from various European sources. Then, through all sorts of cleverness and devices, he is able to make that money stretch so that we can make the very full, professional-looking and rich movies that you see on the screen.

Have all your features been European co-productions?

Yes. The Draughtsman’s Contract was a collaboration between the British Film Institute and the newly opened Channel 4. And everything that I have done since has been very generously helped and aided by Channel 4—except, that is, for The Cook, the Thief. They drew the line on that one. After the first reading of the script, they got very over-excited and said they couldn’t possibly make a movie like this.

I feel The Cook, the Thief is very much in the European tradition which relates to Bunuel and Pasolini, of films which take risks, which try deliberately, and I hope not sensationally, because that’s cheap, to be provocative, in order to stir up sensibilities about areas which need to be aired. It is very adult cinema.

The violence, for example, is not related, I hope, to the American sense of violence. By and large, that is a very irresponsible, tomato ketchup sort of violence, where the characters get up the next frame and walk off. The violence in my films has a sense of responsibility. All of us know how appalling violence is; it must be shunned at every step. Of course, my approach can be misunderstood, and some people have accused me of being as gratuitous as Rambo. I strenuously deny that.

The Cook, the Thief is a film that sets out to shock, but with moral sanction for doing so. At the same time, it ravishes the senses. That makes it a provocative and exciting experience.

Quite. Responses are relative to that very thing; there’s a sense of the stretch mark to it.

Of course, the entire film could have been made with grubby characters in a transport café on some arterial roadway. It could belong much more to the realist milieu, without the use of ravishing cinematic language. Such a film, of course, would be completely different.

There is in my film a concern for picture making, for the formality and the artificiality of it, which energizes what is happening on the screen. This may be a little unusual in terms of the world cinema, but gives it an extra sort of savagery, an extra strength; it moves the whole air away from your transport café into some more grandiose and grandiloquent style of image-making, which again refers to that use of European painting.
Somehow in the imagery we know very well the appalling situation could be changed and the world constantly look like this magnificent imagery. In a very positive sense, it does not have to be constantly dragged down by the appalling greed, lust and self-interest, which seem to be the norm of a lot of western consumer society. And which is here embodied in the character of Albert Spica. But why did you want to make Spica a figure of such undiluted evil? Surely you risk alienating an audience with so unredeemable a presence at the centre.

This is the pleasure of evil, and goes right back to Shakespearean drama. When Laurence Olivier impersonated Richard III, he made that terrible, evil character peculiarly and dangerously attractive. Somehow we admire the evil. It happens time and time again. We have clichés like, "love to hate". J.R. Ewing in Dallas, for example, virtually made that programme, because people switched on the television in order to love to hate this appalling man.

On moral grounds, this is reprehensible. So I tried to create a character where this could not happen. Here is a Fascistic, sexist and mean-minded man, who tortures children and bullies women. All of us have come across people we feel are like this. They are extremely dangerous people, and ultimately must beemasculated and destroyed. Not that I think they should be killed, but there should be ways and means whereby we can combat this evil.

Does the feeling between the Wife and the Lover represent for you the one great positive in a nightmarish world?
The love affair does energize and organize everything else that happens in the film; even those appalling things towards the end of the film. But their affair is regarded in a very unsentimental, unromantic, undeodorized, un-Hollywood approach. The facts of the case are obvious: it is a very unsentimental love affair.

It begins very much as a sexual affair, rather than a romance.

Yes, and travels toward something much more valuable. Nonethe-

less, there is no soft-focus feel to it, really or metaphorically. It is a hastily grabbed, rushed, difficult affair which, while obviously flourishing, rises and falls in the space of four or five days.

There are all sorts of ironies as well: a man who’s supposed to be passionately interested in literature, but never speaks until it’s too late; a woman doesn’t declare her affection again until it’s too late.

The Cook seems a wry, benign presence. Is there a positive feeling invested in him that the film needs?

Yes. He is the director in some senses, the organizing principle. He is the one who invites the diner to come and sit at the meal table, the same way a film director invites the audience to sit in the cinema. He is the one who tucks the table napkin in your shirt front, offers you the menu, suggests what’s to be eaten today and, ultimately, provides the stage for the actors – and the privacy of the kitchen for the lovers. He ultimately agrees to the Wife’s suggestion to offer the dénouement, the final organization, of the film.

The Cook is also the figure which doesn’t take too strong a moral position. In the early part of the film, he could make arrangements to create trouble for the appalling Thief and for the restaurant, but he doesn’t. He observes, constantly watching and occasionally nudging the characters into certain sorts of situations.

He is also keen on his art.

Indeed, which again is reflective of this particular film director. The Cook is a perfectionist, a man who tries to find, in latter speeches of course, a metaphorical parallel between what he does as a cook and a philosophical examination of his particular art relative to everything else. When he describes the ways and means in which the food is cooked, he goes on talking about black being representative of this, and so on.

The most enigmatic character is Grace [Liz Smith]. What do you want to suggest with her?

She is rather strange. In terms of the written script, Grace had a much bigger part but, to make a film that is only two hours long, some of her lines have been cut.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 68
The release last year of The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne (1988) is a good occasion to take stock of one of the most enigmatic careers of post-war British cinema, that of director Jack Clayton.

Thirty years ago, after the international success of Room at the Top (1959), he was being widely credited with bringing realism, the working class and even sex to the British screen. Twenty years ago, shortly after Our Mother's House (1967) had gone down at the Venice Festival like a lead balloon, Andrew Sarris was writing him off, along with David Lean, as the epitome of academic impersonality in screen direction. Since then he has made only three films in two decades – The Great Gatsby (1974), Something Wicked This Way Comes (1983) and Judith Hearne – and has become one of those curiosities of British cinema, like Thorold Dickinson or Lindsay Anderson, whose career has never had any real continuity and who has never really seemed to belong. Perhaps this rootlessness and frustration was what attracted him to Judith Hearne, with its rootless, frustrated heroine. Things are going to be better here than the other places ... a new start...", says the heroine near the beginning of the film. It could be Clayton himself talking, returning to the British cinema after a generation's absence.

Sarris might have been contemptuous of Clayton's gifts, but he does fulfil one of Sarris' basic criteria of a good director: namely, someone who has made a fair proportion of good films. Of Clayton's seven movies, I think only one is the classic he aims for – The Innocents (1961) – but if the others fall short, some at least have cult movie status: The Pumpkin Eater (1964), for pumping Antonioni-esque angst into the pallid cheeks of English domestic melodrama; Something Wicked for reviving the terror of early Disney; Our Mother's House for its belatedly bizarre attempt at a British Forbidden Games (children's fascination with the rituals of death). Of The Great Gatsby, I will only recall at this stage that no less eminent a judge than Tennessee Williams pronounced it to be greater than the novel. If Sarris could not grant Clayton the accolade of auteur, Williams was happy to describe him as an artist.

Clayton is not an auteur in the sense in which the term was used in the 1960s, though nowadays that would not disqualify him from attention. All his films have been based on reputable or classic novels, and his attitude to adaptation has been similar to that of John Huston (for whom he worked as associate producer on Moulin Rouge and Beat the Devil): a belief that the trick is to let the material dictate the style rather than impose your personal style on the material. This is not to deny that Clayton has a distinctive style, or to suggest that there is a lack of recurring preoccupations in his work. But if the style is the man, then Clayton is an elusive character. Indeed, his main originality is in the idiosyncrasy of his borrowings, from Jean Cocteau to George Stevens, from Rene Clement to Alfred Hitchcock.

If one examines his first decade as a director, from his Oscar-winning short The Bespoke Overcoat in 1955 to Our Mother's House in 1967, the film that most looks like his odd man out is his most successful, Room at the Top. Clayton was never cut out to be the Angry Young Man of the British cinema – for a start he was balding, pushing 40, and had been working quite happily in the industry since he was 14 – so the fact that the film struck a contemporary nerve of rebellion and iconoclasm was entirely accidental. "I don't believe in being fashionable", Clayton was soon saying; 'Try to be and you are usually out of date before you start." Ironically, Room at the Top made him very fashionable for the only time in his career, but it is also the film of his that has dated most badly. For all the fuss that was made at the time over the love scenes between Laurence Harvey and Simone Signoret, it was never that sexy, even in comparison with the fleshiness of Fifties Hammer horror, which was then acquiring a following. It was nowhere near as daring or revolutionary a film as Michael Powell's Peeping Tom (1960), which was being made around that time and was to be greeted by the British press with unadulterated revulsion. Although the film is a big improvement on a tenth-rate novel, the portrait of the working-class hero, Joe Lampton, was scarcely authentic enough to cause D.H. Lawrence any twinges of envy, and Laurence Harvey's strangu­lated performance was soon to be upstaged by the raw conviction of Albert Finney in Saturday Night and Sunday Morning (1960). Also some of the direction – like the dissolve from the shot of a key to a love scene, or the mo-
 Yet much of the credit for it should also go to the director. Simone Signoret, a “marvellous” director who, without throwing his weight around, was the wife who has an affair with Lampton only to be pushed aside for another woman. It was her acting, not Clayton’s direction, that certainly thought so. In her autobiography, she described Clayton as “knew exactly what he wanted” and what he wanted was “true and genuine reality”.

The immediate comparison prompted by the film was not Gatsby but A Place in the Sun. Clayton's personal ambition (material ambition) is the aspect of the film that stands up best today, as his cool English temperament turns it all to stone. Yet the selection of Clayton as director was not a foolish one and certainly made more sense at the time than the selection of other English directors for American subjects, like J. Lee Thompson for Huckleberry Finn (1974) or John Schlesinger for The Day of the Locust (1975). I have mentioned the class theme that relates it to The Great Gatsby (1951), the adaptation of Dreiser’s An American Tragedy made by the great George Stevens (who would have been the ideal director for a film of Gatsby). Room at the Top had the equivalent themes and even narrative events of the Stevens film: the attraction of rich girl and poor boy, the death of the golden-hearted woman, the cost of love and the eroticism of money. Equally striking was the similarity of styles. Clayton deployed two of Stevens’s most pronounced stylistic characteristics: the use of counterpoint on the soundtrack (for example, the way Lampton’s wedding celebration is counterpointed with an overheard conversation about Alice’s death); and, particularly, the use of the dissolve, a relatively uncommon device these days which has become Clayton’s main visual signature — for purposes of mood and atmosphere, and for the melting of past and present, or vice versa, into a continuum of felt time.

Around the time of Room at the Top, however, a fellow filmmaker was commenting mischievously that Clayton’s signature in the film was not the dissolve — it was Simone Signoret. It was her acting, not Clayton’s direction, that gave the film its heart. Certainly her poignant performance (as the wife who has an affair with Lampton only to be pushed aside for material ambition) is the aspect of the film that stands up best today, yet much of the credit for it should also go to the director. Signoret certainly thought so. In her autobiography, she described Clayton as a “marvellous” director who, without throwing his weight around, “knew exactly what he wanted” and what he wanted was “true and genuine reality”. (After working with Clayton on Our Mother’s House, Dirk Bogarde – never one to suffer fools gladly – was to be similarly appreciative.)

Signoret’s performance was to provide a clue to Clayton’s personality as a director, notably as an acute psychologist of female feeling. Even on the evidence of his small body of films, one could still argue the case for his inclusion in the handful of great directors of actresses in the history of British film. In addition to Signoret, Anne Bancroft is splendid in The Pumpkin Eater and Maggie Smith’s subtle sensitivity as Judith Hearne reduces her performance in the Merchant-Ivory production A Room With a View (1986), by comparison, to a ragbag of mannerisms. Deborah Kerr is simply sensational in The Innocents, unleashing her customary decorous repression in a torrent of emotion: the nun and the nymphomaniac of her usual screen persona have never seemed more closely aligned.

The thing that links all these heroines is the theme of frustrated passion. They are all emotionally generous personalities, outwardly stable but inwardly insecure, who commit themselves to a relationship that will be unfulfilled. Like David Lean, Clayton makes films about thwarted or unrequited love. Romanticism dashes itself against the walls of repression and the result is often breakdown and delirium. Myrtle (Karen Black) in The Great Gatsby belongs also to this gallery of vulnerable victims.

I am not one of those who sneer at Clayton’s film of Gatsby, although it is badly flawed. It is oppressively decorated and conveys the affluence of the period much better than its energy. For once, his gift with actresses deserts him: Mia Farrow’s Daisy is as nerve-jangling as Cybill Shepherd’s Daisy in Peter Bogdanovich’s film of Daisy Miller (1973). Fundamentally it does not seem very idiomatic. Francis Ford Coppola’s servile screenplay crams in everything to make it seem the ultimate American story: Gatsby is not only a precursor of Charles Foster Kane (a wealthy unhappy personification of the promise and betrayal of the American Dream), of Rick in CASablana (a mysterious, possibly murderous past, an inextinguishable romanticism) but even of Coppola himself (dreams of money and success, achieved not through bootlegging in his case, but through romanticizing the Mafia). But the fastidious frost of Clayton’s cool English temperament turns it all to stone.

Yet the selection of Clayton as director was not a foolish one and certainly made more sense at the time than the selection of other English directors for classic American subjects, like J. Lee Thompson for Huckleberry Finn (1974) or John Schlesinger for Day of the Locust (1975). I have mentioned the class theme that relates it to Room at the Top and gains some power here from the contrasting photographic texture devised for the Gatsby-Daisy romance and the Myrtle-Tom subplot, which is its grim flipside. Gatsby is about “living too long with a single dream” and the quality of the dream and the fate of the dreamer is a constant thread in Clayton’s films. Characters either sacrifice their dreams out of ambition or greed, like Lampton or Daisy, or fulfil their deepest dreams and then have to confront their worst nightmares, as in Something Wicked This Way Comes. The timid librarian of Something Wicked is sneered at by Mr. Dark for “dreaming other men’s dreams”: i.e., immersing himself in books rather than in life, and which now sees him drowning in a sea of regrets. The faithful wife in The Pumpkin Eater is accused of “living in a dream world” when she is horrified by revelations of her husband’s supposed infidelity. Characters like her, and like Gatsby, and the
librarian in *Something Wicked* sometimes seem too trusting and idealistic for the real world, which makes the encounter between their essential innocence and the world's corruption all the more shocking.

Visually, the most stunning moment of disillusionment in his work probably occurs in *Our Mother's House*, when an impressionable young girl (Pamela Franklin) becomes an unwitting voyeur, her adoration of her 'father' is shattered and the screen is suffused with a hazy shade of sensual scarlet. This fascination with innocence and experience might explain Clayton's capacity for conjuring remarkable performances from children in films like *Our Mother's House*, *The Pumpkin Eater*, *Something Wicked This Way Comes* and, especially, *The Innocents*.

“...I adore working with children,” he has said, “seeing them embody my concept. It is totally 'pure' direction. It brings out the best in me.”

*The Innocents* is the film that has so far brought out the best in Clayton. The ambiguity and suggestiveness of Henry James' ghost story, *The Turn of the Screw*, where the horror is conveyed through psychological implication rather than physical shock, are a real challenge to the filmmaker's imagination and Clayton rises to it magnificently, in a style that seems partly inspired by the haunted poetry of *Beauty and the Beast* (1946) by Cocteau. The ghosts are solid but eerie, the man first glimpsed briefly through mist on a tower, the lady (in perhaps Clayton's most haunting single image) seen across a lake in an attitude that bespeaks unutterable sadness. The evidence of their visitations is limited to a single tantalizing trace: a tear-drop on a blotting pad that, like 'Rosebud', disappears almost as suddenly as it materializes. In Clayton's reading, the story becomes a trenchant critique of Victorian attitudes, in which the preservation of 'innocence' (in this case, an authoritarian protection of children from sexual knowledge) is the product of a repression so severe that it could be twisted into hysteria and hallucination. In a particularly telling touch, Clayton shows the governess' reaction to the horror before the audience sees the thing itself, in this way suggesting that it is her imagination that is supplying these visions. It is a brilliantly effective way of being at once faithful to the spirit of Jamesian ambiguity whilst at the same time interpreting rather than simply illustrating the text.

No other film of his is constantly on that level but nearly all of them contain great things. In spite of the curiously misogynistic Harold Pinter screenplay for *The Pumpkin Eater* - as if he were intent on playing Strindberg to the novel's Ibsenite themes - the art with which Clayton compels us to identify with the anguish of Jo Armitage (Anne Bancroft), as in the very Carol Reed-like use of animal imagery to underline her fear of human nature, makes this one of Britain's finest 'woman's pictures'. *Gatsby* has some fine scenes - Clayton is very good at sweaty arguments - and some concisely eloquent images, like the dissolve from Dr Eckleburg's all-seeing eyes to the broken, blood-stained headlamps of Gatsby's car. *Something Wicked* cannot make the ending work - Clayton is no Spielberg when it comes to swallowing that kind of familial sentimentality - and Jon-
Clayton

athan Pryce is badly miscast as Mr Dark, offering lightweight menace when what is needed is the charisma of a Robert Mitchum in a Night of the Hunter mood. Yet there are moments that make this the scariest film from the Disney stable since Pinocchio (1940): the fabulous opening shot of the ghost train; the tarantula nightmare; and a hunt for the children in the library that culminates in a terrifying shot of the boys as they peer out from their hiding place between the shelves, unaware of the two black-gloved, disembodied hands rising like the tentacles of an octopus behind them. Hitchcock would have relished the use of the fairground as a symbol of Dionysian chaos, as in Strangers on a Train (1951) or a small town’s craving for excitement releasing demonic forces, as in Shadow of a Doubt (1948). If the film was a commercial disaster, the reason might be that it discomfited its audience too effectively. Adults would feel the pain in the film’s exploration of the American fear of the ageing process. As for children, the film, like Mr Dark, like the governess in The Innocents, seems capable of frightening them to death.

In fact, the overall impression one has from a cursory survey of Clayton’s films is the sense of an unusually interesting cineaste at work. It might not be that valuable but it would certainly be possible to offer a structuralist/auteurist diagram of Clayton’s career to refute accusations of impersonality. Thematically there are the motifs of frustrated passion, feminine feeling, ghostly visitation, children, dream, the coalescence of past and present, and an undercurrent of religious hysteria that is particularly marked in The Innocents, Our Mother’s House and Judith Hearne, but is also briefly felt in The Pumpkin Eater (when the heroine is visited, at a moment of crisis, by a religious fanatic). Visually and aurally, one can pick up traces of the Clayton signature: the use of dissolves; a fascination with hands, that are either clenched in tension or reaching for contact; a Truffaut-like love of the photographic effects of candlelight; significant use of pictures and portraits; an amplification of sound at moments of high drama and a pervasive use of echoes and whispers (the children in both The Innocents, and Something Wicked are picked on by their respective spinster teachers for being ‘whisperers’). The conjunction of these elements across a wide variety of material adds up to a very distinctive world.

Why then has his career been such a faltering affair? Part of it has to do, of course, with a national film industry seemingly incapable of sustaining continuity. Also Clayton’s sobriety has always been at odds with a popular cinema dedicated to the pursuit of happiness. His films invariably end on a melancholy note: not pessimistic necessarily but nearly always sad. Only Something Wicked contrives a happy ending and it is so embarrassed and awkward about the whole thing that it almost topples the entire narrative structure. There has never been much of a sense of play in Clayton’s cinema — an inability to relax is his main failing as a director — and none of his films comes over simply as entertainment. Philip French once said of Robert Rossen that “here was a director, one felt, who would rather be dull than frivolous — and frequently was”, and one might apply that, with modifications, to Clayton.

If he has had less than his due from the critics, I think much of that stems from bad timing. He came into directing movies at a time in the 1960s when his kind of well-crafted literary cinema was going out of style. He has never looked like catching up with the cinema of the present day. Contemporaries like Karel Reisz, John Schlesinger and Tony Richardson have made strenuous efforts to move with the times, but, Gatsby-like, Clayton has seemed to insist: “Can’t repeat the past? Of course you can!” Like many of his characters, he has waited for the past to catch up with him, to come into alignment with his present. Considering the reception given to The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne as a welcome return of the intelligently scripted, well-made, inter-relationship sort of movie, maybe his time at last, and deservedly, has come.

Jack Clayton Filmography

A panel of film reviewers has rated twelve of the latest releases on a scale of 1 to 10, the latter being the optimum rating (a dash means not seen). The critics are: Bill Collins (Channel 10; The Daily Mirror, Sydney); Sandra Hall (The Bulletin, Sydney); Paul Harris (3LO; "EG", The Age, Melbourne); Ivan Hutchinson (Seven Network; The Sun, Melbourne); Stan James (The Adelaide Advertiser); Neil Jillett (The Age); Adrian Martin (Tension, Melbourne); Scott Murray; Mike van Niekerk (The West Australian); Tom Ryan (3LO; The Sunday Age, Melbourne); Peter Thompson (Sunday, Nine Network); and Evan Williams (The Australian, Sydney).

**BACK TO THE FUTURE II**

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### Now Voyager [classic]

**Irving Rapper**

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The FFC has offices in Sydney and Melbourne. Investment executives in each office are available to discuss proposals for funding.

The FFC welcomes funding proposals from the industry. Guidelines and application forms are available at the Sydney and Melbourne offices.
REVIEWED:
THE DELINQUENTS, DO THE RIGHT THING, THE ABYSS,
THE FABULOUS BAKER BOYS, AND A STING IN THE TALE.

ABOVE: LOLA (KYLIE MINOGUE) IN CHRIS THOMSON'S THE DELINQUENTS: "ASPIRING TO A VERY UNINVENTIVE LEVEL OF 'NORMAL' FILMMAKING". FACING PAGE: LOLA AND BROWNIE (CHARLIE SCHLATTER)

THE DELINQUENTS
ADRIAN MARTIN

Something in the pre-publicity for The Delinquents kept suggesting to me that I should hire Grease from the video shop as homework and preparation before the main event. Perhaps it was the hint of Kylie Minogue on a path similar to that of another beloved Aussie lass, Olivia Newton-John. For here, in the tantalizing spread of available pictures, was Kylie, debuting in a film seemingly carefully calculated to show off her 'range' by taking her from innocent country schoolgirl to Madonna-ish vamp in black leather, being attacked lustfully at the neck by her guy (Charlie Schlatter). Whatever the flimsy storyline contrived to manoeuvre her from point A (innocence) to point B (experience), the film promised to be a knowing 'vehicle' (an apt expression) for Kylie, driving her from one florid movie-image to the next. After all, there was also, looming in the picture, her great character name of Lola activating memories of Lola Lola in The Blue Angel, or The Kinks' Lola, or Fassbinder's, or Ophuls' Lola Montes. Not to mention that wonderful title (taken from Criena Rohan's source novel, which I have not read) - the perfect, the archetypal teen movie title, The Delinquents, with its connotations of rebellion, lawlessness, vice, craziness - promising a summation of the original teen movies (Altman made a film of the same name in 1957) and their modern, romantically charged variants (such as The Outsiders or Reckless).

Dreamer, dream on. In the event, there is no vamp Kylie with a hunk at her neck appearing anywhere in the film - only a girl meekly apologizing to her man for 'indiscretions' we never see. (Unless, that is, it's a sin to catch the flu, which Lola is often guilty of in the film.) Nor is there much teen rebellion past a vaguely 'daring' point - an interrupted grope in a public dressing room, a fleeting evocation of Jerry Lee Lewis, an inconsequential riot in a girl's prison dorm to the sound of 'Be Bop A Lula' - beyond which the film is determined to match Lola up not only with a reformed, tamed 'wild one', but an instant child as well, with Little Richard's "Lucille" now trans-
formed from an anthem of wild youth to a cute, funny song suitable even for young marrieds. The film is no ultimate teen movie extravagana either – although Brownie (Schlatter) keeps talking about wanting to be “fast and free”. The Delinquents (unlike, say, Great Balls of Fire!) is clearly neither. Again (again!), a case of an Australian film too scared, or too precious, to become, in its very texture and movement, a knowing genre film, in a popular genre. (You can tell from the first languorous pastoral shots of the Bundaberg postie that this one really wants to be The Year My Voice Broke.)

Okay, maybe I came with the wrong bag of expectations. Let’s try another paradigm, one cued by the appearance in the film of a poster for Rossellini’s Stromboli with Ingrid Bergman and the remarkable work about the fury and ecstasy of a trapped woman) and fortuitously nourished by the video I actually did happen to watch before The Delinquents instead of Greenes, Vincente Minnelli’s 1949 Hollywood version of Flaubert’s Madame Bovary. Is The Delinquents, in short, a ‘woman’s melodrama’? Like many star vehicles of old (Garbo’s, for instance, or Bette Davis’), it certainly conforms to the convention whereby the maximum of both screen time and dramatic character is invested in the female star—even to the extent of making the male ‘hero’ a bit of a blank (which is no fault of Schlatter’s acting: he does what he can). Performance-wise, Minogue proves herself equal to the challenge of this single-minded centring of the film on her. But, themewise, is anything going on?

The connection to Madame Bovary is not as arbitrary or crazy as it might sound. Like Bovary (Jennifer Jones) in Minnelli’s film, Lola is first seen performing the rigid task of practising piano so that Lola can be an instant Mum?). The film is also not short on puzzling ellipses (who’s her girlfriend at the end of ‘commercially’ minded Australian films. In the context of a film industry which (at least at the professional training and conference levels) thrives inane scripting and filmmaking prescriptions like ‘don’t say it when you can show it’ into impressionable young minds, The Delinquents—which completely embodies the mindset of that industry—illustrates almost every wrongomatic, stylistic, etc.), if any, was envisaged for them?

Had anyone involved in the making of this film seen Stromboli before deciding to whack a poster of it up on the set? Do small (but often crucial) decisions like this matter to mainstream Australian filmmakers any more? Did they ever?

**THE DELINQUENTS**

Directed by: Chris Thomson.
**DO THE RIGHT THING**  
**MARCUS BREEN**

There is an essential relationship between filmmaking and marketing. It is generally taken for granted that major newspapers, radio and television interviews, complemented by advertisements, will convey to consumers the necessary hooks whereby those very consumers will be attracted to pay to see the film in question.

In the case of *Do the Right Thing*, some of the most remarkable aspects of the film have involved its marketing, rising from the subject matter and the way it is treated on the screen.

But *Do the Right Thing* has had the rare pleasure of surpassing that marketplace activity and moving into a controversy zone that challenges the lazy conventions of media publicity.

But then again, as Americans are prone to say, this is an issues film—which is just another way of safely packaging it for the middle section of the great consuming audience.

"Fight the power, fight the power, fight the powers that be"  

When Spike Lee chooses a musical track like that to (repeatedly) lay over the small suburban world of Bed-Stuy he has created for *Do the Right Thing*, it is time to take note. But we are already taking notice, because our film journalists, for the most part, have told us that this is no ordinary film.

Indeed, it is not. It is undoubtedly one of the strongest, most idiosyncratic films to achieve major release in many years. Most strong films are idiosyncratic, but most films do not lead audiences into one of the major contradictions confronting the era. That contradiction is between the claim for racially based independence in a system that cannot offer anything as long as it exists in its present form. In other words, American blacks want to be free of the racist constraints of America, while enjoying all the benefits of the liberal dreams to which they aspire.

What does the world do when race, ethnicity and nationality begin to assert themselves like mushrooms popping up through pine needles? Be it Armenia, Bulgaria, Kurdistan, Lithuania or New York, there are major movements internationally that herald potentially exciting and/or dark times ahead for the planet. They are movements which suggest that societies have advanced to the stage where independent ethnic groups can develop the economic, cultural and social coherence that will enable them to live “free” lives. (It should be noted that in the early 1930s, the Spanish Republic recognized the right of Basques to control their own destiny, while Franco scrapped that right as one of his first reactionary moves after his coup.)

Black Americans are in the mood for nationhood and statehood. They are making waves that Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. could have only dreamed about. Some contemporary American blacks are laying claim to the intellectual territory of their radical parents, who wanted independent social, cultural and economic lives for their children, free of the constraints imposed by racist whites. They are making the moves within a contradiction that asks if it is to be done within or outside the existing white American system of capitalism; or will it even be a capitalist system?

It is fascinating that producer-writer-director-actor Spike Lee selected a handsome, yet almost incomprehensible, stutterer to continually present photographs of Malcolm X and King. Named Smiley (Roger Guenveur Smith), he parades through the film with his snapshots of the two black leaders, keen to sell them to whomever will pay. His colorations and decorations of the photographs are a telling subtext of the uncertain relevance of these men in the late 1980s, suggesting that you make your own interpretation of your history.

Selling and making money is a significant sideline of the film as well. Economic independence has been an important debate among black American intellectuals for many years. It began as far back as the turn of the century when Booker T. Washington argued that, “Brains, property and character will settle the question of civil rights...,” while W. E. B. du Bois saw political power for blacks as being essential, regardless of how it was achieved. It is still a healthy debate.

*Do the Right Thing* is based around Mookie (Spike Lee), who spends his days and nights delivering pizzas, calling to black brothers “Get a job!” then counting his money, while putting off his girl friend because he has to work. It doesn’t seem much, but it is an important and disturbing trend suggesting that work will solve the race problems presented in this film.

While much of the publicity for the film concentrated on its attempt to explain the racism of America and the problems faced by minorities, I do not believe it succeeds in this respect. It is too diverse, too successful in digging into the rich social psyche of its audiences to be bothered with simplistic reading.

Spike Lee has gone on record saying that the film did not win the Palme d’Or at last year’s Cannes Film Festival because, among other things, judges like German director Wim Wenders preferred to award the prize to “a golden haired, white boy” like Steven Soderbergh for *Sex, Lies, and Videotape*.

Comments like these raise the racist spectre, but, in fact, merely express the frustration of
filmmakers who feel that they should collect the big prizes once they make a film that mixes in the top league. Of course, the mistake is with Lee. He does not need Cannes or Wenders.

More important, he does not need the conventional film industry machinery to promote his films because, as previously mentioned, his idiosyncrasy is his appeal.

The idiosyncrasy of Do the Right Thing is quite incredible. There are risks taken here that could be used as examples of bad filmmaking in first-year film-school courses. The stage scenes and static sets, the incredible absence of method acting, the overly articulated dialogue: it all suggests a healthy disregard for narrative film’s obsession with the story. More important, it suggests an ambivalence towards Hollywood’s dream machine.

There are no suspended states for Spike Lee, no suspension of belief and its ensuing seduction into narrative dream scapes and fast fictions.

Technically, the film stumbles and rolls like the aged drunkard Da Mayor (Ossie Davis), from one uncertain day to the next. Lee is determined not to allow any indulgence—herein is the rub of the difference between Do the Right Thing, Sex, Lies, and Videotape and other conventional films. Spike Lee keeps his audience conscious. Soderbergh (read Hollywood/conventional narrative theory and practice) drives the audience into the back of its own sleepy brain to dream its fictions.

Spike Lee’s direction combines the following unlikely styles: theatrical stage performances, such as that by the three men in front of the matt red wall and their vaguely relevant, but deliberate, conversation; much of the silent action by Radio Raheem (Bill Nunn) until he speaks; and the cinéma-vérité camera work, such as that in the bedroom and in the home with Mookie’s girl friend Tina (Rosie Perez). All coexist in an ungainly fashion within conventional, feature-film construction.

This mixture of styles makes the film awkward, often difficult to watch, but always idiosyncratic. Indeed, its appeal is in its treatment of the material not the characters, although the Italian pizza owners tend to perform character roles.

Where Eddie Murphy (e.g., Going to America, Harlem Nights) takes black characters and makes them parodies of the mass market’s experience of blacks, Lee carefully avoids such easy strategies. Even the opening titles incorporate a feminist assertion: black women dancing semi-naked in leotards to Public Enemy’s “Fight the Power” rap, some wearing boxing gloves. There is nowhere to hide among the stereotypes when faced with this originality.

“Fight the power, fight the power, fight the powers that be”

Ultimately, Lee uses all the devices he can—short of experimental treatments—to throw up as many conflicting and contradictory messages on the screen as it is possible to do while maintaining the unsteady momentum of the film. When the momentum finally takes us into the climax, in a frenzy of fire bombing that leaves the viewer breathless at its rapidity and conviction, there is a sense that Lee has concluded his statement.

Radin Raheem is murdered by police in front of a mostly black crowd, and Mookie (who, as the good boy, finally breaks out to do the bad thing) makes the move that brings about the destruction of Sal’s Pizza and his income. He returns to the shop the next morning for his wages and there is Sal with enough money to overpay Mookie. Lee will not compromise. He will not resile from his belief that, regardless of what happens, the contradiction will remain: blacks will always be bought out by the American free-enterprise system and almost nothing will be gained.

This is perhaps too rational a reading of Do the Right Thing. Two viewings of the film, however, convinced me that it is an intensely rational film constructed with love by Lee who sees the immensity of the problem for black Americans with exceptional clarity. His rationality will not be appreciated by many people, nor will his appeal to the two major streams of black American history, as evidenced in the statements by Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X that close the film.

It is unfortunate that Do the Right Thing has been tarred with the media brush, whereby its appeal has been limited to the race/racist reading, because it is a much denser film than such marketing will allow. But it is a film that bravely enters into the honest logic of the contradiction facing all progressive Americans.

Because he takes that approach, many people may be unable to cope with Lee’s somewhat confusing attitude, but there is little doubt that his work is rapidly elevating him to a position alongside some of the great black American intellectuals and activists. It is a position that accurately reflects reality for many people around the world and that is a major accomplishment.


DO THE RIGHT THING


THE ABYSs

JIM SCHEMBRI

So what went wrong with the end of The Abyss? How could James Cameron, director of such consummate action films as The Terminator and Aliens, drop the ball just as he was going for the touchdown? How could a film that, for 95 per cent of its running time, is everything one could possibly want in an underwater action-adventure film (leaving two similarly themed cousins Deep Star Six and Leviathan way behind) turn into a pseudo-mystical parable with a mushy mish mash of images torn living and breathing from 2001: A Space Odyssey, 2010, Close Encounters of the Third Kind, E.T. the Extra-terrestrial and even Splash?

The answer is simple: the film was too eager for an answer. After spinning a great yarn and setting up a fabulous mystery about an underwater civilization, Cameron took that one step too far. Rather than leave one with the tantalizing suggestion as to what these creatures were, he gives us their address and a guided tour of the neighbourhood.

The Abyss, like most good action films, is struct-
Whereas in also an emotional and visual thrill. Like he likes to espouse are "healthily conservative". Of the maternal instinct, as Ripley (Sigourney Weaver) fought with the multi-dentured Mother Alien for the custody of a little girl, in *The Abyss* he makes a clear statement about the importance of marriage, though he wisely opts for humour and action rather than sentimentality in imparting this.

After Bud and Lindsey have their first confrontation, Bud deposits his wedding ring into the septic blue depths of the toilet only to retrieve it seconds later. Shortly after, the ring saves his life during one of the most compelling segments of the film when the hull of the rig is breached and sea water cascades in. As Bud hurries for a pressure door to escape the rising tide, it quickly shuts automatically. Instinctively, he tries to force it back open but the door pushes his hand against the side, the wedding ring keeping his hand from being crushed and enabling him to call for help. Later, when Bud is plummeting into the abyss, it is the bond with his wife that keeps him going.

Interestingly, these "healthily conservative" values sit comfortably alongside politically hip anti-nuclear and anti-cold war themes, suggesting that being conserva­tive does not necessarily mean being Right wing (a great topic for dinner parties, this).

The anti-nuclear and anti-cold war themes - so appropriate in this age of glasnost and nuclear disarmament - are beautifully embodied in the character of Lt. Coffey (Michael Biehn), who is going ga ga because he is unable to adjust to deep water diving. His devotion to nuking the alien underwater colony and his anti-Soviet paranoia are purely the results of mental dysfunction.

More dramatically enticing, however, are the childlike responses to the underwater beings, referred to as NTIs (non-terrestrial intelligences), eliciting from the characters. Wide-eyed expressions of wonder and warmth deliberately jar and undercut the very adult, no-nonsense world of deep-sea drilling they inhabit. "Big Guy" panics during the exploration of the damaged sub and encounters one of the NTIs, he goes into a coma. When he emerges, this big, burly, beef-eating childlike response to the underwater beings, referred to as NTIs (non-terrestrial intelligences), eliciting from the characters.

Coffey deposits the nuclear bomb at the bottom of the abyss to destroy the NTI colony, Bud goes down, disarms it and then, with only minutes of oxygen left, lies there waiting to die. However, a multi-coloured reflection appears on his helmet during one of the NTIs, he goes into a coma. When he emerges, this big, burly, beef-eating macho man gingerly refers to the NTI as an "angel".

Similarly, when Lindsey runs into a large NTI, her sense of scientific duty is suspended as she examines it with joyous curiosity. It is not until it leaves that her professional instincts kick back in and she tries (unsuccessfully) to photograph it. But to keep this childlike-adult motif from going over the top, Cameron tempers it with some good, hard-nosed cynicism. When Lindsey tries to convince Bud that the NTIs are friendly and wise and want to help, she sounds like a Disney character and he responds with astringent disbelief and concern that she might be losing her marbles.

There is an important feminist aspect to *The Abyss* - as there is in *Aliens* and *The Terminator* - that deserves special note, but for which Cameron has not been given due credit. Cameron has a penchant for very strong female leads who can cut it in a genre normally dominated by men. Linda Hamilton played the reluctant hero in *The Terminator* and Sigourney Weaver showed brains and physical resilience in *Aliens*, which also features female combat marines - state-of-the-art hardware. In *The Abyss*, Cameron again has a strong, intelligent female lead in the character of Lindsey, as well as an oil rig crew which includes a female who is not a cook or a cleaner or a clerk.

No apology or explanation is ever made for these characters, they are simply part of the dramatic tapestry. And as these are films which have been very successful commercially (*Aliens* made a profit of $200 million), Cameron's task is to create a major breakthrough in smashing sex stereotypes and opening up audiences to a new way of thinking about females on the mainstream screen. Surely one doesn't have to wait for Marleen Gorris to make an art-house statement before we recognise what ground has been broken.

The technical mastery of the film serves the soundest backhander to the video generation so far. As more and more so-called "big screen" films seem to be shot with their video release in mind - *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* being a prime recent example: it comes across more as a monochromatic television series pilot - *The Abyss* is blessed with beautifully fluid camerawork, fabulous widescreen compositions, revolutionary production values and some compelling production design.

About 40 per cent of the film was actually shot underwater with Cameron spending more than 500 hours directing from inside a diving helmet. Special microphones and lighting rigs had to be developed, as well as special submersible vehicles. The matching of miniatures and live-action footage is almost impeccable and the major special-effects sequence, where an alien water tentacle slithers through the rig, is designed to make a lasting impression on the viewer, as opposed to the brilliant effects in films like *Back to the Future II*, where many are designed not to be noticed.

The only technical problem the film encountered is its setting sometimes looks a little too like Atlantis. In fact, Cameron says he was conscious of not using too many actors from *Aliens* else the films look too similar.

So what went wrong with the ending? After Lt Coffey deposits the nuclear bomb at the bottom of the abyss to destroy the NTI colony, Bud goes down, disarms it and then, with only minutes of oxygen left, lies there waiting to die. However, a multi-coloured reflection appears on his helmet showing that the NTIs have come to visit. It is here that Cameron could have, and should have, ended the film. Instead, he goes on to pay homage to the finale of *Close Encounters* and *2001: A Space Odyssey* by using computer-generated images of small tinkerbells take Bud's hand and show him around the house.

So what was Cameron's intention? "I knew I wanted to meet and see the creatures", he says: "I wanted to follow certain rules that made sense to me. But I did want to establish the very tenuous toehold of communication between man and this other species. I wanted to go further than the purely abstract meeting..."
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THE ABYSS

THE FABULOUS BAKER BOYS
HU NTER CORDA IY

The Fabulous Baker Boys is a rare film from Hollywood. Its setting is not expansive horizons, or the large canvas with the symbolic struggle between good and evil super-heroes. Instead, it represents a cinema of interiors - hotel rooms, bars, clubs - and characters who live out their lives in the smoky light between dusk and dawn. It is a world, often, of brief encounters, shy confessions of ambition or regret at talent wasted in the land which seems to relentlessly suck all potential dry. Films such as these become portraits of a society of minor characters, constructed from small gestures and shifting emotions, stories which re-define the hero/heroine as someone whose innocence, though gone, has not been totally replaced by the bitterness as defined by classical noir narratives.

A cynic might call these stories small-time, but they have a nobility about them because they give a sense of worth to the unfashionable and ordinary while allowing enormous scope for quirky behaviour and humour. A short list of notable examples would include Fat City, Five Easy Pieces and The King of Marvin Gardens, to which writer-director Steve Kloves’ film, The Fabulous Baker Boys, should be added.

The credit sequence of The Fabulous Baker Boys has all the codes which establish this as a film about the inevitable connection between personal and city life. Outside is the city at dusk; inside, a woman and man are in bed. The man (Jeff Bridges) gets up and starts dressing. "Will I see you again?" she asks. "No", he replies. This is the first and last time. A brief encounter of two strangers in a room. He then walks out into the evening city, not in to mean streets so much as an urban landscape which is unremarkable, often familiar, with neon signs, loan shops, a fish bar, a piano lounge, dull red lighting, more empty tables than customers. This will be a film of glances, melancholy chords, a recording of the spaces and silences between people.

The Fabulous Baker Boys of the film’s title are two brothers, Jack and Frank, played by Jeff and Beau Bridges. They have been playing piano together for 30 years, and while "Fabulous" has more wishful thinking than truth in it, "Boys" is a lingering reminder that their joint careers started back when, as Frank repeatedly uses in his show patter, their only audience was Cecil the cat. If their act is not scintillating, the casting of the brothers Bridges is inspired; though this is their first time together on screen, the rapport between them brings a depth and tension to the tired musical platitudes of the piano act they take from lounge to lounge. How many times can they play "The Girl from Ipanema" or "All of Me" before the words feel hollow, and fabulous falls into predictability?

Frank, the older brother, is the driving force in the act, though by now he has settled for playing to near-empty lounges on low wages, has a wife, kids and a mortgage. His professionalism...
is small time (play and take the cash), his tunes is small time (play and take the cash), his tunes are only matched by the traumas of auditioning and subsequent successful audition of Susie Diamond (Michelle Pfeiffer) is the one predictable scene in an otherwise fine film. Naturally she has everything the other 37 candidates lacked. As she sings, the camera slowly closes in to alternating close-ups of Frank and Jack to show their recognition of her vamp-like talent. It is a crucial scene because the two brothers will now become a pair of a threesome and much of the film rests on how difficult that adjustment proves to be.

As the relationship between the brothers waxes and wanes, Susie Diamond will be transformed from the rough-edged (un-cut?) singer at the audition to a silky smooth (polished?) enterpriser who enters parliament after winning the seat of Black Stump in a by-election. With a sense of naive innocence which Monroe also had a sort of purity, whereas Pfeiffer to make various telling points in his fable itself with "how the full force of the male-dominated world of power tries to manipulate the life and career of one woman and how she turns the table on them". Screenwriter Patrick Edgeworth (Buswell for the Defense) deliberately uses caricatured characters to make various telling points in his fable about the nature of political power, backroom party machinations and male sexism.

Diane Lane (Diane Craig) is the newly elected and naive backbencher, formerly a trade-union official, who enters parliament after winning the seat of Black Stump in a by-election. With a sense of heady idealism, she ascends the corridors of power and navigates a treacherous political minefield, carrying some odd personal baggage with her along the way.

Not surprising, given the jaunty tone of the piece, she eventually becomes Australia's first female prime minister. This occurs despite obstacles placed in her ascent by married lover, Barry Robbins (Gary Day), a corrupt (and chain-smoking) Minister for Health and the schemings of seedy media magnate, Roger Monroe (Edwin Hodgeman), a Rupert Murdoch sound-and-look-alike character, basically your standard media baron. Produced by the prolific Rosa Colosimo on South Australian locations to represent the federal capital, the film uneasily settles for a broad comedy style that lacks any real bite or venom with most of the characters trading quips that would seem more at home in the shorthand vocabulary of television sitcoms.

Director Eugene Schlusser, a former actor and theatre director with extensive television experience, seems to be fighting an uphill battle on obviously limited resources. The low budget frequently strains dramatic credibility, particularly in any scene that takes place in the political arena. The soundtrack suggests the presence of dozens of people, but the recurring image is limited to the same half dozen or so extras traipsing across screen.

Intermittently amusing, A Sting In The Tale, amiable and relaxed in tone, lacks any real sense of passion or commitment to its subject matter, and seems content to straddle a dated twilight zone, which is perched uneasily between broad farce and grim earnestness.


A STING IN THE TALE
PAUL HARRIS

A STING IN THE TALE is a home-grown political satire, and one which announces itself in the press material as concerning itself with "how the full force of the male-dominated world of power tries to manipulate the life and career of one woman and how she turns the table on them".

Screenwriter Patrick Edgeworth (Buswell for the Defense) deliberately uses caricatured characters to make various telling points in his fable about the nature of political power, backroom party machinations and male sexism.

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**A CASE OF HONOR**


Unpreviewed. Produced by International Film Management, *A Case of Honor* is described as an action-packed adventure story in the tradition of *Rambo* and *Uncommon Valour*.

**DEAR CARDHOLDER**


“When Governments pass laws that aren’t good, people should just break them”, the fiery Aggie tells a 60 Minutes camera crew who have come to her egg farm to survey the destruction wreaked by the thugs of an industry board that Aggie has refused to join.

Hec, a timid and dreamy taxation clerk, is an unlikely but stalwart kindred spirit. His life is the stuff of an absurdist comedy. A taxation clerk instructed by his anally retentive boss (a brief and funny performance by satirist Patrick Cook) to reduce the government’s trade deficit, he dreams of escaping from his humdrum job by developing an ioniser that unfortunately triggers car alarms, sets the tone for his grand dream.) He applies for a bank loan, but fast finds himself in a downward spiral of applying for more and more credit to pay off his escalating debts.

Writer-director Bill Bennett’s third feature is about people bucking the system, but, unlike the previous *A Street to Die and Backlash*, the spirit of rebellion is tempered by a light-hearted comic tone. Here, the characters find themselves in an After Hours-style scenario with the characters caught in a series of events that defies logic or reason.

At the same time, the characters’ psychological make-up is always credible, allowing them to remain in control throughout the spiralling narrative. The finely-tuned comic tone neither underrates nor overstates the situations, many of which, comic as they may be, do not betray the human drama. Almost imperceptibly, Bennett moves from caustic satire of institutions and bureaucracies to touching drama in which the effects are measured in human terms, such as when Aggie realizes that she has lost everything she fought for, and when Hec’s daughter Jo is taken to live in a home after he finds it impossible to provide for her.

**GLASS**


Unpreviewed, *Glass* is described as “a thriller and a mystery of distortions and reflections, about friendship, flowers and shards of glass, and the illusions created by grease paint ... a haunting, stylized tale of escape”.

The story evolves around Richard Vickery, whose chain of retirement homes has made him a millionaire. The new board’s proposal to build a casino, coupled with the murder of Richard’s secretary, marks a turning point in the life of the old-fashioned and sentimental man.

His wife, however, has already taken bribes from underworld figures to use her influence to ensure that her husband delivers the casino into certain hands. Thus, when Richard decides to sell the corporation, she enlists the help of her lover, Peter Breen, a sharp lawyer who has also made promises to dangerous people.

**I’VE COME ABOUT THE SUICIDE**


Garfield Lawson is a best-selling author whose novels are based on his death-defying adventures in exotic places. Things aren’t looking too good for Lawson after he returns from a trip, realizes that his safari days are numbered and that his adulterous wife is scheming with his greedy publisher to take control of his considerable wealth. His faithful servant, Man, tries to help Lawson over his menopausal grief. Meanwhile, Lawson learns of an organization, Cryonics Corporation, that freezes corpses for revitalization in the future. He is now ready to embark on his greatest adventure ever.

Originally made for television under the title *Pigs Can Fly*, the film is a messy and abortive attempt at wildly over-the-top comedy. While parts of this hit-or-miss endeavour work better than others, it too often relies on tired jokes and lumbering situations, an under-written screen-
play and undynamic direction, leaving the actors with little more to do than slap each other and carry on regardless.

**KANSAS**


Wade and Doyle rob a bank and, while hiding the stash, witness an accident in which a small child nearly drowns. Wade heroically rescues the child, but, not wanting to be identified, quickly disappears. As the search to find both the criminal and the hero intensifies, so too do the tensions between Wade and Doyle, whose anger is ignited when he begins to suspect that Wade has hidden the money and will not give it to him.

Unfortunately, *Kansas* is a fairly lack-lustre, unengaging and hackneyed melodrama about the stigmatizing of two teenagers, one of whom is clearly destined to suffer, the other to thrive. The moral parameters are drawn early in the film when Wade’s selfless heroics supposedly absolve him from his part in robbing the bank and a house (he dugs $20 from his pocket and leaves it in the kitchen – what a guy!). The characterization of the good and bad apples are shallow and one-dimensional, a situation exacerbated by the unimaginative casting of Dillon and McCarthy. Directed by David Stevens (*A Town Like Alice, Always Afternoon*) and photographed by David Eggby, the film features one of the worst filmed climaxes of all time.

**OTHER RELEASES**

**BACKROADS**


Incisive view of racism told through the story of Gary, a young Aboriginal, and Jack, a white man, who steal a car and set off for Gary’s home in the outback wilderness. Celebrated feature debut of Phil Noyce, who also produced and co-wrote the film.

**CELIA**


The political, social and familial life of Australia in the late 1950s is reflected through the winsome Maryanne Fahy.

**FEATHERS**


Director of photography: Ellery Ryan. Editor: Ken Sallows. Distributor: Home Cinema Group. Cast: Rebecca Gilling (Fran), James Laurie (Jack), Julie Forsythe (Olla), Neil Melville (Bert).

Raymond Carver’s wistful short story about the night a couple decide to have children is admirably treated in this short film written and directed by John Ruane. Set on a farm where two couples spend a strange and eerie night together, the film is a mannered and detailed study of transition, social values and relationships. The tense atmosphere is punctuated by wry humour that is less cruel than Carver’s. There are strong performances by Julie Forsythe, Neil Melville and a peacock.

**A FORTUNATE LIFE**


**GEORGIA**


**GREAT EXPECTATIONS – THE UNTOLD STORY**


This is the feature film version (not to be confused with the six-part mini-series made simultaneously in 1986) loosely based on the Abel Magwitch character of Dickens’ novel *Great Expectations*. The premise sees Magwitch as a convict exiled in Australia, tracing his life until he made a fortune and returned to England.

**HER ALIBI**


Lightweight and frothy romantic comedy about an author of pulp crime novels who finds his life closely mirroring the far-fetched scenarios he invents after saving a Romanian beauty, arraigned for murder, by providing her with an alibi.

This relentlessly cute, occasionally charming but slightly old-fashioned romance was directed by Australian Bruce Beresford and photographed by veteran Freddie Francis.

**AN INDECENT OBSESSION**

This 1985 film adaptation of Colleen McCullough’s best-seller is released for sell-through at $29.95.

**PHILIPPINES, MY PHILIPPINES**


A documentary which strips away the carefully fostered media image of Cory Aquino, and critically questions the motives of allies like Australia and the U.S., while they pursue their own interests behind the scenes. Reviewed in *Cinema Papers*, July 1989.

**SONS OF STEEL**


Futuristic, sci-fi adventure about a hard-living, peace-loving rock ‘n’ rollser destined to save the world from an impending nuclear disaster and the shackles of a fascist Government. Punk and heavy metal come together in this pastiche of comic-books, high-voltage rock clips, and environmentally/socially-aware consciousness.

**WHERE THE GREEN ANTS DREAM**


Two days on the road with members of Aboriginal bands No Fixed Address and Us Mob. Playing themselves, the musicians ‘act’ out incidents from their lives and offer glimpses into their lives off-stage. Although the performers’ depiction of these ‘real-life’ incidents tends to be stilted and awkward, the film bristles with casual humour and moving insights into racism, prejudice and the ‘two laws’ of Australian society.

**WITCHES AND FAGGOTS – DYKES AND POOTERS**


An examination of the individual and collective oppression of homosexuals in Australia today against the backdrop of such oppression throughout history. The 45-minute documentary grew out of a videotape of a gay liberation protest in Sydney in 1978, the first of a series of clashes over two years between homosexuals and police in which 184 arrests were made.

**WRONG SIDE OF THE ROAD**


Two Aboriginal tribes come into conflict with the laws of modern Australia when a large company tries to mine uranium on a sacred site. This well-intentioned but completely misguided treatment of Aboriginal Land Rights fails to do justice to the controversial issues, and sees German director Werner Herzog wallowing in what is a hopeless mess of unimaginative imagery, clichéd characters, confused narration and tedious direction.

**NEW PUBLICATIONS**

Two new publications from the Australian Film Commission are now available.

"GET THE PICTURE"

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"NON-THEATRICAL DISTRIBUTION IN THE UNITED STATES" A guide to the lucrative yet difficult to access non-theatrical market in the U.S. This report is designed to explain the way this market operates and to assist Australian producers in identifying the most appropriate non-theatrical distributor for their programmes. It details over 50 distributors working in this area and the best methods by which to approach them. Price $8.00

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Murray Wills, who made the underwater camera housing mentioned in the previous issue, has sent by mail (he works from Kaniva in rural Victoria) details of some of the smaller housings he is making for 16mm (Arri SRs, Bolexes) and video cameras. Murray has supplied the C.S.I.R.O., Marine Science Lab, Department of Fisheries and the Victorian Archaeological Survey, among other government departments.

The housings are made from 15-25mm perspex and are tested to 35 metres. The video cameras come complete with power on/off, record on/off, two handles and a dome port for wide-angle converter lenses. An average price for a Video 8 or VHS-Q camera with rear-mounted viewfinder is just under $1,400. Murray can be contacted at 42 Commercial St, Kaniva, Victoria 3419. Ph: (053) 922294.

Long-term storage of videotapes, film and computer tapes is a balancing act for most production companies. They need access to the material and usually are paying a premium price for the storage space. There are now companies in most cities addressing the problem and the latest is Comcopy in Melbourne, which has formed a separate company called Safe Tape and Film. According to Guy Howell, who runs the company, they took an all-or-nothing approach to the archive problem and built a sophisticated fire-proof facility with dust-free air conditioning and an humidity controlled environment with 24-hour monitored security. All tapes are computer logged and catalogued.

The approach seems to have impressed a number of advertising agencies, including George Pattersons, and HSV 7 and GTV 9 Melbourne. GTV 9 has Safe Tape and Film handling its news footage stock library on a commission basis and expect that the return should go a long way to defraying the storage costs. For more details, call Guy Howell on (03) 696 6219.

One of the demo reels that has been much copied and spread around the commercials producers is from South Australian Simon Carroll. His company, Communicator Video, has been doing some superb time-lapse 35mm photography that matches some of the best in Koyaanisquatsi. He uses a motion-control head that allows him to pan and move during the exposures. Some of the transitions to night skies with stars visible are beautiful and top cinematography.

Communicator Video has now joined with Adelaide-based computer-animation company, Digital Arts, to form Digital Arts and Television Pty Ltd. Andrew Carroll mentioned that they have attracted some off-shore investment, which will be used to further enhance the research and development of their transputer-based animation system, and to continue work on their multi-axis motion control camera head.

In other news, Carroll mentioned that Peter Robertson from their Melbourne office was in the U.S. discussing the development of an interactive animated computer system for a science museum in Silico Valley (which is really taking coal to Newcastle!). It looks as if Adelaide is becoming a centre for high-tech film and effects (look for a future piece on Adelaide’s Fright company, which is doing world-class robotics). Contact the new Digital Arts in Melbourne on (03) 690 8857, or in Adelaide on (08) 223 2430.

ABOVE LEFT: MURRAY WILLS’ UNDERWATER CAMERA HOUSING FOR A BOLEX (OWNER PETER MCDougall). BELOW: THE SONY V200 IN A WILLS HOUSING (OWNER JOHN MURRAY.)
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Michel Ciment

INTERVIEWED BY ROLANDO CAPUTO

MICHEL CIMENT is Associate Professor in American Studies at the University of Paris. He is also a long-time editorial-board member of the highly regarded French film magazine, Positif, and, of recent, its Editor-in-Chief.

A prolific author, Ciment has written books on, among others, Elia Kazan, Francesco Rosi, John Boorman, Stanley Kubrick and Jerry Schatzberg. He has also directed a number of fascinating documentary portraits of filmmakers: PORTRAIT OF A 60 PER CENT PERFECT MAN; BILLY WILDER; HERMAN MANKIEWICZ; FRANCESCO ROSI, CHRONICLE OF A DEATH FORETOLD; ; and his most recent, ELIA KAZAN, OUTSIDER.

The following interview, conducted in English, took place in Rome on the occasion of a homage-retrospective-colloquio on the cinema of Elia Kazan, organized by the Italian film magazine, FILMCRITICA, as part of their “Maestri del Cinema” award events. Ciment was present to screen his film on Kazan, and to chair papers and dis-

famous photographer in the 1960s. Half the book is made up of quite beautiful stills of his photographic work and the rest a study of his work. It was published in 1982 but is now incomplete because he has made a few more films. The book deals with his six first films: Puzzle of a Downfall Child, Panic in Needle Park, Scarecrow, Dandy, the All American Girl, The Seduction of George Tynan and Honeysuckle Rose.

Also not in English are my Francesco Rosi book and the one I published last year on the director, Theo Angelopoulos. It is co-authored and deals with Angelopoulos’ nine features to that time.

You seem concerned in highlighting filmmakers whose work reveals a cross-fertilization between European and American cinema. In some cases, this is through directors who are themselves culturally transported - Losey, Kubrick and Boorman seem the most obvious examples. Is it an area you have consciously pursued?

It was not something I was really conscious of at the time, but was much more intuitive. It was more just liking their films and enjoying the complexity of their work. What I like about all these directors is that they are very visual, which is after all what cinema is about. At the same time, the images refer to ideas. It is how to make ideas that shape images, which for me is the supreme goal of art.

That’s the first thing. Then, some years ago, a friend of mine said to me over lunch just what you said a moment ago. It was then that I realized it was absolutely true that I was interested in a particular kind of filmmaker. All my books are actually about people who are between two cultures. For example, Kubrick is an American Jew who emigrated to England. He has a kind of European sophistication, yet is aware of his American origins. Joseph Losey was a WASP, upper-class American from the mid-West, a Communist who, because of the blacklist, came to work in England, where he made very refined European films. Nevertheless, he was very much an American director, and his films are American in many ways. With John Boorman, half his films are American productions, the other half purely British. He is an Englishman who was educated as a Catholic by a band of Jesuits, although his family was Protestant. He is a man between two religions, two cultures.

My first really long piece of writing was a booklet which now is included in Conquerors of a New World. It was an 80-page study of Erich von Stroheim which I wrote when I was 29 years old. Von Stroheim is, of course, another example of what we are talking about. So, from the beginning, I was attracted to culturally pluralistic filmmakers. Maybe it comes down to the fact that my father was Hungarian and Jewish, and my mother French and Catholic. Probably I’m interested in impurity. I don’t believe in purity. I think purity is ideological and dangerous, whether it be the purity of Communism, the purity of Nazism, of race or of nation. I’m attracted by mixtures.

Within this sphere of cross-cultural influence, Francesco Rosi, to whom you devoted an early work, Le Dossier Rosi, becomes another rather unique example.

Francesco Rosi is a Neapolitan, a man from the South, who lives in Rome and is very much like a
Northern Italian - like a man from Milan, let us say. He seems a kind of embodiment of the two sides of Italian culture. He is very emotional like Neapolitans can be, but also very rational like Neapolitans. Naples is the place where all the great lawyers come from and it is also the place where the French philosophers of the 18th Century were very popular: Montesquieu and Voltaire, for example. There is a tradition of rationalism in Naples, combined with high emotionalism.

This combination is something I like in directors. I admire filmmakers who are very cerebral and very emotional - after all, man is a combination of the two. If he is only rational, he is very dry; if he is only emotional, he is very superficial.

Rosi is interested also in America. Some people in Italy call him "the American" because his early films, like La Sfida, I Magliari and Mani sulla Città (Hands over the City), are highly influenced by Kazan and Warner Bros. He is obviously a man who has a strong sense of dynamics and action combined with his highly artistic culture. He was a pupil of Visconti and worked with Antonioni. So he combined his kind of strong American action film with a highly intellectual approach to politics, a politics which is very different to the liberal school of Richard Brooks and even Kazan.

THE DOCUMENTARIES

The Billy Wilder film was made in 1979, and it was quite successful - it was selected for Cannes. So I thought of following that up with one on Kazan. During the film, Kazan talks about being an outsider - culturally and artistically - so we thought it would make a nice title. It was shot in three days with a very small crew on location at the New York waterfront, the Actors Studio, his home in the country and his house in New York. It was quite a technical feat and the contributions of the cameraman and the editor were of paramount importance.

The Mankiewicz documentary has the pace of his language. Like characters in his own films, he sits in an armchair and talks wittily and brilliantly. So, it is about the fascination of talk.

Mankiewicz is perhaps the most intelligent director I have met. He has an extraordinary wit and dialectical mind. But he was an old man, and we thought there was no way to get him out onto the streets. So we captured him in his library, surrounded by books, pipe in hand. He resembles an elder English statesman, who talks about cinema and talks fantastically well. Thus, the form of the film came out of the person, just as in architecture where form follows function. The man dictated the form.

SURREALISM

The publication some years ago of Robert Benayoun's The Look of Buster Keaton was among other things a remarkable reminder of Positif's association with surrealism. Could you make mention of some of the other editorial members and their links to surrealism?

I was once the head of a film book series, which has now closed down, that included 12 or 15 titles. One of these was a book on aesthetics by Gerard Legrand called Cinemania, which I found to be a remarkable book. In the last 15 or so years of André Breton's life, say between 1950 and '66, Legrand was one of Breton's most important collaborators. He wrote a book with Breton called L'Art Magic. Legrand, who is now sixty, has been writing for Positif for 25 years.

Ado Kyrou was a Greek partisan during the civil war and fought in the Communist ranks. He was an exile in Paris and became in the '50s one of the most important spokesmen for Positif. He was a close friend of Buñuel's. Kyrou wrote two books in French, one of them is particularly important, called Le Surréalisme au Cinéma. I think he published it in 1953, but it has been reprinted in rather beautiful editions.

Peter Kral, who has written two books on slapstick comedy, was a Czech who went into exile in Paris in 1968 and joined Positif then. Robert Benayoun you have already mentioned.

I could go on, but it should be obvious from what I have said that there is a component of the magazine which is strongly a part of surrealism. I'm not a surrealist, and a lot of people on the magazine are not surrealists. I would say that today the influence of surrealism is less prevalent, but it was very strong in the '50s. Louise Brooks, slapstick comedy, films like Peter Ibbetson, Murnau's Nosferatu and all the dream aspects of cinema - all the things Breton liked in the cinema were there in the magazine.
supreme mark. I think that *Duck Soup* is the best Marx Brothers film; I think *Ruggles of Red Gap* and *The Awful Truth* are amongst the best comedies ever made. In the realm of melodrama, *Make Way for Tomorrow* is a supreme achievement.

As for the silent cinema, though I haven't seen many of his films, there is a tremendous director in Clarence Badger. He certainly deserves to be reconsidered for films like *Hands Up*, *It* and others. These films are quite brilliant.

This maybe a generalization, but I get the sense that the French never really appreciated someone like Preston Sturges.

*Positif* did a special issue on Sturges five years ago. It was the first issue on Sturges anywhere in the world in the past twenty years.

I certainly like Sturges very much. The problem with Sturges, however, was that his career could be summed up in five years. He made six tremendous films between 1940 and '44 and was already highly considered and praised in America. French critics didn't feel like writing about him because a lot had been written already. There was no sense of discovering or re-discovering him.

Also, when the young critical journals like *Positif* and *Cahiers du Cinéma* started publication in the early 1950s, his career was in total decline. His later films were very, very disappointing. Therefore, it was not the same as with Hitchcock or Hawks who were still making very good films.

**AUSTRALIAN CINEMA**

What is your opinion of what you have seen of the Australian cinema? Are there any Australian directors who particularly interest you?

Certainly. I do appreciate Fred Schepisi. I like some of his films very much, such as *The Devil's Playground* and *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith*, and even the recent films like *Roxanne*, which I thought was a very talented rendition of *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

I think Peter Weir is very good. I even like a film like *Mosquito Coast*, but more especially his earlier films like *The Last Wave* and *Picnic at Hanging Rock* - *Gallipoli*, less so.

I also like very much the film by Scott Murray, *Devil in the Flesh*, and *Backlash* by Bill Bennett.

Certainly I also like George Miller, particularly his *Mad Max 2*. Not so much his first one, or the third one. He is very much like Sergio Leone.

I have my reservations about the first George Miller, just as I have reservations about *A Fistful of Dollars*. But then Leone's *Once Upon a Time in the West* is like *Mad Max 2*. I really thought it was terrific. I liked *Witches of Eastwick*, too. Miller is a very talented man.

Of course, Jane Campion is absolutely terrific. Her short films and *Sweetie* are stupendous. In fact, *Sweetie* was for me the most original film in Cannes last year, although I also liked Steven Soderbergh's *Sex, Lies, and Videotape*. But if Wim Wenders [president of the Cannes jury] had wanted to be really original, he would have given the Palme d'Or to Campion. Comparing the two first features, Campion's reaches poetic heights which are stupendous. Soderbergh is wonderful, but within a narrower range.

The Soderbergh film is closer to a Wendersque universe. It would appeal more to Wenders than *Sweetie*.

Well, it’s too bad for Wenders. It shows his limitations.

But you are an admirer of Wenders.

Yes, he is a terrific director. But directors are not always the best judges.

But to conclude on Campion: in the world cinema of the 1980s, she is one of the few really inspiring filmmakers. She makes you believe that in cinema there are still new and surprising things to come. Most films today are merely repetitions of things seen before, done less well.
POSITIF AND CAHIERS DU CINÉMA

Positif and Cahiers du Cinéma have long been regarded as France’s most influential film magazines. Given your lengthy association with Positif, could you give us an overview of the differences that have historically marked their evolutions?

One was founded in 1951, the other in 1952. The differences between the two magazines vary according to the historical period. The differences between Positif and Cahiers today are very different from those in 1968, and very different from those in 1955.

The first period was the early 1950s. What they had in common was that they were both film-buff magazines. Today, it seems very obvious and simple being a film buff. But in the '50s, though France has always been a highly cine-literate country, most of the press dealt with the cinema in a political or ideological way. The Communist influence was very strong in French criticism. They had 25 per cent of the vote, and a lot of intellectuals were Communist Their approach to art was highly ideological and they totally despised, with very few exceptions, American cinema. Those few exceptions were social films and Charlie Chaplin’s — things of that nature. Most Hollywood entertainment was considered ugly, evil escapism — opium for the masses.

On the other hand, the Right-wing, bourgeois criticism in newspapers like Le Figaro considered American cinema as naïve and vulgar. Those critics looked down upon it from the standpoint of French high culture, as opposed to American popular culture.

Now Positif and Cahiers had something in common in that they took American films into consideration. They loved Westerns, thrillers and things like that. They spoke about them in highly intellectual terms, which made people on the extreme Left indignant and provoked laughter on the Right.

Then came the very big split at the end of the 1950s. In part, there had already been an ideological split. Cahiers was highly apolitical, which can mean conservative or Right wing. And it is not to be denied that Cahiers was rather Right wing. But rarely did it deal with the content of films. They would see films which were anti-Communist, like Samuel Fuller’s, and not deal at all with the issues.

Also, Cahiers did not deal, as Positif did, with the censorship of films. Truffaut had a famous phrase: “Censorship exists only for cowards.”
Anyway, that’s what he pretended. This, of course, was a totally irresponsible position to take, as censorship was very strong in France at the time. A lot of films were banned, like Alain Resnais films, and certain films could not be made. So, there were points of divergence between the magazines from early on.

An area of disagreement was between editor and politics. Positif say, loved John Huston, but not all his films. Cahiers, when they chose a director, would like his films all the way through. For them, there was no way that Robert Aldrich could make a bad film; no way Hitchcock could either. Positif, on the other hand, could love Anthony Mann but not God’s Little Acre, could love Aldrich, but not like Autumn Leaves. So while the two magazines shared similar theory, they did not share similar politics. Also, Positif was more interested in genre criticism. They appreciated a lot of musical comedies that Cahiers was not keen on, because they could not put an auteur label on them. Positif would enjoy a film even if it were a great film because of the contributions of many people and not automatically the creation of one auteur.

Cahiers was much more formalist; they paid attention to the way a film was directed and Positif, perhaps, not enough attention.

There were also conflicts about directors. Cahiers favored Hitchcock and Hawks, whereas Positif favored Minnelli and Huston. With Italian cinema, Cahiers favored Rossellini; Positif preferred Antonioni. The first special issue of a magazine on Antonioni outside of Italy was published by Positif.

As well, Positif liked Buñuel, whereas Cahiers preferred Dreyer, which is understandable: Dreyer was a spiritualist, a Christian; Eric Rohmer was a devout Catholic and Cahiers’ tastes were Catholic. Positif, on the other hand, was more surrealist oriented. A lot of people at Positif were members of the surrealist group and they naturally favoured Buñuel. He was anti-clerical, anti-establishment, his cinema dealt with the power of dream.

I could go on, but those were the basic oppositions between the magazines in the ’50s.

Now in the early 1960s, for the first four or five years, there were not so many differences, with the exception that Positif was much more reserved about the New Wave. They didn’t like Godard, but they liked some films by Rivette; they liked some films by Chabrol and loved everything by Resnais. But Resnais was not part of the New Wave.

Positif’s reaction towards the Cahiers-ist New Wave films was obviously influenced by the conflict between the magazines. But it was not really there at that time, so I’m not really a part of that. I came to Positif in 1964, when the New Wave had already made its mark.

Aside from the New Wave issue, there was much in common between the two magazines in the first part of the ’60s. That is, both magazines were very much part of the discovery of the ‘New Waves’ happening internationally. Both Positif and Cahiers defended new Brazilian, Czech, Polish, Hungarian, British, and Japanese cinema. I myself interviewed a lot of the same people Cahiers was interviewing, such as Glauber Rocha, Bertolucci and Jerzy Skolimowski. So, there was a common interest in the international ‘New Waves’. As a consequence, the two magazines were at that time rather close. However, Positif continued to be interested in American movies; Cahiers less so.

The New Wave were making films and the American cinema became an economic enemy. They were trying to force the market.

Around 1968, when the May uprising took place, Positif, which had been Left wing and remained Left wing and was very much part of the movement, never went overboard. We were not Maoist, we were not Communist yet we were still anarchist, surreal, socialist. On the other hand, Cahiers very strangely became, first, orthodox Communist and then Maoist. They began to throw overboard the whole of cinema. They loved only some Maoist films of Godard and Jean-Marie Straub. If you look at the issues of the time, Cahiers almost didn’t speak of cinema anymore, they were talking about Maoism and theory. Cahiers went from the Right, through the Centre to the extreme Left. But I don’t think what they were doing was Left wing; it was a kind of perversion of the Left. So, for a number of years, say from the late ’60s to the mid ’70s, the two magazines were very different. It was a time when Positif started to discover and interview extensively a lot of new American directors, such as Robert Altman, Bob Rafelson, Francis Coppola, Martin Scorsese, Brian de Palma and Terrence Malick. You cannot find a trace of these directors in the pages of Cahiers, which ignored absolutely this cinema. They even attacked it very strongly until 1976/77 when they started to come back into the mainstream. Positif remained a film-buff magazine interested in cinema. Politics was always interesting for us, but in illuminating the films, not substituting itself for them.

Then, in the late ’70s and early ’80s, the differences between the magazines again started to diminish. Partly this was because Cahiers re-discovered the American cinema and began to talk about directors they had previously ignored.

So, in the ’80s, the magazines became a little closer. Then, during the past two years, Cahiers seemed to want to become more popular and produce a ‘magazine’ more than a ‘review’. In France, there is a difference between a review and a magazine. A magazine is more like Studio or Premiere and a review is more elitist, has a narrower market. Positif has a 10,000 circulation and we have decided to keep that circulation. We don’t want to go mainstream and sell 100,000 copies because we think that as soon as you print 100,000 copies you must sell 100,000, and in order to sell 100,000 copies there are things you cannot deal with any more because they don’t sell. Therefore, subject matter is influenced by circulation. For instance, in the last issue of Positif we had a South Korean film on the cover, whereas Cahiers is putting Batman and things like. Strangely, Cahiers is now much more Hollywood than we are. They are now starting to defend Hollywood in a very intense way, whereas we are more reserved about the new Hollywood films.

That, roughly speaking, is the evolution of the two magazines.
In some ways, she is Spica's confidante, in perhaps the only moment that somewhat twisted personal affection is directed towards her. She is very much against his wife too, which is strange. You would think, in maybe a more conventional set-up, there would be a solidarity amongst the females in this particular milieu, but there's no sympathy at all between them.

There is something poised and invulnerable about Grace. Given Spica's sexist attitudes, she is no longer a character who has any sexual identity. She is a hanger-on, a part of his party, but doesn't suffer or offer any sexual or antagonistic threat whatsoever. This is rather important, as Albert Spica's sexuality, to say the least, is extraordinarily strange. This man is much more interested in the lavatory than he is in the bedroom. His sexuality is very adolescent, not only from what we have observed from his constant use of scatalogical imagery, his foul language and his appalling attitude towards women, but also in that big soliloquy the Wife delivers to camera when she's lying down. We suddenly realize that his sexuality is decidedly peculiar and adolescent.

The set is brilliant designed and used. Did you see its juxtaposition of rooms and alleyway as having symbolic importance? What, for instance, did you want to imply by the changing of colours as the characters move from one room to another? There has been in all my films a concern for the way in which I am the author of the product. I have total control of the plot and the characters. I can invent 50 characters or only three; I can kill off the heroine in the first act, or wait till the end of the film.

I have also always looked for other disciplines, other universal structures. In *Drowning by Numbers*, there is a number structure; in *A Zed and Two Noughts* an alphabet one; whereas *The Draughtman's Contract* is very much about the 13 drawings.

What I wanted to do with *The Cook, the Thief* was find some other discipline which would help to complement the narrative, but which would obviously have associations with what I have been trying to do. These things do have to be related.

In 20th-Century painting, colour has become very disassociated from content. There is the famous anecdote about the young man who went up to Picasso, who was painting a landscape, and asked, "Why are you painting the sky red?" Picasso rather facetiously replied that he had run out of blue paint.

Given the break-up of colour and content, colour became free to do anything. Largely that meant colour became merely decorative, pretty. In Venetian art, there is the example of painters like Titian and Georgiani where colour became almost the sole organizing principle. Those sorts of potentials seem to have been lost. I want to bring colour back, to use it as a structural device, not merely as a principle. Those sorts of potentials seem to have been lost. I want to bring colour back, to use it as a structural device, not merely as a decorative one.

Another aspect is that in *Belly of an Architect*, the secret protagonist is Sir Isaac Newton. That film is all about gravity—it is fundamental to architecture—and, ironically, the man meets his death by falling. But we tend to forget that Sir Isaac Newton was the first person to originate colour theory, to break down the colour spectrum.

In *The Cook, the Thief*, the colour white represents the toilet. It is used with a great sense of irony, because the symbolic colour of toilets would certainly not on the whole be white. But it is where the lovers meet for the first time and it represents heaven for them. A great irony is that even in the hellish confines with which we presumably associate toilets—with defecation and micturation—it takes a very opposite colour, becoming extraordinarily white.

Then you move into the main fulcrum of the film, which is the red, carnivorous, blood-covered, violent area of the restaurant. Now, because of an optic phenomenon, when white comes on the screen after the dark red of the kitchen, it acts very strongly on the retina. If you look at your companions in the cinema, you will see that they are all lit up—the irony being they are lit up by the white toilet.

We have blue for the carpark, which represents the outside world, the world away from food, the world of dustbins and dogs and polar regions, if you like. Then we move through into green, the colour of safety, the colour of the metaphorical jungle from which all the food of the world ultimately comes. I think green is the colour for safety on traffic lights all the way throughout the world, apart from apparently China. I don't quite know why that is.

The other two colours represented, in maybe a minor way, are the yellow of the children's hospital, which represents the yolk of an egg, the colour of maternity, the colour of children in some senses, and the gold of the book depository, which is for the golden age of literature, the colour of spines, pages, gold leaf and so on.

So, each area has its own colour association. Even in the tiniest way you could say, "Ah, it's red, therefore it must be the restaurant", or "It's blue, therefore it must be the carpark." In a way, it is a device for reminding an audience that these are artificial structures, but also it has these probably quite successful emotional associations.

There is also the way the camera moves fluidly past the rooms, and the way compositions tend to be rather stately. Is this a conscious thing?

Indeed. I suspect in your question that there is a positive delight in this. A lot of people of course find it uncomfortable and they describe me as being a constitutary filmmaker, as though these things are happening without my knowledge.

Mine is a very conscious cinema. I try as hard as I can to have complete control over the organization of every single part of this discipline. This has to do with my own temperament, my own cultural baggage. My films are very Apollonian; they are concerned with the classical ordering of the world. Some of my early films are about list-making, catalogues and encyclopedias. My framing is deliberately related to the Renaissance sense of a framed space, an organized space, a space which is deliberately selected in order to make use of composition.

There is also a way in which the camera moves in an objective way. Although there is movement, and it does glide very gracefully through the various rooms, it holds itself steady. It does not behave like a voyeur, darting about. It does not, for example, follow characters. If an actor disappears behind furniture or goes into another room, the camera will deliberately not interrupt its stately progress to follow him. The camera is acting as an inorganic eye. It's not a subjective eye at all, which again is the way the painting behaves.

It is pretty well known that you are a painter as well as a filmmaker. One of these activities is solitary and the other intensely collaborative. What kind of different rewards and demands does each of these offer you?

Sometimes I feel as though I'm not a filmmaker at all, but a writer or painter who happens to be working in the cinema. This is sometimes a good position to be in, because it is like being an outsider. Almost without knowing it, I can take experimental risks, which maybe someone educated as a filmmaker would not. A lot of editors, for example, throw their arms up in horror at some of the editing devices I use, like crossing the line. I deliberately make these massive cuts of 180°, because, if you look in one direction and then completely change direction, you would in fact see the camera as it were in the real world.

This sort of risk-taking in all departments obviously throws the conventional filmmaker, who feels that there are rules and regulations that should be followed. I am constantly breaking them, not from being antagonistic to those rules, but rather from the position of outsider asking, "Are these rules and conventions really necessary?" I'm not a disciplinarian in that sense.

My films could be better appreciated, better understood, if people applied the aesthetics of painting to them. A great delight is a concern for surface, in using two-dimensional organizations of objects across the screen as though they are three dimensional, a concern for the way in which objects shine, for the difference in textures. The restaurant, for example, is red, but it is many different types of red and they all interact, balancing one another.

This concern for surface, by and large, is not understood, is not
As a painter, you must have an eye for colour and composition. What sort of transfer is there of this faculty when you come to work for the screen? Do the roles of painter and filmmaker feed into each other?

There are ironies here, because when I was at art school my painting was always described as being very literary. That is also a curse of English painting. We do not produce, never have produced, great painters, other than maybe Constable, Turner and Francis Bacon. Everybody else seems to want to tell stories. Yet, the greatest paintings are those which do not tell stories, but simply make philosophical statements about the world.

On the whole, my painting was and still is very literary, but that is useful for me in terms of filmmaking. Cinema is a narrative form and uses literary devices, so I feel quite at home. My scripts are extremely full and detailed. They describe all the concerns we’ve had so far in our conversation, as well as others, such as the use of flowers, which are absolutely impossible to manage.

For me, the most enjoyable parts of filmmaking are considering the idea, writing the script and then getting the film back into the editing room after shooting. I feel it’s mine again after the bit in the middle, where an army of nearly 300 people all add their pieces to the total film. Of course, their contribution is absolutely essential, but that is the time when the film gets furthest away from me. A lot of the time you’re not a film director at all, but a chaperon, an organizer of events, a psychologist... It can be a very frustrating, irritating period. But, I’m getting better at that now, and I’m actually enjoying that process a lot more.

You are one of those filmmakers whose films look as if they know and care about other art forms. How important are these to you and your films?

Films are only a very recent entrant in the 2000-year continuum of the arts. That continuum is safe because, even if electricity is going to be switched off all over the world, people will still go on painting and making images, recording a philosophical point of view of the visual world. And if cinema entirely evaporated from the world tomorrow, it would be a cause of some regret and sadness, but it would not in any way stop my personal activities: I could still go on being a painter or a writer.

So, I am aware of the ephemeralism of the film medium. However, sophisticated we regard cinema, it is no more than a painter’s brush. It is just a tool in which to organize things. Every single visual problem that comes up in film has come up a thousand times before in painting, and people have found solutions for them over and over again. If these solutions had not been successful, those artefacts, those paintings, would have disappeared long ago.

This is a very post-modernist concern, looking over our shoulders to see what other people have done to see what we can utilize and make valuable in our current situation. I want to be part of that tradition which, without embarrassment, can easily make comparisons between Orson Welles’ Citizen Kane and Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel, between Eisenstein’s Battleship Potemkin and Rembrandt’s Night Watch. There is an easy dialogue that can be utilized in terms of language, etc., between cinema and the rest of European culture.

When you talk about wanting to feel part of a tradition, do you feel you have anything in common with other British filmmakers, past or present? One thinks particularly of Michael Powell, whose films, like yours, mix the beautiful with the dangerous and disturbing.

The Michael Powell connection has been made many times recently in critical appreciations of English cinema. People have actually gone so far as to say, and I’m deeply flattered, that I’m his natural successor, that there have never been other filmmakers in Britain like the two of us.

Powell was very much outside the general trend and inclination of the British cinema – I say “was” because he is no longer making films. That is basically to do with realism and the documentary tradition, seen in the work of people like John Grierson and Caval-
Production Survey forms now adhere to a revised format. Cinema Papers regrets it cannot accept information received in a different format, as it regrettably does not have the staff to re-process the information.

**FEATURES PRE-PRODUCTION**

### ALMOST ALIEN

**Prod. co.** Entertainment Partners
**Producer** James Michael Vernon
**Director** Rolf de Heer
**Scriptwriter** Peter Loqren
**Assoc producer** Penny Wall
**D.O.P.** Martin McGrath
**1st ass director** Don Cranber
**Editor** Pippa Anderson
**Casting** Forcast
**Prod. manager** Lionel Midford

**Cast:** [No details supplied]

**Synopsis:** A television weather forecaster goes through a mid-life crisis when he discovers, after 18 years of marriage and two children, that his wife is an alien.

### BACKSTREET GENERAL

**Prod. manager** Phil Avalon

**Cast:** [No further details supplied]

### DINGO

**Prod. company** Gevest Australia
**Co-producers** Gevest Australia
**AO Sals SARL (Paris)**
**Dedra Foods (Paris)**

**Synopsis:** A chance encounter with a leg of jazz begins a life-long dream for a young boy in the outback. Years later, he journeys to Paris to revive the dream.

**[No further details supplied]**

### HOLIDAYS ON THE RIVER YARRA

**Prod. company** Jungle Pictures

**Principal Credits**

**Director** Leo Berkeley
**Producer** Fiona Cochran
**Scriptwriter** Leo Berkeley
**D.O.P.** Brendan Lavelle
**Art directors** Margaret Eastgate
**Adelie Flere
**Editor** Leo Berkeley
**Composer** Sam Melet

**Other Credits**

**Story editor** Doug Ling
**Prod. manager** Peter Jordan
**Script editor** Doug Ling
**Budget** $425,000
**Dist. guarantee** Film Finance Corp.

**Government Agency Investment**

**Production** AFG
**Film Victoria
**Length** 95 mins
**Gauge** 16mm
**Cast:** Craig Adams, Luke Ellio, Tahirt Cambis, Alex Menget.

**Synopsis:** Eddie and Mick are out-of-work teenagers. They become involved with a gang of would-be mercenaries that are heading for Africa. What they hope will be a great adventure starts to go horribly wrong.

**Sensai**

**[See previous issue]**

### PRODUCTION SURVEYS 1ST

**Prod. co.** Filmside Prods-ABC
**Prod. manager** Rod Lee

**Production 2/4/90 - 25/5/90
**Post-production 26/5/90 - 11/90

**Principal Credits**

**Director** Jackie McKimmie
**Producer** Ross Matthews
**Exec. producer** Penny Chapman
**Assoc producer** Wayne Barry
**Original screenplay** Jackie McKimmie
**Written by** Jackie McKimmie
**Editor** Mike Honey
**Prod. designer** Murray Picknett
**Art director** Michelle Milgate

**Planning and Development**

**Production Crew**

**Prod. manager** Carol Chirian
**Prod. coordinator** Roberta O'Leary
**Proc. secretary** Lisa Hawkes
**Location manager** Paul Viney
**Unit manager** John Downie

**On-set Crew**

**Continuity** Rhonda McCaw
**Extra casting** Irene Gaskell
**Construction Dept.**

**Carpenters** David Hawke
**Set finisher** Gary Hanch

**Post-production**

**Gauge** 35mm
**Screen ratio** 1:1.85
**Shooting stock** Eastmancolor
**Cast:** Noni Hazlehurst (Clare), John Hawke

**Synopsis:** An assortment of old friends converge at an isolated farm house to converge at an isolated farm house to write the birth of a baby. An irrelevant comedy of errors.

### FEATURES PRODUCTION

**DEATH IN BRUNSWICK**

**Prod. company** Meridian Films
**Prod. manager** Christine Hart
**Scriptwriter** Ross Gibson
**D.O.P.** Tony Yegle
**Sound recordist** Lloyd Carrick
**Editor** Neil Thompson
**Assoc producer** Peter Walsh
**Original screenplay** chick Kennedy

**On-set Crew**

**Continuity** Greg Apps
**Casting** Liz Mullin
**Production Convex**

**Prod. manager** Lynda House

**Synopsis:** An enchancing story which borrows characters and events from popular fairy tales and weaves them into one charming and suspenseful tale of love, mystery and mirage.

### THE MAGIC RIDDELL

**Prod. co.** Yoram Gross Film Studio
**Distr. co.** Beyond International Group
**Producer** Yoram Gross
**Director** Yoram Gross
**Scriptwriters** Yoram Gross
**D.O.P.** Tim Codd
**D.O.P.** Alex Carides
**D.O.P.** Frank Miller

**Synopsis:** A tale of real estate and revenge.

### THE RETURNING

**Prod. company** Matte Box
SYNOPSIS: Golden Braid is an erotic comedy, a tragi-comic love story, in which the characters come to terms with their identities, their syndromes, their fantasies and their realities. Ultimately, they find old-fashioned happiness in each other’s arms.

A KINK IN THE PICASSO

[See previous issue for details]

Mark Clark Van Ark

Prod. company: Castricon Films

International

Production

6/11/89 – 22/12/89

Post-production

January – April 1990

Principal Credits

Producers

Tad Nass

David Parker

Co-producer

Timothy White

Bryan Menzies

Scripwriter

David Parker

D.O.P.

David Parker

Sound recordist

Paul Brincat

John Wilkinson

Editor

Peter Morod

Patrick Reardon

Costume designer

Anje Bos

Planning and Development

 Casting consultants

Liz Mallin

Casting

Extrav casting

Michelle Neal

Production Crew

Prod. manager: Catherine Bishop

Prod. coordinator: Amanda Crittenden

Producer's ass: Michelle Neal

Location manager: Kerin Begaud

3rd ass director: Rebeca Coote

1st asst director: Colin Fletcher

Production manager: Nicholas Cole

Producer's asst: Blasie Pachecchi

Casting

Christine King

Camera supervisor: David Morson

Focus puller

John Platt

Clapper-loader: Barry iodine

Key grip

Ray Brown

Grips

Warren Grief

Gaffer

Simon Lee

3rd electricity

Greg Allen

4th electricity

Vaughn Wilks

Art director

Jannette Carlsen

Art dept coord.

Julianne White

Costume designer

Bruce Finlayson

Costume superv.

Sandi Chichello

Makeup artist

Ginny Giorgioff

Hairdresser

Cheryl Williams

Standby wardrobe

Julie Barton

Props buyers

Mark Dawson

Kristin Reuter

Standing props

John Osmund

Special effects

Explosive Engineering

Action veh. coord.

Peter Cashman

Camera manager

Bill Underby

Scenic artist

Frank Papas

Carpenters

Alan Armitage

Carpenters' ass

Robert Morrison

Stage hand 1

Adrian Knowles

Stage hand 2

Bob Heath

Stage hand 3

Deborah Reid

Unit manager

Sue Andrews

Makeup driver

Paul Naylor

Stunts coord.

Glen Boswell

Still photography

Bren McKenzie

Best boy

Peter Bushby

Prop manager

Lynette Menken

Catering

David & Cassie Valle

[Out to Lunch Catering]

Sound post-prod.

Sound Firm

Sound budget

$3,500

Gauge

35mm

Super stock

Kodak

Government Agency Investment

Development

Film Victoria

Production

AFC

Film Victoria

Cast: Chris Haywood, Gossio Dobrowolska, Paul Chubb, Norman Kaye, Marion Heath-
Synopsis: A video to educate people in strategies to halt degradation of river management.

SHOWING A LITTLE RESTRAIN
Exec. producer Lucy MacLaren Director Richard Jones Producer Rachel Dixon Scriptwriter Rob Phillips
Synopsis: An entertaining look at how a family copes with the different restraints needed by different-aged children, and suggests how to keep them amused on long, boring car trips.

THE CRIMINAL COURT
Prod. company Balcony Prods Director Luigi Acquisto Producer Lucy MacLaren Scriptwriter Jackie McLean D.O.P. Luigi Acquisto Sound Jaems Grant Length 10 mins Synopsis: A docu-drama to be screened at all first-time offenders, which outlines procedures of the court to help them form a realistic expectation of what will happen during their case.

DRINK DRIVING
Prod. company Supervision Director Peter Campbell Exec. producer Lucy MacLaren D.O.P. John Carter Sound Brett Gocking Length 8 mins Gauge 1” master Synopsis: A video demonstrating the correct procedure of dental care for the disabled.

MELBOURNE - THE BIG EVENT
Director [Not given] Producer Terence McMahon Exec. producer Rachel Dixon Editor Peter Carrodus Length 8 mins Synopsis: Melbourne - The Big Event is designed to promote Melbourne as a vital centre of art and culture.

FOOD AND WINE IN MELBOURNE
Prod. company Broadway Directors Terence McMahon Producer Venetia McMahon Scriptwriter Lucid Masters Length 10 mins Synopsis: Designed to promote Melbourne as a city of taste and style, as evidenced in its restaurants and wineries.

GRASS FED BEEF
Prod. company The Film House Director Process Robert Padden Executive producer Rachel Dixon Scriptwriter Glen Blackmore D.O.P. Geoff White Sound George Tosti Length 8 mins Gauge 16mm, 1” video Synopsis: This video will outline the Victoria’s success story grass-fed beef industry, allowing all aspects from farm production, processing and packaging to local and export distribution.

ME AND MY BIG MOUTH
Prod. company Tuccipof and Hubbard Director Louise Hubbard Executive producer Rachel Dixon Scriptwriter Dennis Tuccipof D.O.P. Kevin Anderson Sound Mark Terape Music Mark Ferrie Length 10 mins Synopsis: What is our mouth for and what are each of the teeth designed for? An entertaining look at our mouths for primary-school children.

MELBOURNE DAWN TO DUSK
Prod. company Broadstone Director Sally Silverstein Producer Terence McMahon Exec. producer Rachel Dixon Sound Geoff White Length 10 mins Gauges 16mm, 1’ video Synopsis: Designed to promote Melbourne as a stylish, design-conscious city, as evidenced in its architecture, fashion and entertainment.

THEIR LIVES IN OUR HANDS
Director Mark Atkin Producer Kathie Armstrong Executive producer Lucy MacLaren Scriptwriter Dennis Tuccipof D.O.P. Graeme Wood Sound Phillip Healy Length 8 mins Gauge 1” master Synopsis: A video that explains the problems that pre-school children have in coping with traffic, and suggests strategies for parents and teachers to help children.

FRESH EVERY DAY
Director Wayne Tindall Producer Ann Tindall Exec. producer Lucy MacLaren Editor Wayne Tindall Length 8 mins Synopsis: A video to educate people in coping with traffic, and suggests strategies for parents and teachers to help children.

INNOVATIONS IN LOCAL GOVT
Director Albie Thoms Producer Barry Nancarrow Scriptwriter John McKay D.O.P. Graeme Wood Sound Phillip Healy Length 8 mins Synopsis: A video to educate people in coping with traffic, and suggests strategies for parents and teachers to help children.

CLEAN WATER, CLEAN SAND
Prod. company EVS Executive producer Lucy MacLaren Director John McKay Producer Tony Faulk Scriptwriter Paul Collock D.O.P. Joseph Pickering Sound recordist Paul Collock Length 24 mins Gauge Betacam Synopsis: Designed as part of a training package for trainee traffic controllers. Traffic controllers are responsible for the flow of traffic through, or around, roadworks conducted by the Roads and Traffic Authority of New South Wales.

GETTING STRAIGHT

BURYING THE LINES
Prod. company Vector Prods Sponsoring body Adult Literacy and Language Development Through Video Campaign Director Roger Hudson Producer Jonathan Clemen Scriptwriters Jonathan Cremen, Roger Hudson D.O.P. Sound recordist Bronwyn Murphy Editor Peter Somerville Producer Simeon Bryan Assistant director Elliot Street Post-prod. Elliot Street Prods Length 16 mins Gauge 35mm, 1” video Synopsis: A series of eight videos produced as a learning resource for adults with low literacy levels. They are intended to break down feelings of isolation and raise awareness of the availability of literacy tuition.

BURROW BEACH OCEAN OUTFALL

CLEAN WATER, CLEAN SAND

FROM STOP TO SLOW
Prod. company EVS Executive producer Lucy MacLaren Director John McKay Producer Tony Faulk Scriptwriter Paul Collock D.O.P. Joseph Pickering Sound recordist Paul Collock Length 24 mins Gauge Betacam Synopsis: Designed as part of a training package for trainee traffic controllers. Traffic controllers are responsible for the flow of traffic through, or around, roadworks conducted by the Roads and Traffic Authority of New South Wales.

GETTING STRAIGHT

BURYING THE LINES
Prod. company Vector Prods Sponsoring body Adult Literacy and Language Development Through Video Campaign Director Roger Hudson Producer Jonathan Clemen Scriptwriters Jonathan Cremen, Roger Hudson D.O.P. Sound recordist Bronwyn Murphy Editor Peter Somerville Producer Simeon Bryan Assistant director Elliot Street Post-prod. Elliot Street Prods Length 16 mins Gauge 35mm, 1” video Synopsis: A series of eight videos produced as a learning resource for adults with low literacy levels. They are intended to break down feelings of isolation and raise awareness of the availability of literacy tuition.

BURROW BEACH OCEAN OUTFALL
Synopsis: This programme examines the role and function of the Parliament of New South Wales and its Members. It opens with an historical overview of the Parliament itself and moves on to survey the composition and character of the two Houses of Parliament: the Lower House or Legislative Assembly and the Upper House or Legislative Council, the House of Review.

RAINFOREST PARKS OF NSW
Prod. company Sky Visuals Sponsoring body National Parks & Wildlife Services Director Peter Hicks Producer Gary Steer Scriptwriter Peter Hicks D.O.P.s Greer O'Meara, Ian Marden Editor Philip McGuire Narrator Guy Blackmore Length 15 mins 15mm Betacam

Synopsis: Introduces the rainforest parks in North-eastern New South Wales. Shows how the management programme of the National Parks and Wildlife Service has made the parks accessible to visitors.

RIGHT ANGLES
Prod. company Silvergrass Prods Sponsoring body NSW Dept of Education Director Michael Mundell Producer Richard Mason Scriptwriter Barbara Chebsey D.O.P. Phil Baldson Sound recordist John Parmentier Editor Julie Hickson Prod. manager John Bell Laboratory Visualeys Post-prod. Visualeys Length 23 mins 16mm Betacam

Synopsis: A series of four programmes which give an insight into the working life of the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, The President and the Speaker and Parliament House itself.

LEARNING TO BE SAFE
Prod. company Lumiere Prods Sponsoring body NSW Dept of Education Director Shalagh McCarthy Producer Lynne Broad Screenwriters Jonathan Clemens D.O.P. Jack Swart Sound recordist Peter Read Editor Murray Ferguson Prod. manager Leigh Holland Narrator Noni Hazlehurst Lab Visualeys Post-prod. Visualeys Length 20 mins 16mm Betacam

Synopsis: A documentary-style programme designed for secondary school teachers to demonstrate how gender-inclusive teaching practices can benefit female students in gaining confidence and skills in areas of learning which, traditionally, been 'angled' towards male students, such as Science, Industrial Arts, Computers and Mathematics.

THE RIGHT PERSON IN THE RIGHT PLACE
Prod. company EVS Sponsoring body Roads and Traffic Authority Director Brian Faulk Producer Tony Cote Scriptwriter Brian Faulk D.O.P. Joseph Pickering Sound recordist Paul Colclough Prod. manager Kevin Powell Laboratory EVS Post-prod. EVS Length 22 mins 16mm Betacam

Synopsis: A video showing parents the New South Wales' Department of Education's child protection programme which devised to protect children's interpersonal skills, helping them to recognize dangerous situations and protect themselves from potential sexual assault.

PARLIAMENT AT WORK
Prod. company Alfred Road Films Sponsoring body NSW Parliament House Director Ned Lander Producer Richard Mason Scriptwriter Rodney Long D.O.P. Steve Mason Sound recordist Pat Fiske Editor Margaret Sixel Prod. manager Jolyon Bromley Narrator John Bell Laboratory Colorfilm Post-prod. Filmworks Length 11 mins 16mm Gauge
MORE WINNERS

(“The Journey”)  
Prod. company: ACTF  
Dist. company: Quarter Latin Int.  
Budget: $4.5 million (series of six dramas)  
Pre-production: 5/2/90 – 3/3/90  
Production: 12/3/90 – 23/3/90  
Post-production: 26/3/90 – 18/4/90  
Principal Credits  
Director: Jane Oehr  
Producer: Richard Mason  
Exec. prod.: Patricia Edgar  
Supervising prod.: Ewan Burnett  
Scriptwriters: Jane Oehr  
Key grip: Keri Cameron  
Planning and Development  
Budgeted by: ACTF  
Production Crew  
Insurer: Steaves Lumley  
(Sue Milliken)  
Completion guarant.: Film Finances  
On-set Crew  
Unit publ.: Howie and Taylor Publ.  
Post-production  
Gauge: 16mm  
Government Agency Investment  
Production: AFCC  
Marketing  
Int. distributor: Quarter Latin Int.  
Prod. runner: Howie and Taylor Publ.  
Cast: [Details not supplied]  
Synopsis: In the 1850s Justus Zukermann, a wealthy prospector, lives with his daughter Ada, and a housekeeper, Martha, and her stepdaughter, Agnes. Before Justus dies, he orders Ada to travel south to find her true inheritance. Agnes is to go with her. Martha, who has for years envied Justus’ wealth orders Agnes to kill Ada and steal her inheritance.

MORE WINNERS

(“Pratt’s Childhood”)  
Prod. company: ACTF  
Dist. company: Quarter Latin Int.  
Budget: $4.5 million (series of six dramas)  
Pre-production: 30/10/89 – 3/12/89  
Production: 4/12/89 – 25/12/89  
Post-production: 1/1/90 – 9/2/90  
Principal Credits  
Director: Eben Strom  
Producer: Antonia Barnard  
Exec. prod.: Patricia Edgar  
Supervising prod.: Ewan Burnett  
Scriptwriter: Steve J. Spears  
D.O.P.: Stephen Dobson  
Sound recordist: Paul Brincat  
Editor: Richard Barnard  
Prod. designer: Larry Eastwood  
Costume designer: Kerri Barnett  
Planning and Development  
 Casting  
Forecasting schedule: ACTF  
Budgeted by: ACTF  
Production Crew  
Prod. manager: Julie Forster  
Prod. coordinator: Caroline Bonham  
Prod. ass: Christine Johnston  
Prod. secretary: Christine Johnson  
Location manager: John Meredith  
Unit manager: Phil Urgahart  
Prod. runner: David Holmes  
Financial controller: ACTF  
Prod. accountant: Moneyhouse Services  
(Sue Milliken)  
Insurer: Steaves Lumley  
(Tony Leonard)  
Completion guarant.: Film Finances  
Legal Services  
ACTF  
Travel coordinator: Entertainment Travel Services  
Camera Crew  
Focus puller: Nick Mayo  
Key grip: Roy Mico  
Asst grip: Simon Spencer  
Gaffer: Warren Mearns  
Best boy: Dean Bryan

ON-SET CREW

Make-up: Lesley Vanderwalt  
Hairdresser: Lesley Vanderwalt  
Safety officer: George Mannix  
Unit nurse: Sue Andrews  
Unit publicist: Howie & Taylor Publ.  
Catering  
Out to Lunch  
Art Department  
Set designer: Tim Proctor  
Properties: Tim Farrier  
Standby props: Igor Laurafedd  
Wardrobe  
Wardrobe superv.: Andrew Short  
Standby wardrobe: Kate Rose  
Post-production  
Asst editor: Pam Barnett  
Lab. editor: Paul Willard  
Gauge: 16mm  
 Shooting stock: Kodak  
Government Agency Investment  
Production: FFC  
Marketing  
Int. sales agent: Diana Quinnett  
Dist. company: Quarter Latin Int.  
Publ. Howie & Taylor Publ.  
Producers: Cameron Nugent (Christopher Walter Pratt), Justin Roznick (Prince William), Richard Moir (King), Rowena Wallace (Queen), Maggie Dence (Lady Mikevoll), Paul Livingston (Gobbo), Sandra Collins (Vobbo), Gaz Lederman (Mum), Ebony Ricketson (Katie).  
Synopsis: In the Enchanted Realm the fairies are in trouble. They must give away seven wishes to the humans every 100 years or they will lose their magic powers. The last gift was given away 99 years and 364 days before when Prince Wilton reached adulthood. The only human who will believe him is Christopher Walter Pratt.

A COUNTRY PRACTICE

Prod. company: JNF Films  
Dist. company: Seven Network  
Principal Credits  
Directors: Peter Maxwell  
Bob Mellion  
Cherie Lee-Jennins  
Producer: Denny Lawrence  
D.O.P.s: David Alley  
Patric Barter  
Peter Youngman  
Russel Hitchenson  
Ross Boyer  
Howard Fricker  
Graeme Andrews  
Steve Muir  
Based on pilot: In General Practice  
Written by: James Davern  
Scriptwriters: Judith Colquhoun  
Graeme Kootsfeld  
David Boulound  
Original screenplay: James Davern  
Planning and Development  
Researchers: Jenny Wilks  
Lindy Barter  
Jon Lingard  
Script editors: Bill Searle  
Sue Ellis  
Robyn Sinclair  
Shauna Crowley  
Camera Crew  
Camera operators: Glen Steer  
Peter Westley  
John de Ruvo  
Dietrich Rock  
Pip Shibulp  
Justine Slater  
Camera assistants:  
Camera type: FFC  
Camera maint.: ANZ Maintenance  
Key grip: Andrew Barrance  
On-set Crew  
Inst. directors: Ian Simmons  
Mark Moroney  
Richard McGrath  
Andrew Turner  
Vicki Osborne  
Continuity DA’s: Karen Willing  
Karen Mansfield  
Liz Ruhlens  
Phil Jones  
Paul Lehman  
Rachael Dal Santo  
Kit Moore  
Joanne Stocks  
Make-up:  
Special fx:  
Safety officer: George Brown  
Taste Buddies  
Catering  
Unit publicist: Network Staff Dept.  
Art Department  
Art director: Steve Muir  
Set dresser: Doug Kelly  
Propsperson: Gerard Brown  
Props buyer: Jane Parker  
Standby props: Dirk Van den Driesen  
Prod. manager: Tony Leach  
Synopsis: [No details supplied]  
Cast: [No details supplied].

BEYOND TOMORROW

(See previous issue for details)  

BEYOND 2000

(See previous issue for details)  

A COUNTRY PRACTICE

Prod. company: JNF Films  
Dist. company: Seven Network  
Principal Credits  
Directors: Peter Maxwell  
Bob Mellion  
Cherie Lee-Jennins  
Producer: Denny Lawrence  
D.O.P.s: David Alley  
Patric Barter  
Peter Youngman  
Russel Hitchenson  
Ross Boyer  
Howard Fricker  
Graeme Andrews  
Steve Muir  
Based on pilot: In General Practice  
Written by: James Davern  
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Original screenplay: James Davern  
Planning and Development  
Researchers: Jenny Wilks  
Lindy Barter  
Jon Lingard  
Script editors: Bill Searle  
Sue Ellis  
Robyn Sinclair  
Shauna Crowley  
Camera Crew  
Camera operators: Glen Steer  
Peter Westley  
John de Ruvo  
Dietrich Rock  
Pip Shibulp  
Justine Slater  
Camera assistants:  
Camera type: FFC  
Camera maint.: ANZ Maintenance  
Key grip: Andrew Barrance  
On-set Crew  
Inst. directors: Ian Simmons  
Mark Moroney  
Richard McGrath  
Andrew Turner  
Vicki Osborne  
Continuity DA’s: Karen Willing  
Karen Mansfield  
Liz Ruhlens  
Phil Jones  
Paul Lehman  
Rachael Dal Santo  
Kit Moore  
Joanne Stocks  
Make-up:  
Special fx:  
Safety officer: George Brown  
Taste Buddies  
Catering  
Unit publicist: Network Staff Dept.  
Art Department  
Art director: Steve Muir  
Set dresser: Doug Kelly  
Propsperson: Gerard Brown  
Props buyer: Jane Parker  
Standby props: Dirk Van den Driesen  
Prod. manager: Tony Leach  
Synopsis: [No details supplied]  
Cast: [No details supplied].

THE FLYING DOCTORS

(See previous issue for details)

■ TELEVISION PRODUCTION

BEYOND TOMORROW

(See previous issue for details)

BEYOND 2000

(See previous issue for details)

A COUNTRY PRACTICE

Prod. company: JNF Films  
Dist. company: Seven Network  
Principal Credits  
Directors: Peter Maxwell  
Bob Mellion  
Cherie Lee-Jennins  
Producer: Denny Lawrence  
D.O.P.s: David Alley  
Patric Barter  
Peter Youngman  
Russel Hitchenson  
Ross Boyer  
Howard Fricker  
Graeme Andrews  
Steve Muir  
Based on pilot: In General Practice  
Written by: James Davern  
Scriptwriters: Judith Colquhoun  
Graeme Kootsfeld  
David Boulound  
Original screenplay: James Davern  
Planning and Development  
Researchers: Jenny Wilks  
Lindy Barter  
Jon Lingard  
Script editors: Bill Searle  
Sue Ellis  
Robyn Sinclair  
Shauna Crowley  
Camera Crew  
Camera operators: Glen Steer  
Peter Westley  
John de Ruvo  
Dietrich Rock  
Pip Shibulp  
Justine Slater  
Camera assistants:  
Camera type: FFC  
Camera maint.: ANZ Maintenance  
Key grip: Andrew Barrance  
On-set Crew  
Inst. directors: Ian Simmons  
Mark Moroney  
Richard McGrath  
Andrew Turner  
Vicki Osborne  
Continuity DA’s: Karen Willing  
Karen Mansfield  
Liz Ruhlens  
Phil Jones  
Paul Lehman  
Rachael Dal Santo  
Kit Moore  
Joanne Stocks  
Make-up:  
Special fx:  
Safety officer: George Brown  
Taste Buddies  
Catering  
Unit publicist: Network Staff Dept.  
Art Department  
Art director: Steve Muir  
Set dresser: Doug Kelly  
Propsperson: Gerard Brown  
Props buyer: Jane Parker  
Standby props: Dirk Van den Driesen  
Prod. manager: Tony Leach  
Synopsis: [No details supplied]  
Cast: [No details supplied].
of children from all over the world are linked through their computers, and in touch with Centauri Headquarters, which enlists their aid to fight against a gang of terrorists in a Middle-eastern State.

**POST-PRODUCTION**

**JACKAROO**

Prod. company Crawford Prods

Principal Credits

Director Michael Carson
Producer Bill Hughes
Exec. producer Terry Ohlson
Assoc. producers Terrie Vincent
Scriptwriter John Cundill
D.O.P. Jeff Malouf
Sound recordist Don Connolly
Editor Dee Leibenberg
Prod. designer David Copping
Costume designer Anna Senior

Planning and Development

Script editor Barbara Bishop
Extras casting Susan Haworth
Dialogue coach Richard Walley

Production Crew

Prod. manager Terrie Vincent
Prod. coordinator Christine Hart
Location manager Graeme Nicholas
Unit manager Peter Simon
Prod. assist Susan Haworth
Prod. runners William Wake
Prod. accountant Vince Smits
Completion guarant. film finances
Travel coord. Set In Motion

Camera Crew

Camera operator Jeff Malouf
Clapper-loader Mark Muggeridge
Aerial photog. Alex McPhee
Camera type Arri S.R.
Key grips Karel Akkerman
Asst grips Kelvin Early
Gaffer Craig Bryant
Best boys Steve Johnson

Asst electrics Mike Ewan
Asst wardrobe Peter Rasmussen

Sound camera Phil Mulligan

1st asst director Jake Ashinon
2nd asst director Michael Mercuio
3rd asst director Heather-Jean Moyes
4th asst director Collette McKenna
Continuity Chris O’Connell-Bryant

Boom operator Jenny Sutcliffe
Make-up Karen Sims

Hairdresser Jude Smith
Special fx Tom Priemus
Stunts coord. Peter West
Safety officer Art Thompson
Unit nurse Johannes Akkerman
Still photography Skip Watkins
Unit publ. Susan Elizabeth Wood
Catering Big Bely Bus

**Wardrobe**

Wardrobe supervisor Anna Senior
Wardrobe buyers Paula Ekerick
Denise Goudy
Standing wardrobe Paula Ekerick
Denise Goudy

Animals

Horse master Rob Greenough
Horse wranglers John Fairhead
Shayne Williams

Construction Dept

Scenic artist Andy Dolphin
Const. manager John Parker
Leading hand David Boardman
Set finisher Mick Wilkinson
Studios DMG

Asst constr. man. Will Davidson

Post-production

Post-prod. super. Dee Leibenberg
Asst editor Jan Louthian
Laboratory Movielab/Vic. Film Labs

Gauges 16mm, 1" 7591

Shooting stock

Video transfers by Complete Post Off-line facilities Crawfords Australia

Cast Annie Jones (Clare), Tina Bursill (Martha), David McCubbin (Jack), Dee Collard (Jimby), Colin McEwan (Mallory), Leith Taylor (Jo-ann), Leedham Cameron (Murrawambah).

Synopsis: A four-hour mini-series, Jackaroo is the story of a wild Australian stockman, a part-Aboriginal young man whose struggle to win the woman he loves and claim the land he has inherited erupts into a saga of family love, passion, power and loyalty.

See previous issue for details of:

ADVENTURES ON KYTHERA I ICOME IN SPINNER THE PRIVATE WAR OF LUCINDA SMITH

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**CINEMA PAPERS**

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S E P T E M B E R  1 9 8 9

G (GENERAL EXHIBITION) All Down the Line M. Witzig, Australia, 79 mins, Hoyts Distribution, Adult concepts and occasional violence, O(adult concepts) V(i-m-g) L(i-m-g) Holdings, Sexual allusions, occasional scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly

Erik the Viking J. Goldstone, UK, 102 mins, Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Mild Horror, O(mild horror) L(i-m-g)

How to be a Billionaire?...Without Really Trying (main title not shown in English), Hoyts Enterprises, Adult concepts, some low-level violence, O(adult concepts) L(i-m-g) V(i-m-g)

M (MATURE AUDIENCES) Black Rain S. Jaffe-F. Lansing, U.S., 122 mins, United International Pictures, Impactful violence, coarse language, V(f-m-g) L(i-m-g) M(less g) L(f-m-g)

Casualties of War A. Linson, U.S., 115 mins, Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Frequent coarse language and impactful violence, V(i-m-g) L(i-m-g)

Driving Force H. Grigby-R. Confesor, Australia-The Philippines, 89 mins, Filmpac Holdings, Violence, V(i-m-g)

Funny Ghost (main title not shown in English), Stephen Shin, Hong Kong, 96 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Occasional low-level violence and sexual allusions, V(i-m-g) O(adult concepts)

Heavy Petting O. Benz-C. Noblit, U.S., 77 mins, Filmpac Holdings, Sexual theme, O(sexual theme)

Innocent Man A. Trondell-R. Court, U.S., 110 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Frequent language, some adult concepts, O(adult concepts) L(i-m-g) V(i-m-g)

City Pirates R. Theier, West Germany, 60 mins, Goethe-Institut

Metin T. Dragger, West Germany, 84 mins, Goethe-Institut

Rivertrip with Hen A. Agthe, West Germany, 105 mins, Goethe-Institut

Mr. Nobody O. Runde, West Germany, 86 mins, Goethe-Institut

Three Weeks Northeast D. Ullrich, West Germany, 90 mins, Goethe-Institut

O C T O B E R  1 9 8 9

G (GENERAL EXHIBITION) Composed Notes: Philip Glass and the Making of an Opera, A. Blackwood, U.S., 85 mins, The Other Films

Outside Chance of Maximilian G. S. Foster-D. Davis, Canada, 95 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation

When the Whales Came Simon Channing Williams, UK, 100 mins, Fox Columbia Tri Star Films

PG (PARENTAL GUIDANCE) Dawning, The S. Lawson, UK, 97 mins, Hoyts Distribution, Occasional low-level violence, V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g)

Eddie and the Cruisers II - Eddie Lives! Stephane Reichel, Canada, 103 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Occasional low-level coarse language, V(i-m-g) O(adult concepts)

Favorite, The G. Vuille, Switzerland, 105 mins, Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Occasional violence, V(i-m-g) O(adult concepts)

Gods Must be Crazy II, The B. Trokie, U.S.-South Africa, 96 mins, Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Occasional low-level violence, coarse language, V(i-h) L(i-h)

Happy Together (main title not shown in English), Stephen Shin, Hong Kong, 95 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Sexual allusions, occasional low-level coarse language, L(i-f-g) O(sexual allusions)

Lost Souls (main title not shown in English), Golden Harvest, Hong Kong, 89 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Occasional low-level violence, V(i-h) O(mild horror)

Millennium D. Leiterman, Canada-U.S., 105 mins, Manilla Film Holdings, Occasional low-level violence, language, sexual allusions, V(i-h) O(supernatural theme, sexual allusions) L(i-h)

Miss Firecracker Fred Berner, U.S., 104 mins, Flat Out Entertainment, Adult concepts, O(adult concepts) V(i-m-g)

Rosalie Goes Shopping F. Adlon-E. Adv, U.S., 91 mins, Dendy Cinema, Adult concepts, O(adult concepts)


M (MATURE AUDIENCES) Avinging Trio (main title not shown in English), Jia's Motion Picture, Hong Kong, 89 mins, Yu Enterprises, Frequent graphic violence, V(f-m-g) Delinquents, A. Cutter-M. Wilcox, Australia, 102 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Sexual allusions, adult concepts, O(sexual allusions) O(adult concepts)

Empress Dowager, The (main title not shown in English), Son Chang Cheng Ma Fon, Hong Kong, 99 mins, Yu Enterprises, Occasional violence, occional low-level violence, sexual scenes, adult contexts, V(i-m-g) O(adult concepts)

Fair Game M. Orfini, Italy-U.S., 81 mins, Flat Out Entertainment, Violence, occasional coarse language, V(f-m-g) L(i-m-g)

Goodnight, Sweet Marilyn L. Buchanan, U.S., 100 mins, Filmpac Holdings, Sexual scenes, O(adult concepts) O(nudity) M(less g)

Homer and Eddie M. Bornerman, Cady, U.S., 98 mins, Filmpac Holdings, Frequent coarse language, occasional violence, L(f-m-g) V(i-m-g)

Honeymoon Killers, The W. Stibel, U.S., 105 mins, Potential Films, Occasional violence, V(i-m-g)

How I got into College M. Shambler, U.S., 84 mins, Filmpac Holdings, Occasional coarse language, V(i-m-g)

If We were for Real (main title not shown in English), Chiang Jih-Shen, Taiwan, 87 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Occasional violence O(adult concepts) V(i-m-g)

Live Hard (main title not shown in English) Not shown, Hong Kong, 95 mins, Yu Enterprises, Frequent violence, V(f-m-g) O(drug use)

Loose Cannon A. Greisman-A. Spellings, U.S., 99 mins, Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Occasional violence, coarse language, V(i-m-g) L(i-m-g)

My Dear Son (main title not shown in English), Rover K. C. Tang, Hong Kong, 96 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Frequent violence, sexual scenes, adult concepts, V(f-m-g) S(i-m-g) O(adult concepts)

My Friends' Train M. Stacey, U.S., 109 mins, Premium Films, Coarse language, occasional violence, sexual scenes, V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) (V(i-m-g) L(i-m-g)

Paperehand B. Zucker, U.S., 119 mins, Universal Pictures, Adult concepts, O(sexual allusions adult concepts)

Pink Cadillac D. Valdes, U.S., 118 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Drug use, violence, O(drug use) V(i-m-g) L(i-m-g)

Shirley Valentine L. Gilbert, U.K., 108 mins, United International Pictures, Occasional coarse language, sexual scenes, L(i-l-j) S(i-m-g)

tightrope Dancer, The R. Cullen, Australia, 58 mins, Ronin Films, Occasional coarse language, drug references, L(i-l-j) O(drug references)

Tracks Howard Zucker, U.S., 91 mins, Ronin Films, Occasional coarse language, violence, sexual scenes, L(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) V(i-m-g)

Une Affaire de Femmes M. Kurtz, France, 107 mins, Sharmill Films, Adult concepts, O(adult concepts)

Vampirates (main title not shown in English) Golden Harvest Presentation & Diagramic Pictures, Hong Kong, 86 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Horror, violence, V(f-m-g) O(horror)

Violent from UHF, The G. Kirkwood-J. Hyde, U.S., 94 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Occasional violence, V(i-m-g) L(i-m-g)

Worth Winning Gil Friesen-Dal Pollock, U.S., 102 mins, Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Adult concepts, L(i-m-g) O(adult concepts)

R (RESTRICTED EXHIBITION) Beyond the Valley of the Dolls (edited version) R. Meyer, U.S., 108 mins, Filmpac Holdings, Some graphic violence, sexual activity, drug abuse, V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) O(drug abuse)


Killer Angels Jia's Motion Picture, Hong Kong, 89 mins, Yu Enterprises, Frequent graphic violence, V(f-m-g)

Last Exit to Brooklyn B. Eichinger, West Germany-U.S., 102 mins, Hoyts Distribution, Occasional graphic violence, sexual scenes, V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) L(i-m-g)

Mes nuits sont plus belles que vos jours (My Nights are More Beautiful than your Days) Alain Sarde, France, 110 mins, Richly Communications, Occasional sexual scenes, violence, S(i-m-g) V(i-m-g)

FILMS REFUSED REGISTRATION Beyond the Valley of the Dolls (a) R. Meyer, U.S., 109 mins, Filmpac Holdings, Some graphic violence, sexual activity, drug abuse, V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) O(drug abuse)

Beyond the Valley of the Dolls (b) R. Meyer, U.S., 110 mins, Filmpac Holdings, Occasional coarse language, sexual allusions, occasional adult concepts.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS 19-Sai No Chizu Y. Miwa-S. Kenichi, Japan, 105 mins, Murray Pope & Associates


Cabinet De Th. Sigal, The Decla, West Germany, 80 mins, Goethe-Institut

Chronicle of the Grey House UFA, West Germany, 108 mins, Goethe-Institut

Dogura Magura S. Shibata-K. Shimizu, Japan, 110 mins, Murray Pope & Associates

From Morning to Midnight Ilguf Film, West
Germany, 72 mins, Goethe-Institut
Gondola M. Sadase, Japan, 112 mins, Murray Pope & Associates
Karumen Junjo Su T. Kokura, Japan, 102 mins, Murray Pope & Associates
Kojin to Gango N. Hidemasa, Japan, 96 mins, Murray Pope & Associates
Rikiy Hiroshi Morie, Japan, 135 mins, Murray Pope & Associates
Sho O Suteyo, Machi £  Dayo Eiko Kupo, Japan, 129 mins, Murray Pope & Associates
Tetto M onogatariTakashile Ichise, Japan, 135 mins, Murray Pope & Associates
Zulay, Facing the 21st CenturyJ. Preloran, West Germany, 187 mins, Film pac Holdings
Decision reviewed: [Classify 'RR 13 (1) (a) ' by the Film Censorship Board.
Decision of the Board: Direct the Film Censorship Board to Classify 'R'.

NOVEMBER 1989

G (GENERAL EXHIBITION)

All Dogs Go to Heaven Sullivan Bluth Studios, U.S.-Ireland, 84 mins, Hoyts Distribution
Marriage of Figaro, The Fritz Buttenstend, U.S., 109 mins, Film pac Holdings
Prancer R. De Laurentis, U.S.-Canada, 103 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation
PG (PARENTAL GUIDANCE)

Back to the Future II B. Gail-N. Canton, U.S.-U.K., 95 mins, Film pac Holdings
Pedicab Driver (main title not shown in English) D & B Films Distribution, Occasional coarse language, V(i-m-g) O(l-m-g)
Vladimir N. Konchalovsky, Russia, 112 mins, Film pac Holdings

PG (PARENTAL GUIDANCE)

Back to the Future II B. Gail-N. Canton, U.S.-U.K., 95 mins, Film pac Holdings
Pedicab Driver (main title not shown in English) D & B Films Distribution, Occasional coarse language, V(i-m-g) O(l-m-g)
Vladimir N. Konchalovsky, Russia, 112 mins, Film pac Holdings
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