12-1-1990

Cinema Papers #81 December 1990

Scott Murray

Follow this and additional works at: http://ro.uow.edu.au/cp

Recommended Citation
http://ro.uow.edu.au/cp/81

Research Online is the open access institutional repository for the University of Wollongong. For further information contact the UOW Library: research-pubs@uow.edu.au
Cinema Papers #81 December 1990

Description
Contents:

3 BRIEFLY Toronto Film Festival Report by Ivan Hutchinson Letters, News, Views

6 IAN PRINGLE: ISABELLE EBERHARDT Interview by Scott Murray

14 ESBEN STORM'S DEADLY Production report by Andrew L. Urban

18 MARTIN SCORSESE: GOODFELLAS Interview by Ana Maria Bahiana and Afterword by Raffaele Caputo

28 FATHERS AND DAUGHTERS Jan Epstein

32 JANE CAMPION: AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE Interview by Hunter Cordaiy

38 ALAN J. PAKULA: PRESUMED INNOCENT Interview by Ana Maria Bahiana

44 TECHNICALITIES Apocalypse New: Fred Harden

50 DIRTY DOZEN

52 FILM REVIEWS An Angel at My Table Brian McFarlane The Big Steal Jim Schrembi Blood Oath Keith Connolly Chocolat Marie Craven The Crossing Raffaele Caputo Mo' Better Blues Adrian Jackson Phobia Ross Harley Return Home Peter Lawrance

60 SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE FESTIVALS REPORTS Hunter Cordaiy, Adrian Martin

66 BOOK REVIEW Directed By Vincente Minnelli Adrian Martin plus Books Received

68 PRODUCTION SURVEY 79 FILM CENSORSHIP LISTINGS

Publisher
MTV Publishing Ltd, Richmond, 96p

This serial is available at Research Online: http://ro.uow.edu.au/cp/81
MATILDA MAY IN IAN PRINGLE’S ISABELLE EBERHARDT

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
MARTIN SCORSESE ON ‘GOODFELLAS’
PLUS
IAN PRINGLE AND ‘ISABELLE EBERHARDT’
ALAN J. PAKULA AND ‘PRESUMED INNOCENT’
JANE CAMPION AND ‘AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE’
A universal stock for all situations.

In critical scenes from bright to low light, with filters and long lenses, in ample or confined space on location or in the studio, AGFA XT 320 outperforms any combination of multiple stocks.

AGFA XT 320's high speed and extra wide latitude ensures consistent image quality throughout your entire production.

AGFA XT: a universal colour negative pushing forward the creative border for today's cinematographers.

Agfa-Gavaert Limited.
2 Byfield Street,
North Ryde,
New South Wales 2113
Contact: John Benfield
Telephone: (02) 888 1444
Facsimile: (02) 887 1981

Victoria
Contact: Simon Murphy
372 Whitehorse Road,
Nunawading 3131
Telephone: (03) 875 0222
Facsimile: (03) 877 7345

AGFA XT 125 & XT 320
COLOUR NEGATIVE FILMS

They reflect the best of you.
INCORPORATING FILM VIEWS
DECEMBER 1990 NUMBER 81

CONTENTS

3 BRIEFLY
Toronto Film Festival Report by Ivan Hutchinson
Letters, News, Views

6 IAN PRINGLE: ISABELLE EBERHARDT
Interview by Scott Murray

14 ESSEN STORM’S DEADLY
Production report by Andrew L. Urban

18 MARTIN SCORSESE: GOODFELLAS
Interview by Ana Maria Bahiana
and Afterword by Raffaele Caputo

28 FATHERS AND DAUGHTERS
Jan Epstein

32 JANE CAMPION: AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE
Interview by Hunter Cordaiy

38 ALAN J. PAKULA: PRESUMED INNOCENT
Interview by Ana Maria Bahiana

44 TECHNICALITIES
Apocalypse New: Fred Harden

50 DIRTY DOZEN

52 FILM REVIEWS
An Angel at My Table Brian McFarlane
The Big Steal Jim Schrembi
Blood Oath Keith Connolly
Chocolat Marie Craven
The Crossing Raffaele Caputo
Mo’ Better Blues Adrian Jackson
Phobia Ross Harley
Return Home Peter Lawrence

60 SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE FESTIVALS REPORTS
Hunter Cordaiy, Adrian Martin

66 BOOK REVIEW
Directed By Vincente Minnelli Adrian Martin
plus Books Received

68 PRODUCTION SURVEY

79 FILM CENSORSHIP LISTINGS

CONTRIBUTORS
ANA MARIA BAHIANA is a Brazilian film writer based in Los Angeles;
RAFFAELE CAPUTO is a freelance writer on film; JAN EPSTEIN is film reviewer for The
Melbourne Report; KEITH CONNOLLY is a special writer on film for The Sunday Age;
HUNTER CORDAIY is a writer, and a lecturer in mass media at the University of NSW;
MARIE CRAVEN used to be Anne-Marie Crawford and is now film reviewer for Business
Review Weekly. FRED HARDEN is a Melbourne film and television producer specializing
in special effects; ROSS HARLEY is the editor of Art & Text; IVAN HUTCHINSON is the film
critic for the Herald-Sun; ADRIAN JACKSON is a jazz lover and a music writer for The
Age; PETER LAWRENCE is a freelance writer on film; BRIAN MCFARLANE is a
professor in film at the Chisholm Institute; ADRIAN MARTIN reviews films shown on
television for The Sunday Herald, and writes on film for Tension; JIM SCHEMBRI writes
on film and entertainment for The Age; ANDREW L. URBAN is the Australian
correspondent for Moving Pictures International.
FOUR-HOUR FLIGHT from Vancouver, leaving at 8 am in the morning, should have deposited any movie enthusiast racing to get accreditation and an invitation to the Gala opening presentation of “The 15th Festival of Festivals” well on the ground and on the way long before the 7:30 pm starting time.

However, there was a small matter of a three-hour time difference, so the touchdown, though dead on time, read 3 pm, not the expected midday. That, plus the first heavy rain of the autumn and the Toronto traffic, ensured mild panic had kicked in by the time the taxi arrived at the hotel. Credit card noted, registration completed, baggage dumped in the room, and off to find the headquarters of the Festival.

Three wrong turns, and an hour later, feelings of acute stress were finally assuaged, and kindly minions were handing out the necessary press passes, cups of coffee, invitations to the post-official opening party, which, in the event, was not attended, exhaustion having set in not long after the 7:30 movie began. And a performance from Robbie Coltrane couldn’t hide the fact that director Yves Simoneau’s heavy hand killed most of the humour stone dead. Local references and one or two smart lines kept the audience vastly amused, but not this visitor.

Toronto’s 15th Festival of Festivals was spread, like Los Angeles smog, all over the town. The number of films on display seems daunting (“nearly 300 films from 47 different countries”) but was nothing compared to the difficulties facing strangers trying to see some of them.

There was no single, central cinema complex, but a variety of venues. To the out-of-town visitor, just finding where a particular film was being screened turned out to be difficult enough. Even with the aid of the brisk, clean underground system, energy and agility were necessary to get to the various areas on time.

When one did arrive, round-the-block queues were often the first thing seen. Whether press or paying public, everyone joined the queue which formed often up to 90 minutes before the popular screenings. A token was handed out which ensured a place but, unless you didn’t care where you sat, leaving the queue was unwise. It also proved an exhausting and boring experience, although it did give one plenty of time to consult maps and programme times in order to get to the next movie queue of your choice.

Most festivalgoers thought the procedure fair and reasonable and perhaps they were right — it at least made you choose your film carefully.

The emphasis this year at Toronto was on the cinema of Portugal. Some 14 films made in the 1980s, plus a retrospective of the work of the now 82-year-old director Manoel de Oliveira, were on display. There were 19 Canadian features and many shorts in the “Perspective Canada” section, a batch of the latest cult horror flicks (shown at midnight, of course) and a number of new American and British movies, some having their World Premiere at the Festival.

Celebrities were shuttled in and out of screenings (Clint Eastwood, Liam Neeson, Maria Berenson, Ron Silver and many others) and everywhere the whoosh of Festival fanatics racing from one end of the city to the other could be heard.

At the magnificently restored Elgin Theatre, a throwback to the movie palaces of the 1930s, after a brief appearance on stage by the Star-Director-Producer himself, Clint Eastwood’s White Hunter Black Heart failed to deliver. Based on Peter Viertel’s 1965 book about the events during the making of the film The African Queen, the movie supposedly examines the complex personality of director John Huston (called John Wilson in the film), but reveals little more than the fact that Eastwood, as Huston, is far less interesting than amusing, and mostly dull. Surely Eastwood’s past track-record at the box office got this eccentric self-indulgence before the cameras.

Dealing with the other showcased movies: Interrogation from Polish director Ryszard Bugajski was shown earlier this year at the Melbourne and Sydney film festivals; Bruce Beresford’s Mister Johnson is one of his best works, an excellent adaption by novelist William Boyd of Joyce Cary’s novel (a book once under consideration by John Huston), and the cast first-class under Beresford’s non-sentimental, brisk direction (the film brings together Beresford and actor Edward Woodward for the first time since Breaker Morant); and Everybody’s Fine, the new film from the director of Nuovo Cinema Paradiso, says little more about life than don’t expect too much of your children. Marcello Mastroianni plays the Sicilian father who goes to visit his grown-up family all over the country, and carries the film through its sentiment and sub-Fellini style with his customary brilliance. This remarkable actor seems to be as essential to the Italian film industry as Depardieu to the French, but even he can’t save this film from an excess of sentiment.

The Long Walk Home dealt with the boycott by the blacks of the bus system in Alabama in the mid-‘50s and its effect on two families — one upper-middle-class white, one working-class black. With impressive performances from Sissy Spacek and Whoopi Goldberg, and low-key direction by Richard Pearce, it is a movie which is worthy but probably out of tune with the demands of cinema audiences these days.

The Field, director Jim Sheridan’s second feature film (his first was the phenomenally successful My Left Foot), was based, unfortunately, on the play which seems almost a compendium of every event and character common in Irish Tragedy. Performed with gusto by Richard Harris (replacing the late Ray McAnally, who had played the central role on stage), John Hurt and others, the movie ends in a welter of tragic events which make Synge’s Rulers to the Sea seem like light comedy.

Many of the films screened at Toronto have come straight from Cannes in May and Montreal in August. These included, among others, Karel Kachyňa’s The Ear, Andrzej Wajda’s Korczak, Jean-Paul Rappeneau’s Cyrano de Bergerac and de Oliveira’s Vain Glory of Command, all discussed in some detail in the report from Cannes in the August Cinema Papers. Tavernier’s Daddy Nostalgia was also praised there, but, since it has been one of the most memorable films in Toronto, it deserves a further recommendation here. A film of great tenderness and nuance, subtly played, it has stayed in the mind in spite of the plethora of movies seen since.

While I found David Lynch’s Wild at Heart ridiculous, it never bored me and Hidden Agenda, Ken Loach’s first film in some time, is surely a most engrossing film (and far better acted) than the report from Cannes suggested.

There seems to be great enthusiasm in Canada for Canadian films whether in English or, if made by Quebec filmmakers, in French. Getting Married in Buffalo Jump and Une Histoire Inventée are as different as chalk and fromage, but the audiences loved the synthetic sentiment of the first, and laughed like loons at the tiresome eccentricities of the latter. The former, obviously made for television, should at least be a popular success when it goes to television — it has already been sold to the BBC and Australia — and the Alberta scenery alone will enchant audiences.

Finally, the bleak crime fiction of writer Jim Thompson has caught the interest of Hollywood filmmakers. James Foley (Reckless, At Close Range) chose After Dark, My Sweet, a visually impressive...
mix of melodrama and comedy (the laughs sometimes unintentional) about a kidnapping that goes disastrously wrong. Far more interesting was Donald Westlake's adaptation of another Thompson book, *The Grifters*, with Angelica Huston, John Cusack and splendid newcomer Annette Bening as three con artists outmanoeuvred not by clever con men but their own greed and, naturally, the heavy hand of fate. Director Stephen Frears appeared on stage to briefly introduce his first made-in America movie, and the first release from the new Martin Scorsese Company. Frears called Scorsese a man of great humanity and compassion and added, "I think he'd have made a fine priest."

Even at three films a day, only a small percentage of the total of films screened was covered. Among those seen which seemed a complete waste of time were Jean-Charles Tacchella's *Dames Galantes* (excruciatingly boring) and Michel Deville's *Nuit d'Été en Ville* (excruciatingly pretentious). Among those missed which have since been extravagantly praised and/or enthusiastically condemned in the various queues in which one has waited were Paul Schrader's *Company of Strangers* (Canada), *Mindwalk* (Australia-U.S.) and *Time of Servants* (Czechoslovakia). Hardest movies to get a seat for were: Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstem are Dead*, *The Wonderful World of Dogs* and Jane Campion's *An Angel at My Table*.

The Critics Award went to *An Angel at My Table*, while the John Labat Classic Award given to the film voted most popular by the Festivalgoers themselves went to *Cyrano de Bergerac*. The $25,000 Toronto-City Award for Excellence in Canadian Production went to *H*, a first feature by director Darrell Wysk, a grim study of drug addiction.

### AFI NOMINATIONS

In the May issue of *Cinema Papers*, Scott Murray wrote about *Driving Miss Daisy* winning Best Film at the 1990 Academy Awards and how,

"The major disappointment... was the non-inclusion of [Bruce] Beresford in the Best Director category. How can a film which is judged to be the best not also be the best directed? so many queried. But the Oscars are not about logic, and every year they have inconsistencies... What has been little remarked in the summations is that the Best Director nominations are submitted by the Screen Directors' Guild of America; Academy members can vote only on those on the Guild's [pre-selected] list. This patently unfair system, where internal politics have too great a chance of influencing things, is something that should be changed. Strangely, it is similar to the pre-selection model adopted by the Australia Film Institute in its annual awards."

The following letter was received in response, arriving prior to the announcement of the 1990 AFI Awards.

**Dear Scott,**

We at Cascade Films read with interest the *Cinema Papers* report of the glaring omission of a director nomination for Bruce Beresford at this year's Academy Awards.

As you rightly point out, how can a film which is judged amongst the best in so many categories not also gain a nomination in the Best Director category? We, too, are questioning the turn of events at this year's AFI nominations in the case of *The Big Steel* which, you are no doubt aware, has been nominated for 9 AFI awards, including Best Film.
and each of the acting categories ... Like Beresford’s film, it did not receive a nomination for Best Director. How was it so that *The Big Steal* was not judged to have also achieved excellence in di-
rection? Is it even implausible that *The Big Steal* was a self-directed film. Given that the director is the pivotal inspiration of the many elements which come together to realize a film, we feel that Nadia Tass’ omission from the Best Director category is indeed a parallel situation to Beresford’s. Nadia is delighted her film has done so well in being nominated for 9 AFI awards. We wonder, how-
ever, if your perception of Beresford’s reaction to not gaining the nomination as “a sense of a personal chance so narrowly, and perhaps un-
fairly, missed” might also be the case this side of the Pacific.

The current AFI Awards system with its pre-
selection process – 20 nameless/faceless judges
nominating the films for the various AFI catego-
ries – we believe is an unfair and undemocratic
method of ultimately selecting the films which vie for the highest achievement in each category.

That such significant awards as the AFI’s can be open to abuse and to being influenced, as you suggested of the Academy Awards scenario, by internal politics is a great pity, which in the long run diminishes the credibility and worth of the AFI Awards.

We congratulate *Cinema Papers* on opening up the debate with what turned out to be almost intuitive foresight, and encourage you to con-
tinue the debate with gusto, for the benefit of the Australian Film Industry as a whole, let alone the future of the awards themselves.

Yours sincerely
Aida Innocente
on behalf of Cascade Films.

Scott Murray replies:

As to the AFI Awards pre-selection process, there is little if anything to be said in its favour, which is what I wrote in the April 1982 issue of *Cinema Papers*, at the time the pre-selection was brought in by the long-gone but never forgotten AFI executive director, Kathleen Norris. The industry reacted quickly and strongly at a Sydney meeting of the Features Division of the Film and Television Production Association of Australia (FTPAA), which carried a motion urging the AFI to abandon pre-selection. When director Michael Thornhill got up and spoke for the motion, he was greeted by Norris telling him to “go blow it out your ear”, which set the tone for much of the future response.

That was eight years ago, but how little things change. Especially curious is the shortness of col-
mctive memories, particularly in organizations where new administrators seemingly take no heed of what has happened and been learnt in the past.

On a recent ABC television interview, I was asked if the AFI Awards system was the best way of discovering the finest Australian film of the year. The answer, paraphrased here, was no. I pointed out the absurdity of a film like *Return Home* being nominated for Best Director but not Best Film. I continued by criticizing the pre-selection proc-
cess and calling the pre-selectors “faceless and nameless” (the names were released much later, but no indication was given of which section they pre-selected, a cop-out position if ever). In clos-
ing, I quoted the percient Thomas Keneally, who said of Australia that it “almost congenitally values mediocrity”, adding “The AFI Awards is proving him right.”

Needless to say, the AFI did not take kindly to such views and the phones to the ABC and me ran hot. Most curious was the AFI representative who criticized me for not having informed the AFI of my reservations before going public? What?! I have for years so regularly and inter-
perately berated the AFI over its handling of the Awards that I believed there was no one left out there who wanted to hear from this correspon-
dent ever again on the topic. When informed of all this, the AFI representative said he had no idea people had been so critical of the AFI Awards. Surely, this is organizational amnesia on a grand scale. The AFI Awards have always been, and this year most particularly are, the most criticized of all the AFI’s activities.

But despite years of people hoping and work-
ing for improvements, things get worse. (When challenged on ABC radio about David Stratton’s staunch and same criticism of this year’s Awards, the present AFI director closed to speak glowingly about the “smooth professionalism” of the ABC presenters. She must have been referring to a different show.)

Given the AFI’s inability to fix the Awards (which is really quite simple: people should be free to see and vote for all films in their catego-
ries), it is time to think of other strategies. A boycott might be a good start.
CONGRATULATIONS!!

ROBERT GIBSON

for winning the

1990 AFI

SPECTRUM FILMS

BEST ACHIEVEMENT
IN EDITING AWARD

for

‘Flirting’

Film Victoria

is proud to have supported the following 1990 AFI AWARD winning feature films

☆ THE BIG STEAL
Best Screenplay David Parker
Best Supporting Actor Steve Bisley
Best Original Music Score Phil Judd

☆ FATHER
Best Actor Max Von Sydow
Best Supporting Actress Julia Blake

☆ RETURN HOME
Best Achievement in Direction Ray Argall

FILM VICTORIA PO BOX 4361
TEL (03) 651 4089 FAX (03) 651 4090
Ian Pringle

In an industry concerned with sectionalizing its talents, director Ian Pringle has traditionally been viewed as “fringe” or “alternative”. His cinematic and thematic concerns were seen to be European and his films regarded as low-budget personal works which touched little the mainstream industry. But so do realities and perceptions change. Pringle is now completing *Isabelle Eberhardt*, a big-budget Australia-France co-production starring Matilda May, Tcheky Karab and Peter O'Toole, all major names on the continent and elsewhere. At a time when the journeymen directors of the mainstream are at their most tepid, it is those who were once exiled to the edges who aesthetically dominate local production: Jane Campion, Ray Argall, Pringle, et al. Pringle’s features are notable for their stark presentations of characters caught up in “extreme situations”. His first feature, *The Plains of Heaven* (1982), concerns two men working in a kind of self-imposed exile in the Victorian mountains, one trying to live in tune with the environment, the other overwhelmed by it. The next feature, *Wrong World* (1986), is set in a bleak, night-shrouded Melbourne and the mysterious twilight world of Bolivia. It is remarkable for its intense portrait of a nihilistic, materialist society in decay, and for the characterizations of Mary (Jo Kennedy) and David (Richard Mor), who feel alienated within it. As in all Pringle films, including the recent and moody *The Prisoner of St. Petersburg*, relationships are transient moments of shared directionlessness. His characters are literally and emotionally homeless, but always there is a sense of emotional expansion, of a journey forward, however small. Despite the dark images his films invoke, Pringle is in essence a romanticist, though he may well prefer the word optimist. It was during the post-production on *Isabelle Eberhardt* that Ian Pringle spoke with Scott Murray.

IN FOR THE LONG HAUL
The Australian film industry is often divided by writers into "mainstream" and "fringe". How does Ian Pringle perceive his position as a filmmaker?

It is always hard to give an accurate reflection on where you might sit in other people's eyes. From my point of view, what I have tried to do is be true to the ideas that I have and find the best way to get them made. I have never delineated between any specific areas.

Obviously, though, there is a big difference between the types of films that had to be made under 10BA and a more adventurous indigenous cinema that could have emerged. The things that I was interested in oscillated somewhere between the two and, as I have found out, they seem to have more legs overseas.

Do you think there has been an unnecessary sectionalization of filmmakers within the industry here?

Yes. And it is unfortunate, because it stifles talent. Australia has not really had a good system for encouraging talent. What the people in positions of influence must now do is take a more adventurous approach. We are in a position where people have to make braver decisions about Australian talent and how to encourage it. That didn't happen in the past.

Of course, we have been very fortunate to have had an organization like the AFC, which for such a long time was the backbone for anyone trying to make a film. But the AFC's role would have been more effective if there had been a link with television, especially the ABC.

So you think it is time to be more selective about whom to support and not spread the funds around so widely?

Absolutely. You only need look at all the scripts that have been written and projects that went into development but which never got anywhere. That's a shame.

This is not a complaint on my part, just an observation. In fact, I think I have been very lucky. But I have seen other people with talent who have not had the good fortune to go on.

It could be argued there has been a very tokenist approach towards people making personal films. Paul Cox, almost alone, has had near constant support. The others seem to have been unfairly marginalized.

Yes, that has certainly happened. And the inevitable result is that some survive and some don't - not because of cinematic worth, but because of sheer bloody tenacity. That is not always fair. But then, who is to say there is justice out there?

Which raises the problem for many directors of finding producers who can protect them from some of the worst pressures.

Precisely. The greatest lack in this country is produceorial talent. It is as important to have talented producers as it is to have talented directors: you cannot have one without the other. What we have largely had was a lot of individuals whose greatest skills were in taking advantage of the subsidy model. That's the way I see it.
Do you see unionism having played a detrimental role in that distancing?

I wouldn’t specifically blame the unions, though they have to learn that there are opportunities in trying new approaches such as co-productions. Basically, I think the problems we have represent a hangover from 10BA, which left everyone fat and lazy. We had it too good for too long.

But unionism has been responsible for an increasingly isolationist policy at a time when the rest of the world has recognized that national boundaries in a cultural sense are virtually meaningless. For a Parisian to be filming in Leningrad, or wherever, is just a natural part of the film process, whereas Australia sets up all these rules which interfere with the universal nature of cinema.

Absolutely, I totally agree. However, I think the unions will learn that we need to be more flexible, and more intelligent in our approach to the matter. In some ways, I understand why they react the way they do, and it is going to take time for them to realize why it is important to change.

As an Australian filmmaker, how have you been received in Germany and France?

I have never had a problem. Ultimately, you are judged on your ability.

In Germany, I had an extraordinary experience. We had very little money to do that film [The Prisoner of St. Petersburg], but that was no hardship. It was exciting, an adventure. And I was so impressed with the Germans’ technical expertise. We had a fantastic crew.

In France, again you are judged on your ability to deliver – to the crew and all those involved. The French and Germans have different systems, and as a filmmaker the opportunity of experiencing both can only enrich you. That is why I feel so fortunate.

What about in terms of working within foreign cultures?

There is an enormous benefit in that. It opens your eyes and brings out the best in you. You have to draw on so many resources that you would not have to call on when working here. That is a fabulous challenge, the same I expect as it would be for an Australian working in America. Yet so many Australians complain about working in America. To me, it is so easy to be negative. But you have to accept that is the way it is over there and learn to work within it, whether it be Spain, or wherever. You must remember they have their own temperament, their own culture, and that can be one of the great benefits of working somewhere else.

You said earlier that the sort of films you wanted to make led you to work overseas. What specifically was it you wanted to accomplish that necessitated that move?

[Long pause.] If it was one specific thing, it was a sense of personal history. The core of my work is individuals in extreme situations. The colour of the stories that follow is secondary. I have never had an affinity for just paying homage to the Australian culture, whether it be suburban or historical.

Doing the last two films has opened things out for me, ironically to the point now where I feel I would like to do something in Australia. When I do this story, if I get to do it, it will have a lot of what I have learned working overseas. It doesn’t have to be culturally specific, but it is at the same time.

In Australia, there is a sort of cultural and historical literalness which colours the cinematic impulse. If in a period film you want a wall painted a certain colour, because you feel it is right for the emotional texture of a scene, surely it is irrelevant whether anyone would have had such a wall at the time. If a prop or a dress can’t be found in a Women’s Weekly, then it must be wrong and cannot go in the film.

I know; absolutely. I think that is a product of our being a young society is changing very quickly. For us to take benefit from that, we have to learn that the outside world is changing faster.

However, I do think though there are some people who have broken the boundaries a little bit in Australia. That is why I am interested in Brian McKenzie’s work. He and others have got out of what you described, which is encouraging.

Generally they are people who occupy that loosely termed area called the “fringe”.

Sure, but I think that division will be broken down, though it is going to take time. We have a very small population and a very young culture that is still finding its feet. The face and colour of Australian society is changing very quickly. For us to take benefit from that, we have to learn that the outside world is changing faster.

You have been making films for some time, starting with Super 8 at high school. Has yours always been a strongly personal voice?

Yes. I never had the illusion that I could go out and direct anything. Maybe that has changed a little bit now. But then it was very personal. And though my ambitions were very modest, those days were just as exciting as the more recent times.

One of your early collaborators was Ray Argall.

Yes, Ray and I go back a long way to when we made Wronsky in 1979. That was great for me, because Ray is really gifted. He is one of those cinematographers who will always search for the voice of the director.

Did you expect Argall to become a director?

I always hoped he would be, because it was something that he had wanted to be for a long time. His passage to making Return Home was
Do you think links with Europe will become stronger, rather than those with America?

We will have a balance. We will become more like a servicing industry to America, and we will make occasional films that are successful over there. But inevitably a balance will emerge when it is realized that we have an opportunity in Europe to engage in something significant.

With the European link, the advantages are very obvious. A personal cinema will emerge, which is what this country desperately needs. Those films give us a window on our culture that is vital.

The American cinema, for example, is obsessed with characters who win. It is hard to do The Prisoner of St. Petersburg in an environment like that.

You wouldn't even try.

Even though your films are often set in very dark worlds, there is always an optimism, even a romanticism, at work. The positive moments between people may be very fleeting, but still they exist. One does not leave your films, despite the bleak description, with a feeling of pessimism.

That is certainly what I always aim for. What I hope my films are ultimately about is those little essences of hope that can be found in the world. I always try to find a way of showing how important it is that such essences still exist. And when you put them into a context of extreme situations, they become even more valuable. Because we live in such an expedient and disposable society, those values become increasingly important.

However, the essaying of those elements is so hard, and so rarely accurate. It can be found in literature, but not often in film.

You never do what one imagines most American directors would do, which is to go for a cathartic ending where good triumphs nobly. Right to the end, you refuse to sentimentalize, to allow more than a hint of positive growth.

I think that is part of the heritage of my growing up in Australia: It is being true to the way I have developed a view of the world.

What has been very important for me in the last couple of years is my working with Stephen Sewell. His theatre work is fundamentally heading in that same direction, and he has really expanded my approach to what I want to achieve.

We first wrote a script called "Traces", which has not been made yet. And then he wrote Isabelle Eberhardt, which, while a collaboration, is fundamentally Stephen's work. He gave it the voice.

We have now worked on two more scripts, one of which is quite advanced. It is a wonderful feeling this heading into unexplored territory. It seems that everything I have been doing has been leading to these moments now — not only in learning the craft, but learning a language which can express a view of the world.
"The greatest challenge in writing the script was dealing with a life which was so chaotic ... we had to make the difficult but necessary decision to ask ourselves what was the essence of the character and from that select our important moments ... Once we had done that, and released ourselves from the day-to-day accuracy of what happened, we were then able to write a script that worked."

**ISABELLE EBERHARDT**

There is quite an expectation about Isabelle Eberhardt. Do you see it as a watershed film for you?

Every film that I make is an absolute love affair and one is no more important than another. However, Isabelle is slightly different in that it goes back such a long way, to when I first read Paul Bowles' introduction to a book of Eberhardt's short stories, *The Oblivion Seeker*. Ever since that time, I hoped that one day I might get the chance to make a film about her.

I kept trying to resurrect the project over the years, with not much success. But it was always there for me. Fortunately, things happened in the last year and a half that made filming it possible.

It was interesting to observe that I had changed so much from when I first embraced the story. That was a major situation for me to contend with.

Isabelle is a watershed in the sense that it has allowed me to explore the beginnings of a style that I want to take much further. I am also dealing with a story that is very hard to tell. It is the most elusive life I have ever tried to capture on film, and really a challenge.

The experience has also galvanized for me things that had been welling up inside for a long time about what I wanted to do next. So, it has been a deeply passionate involvement.

**How had your approach to Eberhardt's story changed over the years?**

I became less romantic and idealizing of the character, more interested in the inner essence of what made her tick. I also became less interested in her as a writer and more in her personal relationships. I ended up with quite a different approach to that which I would have taken had I made the film when I first discovered the material.

**Have you concentrated on a particular section of her life?**

We deal with the last part of her life, from when she returned to North Africa from Europe and her journey down to El Oued and her involvement in the problems there. After an assassination attempt on her life, she returned to Marseille, but later went back to North Africa and became involved with Colonel Lyautey, which led up to her death.

Isabelle was born the daughter of an ex-Pope of the Russian church and the adulterous wife of a general in the Czar's Army. The children from the general's family, with the mother, fled to Switzerland, where Isabelle was born. She grew up in a very claustrophobic environment. Trophimovsky, the father, denounced the church and embraced the Bakunian philosophy of nihilism. To that end, Isabelle grew up in a fairly neurotic atmosphere and dreamt of escaping.

Isabelle had a prodigious intellect and wanted to be a writer. She was fluent in five languages and became intoxicated with the occidental. She found in that a way to escape, a way to freedom.

The greatest challenge in writing the script was dealing with a life which was so chaotic. When we put down on paper all the major events, we found there was no dramatic through line. Finally, we had to make the difficult but necessary decision to ask ourselves what was the essence of the character and from that select our important moments. Sometimes you have to do that with drama. Once we had done that, and released ourselves from the day-to-day accuracy of what happened, we were then able to write a script that worked.

It was only very late in the piece that I fully appreciated how melodramatic her life was - almost operatic. So I tried to push the film that way. In fact, I would like to have perhaps pushed it even more, to give it a slightly super-surreal element. Fortunately Stephen's dialogue is very poetic and wonderful, so it slips into that concept very easily.

In what sense does Isabelle represent the beginning of a style you wish to pursue?

It showed me something that was like a crack in the curtain. It is extremely exciting and I feel as if a rebirth is going on.

**Are you talking visually or structurally?**

I don’t think so much cinematically, because I will always find the cinematic form. As a director, you have that inside in you. When you film, you direct more with your stomach and your emotions than your intellect.

When I say I sensed a crack in the curtain, I mean that while making this film I found other ideas for films, which were lurking somewhere deep down in the back of my mind, suddenly start to filter through. And, on reflection, I can see that this is because of the types of characters I was dealing with while making *Isabelle* ... It's hard to explain.

At times, *Isabelle* gave me the opportunity to do certain things cinematically that I may not have done otherwise. I knew that when we would be shooting in North Africa there would be many occasions where we’d be working in extremely small environments. That’s why I chose to use 16mm and 18mm lenses [i.e., wide-angle]. They give you the chance to create an atmosphere and sense of space that otherwise is difficult to achieve. But, of course, when you track and pan in such small spaces it creates problems for lighting.

I also discovered how much of a problem it can be for the actors. In an extreme close-up, the bellows of the camera are only inches away from the actor’s face, and in many instances we had heavily dialogued scenes with that type of coverage. Inevitably, it left the actor...
with a blind eye-line to the other actor. The real challenge was to be able to integrate that type of coverage for both interiors and exteriors.

In your films, dialogue tends to be poetic and about essences; it is at the other extreme to the false naturalism of Neighbours. And in the case of The Prisoner of St. Petersburg, that led to some pretty negative responses.

That is a part of the way I make films. I always try to find a way that is different – not to be different for its own sake, but to explore territory that is unknown. I admit freely that I am not always successful, but one day I will find a way to do it. That is what is good about working with Stephen.

There are so many elements in making a film that it is like conducting an orchestra. Every time you go out, you learn something new; there is something more you have to master or become more proficient with. Sound, for example, takes such an enormous part in film, but directors rarely make an effort to learn about it.

One of Bresson’s maxims of the cinema is that if you can replace an image with a sound, you should do so immediately. The ear works faster than the eye and creates a more poetic and powerful vision than can the interpretation of a flickering image. But one imagines many people here would see that as anti-cinema.

Such a response would be naive, because it follows over into music as well. You should be thinking music while you are shooting.

Who is doing the music on Isabelle Eberhardt?

Paul Schutze. It is still early days, but the work Paul has done so far is very satisfying, I think it meant for him going into new territory as well.

Ken Sallows, the editor, has also been instrumental in guiding the music and sound in the right direction. The same with Dean Gawen, who is doing the [post-production] sound on the film. I like that sense of collaboration and encourage it.

All those individuals are world class. They could work anywhere in the world and hold their own. I have no doubt about that. It is a privilege to have individuals like them working here in Melbourne.

The really important thing in a creative environment is to allow that talent to work, and not regard them just as workers. They are contributors to the piece; they share, or should, any kudos a film might get. It is always a collective effort on a film. Okay, so you have one bunny up there who is director, but he is dependent on so many people to pull it all off. That is why I mentioned Daniel early on. I could never have done these things without Daniel. He is a rare individual and a truly gifted producer, just as Ken is a gifted editor, Paul a musician and Dean a sound person. I was very lucky to get these guys. They are gems.

Was the film shot in English?

We filmed in English and there will be a French dub for the French territory. All the actors spoke English, though there were some Tunisians who weren’t very fluent.

I never minded the diversity of accent. We have Australians in it - Richard Moir, Arthur Dignam, David Pledger – and they bring wonderful accents with them. Richard went to the end of the diving board with his, as did Arthur. As for Tcheky Karo, his English is very different to Matilda May’s, although they are both French. And then we have Mr O’Toole, whose voice in English is extraordinary … By the way, his French isn’t bad, either.

The casting is intriguing. Whom did you cast and why?

Obviously, the most important decision was casting Isabelle. Early on I spoke to Isabelle Huppert, but that fell through for a number of reasons – all for the better in the end. Then there was Tilda Swinton, an English actress, and Laura Dern. We even spoke about Jodie Foster at one stage. Finally, we chose Matilda May. I must say that while the casting of Matilda was not a mercenary financial decision, it was certainly part of it, simply because of the budget of the film. In Europe, Matilda is a big name.

Had we cast someone like Tilda, who is an extraordinary talent, the film would have been very different. But I think Matilda drew something out of herself that she hasn’t done before.

As for Tcheky, he is someone with a tremendous reputation in France and perhaps one of the finest actors I have ever had dealings with. He was born of Turkish parents and has lived in France all his life. In some ways, the casting of Slimen was the one I had the most trouble with – until I saw Tcheky. He is in Luc Besson’s Nikita and he did The Bear. The guy’s range and method is phenomenal.

And how was Mr O’Toole?

He is an extraordinary man, just on a human level. I was profoundly surprised at how worldly and how well read and knowledgeable he was. The opportunity to work with him is something one can never forget. His is a substantial part of the film.

He does such a lot of preparation on his character. In the end, he knew everything about Lyautey. He is from a school that relies entirely on technique. He has a wonderful sense of timing, and moving between the extremes of the big gesture and the small gesture. He can do it in an instant. It was a tremendous experience to work with him.

In a recent issue of American Film, Alan Parker and Michael Apted interview one another. A lot of the time is spent moaning about working with stars and all the baggage they bring with them. This film had several names of an order you have not worked with before.

How different was it?

No different, really. There is of course a sense of excitement when you encounter an icon, but the work on the day is the work on the day, and it was no different. Of course, every actor is like a child and...
you have to find their handicaps, their inhibitions and their problems. That is a part of being the director: to learn that and work with it. Of course, working in this situation, which was a much bigger film for me, and working with a very large crew, it brought out the best in me. That is what I felt.

How was the French crew?

We had a few problems, and in part that was to do with the difficulty of the project. There were a couple of things that I don’t want to mention, because they are not of benefit to mention. I always try to regard what I do as an opportunity to learn.

There were some quite extraordinary people on the French crew. The sound recordist [Bernard Aubouy], for example, was exceptional. I had never worked with someone like that before. He is a mercenary; I never had to look around, he was always there, no matter how small and difficult the location. And he had a boom operator [Laurent Poirer] who did things I couldn’t believe it was possible to achieve.

During the height of 10BA, there was what came to be known derisively as the “mid-Pacific” film. Co-productions were seen as a compromise. How have you found the experience?

Compromise is not a word that springs to mind. Naturally, when you make any film there are compromises and, unless one faces that, one is living in a fool’s paradise. But, for me, co-productions have been a wonderful opportunity to work in different areas and explore new things. Taking a chance is the most important thing, because once you lose the ability to go into the unknown then you have lost something, not just as a filmmaker but as someone who wants to create. You start to imitate, to regurgitate, and it shows. But if you do have the good fortune to keep working, then maybe you can find your voice.

And that can take a long time. Hitchcock made twenty-odd features before he fully found his voice. Exactly. If you have visions of directing features, then you have to say to yourself, “I'm in for the long haul, no matter what.” And you have to accept the fact that there is no justice out there . . . you have to be absolutely convinced that you have something to say, and believe in it."

One could argue that if there isn’t that potential for tragedy, then the film isn’t worth making in the first place. The biggest problem with 10BA was that almost all the films looked as if they were made by people who had absolutely no passion for what they were doing. If another project had come along with a bigger pay cheque, they would have happily switched to doing that.

That is a very important point because we have to overcome that attitude in the industry and find ways to lift people out of that state of mind. Film is very specific and, as soon as that mentality enters into it, you are as good as dead. People who work in the industry must have a passion about what they do, at every level. And that comes from giving respect to the crew and their work. Every job is important, and that is the way you have to go about it – not in a parading way; you have to demonstrate it. My experience has shown in the main that people then rise to it.

You mentioned earlier Paul Bowles. Is he someone you would be interested in adapting?

I can remember reading The Sheltering Sky years ago, but I felt as if I had already found a story in that terrain. Naturally, I will be interested to see what the Bertolucci film is like.

Like you, Bowles deals with characters caught up in a frighteningly nihilist world. But he is very much a "God is dead" writer and, not only does he not allow flickers of hope, he is totally opposed to them. In that sense, he is the complete opposite of you. I agree. That is very astute of you to pick that up.

I must admit that I read Bowles' work a long time ago and when I come back to it I may see it with different eyes. But he is a wonderful, extraordinary writer. He is so much his own person, and always has been. He has also done a tremendous amount for the Islamic writers of North Africa, which is very rarely recognized. He has translated and published many writers from that part of the world.

To what degree does Isabelle Eberhardt look at a person wishing to be part of a culture other than her own? And in answer to that, how does that parallel your going overseas to make films in Europe?

The film is essentially an interior journey. There are elements of encountering a new culture, but it is not that important to the story. It is more to do with the relationships she has with people. But it is certainly part of the tapestry, the backdrop, of the piece.

Actually, I never thought about it relating to my own position. But I suppose inevitably it does.
Esben Storm's *Deadly* was the first of the five features funded by the FFC's Film Trust Fund to go into production. Andrew L. Urban reports on this drama about an Aboriginal death in custody.
population of 1000, 80 per cent of them unemployed, mostly Aborigines. It is perfect for the film, standing in for Yabbabri, the fictitious little country town where Sergeant Tony Bourke (Jerome Ehlers) is sent to investigate the death in police custody of Jimmy Bryant, a young Aborigine.

It wasn't that many years ago that Wilcannia was shattered by the tragedy of the real thing - hence the apprehension among some of the locals that making this film there would scratch off the scab from old sores and let the real blood flow again.

Driving through town, and stopping at the Club Hotel, there is little sign of such tensions, although the newsletter that passes for the local paper makes it a front-page issue and attacks the council in no uncertain terms for letting the filmmakers in.

On the set, 30 kms out of town, an Aboriginal elder says he has no problems with it. Neither have any of the dozen assembled Aboriginal extras. Everything is relative, after all.

But Deadly's primary aim is to take the audience on a dual investigation: on one level, Sergeant Bourke arrives in Yabbabri and begins searching for answers to how Jimmy came to be dead in his cell.

Sergeant Bourke, young and once a promising cop, has been under a cloud for some time, drinking too much, breaking up his marriage and finally shooting an innocent bystander in a fatal accident. He is hardly the ideal romantic figure at this stage, but his journey will uncover things not only about Jimmy's death, but about his own life. That's the second investigation we share.

Sergeant Bourke's inability to have meaningful relationships with women is cured by the end of the film, and, much to his own amazement, he falls in love with Daphne, a black girl in town (Lydia Miller).
The impact of the film will be largely measured by the performances and the direction, but it is easy to see that an actor had a hand in casting, since the entire team is notable for talent, from Bill Hunter and Julie Nihill to Gaz Lederman and Frank Gallacher - and the new young black actor from Perth, John Moore, who co-stars with Ehlers and Miller.

The final mix of political message and human interest will, of course, be determined during filming and editing. The script is merely the structural framework, and Storm's nuances will be crucial to our emotional responses:

It is a love story, between a black and a white. Tony Bourke had never thought about blacks, but, by the end of the film, he's in love with one. And his journey is not only huge, it's also very quick. The time span of the film is just three days. By the end of the film he's exhausted.

In explaining what he is after, Storm reaches for comparisons:

Neither The Fringe Dwellers nor The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith is relevant; this is much tougher. Films like Wake in Fright and In the Heat of the Night come to mind. And it has a classic three-act structure, with developments in each.

Storm's third collaborator on the script was Raland Allen (The Crossing). They met in a Sydney pub to talk it over, and then in March 1987 had a further meeting with Richard Moir. Straight after, Storm went home to Bondi and that night wrote the entire storyline. "It all just clicked", he says, and the next day he had 30 pages typed and ready for Moir. Storm:

Richard and Raland acted as sounding boards. And we had several discussions in which some basic decisions had to be made, like we're looking at this from a white man's point of view, and not at any one specific incident.

Storm says that Sergeant Bourke's condition is just as central to the script as the death in custody:

It's just as much a story of the Australian male. At the start, he denies his sensitivity, but he's brought into naked contact with his emotions. For example, the funeral scene illuminates the fact that this person [Jimmy] was a son, a lover, someone who had hope. He wasn't just a pisspot or a boong.

It is also just as much about inter-racial relations. The question, of course, is whether these complexities will shimmer and simmer in the cinematic light, or will they be hurdles in the story-telling process. In other words, we will be always watching for what is beneath the surface. For example, Frank Gallacher's role as the town's police sergeant, Mick Thornton, is pivotal. He is a white cop in a powderkeg community, with his own way of achieving a workable balance. Says Gallacher:

Thornton plays the death down. He doesn't appear racist - on the surface. And his private problems impact on the story. His is a sterile marriage, literally and emotionally. And he revels in his power.

Thornton, a complex man with deep gullies in his psyche, is genial enough at first, but as media attention begins to focus on the riot in Yabbabri - and on him - he gets desperate.

Sergeant Bourke, on the other hand, gets less and less desperate: he solves the mystery death, finds himself and avenges the girl. Perhaps he even drinks less.

But Tony Bourke is only one of the heroes: the other two are Aborigines, Eddie (John Moore) and Daphne. Says Storm:

They are the positive forces. Usually, the white guy is the hero - like in Black Rain. The Japanese detective is cute and wise, but it's Michael Douglas who comes and saves the day.

But in Deadly, all three characters have an active role in the resolution of the story. So some kid at Fitzroy Crossing can see a black guy on screen just as heroic as a white guy. And Daphne runs a motel; she's not a victim. Plus, there's lots of humour on both sides.

As well as humour, there is an effort being made to avoid overcompensation, and Storm is showing good whites, bad whites, good blacks and bad blacks. "Just because you're black," he remarks, "doesn't mean you can't be an arsehole. We're all human."

Indeed we are. And as we walk and talk between scenes, I can't help remarking on the trendy, full-length, brown leather coat Tony Bourke is wearing. Nice wardrobe for a crumbling cop. Says Ehlers:

Well, you've honed in on the heart of the matter, the one sore point around here. But when I saw it, I wasn't going to let it go. Besides, I can justify it: we decided it's Tony's one little quirk.

On a more serious note, Ehlers begins to unfold the Sergeant Bourke he has fleshed out from the script, especially in respect of the romance with Daphne:

At first, his slightly predatory streak comes out. His first pass doesn't work and he's attracted by her fire. But he becomes aware of a sense of
A Life, in brown police revolver in one hand, and the Elia Kazan autobiography, A Life, in the other, is a late starter. He hadn’t been to the theatre until he was 23. He was a mature student at NIDA, and he still doesn’t think of himself as a natural actor.

Ehlers, who had earlier sauntered around between takes with a brown, full-length leather coat. ■

One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest. There was real pain in it. It made me realize that movies could make you mad. I wanted Nicholson to kill that nurse; it seemed the morally correct thing.

Producer Moir had said earlier that they cast Ehlers because they wanted a “real leading man, and they’re hard to find”. Over dinner, I put this to Ehlers. While openly ambitious, saying that ambition is very much a natural part of acting, Ehlers is still working on just what is that notion of a leading man:

At NIDA, I didn’t imagine I’d be a leading man. It wasn’t a clear idea, and I kept looking for actors who were interesting.

The first film that enraged me was Serpico. I still remember images from it, and I knew that something had emotionally happened to me. I discussed the film with friends, and we talked about how Pacino changes through the film. After that, I still remember images from it, and I knew that something had emotionally happened to me. I discussed the film with friends, and we talked about how Pacino changes through the film. After that, I kept looking for actors who were interesting.

The first film that enraged me was One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest. There was real pain in it. It made me realize that movies could make you mad. I wanted Nicholson to kill that nurse; it seemed the morally correct thing.

Producer Moir had said earlier that they cast Ehlers because they wanted a “real leading man, and they’re hard to find”. Over dinner one night, I put this to Ehlers. While openly ambitious, saying that ambition is very much a natural part of acting, Ehlers is still working on just what is that notion of a leading man:

At NIDA, I didn’t imagine I’d be a leading man. It wasn’t a clear idea, and I’m still guessing, still trying to work out what it means, although I’m not sure I should. But good actors are leading men.

Ehlers’ studies are not over: he loves to work, and hates holidays. When he is not working, he watches videos by the thousands. I got a love for the psychology of it through these guys. The first film that got to me was Serpico. I still remember images from it, and I knew that something had emotionally happened to me. I discussed the film with friends, and we talked about how Pacino changes through the film. After that, I kept looking for actors who were interesting.

The film that enraged me was One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest. There was real pain in it. It made me realize that movies could make you mad. I wanted Nicholson to kill that nurse; it seemed the morally correct thing.

Producer Moir had said earlier that they cast Ehlers because they wanted a “real leading man, and they’re hard to find”. Over dinner one night, I put this to Ehlers. While openly ambitious, saying that ambition is very much a natural part of acting, Ehlers is still working on just what is that notion of a leading man:

At NIDA, I didn’t imagine I’d be a leading man. It wasn’t a clear idea, and I’m still guessing, still trying to work out what it means, although I’m not sure I should. But good actors are leading men.

Ehlers’ studies are not over: he loves to work, and hates holidays. When he is not working, he watches videos "by the thousands. I watch for actors’ performances and for directors. I also like to show films I like to other people."

Sweetie is not one of them, neither are Peter Greenaway’s films. He likes Withnail and I, The Big Chill, One from the Heart, all of Coppola’s work, and the Katharine Hepburn-Cary Grant comedies. As an actor, he says he would like to be quirky. Perhaps that explains the brown, full-length leather coat.

---

**THE FFC FILM FUND**

Australia’s mainstream production slate for the financial year to June 30 is estimated to have been $164 million, of which the Film Finance Corporation provided almost $85 million. Not all of this has yet been spent, as some productions are still to draw down their moneys.

Of the total, $97.5 million was spent (or will be) on feature films, of which $47.5 million came from the FFC. Television drama accounts for $53 million ($29 million from FFC) and documentaries a further $13.3 million (FFC: $8 million). The rest of the funds were provided by a variety of private sector sources, by way of pre-sales, distribution guarantees or direct investments, as in the case of Village Roadshow Pictures’ Turtle Beach, which was recently shot in Thailand.

The FFC notes that all funding approvals for the year in fact total $114.5 million (on budgets totalling $212.8 million), but some of the projects are still in the process of negotiation and do not yet constitute commitments.

The 1989-90 aggregate is well above the previous year’s total of $121.8 million, of which the FFC provided $73.4 million.

A year ago, the FFC announced a bold new plan, something that would be a departure from its so-called hard-nosed, commercial approach to funding Australian productions. The FFC had been set up that way: private sector involvement was — and is ever more so — an essential element in a proposal, before the FFC would even consider a film for finance. That meant producers had to pass the market test: if a commercial buyer was prepared to put up 30 per cent or more of the budget, the FFC would come to the party.

This, some said, was too restrictive and closed off options for those innovative filmmakers who really had something, but couldn’t get the commercial market to recognize it.

In response, the FFC decided to fully fund five films under a Film Trust scheme. Underwritten by BT Australia and the FFC, the films have an aggregate budget of just over $20 million. The public was offered first recoupment of monies, 100% tax deduction, plus up to 170% profits. There was $6.4 million available for such public investment, but only $4.5 million was taken up.

The projects are going ahead, and the FFC believes they have a good chance of making money, even though the budgets are all around $4 or $5 million.

Deadly was the first into production. The other four are:

**GARBO**

Producer: Hugh Rule. Director: Ron Cobb. A tale of love, of the search for truth, of individual courage and of municipal sanitation. [Production]

**THE GIRL WHO CAME LATE**

Producer: Ben Gannon. Director: Kathy Mueller. About a loving, stable relationship, and how to get it. And Nell is a horse. Or thinks she is. [Production]

**THE LAST DAYS OF CHEZ NOUS**

Producer: Jan Chapman. Director: Gillian Armstrong. A desperate little comedy. [Pre-production]

**SPOTSWOOD**

It isn’t difficult to get Martin Scorsese started. You just have to bring up the subject film. Once he gets on the track, though, it’s almost impossible to stop him. “I’m sorry, I’m sorry”, he smiles, realizing that his words were gushing out at an almost hallucinatory speed, or, better yet, in unformed sentences more similar to frames than phrases. “I can go too fast at times.” One has to understand that films are to Scorsese more than his life. They are his food and
oxygen and pleasure and, most of all, his passion. "You have to think about films to know how to make films", he says, referring to his two-year tenure as a teacher in his alma mater, the prestigious New York University School of Film. "My only influence over my students was this: How to make films in a sense is how to give passion to them."

AN INTERVIEW BY ANA MARIA BAHIANA
Besides film, only music and Robert De Niro can speed Scorsese’s speech one notch up. He gives constant musical references when talking about his work, and is known for playing the future soundtrack on the set. To inspire actors and guide his own work, he filmed one climactic sequence in his newest offering, Goodfellas, while Eric Clapton and Duane Allman’s soaring guitar riff in “Layla” was blasting from the set’s speakers. “I happen to see things to music”, Scorsese admits, adding that his taste can be as eclectic as his filmic appetite: “pop and rock and Italian folk songs and opera and country and western, and church music”.

De Niro, a life-long friend and collaborator in almost all of his films, is “someone very, very special. He’s family. You’d have to be there to see how he works, how he still surprises me.”

De Niro has a somewhat back seat in Goodfellas, Scorsese’s scorching, casually epic view of the intimate life in organized crime, based on journalist Nick Pileggi’s non-fiction bestseller, WiseGuys. But he’ll play the lead in Scorsese’s next venture, a remake of the thriller Cape Fear (Jack Lee-Thompson, 1962), originally starring Gregory Peck and Robert Mitchum.

“You have to do some things for yourself and some things for the market”, Scorsese muses. “This one will be for the market. This is America.”

In Goodfellas, you have a world populated entirely by “bad guys”. There are no heroes, no uplifting morals, no judgements, no lessons, and certainly no ethics and no redemption for your characters. What was the intention behind that?

Well, this question comes up with every person I speak to. In all the history of theatre and cinema, novels or whatever, characters who are on the bad side are always more interesting than the good guys. It goes all the way back to Greek tragedy. You always had an antagonist who is more interesting than the protagonist.

Because we are human beings, and there’s good and evil in all of us, these guys, these villains, act out the worst part of ourselves, the things we always feel. We like to live vicariously through these characters. We also like to see them get punished at the end – in certain cases, not all cases.

In this film, there’s no discussion of guilt of any kind. I think there’s no mention of God. I have a feeling the guilty characters don’t feel [a need for ethics]. They have special ethics and, because of that, or the lack of ethics, it brings attention to it. That was the plan: just show how they act and then let the audience judge, or think about, what their actions reveal as characters.

As far as redemption, I don’t know. The story still goes on.

There is also a good deal of very graphic, and almost casual, violence. Some critics here in the U.S. were offended by it.

I don’t know what the criteria of the deans of American film criticism, or what their credentials are in terms of knowing what that lifestyle is like, of knowing what violence is really like in the streets. Have they grown up with it and lived with it as a daily expression?

One has to deal honestly with the enjoyment of violence at certain times in growing up, when one doesn’t know if it’s good or bad. You see how people act and realize, after a while, that it’s not right. But some people don’t [realize that]. There’s a kind of thrill of violence, an attraction to violence and in living that way. In certain characters, certain people, there’s a thrill. But I do question the credentials of those who pontificate from a very safe distance about others’ lifestyle.
“In all the history of theatre and cinema, novels or whatever, characters who are on the bad side are always more interesting than the good guys. It goes all the way back to Greek tragedy. You always had an antagonist who is more interesting than the protagonist.”

How did your own upbringing influence your vision in making Goodfellas?

Over the years there have been a lot of great pictures made of underworld figures where gangsters are shown as very solemn, very serious people. I’m not saying that they shouldn’t be presented like that – there must be some gangsters who are that way – but it’s not what I remember from growing up in an area where there was a certain percentage of small underworld figures.

It is a small parochial area on the east side in lower Manhattan; Elizabeth Street between Prince Street and Houston Street. We never went six or seven blocks over to the west side, because we had everything we needed in our neighbourhood. It was an incredible place filled with great life and vitality, and a village mentality – not a Greenwich Village mentality, but a Sicilian village mentality.

I knew the minor crime figures from when I was eight or nine years old, first as people. The person whose candy store I stood in front of was very nice to me, always very jolly and happy. But across the street we couldn’t stand in front of this other guy’s store; he didn’t want kids there for some reason. Of course, it really wasn’t a candy store, it was a place where all could congregate and do business.

At the time, you just took them as people; you don’t know what they did and only later did you find out what was going on. And when you discovered that certain lifestyle, you were faced with certain choices - street choices.

You have to be tough to survive on the streets. If you have severe asthma, like I did, you have to survive another way. It’s very difficult surviving in the underworld if you aren’t physically capable of defending yourself, so you defend yourself by your wits. You work out your values another way.

So, I became more attracted to the church, which was the other main force in that neighbourhood. You had a choice, either to become a gangster or a priest. I told this to Gore Vidal and he said: “It’s great. You became both.”

But did you entertain thoughts of choosing the underworld?

When you’re a kid you look and see these guys and they’re very interesting people. To a kid, they are beautifully and elegantly dressed, and they command a great deal of respect in your small world. And it is the quieter ones who are always the most powerful. You see an older gentleman in front of the candy store, let’s say, on a chair and wearing a mohair suit; you see the change in the body posture of the people passing by him. Nobody gets in front of him or does anything disrespectful. That’s an amazing amount of power for a man who doesn’t have to lift a finger.

Naturally, those sort of people become role models to you and, at a certain point, sure you think, “Oh boy, I’d like to be respected like that person.” But to be able to do that you have to live that
lifestyle of violence and violent behaviour, and a contempt for any kind of morality and codes of living.

Then you see that the other kind of person who is pretty much respected is the priest—pretty much, but not too much.

So, in a way, this film continues a series of neighbourhood tableaux that you started with *Mean Streets*?

I'm attracted to the same subject matter, the same material. It's like looking at the world again from a slightly different angle. There's a direct line between *Mean Streets*, *Raging Bull* and this film. It's almost a trilogy.

*Mean Streets* is pretty much about myself and my friends. The period covered in that film is when I was a film student at New York University, going back and forth between the two worlds, the east side and the west side. *Mean Streets* is a very clear, almost autobiographical movie of that time. I hopefully have a couple more in mind to chronicle that lifestyle.

Were you surprised when *Raging Bull* was chosen best film of the 1980s in almost all lists compiled by the American press?

I was very surprised and very, very pleased, because up to that point I thought it was pretty much... well, not forgotten, but sort of played down. And it was chosen by individuals whose votes were collated, not worked out politically in some room, like by a jury at a film festival, when you have to encourage certain kinds of filmmaking as opposed to others.

The other thing is that *Raging Bull* was filmed in 1979 and released in 1980. That means it stayed in people's minds for more than ten years, and that's pretty good. I hope it stays in people's minds.

How did you find your way out of this impasse?

I figured what I had to do was start all over again and learn how to make pictures for the least amount of money. Then I could afford to make riskier films in this country. You see, unless I do something that doesn't relate directly to my personal experience, it is very hard for me to do things in England or Italy or France or Spain. It's difficult because I'm really American. So I kind of put the pieces together and did *After Hours*, which was a very low-budget, $4.5 million film, all included.

Then I raised the stakes a little by doing *The Color of Money* a year later. It was a very commercial venture in a way, a straight *Mean Streets* kind of movie made with a movie star. That was made cheaply, too.
"I like so many movies, so many directors!
The first director I can remember liking, and I was too young to understand what a director did, was John Ford. I just saw his name in all the movies I liked. Then there was Orson Welles, when I learned about what a director really does."

Then the people at Creative Artists Agency [the most powerful artists' representation and packaging agency in the business] took notice of The Color of Money and suggested that I come over to their agency, which I did. They asked me which film I'd like to make most, and I said The Last Temptation of Christ, the most impossible film to get made in Hollywood. I hadn't been able to do it, not because of the money, but because of the exhibitors. They simply would not show it in the theatres. So it had become a kind of a joke in Hollywood, like "You have as much a chance of making this film as in making The Last Temptation of Christ." It became a total humiliation.

How did The Last Temptation of Christ finally get made?
Within one month or so of my signing with CAA, there was some movement at Universal. Mr Tom Pollock came in [as President] and Michael Ovitz [UAA's owner and powerbroker] spoke to him about the project, which was by now a cause célèbre in Hollywood. We had this meeting at Universal and talked about making the film for $7 million all in, with no salary for me and scale for the actors. And it was made that way.

It was a very difficult period the '80s. From 1981 to 1987, I thought that I'd never be able to get another film like Raging Bull made again. After '87, things started to get back on the track.

Is there any particular reason for doing this remake of Cape Fear right now?
Basically just because it's a thriller, a mainstream film. It's like going back to school.

Usually, the pictures I make are for myself. I can't, no matter how much I try, make a film like Spielberg does. He has a certain sensibility and a certain command of the craft which is quite remarkable, and that's what commercial means. But very often in America you have to be able to make one or two of these pictures that do fairly well at the box office so you can make two or three of your own.

So, for you, it must be especially hard to shoot a film like Cape Fear. Oh yeah, very hard. You do the best you can. The problem is that I really prefer stories that are not told in a straight sense. To make a film, I prefer a story that's broken up and told in a more interesting way. But to make a thriller, you have to tell the story in a certain way, with certain moves and certain moments. And you have to know how to hit that, which is pretty hard.

I like thrillers but they are hard to do and dangerous in that I can get very bored. But I can't afford to bore myself, nor can I make the film too flashy because I might destroy the mood. I have to find that fine line. It's a big challenge. We'll see what happens.

Which director do you think has had the biggest influence on you?
I like so many movies, so many directors! The first director I can remember liking, and I was too young to understand what a director did, was John Ford. I just saw his name in all the movies I liked. Then there was Orson Welles, when I learned about what a director really does.

At the same time, I was living with movies by Michael Powell. I saw them on television all the time. And those by Carol Reed and Sam Fuller and Vincente Minnelli... it goes on and on. There are so many, so many...

Is there any particular reason why we are now seeing so many gangster movies?
I don't know. There's no reason other than things happen in cycles. What was the other recent one? Comic book heroes. And films like Big, with people switching roles and children becoming adults. I don't know.

Francis' The Godfather was very important in the '70s because of Watergate and the end of the Vietnam war and how we all felt in this country. He was showing a law, a code. Now he's coming out with Godfather III. I think Francis really felt he was able to find an angle on the story of The Godfather at this point.

But the appeal of gangster films? I don't know. It's the old story, I think. The bad guys, quote unquote, are more interesting than the good guys.
“From the opening shot of Goodfellas, one knows one is in familiar territory. The camera careers up to the rear of the car, pulls out alongside and then overtakes it. There is an immediate feeling of recognition: this shot is to be found in the past, in the closing sequence of Mean Streets (1973) just before Charlie (Harvey Keitel), Johnny Boy (Robert De Niro) and Teresa (Amy Robinson) are hit by Michael and his hired hand, Shorty (played by Scorsese himself).

Coupled with the sense of familiarity, however, is also an ominous, grating sense of dissatisfaction lurking about the film. It is as though the get-together with old friends has lost some of its magic; though the spark is certainly still there, the feeling that things have changed is more definite and overrides the magic. By all accounts, there are the obvious signs of a return to one’s roots, but the reconciliation just isn’t the same. It is probably this kind of spirit that Scorsese is really pointing out.

There are a number of things that cannot be reconciled in Goodfellas. Perhaps it is because Goodfellas is a little too familiar. For the moment that’s just a “perhaps”. There is probably another reason. From the opening sequence, it is difficult to reconcile the words that have become the film’s guiding inscription – “As far back as I can remember, I’ve always wanted to be a gangster” – with the freeze frame of the face of Henry Hill (Ray Liotta). It is not because of the freeze frame itself, but the brief, incredulous expression it catches on Henry’s face at the instant Tommy DeVito (Joe Pesci) and Jimmy “The Gent” Conway (Robert De Niro) respectively hack into and blast away at the half-dead victim stuffed in the boot of the car.

Certainly, the expression takes its cue in an ensemble of action with a timed purpose – the build-up to the final, violent dispatch of the victim, the camera zeroing on Henry’s face, the Roadrunner-like freeze frame, and then those mnemonic words over the momentary, incredulous stare – that works to great comic effect. But, as with the opening shot, where is this expression to be found? The sequence as a flashforward singles out Henry’s expression as something to return to, that indeed it also suggests something of a moral stance, and that part of the film’s movement will be toward understanding that expression.

As most would already know, Scorsese is one to structure and thematize his own personal desires in relation to cinema’s history. But with Goodfellas it appears double-edged, for what cannot be mistaken with all the close-knit marks of a return to his earlier films, especially Mean Streets, is that Goodfellas also inscribes Scorsese’s own place within film history. In one way, Henry’s stare does tend to look to what has become the classic trajectory of the Scorseseian figure: the passage through hell to the point of redemption. Still, one cannot be so sure. What also has to be emphasized is not only Scorsese’s doubled-edged inscription, but that this includes the spectator’s precarious fascination with cinema, and Scorsese’s cinema more so. Again, where is Henry’s stare to be found?

Well, for one thing, it can certainly be traced to a past, and at least we know it is the story’s past. Immediately following the
Immediate feeling of recognition: this shot is to be found in the past, in the closing sequence of Mean Streets . . .

Opening sequence in 1970 is a flashback to 1955, where Henry, himself a spectator, gazes trance-like through the blinds of his window down at the congregation of gangsters across the street. With the camera's slow-motion insistence on the emblems of gangsterism (the cars, the shoes, the rings on their fingers, the suits, the cigars), and all revolving around a nodal abstract, power, this segment lays claim to Henry's desire to be a part of this world, to be a "somebody in a neighbourhood of nobodies". It is a perfect, fantastical lifestyle set at play in one's consciousness.

Yet, there is something of a tiny crack that appears in this seductively hermetic world, something that is so much a part of this world and still it arrives as if purposely embedded. There is the point where a man, shot, staggers to the doorstep of the local mafia's hangout. When everyone else scatters away, Henry wraps aprons around the man's wound. Henry cannot explain why he did that exactly, except that Paulie Cicero (Paul Sorvino), the mob chief, would have shut the door on the guy. But Henry just couldn't let him bleed all over the place. This scene certainly differentiates Henry from the others, and points the spectator in both directions: it draws us back to Henry's incredulous expression, and, in so doing, pulls us further along to its return.

Now it is time to move Henry to some place else in the film. What becomes discernible are more tiny cracks turning into fissures, moving in tandem and reflecting back on one another. Another thing that cannot be reconciled in Goodfellas is Henry's belief in a glorious time where "we could go anywhere and do anything" with this belief's visual realization, and how, in part, this relates to his extraordinary friendship with Jimmy Conway and Tommy DeVito. For a man who is continually on the move and who can virtually have whatever he desires, there's the burgeoning sense that Henry's belief in this dictum is a false one. That is to say, the people who can actually "go anywhere and do anything" in Goodfellas are the ones who do very little and do not move very far. The one obvious figure to spring immediately to mind is Paul Cicero; it is even Henry who cues us in very early on with "Paulie may have moved slow, but that's because Paulie didn't have to move for anybody." Power is measured not through one's actual movement, but through one's ability to mobilize others. Paulie sits as if on a throne, dispatching orders with the mere nod of his head, or communicates through underlings running back and forth relaying telephone messages for him.

Next are Robert De Niro's Jimmy Conway and the repulsively attractive Tommy DeVito, though, unlike Paul Cicero, how power is rendered with regard to these two figures is both more complex and more subtle. For DeVito his power rests in his ability to transgress codes, to turn them inside out – all codes, including the mob's – irrespective of the consequences. In visual terms, this is brought out through the space which is occupied before him, or which is in his sights. On the one hand, he can be mobilized as a proficient killer with a logistical purpose, as with the murders of Stacks (Samuel L. Jackson) and Morrie Kessler (Chuck Low). On the other hand, Tommy cannot be contained: his killing of Spider, the stuttering waiter, and Frankie Carbone, the "made-man" and boot victim, come about impulsively, unencoded, in the netherworld of jokes taken as insults. Perhaps this is the significance of his mother's painting: one dog looks in one direction, the other dog looks the other way – two sides of the same coin.

In this sense, the distance between the two types of killing Tommy performs is minimal, for the locus of his power in both instances is always outside of himself: it becomes a fact that anyone
who stands before him is a potential target. One should recall the
tense grilling Tommy gives Henry over an off-hand remark: "What
do you mean I'm funny? I'm a funny guy, you said it! What's so
fucking funny about me?" Jokes turned into insults; insults back into
jokes. But the point at which this knowledge is suddenly testified is
the chilling, sad moment of his death. It is also the point at which
Tommy himself realizes this knowledge: he gets whacked precisely
at the moment he opens the door for his initiation as a mob chief,
and all that he comes face to face with is an empty room.

If Tommy's power resides outside of himself, Conway's power,
on the other hand, is inside him, in his being and what it can suggest.
When we first meet Jimmy, unlike all the others gathered about
the gambling house, he glides through the door in a blue shimmering
suit. It is as though light emanates from his body. He gives out one
hundred dollar bills for even the most insignificant of duties, and it
is as if to touch him is to have some of his magic rub itself onto you.
But this is also deceptive: Jimmy is as liberal with death as he is with
his magic, with his charm. One of the most curious scenes having to
do with his power is the scene where he suggests to Henry's wife,
Karen (Lorraine Bracco), that she pick out a Dior dress. It becomes
a menacing scene because of the gaping deception of where
this man's power resides. In a way, like Tommy, Conway's power
rests on the confusion of particular codes having to do with his ex­
pressions and gestures, again in the netherworld of uncertainty
concerning his charm.

An essential condition of Scorsese's films is that what we are
watching seems to somehow unwind naturally and directly onto the
screen from the consciousness of the central character. Given his
voice-over narration, it would appear that Henry is at the centre of
Goodfellas. Yet, in placing Jimmy Conway and Tommy DeVito to­
gether, there appears to be another centre, one that has all along
the line displaced Henry. There are a number of instances one
could cite. For example, there is the scene already mentioned of
Tommy's grilling Henry with his incessant questioning about being
funny. No other central Scorsesean figure has suffered this indig­
nity; it is usually the other way around. Then there is Jimmy's very
serious playing off of Henry's position within the make-up of their
friendship in a sort of game of inclusion and exclusion. This is
certainly played out with Henry in regard to Morrie Kessler's
murder: setting up the hit with Henry, then cancelling it, in order
to kill Morrie without Henry's knowledge. In other words, for a man
who is continually on the move, Henry is hardly the agent of that
movement.

But there is one moment in particular that brings this out, and,
yes, returns the audience to the opening sequence. It begins just
before Tommy's arrival at Henry's bar, with Frankie Carbone,
celebrating his return from prison, offering a drink to his "Irish
friends". Conway's response is an innocently telling one: "There's
only one Irishman here." Who, in the film's scheme of things, could
Conway be referring to but to Henry. But there is more. Characters
appear to be forever making returns, for after Frankie has insulted
Tommy with his "go get your fucking shine box", Tommy returns to
take his revenge. To the exclusion of Henry, it's as if Conway
implicitly knows of Tommy's return, and awaits him, and both take
out their revenge. Indeed, one could say this scene occurs as though
Jimmy and Tommy have already planned the murderous scenario.
It is also here that once again we come across Henry's incredulous
expression, not due to the brutality of Conway and DeVito's vio­
lence, but at the moment DeVito, placing the tablecloths on the
floor, utters the words, "I don't want to get blood on your floor."
Where does this point to? Where else but the scene of Henry
wrapping the man's wound with aprons. But these two scenes do not
belong to the same world. It is as though to re-confirm that the kind
of world we have been watching through Henry's eyes is a false one,
an illusion.

There is only one place where Henry's point of view can be re­
ocnciled with another's. It is that of Karen's. Their voice-overs are
virtually identical, especially when their extraordinary life in the
mob world is "all the more normal". What could this be about but
the sad truth that Henry and Karen are really normal and ordinary
nobodies?

In the aftermath of Henry's betrayal, there are three ways in
which to read the ending of Goodfellas, all of them are complement­
ary. The camera pans along a nondescript neighbourhood at
ground level until it meets the figure of Henry walking out the front
door to collect the morning paper. Here is the first way: Henry gazes
out into the camera and our gaze meets his. He is our reflection:
average nobodies. Where is his expression to be found? In the audience.

The second way: Henry's gaze is also met with the image of the
killer pointing his gun. By the codes of the mob, this image is the
informant's projection of his fear that there will always be a killer
waiting no matter how well protected.

And the third: the image of the killer is that of Tommy DeVito.
Once realized it is as if this image passes back over the film. It was
a glorious time and now it is all over, and what Henry misses most is
"the life". Henry speaks about loss, but it is a loss which is also about
our implication in Scorsese's yearning to return and the impossibil­
ity of that return. As already stated, the get-together with old friends
just isn't the same. But with the image of Tommy, Henry's loss is also
speaking about his desire and our desire. It brings to mind one of
the nobler dictums of the mob, put beautifully in the short story by
Marotta, quoted at the beginning: "I have had friends for as long as
I can remember and I hope it will be a friend who closes my eyes for
me. "What is it that Henry says at one point? "They come with a smile,
they come as your friend." •

ADD THE GRAPHICS GLOSS
WITHOUT THE PAINTBOX COST!

At the $300 an hour charged for broadcast graphics you
could pay for this CASI Professional Graphics System in a
week, and with a few hours training be producing quality
graphic images for your budget-conscious S-VHS, Hi-8
and BVU Productions.

Developed and built in the US, this fast image processing
computer offers real time digitizing, graphics overlaid on
live action, internal gen-lock, and full PAL specs. With
it's 65,536 colour Paint software package and built-in hard
 disk stills store, it fills the gap between PC based and
expensive broadcast systems.

SPECIAL TOUGHS OFFER!

Fully optioned package CASI PGS with 48mb SCSI hard
 drive, 5.5in floppy, 13 in RGB/Composite monitor, 9in
graphics tablet, keyboard, cables, Paint and Character
Generator software. Operator training and support.
$16,000 inc. Tax

CALL OR WRITE FOR A DEMONSTRATION OR FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.
CONTACT FRED HARDEN, PROGRAMMES PRODUCTIONS P/L
P.O. BOX 33, ALBERT PARK VIC 3206
TELEPHONE (03) 885 7751 FACSIMILE (03) 885 6711
No matter how gruelling the location, our range of oils star. Insist on the oils that always receive rave reviews and leave an excellent protective film over your engine's moving parts.

EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

The Shell Company of Australia Limited (Inc. in Vic.)

1 Spring Street Melbourne 3000.
Jan Epstein looks at Father and The Music Box, two films concerned with war-crimes trials and father-daughter bonds.

**FATHERS & DAUGHTERS**

It is not only through direct action in military conflicts (Gallipoli, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf) that young countries lose their innocence and isolation. If Ivan Timofeyevich Polyukhovich recovers sufficiently from his gunshot wounds to stand trial later this year in Adelaide for the alleged murder during World War II of 24 Jewish men, women and children from the Rovno district in the Ukraine, and for complicity in the deaths of another 850 people, Australians will be confronted with complex legal and moral issues that up till now, at a national level, we have been able to avoid. And judging by the debate in the media which followed the announcement last January that Polyukhovich’s trial under the War Crimes Amendment Act is the first of a series planned for Australian courts, it seems many Australians would prefer that the status quo be maintained, and that the trials don’t go ahead.

In *The Age*’s “Access” column of 2 February 1990, a reader [M.F.] was quoted as saying:

Regarding the war crimes trials, we must remember that after 45 years memories are blurred, identification is almost impossible. The quirks of war and the deep-rooted bigotries which accelerated it would never be understood in an Australian court. In case we deepen these ancient animosities, remember Shakespeare’s words: ‘Old men forget.’

This prompted a rejoinder the next day from another reader:

[M.F.] said: ‘Old men forget.’ It is not true. My uncle is 82 years old and he still remembers when and how the Nazis murdered his family.

Implying a moral imperative to remember, this argument supporting war-crimes trials – perhaps the most persuasive of all – was dismissed out of hand by another reader whose curt comment had the effect of stumping further debate in the column:

If [L. Z’s] uncle, 82 years of age, is unable to forget a 50-year-old tragedy, that certainly is a case of an old man failing to adjust. I do not want my taxes to be misused to support a vendetta that is totally irrelevant in this day and age.

It is very timely then that two films recently shown in Australian cinemas confront the issue of war-crimes trials – perhaps the most persuasive of all – was dismissed out of hand by another reader whose curt comment had the effect of stumping further debate in the column:

Immediately following the trial, the daughter learns that her father is the man responsible for the crimes, and she cuts herself off from him forever.

However, despite the almost identical storylines, the two films have important differences, and in much the same way as it is interesting to compare different interpretations of the same piece of music, or, more appropriate, different retellings of the same myth, it is worth comparing the political preoccupations of Costa-Gavras in *The Music Box* with the more philosophical, speculative concerns of *Father*.

Costa-Gavras has been associated for a long time with films that deal with political subjects. Concerned less with political analysis than political morality, his films, *Z*, *The Confession*, *State of Siege*, *Missing* and *Betrayed*, all political thrillers, are dominated by strong, courageous characters driven by a deeply felt humanity to expose conspiracies, racism and political corruption.

The film is set in Chicago, and its war criminal is Mike Laszlo (Armin Mueller-Stahl), a Hungarian who emigrated from the old country to America after the war. When we first meet the upright, still-handsome Mike (known as Mishka to his family and friends), he is dancing with his tall, beautiful daughter Ann Talbot (Jessica Lange), a successful criminal lawyer. At first we have some difficulty establishing the location. The band to which Ann and her father are dancing is dressed in folk costume, and a woman singing a nasal, foreign song is wearing peasant headgear. The room where people are dancing looks old-fashioned and somewhat dated, but when we see an American flag, prominently displayed, we know instantly where we are. This is a Hungarian club, and these are Hungarian-Americans who are proud of both their old and their new cultures.

This scene setting is important because much doted on by her father, finds to her shock and disbelief that her loving, kindly father has been accused of war crimes committed against Jews during World War II. In spirited defence, the daughter arranges legal representation for her father, who is brought to trial swiftly in his country of adoption. Despite harassment by some elements of the public and the media, the father is sustained by his daughter’s love and the love of his grandchildren, to whom he is a revered figure. In the lead-up to the trial and the trial itself, the daughter experiences doubts as to whether her father is innocent or not, but when he is acquitted, through the discrediting of witnesses and other evidence, she is overjoyed. Her joy, however, is shortlived. Immediately following the trial, the daughter learns that her father is the man responsible for the crimes, and she cuts herself off from him forever.

In *The Music Box*, the film is set in Chicago, and its war criminal is Mike Laszlo (Armin Mueller-Stahl), a Hungarian who emigrated from the old country to America after the war. When we first meet the upright, still-handsome Mike (known as Mishka to his family and friends), he is dancing with his tall, beautiful daughter Ann Talbot (Jessica Lange), a successful criminal lawyer. At first we have some difficulty establishing the location. The band to which Ann and her father are dancing is dressed in folk costume, and a woman singing a nasal, foreign song is wearing peasant headgear. The room where people are dancing looks old-fashioned and somewhat dated, but when we see an American flag, prominently displayed, we know instantly where we are. This is a Hungarian club, and these are Hungarian-Americans who are proud of both their old and their new cultures.

This scene setting is important because...
Costa-Gavras' film is not only about the trial of a man for crimes past, it is about anti-Semitism past, present and future, and the way xenophobia and racism perpetuate themselves. Costa-Gavras and his script writer Joe Eszterhas have set their story firmly within the socio-political framework of Mishka's attachment to his native Hungary where he inherited both his anti-Semitism and his anti-Communism, and, to underline the links between the two, they have devised a sinister sub-plot involving Ann's father-in-law, Harry Talbot, which draws substantially upon evidence brought to light in Marcel Ophuls' chilling documentary, *Hotel Terminus: The Life and Times of Klaus Barbie*.

Harry Talbot is also a lawyer, and though Ann is divorced from his son (who plays a shadowy role in the film), she works out of Talbot's office, preparing her father's defence when Mishka is accused of war-time atrocities in Hungary. Mishka, says the U.S. Office of Special Investigations, lied when he declared on his U.S. citizenship papers that he was a farmer during the war, and, if the charges against Mishka are proven, he will lose his citizenship and be extradited back to Hungary. With a conviction born of loyalty and love, Ann knows that the charges are false, either an honest mistake or an attempt by enemies to destroy her father for his anti-Communist activities. Talbot, on the other hand, is not so sure about Mishka's innocence — not that he cares — the important thing is that Mishka is acquitted.

Costa-Gavras is an old hand at conspiracies. His best political thriller was *Missing*, based on true events during the 1973 coup in Chile, and his worst was *Betrayed*, a mixture of fact and fiction, scripted by Eszterhas and made implausible through a contrived plot and psychologically faulty characterizations. *The Music Box* is better scripted than *Betrayed*, and the Right-wing conspiracy of interests, though never completely explained except as a metaphorical device, is altogether lighter and more deadly.

Talbot, Ann learns in a conversation with lawyers in his office, once drank whisky with Klaus Barbie. There is no follow-up to this information. It is neither laboured nor explained, rather it is insinuated. Ann registers it cynically, with a raised eyebrow, but it is stored away in her memory as it is in ours. This first doubt about Talbot is twinned with Ann's deeper anxiety about her father. When Ann learns from Talbot that Irwin Silver, a Jewish judge, will preside over her father's trial, she is surprised at his response, a mixture of elation ("He'll have to bend backwards to be fair!") and contempt ("The Holocaust is the world's sacred cow! ... Holocaust survivors are saints"). Worse is to come. What is she to make of Talbot's secretly telling her eleven-year-old son, Mikey (Lucas Haas), that the Holocaust is a big exaggeration and all made up? Is Harry's support for Mishka simply a matter of family loyalty? If not, where does it place her, when she is driven to Talbot in a last, desperate attempt to save her father?

The strength of *The Music Box* lies in its lack of ambivalence about men such as Mishka, who took to committing atrocities like ducks to water, and U.S. Counter-intelligence men such as Harry Talbot, who after the war helped these men escape punishment, recruited them, covered up their crimes for them, and used them in the post-war struggle against Communism. When Ann, discouraged by the evidence mounting against her father by witnesses she can only seek to discredit, not refute, visits Talbot in his office to ask him
for help, she also takes the opportunity to question him about Barbie: "Is it true you drank whisky with Klaus Barbie?" Not him, he tells her, but others like him. And they weren't monsters. "They were all salt-of-the-earth types like your old man."

In court, Ann defends her father as if she has no doubts, withholding nothing from the fight to gain his acquittal: she discredits honest witnesses, impugns the integrity of the federal prosecutor in private in an attempt to rattle him in public, uses Talbot's CIA contacts to question the validity of her father's Special Section (Death Squad) ID card, and taps into Mishka's international network of friends to vanquish the last remaining obstacle to her father's full acquittal. And she succeeds. Without doubt Ann is a loyal daughter and a skilful lawyer, but, beyond this, she has a sense of justice and a concept of futurity. Reared as an American, having imbibed the liberal values of America and choosing to practise the law of the land, Ann finds her integrity violated and her loyalty to her father shattered when she is given, quite by accident, the music box that contains incontrovertible evidence that her father is the beast she has feared him to be.

In another context, Camus once wrote: "If I have to choose between justice and my mother, I will choose my mother." In this context, Ann chooses justice, and the fact that her choice rings true is integral to the success of the film.

Ann's decision at the end of the film to betray Mishka to the federal prosecutor, and through him to the world via the press, is predicated upon three things: her revulsion at the atrocities he has committed, proven by the photographs found in the music box; her father's lack of remorse; and, most important, his naked coveting of his son. "He's my boy, my son", Mishka shouts at her, becoming violent and snatching the boy to him. "You will poison his mind, like they have poisoned yours!"

This scene more than any other makes Ann's repudiation of her father credible. She must sacrifice her father to save her son - break the power of both the grandfathers for her son to have a future.

An analogous reason for a daughter's repudiation of her father can be read into the last scene of John Power's *The Music Box*. The preparation of a mass grave for 850 Jews from the Serniki ghetto who were shot and clubbed to death in September 1942 was not Babi Yar, or Iya's trench. An army engineering unit arrived in the village and, with German precision, dug a grave exactly 37 metres long, three metres wide and three metres deep, and running exactly north and south. Even the proba...
lem of getting the Jews [to walk] to the bottom of this huge trench had been taken into consideration — the army unit built a gently sloping walkway which ran down one side. Then the Jews were rounded up. There were not only the inhabitants of the Serndki ghetto. Villagers remember trucks bringing other Jews from surrounding villages, and the grave possibly contains far more bodies than the 553 that the forensic section of the Australian Special Investigations Unit counted earlier this month.9

Father’s scriptwriters Tony Cavanaugh and Graham Hartley say that neither of them are prepared to categorize Joe Mueller, who admits to killing 120 people with a smile on his face, as a good or evil man. For Cavanaugh, Bobby’s “It’s not the war, it’s in all of us” is the most important line in the film. “We all have the potential to do things and maybe it is wrong for his daughter to condemn him, maybe not. There are no actual resolutions”, he is quoted as saying. This ambivalence is why the film doesn’t succeed dramatically as well as it should.

Anne’s decision to repudiate her father is far less convincing and believable than Ann Talbot’s. The scene where this happens, however, is handled well. It follows Iya’s suicide and the handing over of Iya’s burden to Anne. Anne watches Joe’s reactions to this death with horror. He is excited, glad it is all over, unconcerned about the body lying on the floor. Angered by his reaction, and made certain by Iya’s death that her father is guilty, she asks him how he became that way. She can understand that he had to kill people, but with a smile? His answer chills her: “I did it to survive — to prevail is everything”, he tells her. “You think I invented the war? It surrounded us — it was my duty. I feel no shame. There’s nothing special about me.”

We have heard these arguments before in the film; they are reasonable ones. There is nothing in Joe’s manner or words similar to the mad paranoid ravings of Mischka Lazlo. Why then does his daughter reject him so utterly? Can’t she forgive him as many of the audience will be prepared to do?

Father is not as powerful as it should be. Unintentionally, the scriptwriters have emotionally exonerated Mueller. In analogizing the massacre out of which Iya crawled to such massacres as My Lai, or Australian soldiers to Nazi collaborators, they fail to discriminate between what Iya’s experience and My Lai represented. If the Nazis had confined their attack on European Jewry to a few mass graves dotted over the European countryside, the Holocaust would be no different to countless other slaughters of innocent people. But behind Iya is the “sacred cow” of which Harry Talbot speaks, a vast organized machine that culminated in the destruction at its peak of 24,000 people a day in Auschwitz. By seeking to contain the enormity of the Holocaust through comparing it to My Lai, Iya is made to understand Mueller and sympathize with him, but this is a false understanding which shifts sympathy from the victims of Mueller to Mueller himself.

The film portrays Mueller as elderly, frail and loving, when he had been brutal, uncaring and cruel. But, worst of all, through no fault of Julia Blake’s acting, they have made Iya, the victim of a great crime, neurotic, obsessive and cunning — a pariah still, in a shabby coat and funny hat, as if she was a madwoman to be seeking justice. Bobby, the lens through which most of the film’s sympathetic judgement about Mueller is expressed, voices the opinion that Mueller may have committed the crimes then, during the war, but not now. “That’s all we can be sure of”, he says. But what can we be sure of? Mueller expresses no shame or remorse for what he did because he doesn’t believe he did anything wrong.

Primo Levi spoke about forgiveness in the Afterword of his volume If This Is A Man and the True, explaining that he wasn’t willing to forgive any of his persecutors unless they showed first by deeds and words over a period of time that they were conscious of their crimes. Then, and only then, “an enemy who sees the error of his ways ceases to be an enemy”.10

The flaw with Father is its moral ambiguity. Despite its attempt to be even-handed, it fails to explore deeply enough the allegorical symbolism of the characters it is dealing with. Because the Holocaust like Hiroshima towers over the twentieth century, a film about these mythological events has no choice but to state clearly, and without ambivalence, where it is coming from. If a character proclaims as Mueller does in his defence, “To prevail is everything”, he must be condemned because the informed conscience, if it is a moral conscience, must find itself deciding in some circumstances to act against its own best interests. To prevail is not everything. Anne indicates her opposition to this belief by her departure from him, but the reason why she does so is never spelled out. Because of her children being infected by him? To punish him? Simply because she is revolted? We are not told, and the subtext of the film works against such a harsh judgement.

Ambiguity about why Anne left her father or whether she should have done so is acceptable. A daughter may stay, and continue to love her father — this is comparable to a mother loving her son the murderer. What is not acceptable is that there should be any ambiguity about her father’s being wrong. Unfortunately, Father conflates the two.

With more rigour, a clearer definition of the issues involved, and by allowing Iya to become a more fully developed character who can speak more articulately for herself and what she represents, Father could have been a major Australian contribution to the war-crimes debate.

NOTES
1. This shift has cultural validity as we see from another “Access” letter: “E. H.’s letter (31/1) expresses clearly the opinion of most true Australians who are against this fiasco and sham of so-called war crimes trials which are based on evidence provided by senile witnesses of doubtful integrity. I agree the only losers will be Australian taxpayers and the accused.”

2. Note how the victims are “senile witnesses of doubtful integrity” (similar to Iya’s discrediting at her trial), and sympathy is only directed to the accused. Undoubtedly many feel this way. This response is morally questionable, to say the least.

Based on the autobiographies of New Zealand writer Janet Frame,

*An Angel at My Table* extends Jane Campion’s preoccupations, which

![An Angel At My Table](image)

**JANE CAMPION INTERVIEWED BY HUNTER CORDAIY**

she so distinctively established in her earlier work – a girl’s childhood; creativity; a woman’s sexual experience – into a compassionate,

three-hour study of Frame’s life. Originally made for television, the film is now in theatrical release after a premiere at the XLVII Mostra Internazionale d’Arte Cinematographica in Venezia, where it won the Special Jury Prize and several critics’ awards.
You have said elsewhere of An Angel at My Table that “It’s the story of her [Janet Frame’s] life but it could have been my life.” Was that the starting point of the film for you?

I said that because one of the things that really inspires me about the autobiographies is that I feel I can really see myself in her story. That makes it attractive and personal for me. I feel other people will see a part of themselves that they hadn’t valued before, because what Janet suggests is all the vulnerability and shyness that exist in people. Many people haven’t suffered to the degree that she has, and I found it very liberating.

Is there a particular sort of personality that you want to make films about?

It is not something I consciously think about. But there is always something that has attracted me to telling anti-hero stories, and seeing the heroic aspect of them. I’m a lover of the perverse.

Where does that originate?

Maybe coming from New Zealand where you say “small is beautiful”, because everything in New Zealand is small compared to the rest of the world. Maybe in that way you learn a kind of respect and regard for the backward, the shy, the countrified.

And the perverse?

That may be my own little domain.

In Sweetie, you explored the personality of a troubled artist. Janet Frame is also a troubled personality.

Yes, I think that’s true. What’s exciting about troubled people is that they’re in action with life; they’re not sitting back and contemplating their success but trying to work something out. I find something incredibly endearing about that human effort, a sincere and not cynical effort to try and understand this life we’ve been given.

I’m reading War and Peace at the moment and Tolstoy is grappling with the same questions all the time: Why are we here? What are we here for? And when you see characters or people really struggling with those ideas and not just resigned to getting a mortgage and a job, I think they carry with them the whole meaning of human existence in that struggle, that attempt, to make some sense.

Sweetie shows how creativity isn’t understood; if someone is creative, they have to be troubled so we won’t try and understand them. Is that a universal problem?

Yes, a lot of creative people are misunderstood. But I’ve also heard a very funny situation where someone was describing their father, who was obviously a drunken pig and liked intimidating everyone, and the umbrella she put him under was to say he was “very creative”.

So, there are all sorts of ways it can be used and abused.

There is also the idea that if we don’t understand someone we can call them mad.

Or creative.

An Angel at My Table was essentially made for television. How was that decision arrived at?

Obviously with some degree of error at times! I always felt that this was a project that had an unreasonable length to it. I couldn’t imagine it any shorter than three hours, and Janet thought at one stage it would be nice to have a feature film of each of the books. That wasn’t a project I wanted to do, but I could imagine it as a sensational three-part series for television, treating it as a medium that deserved respect. That was the idea.

At first, I couldn’t see how you could release three one-hour episodes for cinema. But a number of things have turned that around. For one thing, the surprising success of Sweetie all over the world, apart from Germany, has meant there are distributors keen for something else. People have seen theatrical opportunities with An Angel that we as filmmakers were intimidated by. If I had made it for cinema, I would have wanted a budget like that on Lawrence of Arabia, and more time to do a more cinematic response to the work.

You said you wanted to treat television with respect. Is it not usually treated that way?

People have an abominable attitude towards the television audience. They think they’re total cretins. My argument is that every human being is really struggling with the big questions, such as “Why am I here in my life?” And while a lot of us go sleepy on it, that’s the way I want to address people. I find that every time you speak to a person in that manner, they respond.

Do you think different stories deserve different size screens? Are there some more destined for cinema or television?

I don’t know; I’m so confused now! I feel I have it wrong and right. But whatever you do, if you treat it with care, love and respect, it’s an unknown how far it can travel. If you only do it as “good enough for television”, you can be sure that’s all you’ll get from it. I didn’t behave with An Angel at My Table like that; I was just trying to honour the books, which I love. I brought as much quality to them as I could.

How different did you find directing for television?

I thought my love was the big screen, but when you address any problem, in its specifics, it becomes interesting. Television is basically a square, which is great for faces, and it’s so nice to know that when it’s put on video the integrity of the frame will be intact. I get nightmares about people watching Sweetie on tape without the
letterbox masking—it's horrible. So, it’s really great to know you’ve taken one of the major considerations of the world in hand and that *An Angel at My Table* will look great on tape. That’s one of the good things.

One of the major breakdowns for me was that there’s a tradition that television is shot faster than film and we had a 12-week shoot which included overseas travel. We were averaging about 5 minutes a day, which isn’t very high for television. Really, we made two feature-length films in 6 weeks each. Some features are made in that time, but usually not very good ones. Six weeks isn’t very generous, so we couldn’t expect too much and some shortcuts had to be taken. But the pre-production was really hard to fit into the time we had, and I think a project’s success is almost entirely equatable to the quality of the pre-production.

I’m a bit of a perfectionist so I wouldn’t have been happy if someone had said we were releasing these as features as well. What a bargain: two features back to back in 12 weeks.

**In your introductory remarks at the Sydney Film Festival screening,**
you mentioned there was a moment when you thought Frame’s books might be unadaptable. Can you describe that process of adaptation?

My vision on this has been really opened up through this experience. It wasn’t my feeling that the autobiographies were unadaptable, but that of a lot of other people. I had such a strong love and feeling for them that I was just convinced there was a way to do it. In a lot of ways, I think it’s that sort of attitude that makes adaptation possible. Someone has a total belief that they can see it on the screen, and they create the belief and the energy to make it happen. Episode One is basically an essay on childhood and people thought that would be extremely hard to adapt.

You have done several films where there are special moments from childhood, put them together in a sequence and built up a story. Your films give a sense that what’s important are the little moments in people’s big lives.

It’s nice of you to say that, because one of the aims in the first episode was the idea of how your memory develops. I wanted the first bits to be like little slides, visual impressions. If you look back to your very first memory, you can’t even put a story together: it’s just a picture. So I wanted Episode One to build up the storytelling with very short scenes that get longer and longer, as would a memory. By Episode Two, it’s normal storytelling. That was one of the challenges for me, and probably why I like it best.

**Did you consider the finished script a rigid text?**
No, I see it as a kind of architectural blueprint and you’re a fool not to relate to the ‘building’ that’s going up. Things are happening there that you can’t see on the paper, and the intentions, the feelings, are in those bits of paper, but you have to put them aside and understand its spirit and feel, rather than the literalness of it. Laura (Jones) has a great trust and it’s nice to have that from a scriptwriter.

**How closely did you work with Jones? What was your contact with the script as it developed?**
Long conversations and friendship. Then she just did the entire work. It didn’t surprise me, because I think Laura is a very clever and subtle writer, except that it was always much better than I was hoping for.

I think I got more courage as I went on, especially with the third episode. I had some worries about it being interesting and exciting, and finally I think that worry and fixation probably made a difference. I don’t think it’s in any way the fault of Laura or Janet that Episode Three feels less strong; it’s just that the middle episode with its extremely strong material made the third a bit harder. Also, Janet was saying good bye to her audience in the third book and I didn’t want to do the same thing. I wanted to keep the audience with her to the end.

One of the problems with adaptation is that people say cinema cheapens literature, and films can never give the power, depth and consideration of a book.

I agree with them. I love novels. I get more enjoyment out of novels than I do out of cinema now.

Is that because you didn’t before?
I used to love cinema more but now I think that too many films are too cheap, and they’re kind of censored by an expectation of a stupid audience. They’re not the challenge or the excitement that you can get in books.

**Do you mean recent novels?**
Not contemporary particularly, I’m talking about *The Iliad, War and Peace*, the opportunity to commune with somebody in your mind from history or present time and live with that relationship for a few days or however long it takes to read a book. I think that’s a really exciting experience and I find it inspiring. I’d probably like to write a novel. Then you wouldn’t have to do so much collaborative work, which is the plus and the minus of film-making.
Perhaps cinema hasn’t cared so much about the precious nature of creativity. It has always trampled on that and, if that is what you care about, then cinema can be very unkind.

You have to have an extraordinary relationship with that ability to work with others, and see each compromise as an opportunity, not a reduction. If you can cultivate that relationship then you can survive in cinema. If you can’t, then it’s just awful.

In An Angel at My Table, there is a moment when Janet sits on the stairs at school with a friend who says Karl Marx is the only true rational thinker. On the other side of the steps is another group who are having fun. It seems she either has to be with one group or the other, not both.

I think Janet wanted to be part of the group of beautiful girls with long silky hair who discussed whose personality was nicest. The notion of developing your personality was something she was probably more drawn to than Karl Marx. But she felt that world was inaccessible to her. She had frizzy hair and she never had any nice clothes, so she couldn’t join in that lot. They had a special attraction they might not have had, had she been included.

What she wanted, like all of us, was to be special in some way, to have some special attention. She is really taken by the girl at school, Shirley, whose father has died. She wants to be what the teacher says - "in the poetic world of her imagination", to be a dreamer - but Shirley is so wan and pretty. So the only direction she could find in the end was to be a bit bookish, and poetry seemed to be a way she could be understood. She tried to get Dr Forrest interested by writing a very provocative personality piece about her overdosing, so she was obviously trying to attract his attention by being a bold and unusual person.

In the asylum, there are scenes from Bedlam, and I imagine it must be very difficult to find ways to show what people are experiencing without it being stereotyped.

Loony scenes can look cheap, too. It’s a worry. Scenes were taken from events she discussed in Faces in the Water, which is her book about the experience, and I felt pretty confident that those scenes were particular, and weren’t made up to show madness but to describe her situation in a particular way.

What I wanted to show was the degeneration of her person during the experience, from the shock treatment down. I wanted to show the mad liberating aspect, the dance, as well as the awfulness of the dirty day room, which is where you got put if you were naughty or created trouble about your shock treatment.

Kerry [Fox, who plays the eldest Janet] does that wonderful thing where she had a copy of Shakespeare, and a bag which she carried – that’s the only thing the patients had that identified them – and she brings the strings of her bag together and puts her hand through them as if it’s an achievement. In that moment, you realize how far gone she is. I didn’t mean to do it just to shock the audience, but to help them sympathize with that experience.

Why do you think she was, as we know now, mistreated? Was it ignorance on the part of those in charge?

I have an opinion on that but I’m not equipped to say. I think diagnosis has an awesome power. Someone says a person is schizophrenic and everything is then interpreted in that light. It’s hard to get anybody to decide differently. Everything they do seems part of the schizophrenic framework. And in the environment of a mental hospital, everyone looks mad. The more you protest about it, the madder you look. It’s one of those horrible circles that go on and on.

There are several times when doctors say they have a new treatment and it seems to work.

It’s not enough to lay the blame at the hands of the psychiatric people at the time or the doctors, because a lot of people suffering from the mental conditions were in an immense amount of pain and grossly unhappy. Shock therapy at the time made the handling of patients easier, because before shock therapy patients were running wild; it really was bedlam. The awful thing about shock therapy, which Janet experienced, was that it was without anaesthetic.

Didn’t she say each time was like an execution?

Yes, the fear of execution, and that’s what I think is unforgivable. When psychiatrists suggest, as they do today, that maybe a course of shock therapy would be helpful for depression, you think, “Have you tried it?” I’d like to see the psychiatrists themselves experience it with the confidence that they prescribe it.

When Janet gets published and goes overseas, it is as if she is joining the world for the first time. She is not a tourist but a stranger in the world. We see her start writing but it seems very difficult to show writing on the screen.

Yes. I regret now that we didn’t show her writing more often. I thought it might have been a bit dull, but now I think it’s fantastic to see her writing and we used every scrap of it we had.

The film shows Janet’s gradually making contact with the world and people. For her this is not ‘growing up’ but something greater.

Yes, it’s strange. At the end, you might think poor Janet, no lover, none of those things most of us think of as part of the elements of happiness. Yet, I don’t feel sorry for her at all. At the end you sense that she’s had her fulfilment.

A whole person?

Yes, and I think it’s great because it validates a lot of people’s lives.

Is An Angel at My Table an Australasian film? Does it matter what you call it?

I hope people find it just part of humanity. Its origins are obviously New Zealand. It’s Australian as much as I consider myself Australian; my home is Sydney. I think it’s a human story and they belong to the whole world.

Do you think the Australian film industry is now re-built or in transition?

I’m such a hopeless commentator on Australian cinema. But I do think there are enormous opportunities in Australia to work in cinema because they give you a chance in a way that I don’t think you’d get in America. For all the talent and cleverness in America, they don’t give their young filmmakers a go. That’s why they’re scrambling after Australians! I think it’s totally up to you here how you do your work. You can create an audience for anything if it’s well done, and you are passionate about it.

An Angel at My Table was an outrageous proposition to most people when we were looking for the money. It just didn’t fit any categories and it really seemed like an impossible desire. They were wrong about that. If you have the vision and you work hard to make it available to people, you can do anything. I think what goes wrong is that people don’t realize how hard it is to do good work. That may sound awfully school maamish of me, but you can’t just turn up on the day and call yourself a director. The homework is horrendous, and you have to be prepared to compete with world standards.
Motion Pictures Guarantors are an international company providing completion bonds for more than 300 motion pictures and television series in North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, with budgets in excess of 500 million dollars.

M.P.G.'s Australasian operations have bonded 25 motion pictures with budgets of over 55 million dollars.
During the last months of 1986, Hollywood was ablaze with a fierce bidding war. It seemed that every single producer and director wanted to turn Scott Turow’s yet-to-be-published novel, *Presumed Innocent*, into a film. Alan J. Pakula, a writer and director with an intense interest in the same battles of good and evil that form the core of Turow’s novel, was one of the most industrious contenders in that war, albeit a behind-the-scenes one. “I more or less talked [producer] Sydney [Pollack] into buying it for...
INTERVIEWED BY ANA MARIA BAHIANA

me”, Pakula says. “I was fascinated by the book, by its wonderful exploration of our system of justice. It also was a crackling good suspense yarn.” A New York native with degrees in psychology and drama, Pakula has an extensive and brilliant filmography to his credit, including an essential trio of thrillers that dissect some of America’s most sensitive nerves: sex, power and rage in Klute; politics, power and mischief in The Parallax View; politics, power, mischief and the media in All the President’s Men. He received a New York Film Critics’ Award and an Oscar nomination for All the President’s Men, a London Film Critics’ Award for Klute, and an Academy Award screenplay nomination for Sophie’s Choice, his painful 1980s masterpiece.
WITH PRESUMED INNOCENT, Pakula puts his mark in 1990, a year that may come down in American film history as an era of excesses, self-indulgence and outrageously expensive and silly movies. Presumed Innocent is none of this, and it shines brightly as a mature, almost serene meditation on the tangled worlds of crime and punishment, sin and guilt, repentance and atonement.

Extremely faithful to Turow’s novel, Pakula’s film chronicles the dizzying descent of a rational, decent, perfectly normal man, district prosecutor Rusty Sabich (Harrison Ford) into the hellish judicial maze he is supposed to manage after colleague (and ex-lover) Carolyn Polhemus (Greta Scacchi) appears brutally murdered and probably raped. He quickly becomes the prime suspect and, finally, the accused. As Pakula says, “It’s a story of power, and how it affects men and women. It’s a story of what is justice, and is it attainable?”

Was your intention, in bringing Presumed Innocent to the screen, to be truthful to the original novel?

Yes. Given that millions of people bought and read the book, I felt it would have been arrogant of me to violate what that book was about. Also, I wanted to be truthful to an experience that I had been thrilled by. That was enough of a challenge without re-writing the book. Anyway, Scott is a genius when it comes to plot, so I wasn’t about to try to top him on that.

Did you have any specific problems in the adaptation?

Nothing but. There had to be grounding and some kind of reality at the beginning. That’s why I set it in a small town, so you could relate to these people on a simple level. The telling of this complicated story depends on the audience understanding a lot of complicated things and you have to clear up that information. (I had the same problem with All the President’s Men.)

Harrison [Ford] was very helpful on this one. He kept asking me questions about, “Do you understand this?” I remember the second time I met Harrison, I went to Wyoming and read the script. He said to me, “Explain the B file.” I then spent three hours explaining it. I then realized that if it took me that long to explain it, something was wrong with the script. So, we kept working on it and trying to simplify it.

What we found when we previewed the picture is that when you get 450 people into a theatre, as opposed to a few people in a projection room, there is a wave of understanding that happens. I don’t know if they hypnotize each other or how they communicate, but somehow you just felt the audience getting things faster.

It is interesting that you mentioned All the President’s Men, because both films have an ending that was well-known to a lot of people. How do you handle a problem like this?

By being true to the story. The story is my discipline and I have to tell it as if it is being told for the first time. I have to be careful that anything that’s written and all the actors who play the parts have integrity. It’s not just a trick at the end.

In this case, I wanted people to be fascinated by the story even if they knew the ending. At the same time, if you don’t know it, that is another thrill.

Turow has recently published another book, The Burden of Proof, exploring the character of Sandy Stern, the Jewish Argentine lawyer played by Raul Julia in your film. Would you be interested in turning that novel into a film as well?

At this point, I’m working on a script of my own, but who knows what could happen in a few years.

I liked working on Scott’s material a great deal; he’s a wonderful storyteller and has this fascination with the interplay between good and evil in seemingly ordinary people and in the system itself. So, would I be attracted? Yes, I would.

Besides being thrilled by the book, what else attracted you to this project? Was it that interplay between good and evil, which you have approached in other films?

I have explored American journalism and how it works. I have also been interested in the particulars of the American justice system.
SUBSCRIBE TO CINEMA PAPERS, AUSTRALIA'S LEADING FILM AND TELEVISION MAGAZINE. CINEMA PAPERS IS PACKED WITH FEATURES, INTERVIEWS, NEWS, REVIEWS, AND THE ONLY COMPREHENSIVE PRODUCTION GUIDE TO WHO'S MAKING WHAT IN AUSTRALIA • IN EVERY ISSUE YOU CAN READ IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH LEADING FILMMAKERS AND ACTORS, HERE AND OVERSEAS; REVIEWS BY LEADING WRITERS OF THE LATEST RELEASES; STORIES ON THE BEST OF MAINSTREAM AND INDEPENDENT FILMMAKING IN AUSTRALIA; PROVOCATIVE, ANALYTICAL FEATURES ON THE ISSUES THAT MATTER IN FILM AND TV; COVERAGE OF TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS; AND A COMPLETE LIST OF THE LATEST CENSORSHIP DECISIONS.


NUMBER 14 (OCTOBER 1977): Phil Noyce, Matt Carrell, Eric Rohmer, John Cameron, Claude Lelouch, Jim Thompson, Paul Verhoeven, Derek Meddings, tie-in marketing.


NUMBER 19 (JAN/FEB 1979): Anthony Ginnane, Stanley Hawes, Jeremy Thomas, Andrew Sarris, sponsored documentaries, Blue Fin.

NUMBER 20 (MARCH 1979): Ken Cameron, Claude Leolou, Jim Sharman, French cinema, My Brilliant Career.


NUMBER 25 (FEB/MARCH 1980): David Putnam, Janet Seidler, Everett de Roche, Peter Faierman, Chain Reaction, Seir.


NUMBER 37 (APRIL 1982): Stephen Maclean, Jack Weaver, Carlos Saura, Peter Ustinov, women in drama, Monkey Grip.


NUMBER 39 (AUGUST 1982): Helen Morse, Richard Mason, Anja Breiten, David Millikan, Derek Geiger, Norwegian cinema, National Film Archive, We Of The Never Never.


NUMBER 55 (JANUARY 1986): James Stewart, Debbie Byrne, Brian Thompson, Paul Verhoeven, Derek Meddings, tie-in marketing, The Right-Hand Man, Birdsville.

NUMBER 56 (MARCH 1986): Fred Schepisi, Dennis O'Rourke, Brian Trenchard-Smith, John Hargreaves, Dead-End, Divorce, In The More Things Change, Kangaroo, Tracy.


NUMBER 60 (NOVEMBER 1986): Australian television, Franco Zeffirelli, Nadia Tass, Bill Bennett, Dutch cinema, Movies By Microchip, Orello.

NUMBER 61 (JANUARY 1987): Alex Cox, Roman Polanski, Philippe Mora, Martin Armiger, film in South Australia, Dog In Space, Bowling III.


NUMBER 64 (JULY 1987): Nostalgia, Dennis Hopper, Mel Gibson, Vladimir Osherov, Brian Trenchard-Smith, Chambertos, Inexhaustible.


NUMBER 70 (NOVEMBER 1988): Film Australia, Gilligan Armstrong, Fred Schepisi, Wes Craven, John Waters, Al Clark, Shawe Screenplay Part I.

NUMBER 71 (JANUARY 1989): Yahoo Serious, FFC, David Cronenberg, The Year In Retrospect, Film Sound – the sound track, Young Einstein, Stroy, The Last Temptation of Christ, Salé Sávila, Sperm and Sweat.


NUMBER 73 (MAY 1989): Cannes Issue, Phil Noyce's Dead Calm, Frank Scheck, Jan Camm, Ian Pringle, Their Prisoner Of St. Petersburg, Frank Piro, Strip-Scriptwriter, Australian films at Cannes, Pay TV.

NUMBER 123 AUTUMN 1985
The 1984 Women's Film Unit, The Films of Solrun Hoaas, Louise Webb, Scott Hicks, Jan Roberts

NUMBER 124 WINTER 1985
Films for Workers, Merata Mita, Len Lye, Marleen Gorris, Daniel Petrie, Larry Meltzer

NUMBER 125 SPRING 1985
Rod Webb, Marleen Gorris, Ivan Gaal, Red Matildas, Sydney Film Festival

NUMBER 126 SUMMER 1985/86
The Victorian Women's Film Unit, Randelli's, Laleen Jayamanne, Lounge Room Rock, The Story of Oberhausen

NUMBER 127 AUTUMN 1986
AFTRS reviews, Jane Oehr, John Hughes, Melanie Read, Philip Brophy, Gyula Gazdag, Chile: Hasta Cuando?

NUMBER 128 WINTER 1986
Karin Altmann, Tom Cowan, Gillian Coote, Nick Torrens, David Bradbury, Margaret Haselgrove, Karl Steinberg, AFTRS graduate films, Super 8, Pop Movie

NUMBER 129 SPRING 1986
Richard Lowenstein, New Japanese Cinema, Ken Russell, Taking a Film Production Overseas, Richard Chataway and Michael Cusack

NUMBER 130 SUMMER 1986/87
Sogo Ishii, Tom Haydon, Gillian Leahy, Sogo Ishii, Tom Haydon, Gillian Leahy, Tom Zubrycki, John Hanhardt, Australian Video Festival, Erika Addis, Super 8, Camera Natura

NUMBER 75 (SEPTEMBER 1989)

NUMBER 76 (NOVEMBER 1989)
Simon Wincer and Quigley Down Under, Kennedy Miller, Terry Hayes, Bangkok Hilton, John Duigan, Flirting, Remora, Dennis Hopper and Kiefer Sutherland, Frank Howson, Ron Cobb.

NUMBER 77 (JANUARY 1990)
Special John Farrow profile, Blood Oath, Dennis Whithburn and Brian Williams, Don McLennan and Breakaway, "Crocodile" Dundee overseas.

NUMBER 78 (MARCH 1990)
George Ogilvie's The Crossing, Ray Argall's Return Home, Peter Greenaway and The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover, Michel Ciment, Jack Clayton, Bangkok Hilton and Barlow and Chambers

NUMBER 79 (MAY 1990)
Australia at Cannes, John Seale's Till There Was You, Jerry Domrardzki's Struck By Lightning, Hal and Jim McElroy, Pierre Rissient, Tracey Moffat.

NUMBER 80 (AUGUST 1990)
Cannes report, Fred Schepisi career interview, Peter Weir and Greensand, Pauline Chan, Gus Van Sant and Drugstore Cowboy, German Stories.

ALSO AVAILABLE
BACK OF BEYOND
DISCOVERING AUSTRALIAN FILM AND TELEVISION

A LIMITED NUMBER of the beautifully designed catalogues especially prepared for the 1988 season of Australian film and television at the UCLA film and television archive in the U.S. are now available for sale in Australia. Edited by Scott Murray, and with extensively researched articles by several of Australia’s leading writers on film and television, such as Kate Sands, Women of the Wave; Ross Gibson, Formative Landscape; Debi Enker, Cross-over and Collaboration: Kennedy Miller, Scott Murray, George Miller, Scott Murray, Terry Hayes, Graeme Turner, Mixing Fact and Fiction; Michael Leigh, Carriouer and Curiouser; Adrian Martin, Nurturing the Next Wave.

The Back of Beyond Catalogue is lavishly illustrated with more than 130 photographs, indexed, and has full credit listings for some 80 films.

PRICE: The Catalogue price is $24.95, which includes postage and packaging.
CINEMA PAPERS SUBSCRIPTIONS

I wish to subscribe for

- □ 6 issues at $28.00
- □ 12 issues at $52.00
- □ 18 issues at $78.00

Please □ begin

□ renew my subscription from the next issue

Total Cost ____________________

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

1. BACK OF BEYOND:
DISCOVERING AUSTRALIAN FILM AND TELEVISION

I wish to order ________ no. of copies

□ $24.95 per copy (Includes Postage)

Total Cost $____________________

2. BACK ISSUES

I wish to order the following back issues

□ CINEMA PAPERS Issue nos.

□ FILMVIEWS Issue nos.

□ 1-2 copies @ $4.50 each
□ 3-4 copies @ $4.00 each
□ 5-6 copies @ $3.50 each
□ 7 or more copies @ $3.00 each

Total no. of issues __________________

Total Cost $____________________

PAYMENT DETAILS

Cheques should be made payable to:
MTV PUBLISHING LIMITED

and mailed to:
MTV Publishing Limited,
43 Charles Street, Abbotsford, Victoria 3067

NB. ALL OVERSEAS ORDERS SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY BANK DRAFTS IN AUSTRALIAN DOLLARS ONLY

INTERNATIONAL RATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone 1:</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>36.00</td>
<td>65.00</td>
<td>97.00</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niugini</td>
<td>48.00</td>
<td>90.00</td>
<td>136.00</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone 2:</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>36.00</td>
<td>65.00</td>
<td>97.00</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>42.00</td>
<td>77.00</td>
<td>116.00</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone 3:</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>36.00</td>
<td>69.00</td>
<td>102.00</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>48.00</td>
<td>90.00</td>
<td>136.00</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>59.00</td>
<td>112.00</td>
<td>168.00</td>
<td>5.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone 4:</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>37.00</td>
<td>67.00</td>
<td>101.00</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>56.00</td>
<td>99.00</td>
<td>143.00</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>65.00</td>
<td>125.00</td>
<td>187.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone 5:</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>Surface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK/Europe</td>
<td>37.00</td>
<td>68.00</td>
<td>107.00</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>59.00</td>
<td>112.00</td>
<td>168.00</td>
<td>5.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>71.00</td>
<td>136.00</td>
<td>205.00</td>
<td>7.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FILL OUT AND MAIL NOW!

NAME ____________________________

TITLE __________________________

COMPANY _________________________

ADDRESS __________________________

COUNTRY __________________ POSTCODE ______

TELEPHONE HOME ______ WORK ______

Enclosed is my cheque for $______
or please debit my

□ BANKCARD □ MASTERCARD □ VISACARD

Card No. __________________________

Expiry Date _______________________

Signature _________________________
and how it works. I don’t think it is that different from one society to another, and sometimes works in spite of itself. The notion of justice is such a glorious idea and yet it also deals with criminal behaviour. It represents the best in man, and the worst. That fascinates me.

There was also the fact that the book was written by someone who knew the environment well. It is a tale of reality, which I loved. More important is the character of Rusty Sabich. I am fascinated by rational people who find themselves, and their lives, doing irrational things; people who think they are civilized and in total control of themselves and their lives but wind up not in control; people who are reminded of the fact that they can be better and start having compassion for themselves and other people and are not so arrogant in their judgements. Those complexities fascinated me.

There is also the erotic obsession of this character, which is full of pleasure but gives him no happiness. It is a disturbing kind of pleasure; a pleasure without fulfilment. It is compulsive and obsessive, and that kind of thing fascinates me.

You have approached this theme before in Klute.

Yes, where a character uses the manipulation of sex for other reasons than itself. For whatever reasons, such things interest me. I can’t tell you why. I don’t know what it tells about me and I’m not sure I want to know.

*Presumed Innocent* has in fact two outstanding female characters involved in this strange battle for power who, at some point, can be taken for villainesses. Were you concerned with the design of these characters?

Well, yes, they are two wonderful parts for women. But I was worried, after reading the book, that audiences would not understand. I did not want them to come out looking like simply bad people: they are fascinating, complicated women. That’s why it was so important to cast Greta Scacchi as the great seducer, Carolyn.

You’re dealing with a story of a man who is sexually obsessed by a woman who tears his whole life apart. You have a very short time in which to establish this sexual obsession, because she’s dead at the beginning of the picture. Greta has this bigger-than-life desirability that reminds me of the sexual icons of the screen in 1940s, when I was young. Her character is so complex: she’s a seducer; she’s incredibly intelligent and a wonderful lawyer; she has compassion. That interests me rather than somebody who is just bad. Yes, she uses seduction to get her ways, but how many men wouldn’t use it, if anybody wanted them? George Bush tried everything else ...
Considering the climate in Hollywood these days, when only mega-budget productions with lots of special effects and huge body counts are made, your film is almost a daring enterprise.

Well, Warners didn’t think it was. The fact that this book is one of the biggest sellers in the history of America had a lot to do with their willingness to take a chance. Also, it’s not just a character study: it’s an exciting suspense story, with a fascinating plot. I love that kind of storytelling. It’s like the pictures of the 1940s that I grew up with.

What’s your opinion about what is going on in the industry right now, especially this [American] summer, with all the juvenile action/sci-fi films?

I think it goes in waves. The head of the studio said to me, “A lot of us and a lot of filmmakers have been having fun with all the special-effects and violent toys, but the next thing you know there is another wave and another kind of film.” Hollywood has traditionally gone through different waves, although this one has lasted a very long time.

You see, I find there is room for all kinds of films. Certainly Dick Tracy and Die Hard 2 should be made. They are wonderful, child-like, thrilling experiences. It’s just that we should be making other kinds of movies as well. If you look back to the 1940s, all different kinds of films were made: women’s pictures, adventure movies, big westerns, science fiction, and so on.

So, my only frustration is not that Hollywood makes what it does, because childhood fantasies and childhood adventure are some of the wonderful things film can do, but that there should be all kinds of things for audiences. Who wants to eat nothing but popsicles?

Given that, how would you describe Presumed Innocent?

It’s a classic, commercial, Hollywood film. That’s really what I wanted to make, with that kind of excitement and character. It is not just out of a physical amusement park.

You have done different kinds of films yourself, but you seem to come back, always, to thrillers. Is there any particular reason?

I sure like doing thrillers. For one thing, they allow me to use a very specific style, a kind of hypnotic style. You can’t do that in comedy. I like that style and relate to it. Maybe there’s a part of me that loves going “What’s going to happen next?”, and is thrilled by suspense.

When I was working on Presumed Innocent I called it “Sex and Punishment” … When you’re dealing with this kind of obsession, there is something of the sense of the forbidden. It’s not just simple, healthy sexuality. There is the sense of violating your own code …

Ultimately, you make a film for yourself, because you want to see that kind of film.

Do any of your films stay with you for some time after you have finished them?

This one. I am haunted by it and the people in its story. It stays with me. Klute, too. I couldn’t get out of that.

On See You in the Morning I had the whole experience – I also wrote the script. I then wished it well and went on to the next. I felt that way with Starting Over and with a lot of my films. It’s not a question of liking one more. But there is something unconscious that keeps pulling me into this one. It’s like Harrison’s character obsession with Greta’s. You kind of just want to get away but can’t.

Rusty Sabich’s sexual obsession is, as you said, painful and joyless, and gets extraordinary punishment at the end. The same thing happened with Donald Sutherland’s character in Klute. Would you make a film where sex is joyful and goes unpunished?

I’m trying. I like it a lot. When I read the book Presumed Innocent, I said I think what Rusty did was unfortunate, but the punishment really seemed rather extraordinary to me. When I was working on it I called it “Sex and Punishment” (I always have subtitles dealing with what a film’s about). When you’re dealing with this kind of obsession, there is something of the sense of the forbidden. It’s not just simple, healthy sexuality. There is the sense of violating your own code, the excitement of doing that, of the malevolent person who gets eroticized by way of doing the forbidden.

I am currently working on this new script, which is an outrageous comedy caper. Nobody’s punished for the sex. The sex is really going to be outrageously cheerful. They might be punished for other things. They have to be punished for something.

Are you obsessed with the forbidden, with guilt and punishment?

Maybe you can say I come from a generation where sex was a lot less complicated than it is now. There is no word in the English language that’s more of a turn on than “Don’t.” It eroticizes.

In this script, there is an adulterous affair, and I think that adds to a certain kind of eroticizing, a certain sense of danger and a certain kind of chilling quality. That lasts a lot longer and has a lot more to do with punishment than cheerfully jumping into the sack with two or three people by dawn’s early light.

ALAN J. PAKULA FILMOGRAPHY

AS DIRECTOR
1969 The Sterile Cuckoo (also producer) 1971 Klute (also co-producer) 1973 Love and Pain and the Whole Damn Thing (also prod.) 1974 The Parallax View (also prod.) 1976 All the President’s Men 1978 Comes a Horseman 1979 Starting Over (also co-prod.) 1981 Rollover 1982 Sophie’s Choice (also co-prod., script) 1986 Dream Lover (also co-prod.) 1987 Orphans (also co-prod.) 1988 See You in the Morning (also co-prod., script) 1990 Presumed Innocent (also co-script)

AS PRODUCER
1957 Fear Strikes Out 1962 To Kill a Mockingbird 1963 Love with the Proper Stranger 1965 Baby, the Rain Must Fall 1965 Inside Daisy Clover 1967 Up the Down Staircase 1969 The Stalking Moon

RUSTY ANGRILY CONFRONTS HIS (OUT-OF-SHOT) ACCUSERS IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS LAWYER, ALEJANDRO STERN. ALAN J. PAKULA’S PRESUMED INNOCENT.
Do you own a copy of the Encore Directory? Showcast? The Writers’ Directory?
Then you need a copy of the National Directory of Women Working in Film, Television & Video as well. Now in its third year, the Directory brings together many talented people who aren’t listed anywhere else!
The National Directory lists almost 700 professional women working in all areas of film, television and video.
Can you afford to overlook a source of talent for your next project?
Order your copy of the National Directory of Women Working in Film, Television & Video NOW:

Please send me ____ copies of the 1991 WIFT Directory at $20 each (inc postage)
Name _______________________
Company _______________________________________
Address ____________________________________
Phone___________________________________________
Send this form with your cheque / postal order to WIFT, PO Box 648, Broadway 2007

Vee Sea Films are pleased to announce the purchase of the Cameo Triple Cinema Belgrave, Victoria.
Effective 19/10/90.

Australian films will be screened every day of the year.

Vee Sea Films – Australia’s most innovative film production house.

12 Baranda Crescent Canberra Australia 2614
Telephone (06) 251 6087 Facsimile (06) 253 1574
Apocalypse New

There is an old joke about the Japanese manufacturer which was so successful that it moved to a smaller factory. And while hardware is shrinking, so also is the video industry, which is not so funny for some.

FRED HARDEN reports

It is obvious at the moment that pessimism rules: video facilities are closing down, Colorfilm de-materialized before our disbeliefing eyes and there are more receivers watching the television networks than viewers. Perhaps it is no surprise, then, that a small apocalypse slipped into the Sydney Showgrounds unannounced.

This year’s SMPTE Sound & Vision 90 show (July 34) was the biggest ever, yet it was launched bravely to the industry without a conference theme. Despite this, it was the most unified show for a long time, even if that only became evident when looking through one’s notes afterwards.

Conference themes usually seem forced, rather than reflecting any structure that comes out of the papers presented or especially from the hardware displayed. Yet that is indubitably where the real state of the technology is revealed.

The fact that most of the changes are in video and audio is not surprising, but what is happening is that the impact of digital/computers is fully upon us. Digital video systems are now outmoded before they are purchased and that rate of change is filtering into all other areas of the industry. With the introduction of Eastman Kodak’s Keycode, its joint development of Cinema Digital Sound and, with a date set in 1991 for the testing of its digital film image manipulation system, film production is in for a similarly dramatic change in a way that has never happened in cinema before.

AND YOU DON’T KNOW WHAT’S HAPPENING, DO YOU MR JONES?

Why now? What has precipitated this rush of technology? I believe the impact has come now because we have found a level, a plateau, in film production is for a similarly dramatic number of scan lines, same image and sound bandwidths and extenders. Feeding the box in the corner is the VHS cassette, a low-resolution distribution medium that is obviously good enough for a vast audience of viewers. With such a large user base, it will be years before replacement systems like HDTV make an impact.

So presentation on video is static and, even with the ongoing and gradual improvements with filmstocks, we have reached a point where the 35mm frame is well suited to the size of the majority of theatres and screens. Qualitative improvements, such as the use of bigger frames like 70mm, are tied to an economics of scale. So film too has found a workable level.

Now while the distribution media of Film, Broadcast Television and Cassette Video have been in stasis, computers haven’t. The price of the chips and memory has fallen, the automation of the industry has kept it competitive, and at the market price it must be a hard way for a dealer to make a dollar. This has allowed the computerization of almost all aspects of the visual communication industry, leaving only the analogue signal as the broadcast end of the megaphone. There is no doubt that what is happening at the other end of the funnel will soon be totally digital.

THE VIDEO BEAST

SLOUCHING TOWARDS ROCHESTER

The papers that I believe were most relevant to Cinema Papers readers were delivered by the local Kodak sales team. Larry Weiner’s demonstration of his kine system added weight, but it was Kodak which took the technological lead.

David Wells (Regional Business Unit Manager of Motion Picture and Television Products Division) presented the lead paper entitled “Film Now and in the Future”, which did smack at times of the quasi-religious hysteria of the company line about God/Film not being dead. But it was a pretty good summary of the current cinema trends, of HDTV and the video market for film.

Wells talked in the current financial argot about “leveraging” the power of film with electronic systems to extend the creative possibilities. As an example, he used Kodak’s soon-to-be-released still-image manipulation system for publishing (called the Kodak Premier System in the press release, which says it consists of “the highest resolution film scanner available today”).

This was the lead-up to the paper presented by Richard Krohn (Motion Picture/Audio-visual Marketing & Sales Development Manager), an update of one given at the SMPTE conference in Los Angeles earlier this year. He detailed with slides and graphs Kodak’s work on transferring and manipulating film images digitally, and then returning them to film without loss.

Krohn began with the point that HDTV is much lower in resolution than film and provides no real alternative for an image-manipulation intermediate system for feature film. His point was, “HDTV is forced to operate in a real-time world which keeps the equipment costs high and constrains the signal specification.” HDTV would act as a filter in the process of transfer from and back to film. The potential for computer digital manipulation is that it will be transparent. The process of scanning, digitizing and then using lasers to return the image to film can already be done with off-the-shelf hardware and is being done in the printing industry pre-press every day.

The minimum resolution requirement that the experts agreed on is between 2000 and 3000 lines, so that when it is transferred back to film with some electronic enhancement (but not enough to add any unwanted ‘artifacts’) there is no line structure visible. The potential for the system is that the final result could be better than conventional release-printing methods. Krohn said.

As we look to the future, the real value of developing the Electronic Intermediate System will be its ability to improve the overall quality of film images shown in the theatre. For example, the image-processing algorithms used today to enhance reconnaissance photographs could be applied to sharpen motion-picture images, reduce graininess, or automatically remove artifacts like dirt and scratches. As advances are made in image-processing power and data storage, these enhancement operations could someday be applied to each reel of full-length feature film. This will make possible the generation of release prints that are better than direct prints from the camera negatives.

That is the system we need. With all the computer image manipulations possible today in a digital video suite, with the ability to retouch out special-effects rigs and wires, mixing computer-graphics images seamlessly with live action, the creative potential is enormous. (If you are interested in the more technical aspects, see the...
edge, and, as local stocks are replaced, all the Eastman 35mm stocks will have the Keycode numbers. 16mm will take a while because of the equipment modifications Kodak will have to make. But it too will benefit soon from a machine-readable method of accurately locating frames at speed. Kodak says that with Keycode there is no conflict with other time-code systems, like Aaton's or Arrif's, because they leave one film edge completely free in-camera recording of those systems.

The small bar codes and frame markers are also paralleled by a better human-readable edge number system and the accompanying illustration shows the physical layout of the numbers. Briefly, the changes and the advantages are:

- There is less chance of duplicate numbers because of the use of ten digits instead of the previous nine.
- The numbers are clearer and easier to read, with the three groups and a two-letter manufacturer code. For example, KJ would be K for Kodak and J as the stock identifier (5296).
- There is less chance that short scenes will end up without a key number because there is now a mid-foot number. There are now identifiers every thirty-two perforations.
- A frame-line marker has been added every 4 perforations so that it will be easier to locate frame lines on dark scenes. This is skipped on the frames with the Keycode numbers but should help matching those low-light scenes.
- The prefix number is printed on the roll of film and there is a pair of matching check symbols that appear each foot. This takes the place of the final checkstrip numbers that sometimes used to be overprinted with the edge numbers, making them hard to read. The advantages are many, and attaching scanners to devices like telecines widens the applications.

Kodak has launched its answer, called Keycode, without waiting for an industry standard agreement to be reached. After a healthy amount of industry consultation, the new 5496 stock showed up with these strange markings on the

**THE TIME(CODES) ARE A-CHANGING**

One of the first problems with videotape was that you couldn't see anything on the tape. Film had those nice little black lines between the frames. And every so often they had edge numbers so you could match your edit point to the negative. So the SMPTE standard time-code address number for each video frame was adopted, which would have been terrific if film and video had been hard (for a computer), but then we all realized that good after all and what an antiquated system it was and why hadn't Kodak/Fuji/Agfa done something about it?

Kodak has launched its answer, called Keycode, without waiting for an industry standard agreement to be reached. After a healthy amount of industry consultation, the new 5496 stock showed up with these strange markings on the

**THE TECHNICAL PROPOSAL FOR A HIGH-RESOLUTION ELECTRONIC INTERMEDIATE SYSTEM FOR MOTION-PICTURE FILM.**

An Advanced Imaging Systems development group is working at Coburg, led by Lindsay Arnold to research, develop and build both the graphic workstation and write the software. There has been input from overseas production companies and special-effects houses and some consultation here in Australia. Industrial Light and Magic, Lucasfilm's effects company, is currently testing prototypes and built the CCD film scanner in the photograph.

A number of systems are being looked at and the contestants that match the 2000 to 3000 lines quality are:
- a 2-times digital HDTV standard with 3840 samples per line and 2880 scanning lines;
- a 4-times CCIR 601 with 2880 samples per line and 2160 scanning lines; and
- a 2-times CGI with 2560 samples per line and 2048 scanning lines.

The MTFs (Modulation Transfer Functions, another buzz word I have just learnt) of each of these is so similar that the recommendations that will be left to the Ad-Hoc Group On Digital Pictures Formed Under The SMPTE Working Group On High Definition Pictures (Whew!). Because Kodak wants it to be a standard, it is not committing itself at this point, but the samples discussed were the "2-times HDTV", and, based on its HDTV telecine work, this would be a good bet.

It uses a high-resolution CCD film scanner with a tri-linear colour array sensor, with about 4000 phototubes operating at 1 frame scanned per second for an Academy aperture frame. To get the required colour depth, the suggestion is for 10 bits per colour, and there should be a full resolution "alpha" key channel. The requirement will also be to handle, Academy, Cinemascope, Super-35 and Vista Vision formats, pin registered.

To transfer the data will require an interface to an industry-standard data bus with a preference for a high-speed CCIR 601 compatible, which would allow a D1 format digital recorder to be used for storage. D1 would allow a degree of standardization in interchange between production/effects houses, but, although D1 can support a digital data rate of 20 MBytes/sec, one second (24 frames) would still require 1,327 GBytes. (A megabyte is a million bytes and a gigabyte is a million million.) A standard one-hour length D1 cassette would only hold 54 seconds of high-resolution images, but there are a lot of data compression techniques that could increase this by two to four times.

Richard Krohn, with his tongue firmly in cheek, added that the image manipulation workstation would have a video output to a standard D1 VTR to provide a "low-resolution video workprint" for checking on the effect at normal speed before sending it to the laser printer. The laser printer, see picture, that Kodak has developed with Industrial Light and Magic is apparent, as Scott Anderson mentioned in a conversation at Ausgraph 90, a combined scanner and printer that had to be practically rebuilt each time to change its function. ILM has used a number of commercial systems, such as the Management Graphics Solitaire, and Scott Anderson believes that they are all disappointing in the accuracy of their colour handling. The task ahead of Kodak to produce a working system by 1992 will not be easy but the potential is exciting.

Kodak has launched its answer, called Keycode, without waiting for an industry standard agreement to be reached. After a healthy amount of industry consultation, the new 5496 stock showed up with these strange markings on the

**THE TECHNICAL PROPOSAL FOR A HIGH-RESOLUTION ELECTRONIC INTERMEDIATE SYSTEM FOR MOTION-PICTURE FILM.**

An Advanced Imaging Systems development group is working at Coburg, led by Lindsay Arnold to research, develop and build both the graphic workstation and write the software. There has been input from overseas production companies and special-effects houses and some consultation here in Australia. Industrial Light and Magic, Lucasfilm's effects company, is currently testing prototypes and built the CCD film scanner in the photograph.

A number of systems are being looked at and the contestants that match the 2000 to 3000 lines quality are:
- a 2-times digital HDTV standard with 3840 samples per line and 2880 scanning lines;
- a 4-times CCIR 601 with 2880 samples per line and 2160 scanning lines; and
- a 2-times CGI with 2560 samples per line and 2048 scanning lines.

The MTFs (Modulation Transfer Functions, another buzz word I have just learnt) of each of these is so similar that the recommendations that will be left to the Ad-Hoc Group On Digital Pictures Formed Under The SMPTE Working Group On High Definition Pictures (Whew!). Because Kodak wants it to be a standard, it is not committing itself at this point, but the samples discussed were the "2-times HDTV", and, based on its HDTV telecine work, this would be a good bet.

It uses a high-resolution CCD film scanner with a tri-linear colour array sensor, with about 4000 phototubes operating at 1 frame scanned per second for an Academy aperture frame. To get the required colour depth, the suggestion is for 10 bits per colour, and there should be a full resolution "alpha" key channel. The requirement will also be to handle, Academy, Cinemascope, Super-35 and Vista Vision formats, pin registered.

To transfer the data will require an interface to an industry-standard data bus with a preference for a high-speed CCIR 601 compatible, which would allow a D1 format digital recorder to be used for storage. D1 would allow a degree of standardization in interchange between production/effects houses, but, although D1 can support a digital data rate of 20 MBytes/sec, one second (24 frames) would still require 1,327 GBytes. (A megabyte is a million bytes and a gigabyte is a million million.) A standard one-hour length D1 cassette would only hold 54 seconds of high-resolution images, but there are a lot of data compression techniques that could increase this by two to four times.

Richard Krohn, with his tongue firmly in cheek, added that the image manipulation workstation would have a video output to a standard D1 VTR to provide a "low-resolution video workprint" for checking on the effect at normal speed before sending it to the laser printer. The laser printer, see picture, that Kodak has developed with Industrial Light and Magic is apparent, as Scott Anderson mentioned in a conversation at Ausgraph 90, a combined scanner and printer that had to be practically rebuilt each time to change its function. ILM has used a number of commercial systems, such as the Management Graphics Solitaire, and Scott Anderson believes that they are all disappointing in the accuracy of their colour handling. The task ahead of Kodak to produce a working system by 1992 will not be easy but the potential is exciting.

**THE TECHNICAL PROPOSAL FOR A HIGH-RESOLUTION ELECTRONIC INTERMEDIATE SYSTEM FOR MOTION-PICTURE FILM.**

An Advanced Imaging Systems development group is working at Coburg, led by Lindsay Arnold to research, develop and build both the graphic workstation and write the software. There has been input from overseas production companies and special-effects houses and some consultation here in Australia. Industrial Light and Magic, Lucasfilm's effects company, is currently testing prototypes and built the CCD film scanner in the photograph.

A number of systems are being looked at and the contestants that match the 2000 to 3000 lines quality are:
- a 2-times digital HDTV standard with 3840 samples per line and 2880 scanning lines;
- a 4-times CCIR 601 with 2880 samples per line and 2160 scanning lines; and
- a 2-times CGI with 2560 samples per line and 2048 scanning lines.

The MTFs (Modulation Transfer Functions, another buzz word I have just learnt) of each of these is so similar that the recommendations that will be left to the Ad-Hoc Group On Digital Pictures Formed Under The SMPTE Working Group On High Definition Pictures (Whew!). Because Kodak wants it to be a standard, it is not committing itself at this point, but the samples discussed were the "2-times HDTV", and, based on its HDTV telecine work, this would be a good bet.

It uses a high-resolution CCD film scanner with a tri-linear colour array sensor, with about 4000 phototubes operating at 1 frame scanned per second for an Academy aperture frame. To get the required colour depth, the suggestion is for 10 bits per colour, and there should be a full resolution "alpha" key channel. The requirement will also be to handle, Academy, Cinemascope, Super-35 and Vista Vision formats, pin registered.

To transfer the data will require an interface to an industry-standard data bus with a preference for a high-speed CCIR 601 compatible, which would allow a D1 format digital recorder to be used for storage. D1 would allow a degree of standardization in interchange between production/effects houses, but, although D1 can support a digital data rate of 20 MBytes/sec, one second (24 frames) would still require 1,327 GBytes. (A megabyte is a million bytes and a gigabyte is a million million.) A standard one-hour length D1 cassette would only hold 54 seconds of high-resolution images, but there are a lot of data compression techniques that could increase this by two to four times.

Richard Krohn, with his tongue firmly in cheek, added that the image manipulation workstation would have a video output to a standard D1 VTR to provide a "low-resolution video workprint" for checking on the effect at normal speed before sending it to the laser printer. The laser printer, see picture, that Kodak has developed with Industrial Light and Magic is apparent, as Scott Anderson mentioned in a conversation at Ausgraph 90, a combined scanner and printer that had to be practically rebuilt each time to change its function. ILM has used a number of commercial systems, such as the Management Graphics Solitaire, and Scott Anderson believes that they are all disappointing in the accuracy of their colour handling. The task ahead of Kodak to produce a working system by 1992 will not be easy but the potential is exciting.
It will immediately reduce the manual work of matching the negative to the workprint. In colour timing, if the video analyzer is fitted with a scanner it could set itself automatically for the film type and change with each new stock on the roll. A telecine could do the same, calling up preset basic starting balances. If a printer was fitted with the scanner, then you could order reprints of sections by giving the lab the numbers and 'go' takes could be logged during timing.

Its main advantage, however, will be for matching negative to videotape cuts on off-line, electronic-editing systems. If the time-code generator could read the film, it could even incorporate the information into the time-code data, or assemble a parallel neg-edit list on disk with the time-code edit list. If the negative cutter has a synchronizer equipped with a reader and a computer, the computer could check each section to assure the cutter of the accuracy.

It is a system that I am sure the other manufacturers will adopt and Kodak should be applauded for introducing.

THE CHIPS ARE DOWN

In a Sony press release article (on DAT), the writer said, "Because of its consumer heritage, it is a world wide currency", a line that I'll remember. It applies just as much to the success of the Sony Hi8 and the JVC-designed S-VHS. What it means is that there is a new range of hybrid pro/consumer video equipment. (Somewhere the semi-pro designation doesn't seem right. How about low-budget professional? Low-pro?) It is as much a case of the technology bringing the high-end down, as it is the concept of low-price consumer items that demand more features which lead to high end developments. A spectacular case is that of D2 digital and the new 1/2-inch DX digital, more of which is mentioned later.

Consider: Panasonic worked out a clever way to synchronize the signals of domestic VCRs to allow simple mixes and wipes. Previously you needed time-base correctors to stabilize the variable signals, but by using a built-in 8-bit digital frame store you could make the minute delays that would buffer any timing differences. The WJ-MX 10 mixer was a great success and there is now a new model that has moved up a notch to accommodate S-VHS inputs, the WJ-MX12. It has two added Y/C inputs/outputs along with the composite ones, with improved-signal-to-noise and sampling which has softened some of the hard-edge effects of its predecessor. Its main attraction is still the internal frame-store synchronizer that allows proper mixes between two low-band VCRs or cameras. At first glance it looks like it should be fine for low-end work, and I can see production advantages when used with a colour video split on the studio floor in effects work.

The same approach to eliminating the need for time-base correctors is shown in the FOR-A VPS-500 mixer. It is up the market a bit in price, but it has two full-frame 5.0 MHz time-base correctors built into the outputs of the A and B bus. If that doesn't mean much to you, it is just a clever way to allow up to six non-standard inputs, your choice of composite or Y/C, to be mixed, keyed or dissolved.

ALL HAIL THE PROFIT!

S-VHS gear has really come of age. It is now a complete system and there are a lot of third-party suppliers producing all the bits you might need to make this low-cost format perform like full pro gear. I would like to mention a few items that caught my attention that I believe demonstrate the less-is-more idea.

Glyn Morris at ACE EDIT has been a passionate supporter of semi-professional formats from Super 8 up to S-VHS. He had a lot of items on display, such as his very successful import of Azden radio mikes which for a few hundreds of dollars add long distance miking capability that normally costs a thousand.

Morris had a representative on his stand from Alpermann + Vite, a new range of German equipment he is distributing. Alpermann + Vite is the original manufacturer of the Hama editing controller, the VideoCut 20+. Looking distinctly low-pro, it is nonetheless time-code accurate, it can read VITC (Vertical Interval Time Code), and can store and modify an edit list. However, the item that attracted my attention most was also one that Glyn is obviously proud of. It was a portable VITC generator for separate camera recorders systems or for the low-pro S-VHS and Hi-8 camcorders. Only a few of these have any time-code capability and usually rely on striping code later in post-production on one of the audio channels, before making off-line cassettes. This loses an audio track and has attendant problems. The solution is in one clever device, a small box that sits on the accessory shoe of the camera and uses the input of the (sometimes optional accessory) title generator to write proper, continuous Vertical Interval code in the picture information; it even allows a two-digit user code. For its price and flexibility, it neatly fills a gap in making S-VHS adaptable to the professional world.

QUICK, BUILD ME AN ARK.

When I saw Chris Schwarze from Complete Post Productions in Melbourne at the show, he asked if I wanted a hot news scoop on his new D2 suite that was being installed. I told him that with our deadlines it would probably come out just before the receivers walked in, but it was another example of a service-oriented video facility without leaps of overheads being able to buy state-of-the-art hardware and continuing to compete with the bigger companies.

I haven't asked him what he felt when he saw the digital 1/2 inch demo machines from
Panasonic. Expected to be half the price of the Sony and Ampex D2 composite digital studio machine, the AJ-D350 studio VTR will be available by the end of this year. The format has already been chosen for the 1999 Barcelona Olympics (with an order for 400 machines from the official broadcaster, 70 of which will be camcorders). The only indication of price is a rumoured figure of US$60,000 for the studio deck. The AJ-D310 camcorder shown was a mockup, but a fully operative PAL version was set to be shown at the IBC Convention at Brighton in September. The local distributor is GEC Video, which was also talking about a fully digital cart-replay system based on the Panasonic MARC MII. This would allow a fully digital format from capture to broadcast.

At a time when everyone is just starting to install D2s, the AJ-D350 shakes up the game in the same way that SP Betacam did. One of the big problems that remains in going digital is that the switcher/mixer should also be digital to ensure the best quality. To build a fully digital mixer with the same sophistication as the big composite switches around would be very expensive, and most people are looking for a more gentle upgrade path. If the price of digital drops with the DX format, the pressure will be on the manufacturers to provide better-than-the-basic features for a matching price.

I watched Quantel’s souped-up Paintbox ‘Harriet’ demonstrated and, while it isn’t a scaled-down Harry, it has a lot of animation and movement features that will add a lot of glitz to the lower-budget commercials and corporate work. At the end of it I was left wondering if Quantel’s dogged protection of its onscreen menu/interface hasn’t painted the company into a corner. I had a full demonstration of the US broadcast-developed Aurora paint system. Aurora was almost certainly the first company to develop the concept of electronic graphics, and is now part of the Chyron Group (CMX, etc.) and represented here by Magnatechnetics. Based around a big 68000 series chip PC, it uses a separate dedicated screen with all the interactive icons. I believe that at the end of the session I could have been producing work on the Aurora, so computer familiar and obvious was its design. And it is a lot cheaper than the Harriet, in a market where that counts. There was a lot more exciting stuff at the conference than there is room to print it. Sony was again pushing the boundaries and I admire the way it can show prototype hardware that is clever but has no firm release date set. It is like building a product that you are not sure there is a use for and you show it around in case someone finds it essential. On the Sony stand, along with its pseudo 3D digital effects machine System G, the DME 9000 (which pushes ADO effects to incredible new creative areas), and the DVR2 portable D2 digital recorder, was a working prototype that made me stop dead. Spread out on a bench was a new Sony (NTSC only as yet) product, the UYT55 Colour Video Scanner, a digitizer/computer, and a fast modem. Another modem and digitizer and a Sony Video Printer sat at the other end. The UYT55 is the size of most flat-bed scanners used in desktop publishing, but here it puts out high-quality 24 Bit RGB, composite video or Y/C, with resolution equal to the best three-chip cameras. You can crop or zoom, superimpose images or move a pointer around, and it has a handle for transporting. Plugged into a video projector it would be a perfect conference tool.

At the show, Sony had it connected to a Sony digitizer that would send the scanned image by phone to another digitizer where the image appeared on the screen line by line at the rate of a slow reader scanning the page. Because it is a digital graphic and can be manipulated with simple graphic programmes, you could cut out bits, marking areas of interest and sending the image back. It could find use in pre-press proofing, sales people could get a quick check on colour samples before ordering, talent agencies could show the production company the Polaroids (or still video frames), etc. The Video Printer allows you to take a hard copy, but the quality is high enough to transfer to tape and use in programme material.

It will be interesting to watch what develops from it as a lot of work is being done with colour faxes and data compression for transmission.

HEAR YE, HEAR YE AND REPENT

In audio, the same thing has happened as in video with the rise of the specialist small shop. With all thanks to the big boys for all their training, their best operators have gone off to start their own businesses. It is still nice to have the big facility there when only two 24-track machines interlocked will do the job and the big hand plays on, but the bread and butter work has gone to the small audio suite. This has cut profitability and rates are getting tighter and more competitive everywhere.

You can now build a film- or video-interlock audio suite as you once would have a home studio in the garage. The hardware requirements now fit on a small desktop. And if you buy anything other than a hard-disk-based system, you are out of date. With the introduction of DAT, which may never be a big home-entertainment item but has a future as a mastering format, the quality being so good, a whole price range of reel-to-reel
systems has been pushed off the end of the bench.

All I believe that is holding back a major shakeup in the audio industry (beside the considerable investment in existing analogue hardware) is tradition: "I was taught how to use a multitrack reel to reel and wanted one when I grew up." What will be required is retraining in a computer-dominated environment.

At SMPTE, the hard-disk-based systems were everywhere, and the buzz words were "workstations" and "transputers." The resurfaced Fairlight EM&S was demo-ing its MFX (Music and Effects) D R, with simultaneous 16-track replay routed to 24 outputs. It controls the playback VTR and external tape machines much like a video-edit controller, and Fairlight was making a big thing about having no "whimpy" mice or trackball controllers.

Among the other hard-disk systems, the AMS AudioFile is gaining a lot of video converts and the AudioFile Plus was shown by Synchrotech Systems Design, which is already using an optical disk for archiving.

Add-a-board systems for your PC or Mac are becoming widely available, and Macintosh seems to have a good lead in audio add-ons. If you have a DAT master, and a Mac with a big hard disk, for about $6000 Innovative Sound and Media Technologies will sell you its Digidesign Sound Tools two-channel CD digital mastering system. Featuring a direct-to-disk recording system in 48kHz or 44.1kHz sampling modes, it looks like a fast and flexible editing system that has other applications. And Innovative was offering a fast CD pressing programme that can produce CDs from as low as $2 each.

HEARING THE WRITING ON THE WALL

How does this tie in with film? You are soon going to be recording location sound, digitally mastering your audio mix (if you are not already) and then going back to the analogue world of a Dolby-encoded soundtrack. Now the last link in the digital chain has fallen into place and Kodak and ORC have set a digital optical track. It can be conventionally contact- or optically-printed and gives five full-surround soundtracks, plus a bass subwoofer channel, all with the dynamic range of CDs against a background of total silence. A number of features have been released in 70mm, and 35mm will follow. The best current 35mm Dolby stereo optical tracks are two channel with a matrix adding two more, and can offer between 51 and 59dB Dynamic range according to the quality of the print. The new digital optical has around 96dB, even on a worn print, with 100 dB channel separation. The Digital sound frequency range available is almost double the Dolby.

Also available on the tracks are MIDI control information and SMPTE code to allow external devices to be triggered. This would allow simple lighting or curtain automation to be programmed or more complex audio and physical effects, such as seat movement and smoke, to be synchronized to the images. Having a time-code address for each frame also allows labs to reprint damaged sections and for the theatre to insert them accurately.

CDS decoders will cost about $30,000 and there were about thirty installations in selected first-run theatres in the U.S. at the time of the SMPTE show (July '90). The 70mm prints of Dick Tracy, Die Hard II and Never Ending Story II were available in CDS, and Kodak and ORC have set a release date for the 35mm decoders and prints for mid 1991.

To produce the optical digital audio track, Eastman Kodak had to develop a new sound negative film and ensure that the new soundtrack could be printed using conventional laboratory techniques. This is where all that R&D and patient coverage starts to pay off. Kodak must have more patents for electronic imaging technologies than the Japanese, and it owns a string of related companies such as Verbatim, which make computer disks.

One of the key components of the Cinema Digital Sound decoder is a proprietary error-detection-and-correction system developed by a Kodak-owned company called Cyclotomics. The company specializes in integrated circuits for communications satellites and what is euphemistically called "other government applications". Error correction is pretty important with film that can get scratched and dirty, especially as the data rate is something like 5.5 million bits per second. Kodak says that the audio quality of the print after 1000 screenings is perfect.

With only relatively minor modification to projection equipment already set up for surround sound, it will be interesting to see how quickly it can gain industry acceptance. There are a lot of Dolby licensed theatres and sound facilities around, but, with the promise of 70mm sound quality on 35mm and the flexibility for additional information and automation, it will be a hard process to beat. The market will decide. Imagine what it could do for the audio quality of 16mm prints (or is 16mm projection dead?)?

FOR THE LUDDITES AND TECHNOPHOBES

Was there anything on the show that wasn't digital, or at least driven by computer? Not much. There is an ongoing process of improvement in lenses, especially for ENG and videos. It is about time, too, as the lines resolution of the CCD chips creep up the chromatic aberrations in the cheaper lenses become obvious. I can see the day when you will order the equivalent of a Zeiss Super-Speed zoom that will match the prime 35mm lenses at least for video resolutions. There were lighter and better-designed zooms around from Canon, and a new TV-Nikkor all with, at last, usable wider angles.

The Arriflex camera was on the John Barry stand and, just as Yuri Sokol's ad in Encore stated, Arri has finally added a lot of the features that his Movicam has had for years. The new Arriss is a terrific-looking camera, yet unlike video most film equipment gets more expensive each year. The two-or-three-year obsolescence built into
video doesn’t apply here; this camera will still be shooting in ten years time, if you can afford it now.

HMs are getting brighter. There was a flicker-free 16K Lee Colortran HMI from Mediasvision that promised a 30 per cent increase in output to the 12K. Miller had their new Series II heads on display and continue to keep up with their competition.

The One Man (Person?) Grip Kit has been well marketed and stylishly promoted here and in the U.S. by Cinekinetic, a West Australian company. OMGK was again at the Sydney show with its mix of original ideas and cleverly packaged old ones. This time the original was the Nano Jib: using gas stuss and clamping on to almost any vertical or horizontal solid support, it provides a low-cost alternative to their tripod-mounted Micro Jib arm. The clever repackage is a wedge-shaped, sand-filled bag with a handle for levelling PVC pipe dollies (like the Pocket or Sawed board dollies); the bags are called, not surprisingly, Sand Wedges. (It is a pleasant change and tribute to its share in the success of the Cinekinetic-printed material that there is credit to both the designer, Rick Lambert Design Consultants, and the photographer, Leon Bird.)

For off-line editing, there was a new version of Shortlister, which must have as good as sewn up the market in EDL preparation in Australian off-line suites. Shortlister 4.0 should be even easier to learn despite all the extra features. It now runs under Windows with pull-down menus (mouse or keyboard); with a colour monitor you can build a multi-track audio-dubbing chart. There is a better library database format.

Back to Kodak again, the cheapest and surely the most obvious piece of technology is a tacky roller that picks up film dirt. Called the Particle Transfer Roller, it is an easy-to-clean (wash it with water), cheap-to-replace way of extending print life and reducing the distraction for the audience of projected dirt.

With stocks, Kodak also announced the release of Eastman EXR5248 Colour Negative with an EI of 100 Tungsten, which will be Kodak’s sharpest, finest-grain medium-speed film. The demo film shown at SMFTE was a mix of daylight and interior situations and looked pretty good on the medium-size screen. It should look almost grainless transferred to tape, and has Keycode numbering.

The first 16mm stock to have Keycode also sounds impressive for its promise of image quality. Eastman EXR7296 negative has an EI of 500 Tungsten and Kodak says it is its sharpest, fastest T-grain 16mm stock, with “the best underexposure latitude ever designed into a high-speed motion-picture film”.

If all that doesn’t rate the title of a small apocalypse, then someone else can write the headline punds. The 1990 SMFTE Sound and Vision 90 show will mark a significant year in the technological development of our art and industry. It is a scary and exciting time.
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); John Flaus (3RRR); Sandra Hall (The Bulletin, Sydney); Ivan Hutchinson (Seven Network; Herald-Sun, Melbourne); Stan James (The Adelaide Advertiser); Neil Jillett (The Age, Melbourne); Adrian Martin (Tension, Melbourne); Scott Murray; Tom Ryan (3LO; The Sunday Age, Melbourne); David Stratton (Variety; SBS); and Evan Williams (The Australian, Sydney).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE CROSSING</th>
<th>DAYS OF THUNDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George Ogilvie</td>
<td>Tony Scott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Collins</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Flaus</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra Hall</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivan Hutchinson</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stan James</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil Jillett</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrian Martin</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Murray</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Ryan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Stratton</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evan Williams</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BLOOD OATH</th>
<th>DIE HARD 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Wallace</td>
<td>Renny Harlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Collins</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Flaus</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra Hall</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivan Hutchinson</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stan James</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil Jillett</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrian Martin</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Murray</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Ryan</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Stratton</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evan Williams</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE</th>
<th>THE BIG STEAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jane Campion</td>
<td>Nadia Tass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Collins</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Flaus</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra Hall</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivan Hutchinson</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stan James</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil Jillett</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrian Martin</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Murray</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Ryan</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Stratton</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evan Williams</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Dirty Dozen
2. Critics' Best and Worst
3. The Lady from Shanghai: An average of only 6. Most surprising, it is unseen by more than one third of the critics panel.
### FATHER

**John Power**

- Bill Collins  
- John Flaus  
- Sandra Hall  
- Ivan Hutchinson  
- Stan James  
- Neil Jillett  
- Adrian Martin  
- Scott Murray  
- Tom Ryan  
- David Stratton  
- Evan Williams

### RETURN HOME

**Ray Argall**

- Bill Collins  
- John Flaus  
- Sandra Hall  
- Ivan Hutchinson  
- Stan James  
- Neil Jillett  
- Adrian Martin  
- Scott Murray  
- Tom Ryan  
- David Stratton  
- Evan Williams

### GOODFELLAS

**Martin Scorsese**

- Bill Collins  
- John Flaus  
- Sandra Hall  
- Ivan Hutchinson  
- Stan James  
- Neil Jillett  
- Adrian Martin  
- Scott Murray  
- Tom Ryan  
- David Stratton  
- Evan Williams

### STRUCK BY LIGHTNING

**Jerzy Domaradzki**

- Bill Collins  
- John Flaus  
- Sandra Hall  
- Ivan Hutchinson  
- Stan James  
- Neil Jillett  
- Adrian Martin  
- Scott Murray  
- Tom Ryan  
- David Stratton  
- Evan Williams

### THE KRAYS

**Peter Medak**

- Bill Collins  
- John Flaus  
- Sandra Hall  
- Ivan Hutchinson  
- Stan James  
- Neil Jillett  
- Adrian Martin  
- Scott Murray  
- Tom Ryan  
- David Stratton  
- Evan Williams

### THE LADY FROM SHANGHAI

**Orson Welles [CLASSIC]**

- Bill Collins  
- John Flaus  
- Sandra Hall  
- Ivan Hutchinson  
- Stan James  
- Neil Jillett  
- Adrian Martin  
- Scott Murray  
- Tom Ryan  
- David Stratton  
- Evan Williams

### SOUNDTRACKS

NEW & UNUSUAL SOUNDTRACK RECORDINGS FROM OUR LARGE RANGE

- **Ghost** • Maurice Jarre • $29.99
- **After Dark, My Sweet** • Maurice Jarre • $29.99
- **Presumed Innocent** • John Williams • $29.99
- NEW DAVID LYNCH FILM
  - **Wild At Heart** • Aldo Baldanenti • $29.99
- WHERE EAGLES DARE/633 SQUADRON • Ron Goodwin • $19.99
- 1941 • John Williams • $29.99

M.G.M. MUSICALS

New pressings with all the music featured in the movies:

- **Unsinkable Molly Brown; Bandwagon; Brigadoon; Show Boat; Kismet; American In Paris; Gigi; Easter Parade; Singin' In The Rain; Kiss Me Kate; Summer Stock; The Wizard of Oz.** ALL $29.99

That's Entertainment Part 2 • Double CD $55.00

### READING • SOUTH YARRA

105 TOORAK ROAD • 007 1800 • BOOKS / LPs / CDs / CASSETTES
78-75 DAVIS AVENUE • 006 5877 • SECONDHAND LPs & CASSETTES
304 LYON STREET CARLTON • 347 7470
220 EWENFORD ROAD MALVERN • 009 1032
710 EWENFORD ROAD RAYNHAM • 816 1917
MAIL ORDERS • P.O. BOX 426 SOUTH YARRA VIC. 3141

### THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS PRESENT

FOR ANYONE WHO LOVES THE MOVIES

THE 1991 FILM & VIDEO BUFF'S DIARY

**ONLY** $14.95

- Comprehensive listings of showbiz personalities for each and every day of the year
- Over 64 stills from your favourite movies, six in full colour
- Over 1,300 movie personalities’ birthdays

PLEASE SEND ME ____ COPY(S) OF THE 1991 FILM BUFF’S DIARY

NAME ___________________________________________________________________

ADDRESS ________________________________________________________________

_________:____________________STATE ____________ POSTCODE ____________

ENCLOSED: CHEQUE / MONEY ORDER / POSTAL ORDER FOR $ ___________

OR CHARGE MY BANKCARD MASTERCARD VISA DINERS AMEX (CIRCLE)

CARD NO. ________________________________________________________________

SIGNATURE ______________________________________________________________

EXPRESS DATE ________________________

RETURN TO: FILM BUFF’S DIARY BOX 204 ALBERT PARK VIC. 3206 AUSTRALIA
ENQUIRIES TELEPHONE (03) 531 2086 FACSIMILE (03) 531 2411
NEW SUBJECTS HAVE PROVED MORE INTRACTABLE TO THE CINEMA'S RESOURCES THAN THAT OF A WRITER'S LIFE. MOST ATTEMPTS HAVE SETTLED FOR GIVING THE LIFE OF THE WRITER RATHER THAN THE LIFE OF HER WRITING OR THE WRITING IN HER LIFE. IT IS PERHAPS ALWAYS DIFFICULT TO CONVEY THE SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN ONE MEDIUM IN TERMS OF ANOTHER. SOME, ADMITTEDLY, HAVE THEIR SHOWER MOMENTS: THINK OF CHOPIN'S BLOOD ON THE PIANO KEYS IN "A SONG TO REMEMBER" (CHARLES VIDOR, 1945) OR VAN GOGH'S EAR-ECTOMY IN "LUST FOR LIFE" (VINCENTE MINNELLI, 1956); BUT MOST SCREEN BIOGRAPHIES OF ARTISTS DON'T COME WITHIN A BULL'S ROAR OF CONVEYING THE SPECIAL GIFT OF THE ARTIST IN ACTION.

The literary artist's work is, of its very nature, even more intransigently tied to the medium in which it is created. One doesn't have to invoke enterprises as ludicrous as "THE BAD LORD BYRON" (DAVID MACDONALD, 1948) to exemplify the difficulties. Lumet's "LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT" (1962) only really fails when, in Dean Stockwell's performance as Edmund, it tries to put the young O'Neill before us. Bruce Beresford simply changed Laura's literary talents for those of a concert pianist in "THE GETTING OF WISDOM" (1977), and we are asked to take Sybilla's writing gift on trust in Gillian Armstrong's "MY BRILLIANT CAREER" (1979). Whatever images of D. H. Lawrence we get in "THE PRIEST OF LOVE" (CHRISTOPHER MILES, 1981) or Lillian Hellman and Dashiell Hammett in "JULIA" (FRED ZINNEMANN, 1977), they are not importantly those of creative artist. The nearest I have ever come to believing in an author as an author is in Robert Enders' "STEVIE" (1978), a brave try at the life of the poet Stevie Smith; it offered at least a sense of where the writing might have come from.

In view of the dispiriting record of such attempts, it is doubly pleasing to report on the success of "AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE," Jane Campion's film based on the autobiographies of New Zealand author Janet Frame. Essentially a "PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG WOMAN" (and recalling both Joyce's great autobiographical novel and Joseph Strick's heroic if finally doomed 1977 adaptation of it), it offers a richly-textured experience on several levels.

What is at once impressive is the way it keeps
its eye on what makes its protagonist important; that is, as a writer. She is presented as fascinated with words from the outset, in ways that are made truthful in the performances of Alexia Keogh, who plays Janet as a red-headed mop of a child, and Karen Ferguson who takes over as teenager. Nothing so clearly excites the child as her experiments with words: whether it is a matter of causative repetition "fuck" (for which she is stupidly punished) or experimenting with her signature or learning French.

The screenplay stresses the centrality of words, of writing, in Janet’s life, and there is a sharp reminder near the beginning of the film scenes with words, whether it is a matter of causative repetition "fuck" (for which she is stupidly punished) or experimenting with her signature or learning French.

The idea of solitariness as the writer’s condition is there from the opening shot of the little girl on a straight road: as she approaches the camera, an adult silhouette throws its shadow over her as the voice-over quotes from George Borrow’s Lavengro. It is unselfconsciously done but it is enough to suggest that the solitary child is the mainspring of the gauche, likeable adult. The arrival in 1950s London (recalling Stephen Wallace’s For Love Alone: its antithetical view of shabby, dirty English streets and houses), the few joyous shots of Janet against famous Parisian landmarks, and her awkwardness with the English-speaking expatriates in Spain: all are at the service of stressing her shy separateness.

But if to be solitary is necessary to the writer, to have something to write about may also involve the intercoursce of daily life, and one of the strengths of Campion’s film is in its representation of the facts of this life. The raw details of lower-middle-class life in New Zealand have a vividness that recalls Terence Davies’ masterly Distant Voices Still Lives: There is some of that same unobtrusive plainness and beauty as the camera inspects kitchens and bedrooms, schools and neighbours. The episodes in the psychiatric hospital in which Janet is given electric shock treatments "(each one is equivalent in fear to an execution)" are horrifying in the very plainness with which they are recorded.

There is a third key element in the mosaic of Janet’s life which the film pieces together and that is in its rendering of her sensuality. The camera takes a direct, entirely non-prurient interest in her, as in the asylum scenes where she scribbles on the drab walls of her cell. At this point one is reminded of Pope’s Clerk "who, locked from ink and paper, scrabbles/with desperate charcoal round his darkened walls". The urgency of the need to write is signified in this scene of intense deprivation. There are, of course, the obligatory scenes of her sitting at the typewriter - and these do little more than such scenes in films usually do - but by this time Campion has convinced us that writing matters to the girl.

The film’s mode is essentially episodic, but Campion and her scriptwriter Laura Jones have ensured that the episodes which comprise the narrative achieve a remarkable coherence. For one thing, that opening shot ushers in an expectation of the “prison-house” of Wordsworthian maturing which the film fulfills: growth is pain and dark knowledge as well as a movement towards the understanding of self and others. The episodes of the film take their place in that larger movement, and in the film’s plain but affecting cinematic style, in its refusal to stress plot when reflectiveness might be apter, is an acknowledgment of the “literariness” of the venture. This latter would not normally be a term of praise for a film but here it seems entirely right. We have been offered a life in which words matter, for their ordering and completion of experience, and for the means they offer the user of negotiating terms with life.

Finally, the episodic structure is held together by the protagonist’s growing awareness, not in a simplistic version of the bildungsgroman but in a watchful, eager, easily alarmed approach. ‘Given what life has handed out to her as well as what it has promised, such an approach is justified.

The three actresses who play Janet at various stages of her life, the two mentioned earlier and Kerry Fox as the young woman, are beyond praise. They provide a vital continuity; they not merely look convincingly enough like each other, but the roles are so carefully written and the actresses so skilfully directed that each grew seamlessly into the next.

With An Angel at My Table and Return Home, there are suddenly new signs of life in Australasian cinema. Never a narrative-driven cinema, it has too often opted for picturesque meandering; these two new films have understood what it means to meander intelligently and observe acutely.

AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE
Directed by Jane Campion.

THE BIG STEAL
JIM SCHEMBRI
There’s no big secret to the appeal of The Big Steal: it is a sweet romantic comedy, a revenge fantasy, a kid’s adventure film, nothing more. Actually, it’s a lot more than that, but not as a film.

As a film, it is well-made, well-acted, sincere and endowed with enough intelligence to give it body, but not quite enough to weigh it down or induce people into fits of chin-rubbing discussions over cappuccinos about subtexts and Eisensteinian references.

Certainly (as with Nadia Tass and David Parker’s first film, Malcolm) it is not a film to get deep about. I tried getting deep about it while talking to a friend and my tongue came out in a rash. It was only when I got back to phrases such as “delightful family film” and “a lot of fun” that the spots began to clear up. It is nothing that hasn’t been done before by Disney, but that’s no insult.

The film does not have a lot of muscle (there are no explosions, automatic weapons or helicopter shots) but it does have a lot of heart, mainly because its storyline rates about a 9.98 on the cultural validity scale.

Nervous teenager Danny (Ben Mendelsohn) tries to impress Joanna (Claudia Karvan) into dating him by telling her he has a Jaguar, which he hasn’t. She says yes, so he hurriedly buys a jag to prove he wasn’t lying. But the Jag is a lemon, the car salesman, Gordon Farrkas (Steve Bisley), an unashamed slyster, and Danny and his pals plot revenge.

Here we have it all: adolescent boy-girl romance; cars; adventure; and a villain on whom the heroes can exercise that invaluable Animal House maxim: “Don’t get mad, get even.”

In its first few minutes, the film plucks straight
into two central concerns of most Western (and probably by now Eastern) adolescent males: cars and girls. Danny, in his youth, thought that wanting a Jaguar is beyond his working-class aspirations. Later, when Danny is given his father's old Credic as an 18th birthday present, his friends snicker, and one sarcastically says how girls will now leap into his lap. This neatly establishes the car as a status symbol of social class and sexual potency (although the only possible reference to the classic concept of car as phallic symbol comes from a Scrabble board with "penis envy" spell out on it). It also establishes the means by which Danny tries to impress Joanna. When he nervously tells her about the Jaguar, it sounds strange to her, but to him, and the audience, it is perfectly logical.

As these twin desires begin rubbing against each other, we are treated to some nicely observed hard facts about the emotional maestral of adolescence which will be familiar to anyone who went through it properly or who has read any "Charlie Brown".

The opening titles (as Danny looks longingly after Joanna down school corridors) beautifully captures the interstellar emotional distances that can exist between two people. We also see the power girls can have over boys as Danny is turned into an emotional pinball by his infatuation for Joanna. He is barely in control of what he is doing or saying, which is why he volunteers that he has a Jaguar when asking her out for that perilous first date.

The film goes on to show, with only slight exaggeration, the mammoth scale that infatuation can assume. Danny, in his desperation to impress, is willing to buy an $11,000 Jaguar for one date with Joanna, which is quite a lot when you consider that Richard Gere had Julia Roberts for a whole week for only $3,000.

But the "car and girl" ethic is quickly subverted for a much nobler theme. On the way home from their date, Danny gets into a drag with a bunch of local (and poorly dressed) hoons. The car blows out and ejaculates oil onto Joanna, thus damaging her dress and her good impression of Danny's charm and simple warmth are what make it work.

The film's photography (by Parker) deserves praise for achieving what many have thought impossible: taking Melbourne locations and making them look interesting. The enormity of this accomplishment is comparable to the one in Malcolm, which achieved the similarly impossible task of doing something interesting with Melbourne trams.

The film's photography (by Parker) deserves praise for achieving what many have thought impossible: taking Melbourne locations and making them look interesting. Of the million drunk gags they could have done, they could have chosen something a bit more inventive.

Apart from the liberal peppering of humour, there is plenty of homespun philosophical appeal in The Big Steal. Danny's growing sensitivity to his parents, the tension between Danny, Joanna's father and her best friend, and his taking the responsibility for his own mess may not be enough to keep a Home and Away script conference going for more than five minutes, but they do give the film some dramatic weight.

The film's photography (by Parker) deserves praise for achieving what many have thought impossible: taking Melbourne locations and making them look interesting. Of the million drunk gags they could have done, they could have chosen something a bit more inventive.

The only comic moment in the film that doesn't click is when Farkas gets pulled over for drunk driving and emerges from his car wearing ladies' knickers and making fart jokes. Of the million drunk gags they could have done, they could have chosen something a bit more inventive.

The opening titles (as Danny looks longingly after Joanna down school corridors) beautifully captures the interstellar emotional distances that can exist between two people. We also see the power girls can have over boys as Danny is turned into an emotional pinball by his infatuation for Joanna. He is barely in control of what he is doing or saying, which is why he volunteers that he has a Jaguar when asking her out for that perilous first date.

But the ‘car and girl’ ethic is quickly subverted for a much nobler theme. On the way home from their date, Danny gets into a drag with a bunch of local (and poorly dressed) hoons. The car blows out and ejaculates oil onto Joanna, thus damaging her dress and her good impression of Danny's charm and simple warmth are what make it work.

The film's photography (by Parker) deserves praise for achieving what many have thought impossible: taking Melbourne locations and making them look interesting. Of the million drunk gags they could have done, they could have chosen something a bit more inventive.

Apart from the liberal peppering of humour, there is plenty of homespun philosophical appeal in The Big Steal. Danny's growing sensitivity to his parents, the tension between Danny, Joanna's father and her best friend, and his taking the responsibility for his own mess may not be enough to keep a Home and Away script conference going for more than five minutes, but they do give the film some dramatic weight.

The film's photography (by Parker) deserves praise for achieving what many have thought impossible: taking Melbourne locations and making them look interesting. Of the million drunk gags they could have done, they could have chosen something a bit more inventive.

So what is so exceptional about The Big Steal that has won it several AFI awards and caused beelines to the cinema? Nothing. Precisely nothing. That is what makes it so exceptional. Its easy charm and simple warmth are what make it work.

This happened in 1986 with the first Nadia Tass-David Parker film, Malcolm, a caper comedy about a slow-witted mechanical genius (Colin Friels) who teams up with two golden-hearted petty crooks. It did not happen in 1988 with their follow-up comedy, Ricky and Pete. This film featured a mechanical horse that could drill into rock and plant dynamite and was about as funny as a mechanical horse that could drill into rock and plant dynamite.

With The Big Steal, Tass and Parker (and creative team) have again nailed those elements of simple narrative style, cleanly constructed conflicts and assured comic pacing that do wonders for one's cardiovascular system, especially when watching them unspool to a full house.

But as with Return Home, Flirting and Struck by Lightning, it is a grand pity that such a downbeat, modest film is so rare in Australia that its arrival is treated with the sense of occasion that usually greets a solar eclipse. Of course, it is great to see such an unpretentious, well-made, straightforward, crowd-pleasing Australian film filling the theatres. But it is also sad that the idea of an unpretentious, well-made, straightforward, crowd-pleasing Australian film sticks out so much. We are blessed at the moment with a number of such films, but they are more an indication of the industry's potential, not its practice.

Then again, we may be witnessing some sort of renaissance. Here's hoping.

1. Special note must be made here of the deft use of the lifting Greedy Smith ballad "The World Seems Difficult." It is rare enough to see local songs used effectively in films, let alone used effectively in local films. Too often they are heard as background music in American teen flicks as Scooter tells Biff how he's going to lay every girl in the room before midnight and make his first million before 20.

THE BIG STEAL


BLOOD OATH

KEITH CONNOLLY

A good director with a well-written script can scarcely go wrong with a courtroom drama, particularly if the case being argued is a significant one. Yet, in Blood Oath, Stephen Wallace has given us a curiously lacklustre account of pre-war military war-crimes trials that took place not long after the end of World War II.

Conducted on Ambon, then still part of the Dutch East Indies, the proceedings brought 91 Japanese officers and other ranks to trial for atrocities committed against Australian prisoners, hundreds of whom had died of starvation, disease, brutal treatment – or had been cold-
bloody murder – in a prisoner-of-war camp on the island.

The screenplay, by Denis Whittburn and Brian A. Williams, draws heavily on the record of the island. It is bloody murder – in a prisoner-of-war camp on the island.

The narrative has harrowing and intense moments, but too much else lacks that sense of purpose and urgency necessary to compelling courtroom drama. For instance, a foreshadowing/conspiracy element that suggests an incipient Cold War agenda on the part of our great and powerful ally, the U.S., is presented but not pursued. It was worth raising, the issue should have been addressed squarely. Instead, along with several other plot strands, it serves only to deflect the emotional impact of the whole, and one is left somewhat dissatisfied and unconvinced.

In short, Blood Oath is less than clear about what it is saying. Did we get the wrong men and let speakably treated prisoners, did we settle for vic­tims rather than justice? Was this the beginning of a long postwar history of Australian policies and actions decided for us by the U.S.? The film may be implying some or all of this, but, if so, why not spell it out?

Another problem is that Blood Oath never seems quite settled in style, moving as it does between documentary-drama, at best in some of the courtroom scenes, and over-emotive melodrama, such as in that which a dying Australian witness (John Polson) recalls his brother’s death.

The narrative line, too, is inconsistently, and unnecessarily, diffused. The original focus, prosecutor Cooper’s pursuit of evidence that will enable him to nail perpetrators and instigators alike, is obscured, first by the aforementioned sub-plot about the U.S.-protected former commander, Vice Admiral Takahashi (George Takei), then by a certain amount of soul-searching on the part of the prosecutor. This comes to a head in the case of the young naval officer Hideo Tanaka (Toshi Shioya), a Christian who had surrendered to the allies back in Japan, confident that he would receive a fair trial if charged for his part in the execution of Australian pilots at the camp. The drama line, and turns upon Cooper’s extraction of details about one of the executions, which the young Japanese Christian had presumed were carried out in response to a legal order. As the film concentrates on this aspect, we are suddenly made privy to a Japanese view of events, which had been more or less excluded up to this point.

Blood Oath is a good-looking, thoroughly professional and, in general, authentic-looking piece of work (Russell Boyd’s cinematography is, of course, exemplary) that doesn’t quite deliver what it at first promises. I carried away a feeling that its thrust had been blunted by a desire to avoid offence, something that scarcely could be avoided in the telling of this story of terrible atrocities. There are indications, too, of narrational window-dressing as, for instance, in the inconclusive role of nursing sister Carol Littell (Deborah Unger), whose presence, certainly in the final cut, seems to serve little purpose other than to provide at least one female among the principal players. A fleeting appearance by Jason Donovan hardly justifies the high-profile “introducing...” entry in the media information kit credits. Brown is effective in the lead role, giving the impression the director and writers no doubt wished to convey of a person very sure of himself in dealing with the law, but increasingly uncertain as to how it is to be applied in the circumstances of a peace-setting war crimes trial. Supporting roles by John Bach, as an Australian officer responsible to more than one agenda, John Clarke, as the journalist who twists what is happening, and Terry O’Quinn, as the ambivalent U.S. liaison officer, are well handled.

Much the same may be said about virtually every aspect of the production and one rejoices to see a mainstream-budget Australian film prepared to deal with deeply serious moral questions of our history without too much nostalgic gloss or ‘or’ mon-Aussie hoo-hah. But for this member of a diminishing age group that remembers the events depicted (I was a cadet reporter on a Perth newspaper at the time), Blood Oath is disappointing, not so much for what it does or does not depict or express, but for want of definition. Many other admirable films over the past two decades have lacked the courage of their convictions. In this case, the convictions are less than apparent.

Blood Oath

Chocolat
Marie Craven
French director Claire Denis’ feature debut, Chocolat, lends weight to a simple and familiar notion: the deeper one delves into individual experience, the more one finds politics. It is a film in which political conditions are revealed with startling clarity in minimal exchanges between characters; in which rigidly defined social positions are not merely structural, but are felt organically, pervasively everywhere in the public and private life.

With a plot exquisitely staged in miniature scale, the film is set for the most part around one small settlement in French-colonized Africa in the 1950s. The drama centres on the relations of four primary characters: Marc Dalaes (François Cluzet), an officer of the French administration; Aimée (Giulia Boschi), his beautiful, tormented young wife; her husband France (Cécile Ducasse), a European child who has known no life outside of Africa; and a proud young African man, Prosté (Isaac de Bankole), who is the family’s chief servant. With a bare minimum of dialogue, the characters convey extraordinary psychological detail while also suggesting more general social types. Their personal power-plays give body to the film’s evocation of three broader political relations: European culture and African culture; man and woman; adult and child.

There are obvious connections between Chocolat and other recent films dealing with racial politics in Africa, such as A World Apart (Chris Menges, 1988) and Mapantsula (Oliver Schmitz, 1988). With Mapantsula, the film shares a powerful figure of an African man’s struggle to maintain his identity and dignity within terribly oppressive conditions. In each case, there is an avoidance of common liberal stereotypes of the noble oppressed. Chocolat’s Prosté certainly maintains a princeuly quality within his subjugation, but his pride is shown naked, as a painful compensation for his humiliating position. Like A World Apart, Chocolat has its base in autobiography and is seen from a little girl’s point of view. Considerable attention is paid in both films to the relationship between mother and daughter, placing an unusual emphasis on the place of white women within racial politics. But of all the points of intersection between these films, the most vital to understanding Chocolat is the fascination with enwinding personal and political experience.

Witness, for example, an exchange between Prosté and France. Prosté has been banished from the house after rejecting, in one silent and brutal gesture, the advances of Aimée. From a half-lit corner of the shed where he now works, France watches him. There is an unspoken intimacy that they often share. With a child’s curiosity, she points to a pipe running from the side of...
the generator and asks if it is hot. Prostée takes hold of the pipe with his hand, indicating that it is not. While he maintains his grip, France reaches out and touches the pipe, but recoils instantly as her flesh touches the searing metal. She looks up at Prostée in astonishment as he first examines the festering wound in his own palm and then wanders out into the night, leaving her alone.

True to the film's style, hardly a word is spoken in this poignant and savage scene, yet the characters' tortured interplay is perfectly clear. There is between them a palpable bond, shared experience, even love and compassion; there is also white-hot rage, immune to all pain in the pleasure of betrayal. For Prostée, it is a small triumph, a backlash against the least powerful, most innocent of the oppressors; for France, it is the point at which her isolation, her cultural homelessness, is most painfully focused. The film allows no romance here about the riches of hybrid cultures; the portrait of racial domination is one of profound alienation.

The metaphor of sight — to watch or to be watched — and the states of action and immobility are very significant throughout the film, serving as graphic indicators of the relative power of the various characters. Prostée and France are intense observers. They are able to see situations clearly but, having social positions of least power, cannot act, have no effect. Aimée, ostensibly powerful through her relation to her husband, is really entrapped, watched from all sides as she moves restlessly around the domestic confines of house and garden like a moth around a light. She is given space for a clear view neither of her own predicament nor of any of the others so close to her. Marc, both colonial father and eternal boy, embarks on obscure expeditions as he pleases, wilfully sacrificing the clarity of his perceptions to his dreams along the way. He has the free, romantic soul of an adventurer, innocent and irresponsible. Obvious to the effects of the invisible order he represents, even to its painful effects on his own family, he personifies a ruling culture naively ignorant of the impossibility of its project and of its inevitable failure.

The moral decay of the displaced European culture becomes more sharply apparent when a plane crash-lands in the desert near the settlement, introducing a handful of visitors who upset the very precarious balance that has been established. The pilot is an alcoholic, an adventurer who has lost his spirit; he can find momentary peace only in flight. Among the passengers is Delphicq (Jacques Denis), a bigoted loud-mouth prone to singing maudlin songs. He keeps an African mistress hidden from view, a silent "little chickadee" for whom he steals scraps of food. Machinard (Laurent Arnal) and his wife Mireille (Emmanuelle Chaulet) are nervous, insecure French, unable to adapt their pristine manners in any way. Confronted with an alien culture, a culture they have been sent to dominate, their only response is to shrink away and refuse contact. But of all the European characters, the ugliest and most pervers is Luc Segalen (Jean-Claude Adelin). At first he appears as a saintly ascetic, one who has eschewed a culturally superior position, identifying himself with the African workers. Yet his humility contains a sneer. He ostentatiously enacts the role of outsider, a position that cannot exist, that can be adopted only with hypocrisy. In his misanthropy, political conviction becomes a weapon that maintains his sense of superiority against both Africans and Europeans alike. With the superior vision of hindsight, the political position assumed by Luc is one that the film itself could have easily leaned towards. The contempt with which the film portrays this character similarly suggests its deepest sympathies. There is a concern more with humanity than ideology; politics is of interest only in its direct relation to the lives of individuals.

Even though the particular historical place of the film is Cameroon, it is tempting to seek contemporary relevance by drawing parallels with the current situation in South Africa. But, in Chocolat, history has its own relevance embedded deeply in contemporary life. In the film's final sequence, when it returns to the post-colonial present, the legacy of the past becomes piercingly obvious. France, now grown and wandering aimlessly around the country of her origin, still has the scars of her childhood. The lifelines on her palm are gone, burnt away long ago; she has "no past, no future". Her African travelling companion, first introduced at the start of the film, is revealed as an American man, also disillusioned by his attempt to find his roots; "Here I am only dreaming", he says.

Stylistically, Denis is concerned less with flurry of detail than with primal forms, crystalline essences, apparently irrefutable abstractions. The shots are calm, patient, deliberate and relentlessly long in duration. There is a sustained poetic intensity, a meditative quality, about the film that suggests a connection with other French purists such as Bresson or Rohmer. Yet in Chocolat there is also great warmth and sensuality, surprising in a film of such rigour, and an organic unity of formal elements that is almost euphoric. The slow, utterly graceful movements of Isaac de Bankolé as Prostée, for example, seem intimately related to the visual rhythms of the landscape, which are, in turn, sensitively mirrored in the compositions of the camera. The delicacy and poise is at times quite breathtaking.

The fragility of this formal balance finds its perfect metaphor in one small detail of the film. Each night, beneath the vague noises of the desert, a pulsing hum can be heard, barely noticeable yet insistent: it is the generator fighting at the outer edge of the settlement to sustain the light. This incidental sound is a disjunction of all the pathos and fragility of the displaced European culture, the absurdity of the attempt to dominate this vast and unyielding terrain. When the battle is abandoned each night, the darkness seems to amplify both the disturbing sounds of the desert and the emotional echoes of the restless lives contained in this place. The echoes of unfilled desire remain too after the last frame of the film. Chocolat is, finally, not a love story, but rather a story of love in exile and of lives made impossible by the cool, quiet brutalities of power.

The Crossing is a film of such rigour, and an organic unity of form, pathos and fragility of the displaced European culture, the absurdity of the attempt to dominate this vast and unyielding terrain. When the battle is abandoned each night, the darkness seems to amplify both the disturbing sounds of the desert and the emotional echoes of the restless lives contained in this place. The echoes of unfilled desire remain too after the last frame of the film. Chocolat is, finally, not a love story, but rather a story of love in exile and of lives made impossible by the cool, quiet brutalities of power.

THE CROSSING

R A F F A E L E C A P U T O

The final scene of the Crossing is in a cemetery where Meg (Danielle Spencer) brings flowers to the grave of her former lover, Sam (Robert Mammon) — a prodigal son who had returned after many years to his parochial home town in order to take Meg back to the city with him. Already at the grave site, however, is Johnny (Russell Crowe). Meg's lover during Sam's absence. That Sam is in his grave appears, of course, as the outcome of tensions augmented within this triangle. But what does Sam's death compensate? And what are the implications of his death for Meg since she is the central figure in the triangle? It might be best to respond to these questions by going somewhere else, by taking a somewhat roundabout route.

There are a few places one could go to with The Crossing, but what I am wondering right now is whether it would be too rash and clumsy to take The Crossing to a place like Nick Ray's Rebel Without...
a Cause. I'm apprehensive, but let's give it a shot, however unassuming the exercise might turn out to be.

In *The Crossing*, it is the triangular formation of the three central characters that draws me to the characters of Rebel (Judy (Natalie Wood)), Jim (James Dean) and Plato (Sal Mineo). However distant these two films may at first appear, they touch one another in this respect: what seems to underpin the expression of juvenile angst in both is the teenagers' emotional distance from their parents, in particular their fathers (or lack of).

Alienation between the generations is certainly one of the key possibilities to the teen movie genre, but we can at least begin with this emphatic structural similarity: that like Judy and Jim in *Rebel*, Meg and Sam in *The Crossing* have overtly strained relations with their fathers. Johnny, on the other hand, like Plato, lacks a father, and this certainly raises questions about the nuances of Johnny's position within the triangle.

From here we can single out a few more similarities. One, at a superficial level, is that both films feature parental guilt, which is in effect a form of compensation for the interests of the female lead. Sam's question to Johnny at the finish of their race ("Who won?") bears resemblance to what Jim asks Buzz before their chicken run ("Why do we do this?") Two, both stories take place within a twenty-four-hour period and close with the death of one of the threesome—a sacrifice to the resolution of conflicts.

One could go on with this exercise, but the growing question regarding *The Crossing* is where do we end up? Perhaps this comparative exercise was clumsy after all, but it cannot be considered too rash. The comparison with *Rebel* is not accidental and is one that *The Crossing* is partly responsible for. By evoking *Rebel*, what remains to be said is that it typifies *The Crossing* 's lack of induction at the level of narrative resolution, for the terms of sacrifice for Sam, unlike Plato, dissipate into air according to the film's own logic.

Plato's death in *Rebel* is a symbolic one which relates to parental guilt, for it comes as the culmination of events that sees the threesome form a simulated family (father, father and child) that both apes and is representative of their respective familial situations. In this sense, Plato must die, for the death compensates for the formation of the couple (Judy and Jim) and bridges the emotional distance between the generations, at the same time as it is a direct consequence of this emotional distance.

For *The Crossing*, on the other hand, one is hard-pressed to discover symbolic links between the alienated family relations and the events that occur in and around the triangle of young lovers. For instance, the film opens at the break of dawn as the town folk gather for the Anzac Day memorial, which is representative of adult values, and juxtaposes this with Meg and Johnny embraced on the floor of her father's storage shed. But beyond a slight emphasis on the young couple's disrespect for this tradition, neither world bears upon the other in a significant way. The possibility of an undercurrent of emotional drives that connect the two worlds is set back into relief on Sam's return. And, rather than meshing two paradoxical models that could comment on one another, the adult world becomes a mere backdrop. Sam's death, then, does not result from an unconscious set of parental values or guilt.

Like the opening, the fatal, concluding event is worked out through a series of juxtapositions between a number of spaces. Beginning with the scene at the dance with Meg and Sam in one another's arms, the film then progressively cuts between this scene, the Anzac memorial with Johnny, in a drunken stupor, playing out an imaginary scene with his father, and the crossing of a train readied for its journey. When Johnny finally confronts Sam and Meg at the dance, the inevitability of what is to occur is clear. In the heat of the moment, Meg leaves with Johnny, drunk and tortured by what he has seen, in order to console him, while Sam gives chase as the train is seen barreling down to where the tracks will meet the road. Again, as in the opening, it's difficult to discover how the train fits into the scheme of things in a symbolic way. In this sense, if we can conclude that Plato's death is not a whitewash of parental guilt but a re-affirmation of it, Sam's is instead purely and simply an accident.

Now, if we were to set Rebel aside, for given Rebel's somewhat mythic standing in relation to the genre the comparisons could be weighted, what we find to a greater extent than before is a thoroughly conservative film. What Sam brings with him on his return is both the experience and promise of life beyond the restrictions of the small town, choices between Johnny or Sam. If Sam's death compensates for any particular circumstance, *The Crossing* leaves the audience wanting: on the one hand, the film has inexpertly shifted Meg aside, for, although the contradictions of her character loom, her options are now closed; on the other, Johnny in uniform is indicative of the only change in character, but it has Johnny resigned to the condition that afflicted him in the first place: he has become the image of his father.

For a film that seeks to at least establish a sense of autonomy between the young and the values and concerns of the older generation, *The Crossing*, through the conceit of Sam's death, ultimately avoids it. It's unfortunate because *The Crossing* certainly had the possibility to undo the same kind of limitations of *Delinquents*.


**MO' BETTER BLUES**

ADRIAN JACKSON

The jazz movie is a genre that has produced some of Hollywood's more forgettable duds, whether fictional or allegedly biographic, ranging from *The Five Pennies* (with Danny Kaye as Red Nichols) or *All The Fine Young Cannibals* (Robert Wagner as a Chet Baker-ish character) to *Lady Sings The Blues* (with Diana Ross hopelessly miscast as Billie Holliday).

Even such well made and sympathetic films as Clint Eastwood's *Bird* (Forest Whitaker doing a pretty fair job as Charlie Parker) and Bertrand 

BELOW: THE BLEEK QUINTET IN SPIKE LEE'S MO' BETTER BLUES.
Tavernier's *Round Midnight* (with Dexter Gordon in a memorable role as himself, more or less) have attracted some criticism, mainly from within the ranks of jazz purists. The most common complaint is that both movies perpetuate the stereotype of black jazzmen as alcoholics or junkies, although this strikes me as unrealistic: *Bird* with aneut any reference to Parker's self-destructive streak although this strikes me as unrealistic: *Bird with the Ball* and *Round Midnight* are not simply a jazz movie, as *Bird and Round Midnight* are.

Mo' Better Blues is the first film of modern times to deal with jazz and, I wanted to do a film about jazz and it wanted to do a film about relationships. So we have a jazz film that deals with relationships."

All of the relationships in the film revolve around Bleek Gilliam, the character played by Washington. The story opens with Bleek as a child, being forced by his mother to practise the trumpet, when he wants to be out playing with his friends. The next image is of the adult Gilliam, playing trumpet in a jazz club, really tearing it up, with his own ambitions as a bandleader, and his band, and he rejects her bluntly.

On the other hand, Bleek loyally supports his manager, childhood friend Giant (Bill Lee), even though everyone tells him that Giant is an inept manager, and he knows they are right.

The other major relationships Bleek has to deal with are within the band, particularly with saxophonist Shadow Henderson (Wesley Snipes), who has his own ambitions as a bandleader, and resents Bleek's authority; he also has eyes for Clarke.

Everything goes sour for Bleek, however, when he finds himself losing control of all of these relationships. Worse still, Giant's gambling problems lead to his being viciously beaten; when Bleek intervenes, he is also bashed, affecting the lip muscles that are a trumpeter's livelihood.

As with Lee's previous films, *Mo' Better Blues* is an imperfect gem. The resolution of Bleek's problems is perhaps a little too neat. There are gaps in the plot (for example, how does Bleek make a living when he quits music, if indeed he does quit playing? The plot is vague at this point). Bleek's arguments with Shadow are inconsistent: at one point, he is reprimanding Shadow for playing self-indulgent, "three-hour" solos; later, it is Shadow who is arguing that the jazz tradition is not sacrosanct, that musicians should play what people like to hear.

Lee has drawn the most flak for his characterization of the avaricious owners of the club where Bleek works. Moe and Josh Flatbush are cartoon characters, which has left Lee open to charges of anti-Semitism. Maybe Lee was taking the opportunity to turn the tables, after so many decades of blacks being ignored or lampooned by Hollywood; but if he was simply trying to point out that black jazz artists are at the mercy of an industry that doesn't respect their music, he could have made the point rather more subtly.

But the film's merits greatly outweigh its flaws. For a start, the jazz element is handled very convincingly. The actors look right on and off the stand, seriously cool, even though drummer Jeff Watts is the only musician among them. And the music, from the Branford Marsalis Quartet with guest trumpeter Terence Blanchard, is generally excellent. (There are a few vocal tracks that purists may quibble about, but they work well in context.)

Lee certainly succeeds in providing strong roles for black actors. Washington has a meaty role and makes the most of it. Snipes, the two Lees and Williams are hardly less impressive.

There is plenty of humour throughout the film. And Lee's ability to come up with striking imagery is best demonstrated by the scene where Bleek is making love with Indigo, and suddenly finds Clarke slapping his face for calling her the other woman's name. A thoroughly bewildered Bleek finds himself being abused by both women in turn, before they both walk out on him.

On balance, *Mo' Better Blues* succeeds as a look at the jazz world - the obligations and challenges facing any aspiring "keeper of the flame", along with the business problems that have to be dealt with - as seen, for a change, from the black artist's point of view. But even those who aren't especially interested in jazz should find it an amusing and stimulating consideration of the personal conflicts and sacrifices that any serious artist has to face.
lated "investment" deserves a better return than the one Renata proposes: divorce.  

Like some of the better Losey adaptations of Pinter, *Phobia* creates a tangled psychological web of power, co-dependency, and double-binds that ultimately denies anybody the final victory. Yet the result is not at all tragic, despite the way the tables are eventually turned. Shot in a straightforward naturalistic fashion by Steve Newman, the climactic tension of *Phobia* is nevertheless convincingly maintained throughout. The space of the comfortable surroundings is systematically sketched out as a goal-like place from which it is difficult to escape. Indeed, the well publicized restrictions of budget have certainly encouraged the director to wisely channel his energies into the dynamism of mise-en-scène, rather than attempting to make the locations seem flash. Consequently, a high level of performance and attention to quotidian detail is maintained throughout the tightly scripted drama.

In addition to these well executed, though cinematically conventional devices, there is a wilder, more renegade force that comes through in the best moments of *Phobia*. Though not exactly irreverent anarchy or youthful invention, there is certainly something quirky (and yet familiar) about the way Dingwall has managed to combine psychological terror, naturalistic humour and a narrative economy in what could quite easily have been a nothing film about fear and phobias in conjugal relations. With a bigger budget project called *The Custodian* already in the pipeline, one can only hope that Dingwall continues to follow these threads in future films.


**RETURN HOME**  

PETER LAWRENCE

In a cool, almost off-hand manner, writer-director Ray Argall has managed to achieve what seems like the impossible in a climate that appears anything but conducive to independent filmmakers (ditto the straightforward commercial practitioners). With *Return Home*, he shows that with a committed production team remarkable things can be achieved. The price is probably little more than sending a couple of Melbourne city councillors on some overseas jaunt chasing Olympic committees. For my money, Argall’s contribution to Australian culture will be far more profound.

Most gratifying in *Return Home* is the absence of what seems to have become obligatory in this country for filmmakers: there are no co-production credits, no foreign ‘stars’, no special effects or gratuitous violence, not even a misty-eyed romantic interlude. Despite (or because of) these absences, Argall has forged a compelling narrative. This is highlighted by a series of exceptionally acting performances, photography and art direction inimitably attuned to the director’s concerns, and a soundtrack that cleverly enforces the film’s essential conflict: a collision of two cultural worlds.

Early in the film, Noel (Denis Coard) is surprised when his brother Steve (Frankie J. Holden) points out that to him his return home’. Instead, he encounters Gary (Ben Mendelsohn), a grease-covered ‘petrol head’ apprenticed to Steve and ready to drive him out in his Pontiac Firebird. Their ensuing conversation highlights the differences the film will evoke. Simply put, Gary drives a Holden. He listens to The Cellbale Rifles and Bored while he drives, and is constantly on the lookout for other drivers to abuse. Noel, we learn, drives a Mazda 628 and enjoys classical music. Gary is incredulous. Noel is amused.

The return for Noel is more than just a holiday; it is a journey back to a time that seems suspended, a place where he had to ‘punch his father out’ in order to escape. In leaving his working-class background and becoming an insurance broker, Noel carries a certain degree of guilt, particularly when he realizes his brother’s service station is close to bankruptcy and that it could be him working on the cars, not Gary. Steve is quick to point out that Noel has also copped a fair share of problems, divorce and a job that demands upwards of 60-hour working weeks.

*Return Home* is set in suburban Adelaide and uses a set of bleak locations as a visual metaphor for the old world Noel escaped. It is a world of ugly brick-veneer homes, shopping centres that barely compete with the nearby corporate shopping complex and barren supermarket carparks. The film offers some relief to this landscape in the form of trips made by the characters to the nearest seaside (that great Australian playground), but there, too, an ugly commercial funfair is emphasized as much as the pier where the brothers spent much of their childhood.

As they get to know one another again, the old and the new loom as an ideological battleground. Nevertheless, Noel is slowly drawn into Steve’s world, observing his brother’s difficulties with his business acumen. And Noel does offer a solution which may solve Steve’s financial trouble. In his view, a franchise would get them in the clear.

One of the great achievements of *Return Home* is its ability to engage the audience so completely, to demand and receive an involvement in its issues and concerns, above all to cheer the characters on. Here it is a measure of the actors’ respective skills that such an involvement takes place, as well as a delicate balance achieved between humour and pathos.

As stated at the outset, *Return Home* is a remarkable achievement at a time when the direction of the current cinema has become contentious, even vague.


**ABOVE**: NOEL (DENNIS COARD) EXPLAINS TO BROTHER STEVE (FRANKIE J. HOLDEN) WAYS TO KEEP THE GARAGE AFLOAT, RAY ARGALL’S *RETURN HOME*. with his business acumen. And Noel does offer a solution which may solve Steve’s financial trouble. In his view, a franchise would get them into the clear. He points out that it is a developing trend in the U.S. After some discussion, Steve snarls that “This is Australia, not the fucking U.S.” and he runs a ‘servo’ not a grocer shop that happens to sell a bit of petrol.

The plot of having a character witness a discussion or an action from outside works effectively again. We see Gary straying back from lunch early, stopping short when he hears Steve and Judy heatedly discussing the state of their finances. He later tells Noel that he has never seen Steve like that.

As the film progresses, Noel’s ‘objectivity’ sees him developing a strong bond with Gary, whose own problems may well parallel those he faced as a young petrol head with Steve. In building up a series of complex portraits, Argall manages to infuse the film with wryly observed scenes, adding a dimension and understanding of people not often seen in Australian cinema of late. A very subtle narrative structure emerges, woven around an almost diffuse set of stories that surround each character, until all the threads are drawn together at the end. This is not to say there is a ‘happy ever after’ resolution, on the contrary the film leaves off as it begins, although there is perhaps a slightly more optimistic feel at the end.

One of the great achievements of *Return Home* is its ability to engage the audience so completely, to demand and receive an involvement in its issues and concerns, above all to cheer the characters on. Here it is a measure of the actors’ respective skills that such an involvement takes place, as well as a delicate balance achieved between humour and pathos.

As stated at the outset, *Return Home* is a remarkable achievement at a time when the direction of the current cinema has become contentious, even vague.

The 37th Sydney Film Festival was widely anticipated because it marks the first full year of the event with Paul Byrnes as director. The conjunction of the new director and a new decade has, I believe, some significance, contributing to the sense of 'change' which was evident during the two weeks of screenings.

What audiences, and commentators, were assessing was Paul Byrnes' programme selection, the efficiency of the Festival organization and the degree to which the Festival lived up to its title: a celebration of cinema.

In these times, when so much of culture seems tentative and structurally in flux, we attach significance to specific moments, such as film festivals, and read into them a responsibility which they often be ill-equipped to carry. But festivals are not natural phenomena; instead, they are cultural selections, designed and marketed.

They offer the promise of certain experiences: images, sound, meaning, emotion, plus, for some, a challenge to beliefs at the beginning of a decade where rigid ideologies (about society and the role of culture) are collapsing like the concrete slabs of the Berlin Wall.

In his Director's "Programme Note", and opening night remarks, Paul Byrnes pointed to the "momentous" changes taking place in Eastern Europe, and wanting the Festival to reflect "the excitement of our times". With this as a theme or at least general direction, festival directors anywhere on the 'circuit' have two choices available: to screen the newly released 'banned' films and also try to reflect something of current Eastern European cinema. Clearly the former is easier than the latter, with Jiří Menzel's Skrivanci na Niti (Larks on a String, 1969) and Ryszard Bugajski's Przesłuchanie (The Interrogation, 1982) being screened. Both films were set in much earlier times, specifically the Stalinist 1950s, and therefore bring to current audiences a 40-year-old but critical vision of social and political life. Certainly no two films illustrate how different the reaction to those times can be. The Interrogation, from Poland, is a dark, cruel film which concentrates on policemen torturing Tonia, a nightclub singer (played with chilling fervour by Krystyna Janda) who is arrested on the slimmest of excuses, Jiří Menzel's Larks on a String - even the tide has a sense of balance between hope and futility – is a recognizably Czech black comedy set in a large scrap yard. Menzel, who was a guest of the Festival, introduced his film by saying, "The film is old but the contents are contemporary." Both Larks on a String and Interrogation explore the relationship between love and bureaucracy in some form, and are the first of an expected flood of previously banned films which will soon be on the market.

The contrast between these older films and current productions promises to be increasingly contentious. In a sense, this is already visible in Krzysztof Kieślowski's Dekalog (The Decalogue), a ten-part series for Polish Television based on the Ten Commandments. The film, which was voted second in the audience poll, suggests a return to the openly declared religious faith in contrast to the recently rejected 'scientific' socialism. The rush to applaud The Decalogue's bleak, unrelenting moral message was at times surprising, especially since its portrayal of contemporary Polish life conflicted greatly with what was being shown about Poland on the nightly television news. The other main film from Eastern Europe, As an XX Századom (My 20th Century, Ildikó Enyedi) from Hungary, was a light and whimsical fairy tale which was more a curiosity than an advance for our appreciation of Hungarian cinema.

The release of previously banned films will inevitably initiate a re-assessment of the past forty years of European cinema, and the value of seeing Larks on a String was to recognize Menzel's film as a brave resistance to a system that ideologically insisted on only one cultural vision.

The pleasures and problems of short films were also highlighted at the Festival this year. The Dendy Awards for Australian Short Films were continued, as well as regular screenings of shorts before each main feature, a programme of six "long shorts" and a forum dedicated to the short-film form under the heading, "How short is a short film and long is its life?" There used to be a well-established progression for filmmakers from shorts to features, where skills were tried out before being trusted with the responsibility for a longer work (and, inevitably, a larger budget). While this might be useful, it means filmmakers can quickly abandon the short
form for lengthier works, and in turn this depletes shorts of their greatest asset: continuity of practice and the possibility of experiment, an avant-garde worthy of the name. My impression of many short films screened, and most of those entered in the General Category of the Dendy Awards, is one of safety not innovation, of predictability and restriction in form and method.

The absence of shorts from most cinema screens, and the majority of television schedules, is a lost opportunity, not just for filmmakers but programmers to attract or maintain audiences. The prospect of portfolios being available on video is exciting, but films such as Zoltan Spirandelli’s My Old Red Rooster, Kyle Kibbe’s 100 N.Y., N.Y., Virginia Hilyard’s E.G., and Graeme Wood’s Teenage Babylon deserve a wider audience. It was also easy in many cases to determine if a short was made by students from the Australian Film Radio & Television School. Some institutional stereotyping of narrative, and above all emotion, was noticeable in these films and now might be the time for the AFTRS to re-assess the balance between creativity and ‘industry skills’ which it promotes in its students.

This year the Festival’s screenings were at the State Theatre and the nearby Pitt Centre, a two-screen combination which, if maintained, promises to allow the Festival to develop a stronger presence as an ‘event’. The Pitt Centre programme, of documentaries, experimental shorts and discussions, was well attended and provided a strong contrast to the main programme at the State Theatre.

The latter had essentially two categories of films on offer: those with a secure place on the art-house distribution circuit such as Akira Kurosawa’s Dreams, Denys Arcand’s Jesus of Montreal and Hou Hsiao-hsien’s Beijing Chengshi (A City of Sadness), and, by contrast, the more eclectic visions which came un-announced and with only a slim hope of a local distributor. The notion that the Australian distribution of ‘art-house’ or independent films is in a healthy state has little credence today when the re-release of Godard’s A Bout de Souffle (Breathless), which has only just opened in Sydney, was reviewed in the Monthly Film Bulletin in August 1988.

The exception to this is Jane Campion’s An Angel at My Table which received a standing ovation and was voted Most Popular Film by the audience. Such support strengthened the impetus to release a cinema version of what was originally only a three-part television series. An Angel at My Table is a work of precision and subtle observation of a life (New Zealand writer Janet Frame’s) in development. There are few current local films which explore the notions of creativity, mental illness and social values to the extent or with the perception of this film.

With most Australian features apparently in limbo after Cannes, it was up to Campion, Martin Sharp’s tribute to Tiny Tim and Luna Park, The Street of Dreams, and Aleks Veili’s Nirvana Street Murder to represent local filmmaking. Veili’s film is a significant debut, based on the principle that you should put everything into a film in case you can’t make another. Consequently, Nirvana Street Murder has an anarchic fusion of genres and visual styles, steals blatantly from television formula, and has vitality in overwhelming quantities.

What Veili’s film suggests is a rising generation of Australian filmmakers who understand the medium and are aggressively exploiting it.

That independent spirit was also clearly recognizable in two American features which initially disappointed the audience but which handsomely rewarded those who stayed to watch: Charles Lane’s New York mime story of a lost child, Sidewalk Stories, and Wayne Coe’s homage to storytelling in the American West, Grim Prairie Tales. In a sense, these films represent a risk for a Festival audience, and in another way the innovation (Sidewalk Stories, for example, has no dialogue, only music) is precisely the sort of film a festival should show because it extends cinematic form. In addition to Sidewalk Stories, Montalvo et l’Enfant (Montalvo and the Child, Claude Mouri­eras) uses dance rather than dialogue to narrate a gypsy love story. It is ironic that the two films which structure run contrary to narrative expectations were so openly rejected by the Festival audience which, supposedly, was attending because the Festival screens films not so readily accessible. Clearly the Festival’s role of broadening the tolerance of audiences has more to achieve.

George Miller, in his presentation of the Ian McPherson Memorial Lecture, unveiled the planned cinémathèque for Circular Quay, which is precisely one of the structures needed to counter the reaction to films such as Sidewalk Stories. There are 55 cinémathèques worldwide, and the Australian proposal means that, at last “we will have, as a culture, an avenue for human expression in moving images.” Miller’s assertion that “contemporary art includes film, television and video” should not have sounded as revelatory as it did, and served to highlight how such a centre for the moving image in all its forms is long overdue.

Recent doubts over the value of Festival retrospectives were quashed this year by the inclusion of a Preston Sturges season of eight films, mainly from his prolific Paramount years. In addition, a documentary on Sturges, Preston Sturges: The Rise and Fall of an American Dreamer, was shown, and writer Tod McCarthy and director Ken Bowser were guests of the Festival, introducing the Sturges films and providing a context for his work. What was remarkable about the Sturges films was the combina-
tion of social criticism and humour: *The Lady Eve and Remember the Night* have such comic dark truths about the relationship between men and women it is difficult to think of many more recent films which portray cynicism on such a scale. The Sturges retrospective, to judge by capacity audiences and positive comments, was one of the successes of this Festival and should maintain interest in the re-release of his work, and his autobiography later this year.

Other films of note were: South Korean director Yong-Kyun Bae's *Dhamaga Toniguro Kan Khadalgan (Why Has Bouh-Dharma Left for the East?)*, which audiences deserted in large numbers but which lived up to Michel Ciment's description as "mise-en-zen"; Bruce McDonald's *Roadkill*, an eccentric Canadian road film which defied expectations by being amusing and explosive; and Michael Roemer's *The Plot Against Harry*, a recently completed film originally shot in 1969, which portrayed its small-time racketeer character with great irony and stunning black-and-white photography. Luckily, these films outweighed the disappointing presentations, such as Alain Tanner's *La Femme de Rose Mill* (The Woman of Rose Mill), which gloated over its central character (played by African actress Marie Gaydu) for being so 'different', Ken McCullen's *1871*, an insipid film after his previous *Zen*, and Alan Rudolph's *Love at Large*, which defies explanation for its inclusion in a Festival programme at all.

Lastly, a Festival report is obliged to offer considerations for future Festivals and the issues are wide ranging. Why, for instance, is a French festival director in Australia as this article is being written gathering films for the first season of films from the Pacific region when this would be a natural role for an Australian Festival? The programming of special all-night sessions (this year jazz and Australian television) needs to be expanded, especially in ways which give a critical context for television drama or advertisements. The Festival's role in screening Asian films now needs to be extended to take in those regions not represented through local distributors. This also applies to African films (represented this year by Idrissa Ouedraogo's extraordinary *Yaaba*). Now that the Sydney Festival has a stable base its new director should expand the selection of films and take more risks in response to the needs of film and ideas on the edge of the 21st Century. This will mean, inevitably, that the Festival should be presenting short and long films from small and large screens. The notion that 'film' is a strictly celluloid form has faded, as the opening film, *Dreams*, confirmed with its high-definition Sony sequence starring Martin Scorsese as Vincent Van Gogh. That, and the production company being credited as "Akira Kurosawa USA Inc", clearly points to the future.

I have a particularly sweet memory of the 1989 Melbourne Film festival: sitting amidst a very large crowd at the Astor watching the 43-minute masterpiece *Superstar: The Karen Carpenter Story* (Todd Haynes, 1987), and then that same day *Miracle Mile* (Steve De Jarnett, 1988). These two titles happen to represent two of the kinds of films I most like to see at a Film Festival: in the first instance, purist and demented experimental cinema; in the second, intense and inventive genre cinema. Sitting through the 1990 Melbourne Film Festival, I had the strong feeling of being cheated of both kinds of cinema – or at least when I sat with the multitudes in the main Festival venue, the Astor.

Quite apart from my personal tastes in cinema, I start with this impression because it raises for me the central question that the Melbourne Film Festival must surely always ask itself (and no doubt does): In the age of spreading 'art houses', Valhalla 'cult-movie' exhibition and SBS television, what is there left for the Festival to do? The legacy of past Festivals – world cinema according to the late Erwin Rado – is not something I wish to dismiss or ridicule outright; but it does need today to be put in historical context and clearly interrogated.

The Melbourne Film Festival's agenda, as cemented in many punters' minds, has always been something like this: what do we now term 'art cinema', by the 'great' directors; films that reflect momentous social changes and document daily life in (to us) 'exotic' places such as the Eastern Bloc countries, Africa, Asia; political documentaries, of a fairly conventional sort; 'novelty' shorts, especially animations; and an occasional slightly 'innovative' feature hailed by a journalist or two somewhere as 'new cinema', or the debut of a promising young talent. Personally, I would describe

**Thirty-Ninth Melbourne Film Festival: Thanks for the Memory**

**Report by Adrian Martin**
this agenda as 'middlebrow'. Sadly, even when (as in recent years) the Festival has tried to transform this agenda somewhat through more adventurous programming at 'side-bar' venues like the State Film Theatre, mainstream reviewers (such as Neil Jillett at The Age or Keith Connolly when he was at The Herald) have steadfastly continued construing each Festival as the same old middlebrow cultural feast they already know and love.

What's not on this agenda? Experimental cinema in all its forms, short and long; a serious engagement with the edges and undersides of so-called 'popular' cinema, such as 'B' or genre cinema; a scholarly and cinephilic drive to explore cinema's history; a desire to understand the cinemas of other cultures in any terms distinct from the transparently 'topical' and shamelessly exotic. The Festival has indeed tried to include some of this in recent years (with Don Rauvaud as a freelance programmer in the mid-80s, and Tait Brady as director for the past three years), but it has always been, I dare say, a nervous, tokenistic, easily aborted attempt. Instead of trying to militantly drive a wedge into middlebrow culture with these different, difficult types of cinema, the Festival has been content to act in a merely complaisant way with the increasing cosy compartmentalization of the film scene. So there is one 'experimental' programme designated as such for the already converted; a 'schlock', hopefully 'cult' item or two for the superior groovers at the Valhalla (struck down with hilarity, for instance, by John Woo's wholly remarkable The Killer); and a miserly selection of 'golden oldies' (Mitchell Leisen's Remember the Night and Donen and Kelly's It's Always Fair Weather) standing in for a historical 'retrospective' programme (Sydney at least got the full run of Preston Sturges films).

I am no doubt extreme in believing that the Festival must regularly and diligently run the risk of alienating its audience by endeavouring to surprise, educate and confront it; after all, I don't have to balance the books at the end. The cultural (and economic) reality of putting on the Festival is that there is, apparently, a large (mainly older) audience that does indeed still crave comfortable pearls of art cinema and shallow reflections on a world in crisis and flux. However, I do believe I speak for a growing constituency - all the passionate explorers of the arts and culture generally - who are now starting to seriously demand more than the Festival has ever been willing to give them.

Art cinema at its most depressing and infuriating took over the Festival (sixteen sessions of it) in the form of Krzysztof Kieslowski's Dekalog (Decalogue). The audience of old found it irily 'disturbing', monumental and meaningful, while the audience of new complained (and rightly) of its unrelenting misogyny, medieval Christian ethics, and the director's wifful restriction of his stylistic and fictional palette to a few dry-as-dust gestures repeated from episode to episode. I stayed through half of it, hoping that it would reveal itself as a dark reworking of Rohmer's 'Moral Tales' or 'Comedies and Proverbs', working on the gap between the 'commandment' informing each episode and its messy fictional elaboration; but, alas, Kieslowski seemed to actually believe every last, thundering edict the Good Lord had delivered to his doorstep. All in all, a good argument for atheism.

The Festival's pandering to 'social issues', and its eager grouping together of distinct works into 'gay' or 'women's' or 'disabled' (or whatever) sessions, always signals the kiss of death. There was a preponderance this year of conventional television-style documentaries such as Chiorny Kvadrat (Black Square), The Media Show and even Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt (which utilized standard documentary rhetoric so well in its eliciting of a collective grief for mass AIDS death), giving an unfortunate ring of self-fulfilling prophecy to the seminar title "The Death of the Documentary". Many of the fiction films, too, seemed to have been selected purely on the criterion of their socially conscious 'hook'. How else to justify the inclusion of such insufferably twee works as Sidewalk Stories (inexp, pseudo-Chaplinesque comedy building up to a final 'serious moment' that makes Decalogue seem profound) and Wild Flowers (lesbianism with kid gloves, à la Desert Hearts)?

Equally hard to justify was the mini-retrospective of the films of Bernardo's less famous brother, Giuseppe Bertolucci. I Cammelli (The Camels) and Amori in Corso (Loves in Progress) were the most mediocre, derivative, unadventurous European art entertainments imaginable. Perhaps more charitably, it was just that they were utterly routine, minor variations played on Fellini (for the former) and Rohmer (for the latter, again with a little lesbian spice). Simple SBS fodder, surely? Falling also into the too-average basket of art cinema were those films already slated for theatrical release and merely 'showcased' at the Festival: the appalling Jesus of Montreal (I cannot understand how anyone can admire this film) and Jerry Schatzberg's disappointingly inconsequential Reunion. Brady has copied Flack before for drifting along with this showcasing procedure; this year's instances are certainly not going to relieve his agony.

Documentaries on film directors are another Festival staple; however, they are less predictable in quality, and often sur-
is) hell? The latter was an outright offence to the memory and significance of the great Preston Sturges. All pronouncements in this film were either glib (please let’s call it a moratorium on that journalistic catch-all “The American Dream”), sexist and reductive (the old James Agee line, already debunked by Brian Henderson, about Preston’s artistic psyche being formed in revulsion against his ‘over-cultured’ mother) or boringly macho (yes, another maverick who “gave ‘em hell”). This was a film nerd’s appreciation of Sturges, with only Remember the Night available to the crowd afterwards to suggest the profound and poignant depths of his real achievement. Here was a missed opportunity to pay a long overdue tribute.

I’m actually going to say something complimentary about the Festival soon. But first, as a kind of summary, a few questions. Why Bruce McDonald’s dreary Roadkill rather than the latest works of those filmmakers it so feebly imitates, Jon Jost or Robert Kramer? Why the pretty, innocuous French fare and not the last few years’ output of Akerman, Moullet, Ruiz, Straub and Huillet, Demy, Oliveira, Garrel, Rivette, Rohmer? And, of course, my promptings are restricted to the auteurs I already know of and read about; aren’t there exciting, difficult new works popping up in festivals like Rotterdam or Berlin? Whose opinion are we having to trust on this?

Now the highlights. Instead of a decent ‘video art’ selection we got a few ‘essayistic’ somewhere-between-documentary-and-fiction tapes, but one of them was fantastic: Vanalyne Green’s A Spy in the House that Ruth Built. Disparaged on one local radio programme as being merely the confessions of (I quote from memory) “a woman who wants to screw baseball players”, it was in truth a wonderfully ambivalent reflection on both the ugliness and the splendour of a certain kind of masculinity, using both the visual flatness and the layering facility of video to enormously expressive and (comic) effect. Trin T. Minh-ha’s Surname Viet, Given Name Nam was a fully ‘theorized’ essay film similar to Yvonne Rainer’s recent Privilege in the way it dexterously juggled and problematized numerous fragments relating to the politics of gender, class and nation in the divide between Vietnam and America. In addition, Minh-ha was perhaps the most articulate and giving Festival guest since Jean-Pierre Gorin in 1987.

Much to many people’s surprise, the Festival’s biggest programming gamble – the highlighting of four new Australian fea-

ken line of vivid emotional and cinematic moments, it announces the arrival of Alexs Vellis as a major filmmaking talent. The wonder of the film is that, while emulating some of the best aspects of the American action-drama style, it still manages to marshall many endearingly ‘Australian’ elements – fragments of our media history (television’s Homicide) as well as an already highly mediated social history (Greek-Australian relations).

But when all else has long since fled my mind, this is the 1990 Festival memory I will give thanks for: Boris Barnet’s Dom na Trubnai (The House on Trubnya) from the Russia of 1928, for me the most ecstatic, enthralling cinematic event of the entire two weeks. This astoundingly physical comedy, so far removed from the solemnity of the revolutionary classics of contemporaries like Eisenstein and Vertov, seemed to be discovering the cinematic medium for itself with every shot, every cut, every explosion of action and emotion in the frame. The subject matter – some lightweight parable about the need for all good Soviets to join a union – was insignificant; the sheer energy of the film was everything. Barnet’s masterpiece doesn’t correspond to the canons of art cinema in any traditionally sententious or solemn way, like Decadogue; nor does it really flatten anybody’s exotic, reductive notion of what ‘life in Russia’ must have been like. What it does is just go full steam ahead into a spirited exploration of filmic form in its fullest sense – the creation of images, movements, a fictional impulse unbound. And so Barnet gives us a salutary reminder of what the art of cinema – an open, democratic art of cinema - can truly be.

Editor’s note: Due to delays in the production and release of this issue, both the Melbourne and Sydney festival reviews are less current than originally intended. They are printed here for the record. As for Martin’s article, it is an extensively rewritten and expanded version of the Festival review which appeared in The Sunday Herald (24/8/90, p. 51).

VIDEO PROGRAM PRODUCTION
Open Channel has a team of talented people with a long history of making award winning video programs for the educational, non-theatrical and television markets, without blowing the budget.

VIDEO FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT HIRE
We can provide you with the convenience of having all your production needs under one roof with backup from our friendly technical staff, at affordable rates.

VIDEO PRODUCTION TRAINING
Our wide range of production courses will help you make the leap from rank amateur to skilled program maker.

OPEN CHANNEL CO-OPERATIVE LTD
13 Victoria Street, Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065
Ph: (03) 419 511 Fax: (03) 419 1404

Hey!
Did you know that AFI members receive cinema discounts at:
HOYTS
VILLAGE
GREATER UNION
&
A HOST OF INDEPENDENT CINEMAS
throughout Australia, for only $35 for twelve months.

It is Terrific Value*!

RING AFI MELBOURNE (03) 696 1844
OR AFI SYDNEY (02) 332 2111
FOR A MEMBERSHIP FORM TODAY

* AFI members receive many other benefits including a 25% discount on annual subscriptions to Cinema Papers

CAMERAQUIP
FILM EQUIPMENT RENTALS
FOR YOUR FEATURE FILM, T.V. SERIES, COMMERCIAL & DOCUMENTARY NEEDS

Spotswood
The Great Air Race
Till There Was You
Rose Against The Odds
The Big Steal
Mission Impossible
Dolphin Cove
In To Deep
Punishers
Mullaway
Ricki And Pete
Bushfire Moon
As Time Goes By
Initiation

Garbo
Stan & George's New Life
Death In Brunswick
The Golden Braid
Breakaway
Trouble In Paradise
Sweethearts
Island
Naked Under Capricorn
Colla
Boulevard Of Broken Dreams
Nancy Wake
The Tale Of Ruby Rose
Malcolm

Supplying:- CAMERA, LIGHTING & GRIP EQUIPMENT

66 TOPE STREET, SOUTH MELBOURNE
VICTORIA 3205, AUSTRALIA
PHONE:(03)699 3922 FAX:(03)696 2564

330 KING GEORGES AVE, SINGAPORE 0820
PHONE: [65] 291 7291 FAX: [65] 293 2141

CLASSIC MOVIES, BOOKS
and MEMORABILIA
from "THE GOLDEN YEARS"

MAIL ORDERS WELCOME
Shop 2, 199 Toorak Road, South Yarra, Vic.
Tel. (03) 826 3008
DIRECTED BY
VINCENTE MINNELLI


ADRIAN MARTIN

Here is a common experience in cinema education: the teacher gives a lecture on, say, Nicholas Ray, Josef von Sternberg or Preston Sturges. He or she sets an essay topic on that filmmaker, or some closely related matter. The student heads off to the institution’s library and—of course—he looks first to see if there’s one or two good, clear, intelligent books devoted to these auteurs whom their teacher has (quite rightly) made out to be as culturally significant as William Faulkner, Pablo Picasso or Arnold Schoenberg. But there are no good books on many of the ‘great’ filmmakers—sometimes there is not even a single bad one. There is only the daunting jungle of often very badly catalogued periodicals. Any teacher, facing this, would have to nod in earnest agreement with Peter Wollen’s statement in his 1969 Signs and Meaning In the Cinema: “We need not two or three books on Hitchcock and Ford, but many, many more.” Indeed, it is a sobering exercise to add up for oneself all the directors one considers surely ‘worth’ a book or two who languish, long after their death, without one; just as it is saddening to realize that so many projects down the years which ‘earnedmark’ certain fascinating filmmakers for future detailed work—think of the Edinburgh Festival dossiers on Corman, Sirk, Walsh, Tourneur—have never been followed up.

Then again, perhaps this lament is just a little quaint and nostalgic, betraying a legimacy crisis familiar in many a film educator: the fear that film studies doesn’t yet ‘measure up’ to its forebears in the academic Fine Arts sphere. The fear is in fact rather well founded. Note, for instance, that a certain rather respected literary specialist reviewing a book on Satyajit Ray (who else?) in the arts section of a recent Sunday newspaper declared that a “cinema scholar” is a “rare thing”. Perhaps one who diligenty practised a certain post-modern arrogance could snarl in the face of such an academy: who cares, after all, if the ephemeral, commodity based form of cinema is preserved and discussed only fleetingly in the grubby pages of this or that ‘underground’ journal? Even an undoubted cinema scholar such as Dana Polan has suggested, of late, that books are too monumental, too old-fashioned a form of commentary for the vagaries of our audiovisual age. And, anyway, auteur studies are generally considered outmoded these days; Charles Eckert noted in 1974 that the type of fan/critic who considered outmoded these days; Charles Eckert noted in 1974 that the type of fan/critic who declared, “I want to write about Delmer Daves” was already an obvious embarrassment, dinosaur, not a first, decent book on Vincente Minnelli. And, more deeply, one can ask a good question: What would a really meaningful, really useful director study be, today? Now that the polemical embargo on auteurism has long passed, new kinds of studies are starting to appear which tackle this question: Thomas Elsaesser’s articles on Losey and Murnau; Stuart Cunningham’s work on the Chauvels; Sam Rohdie’s forthcoming volumes on Antonioni and Pasolini. A new synthesis is being attempted, weaving personal biography, career trajectory, historical conditions, cinematic conventions, and issues of concern to the present often far distant from the consciousness of the auteur-subject. This is all as it should be; mercifully gone are the innocent days when a director could be treated as if in isolation from culture, history and society, and tacitly (or explicitly) celebrated for their ‘transcendence’ of such impure determinants. I just wish someone would tell this news to increasingly hackish biographers like Donald Spoto (see his latest opus, on Preston Sturges).

Stephen Harvey’s book is not at the vanguard of director studies. He has apparently read little of the earnest, serious recent literature devoted to cinema study, and the debates therein. But, fortunately, he brings to his subject research skills that are far more rigorous than anything the old auteurists could ever muster; he’s been through all the MGM files (memos, contracts, the lot), he’s interviewed many of Minnelli’s collaborators, he’s gone to the trouble of comparing the finished film with the source material via all available drafts of the screenplay. There is much that he uncovers about the director’s way of working, his aesthetic motivations and the vicissitudes that each film underwent from initial script to release print. In short, the book is an essential, indispensable introduction to the Minnelli oeuvre.

Harvey’s critical framework, however, is pretty limited, and I think these limitations have to be pegged clearly before any further work on Minnelli can now be done. Harvey begins by rightly placing Minnelli as a prime instance not of the ‘maverick’ director but, on the contrary, one who got the most out of the studio system by working within its constraints. His research bears out Victor Perkins’ contention that ‘individually’ in a director’s style was not frowned upon or outlawed within the Hollywood system, in fact it was encouraged—as long as the director ‘played the game’ with the necessary attitude of give and take. Minnelli gave and took for his whole career, trading ‘personal’ projects like Lust for Life against strictly ‘contract’ ones like Kismet.

Esther Smith (Judy Garland) and John Drueck (Tom Drake) in Vincente Minnelli’s Meet Me in St. Louis.

Harvey prizes Minnelli above all for his sensitivity. A ‘colourist’, an aesthete, a perfectionist with a marvellous ‘eye’ for design detail, a master of movement both of and before the camera: Harvey gives substance to these typical (and truthful) descriptions of the director’s style. For each film, Harvey evokes for us its variegated emotional flow, highs and lows, expressive ‘bursts’, in sum its stylistic plasticity (he is especially good in this regard on Meet Me in St. Louis). Essentially, the book is therefore a (fine) account of Minnelli’s craft.

What, then, of Minnelli’s art—what is it, and how would we describe its worth, its interest? Here, the usefulness of Harvey’s book starts to quickly wear thin. His approach to this question has two aspects. The first is biographical. Harvey convincingly relates a central, underlying thematic drive of Minnelli’s oeuvre—‘the clash between suffocating respectability and creative anarchy’, as he puts it— to Minnelli’s own formative life experiences. Later strains in the director’s life, such as his difficult marriage to Judy Garland, produced another theme: ‘the idea that the satisfactions of hard work can compensate for personal unhappiness’. This, is at base, very old-fashioned auteurism indeed, Harvey extolling Minnelli for the ways he indirectly ‘encoded’ his personal life into whatever property presented itself to him, which is ultimately not much more sophisticated than claiming that Hitchcock made films to work off his personal fetichism for luscious blondes.

66 • CINEMA PAPERS 81
Harvey fights shy of nominating a thematic for Minnelli's œuvre that is in any way generalizable or applicable outside the individual, biographical case of the director. Other commentators have not been quite so shy, but their proposals that the Minnelli protagonist must be understood variously as one who struggles to impose his or her stable, gendered identity, or a figure enmeshed in the hypnoid spell of the cinematic apparatus itself, are not given any consideration by Harvey. Indeed, it is a book that, knowingly or not, avoids all the 'keywords' that have recurred in the last two decades' discussion of Minnelli: desire, hysteria, seduction, ideology, identity...

Ultimately, Harvey's take on the value of Minnelli's art boils down to this: his sensibility was what made 'routine' Hollywood material watchable. He crafted it well, and added (whenever possible) a little something extra: a touch of irony, melancholy, or fatalism. Harvey is big on what he can only call 'dark side' criticism. We read again and again how Minnelli momentarily "allowed the placid surface of the Metro musical to be shattered by naked emotion" (as in Meet Me in St Louis), or implied an "undercurrent of erotic danger" (as in The Pirate), how he subtly 'upstages' one character or 'indicts' another through some telling bit of colour/design/camera movement business. But this is an incorrect critical model, a hopelessly unequal and unproductive exchange between an auteur who is somehow 'smart', thoughtful, artful, and a set of Hollywood conventions that are always only 'dumb', superficial, intrinsically uninteresting. Harvey gives his game away when he reflexly falls back on the assumption that, directed by virtually anyone but Minnelli, films like The Cobweb, Some Came Running and The Penelope would have been merely "turgid hokum" or "high camp". But why not instead indicate the entry's most important aspect. For example, a star next to a title indicates that such a film is most noted for its acting. The Guide then refers you to entries on the particular actors. The same goes with the titles themselves: each leads to other related titles according to theme or action, which enables the viewer to follow up on interested titles. If you have more than a passing interest in the cinema, this is where disagreements with the Guide can arise. All in all, however, this is one of the most informed and useful reference books for a general viewer that anyone could come across.

**INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY OF FILMS AND FILMMAKERS – 1: FILMS, SECOND EDITION**


This is the first of a five-volume set, and as a second edition the existing entries have been fully updated while some 150 new entries have been included. It is a reference book specifically tailored for the academic field, featuring the films that have shaped film history and that have had the most significant bearing on film theory and criticism.

The dictionary is an excellent research tool for student and teacher alike with cast and crew credits, production dates, awards received and, most importantly, a comprehensive bibliography for each entry, including a critical essay from a specialist of the field. Contributions come from an impressive number of luminaries: Dana B. Polan, Raymond Durgnat, Ed Lowry, Michel Ciment, Pam Cook, Dudley Andrews, Robin Wood, E. Ann Kaplan are but a few. Their entries will of course make for healthy debate.

This is a formidable volume which genuinely extends beyond a more listing, and in this respect makes an excellent cross-referencing device. As with the other volumes, this dictionary makes a good companion to David Thompson's A Biographical Dictionary of the Cinema and the late Richard Roud's Cinema: A Critical Dictionary.
FEATURES

BACKSLIDING
Prod. company Cast Films
Dist. company Film Four International
Budget $2.5 million
Pre-production 1/10/90
Production 5/11/90-1/12/90
Synopsis: A woman faces a crisis when the authorities want to commit her to a home for the aged.

BLINKY BILL
Prod. co. Yoram Gross Filmstudios
Dist. co. Beyond International Group
Budget $3 million
Synopsis: The film tells the story of Blinky Bill’s childhood with his friends in the bush. The peace and charm of their existence is shattered by the destruction and clearing of their home by loggers. But Blinky Bill rallies his friends and, in a series of exciting adventures, the bush animals win the struggle to preserve their existence.

THE FATAL BOND
Prod. company Intertropic Films and Avalon Films
Budget $5 million
Synopsis: A woman faces a crisis when the authorities want to commit her to a home for the aged.

FEATURES PRODUCTION

THE BLACK ROBE
Prod. company Samson Prods
Dist. company Alliance Communications
Synopsis: An eighty-year-old woman, still full of imagination and spirit, faces a crisis when the authorities want to commit her to a home for the aged.

A WOMAN’S TALE
Prod. company Illumination Films
Director Paul Cox
Producers Paul Cox
Scriptwriters Santhahe Naidu
Exec. producer William Marshall
D.O.P. Peter Taylor
Art Phillips
Focus puller John Platt
Dolly grip David Nicholls

GARBO
Prod. company Eclectic
Principal Credits
Director Ron Cobb
Producer Hugh Rule
Line producer Margot McDonald
Associate producers Neil Gladwin
Stephan Kearney
Scriptwriters Patrick Cook
D.O.P. Geoff Burton
Editor Neil Thompson
Prod. designer Richard Bell
Planning and Development
Casting director Richard Kent
Production Crew
Prod. manager Wonne Collins
Prod. coordinator Ann Darrouzet
Producer’s ass’t Gina Mendello
Prod. secretary Serena Gattuso
Unit manager Paul Healey
Prod. accountant Wonne Collins
Accounts ass’t Sharon Young
Completion guarantor Helen Watts,
Film Finances

On-set Crew
1st asst director Phil Jones
Stunts coord. Chris Anderson
Still photography Alan Markeild
Unit publicist Fiona Seaseon, DDA
Art depart. runner David G’rady
Art dept. runner David Bell
Set dresser Richelle Dane
Props buyer Darryl Mills
Props maker Jescia Groduer
Wardrobe
Wardrobe designer Rose Chong
Cast: Stephen Kearney (Steve), Neill Gladwin (Neill), Max Cullen (Wai), Simon Chiwers (Detective), Gerard Kennedy (Trevor), Moya O’Sullivan (Freda), Tammy McIntosh (Jane).
Synopsis: Garbo is the story of Steve and Neill, two very unlikely garbage men working in a mythical innercity suburb of Melbourne. These bumbling philosophical garbage men what we all want—love and justice—and their quest leads them through trial and tribulation, physical abuse, madness and mayhem, until finally justice is done.

THE GIRL WHO HAD EVERYTHING
Prod. company View Films
Synopsis: Friday on My Mind.

FLYNN
[Presently being reshoot with new director Frank Howson. No details supplied.]

Your complete Negative Matching Service
including • Time Coding onto 8” Floppy Disc • Super 16mm • Syncing Neg or Pos Rushes • 16mm & 35mm Edge-Coding Service ("Rubber Numbering") • Tight deadlines our specialty
• 24 hours a day, 7 days a week if required.
Contact Greg Chapman
Tel (02) 439 3988
Fax (02) 437 5074
105/6-8 CLARKE ST.,
CROWS NEST NSW 2065
The story of Martin, a blind photographer obsessed with honesty but hiding from the truth.

Synopsis: An enchanting story which borrows characters and events from popular fairy tales and weaves them into love, mystery and mirth.

Features:

- **PROOF**
  - Prod. co. House & Moorhouse Films
  - Production 15/8/90 - 25/9/90
  - Post-prod' 5/11/90 - March 1991

- **Principal Credits**
  - Director: Jocelyn Moorhouse
  - Producer: Jocelyn Moorhouse
  - D.O.P.: Martin McGrath
  - Sound recordist: Lloyd Carrick
  - Editor: Ken Sallows
  - Prod. designer: Patrick Reardon
  - Costume designer: Ceri Barnet

- **Planning and Development**
  - Casting consultants: Greg Apps, Liz Mullinar Casting

- **Post-production**
  - Prod. manager: Catherine Bishop
  - Prod. coordinator: Joanne McDonald
  - Unit manager: Robert Graham
  - Production runners: Angi Limoncelli, Russell Boyd
  - Prod. account: Madly Carter, Moneypenny Services

Insurer
- Tony Leonard
- Steves Lumley
- Celebration guarantor: Film Finances
- Legal services: Roth Warren & Menzies
- Focus puller: Calum McFarlane
- Clipper-warader: Warik Gissold
- Key grip: Brett McDowell
- Gaffer: John Tate
- Mark Gilfelder

On-set Crew
- 1st assistant director: Tony Mahood
- 2nd assistant director: Julie Burton
- Continuity: Anne West
- Boom operator: Amanda Rowbottom
- Make-up: Jennifer Mitchell
- Sound recordist: Kristina Frolich

Government Agency Investment:
- Funded by: Film Victoria
- Cast: Hugo Weaving (Martin), Russell Crowe (Andy), Genevieve Picot (Celia), Heather Mitchell (Mother), Jeffrey Walker (Willy), Tava Stratton (Tina)
- Synopsis: The story of Martin, a blind photographer obsessed with honesty but hiding from the truth.

Features Post-production
- Prod. company: AYA
- Dist. company: Ronin Films
- Budget: $1,800,000
- Production: Solrun Hoaas
- Producers: Denise Patience, Solrun Hoaas
- Asst. producer: Katriniho Maeda
- Scriptwriter: Gary Burn
- D.O.P.: Geoff Burton
- Sound recordist: Ben Osmo
- Editor: Stewart Young
- Prod. designer: Jenny Tate

Planning and Development:
- Casting consultants: Annette Blonski
- Production assistants: Katsuriho Maeda (Aya)
- Prue’s Zoo (Aussie supports): Julie Forsythe
- Dialogue coach: Robert Graham

Production Crew
- Prod. coordinator: Joanna Carmichael
- Prod. manager: Rob Hewlett

Government Agency Investment
- Development: Film Victoria
- Production: Film Victoria
- Government Agency Investment: Film Victoria

Construction
- Construction: High Rise Flats
- Post-production: John Penders
- Sound editor: Peter Clancy
- Laboratory: Bruce Braun
- Film gauge: Fuji
- Shooting stock: 96 mins

Government Agency Investment
- Development: Film Victoria
- Production: Film Victoria
- Government Agency Investment: Film Victoria
- Cast: Eri Ishida (Aya), Nicholas Eadie (Frank), Chris Haywood (Mac), Miki Oikawa (Junko), John O’Brien (Kato), Mayumi Hoskien (Nancy), Marion Heathfield (Lorna), Julie Forsythe (Mandy), Tim Robertson (Willy), Tava Stratton (Tina), D.J. Foster (Barry)
- Synopsis: A post-war story of love, marriage and friendship, begun during the occupation of Japan, and set in 1950s and ’60s Victoria. Here the cultural shift and
new pressures force three people through inevitable change.

DEAD SLEEP
Prod. company Village Roadshow Pictures (Aust.)
Principal Credits
Director Rolf de Heer
Producers Stanley O’Toole
Exec. producers Graham Burke
Scriptwriter Greg Coote
Art director Michael Ryan
Sound recordist Ian Grant
Editor David Halliday
Art director Phil Warner
Casting Brian May
Planning and Development Judy Hamilton
Production Crew
Film manager Rose Spokes
Prod. coordinator Toni Wing
Producer’s assist Annette Bass
Prod. secretary Rebecca Coate
Unit manager Britt van Niftrik
Accountant Amanda Walton
Financial controller Vincent O’Toole
Prod. accountant Lyn Paetz
Paymaster Angela Kenny
Camera Crew
Camera operator Gene Moller
Focus puller Bob Foster
Clapper-loader Paula South
Key assist Damin Stanley
Key grip Kurt Olsen
Asg grip Bob Eden
Gaffer John Byden-Brown
Electrician Darrin Ballengarry
On-set Crew
1st asst director Bruce Redman
2nd asst director Elizabeth Williams
3rd asst director Christina Hunnam
Continuity Carolina Haggstrom
Boom operator Basil Krivovichko
Hairdresser Ken McLeod
Unit nurse Yin Mei Chee
Still photography Karl Fehr
Unit publicist Hunt Downes
Art Department
Art director Jonathon Leahy
Art dept coord. Nikki Cavanagh
Props buyer Nick Brunner
Stunt co-ordinator Kristin Reuter
Stunt driver Davidson’s
Stunt driver Tony Bonner
Stunt driver Rod Sheaves
Wardrobe
Wardrobe supervisor Helen Maines
Wardrobe asst Jill Loo
Construction Department
Construct. manag. Terry Matheson
Leading hand Pat Hogan
Carpenter Barry Beedle
Studios Warner Roadshow
Post-production
Post-production super. Judy Hamilton
Asst editor Patrick Stewart
Editing asst Andrea Reilly
Foley Trish Graham
Mixers John Simpson
SFX mixers James Currie
Mixing asst David Redfern
Mixed at Henry Taylor
Laboratory Colourfilm
Lab liaison Simon Wicks
Shooting stocks Eastmancolour 5296.
Cast Linda Maggi (Toby), Bonner (Dr Hackett), Christina Amor (Sister Kereby), Craig Cronin (Dr Lack), Suean Cox (Raven Richards), Andrew Booth (Hugh Clayton), Ian Cope (Flats manager), Brian Moll (Dr Shamberk), Slim de Grey (Mr McCarthy), Suzie Mackenzie (Nurse Wendy).
Synopsis: none supplied.

DEADLY
Prod. company MimaProducts
Pre-production 15/1/90 – 23/2/90
Production 26/2/90 – 6/4/90
Post-production 9/4/90 ...
Principal Credits
Director Ross Gibson
Co-producer John Cruthers
Scriptwriter Ross Gibson
D.O.P. Paddy Castle
Sound recordist Bronwyn Murphy
Editor Andrew Plain
Prod. designer Edie Kurzer
Costume designer Amanda Lovejoy
Planning and Development Casting Alison Barrett
Production Crew
Production manager Adrian Parr
Co-producer Christine Johnson
Location manager Pip Brown
Prod. accountant Liane Collwell
Runner Nikki Marshall
Insurer FIA
Completn guarantor (Helen Watts)
Legal services Ruth Warren & McKenzie
Camera Crew
Camera operator David Williamson
Focus puller Julie Wurm
Key grip Greg Molenaux
Asg grip Steve Gordon
Gaffer Phil Golombok
Best boy Peter Pecicon
3rd electrician Ian Boosan
Generator operator (Moneypenny Services)
Boiling coach Jimmy Brown
Still photographer Anne Zahalka
Catering Judy Morel
Unit publicist Dallas Kilponen
Catering the Shooting Party
Art Department
Art director Will Soeterboek
Standby props Ruth Brudgefield
Best boy Kate Green
Post-production
Post-production Spectrum Films
Asst editor Shaun Scott
Editing assistants Tony Andrews
ADR Bronwyn Murphy
Sound editors Angus Robertson
Musical director Gary Warner
Music performed by Johnny Wellington
Prod. Account Jan Storey
Lab Auckland
Anatol Ian Reardon
Length 90 mins
Shooting stock Fujicolor
Government Agency Investment
Production AFC
Cast: Richard Roxburgh (Johnny), Giannis Pepeceze (Alexandra), Tibor Gypjas (Mannet), Lynette Curran (Paul), John Dono (Mr Bean), Gandi Maclean (Lester), Noel Taylor (Skis), Kris Grevas (Kogarah), Paul Chubb (Sgt Jack Grant), Paul Goddard (Bobby).
Synopsis: A tale of real estate and revenge set in the ominious inner-city of the imagination.

DEADLY
Prod. company Moir/storm Prods
Dist. co. Beyond International Group
Production 2/7/90 ...
Budget $4 million
Principal Credits
Director Esben Storm
Producer Richard Moor
Screenwriter Esben Storm
D.O.P. Geoff Simpson
Sound recordist David Lee
Editor Ralph Strasser
Prod. designer Peta Lawson
Costume designer Terry Ryan
Planning and Development Casting Forcast
Extras casting Christina Norman
Production Crew
Production manager Catherine Bishop
Production coordinator Carol Richardson
Prod. secretary Melanie Groves
Location manager Peter Lawless
Unit manager William Matthews
Director’s asst Darrin Ballengarry
Prod. runner Liam Branagan
Prod. accountant Liane Lee
Accounts ass
Camera Crew
Camera operator Bill Hickey
Focus puller Phillip O’Sullivan
Clapper loader Key grip
Gaffer Matt Fairbairn
Electrician Andrew Smith
On-set Crew
1st assst director Chris Webb
2nd assst director Maria Phillips
3rd assst director Karan Monshone
STUDIOS
Continuity Joos Weekes
Boom operator Mark Keating
Makeup Elyse Savage
Hairdresser Peter Stubbs
Stunt coordinator Peter Stubbs
New Generation
Unit publicist Sonya Ainsworth
Catering Kollage
Art Department
Art director Kim Darby
Art dept coord Sue Jarvis
Art dept runner Simon Cox
Costumes Jock Mclellan
Stunt props Harry Zettel
Construction Department
Scene supervisor Gi Allian
Scene supervisor Sue Carter
Unit manager Mark Keating
Catering
Finance
Accounting
Film Fund
Location manager
45 mins
Catering
Finance
100 mins
Gauge
55 mm
Camera
Eumig Super 8
Projection
16 mm

MASCARADE — a team of experienced, highly trained make-up designers and make-up artists geared to produce the face, the look, the feel you need... for film, television, theatre, video and still photography.

MASCARADE — competent specialists in Period Makeup — very natural “No Makeup” look, Special Effects Makeup, Fantasy, Prosthetics.

MASCARADE — the Makeup Agency in Melbourne for all Makeup needs: Handmade Bald Caps, Eyebrow Covers, etc.

Suppliers for Visiora: Joe Blasco - Pola Makeup.

The agency has grown from the unique Metropolitan School of Theatre Arts, established in 1984 to ensure the highest standard of training for future makeup artists.

Enquiries for Agency and School: Shirley Reynolds on (03) 266 2087 or AH (03) 687 3435

(Moneypenny) Liane Collwell
Nick Mayo
Laurie Kirkwood
Adrian Seffrin
Brendan Shany
Neville Cameron
Trevor Coun
Werner Garluck
Andrew Smith
SYNOPSIS: A black man comes to the Gold Coast to find his sister and becomes involved in a web of corruption and organized crime.

ISABELLE EBERHARDT

HURRICANE SMITH

PRODUCTION CREW (AustraliA)

Principal Credits

Director: Leo Berkeley

Scriptwriter: Margaret Egan

Sound recordist: Sam Mallet

Art director: Margaret Egan

Producer: Leo Berkeley

Director: Leo Berkeley

Camera operator: Rex Watts

Script editor: Peter Jordan

Sound recordist: David Aubrey

Director: Leo Berkeley

Production manager: Rex Watts

Editor: Leo Berkeley

Principal Credits

Director: Ian Pringle

Producers: Daniel Scharff, Jacques Leclerc

Production: Film Finance Corp.

Government Agency Investment

Filmscope

Jean Petit

Safety officer

Gerard Moulevrier

First asst directors

Construction Department

Set dresser

Guy Norris

for Africa. What they hope will be a great adventure starts to go horribly wrong.

Synopsis:

The story of Isabelle Eberhardt, a romantic adventurer in North Africa at the turn of the century.

Synopsis:

The story of Isabelle Eberhardt, a romantic adventurer in North Africa at the turn of the century.
STAN & GEORGE'S NEW LIFE

Prod. company Lea Films
Pre-production March 20–5/90
Production 25/5/90–8/6/90
Post-production 10/6/90–7/12/90

Principal Credits

Director Brian McKenzie
Producer Margot McDonald
Scriptwriters Brian McKenzie, Deborah Cox
D.O.P. Ray Argull
Sound recordist Lloyd Carrick
Editors Edward McGuire-Mason, Darryl Mills

Costume designer Rose Chong
Composer Michael Atkinson
Production Crew Prod. manager Lesley Parker
Prod. coordinator Amanda Crittenden
Location scout Marcus Hunt
Unit manager Leigh Amnizbolb
Andrew Power
Financial cont. Robert Thordgold
Prod. accountants Mary Makris, Simone Semmens

Complet. guarant. Film Finances

Camera Crew Camera operator Brian O'Sullivan
Focus puller Tina Raftery
Clapper-loader Barbara Gheble
Key grip David Williams
Ast grips Sarah O'Connell
Gaffer Garry Valentine
Best boy Drury Hogg

Post-production Makeup & special make-up Susanna Anstey
Hairdresser Sandra Cichello
Wardrobe designer Caroline Hockings
Wardrobe assistant Wendy O'Sullivan

Vehicle wrangler Tony Mahood

Carpenters

Michael Hill
Pat Carr
Howard Clark

Other departments

Publicity

Dennis Davidson Associates

Cast: Anthony Hopkins (Wallace), Ben Mendelsohn (Carey), Toni Collette (Wendy), Alwyn Kurts (Mr Ball), Daniel Wylie (Fletcher), Bruno Lawrence (Robert), Rebecca Rigg (Cheryl), Russell Crowe (Kim), John Walton (Finn), Angela Punch-McGregor (Caroline), Courtenay Taylor (Peta), Cameron Daddo (Theo).

Synopsis: A major saga sweeping two suburbs. It is the late 1960s. A time-and-motion expert is called in to modernize the fast-growing factory. Amid this upheaval, an 18-year-old youth attempts a major romantic takeover.

STAN & GEORGE'S NEW LIFE

Prod. company Lea Films
Pre-production March 20–5/90
Production 25/5/90–8/6/90
Post-production 10/6/90–7/12/90

Principal Credits

Director Brian McKenzie
Producer Margot McDonald
Scriptwriters Brian McKenzie, Deborah Cox
D.O.P. Ray Argull
Sound recordist Lloyd Carrick
Editors Edward McGuire-Mason, Darryl Mills

Costume designer Rose Chong
Composer Michael Atkinson
Production Crew Prod. manager Lesley Parker
Prod. coordinator Amanda Crittenden
Location scout Marcus Hunt
Unit manager Leigh Amnizbolb
Andrew Power
Financial cont. Robert Thordgold
Prod. accountants Mary Makris, Simone Semmens

Complet. guarant. Film Finances

Camera Crew Camera operator Brian O'Sullivan
Focus puller Tina Raftery
Clapper-loader Barbara Gheble
Key grip David Williams
Ast grips Sarah O'Connell
Gaffer Garry Valentine
Best boy Drury Hogg

Post-production Makeup & special make-up Susanna Anstey
Hairdresser Sandra Cichello
Wardrobe designer Caroline Hockings
Wardrobe assistant Wendy O'Sullivan

Vehicle wrangler Tony Mahood

Carpenters

Michael Hill
Pat Carr
Howard Clark

Other departments

Publicity

Dennis Davidson Associates

Cast: Anthony Hopkins (Wallace), Ben Mendelsohn (Carey), Toni Collette (Wendy), Alwyn Kurts (Mr Ball), Daniel Wylie (Fletcher), Bruno Lawrence (Robert), Rebecca Rigg (Cheryl), Russell Crowe (Kim), John Walton (Finn), Angela Punch-McGregor (Caroline), Courtenay Taylor (Peta), Cameron Daddo (Theo).

Synopsis: A major saga sweeping two suburbs. It is the late 1960s. A time-and-motion expert is called in to modernize the fast-growing factory. Amid this upheaval, an 18-year-old youth attempts a major romantic takeover.
THE BIRTH OF SALLY'S BABY

Prod. company Flinders Media
Distributor Flinders Medical Centre
Budget $5000

Principal Credits

Director Mike Davies
Producer Mike Davies
Exec. producer Alan Bentley
Assoc. producer Delia Connery
Technical prod. Rod Larcombe
Scriptwriter Mike Davies
Sound recordist Mike Davies
Composer David Kottlowy

Other Credits

Camera operator Mike Davies
Music performed by David Kottlowy

Synopsis: A video showing the normal birth of a normal child, to be shown to prospective parents at prenatal classes.

I SEE TREES DIFFERENTLY NOW...

Composed by Andrew Pidgeon

DIFFERENTLY, but still a comedy of errors.

THE RETURNING TILL THERE WAS YOU

AN ARRANGEMENT OF OLD FRIENDS

Based on idea by

John Clabburn

Music performed by Andrew Pidgeon

Director Ivan Gaal
Producer Ivan Gaal
Co-producer Barbara Dovers
D.O.P. Valeriou Campan
Sound recordist Robin Spilias
Editor Ivan Gaal

Other Credits

Researcher Ray Carroll
Camera assistant Aron Dale
VTR operators Chrys Niemer
Boom operator Sonya Rambahers
Still photography John Burdian
Mixer John Campbell
Mixed at Pro-Image Production
Titles Don Porter
Video gauge BVU — to 1"
Development Ministry for the Arts
Production Ministry of Education, Victoria
Marketing Ministry of Education, Victoria
Marketing consultant Tracie Hille
Synopsis: Sculptor Tony Trebesch was part of Artists-in-Schools programme at Glen Katherine Primary School. This documentary explores the valuable and enriching time students and staff experienced during his stay.

IF IT HURTS, TELL US

Prod. company Flinders Media
Dist. company Flinders Media
Budget $10,000

Principal Credits

Director Mike Davies
Producer Mike Davies
Exec. producer Alan Bentley
Assoc. producer Rod Larcombe
Scriptwriters Mike Davies

Based on idea by Harry Owen

Sound recordist Andrew Gancarczyc
Editor Andrew Gancarczyc
Composer Andrew Pidgeon

Other Credits

Gaining Spotlight Artists

Casting consultant Lyn Pike
Camera operator Mike Davies
Music performed by Andrew Pidgeon
Narrator Jackie Kerin

Gauge Low band U-matic

Cast Karen Inwood (Nurse), John Skid-
Synopsis: Melody, a warm, intelligent woman, has been in a turbulent and sometimes violent relationship with Brian for some years. The news that her friend Christine had been killed by Kevin confirms Melody’s fear that this would also be her fate.

For details of the following see previous issue:

GET REAL

GRASS FED BEEF

THE LAW DECIDES

THE MAN IN THE BLUE AND WHITE HOLDEN

RIVER MANAGEMENT

THEIR LIVES IN OUR HANDS

SYDNEY NSW AND TELEVISION OFFICE

For details of the following see previous issue:

BIOTECHNOLOGY NOW DRIVING FOR KEEPS - SAFE SENIORS

PHOTO LICENCES - AN INTRODUCTION

REHABILITATION WORKS

SALT OF THE EARTH

STEP BY STEP

VITAL POINTS - AN INTRODUCTION TO SELF DEFENCE FOR WOMEN

WALKING TO LIVE - SAFE SENIORS

THE WHAT AND WHY OF FOI

AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN’S TELEVISION FOUNDATION

For details of the following see previous issue:

SKY TRACKERS

TELEVISION PRE-PRODUCTION

BRIDES OF CHRIST

Prod. companies Roadshow, Coote & Carroll

ABC

Pre-production

7/9/90 - 9/7/90

Production

7/9/90 - 21/12/90

Post-production

25/1/91 - 21/7/91

Principal Credits

Director Ken Cameron

Producer Sue Masters

Business Affairs Kim Vecera

Executive producer Penny Chapman

Assoc producers Adrienne Read

Ray Brown

Scriptwriters John Alsop

Sue Smith

Janitza Jani

D.O.P.

Sound recordist Nicholas Wood

Editor Tony Kavanagh

Prod. designer Marcus North

Costume designer Annie Marshall

Composer Bill Motzing

Planning and Development

 Casting Maura Fay

Extra casting Irene Gaskell

Production Crew

Prod. manager Joanne Rooney

Prod. coordinator Sandy Symonds

Prod. secretary Jane Symonds

Location manager Patricia Rodskkins

Unit manager John Downie

Production runner Polly Job

Prod. accountant Michelle D’Acrey

Insurance Hamond Jewell

Complet. guarant. Film Finances

Cameraperson

Camera operator Russell Bacon

Key grip Gary Burdett

Gaffer Tim Murray-Jones

Best boy Pierre Drion

Gennie operator Bob Woods

On-set Crew

1st assistant Adrian Pickerglass

2nd assistant Karin Kreiters

Continuity Rhonda McAvoy

Make-up Garry cup

Jenny Boehm

Still photography Barry Gaunt

Unit publicist Virginia Sargent

Catering John Fauldhill

Art Department

Art assitant Helen Baumann

Key reeie Kea Practio

Art dept coord Robert Hutchinson

Props Don Page

Props buyers Mervyn Asher

Susan Glavich

Workdrobe

Workdrobe coord Wendy Falconer

Standyb workdrobe asst Joanna Baker

Construction Department

Scene artist Paul Brocklebank

Post-production

Assit editor Nicole La Macchia

Stage manager Lucas Frey

Art Department

Art dept runner Sarah McNeice

Prop. runners Sue Masters

Able bodied Stands coord. Kim Heatlake

Safety officer Zev Eleketro

Publicity Beth Kindler, Nathan Hill

Unit publicist Teresa Naylor

Catering

Ear Indoors

Tutor Chris Tugwell

Art Department

Art assitant Jillian Parr

Assist prop. Kim Jackson

Artiste Robyn Belling

Stage hands Chris Webster

Wardrobe

Costumier Denise Rawshow

Stage manager Tracy Richardson

Organizer Anja Seiler

Asst standyb ward. Andrea Hood

Cutter Sheryl Piklinton

Animals

Animal wrangler Bill Wollbery

Construction Department

Construction sup. John Moore

Scene artist John Hartras

Carpenters Ken Hartras

Brenton Grear

Arther Vette

Painters Christine Wood

Brush hands Penny Price

Liam Liddle

Linda Wog

Studios

Hendon Government Agency Investment

Prod. FFC and Teliefilm Canada

MARKETING

International dist.

RTPA

Cast: Kate Nelligan (Anne), John Bach (Walker), Rachel Friend (Kitty), Charles Mayer (Philippo), Pipa Grandison (Elsa), Cameron Doddano (Norman), Hannah Fletcher (Bob), David Rayne (Jack), Justine Clarke (Liddy), Emma Fowler (Rose).

SYNOPSIS: It is the height of the Depres­

sion and a dispoor family is fighting a losing battle of scrapping a living from an arid, marginal farm. Just when things are blackest, they inherit a massive for­

tune and their lives are transformed. But with wealth and privilege comes cruel con­

trasting lesson of the transience of love.

PRODUCTION

BEYOND TOMORROW (series)

[See issue 77 for details]
PG (PARENTAL GUIDANCE)

**April 1990**

- **PG (PARENTAL GUIDANCE)**
  - **Hunt for Red October**, The, M. Neufeld, U.S., 131 mins, United International Pictures, Occasional violence and low-level coarse language, V(i-m,j) L(i-l-g)
  - **Lambada - The Forbidden Dance**, R. Alber, M. Fischer, U.S., 94 mins, Hoyts Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Occasional low-level violence and sexual allusions, V(i-l-g) O (sexual allusions)
  - **Love Is Love** (main title not shown in English), J. Lau, Hong Kong, 94 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Occasional low-level coarse language, L(i-l-g) O (adult concepts)
  - **Zero Town** (main title not shown in English), Mosfilm Studios, U.S.S.R., 98 mins, Ronin Films, Adult concepts, O (adult concepts)

**M (MATURE AUDIENCES)**

- Arviero P. Pakyaj, India, 164 mins, B. Prabhaharan, Occasional violence and adult concepts, V(i-m,g) O (adult concepts)
- **Cold Summer of 1935**, The, J. Lau, Hong Kong, 94 mins, Mosfilm Studios, U.S.S.R., 98 mins, Ronin Films, Adult concepts, O (adult concepts)
- **Coop de Ville** L. Brezner-P. Schiff, U.S., 94 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Occasional coarse language, L(i-m,g)
- **Encounter of the Spooky Kind** II (main title not shown in English), Bojon Films, Hong Kong, 99 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Occasional violence and horror, O (horror) V(i-m,g)

**R (RESTRICTED EXTENSION)**

- **Handmaid's Tale**, The, Daniel Wilson, U.S., 108 mins, United International Pictures, Occasional coarse language and sexual scenes, L(i-m,g) S(i-m,j) V(i-m,g)
- **I Love You To Death**, Jim J. Mullan, U.S., 96 mins, Hoyts Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Occasional low-level violence and sexual allusions, V(i-l-g) O (sexual allusions)
- **Jesus of Montreal** R. Frappier-P. Genest, Canada-France, 119 mins, Newvision Film Distributors, Occasional coarse language and adult concepts L(i-m,g) O (adult concepts)
- **Tropic Belle Pour Toi** Cine Valse-Orly-TFI, France, 91 mins, Palace Entertainment Corporation, Sexual allusions, O (sexual allusions)
- **Zanzibar** (untitled said to be) French Production-SGG-Film, France, 96 mins, Productions de France, Drug use and occasional coarse language, O (drug use) L(i-m,g)

**Wild Orchid** M. Damon-T. Anthony, U.S., 111 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Occasional sexual activity, S(i-m,g) V(i-m,j)

**Films Board of Review**

- **Hard to Kill** (a) Adelson J-B. Todman, U.S., 95 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Occasional violence, V(i-l-g) O (adult concepts)
- **I Heard the Owl Call My Name** D. Duke, U.S., 81 mins, Capricorn Pictures, Occasional low-level violence, V(i-l-g)
- **To Spay With Love** Producer not shown, Hong Kong, 97 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Mild horror, O (mild horror)
- **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles** K. Dawson-S. Fields-D. Chan, U.S., 93 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Frequent low-level violence, V(i-l-g)

**Censorship L I S T I N G S**

- **Handmaid’s Tale**, The, Daniel Wilson, U.S., 108 mins, United International Pictures, Occasional coarse language and sexual scenes, L(i-m,g) S(i-m,j) V(i-m,g)
- **I Love You To Death**, Jim J. Mullan, U.S., 96 mins, Hoyts Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Occasional low-level violence and sexual allusions, V(i-l-g) O (sexual allusions)
- **Jesus of Montreal** R. Frappier-P. Genest, Canada-France, 119 mins, Newvision Film Distributors, Occasional coarse language and adult concepts L(i-m,g) O (adult concepts)
- **Tropic Belle Pour Toi** Cine Valse-Orly-TFI, France, 91 mins, Palace Entertainment Corporation, Sexual allusions, O (sexual allusions)
- **Zanzibar** (untitled said to be) French Production-SGG-Film, France, 96 mins, Productions de France, Drug use and occasional coarse language, O (drug use) L(i-m,g)
**MATURE AUDIENCES**  
Believed Violent S. Bobbi, France, 102 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Frequent coarse language and occasional violence, V(f-m-g) L(i-m-g) V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) O(nudity) 
Bird On A Wire, R. Cohen, U.S., 110 mins, United International Pictures, Occasional violence, V(f-m-g) L(i-m-g) V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) O(nudity) 
Blue Blood D. Whitten-B. Williams C. Waterstreet, Australia, 108 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Occasional violence, V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) O(nudity) 
Cadillac Man C. Rosen-R. Donaldson, U.S., 95 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Frequent coarse language and occasional violence, V(f-m-g) L(i-m-g) V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) O(nudity) 
Censorship Regulations (main title not shown in English) Bo Ho Films, Hong Kong, 95 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Occasional violence, V(f-m-g) L(i-m-g) V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) O(nudity) 
EXPUCITNESS/INTENSITY  
Low Medium High Justified or Grandfathered 
**POURPOSE**  
for classifying non "G" films. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Films</th>
<th>Purposes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meet the Applegates</td>
<td>Dayalan, Occasional violence, V(i-m-g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatal Passion</td>
<td>(main title not shown in English)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Steel</td>
<td>E. Presman-O. Stone, U.S., 101 mins, CEL Film Distribution, Frequent coarse language and violence, V(f-m-g) L(i-m-g) V(i-m-g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born Innocent B. Curtis, U.S., 95 mins, Capitol Pictures, Occasional Violence, V(i-m-g)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadillac Man</td>
<td>C. Rosen-R. Donaldson, U.S., 95 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Frequent coarse language and occasional violence, V(f-m-g) L(i-m-g) V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) O(nudity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiery Family</td>
<td>A. Maltman, U.S., 89 mins, United International Pictures, Frequent coarse language, V(l-m-g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass House</td>
<td>R. Christiansen-R. Rosenberg, U.S., 92 mins, Capricorn Pictures, Occasional violence and coarse language, L(i-m-j) V(i-m-g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardian, The</td>
<td>J. Wizen, U.S., 92 mins, United International Pictures, Horror, occasional coarse language, sexual scenes, O(nudity) V(i-m-j) L(i-m-j) V(i-m-j) S(i-m-j)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Party</td>
<td>W. Hudlin, U.S., 101 mins, Hoyts Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Drug use, O(drug use)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatal Passion</td>
<td>(main title not shown in English) Simon Ko, Hong Kong, 90 mins, Yu Enterprises, Occasional violence and sexual scenes, V(i-m-j) S(i-m-j) O(nudity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiery Family</td>
<td>A. Maltman, U.S., 89 mins, United International Pictures, Frequent coarse language, V(l-m-j)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass House</td>
<td>R. Christiansen-R. Rosenberg, U.S., 92 mins, Capricorn Pictures, Occasional violence and coarse language, L(i-m-j) V(i-m-g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardian, The</td>
<td>J. Wizen, U.S., 92 mins, United International Pictures, Horror, occasional coarse language, sexual scenes, O(nudity) V(i-m-j) L(i-m-j) V(i-m-j) S(i-m-j)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Party</td>
<td>W. Hudlin, U.S., 101 mins, Hoyts Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Frequent coarse language, sexual scenes, L(i-m-j) V(i-m-j) S(i-m-j) O(nudity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idayas Thamarai M. Veda, India, 145 mins, B. Prabhakharan, Occasional violence, V(i-m-j)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jail House Eros (main title not shown in English) Golden Harvest Diagonal Pictures, Hong Kong, 86 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Occasional violence, V(i-m-j) O(sexual allusions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhouse</td>
<td>L. Dixon, U.S., 90 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Occasional coarse language and adult concepts, L(i-m-j) V(i-m-j) S(i-m-j) O(sexual allusions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami Blues</td>
<td>J. Demme-G. Goetzman, U.S., 90 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Occasional violence, V(i-m-j) S(i-m-j) O(sexual allusions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muqaddar Ka Badshah (main title not shown in English)</td>
<td>G. Ud, India, 163 mins, S. Dayalan, Occasional violence, V(i-m-j)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My Hero (main title not shown in English) D+B Films-Chung Sing Film, Hong Kong, 90 mins, Yu Enterprises, Frequent violence, V(i-m-g) 
Nuns on the Run M. White, U.K., 90 mins, Hoyts Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Occasional coarse language and nudity, V(i-l-j) L(i-l-j) V(i-l-j) S(i-l-j) O(nudity) 
Penn and Teller Get Killed A. Penn, U.S., 89 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Occasional coarse language, L(i-m-g) V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) O(nudity) 
Stage Door Johnny (main title not shown in English) Golden Way Films, Hong Kong, 95 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Occasional violence, V(i-m-g) L(i-m-g) V(i-m-g) S(i-m-g) O(nudity) 

**(RESTRICTED EXHIBITION)**  
Dragon Fighter, The (main title not shown in English) Producer not shown, Hong Kong, 92 mins, Yu Enterprises, Very frequent violence, V(i-m-g) 

**FILMS REFUSED REGISTRATION**  
Outlaw Brothers, The (the Eric Tung-Frankie Chan, Hong Kong, 100 mins, Chinatown Cinema, 13 (1) (13) (1), O (gratuitous cruelty to animals) 

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS**  
Zina K. Mc��ullen, UK, 94 mins, Australian Film Institute 

**BOARD OF REVIEW**  
Christy Canyon Starring in a Gourmet Quickie Gourmet Video Collection, U.S., 29 mins, G. R. Hill Decision reviewed: Refusal by the Film Censorship Board pursuant to Section 14 (1) (a) of the Victorian Films Act 1971 Decision of the Board: Confirm the decision of the Film Censorship Board Devil in Miss Jones 3 - A New Beginning, A. Penn, U.S., 83 mins, G. R. Hill Decision reviewed: Refusal by the Film Censorship Board pursuant to Section 14 (1) (a) of the Victorian Films Act 1971 Decision of the Board: Confirm the decision of the Film Censorship Board 

**DEFINITIONS**  
**FREQUENCY**  
Infrequent Frequent Low Medium High Justified Grandfathered 
**EXPLICITNESS/INTENSITY**  
S (Sex) 1 f m h j g 
V (Violence) 1 f m h j g 
L (Language) 1 f m h j g 
O (Other) 1 f m h j g 

**CINEMA PAPERS**  
CONTACT DEBRA SHARP  
ON (03) 429 5511  

**G (GENERAL EXHIBITION)**  
Galaxy Express 999 Y. Tani animation, Japan, 124 mins, Japan Information and Culture Centre 
Jetsons - The Movie, W. Hanna, J. Barbera, U.S., 79 mins, United International Pictures Night of the Galactic Railroads, Masao Hara-Anumi Tashiro, Japan, 104 mins, Japan Information and Culture Centre 

**PG (PARENTAL GUIDANCE)**  
Big Steal, The, D. Parker-S. Tais, Australia, 99 mins, Hoyts Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Occasional low-level coarse language and sexual allusions, L(i-l-g) O(sexual allusions) 
Doll, The Mosfits Studio, U.S.S.R., 128 mins, Ronin Films, Occasional violence and sexual allusions, V(i-m-g) O(sexual allusions) 
Dreams Hideo Kurosawa-M. Y. Inoue, Japan, 117 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Occasional violence and sexual allusions, V(i-m-g) O(sexual allusions) 
Freedom Is Heaven Mosfilm Studio, U.S.S.R., 73 mins, Ronin Films, Nudity, adult concepts, O(nudity, adult concepts) 
Fumbling Cops Producer not shown, Hong Kong, 90 mins, Chinatown Cinema, Occasional low-level violence and coarse language, V(i-l-j) L(i-l-g) 
Gremlin 2 - The New Batch M. Finnell, U.S., 105 mins, Village Roadshow Corporation, Mild horror, O(mild horror) 
Kerouce Seller's Wife, The (main title not shown in English) Mosfilm Studios, U.S.S.R., 96 mins, Ronin Films, Occasional violence, V(i-m-g)
CONGRATULATIONS TO GOSHU FILMS FOR COMPLETING THEIR FEATURE FILM ‘AYA’ AND MACAU LIGHT FILM CORP. UPON COMMENCING PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY FOR THEIR INDEPENDENT FEATURE ‘RESISTANCE’

VICTORIAN FILM LABORATORIES
4 GUEST STREET HAWTHORN VIC 3122
PH: (03) 818 0461 FAX (03) 819 1451

R (RESTRICTED EXHIBITION)
Erotic Nights (main title not shown in English) Producer not shown, Hong Kong, 87 mins, You Enterprises, Frequent sexual activity and exploitative nudity, V(f-m-g) O(exploitative nudity)

Leatherface - Texas Chainsaw Massacre III R. Engelman, U.S., 80 mins, Hoyts Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Occasional graphic violence, V(i-m-g) O(horror)

Total Recall B. Feithshans-R. Shusett, U.S., 119 mins, Hoyts Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Frequent violence, V(i-m-g) O(horror)

Welcome Home M. Ramshof, U.S., 88 mins, Hoyts Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Occasional coarse language, L(i-m-g)

Lady From Shanghai, The Orson Welles, U.S., 85 mins, Hoyts Fox Columbia Tri Star Films, Adult concepts, occasional low Mysteries In Southwest China Cheung Sin Yin-Wong Seulin, Hong Kong, 95 mins, Yu Enterprises, Adult concepts, O(adult concepts)

Storia Di Ragazzi E Ragazze (A Story of Boys and Girls) A. Avati, Italy, 91 mins, Premium Films, Sexual allusions, O(sexual allusions)

Story of Anya Kyachina, The (main title not shown in English) Mosfilm Studios, U.S.S.R., 117 mins, Penman Investment, Occasional coarse language, L(f-m-g)

To Kill a Dragon (main title not shown in English) Mosfilm Studios, U.S.S.R., 85 mins, Ryoichi Sato, Japan, 86 mins, Japan Information and Culture Centre, Adult concepts, O(adult concepts)
The Personal Current Account

Do you work all hours and Saturdays to meet your deadlines? Are you sick of bank charges, bank hours and lack of bank service?

Then you should open a Personal Current Account at the Bank of Melbourne, and discover a more professional approach to costs, service and hours.

- Free cheques, no fees.
- Earn up to 13.5%, daily interest.
- Open 9 to 5 weekdays, 9 to 12 Saturday.
- Helpful staff – personal service.
- 110 branches, over 600 agents.

How to apply:

To open your Personal Current Account, visit your nearest Bank of Melbourne branch. Or call 522 7500

*Also late Friday, some branches. Saturday morning most branches.

Head Office: 52 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000.
From the year 3000 came 'The Girl from Tomorrow' and I chose film to shoot the journey. The year 3000 sets were mostly white on white, with little touches of color...everything controlled by light and energy, so we used light to build mood. EXR 7248 is an all-purpose stock for me: in a lot of situations in the series we burnt out things for effects — 3 or 4 stops over, and there was still something there; if I needed more light I forced the stock — up to 2 stops. Although it's not usual to force 16mm, it held up incredibly well. Its extreme fine grain and definition are impressive. It holds up very well when cut next to 35mm — as we do all special effects on Eastman 35mm. And the color of EXR 7248 is extraordinary — it's so true. EXR is liberating — good to know that I can shoot with total confidence.

Jan Kenny
Director of Photography
'The Girl from Tomorrow'

Film Origination... "EXR is liberating!"

Eastman
EXR
Motion Picture Films

Kodak and Eastman are registered trademarks. 500 GCD & EIDB