3-1-1995

Cinema Papers #103 March 1995

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FROM THE SOIL Ross Dimsey and Film Queensland by Scott Murray A new Director at Film Queensland promises a greater sense of community and a renewed push to see the local industry assume national importance 14

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Publisher
MTV Publishing Ltd, Abbotsford, 96p

This serial is available at Research Online: http://ro.uow.edu.au/cp/103
A Fresh Approach
The Queensland Film Industry Gears Up

A Feeling for Snow
Geoffery Simpson Defines the Look

Passionate Women
Gillian Armstrong’s Latest Triumph
HALIFAX f.p.

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Old Novel, New Women

Margaret Smith talks to director Gillian Armstrong about her post-feminist version of the Louisa May Alcott classic, Little Women, and to DOP Geoffrey Simpson about a film which has already started people talking about possible Academy Awards. PAGE 4
Ronin Films

A

intrest Pike, Managing Director of Ronin Films, announced on 5 January 1995 a restructure of the company. Agreement was reached to sell the Academy Twin and Walker Cinemas in Sydney to the Palace-Village partnership. The exhibition activities of the company, through the Electric Shadows Cinema and management of the Centre Cinema in Canberra, remain under the control of Ronin Films. The sale of the Sydney cinemas enables a restructure of Ronin to take place. The theatrical and non-theatrical divisions will be consolidated and relocated to the company’s Canberra office.

Palace

The Palace-Village partnership continues at great pace, with a tripleplex opening in the Combe Centre, South Yarra, and the George Twin in St Kilda (where Pulp Fiction immediately set a box-office record). Together with the Academy Twin and Walker Cinemas purchases in Sydney, and more cinemas planned, the initiative is changing the face of exhibition (and thus distribution) across two states.

Cinema Nova

Two new screens will be added to the Cinema Nova twin in Lygon Street, Carlton. Nova 3 and 4 will open late March 1995. Jointly owned by Natalie Miller and Barry Peak, the Cinema Nova opened two-and-a-half years ago and its continued success has led to the current extension plans. Miller said, “The additional cinemas will enable us to screen more films and cater for our expanding audience.”

Beyond

Beyond International Limited has appointed Kim Dalton to run the company’s operations in Victoria from 6 February 1995. Dalton will establish a Melbourne office and liaise with producers in Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia. Beyond will be looking for a range of suitable film and television projects for acquisition by the company (to either produce and/or distribute).
AUSTRALIAN FILM FINANCE CORPORATION

1995 FFC Feature Film Fund: How Films will be Selected

Following the first meeting of the Film Fund panel, the FFC clarified a number of the procedures involved in the selection process for this year’s Film Fund.

The panel comprises Tristram Miel, Mac Gudgeon and Jocelyn Moorhouse, with Lynda House acting for Moorhouse until she returns to Australia after the filming of ‘The Making of an American Quilt.’ In the event Moorhouse is unavailable to participate in the final selection process, the FFC will then seek to recruit a director to the panel. In this case, House will remain on the panel.

At this stage, the panel expects to read and therefore assess each of the scripts submitted to it. Accordingly, subject only to an unexpected volume of projects, script assessors will not be used. For this reason, filmmakers are advised to submit their projects as soon as possible so as to avoid a “bunching” of projects on 31 March 1995 (the closing date). All applications should be sent to the Sydney or Melbourne office of the FFC, with application forms that are available from these offices. As soon as they are received, they will be passed directly onto the panel for reading.

When the panel has short-listed the projects, it will interview the creative teams (producers, writer and director) regarding the script they have submitted. There will be no opportunities for further drafts to be submitted. Decisions will be based on the script submitted at the time of application.

The FFC has revised its application form to exclude distributor delivery items from the budget. Accordingly, while the budget cap of $2.5 million will remain, this is exclusive of delivery items. Filmmakers should obtain the revised application form from the FFC.

The announcement date of the selected projects is still expected to be 30 June 1995.

FFC Appoints Sue Seearay as Project Manager

Sue Seearay has joined the FFC as Project Manager in Sydney. Most recently, Seearay was associate producer and production manager of ‘The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert.’ She was also production manager on various feature films and documentaries. These include the documentary series ‘Heaven’s Breath,’ ‘The Animal Contract’ and ‘Backlash.’

Seearay will be working with the investment team concentrating initially on accord documentary projects.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FILM CORPORATION

On 29 December 1994, the South Australian Film Corporation announced two new management appointments: Damien Parker as Manager, Film Development, and Julie de Roeper as Manager, Marketing.

Judith McCann, Chief Executive Officer of the SAFC, said:

The Corporation has attracted two highly experienced professionals in key positions to work with the local industry in building South Australia’s re-emerging film and television profile. Their interest is as much a tribute to the talent base here as it is to the SAFC’s new role in fostering and marketing the state’s creative energies and production opportunities.

Parker is a film and television producer with 28 years of experience in the industry. His most recent productions in South Australia were the award-winning mini series ‘Grum Pickings’ for the South Australian Film Corporation and ‘Tracks of Glory’ for Barron Films. In 1984 he produced ‘Rough Diamonds,’ a feature film, from his current production base in Queensland.

De Roeper has worked in arts marketing since 1979, and in the film industry for the past six years. She was Publicity Co-ordinator for the Adelaide Festival in 1980 and for ‘Come Out 1981,’ Marketing Manager for the State Theatre Company in 1982-3, and Marketing Manager for the Adelaide Festival in 1984 and 1985. She then spent 18 months as production manager on various feature of the Multicultural Arts Trust of SA before training through the Australian Film Television & Radio School and entering the film industry in 1989.

AUSTRALIAN FILM INSTITUTE

8 November 1994

The Australian Film Institute announced the appointment of Bob Weis as Chairman of its Board of Directors. Weis replaced Daryl Jackson, AO, who served as the AFI’s Chairman for the past four years.

Weis, a film and television producer, has also held the position of President of the Screen Producers Association of Australia.

In announcing the appointment, Executive Director of the AFI, Vicki Molloy, thanked Jackson for his contribution.

11 November 1994

The Australian Film Institute announced that its Executive Director, Vicki Molloy, was to “regretfully” leave the AFI due to a restructure of the organization. Chairman Bob Weis acknowledged the contribution Molloy has made during her eight years in the position.

The AFI regrets losing Vicki Molloy but, following a recent review, it has been agreed that the AFI needs to be restructured. Unfortunately, there will be no position for her in the new structure.

Molloy said:
I regret that I am leaving the AFI, particularly at such an interesting time, but I am pleased to be leaving the organization in very good shape both financially and administratively.

Mid-December 1994

The AFI announced it will establish a “high-profile industry committee” to oversee plans for the annual AFI Awards Presentation. The Committee will comprise one eminent member of the film and television industry, two film distributors, two members of the Screen Producers Association of Australia and two representatives from the AFI.

23 December 1994

Chairman Bob Weis announced today that Ruth Jones has been appointed as the new Chief Executive.

Jones comes to the AFI from the Sheraton Towers Southgate, where she has been Public Relations Manager since 1982. Her background in the arts includes working as a publicist for the Victorian Arts Centre in 1980-92, and as Press Secretary and later Ministerial Adviser to Ministers for the Arts in the Victorian Government from 1985 to 1989. She holds a BA (Hons) in Visual Arts and has recently completed a Graduate Diploma of Business (Marketing) at Monash University.

23 January 1995

Jones took up her appointment as Chief Executive.
Louisa May Alcott’s novel, *Little Women*, is an American classic about the rites of passage of young women. Today, however, there are generations of young people who have never even heard of it, let alone read the novel. So, when American producer Denise DiNovi approached Australia’s Gillian Armstrong, it was a serious offer to be given serious consideration.

Armstrong decided that Alcott’s novel about the rebellious Jo March (Winona Ryder was already cast) was an important story about unusual and progressive family attitudes. Susan Sarandon was cast as Mrs March and Armstrong decided on the twenty-year-old Christian Bale as Laurie.

*Little Women* has already opened to good box office in America, where its mixture of commercial and art-house styles hasn’t deterred the public.
WOMEN

Margaret Smith talks with director Gillian Armstrong and DOP Geoffrey Simpson
What attracted you to making Little Women?

Actually, I had some doubts about doing the film when it was first offered to me, partly because I felt it touched on some of the themes I'd already dealt with in My Brilliant Career (1979), and partly because there had been other movies made of the book. But I was seduced into the project by my very pleasant producer, Denise DiNovi, and by Amy Pascal, the studio head, and also by finally meeting and talking to Winona about the project.

Denise pointed out that my worries about its dealing with some of the themes in My Brilliant Career were not all that important, seeing as there is probably a whole generation who haven't seen that film.

Denise also pointed out that Career was really about a young woman finding herself and finding her talents as a writer. While that is part of the story of Little Women, it is also about family and growing up. Our main character, Jo March, continues where we leave Sybil. She does grow up, become an adult and find her first love. In a lot of ways, it goes a lot further.

Did the other films of Little Women influence you at all?

I only had a very vague memory of the Katharine Hepburn Little Women [George Cukor, 1933]. I saw it when I was quite small and I decided that it would be better not to look at it again, or any of the others. I didn't want them to influence or block me.

When I started work with the screenplay writer, Robin Swicord, I asked her about some of the scenes that were in the book but not in the screenplay. She said, "Oh, I didn't want to do that, because they did that in the other movies." It was good that I was free from the burden of worrying about the other films, and I said, "I think our obligation is to the book. Let's just go back to the book and make the best script we can."

I still haven't seen the other films, but I'm actually very curious to see them now.

Because the book is so autobiographical, did Louisa May Alcott's own personality influence the interpretation of Jo March?

I did a lot of research into Louisa's life, as did Robin Swicord and Winona. There was a point, in fact, where Winona was starting to be confused about what was Louisa and what was Jo, and I said, "Stop reading about Louisa and let's just concentrate on Jo."

Robin and I did use some parts of Louisa's real life to fill in the background of the story, because some things were not properly stated in the book. It was interesting to know why the March girls were so different, and how they had been brought up in a family that was so ahead of its time. They had a mother who encouraged education for women, and who didn't see the marriage market as the be-all-and-end-all for her daughters.

We also discovered they were a part of one of the early philosophical groups in America, the Transcendentalists, who were based in New England with Emerson and Thoreau. So we put a little bit of that into the film.

How many drafts of the script were done before you came in?

Robin worked on the script with Amy Pascal. It was something that they were both very interested in.

Amy is the main studio executive at Columbia, and her full name is actually Amy Beth Pascal – she was named after the characters of Amy and Beth. Little Women had been something that she had been very passionate about, as was her mother, for a long time. Amy had tried to get various studios interested in the project over the years.

About a year before I came on, Amy became a powerful executive at Columbia, and she talked the studio into developing the screenplay. Robin and she did two drafts together and I was sent the second. We then did two or three official drafts together, though there were re-writes of certain scenes going on right up to the time we were shooting.

Were there any particular films which inspired the look of the film?

We actually went back to paintings by American artists of that period. Sergeant was one I really liked. We also looked at some of the European artists. It was a question of finding various images that I, the designer and [DOP] Geoff [Simpson] felt had the right feel for the story.

I also got a book of early American photographs that were taken just a little bit later, in the 1880s. There is a beautiful collection of early images of women in a house quite similar to Orchard House. It is quite a plain sort of country house, and there is a photograph of them in the garden picking pears. That was quite inspirational, with the feeling for light sources and so on.

We then chose the colours from various paintings.

It was also a part of the research that we did about the whole Alcott family and Orchard House, which is where Louisa wrote the book and is now a museum. The first thing that I did was go there and visit. Then as soon as Jan Roelofs, our production designer, started, he went straight to Boston and actually spent three days at Orchard House. He even got to see drawings of their garden and what herbs and plants and trees were there. We based the house very much on the real house.

The Transcendentalists were like the first hippies. It was a back-to-nature movement, a reaction against the industrial revolution. Concord was à la the country outside of Boston. This group of philosophers all decided to live in the same area. They were vegetarians and they were very involved in a natural look of furniture. Louisa's father, Bronson, built the weird natural-wood fence we have in front of the house. It was this whole thing of going back to nature. At the time, all the other fences in the other houses were very upright Victorian picket fences. I think he was hammering Jo's whole childhood – the eternal renovator!

There was also a great love of ancient Greek and Roman philosophy and art. In
"I think it’s very important in a period film to really get the proper period look. Nothing’s worse than seeing a film ten years later and finding it looks like the fashion of the time it was made."
their drawing room, Bronson put in two arches either side of the fireplace and placed Grecian or Roman busts inside them.

Some of these things would have looked most abnormal for the time. It was so different and so real, it was how Louisa's life was, so we recreated a lot of that in our interior set.

Did you use real locations for all the other houses?

We were taken on one of these tourist things the first week I was there by the film production people and shown a number of period houses. I said to the designer, “Could you show me some more? I’ll be back in ten days.” I rang him later and said, “How are you going?”, and he said, “Gillian, I think we saw the four period houses.” [Laughs]

One of them was the Women’s University Club in Vancouver, so it felt a really appropriate place. In that one house we actually did London, Nice and the Concord Ball. It was a very big mansion, and Jan did a very clever job in the set dressing. It was a bit like, “Okay, we’ve shot London now. Let’s go over to Nice.” and we’d walk next door!

You also gave the girls a very natural look. It looks as if they don’t have any make-up on.

I think it’s very important in a period film to really get the proper period look. Nothing’s worse than seeing a film ten years later and finding it looks like the fashion of the time it was made, whether they have the bangs that were in fashion at one time or the kick-ups at another. And all the girls, including Winona, were very happy to grow out their eyebrows, and have an absolutely “no make-up” look.

We also purposely cast all pale-skin girls. Winona, luckily, already had pale skin, but it was important to try and tie them together as sisters. As soon as an actor was cast, we sent them a note saying, “Do not go in the sun. Do not bleach your hair. Grow everything and please come back to us au naturel.”

Another interesting actor in the film is Christian Bale.

Christian was the little boy in Empire of the Sun [Steven Spielberg, 1987], after which he did two American films which never really took off: Swing Kids [Thomas Carter, 1993] and Newsies [Kenny Ortega, 1992].

I hadn’t seen either of those. It was...
Winona who said to me, “You should check out this Christian Bale.” And he was fantastic. I hope we will all see a lot more of him now. He’s actually English.

And what about the other men in the film?
You probably had more choice casting your men than casting women.

Actually, it was very hard to cast Laurie. Christian was one of the first people that I saw. Then I saw all these young American men. We really had an enthusiastic turn-out, but so many of them are now into body-building, which is really incorrect for the period. Also, there was a lot of young American actors who play very “street”. They were all doing “Marlon Brando”! They couldn’t deal with the language at all. They were so used to improvising grunting that to speak period dialogue and sound natural was actually quite an art.

I think Robin wrote beautiful, very simple, very naturalistic period dialogue. It has the flavour of the time. But the actors were more like, “Oh Jo, baby!”. I mean, with one of them it literally slipped out! They couldn’t help themselves!

With the other two parts, I had fantastic fun looking for Professor Bhaer and John Brooke. Eric Stoltz, whom I’d met earlier on another film I’d been thinking of doing in America but which ended up collapsing, called and said, “I think it’s wonderful you are doing the film! I’d love to be part of it!” I said, “You’re too young to be the Professor and you are too old to be Laurie”, and he said, “Well, if there is anything, I’m happy to do any tiny part; just happy.” So I said, “Well, would you do John Brooke?” and he said, “Yeah, fine!” That was wonderful!

We were also thrilled to have Gabriel Byrne [as Bhaer]. The film was one of those rare times where the whole cast were very easy-going, non-egotistical, low-key people who were happy to be in a film. We had great fun.

How much rehearsing were you able to do before the shooting?

We had two weeks’ rehearsal, though Winona and Christian started their ice-skating lessons two months before we started shooting.

And how long was the shoot?

It was an eleven-week shoot, plus second unit. We shot in New England before we started the proper shoot. We managed to do all the snow stuff up there in December. Then, just as I finished my cut, we went back to the same town in Massachusetts, Deerfield, to do the Fall shoot. It was great to be able to have this full circle of the seasons.

How did it feel to work with your biggest budget to date?

Actually, it wasn’t a very big budget if you think about it, for a period film with two major stars. The budget was probably about what Mrs. Sof-fel was ten years ago. Little Women was $7m more, but costs have probably gone up about that much.

Actually, it was a very tight budget and a very tight schedule. It was only brought in, and looked so fantastic, because of the great discipline of the Australians on the team, who have worked with two cents, and a designer who has worked on independent European films. We were all like weeping and saying, “We thought we’d be in Hollywood one day and things would be easier!” But so much goes up the top. Your stars are paid so much and the studio takes a lot of the top as well, with various expenses. It wasn’t a luxurious shoot; it was very tight, and very tough.

What I’d like to say to all Australian readers is that it was a huge rush finishing it for a Christmas release. I’d always wanted to come back to the New England town of Deerfield, where we shot the opening snow sequence, to have a real feeling of continuity of time. But by the time the studio finally gave the go-ahead to return to do the Fall shoot, I was in the middle of post-syncing the sound and working with the composer on the music. I physically just couldn’t do it.

Little Women (Mervyn LeRoy, 1949) and Little Women (David Lowell Rich, tele-feature, 1978). There is also a BBC mini-series.
Geoffrey Simpson


Simpson is now able to choose his films from an incredible array of projects, both here and overseas. He says he’s been attracted to performance-based films where the actors are more important than the action, and is grateful he has not had to film Hollywood ‘nasties’.

**How did you decide on Little Women’s look?**

The look of a film is defined by the script and by the art department. It is a self-evolving process to which a lot of people contribute.

On *Little Women*, we had Jan Roelfs, a Dutch designer, who started the shoot very nicely with an Academy Award nomination, with his partner, for *Orlando* (Sally Potter, 1992), and Colleen Atwood, who did the costumes from Los Angeles. They made a huge contribution.

The look defined itself, in the sense that the film is set in the 1860s, with a lot of light coming from candlelight and kerosene lantern sources. I wanted it to look warm and be very rich.

In pre-production, the gaffer and I tested different gels, played around with colour temperature and came up with a colour that I liked. The timer – or the grader as they are called in Australia – got the colour we wanted and we stuck to it throughout the film. Then Arthur Cambridge, who did the answer print here [at Atlab], fine-tuned it, improving it in some cases.

**Were you pleased the final grading was done here?**

I think it was John Scale who once said to me, “Thank God for Kodak and Arthur Cambridge”, which was a great line and is very true. Arthur is a fantastic grader and a very nice man, who has been in the industry a long time. He is one of those people who still has a great passion for his craft. I was certainly very pleased to come back here and have him pushing the buttons.

**Does working with someone like Arthur Cambridge allow you more control?**

When working in the States, it is usually part of my contract that I go back and have at least one session with a timer. But it’s much better to be here: you can spend a week looking at a couple of answer prints, then come back again and check things again. You can keep your finger on the pulse.

Gill also kept an eye on things, as did Nick Beauman, our editor. He followed it through by checking the prints in the States. We made the masters and the dupes here, but the 1,500 release prints were all done in the States.

**Because Little Women is about boisterous young women, did that also influence the look?**

The boisterous quality was more of a performance thing. In particular, I thought Winona did a great kind of changing from the young Jo to an older but still a bit immature Jo, to finally the Jo who is trying to be a writer in New York. Photographically we could lighten things a bit, like brighter and fairly energetic in the hair-burning scene, but it comes more from performance than cinematography.

**What about the camera tracking? It really suits the film by giving it a sense of movement.**

Gill and I both tried to move the camera. The shots were worked out very clearly during our five weeks of pre-production.

When we were on set, we used the time really well. There wasn’t much wasted coverage. If we decided to track, or do a close-up, that is how it was cut. There were some variations and options, of course, but the coverage and design in Gill’s head was pretty much how the film ended up.

**Does working like that mean the shooting ratio is quite low?**

Usually it does. I not sure what the ratio was on *Little Women*, but we certainly weren’t wasteful. The studio wouldn’t let us be!

**Did any other films influence your cinematography on Little Women, particularly older Hollywood ones?**

I don’t think so. It was probably much more influenced by modern films, with their richness and degree of contrast, which is now a contemporary look.

One film that came out last year which I really liked was *Searching for Bobby Fischer* [Steven Zaillian], shot by Conrad Hall. It was photographed very beautifully and it also had a kid as a star. That certainly was one film that stayed in my mind.

You receive influences from many sources: different pictures, contemporaries and older, from paintings, from photographers.

**What about the earlier versions of Little Women, like the one with Katharine Hepburn [George Cukor, 1933]?**

I saw about 20 minutes but found it virtually unwatchable and switched it off. Katharine Hepburn was very Hollywood, very over-the-top. I haven’t seen the June Allison-Elizabeth Taylor one [Mervyn LeRoy, 1949].

**Little Women opens with a snow scene, which is very blue. What did you want to achieve there?**

It was partly a contrast to what is to come later.

The film is about Christmases and a warm and happy family, even if the father is away at war. Gill and I wanted a very warm, homely kind of feeling to come from the photography. To contrast that, I made the exteriors cold and slightly bleak. Still, whenever we see
our girls running through the snow, they are happy and boisterous and colourful.

Actually, the snow was totally artificial. We sprayed very thin chopped-up bits of paper onto bushes and trees with jets of air and water. The air would blow the confetti on, and the fine mist would make it stick to the leaves. In the background, there were snow blankets, which are basically huge white sheets.

In the scene where Laurie is pulling the sled with the girls, he is walking on crushed ice we got from the fishermen in Vancouver, who were using it to store their fish.

All the snow you see, apart from the titles sequence, which was real snow in a place called Deerfield, is artificial.

Did you get that blue look when you shot it, or was that added in the grading?

A bit in the grading, and a bit from not using the full colour correction in the filtration.

Actually, it was freezing that first day we were in Deerfield. There was some fog around, so some shots may look as if there is a fog filter.

Many of the set-ups are very dark. Did you use candlelight to get the soft lighting on their faces?

No, it was all lit, and to a reasonable degree; it wasn’t wide-open super-speed lenses.

One person who encouraged me in the degree of darkness was art director Jan Roelfs, who said early on that he didn’t mind if we didn’t see all of the set. He said he could always do with more money to put things in it, but he was quite keen for things to be suggested and not lit in such a way that you saw every detail. There wasn’t “Boo hoo hoo” from the art department if things were dark. In fact, they encouraged me and gave me the confidence to push for the richness and contrast.

Did you light for a whole scene, or did you re-light for each angle?

Each set-up was a re-light. We had quite a lot of time because of the lengthy women’s make-up and wardrobe changes. We didn’t have to come on the set early; we would arrive on time.

Winona, who had a 12-hour deal so she wouldn’t have to be called early, would be in make-up while we’d be lighting. That gave me a lot of time to get the first set-up. We would block in for the whole scene and then I would fine-tune it from angle to angle and shot to shot. We obviously did the big, difficult choreograph camera move first, and then went in to pick up the close-ups afterwards.

Often when we were ready, I could say, “I don’t like this” and change it. We had the time because of the make-up.

What about your working relationship with Gillian Armstrong? This was your second film with her.

Yes, Gill and I also did The Last Days of Chez Nous about three years ago. I really like working with Gill and Chez Nous was a wonderful film to work on. It was a great crew and we were all in this tiny house in Glebe in the middle of summer, with Bruno Ganz sticking his head in the air-conditioning duct at every opportunity!
There was much more pressure on Little Women. It was a bigger film, with a lot more money involved, and the studio was breathing down our neck. That is one of the things about working in Australia that you don’t have in the States. You have responsibilities to your producer and the FFC or whomever the money comes from, but it’s not the same sort of pressure that you get from a studio.

Columbia Pictures had lost a great pile of money on some of its recent films, like Last Action Hero [John McTiernan, 1993]. It was being very careful, shall we say, and our budget was fairly tight for what we were doing – a costume period piece with a lot of sets and some big builds. Each department could have done with a little bit more money, and we were hopeful that Columbia would give us some, but it didn’t.

There was certainly a lot more pressure than on Last Days of Chez Nous and Gill was tense. I knew exactly where that was coming from and that was fine. There was never any dramas or problems. It was good.

Where were you when you were contracted onto the film?

I was filming Kevin Costner at night in the Georgia woods, in the mud and rain, for Jon Avnet’s film, The War.

I left there and went to New York for a day. Suddenly, I was in Deerfield filming snow scenes for the title sequence, with period wardrobe, awesome cast and snow, a million miles away from Georgia and night shoots and rain and guns and M16s.

Then I went and had a week and a half in Vancouver meeting Jan Roelfs and his art department, and going with Gill to the locations in Victoria, and on Vancouver Island, where our ‘Orchard House’ was. I then came back to Sydney.

I was here for about a week and a half, then turned around and went back to the States, when I had another three weeks or so in pre-production.

What I tend to do, as the sets are built and locations are locked-off, is take lots of photographs. So does Gill. We both had huge reference files.

Gill and I start to work out our camera angles during these surveys. We take photographs from certain angles and get a feeling of how the light works naturally, or might work with some help. Staring at those photographs day after day gives you a really good idea and sense of the overall visual tone of the picture. Obviously it changes once you get on the set, but I’ve done that with all the films over the past four or five years and find it useful. Gill had books filled with photos and she’d use some of mine sometimes and some of hers. We both have that visual sense, which is maybe another reason why I like working with her. I feel very attuned, and often I can anticipate exactly what she wants.

Of your many other films, was any a similar experience?

Each film is different.

Someone asked me the other day whether I would ever want to be a director, and the answer is categorically no. Directors work much too hard. Cinematographers work hard, but directors work incredibly hard.

One of the things I really love is the variety of the cinematographer-director relationship. I’ve been very lucky to have worked with a great bunch of directors. I suppose my big break into America was working with Peter Weir on Green Card. He is a fantastic guy. We had probably a month of pre-production, which was a lot of time to get to know each other and to get a sense of the film. We knew where we were going and what we were doing with it.

Did you use a storyboard on Little Women?

Not real storyboards as such. Gill often does little stick-figure drawings in her notebooks, and there are the still photographs taken on surveys. I also tend to take photographs of the actors rehearsing, though I did that much more on The War.
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From the S

Ross Dimsey has worked more sides of the Australian film and television industries than many. He is an experienced director (Blue Fire Lady), scriptwriter (Morris West’s The Naked Country) and producer of features (Kangaroo); a producer of television (A Thousand Skies); he has been Chief Executive of the Victorian Film Corporation (now Film Victoria); was an early president of SPAA; and is currently a Board Member of Cinema Papers. In short, Dimsey has the wide range of skills that many see as necessary for his new position as Director of Film Queensland. In fact, eighteen months prior to his appointment, Dimsey had already moved north to Brisbane from his base in Melbourne.

What was your opinion of Film Queensland prior to your appointment?

I thought there was some opportunities being missed, to be honest. FQ’s over-all approach was not entirely appropriate to the local industry’s stage of development.

We must be careful here to distinguish between the industry on the Gold Coast, which is essentially an imported industry supplying facilities, personnel and so forth to an export industry, and the ‘native’ industry, which is essentially centred in Brisbane.

What were the opportunities being missed in terms of the native industry?

I didn’t think a forward-enough view was being taken in terms of what this industry was going to look like in four or five years’ time.

In a way, it was understandable in that the previous administration of FQ was looking for a quick start-up. One way to do that was import producers like myself. In a couple of cases, that was successful in beginning to establish a producer infrastructure. But it takes more than that to make an industry. It seemed to me it was time for FQ to bite the bullet in regard to its own clientele in terms of those emerging writers and local producers who had not yet had an opportunity to do major drama – particularly those producers who might have been working in allied areas such as commercials, corporate and educational work, and documentaries.

One has to look at the development of the industry here as a task which will occupy at least three years, with some definite goals at the end. That’s not to say that the attraction of imported producers shouldn’t continue. But I felt that there wasn’t being much left on the ground from previous policy. People were coming and pictures were being made, but the people were going away again. One couldn’t trace a clear line of development of the local client base in that.

What have you done to change that situation?

The first thing is to recognize what the Queensland industry has and what it hasn’t. In many ways, it resembles the Victorian industry, if you take out the Crawford factor, of 1979, which was when I was appointed to the Victorian Film Corporation.

It’s not good enough to not invest in development of people because they lack experience. If one followed that rule, then there would be no development of people up through the system.

The policies that we will be putting in place this year, and which will carry us through my term, are in two streams.

One is the regular business of FQ, which is equity investment in pictures, and script development investment in established producers and established writers, with the overriding factor always being the Queensland elements through the various tests which have been applied in the past to investment.

The other stream is investment in people, with a training or personal development component.

An interview with Ross Dimsey, Director, Film Queensland by Scott Murray
"My aim is to see filmmakers in this office all the time, coming in chatting, whatever. That hasn’t been the case in the past"

We are working closely with the Australian Film Television & Radio School [AFTRS], which has an extremely vibrant office in Brisbane, run by Ursula Cleary. We have a number of programmes for writers, directors and producers, who are as yet untested.

A condition of this will be that recipients undergo some sort of post-graduate course – for want of a better term – organized by ourselves and the AFTRS. This has already been happening with writers, and with producers in various aspects of the producing profession.

In terms of marketing skills, we will be taking three or four essentially inexperienced producers to the major markets over the next two years and working those markets with them as a supportive partner. The learning experience is pressure-cooked to a certain extent to get these people up to speed on how the markets work, what you need to get a deal and so on.

The Australian Film Finance Corporation [FFC] is coming up here early in the year. We are running a two-day seminar on the basics of what the FFC is about. It is targeted at those people whom we believe are skilful and who have the potential to join the ranks of major producers. We just want to accelerate the process of personal professional development.

While there hasn’t been a strong independent feature industry in Brisbane, there has been a struggling but continuing short film industry.

Are the people that you are looking to develop coming from that area, as well as from commercials, documentaries, corporate work and so on?

Yes, on all counts. I’d prefer not to give specific names, because that’s not productive and unfair to those not named, but there is a handful of short filmmakers who look very interesting.

We have supported three short films this year and an element in the selection of those films was that the personnel involved showed potential to go on. That is, we saw the short film not only as an end in itself – to make a movie – but also as an effective stepping-stone to the next phase.

As well, we were looking at cross-over people. There are a couple of producers here who have been very successful in areas like corporate work and commercials, who have indicated they are now ready to move over to features. This is what happened in Victoria with a number of producers, and I was one of them, coming from commercials directing. Of course, those who are prepared to cross over must recognize that they are at the very bottom of the learning curve in terms of producing drama.

There are also some very skilled people working in education and allied fields who have shown real producing skills and, I have to say, some entrepreneurial skills. They are ready to make the cross-over.

You obviously place great importance on producers. Do you, in fact, think the knowledge

What’s Happening in the ‘Native’ Industry

Currently shooting or in production outside the Movie World Studios are:

- **The Blackwater Trail** (feature, Ian Barry) Produced by John Sexton and Julie Foster for Ruthertun Film Holdings, the film began post-production on 20 February 1995. Financed by the FFC, FQ, Portman Productions and Network Ten, it is the story of a writer who returns to a small Queensland town and becomes entrapped in corruption and cover-up. Scripted by Andrew Russell, it stars Judd Nelson, Dee Smart, Mark Lee, Peter Phelps and Rowena Wallace.

- **Lizzie’s Library** (television series) This stop-animation series had been made for the ABC.

Soon to start production are:

- **Fire 2** (mini-series) This is the second series, the first having been produced by Michael Caulfield, Simone North and Tony Cavanagh for Extra Dimensions, in association with Liberty Films. Scripted by Tony Cavanagh, Everett De Roche and Deborah Cox, it told the story of a platoon of firefighters and starred Andy Anderson, Liddy Clark, Shane Connor and Deborra-Lee Furness.

- **Ocean Girl 3** (television series) Set to start production in the middle of the year, this is the third series for one of Australian television exports. The first series was executive produced by Jonathan M. Shiff for Westbridge Productions, and was financed by the FFC, Film Victoria and Film Queensland. The first series told the story of Neri, the mysterious girl from the sea who returns to search for the secret of her past and stars Marzena Godecki, David Hoflin and Jeffrey Walker.

- **The Last Bullet** (feature, Michael Pattinson) This Japanese-Australian co-production (producers Georgina Pope and Brian Burgess), a sort of *Hell in the Pacific*, will star a major Japanese actor and Australian Jason Donovan.

Dimsey hopes that three more local features will go into production in 1995, as well as a family television series.
and expertise of producers in Australia is something that needs improving?

Yes... an emphatic "Yes"! And I include myself among those people. I now recognize that at various stages of my career some form of post-graduate training in specific areas would have accelerated my personal development as a producer, and made me more effective.

Historically, producers have emerged from a variety of areas, and many of those now working successfully are self-taught. That's a process which takes a long time, where you need a very high degree of opportunity to try and fail. It was the 10BA era which afforded that opportunity.

We all know that 10BA now lives under something of a cloud, but, if one looks at the pictures that were made under the 10BA régime, and if you look at the people involved, you'll find that there were a number of producers who were given that opportunity to fail. But they learnt as they failed, which was a vital factor in accelerating that self-education.

I'm faced with a different task. The financial climate is completely different. Money is increasingly available to fewer and fewer and more-established individuals. In New South Wales and Victoria, we are looking at the agglomeration of producer units under umbrellas, which is something we all could see coming two or three years ago.

That opportunity doesn't exist in Queensland and these people I'm talking about will never be given the chance to acquire those skills, or to reach the ranks of active producers, by a natural-selection process.

FQ has a real role to play in getting these people to the point where they are given the opportunity to prove themselves.

Whereas most directors and writers reveal their best talents quite early on, even the best producers need time to learn the market place and develop and hone their skills.

Exactly. It's to do with the respective skills.

You can train directors, but it's self-evident that directing skill - that magic ingredient - is innate. People can get better at it by training, but, by and large, there are good directors who will always be good directors, and there are heaps of others who aren't so good and who, no matter what happens, will always be not so good.

Writers are slightly different in that innate skills in the language can be adapted. We've seen some interesting cross-overs into screenplay writing with playwrights, short-story writers and novelists. They can be helped by training programmes. But again, by and large, the ability to tell a story effectively is an innate skill.

As for producing, one likes to think of the romantic image of the producer as someone who can pick the winners simply by instinct. That is self-evidently not possible, the business of producing is largely the business of building teams - financial teams and creative teams. This is a process which can be learned. It relies far less upon that magic spark of genius to pick the winner. That's still an element, and, if you look at some of our most successful producers, that element is there. But I think you will find that many of them are also writers or directors. Maybe the spark is coming from those areas.

At the time of Cinema Papers' Queensland supplement a year ago, there were many complaints from within Queensland that the federal bodies, particularly the Australian Film Commission (AFC), weren't sufficiently supportive of Queensland. Was that the case and, if so, is it changing?

I don't believe that was a fair criticism of the AFC, although it is a body situated in Sydney which has historically tended to focus on Sydney and, to a certain extent, Melbourne.

With the appointment particularly of Tim Read [as Director, Film Development], I sense a new attitude within the AFC in terms in spreading its effect more equally among the states. This can be seen in the statistics about the recent Producer Support Scheme [under the Distinctly Australian Initiative], which showed a national balance.

Actually, there were not many applications from Queensland. That was probably because people didn't quite know how to go about it. They were not AFC-ready to the same extent as those new producers working in Victoria and New South Wales, who have all the advantages of the networking and service organizations in those states.

One of the things FQ will be looking at, particularly with our short filmmakers who are one step back from these emerging producers for major work, are ways in which we can make them more AFC-ready. They must be confident in terms of how they work the AFC system. It is just the simple things of how to apply, how to get information as to what the AFC programmes are about, how to build skills and the background which will make them more attractive to AFC investment.

We all love to whip the old AFC, but I have to say in this case only a very small element was an AFC problem.
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An overview of Queensland’s independent screen culture

This seems as good a time as any to provide an up-to-date assessment of the state of independent screen production in Queensland. Ross Dimsey has just taken over the Director’s chair at Film Queensland, the local film cultural organizations have just received their annual round of funding for 1994-95, the successful applicants for the Short Film Fund have just been announced and there is a general feeling in the air that 1995 may be an interesting year for screen culture in Queensland.

Australian Film Commission

The AFC ‘ heavies ’ were recently in town, the first time in years, specifically to listen and talk to the filmmaking community. “The Commission will be paying heed to geography”, announced Tim Read, Director of Film Development. “We are prepared to try and give a go to a broad spectrum of funding applications across Australia.” As part of this commitment to regionalism, staff of the AFC will visit Queensland at least three times a year, to meet filmmakers face-to-face, to advise and discuss projects.

The significance of this announcement may be lost to the southern states, which are used to having an AFC presence in relative proximity. The last time Queenslanders had the benefit of personal feedback, especially those who were not fortunate enough to be short-listed, was when Richard Keys held the position of Project Officer in the Creative Development Branch ... and that was some time ago. Certainly, when a funding agency in Queensland was revived as the Queensland Film Development Office in 1988, filmmakers responded to the more accessible and visible form of local government support. Arguably for valid reasons, the AFC was perceived as more responsive to the cultural milieu of its geographical location.

While the AFC is not applying any statistical principles, one of the motivating factors for its more pro-active stance is the consistently small number of applications that originate from Queensland. On the last round of development applications, 759 were received, 42 from Queensland (and only 5 of these were funded). In the interests of cultural diversity, the AFC has aims to increase this statistic.

Film Queensland and the AFC

After the bleak years of the 1980s, the Queensland Film Development Office, now Film Queensland, has a large void to fill with modest funds. Its annual budget of about $2 million supports festivals, film organizations, training and work-experience programmes, and various forms of production support, including the Short Film Fund, which is allocated $100,000 of the budget. In 1994, that boundary was pushed to $114,000 to accommodate three selected projects, two at $30,000 plus and one at $50,000. The Fund has been operating for four years, but, in the last two, Film Queensland has been viewing its support in terms of people investment rather than purely project investment.

In 1993, attention was focused on the producer. In 1994, the accent was on the Professional Development Fund for mentors to guide/advise selected directors through their projects. The Short Film Fund is viewed as a form of professional development, an apprenticeship which hopefully...
would lead on to bigger and better things for Queensland.

Mark Chapman, Project Officer for Film Queensland, said that it was to their advantage that each successful application put forward a creative team of producer, director and writer, as in "a feature-film package". Selected from a field of approximately 30 applications, the assessors were unanimous in their choices, basing their decisions not only on which scripts worked, but also on the abilities of the director, and the relevance of the project to his or her career development.

The AFC, on the other hand, is working on a different agenda. The Short Film Fund is orientated towards a premise that applauds cultural diversity and integrity. The Fund is looking for the "innovative, pushing the boundaries", etc., that places more emphasis on experimentation and challenging ideas in form and content. It is this style of short film that is found to be more marketable on the international circuit of film festivals.

The two agendas may not be mutually exclusive, but one of the excuses used for the AFC's reluctance to co-fund short film projects has been that project sophistication by Queensland's applicants has not measured up to the range submitted from the southern states. The AFC continues to maintain its directive towards funding only the "best" projects, regardless of where they come from. Consequently, there is still a tension between the two funding agencies over which scripts should be funded.

Sometimes, this hiatus has worked to the benefit of filmmakers. Randall Wood, a documentary filmmaker who has only had the opportunity to work in the short format, was rejected twice by Film Queensland on his project Goori Goori Dreaming, which has since been screened on the ABC and won four local awards in Queensland. Wood: I got knocked back initially, then applied to the AFC and Film Queensland for the Microdoc's Project. Film Queensland again said no - they didn't like the script - but the AFC picked it up and Film Queensland agreed to support it.

Significantly, it is the Microdoc's Project arrangement between the AFC, ABC and Film Queensland - a distribution system of funding set-up specifically to address regionalism and cultural diversity - that has provided this opportunity.

In the past, the AFC has been viewed as wary of any commitment to co-fund Film Queensland projects. But the key players have changed, and we have been assured during the AFC's visit to Queensland there is now more willingness to co-operate between the two funding bodies. This may be due to Queensland's emerging status as a major venue for national and international features. Then again, the presence of Queensland academic Stuart Cunningham as a Commissioner of the AFC may be another factor in focusing attention on Queensland.

**Screen culture in Queensland**

The often unacknowledged but significant players in forming screen culture and more specifically screen literacy in Queensland are the tertiary film and video training institutions. These include the Queensland University of Technology's School of Media and Journalism, Griffith's School of Film and Media, and the Queensland College of Art, now part of Griffith University, though production facilities in all three institutions are predominantly confined to the medium of videotape.

These institutions provide production facilities within a learning environment that exposes their students to many of the past and contemporary debates on cinematic forms and industry practice. Within this context, students are expected to explore their ideas, and, while they may not wish to be publicized, many of these institutions have developed a practice of turning a blind eye to those extra-curricular activities in filmmaking. Film Queensland follows on the work of the tertiary institutions by providing a public platform for student work of merit through the Annual New Filmmakers' Awards and the Brisbane International Film Festival.

Mairi Cameron, a QUT student, won the Best Documentary Award this year for Driving Ms Crazy, a quirky documentary on women, their cars and their relationship with mechanics. She has since won the Short Poppy Award, and has been interviewed on the SBS Movie Show. Significantly, only she and one other member of the crew were QUT students.

Niamh Lines, a Griffith student, enrolled in a part-time honours degree so that she would have two years of access to its computerized post-production facilities. She has won public recognition for her video art, Talk Show, an 'animated' conversation using the juxtaposition of computer-distorted images with off-beat dialogue. Lines hopes to pursue a career in video art and now feels she is in a stronger position to apply to the New Image Fund, rather than enrolling in another part-time, post-graduate degree.

With the presence of these tertiary courses producing a number of high-production-quality short videos every year, and with the New Filmmakers' Awards, a short film/video culture is alive and kicking - at least in Brisbane. Besides the key organizations - the Queensland Cinematheque, Brisbane Independent Filmmaking and Women in Film and Television (Qld) - there is Ribcage, a new group of women filmmakers and radio producers, and Briz 31, the public broadcasting station that has just started televising last year. All have taken advantage at some time or other to tap into

by Sue Ward

**CINEMA PAPERS • MARCH 1995**

![Image](image-url)
a readily-available source of short videos that generally don’t cost anything if you know a friend of a friend. The video-makers are pleased to get exposure for their work and the organizations have been gratified by the public support for their screenings. Even local cafés in West End regularly screen shorts to complement their artistic ambiance.

One of the key players in the independent film area is Brisbane Independent Filmmakers Inc. (BIF). It is an organization that has survived since the mid-1970s on little more than the tenacity of its members. BIF still has a rocky relationship with the funding bodies, Film Queensland and the AFC. For the past six months, all administration has been carried out by volunteers, yet they have managed to maintain an important profile in the independent filmmaking scene.

BIF maintains a filmmakers’ support service providing advice on all aspects of filmmaking from writing submissions, script editing, budgeting, crewing and access to equipment (though the organization has little of its own). Director-writer Michelle Warner took out the Australian Writer’s Guild Award for the Best Education/Training Documentary, The Car, The Dealer, His Client and Her Uncle, largely with the production support and expertise of BIF members.

BIF also publishes Exposure, a glossy publication devoted to local screen culture. This magazine, published every two months, is also reliant on the goodwill of the editorial staff and its contributors – BIF members, independent filmmakers and film students – who contribute to the publication without payment. Exposure is financed by subscriptions, local business sponsorship and advertising. Local support from the Valley Business Association has also funded BIF’s “Mall of Silents”, an event in which the organization projects silent classics; onto a 12 x 9 foot screen placed amongst the table, chairs and patrons of the Valley sidewalk cafés, Brisbane’s inner-city alternative scene.

Although BIF has had to rely on the entrepreneurial skills of its executive members, it is probably the only film cultural organization that has any presence in Queensland’s far regional centres, through its Qantas Touring Short Film Festival. The airline provides airfares to Townsville, Cairns, Mt Isa and Arlie Beach. BIF makes contact with either local filmmaking groups/film societies, or local city/shire councils. A tour is also planned for Charliewide and Longreach sponsored by Flight West.

These tours increase BIF’s membership and the circulation of its magazine, provide contacts for members and a network of local venues. Mindful of regional audience tastes, films are carefully chosen from BIF’s five-day festival of Short Films that would be appropriate. But as filmmaker Defrim Isai comments:

Unfortunately it comes down to the basic process of changing the culture of regional audiences from the expectations of mainstream feature films. But with the short-film format, people grasp a better understanding of what is possible with a low budget.

Certainly, the progress experienced so far in Queensland can be largely credited to Film Queensland. Queensland continues to be locked out of the AFC’s Industry and Cultural Development Programme’s “budget lock-in” situation, so the burden of organizational support for Queensland organizations has fallen onto the shoulders of Film Queensland. 3

Thankfully, the police form of coercion undertaken by the AFC and Film Queensland during 1992-93 to nationalize activities of WIFT, Cinematheque and BIF under the one organization has largely been laid to rest. The detrimental effects of this push by the AFC and Film Queensland was not only to spend a considerable amount of money on employing interstate consultants, it also had the tendency to promote an under-siege mentality that stifled natural lines of co-operation between the organizations. It is a healthy sign that the heterogeneity of screen culture has finally been recognized.

This year, Film Queensland has employed a Cultural Development Officer, Sharon Sargent, who has initiated monthly round-table discussions between WIFT, the Cinematheque and BIF. WIFT (Qld), affiliated with the national WIFT (Aust.), has always had a very active rôle in issues of local screen culture, as well as taking on many of the industry issues relating to gender. The Queensland Cinematheque’s rôle is to administer the National Cinematheque programme, as well as a bi-monthly programme of guest speakers. This initiative promotes a more effective working relationship between the government agency and the cultural organizations, with the aim to prompt a more synergistic use of existing skills and resources.

Also being addressed is the need to establish some form of archival collection in collaboration with the State Library, of work by local film/video makers for preservation and easy access by the public and organizations. Griffith Artworks, situated at Griffith University, has provided a leading-edge example of what could be done through its project of compiling an extensive video-art collection on laser disc.

Another more ambitious idea is to stage an annual event that would pull together the various diverse elements of screen culture to include community video work, and the Aboriginal organizations such as TAIMA (Townsville) and Murriimage (Gympie), for the purpose of highlighting issues of advocacy, new technologies, and to support regional culture, particularly from the groups that exemplify Queensland’s cultural diversity.

Conclusion

As one filmmaker admitted, Film Queensland is a paradox. I can only applaud them for backing my documentary that was quite politically contentious. They would have been putting their neck out, yet they consistently fail to back any winners in the short-film or low-budget area.

It has long been a bone of contention for many in this state that Queensland, since its more recent ‘revival’, has not produced any work of great critical acclaim. Perhaps it is a matter of time and a certain amount of fine-tuning on the part of Film Queensland on the projects and people it supports. Perhaps it is a matter for Queensland filmmakers to reach that stage of maturity, self-confidence and ability to follow through on their ideas.

Queensland does seem to have reached that turning point in critical mass in terms of production and in the size of the local film community, though it still lacks a vital television-production base and locally-based distributors. Certainly, the independent production and exhibition area in Queensland is going through unprecedented growth, which is being driven as much by film- and video-makers and film cultural organizations as by government funding.

1 The ‘heavies’ were Sue Millikan (Chair), Cathy Robinson (Chief Executive), Sue Murray (Director, Marketing) and Tim Read (Director, Film Development).

2 See discussion in interview with Cathy Robinson, conducted by Scott Murray, Cinema Papers, No. 102, December 1994, p. 31.
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Paradise Beach was a relatively-short-lived serial screened between May 1993 and July 1994 on the Australian Nine Network, and in several international markets. The production and marketing strategy for Paradise Beach was, in contemporary Australian long-form serial television, a unique one. While unequivocally an Australian production (both for regulatory purposes and for maximizing opportunities for local success), it was aimed primarily at the U.S. market and other major ancillary markets. (It was pre-sold to BskyB in Britain, South America and Europe territories mostly sight unseen, a testament to the distribution profile of its co-venture partners.)

It appeared to bring together an exceptionally strong production, distribution and exhibition alliance. Paradise Beach was co-produced by Village Roadshow, with its studio complex at the Gold Coast offering complete production facilities, the Nine Network (the strongest-rating network and needing successful local drama and an equity partner in the Studios), and New World International-Genesis, a large U.S. distribution company specializing in mostly U.S. soap opera (Baywatch, Santa Barbara, 

The Bold and the Beautiful) for the U.S. syndication and international markets. Village had studio space to fill and a commitment to internationalize local production and facilities. For their part, New World and subsidiary Genesis, in co-venturing on Paradise Beach, were responding to a contracting U.S. market for soap opera by capitalizing on overseas sources of finance and lower-cost structures, in effect turning the U.S. into a secondary market and diminishing the importance of network sales. Paradise Beach was virtually simultaneously launched in Australia and the U.S., and followed soon after in other territories. It was heavily promoted in Australia, filling initially an early evening slot directly before the nightly news, then was shifted back a half hour (to insulate its poor performance from the powerful news and current affairs rating period). Neilsen ratings for the programme indicated that it received its highest exposure at premiere (18), dropping quickly to 11 at the end of its first week, and falling into single figures when it was shifted back a half hour to 5 pm. Production ceased in May 1994, with some states running episodes until July 1994.

While, in the U.S., it was cleared by Genesis-New World for 85 per cent (or 150 stations) of the syndication market, an unprecedented exposure for a foreign-made serial. This compares markedly with the 1980s campaign for Neighbours, which was not handled by a major distributor such as New World. The U.S. strategy was to test Paradise Beach during the 1993 northern summer, and then relaunch it in January 1994 if it showed promise. Paralleling the theme of the programme ("It's where teenagers from everywhere converge to cut loose, find the perfect wave, and fall hopelessly in love"), it was aimed at its target get teen audience at the end of the school year. There was also a deliberate strategy to cover all schedule slots in major markets so that its best performing times could be determined for the relaunch. It was disastrously placed in the 'black hole' of 3-4 pm against Oprah Winfrey on KCBS Los Angeles and so didn't stand a chance in one of the most important U.S. markets. It did not survive the summer, being pulled from U.S. schedules before it had run the length of its test campaign.

Why did Paradise Beach fail? There are several answers, underscoring the inadequacy of any single industrial, cultural or textual explanation. From a purely financial perspective, it was structured in such a way that it couldn't fail. The experienced partners knew the programme was an experiment and structured its costs so that it was virtually certain to returning modest profits even if it failed to secure ongoing screen time. Produced at a rock bottom S$130,000 an hour, it certainly would have returned reasonable profits to its backers, especially as costs have been split three ways. Even a 3 per cent rating (which it reached in only a few markets) would return S$18,000 for a 30-second commercial in U.S. syndication. And, of course, there were additional residuals from other markets - it was still running on RTLS in Holland, for instance, in mid-1994.

However, as a strategy that could be built on by further Australian serial production aimed for long-term acceptance in international markets, it was a signal failure. This may be in part due to the very factor which guaranteed its bottom-line security: its extreme low-budget, instrumental production protocols. This approach to production (actors with very limited experience or models with no acting experience) and similar limitations in the script and technical departments (partly due to the need to meet regional expectations for Queensland personnel involvement and fulfil requirements under the state's Revolving Film Fund) virtually guaranteed a fulsomely negative critical reception in Australia, as well as elsewhere. This cannot be discounted as a factor in the fate of the programme, especially when serial programming needs to build audience by word of mouth and peer influence.

Such protocols irresistibly attracted the wrath of critics. Dubbed "Stupidity Beach", "Paradise Lost", "Suffering Paradise" and similar sobriquets, some critics, like Robin Oliver in The Sydney Morning Herald, adopted something of a personal crusade against
PARADISE BEACH

cesses). Given the traditions of high-quality prime-time serial drama produced in Australia, and the lack of daytime and access prime-time traditions of soap opera, together with these invited comparisons, Paradise Beach was an easy, if probably misplaced, target.

Other factors intervened against the serial. The U.S. market for pre-prime-time soaps has declined considerably. There hasn't been a successful launch of a new soap opera in many years in the U.S., since The Bold and the Beautiful, and even this programme (along with Santa Barbara) has fared better in Australia and Europe than in the U.S. It seems that the fragmented nature of the marketplace and the shortened attention span fostered by multi-channel viewing works against building a traditional soap opera following. In 1994, there is no stripped soap in the U.S. that runs after 3 pm. As well, a crucial ancillary marketing outlet, the soap-opera press (Soap Opera Weekly, Soap Opera Digest and Soap Opera are the three main magazines), did not promote the programme.

Decisions on the 'look' - its background texture and mise-en-scène - was designed to compensate for exasperated storyline and wooden performance. This led to the emphasis on what's referred to as the "MTV moment": the lyric set-piece, slow-motion and/or panorama sequences of sleek bodies set against the 'unique combinations' of beach, rainforest or high-rise skylines. Paradise Beach set 'a new high-water mark' for location use in low-budget soaps. It achieved twenty per cent exteriors per episode, a proportion unmatched in the world. The cost of stripped soap in Los Angeles, according to McNamara, is seven times that of Paradise Beach without the locations. The programme continues a long tradition of location exploitation in attempting to position Australian audio-visual product internationally; the Gold Coast tourist 'Mecca' backdrop was central to its marketing concept.

The failure of Paradise Beach suggests that, at least in terms of acceptance of foreign long-form drama in U.S. broadcast television, the English language is not necessarily an advantage; Spanish language soaps have more success in cable. This is because the point of comparison will always be to U.S. broadcast television - in the soap format, it seems, an absolute benchmark for audience acceptance. The Australian long-form successes in the U.S. have not been live-action adult or teen drama. Rather, they have been sci-tech (Beyond 2000) and children's animation (Blinky Bill); the first, a format Beyond built up as an exploitable international format, the other a tried-and-tested children's formula from a highly-credentialled Yoram Gross Studios. This underscores the virtual impossibility of seeing foreign long-form drama on U.S. broadcast television. Soap opera, more than any other format, must be allowed to build an audience through stable scheduling and committed marketing, for their "dispersed narrative structure and incremental characterization make of them an acquired taste", all the more when they are foreign.

NOTE: This article is an amended extract from a forthcoming book, Away from Home: Australian Television and International Mediascapes (Cambridge University Press).

3 James McNamara (Chief Executive Officer and President, New World Entertainment), Thea Diserio (Senior Vice-President, New World International), and Phil Oldham (Executive Vice-President, Genesis Entertainment) interviewed by Stuart Cunningham, New York, March 1994.
4 Executive producer Nick McMahon, quoted in Shoebridge, op. cit.
5 For a dismissively dismissive New Zealand account, see Diana Wichtel, "Ain't it a Beach", Listener, 28 August 1993, p. 7.
8 Quoted in Stewart, op. cit.
Searching for success...

If success does rub off, then the decision to open the third Brisbane International Film Festival with the Australian hit Muriel's Wedding (P. J. Hogan) was an inspired one. The attention the Queensland premiere attracted may well have played a significant part in boosting audiences for the Brisbane Festival, ultimately contributing to its claimed success. David Stratton described the opening night as the best he's been to in 30 years. In fact, almost before it had begun, the Festival was being showered with accolades—a sign of success, surely?

Queensland’s daily newspaper, The Courier-Mail, has been a consistent supporter of the Festival, and an editorial a few days before the gala opening made it clear how this particular cultural institution positioned the Festival. The link between the burgeoning film industry in Queensland and the Festival was assumed. Is this, then, a measure of its success? Is this the role of a film festival in Brisbane? The editorial didn’t actually mention the word “culture”, suggesting instead that “Brisbane’s artistic community is large and growing”. It also explained that “Brisbane is not only beer and skittles, frolics and footy”—but that’s The Courier-Mail. It seemed to be trying to articulate the emergence of a film culture in Brisbane, with the Festival playing a significant role. Certainly, the $110,000 in support from the Queensland Government would seem to suggest that the Festival plays a significant role indeed—at least, in the eyes of influential state government policy-makers. When was the last time you met a politician who didn’t want to be associated with success?

Perhaps the idea of success is bound up in the Festival itself as an organization. If so, how is it different from other festivals? The first person I bumped into while in this particular frame of mind was a young woman working in the Festival nerve centre—a small office above the Regent Showcase Cinema in central Brisbane. I met her in a lift the day before the official opening and she seemed confident: “We’ve moved from chaos into numbers.”

Along the corridor in artistic director Anne Demy-Geroc’s office, the electronic chipping of telephones was chaotic. And they keep ringing: one print is buckled and can’t be shown; another has subtitles too high on the screen; where can you get an NTSC Betacam dub done? Fred Schepisi wants to change his schedule! So is this usual? Demy-Geroc seemed amazingly calm: “Every year you have ghastly things happening, like prints that don’t arrive on time. This year, there’s less of that than in the past. But it’s a nightmare logistically.”

Logistics. Catching most of the 66 films offered during the nine-day Festival was a big task—even for film buffs—but BIFF offered all of us a chance to do just that by focusing the action on just one screen this year—Hoyts’ Regent Showcase Cinema in the central city. Positives and negatives aside, it enabled access to around 50 features and an impressive array of docs and shorts—27 Australian premieres in all. As in previous years, the State Library Theatreette on Brisbane’s South Bank was the venue for a range of Festival-related cultural activities like forums on the producer-director relationship, the documentary and the Western, and multiformat film events including the annual Qld New Filmmakers Awards.

But that question again: Was it a success? In terms of paying customers, BIFF 94 attracted a little more than 13,000. Access to specific financial details are limited because BIFF is a trading company, but the turnover in 1994 was around $500,000—a similar amount to previous years. Of this, the Queensland government and the AFC continue to be major contributors, with the former allocating BIFF $210,000 for the 1994-95 financial year. About half of that amount was used in 1994. The rest is being channelled into the 1995 Festival. Some argue that, for a city the size of Brisbane, attendance is on the low side—certainly well below that of Sydney and Melbourne. Vancouver, a city of comparable size to Brisbane, attracted around 100,000 to its 1994 Festival, and even New Zealand can pull around 60,000. But, as general manager Gary Ellis explains, BIFF is just three years old and hardly likely to be in the same league of the more-established festivals. Critics suggest that expenditure of around half a million dollars for 13,000 cinemas is hard to justify in terms of cultural outcomes. Maybe so, but BIFF is new and perhaps such criticism is a little premature.

So, how do you measure the success of an event like BIFF? Conventional economic indicators would suggest it (a) has potential; (b) is a modest success; or perhaps (c) is an abject failure, depending, of course, on your point of view. But as a cultural institution—as I suggest a film festival is—what criteria might we use to chart its progress through the shifting cultural climate in Queensland? What influence does government support (some see it as intervention) have on this cultural resource?

In answer to the latter question, long-time film buff Bruce Simpson is adamant: none! And Simpson, who is owner-operator of Brisbane’s Classic Cinema, an alternative, arthouse film venue, has been around the industry long enough to offer an educated assessment. If there has been any influence exerted in selecting Festival films over the years, Simpson suggests the Australian Film Commission has been more active here, linked to its early support for the fledging Festival ($40,000 in 1992 and 1993). As for the Queensland Government’s role, he has nothing but praise:

The important thing is that the Festival would never have got off the ground without the support of Queensland Premier Wayne Goss. He’s been very supportive of the Festival and the film industry here. You only have to look at what’s happening at the Warner Roadshow Studios [on the Gold Coast] to see that.

Fred Schepisi: “I’m a great believer in film festivals [...] It’s good for the filmmaking community to be exposed to great films.”

Another person who deserves recognition is [former Film Queensland chief executive] Richard Stewart, who’s now head of the New Zealand Film Commission. As to its status as a success or otherwise, Bruce Simpson is in no doubt:

BIFF 94 was only the third—it’s still a baby. I would have been very disappointed if it hadn’t succeeded. Any hiccups can be put down to teething problems. The Festival this year was a success and it was seen to be a success.

Film critic Jonathon Dawson probably doesn’t agree. Writing about the rise of the Brisbane International Film Festival in a recent edition of Culture and Policy, he suggests that the event has yet to resolve a key problem: reconciling the demands of film culture with governmental self-promotion. But he suggests this is not a new
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Local film culture and the Brisbane International Film Festival

BIFF is not a success in Dawson’s eyes because, he argues, film groups like Women in Film and Television, Brisbane Independent Filmmakers and Queensland Cinematheque are disenfranchised by a government notion of what constitutes film culture. He accuses BIFF of existing to showcase “pet projects of the government and to promote self-serving visions of the elite arts community”, placing severe limits on the contribution that the Festival might make in consolidating local film industries. Dawson’s critique closes with his doubting the effectiveness of BIFF to act as a catalyst for Queensland filmmaking to join the international stage. He concludes: “Rather, the cultural drinkers at the bar seem condemned to a diet of foreign cocktails rather than local fine wine.” So for Jonathan Dawson, then, BIFF is definitely not a success.

Back inside the Regent Showcase Cinema, with award-winning director Fred Schepisi about to engage a packed house with his industry observations (albeit at least once referring to women’s advancement in the industry as open to challenge) and anecdotes, it is doubtful whether these extraneous issues meant a lot. The only indication of uncertainty at the ‘94 Festival surfaced in a few nervous film introductions which left out the “International” part of the Festival’s name. I don’t think many people noticed or cared that much.

by Michael Meadows
They were there to see movies – some for the first and only time this year – and all that really seemed to matter was trying to decide what to see next!

Perhaps the idea of success is bound up in the Festival’s achievements. Which audiences does it serve, for example? Is it a “Brisbane” festival? If so, how is it different from other festivals? The answer to this question might resolve the problem of measuring success once and for all.

Queensland documentary filmmaker Pat Laughren had just introduced his new production at the State Library Theatrette, Red Ted and the Great Depression. I’d just heard him say that “history is made in the present”. Was this the answer I’d been searching for? I asked him to elaborate:

The Festival is important, particularly in Queensland, where film production has been thought of as coming out of the Studios. But the actual range is much broader. Festivals are about engaging audiences, and BIFF holds up that possibility. We need a strong film culture to develop in Brisbane.

The social goods far outweigh the monetary return in the short term. Years ago, the National Film Theatre of Australia was the only place which offered alternatives. Festivals open your mind to the possibilities. It’s about techniques, social aspects, all aspects – a kind of melting pot, diversity.

Diversity. This was getting closer.

It was time to enlist the heavies. Fred Schepisi, the recipient of the 1994 Chauvel Award for his contribution to Australian feature filmmaking, should know the answer. In accepting his award, Schepisi acknowledged the part that “alternative” cinema (continental films) in the 1950s had played in influencing his filmmaking:

I developed an interest in film festivals because they were the only place, apart from a couple of cinemas in the city, where you could get to see those kinds of films and see the films made by those filmmakers of the past. I’m a great believer in film festivals and I think it’s really exciting that Brisbane is doing the same thing now. I think it’s good for the community to be exposed to great films and to help them appreciate what they mean. It’s good for the filmmaking community to be exposed to great films. And the more films from more different places you see, the more it informs our work and the more individual it makes us. It’s certainly the case for me and certainly the case for everyone who works with me who’ve always been interested in films. I can’t speak highly enough of the value of film festivals.

So it seems that film festivals might best be understood as being different things to different people. And speaking of difference, Bruce Simpson is in no doubt that Brisbane audiences are different: “Very much so. Years ago, Brisbane had few arthouse movies and that’s changing. BIFF is very good for Brisbane.”

Film writer with the Australian Financial Review, Peter Crayford, agrees:

Every place is different, every community responds differently, but here you get a feeling that people are open, and they’re open to a great many diverse selections that are made. I think they’re genuinely enthusiastic. I think there’s an enormous number of visitors who come to Brisbane to the Festival. I’m very surprised by how many come from the Australian film community, in particular. Here there’s a sense of showcase as well as serious filmgoing and I like that.

David Stratton, who may have a vested interest in being one of the Festival’s two programming consultants, nevertheless goes along with this too:

There’s a great deal of enthusiasm. They [the Festival organizers] seem to go to so much trouble. The opening night for Muriel’s Wedding, for instance: I thought they took so much trouble over little details.

What about suggestions that BIFF is a promotional arm for the Queensland government?

I think that’s a little bit of sour grapes. I can’t see that it’s being over pushed at all. The support the Queensland government gives to the Festival is astonishingly good. I supported the Festival from the start when they asked me if I would give some advice on programming, because this could be a genuine alternative to Sydney and Melbourne Festivals.

But it’s still got some way to go – consensus seems to be that no Festival gets established in under five years. And Brisbane audiences?

I’ve heard people say that Brisbane audiences are not as tuned in to festival experience and I think that’s probably true because I’ve noticed that they respond in slightly different ways to the films. In Sydney and Melbourne, they automatically clap – and if they don’t clap, they boo. Here, sometimes they don’t, but it doesn’t mean they don’t like the film, it’s just that they’re not used to this idea of clapping a film. It’s a different approach, but it’s a genuine approach.

The role of a film festival, specifically, this film Festival?

I think the great thing is that people can come in and see things. Obviously the audiences are of mixed ages and backgrounds just looking for something a bit unusual. The role of the Festival is to be a connection, a link, between filmmakers and an audience. I think that’s what’s happening here in Brisbane.

Like Fred Schepisi, filmmaker Charles Chauvel cut
his teeth on the “continental films’ on offer in selected Sydney cinemas like the Minerva at Kings Cross. And Susan Chauvel-Nelson, who accompanied her father on many such visits, suggests another way in which we might measure the success of film festivals: developing the audiences’ analytical skills. She recalls going to the movies with her father when she was a girl. She suggests the influence of alternative films on audiences is significant:

One night in Toowoomba recently I couldn’t sleep and I switched on the ABC to one of those late-night talkback things. There were quite ordinary people ringing in, giving their opinions about films. And they were quite considered opinions. It was really intriguing to see how people were really thinking about the films they went to today and their meaning. And they were quite quick to criticize anything they thought was not up to scratch. It was very interesting. They were not just talking about a night out at the movies. They were far more analytical.

BIFF’s Gary Ellis is in no doubt as to the multifarious roles of a film festival like BIFF – and the nature of Brisbane audiences:

There’s no point in us trying to copy Sydney or Melbourne or Canberra. Brisbane audiences are different. They have their own way of life. Brisbane people are very different to people anywhere else in the world, I think.

How are they different?

Audiences here have their own energy, their own life. It’s taken us three years to understand our audience better, but it’s starting to happen. This year we really made a conscious effort to look at Brisbane people are very different to people anywhere else in the world, I think. Brisbane people are very different to people anywhere else in the world, I think.

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And Festival criticism: Is it a state government promotion?

Possibly in the first year of the Festival it did become a semi-promotional vehicle for the government to try to accentuate its role in the film industry, but the film industry has developed of its own accord and the Film Festival itself is evolving. The Festival has to develop, has to evolve on its own course and it has to provide what the people want to go and see. We can’t impose a Film Festival and say, ‘You will see these films and you will enjoy these films because we’ve decided what’s best for you.’ We spent a lot of time going through that programme. Anne [Demy-Geran] has done a fantastic job this year getting the right blend there.

And BIFF’s role in all this?

What we’re trying to do is to showcase the best films from around the world and bring those filmmakers here. There’s so many new filmmakers coming through. There’s a lot of energy, there’s a lot of enthusiasm and I think those filmmakers need exposure to international films and international filmmakers, including Australian filmmakers, so that they can see that it is achievable, that these people are real. People can come along and see Fred Schepisi and say he’s not this mythical creature who operates out of New York. He’s a real flesh and blood person, and I can do this.

The response we have from most of our guests is they’re really excited by the freshness of Brisbane audiences. There’s no inhibitions about going up and chatting to people, and that’s something that’s probably very unique to Brisbane.

So, then, how do you measure success?

Too many people try to do it in dollar terms, and I don’t think you can. I firmly believe that young filmmakers who come along to the Festival this year, because they’ve had the benefit of seeing Rhinoskin or seeing Fred and having a chat to him after seeing the film tonight, in five years’ time they’re going to be producing fantastic films. I think that can be directly attributed to what’s happening here now.

What sort of impact on Brisbane film culture is BIFF likely to have?

The local arthouse cinemas – the Schonell and the Classic – have done a fantastic job over the past few years, and we’ve been able to pick up on a lot of the business that they’ve generated. They’ve cultivated certain audiences who have a lot of common ground with us, so we certainly acknowledge the role that those cinemas have had. I think they’d say that we’ve been able to do a lot for them, as well.

And mainstream cinemas?

The local cinemas are a bit reluctant to stick their necks out too far. And the same with distributors – it’s too expensive to do it up here in Brisbane, so they use us as a gauge and watch the response the film generates and they’ll operate on that word of mouth.

This year, for the first time, we have just about all of the major Australian distributors actually come to the Festival. They’ve now come to appreciate and realize that the Brisbane International Film Festival is a permanent event – a high-profile, high-quality event. They’re seeing now that what we can provide is a great showcase opportunity for them and also a great networking opportunity. We’re riding pretty high on that.

From all this, it seems reasonable to suggest that film festivals – and the Brisbane International Film Festival in particular – can claim to be important cultural resources, which mean many different things to many different people. Such festivals serve multiple roles spanning entertainment, local exhibition and distribution, and policy-making, and are part of the process linking film industry workers with all of these.

Certainly, significant government and non-government influences are part of this cultural environment, but perhaps the most worthwhile products of such an alliance are the possibilities which emerge. If BIFF is the kind of multi-purpose event being suggested here, then it plays an important cultural role in shaping not only the nature of the film industry in Queensland, but also how we define our own culture in relation to others and our place within it.
1995 sees the arrival of a new player in Post Production's First Division. Because Frame, Set and Match have just installed the most advanced telecine in the world. The amazing URSA Gold.

Plus, we've also installed one of Australia's most talented and experienced colourists to run it. Warren Lynch joins us in February. Our URSA Gold comes equipped with the brilliant Da Vinci Renaissance colour grader.

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With these new arrivals we're sure you'll find Frame, Set and Match is more than a match for the big three.
All that Glisters is not Gold...

Dominic Case talks with industry heavies about the startling new Ursa Gold. Briefer looks at the Supervisor Projection Video Display Enhancer, Metromedia Technologies, the emc Primetime Online Upgrade and the EDI-Tracker.

Shakespeare probably made his "All that glisters" comment before ever seeing the latest Ursa Gold telecine from Rank — time travel is not listed as one of its many new features, although it can run backwards – but his comment warns us not to be dazzled by shiny new equipment alone. An item in AAV's newsletter, AAV Online, suggests that it is the telecine colourist who is often the forgotten component – that the Ursa telecine is really only as good as its colourist.

Running a telecine has never been an easy job to classify. Clearly, as the technology has progressed, so the term "operator" has become inadequate. In other lives, a colourist is the tinting specialist in a hair salon; but then a grader works on the roads. Warren Lynch, who has worked as a DOP in between spells at the controls of Apocalypse's Ursa, suggests "telecinematographer", which begs my question for this story: What is the role of that person? How has their work developed, and how do they use their technology to contribute to the final "look" of a production? I spoke with Jeff Raphael at Sydney's Videolab, and with Stanley Lopuszanski at AAV in Melbourne, as well as Warren Lynch at Apocalypse Sydney.

As with most video equipment, there is always a competition to get the latest and best. Currently, the talk is of Ursa Gold. Videolab is getting it, and AAV and Apocalypse are upgrading their Ursas to Gold equivalents. What is the Ursa Gold, and why is it better?

According to all three colourists, a fully-equipped telecine — be it a new Ursa Gold, or a standard Ursa upgraded with the latest features — gives the colourist more power than ever to improve the image that reaches the screen. The Gold offers 4 x 4 digital colour (see p. 34) for all its image processing. Facilities such as custom curves, power windows and dynamic graduated corrections, available with secondary colour correctors such as the Da Vinci Renaissance, exploit this extra precision, and bring many features into the telecine suite that were previously only possible in on-line editing.

Warren Lynch explained that the mirror to accept a standard 4 x 4 filter. We use nets, diffusion filters and so on. A lot of the time clients will bring their own in — either to 'grunge up' or to soften the image.

Do cinematographers get the same effect as if they'd used the filter on the camera?

It gives them the option not to shoot with a filter. Then they've lost it for ever if it doesn't work.

However, Jeff Raphael pointed out one catch to this technique: Sometimes people put filtering on the telecine — frost or fog or a bit of glad-wrap. That's fine if they're transferring print. It works as it would on the camera: that is, the whites spread into the black. But on neg it works the other way around: the blacks fog into the white. Sometimes the effect is similar, sometimes it is quite different.

Jeff was a bit cautious about the use of filters on the camera:

"You can fix a lot more in telecine now — putting in patches of blue sky between the trees, just to give it a sunnier look."

Rank Arcas colour corrector used with the Ursa Gold at Apocalypse was capable of six-channel secondary colour correction. It was possible to take any colour and twist it around to any other colour — blues can become green without affecting the other tones in the image. However, the effect is over the entire frame. Using other systems like the Copernicus (at Omnicon) or the DaVinci Renaissance, it was possible to colour grade just part of a frame. Stan Lopuszanski:

With the Renaissance, we have Power Windows and you can almost relight the shot. We're using it every day now, just to trim up the lighting a little bit; put a cutter in here, and a little bit there, warm up one section. You can track it dynamically (for example, to darken a window in a panning shot). All the graders here find themselves using Power Windows at nearly every session. You can fix a lot more in telecine now — putting in patches of blue sky between the trees, just to give it a sunnier look. I'm not saying we can replace Harry or Henry, but we certainly are doing a lot of fixups in telecine.

Not all telecinematography is so high-tech. Stan:

We're forever developing and modifying the machine to make it more user-friendly. Just this morning we were using some filtration on the Ursa, and we've modified the cowlings around the bottom near the lens to accept a standard 4 x 4 filter. We use nets, diffusion filters and so on. A lot of the time clients will bring their own in — either to 'grunge up' or to soften the image.

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Jeff was a bit cautious about the use of filters on the camera:
Most times if they [the DOPs] vary from normal, it turns out that it would be better if they hadn’t. Often I have to remove the effect of filtering. Often it’s overdone, so I have to take some of it out, if it’s a colour filter they put on: say a double 85. But on a picture screen, the eye needs to believe that the whites are white, and the blacks are black. And if they aren’t, the eye still wants to make it white. So I’ve got to take some of it out, and then I don’t have the same range of control left, and you don’t have the same range of colour left.

It’s like: if you want to make margarine look yellow, you don’t put it on a timber table with brown toast and light it with yellow light. Sometimes the answer is to take that colour out, and light it with contrasting light. So, if you’re shooting for a TV finish, I have all the colour control that’s needed. It’s the same with fog filters. Sometimes they’re overdone. I usually think a little less is better than a little more.

Warren summed up the position:

It’s getting to the point where, if you can shoot it nicely on the day, in the camera, without too many effects, then you can bring it back to telecine and make it look just how you want it.

Arguments have always raged over the difference between transferring directly from negative, or from a positive print. In the case of rushes, the apparent economy of bypassing work prints completely, and transferring negative to tape prior to digitizing for a non-linear edit, has eclipsed any argument about the image quality of either method. But it seems to be producing an expectation among filmmakers that the neg-to-tape look is the “correct” one, because they see it first. Jeff:

If you show a client a reasonably good neg rushes transfer, then show them something off a print later on that looks a bit different, they already have a pre-conceived idea of what it should look like.

Neg usually shows you less contrast, more gradual gradation, more colour separation. That’s good in some cases, but often there’s not much colour in real life. So, to look more like real life, print is better. But that’s my personal preference. Sometimes it works better off neg, sometimes print is better.

Stan expanded on this point:

My personal feeling is that neg can be very nice, but there’s sometimes too much information. The focus is drawn away from the subject. When a print is made, the focus is drawn more to the subject. Pos has a more filmic look to it. When I look at videotape, for example, it’s just too crisp – there’s too much going on. I think neg has something of that look about it. But there are some things that neg suits: pack shots, for example, and cars can look fantastically glossy.

There’s a process of learning to see. People say, ‘Let’s just put the neg up before we go to the pos.’ And, of course, they say, ‘Wow! that looks great. There’s so much detail.’ Then they look at the pos and say, ‘Oh! it’s a bit dark.’ Well, of course, that’s because it’s been lit dark. So we go around with that a little bit, but we often find that eventually we go back to the pos. There’s a process of learning to see, and to know exactly what you want it to look like – although in 16mm we nearly always end up on neg.

Jeff Raphael explained another feature of the Da Vinci colour corrector:

Traditionally, you have a logarithmic curve for each colour. Custom curves allows you to plot any curve – linear or even s-shaped. That means, for example, if you have some very ancient film, and the dyes have faded in different ratios, you can put in a gamma correction for each dye that’s suitable for the stock you’re looking at. Similarly, it can give you more of a ‘print’ look to negative, giving the compression in the blacks and the whites that you get when you print a negative, which you normally can’t get – not at both ends of the scale at the same time.

I always feel myself that features were making lighter prints on normal contrast stock. I was clearing out Telecine 2 just recently and I actually found an old TCP print. It was the first time I’d seen one, because I wasn’t at Videolab, I was at VTC, when they came out. It was one of the more closely-guarded secrets between Videolab and Colorfilm.

The Gold will give you good results off a normal print, and the normal print has more saturated...
colours. But if somebody asked me what sort of print to get, I'd say low-contrast if I hadn't seen the material, because I know I can always add contrast to it. I can't take it out so easily. If I've seen the material, I might say normal contrast, because sometimes it works better. But that's if they're transferring print, which nowadays is the exception rather than the rule.

And from Warren, still another answer:

CINEMA PAPERS • MARCH 1995

We get the odd bit of print, but mostly it's neg. Then there's features coming in through the Ursa for masters. Sometimes, we do those from the interneg, with all the opticals in it and so on. If people are prepared to take the neg out of the lab, then that's quite a nice way, probably the nicest. The other way is interpos: it's very nice as well, and all the grading is done. People tend not to get low con any more, but now with the Ursa I can get good quality from a release print, so low-con isn't really needed any more.

James Parsons [of Atlab] and I have actually been promoting interpos. It tends to compress the whites and lift the blacks, and then on telecine I can expand the image out again. It comes up very clear and gives you a lot of range. It has a different look about it, but a really nice contrast. We have Woolworths commercials on interpos at the moment — they're done that way. I think I'm the only one who really enjoys it. The others don't see what I'm seeing. It's a pos image, and the telecine is just idling. It doesn't have to work at all, so there's no noise. It retains things like whites.

We did a comparison for Kodak that was printed both to answer print and to interpos. The original material had highlights on screen that were 6 or 8 stops over-exposed, and blacks that were dead as a doornail. The interpos compressed the whites so I could control them and the telecine didn't give that sort of electronic edging that you get. So, it's basically a chemical process of compressing the picture before the telecine sees it.

There was a feature we did — Vacant Possession — shot on Super 16. Half of it was transferred off the 16mm interpos, the other half was opticals off the 35mm print. You wouldn't be able to tell the difference. We had to tune up the old Stradivarius a bit, but they went really well together.

Stan added:

We've had quite a bit of success on interpos. I did Muriel's Wedding here — that was on interpos. What's happening is that people won't use a theatre print because it might be too contrary, and they won't pay the eight grand or whatever it costs to make a low-con print.

We did a Canadian co-production here some time ago, and it worked well, so, when Muriel's Wedding came up, we went straight to the interpos, and didn't even look at the print. We had [DOP] Martin McGrath come in, and the director, and we spent three days on it — with the panning and scanning as well.

With the increased use of neg-to-tape for rushes transfers, and in the absence of film work prints, the role of telecine transfers in checking the rushes has become quite significant. As Stan put it: DOPs are turning up just for rushes, even at 7 o'clock in the morning.

There's a greater interest in telecine; it's become the focal point of the industry. We have a bit of an advantage here, having the lab downstairs. Being an ex-film grader, I can wander downstairs and look at it on the analyzer, and get a sort of ball-park feel for what would be happening on a print before it even gets to telecine.

That's even a help with the one-light situation. We find we are sitting pretty close to satisfy the needs of cinematographers with one-light transfers. We can sit down at the telecine and see what a piece of film looks like at what we call 'base mem', with everything set at unity. I sometimes prove it to them by putting the negative on the analyzer at the lab standard printing lights, and it's the same. We'll pull things down a little — there's a more obvious change when the exposure changes. But if a DOP walks in and says how does it look, I can say, 'Well, you're half a stop over', and he would usually say, 'Yes, I shot it half a stop over.'

So we're running pretty close to the standard line. But if there is a massive exposure change, then it'll show up as being very obvious. Telecine is less forgiving — in fact, it's not forgiving at all. The reality is that you're compressing a huge amount of information into a very narrow bandwidth, so you have to compromise a little bit.

Jeff Raphael:

We set up on the Kodak TAF, but then you have to set up the gains, etc., on the first piece of film. People want to see a good transfer. It doesn't take much inconsistency of exposure to make a vastly different look from the negative on telecine; particularly if they're trying to put contrast in to make it look good. If you give them a flatter look to avoid clipping the whites or crushing the blacks, they say, 'What have you done to my rushes?' The fact is, you've had to give them a flat transfer so they can literally have 'one light'.

There's no way that I've thought of relating your corrections back to the cinematographer in terms of the camera exposure. But there are people who can expose consistently enough, so you can boost the contrast and still give them a one-light transfer.

But it can be done. The series we're doing at the moment for Bearfire Films is called On the Dead Side. The rushes are a reasonably good contrast, and they're very con-

emc Primetime online upgrade — pictures and words together

Editing Machines Corporation, a member of the Dynatech Video Group, has announced a number of major enhancements to its digital non-linear on-line editing system, emc Primetime, in version 5.06.

The new version incorporates on-line quality titling using TrueType fonts — familiar to Windows and Macintosh users, and representing an almost unlimited variety of type styles, with fully-transparent drop shadows. The titler is an integral part of the editing software, and can be accessed without leaving the on-line editor. Extra video effects possible with the new system include 3D, page turn and fish-eye effects. emc is marketed in Australia by Quantum Pacific.
sistent. The cinematographer is Brian Breheny. I can set up on day 20 and use the same settings as I used on day 1. That’s unusual, but it’s really good.

Warren Lynch:

We have the doco fraternity who take it as it comes, but we try to optimize the pictures a little, and that’s usually acceptable. Police Rescue and so on work well. But mainly with commercials, I’ve had DOPs come in and sit with me so it looks exactly like it’s designed to look when it’s finished. They emerge with their reputation intact, and the agency’s got what it wants.

I’ve been setting the machine up to Kodak specs, so I can put the TAF film in, and they can see the film as it’s meant to go over. It gives you a good basis. But then the rest of it you have to set up for the twists, and whatever might come into it from the lab or through different lenses and so on.

The other thing is that we’ve had series come in before they start the shoot, and the DOP shoots a few tests – interior, exterior and so on – and we grade them and store those trims. So, when each shot comes up on the slate, we can choose that setting for that shot. The DOP knows what he’s getting.

The really high-end DOPs tend to turn out good work - the quality’s always there. Sometimes you’ll get a call to say: ‘It’s a double 85 filter, and a warm sunny afternoon look’, and that’s all you need to know.

So what does the Ursa Gold have that adds to all this skill and experience? There are several features: usually the first one mentioned is the ‘Jumpfree’ facility, whereby vertical float is removed digitally. Rank claims that Jumpfree matches and often exceeds the stability of non-real-time pin-registered gates, and is quite stable enough for even complex matting and layering jobs.

Then there is SilkScan, a means of smoothing out strobe in film and telecine pans. Because film only has 25 frames per second, and video scans 50 times, SilkScan interpolates between each alternate field and creates new intermediate positions.

Warren Lynch also lists the new lenses used on Ursa Gold, the ‘Highlight Kit’, which, he claimed, gives another stop in the darker areas of negative, as well as being sharper and clearer. Ursa Gold will run as slow as 5 frames per second, whereas conventional Ursas were limited to the range of 16 to 30 frames per second. Also, it runs in reverse.

So: the machine or the operator?

Which is the one that makes the difference? A last word from each. Jeff Raphael:

I think there’s a general realization that the Ursa look is not dramatically better than a good Mark III. Of course, in 16mm, it’s a lot better. Maybe I’ll contradict myself when we get the Ursa and see the difference. But clients are quite happy. It’s only imperfect film that needs a lot of these features. All that’s changing is that you’re getting more and more sophisticated grading controls. Ursa has less imperfections, so you can go further.

Warren Lynch:

Ursa was the biggest breakthrough. It’s entirely a digital machine which makes it a lot quieter, and the digital thing gives you secondary colour correction as well. It’s the first time in my career I’ve had a really lovely telecine to work with. I started out on telecine, then went away and did other things, but I came back seriously when Ursa arrived.

Stan Lupusanski:

Ursa Gold has some nice little options and things – and we can get a lot of those. But picture-wise it ends up in the hands of the guy sitting there, doesn’t it.

NB: On 6 February, Warren Lynch joined Frame, Set & Match as senior colourist on its URSA Gold telecine.

Lightworks puts Soundfirm in the picture

Australia’s first Turbo Lightworks non-linear editing system has been delivered to Soundfirm, which has set the system up as a fully-portable, self-contained picture-editing package. The system is being used first on the set of Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, being shot in Sydney by Tengu Productions for 20th Century Fox.

Turbo Lightworks offers a higher-quality digitization rate of 30 minutes per Gigabyte, together with four channels of on-line quality audio, made possible by using 32-bit processing. Capacity is always a challenge with non-linear systems – never more so than with Mighty Morphins, reputed to be shooting over half a million feet of negative.

Soundfirm’s Roger Savage explained that they have pushed the capacity of Lightworks up to a massive 81 Gigabytes. Nine drives, each carrying nine Gigabytes, are connected simultaneously. Apparently, this represents an upper limit, due to the DOS system’s inability to separately address any more drives. However, an unlimited amount of additional storage is possible simply by exchanging drives.

Mighty Morphin Power Rangers is following the American method of production, combining film rushes and non-linear editing. All okay takes of negative from the three or more camera units are work-printed, and synced, then the work print is transferred to video by Videolab and subsequently digitized into Lightworks for rough assembly.

Denise Wolfson at Atlab explained that this method gave more security against camera or negative problems and much faster checking of rushes than would be possible without the work-print stage – essential when such large footages are involved.

Transfers are directly to NTSC video, as the fine cutting and mixing will all be carried out in the U.S.

Roger Savage said that Soundfirm had gained experience with NTSC post-production on Fred Schepisi’s productions I.Q. and Six Degrees of Separation, and had set up a complete NTSC editing environment for 20th Century Fox for Mighty Morphins, using the S-VHS tape format and underscanning monitors to check the exact film framing. Lightworks is adaptable to PAL or NTSC frame rates, simply by selecting the appropriate software module. Savage notes an increased amount of overseas production in Australia, and expects that Soundfirm’s portable editing package will find a number of applications after the current production has finished.
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Supervisor projection video display enhancer – big pictures

One of the most apparent advances in video imaging in recent months has been in the quality of video-projection systems. Originally flat, smudgy and unsharp screen images that had to be viewed from across the street for any sort of comfort, the latest generation of images are coming to look more and more like projected film, and less and less like a TV screen writ large.

In many cases, these results are due to sophisticated “display enhancers” such as the Supervisor, seen at NAB and more recently at IBC, and distributed in Australia by Quito Communications. The Supervisor eliminates the effects of visible line structure and interlace which, when seen on a large screen, can mar any production. Supervisor is more than a line-doubler: Snell and Wilcox filtering technology, in the form of a nine-point spatio-temporal filter, really enhances the perceived definition of the display. The gaps between pixels are filled in by comparing not just with the previous line, but with pixels all around in the same field, and before and after as well.

Supervisor supports a wide range of display devices, including HDTV monitors, computer-graphic projectors and video walls, and provides a full range of picture-processing controls.

Metromedia technologies – bigger pictures

Even the biggest projector – film or video – pales into insignificance when compared with the potential size of cinema hoardings produced by Metromedia Technologies International, whose Australian division has recently moved from Melbourne to Logan, Queensland.

According to MMT’s chief executive, Robin Rast:

The visibility and impact of giant images has made icons of enduring stars like Clint Eastwood and Paul Newman. With the release of Batman Returns, Michael Keaton and Michelle Pfeiffer were featured in a massive 39 ft [12m] x 67 ft [21m] face which dominated New York City’s Times Square.

The images are based on proprietary digital-imaging techniques combined with state-of-the-art computer-driven robotic-painting machines which produce full colour images. Robin:

Acrylic paint is applied to pure white vinyl-coated fabric to make the finished product tough and durable – for up to five years even in the severest weather conditions.

The Queensland production facility has four drums, each of which paints single sheets as big as 19.2 x 6.9 metres – which can be combined to make larger images. The machines are colour balanced against a reference standard before every run.

A quick calculation tells me that one sheet of a hoarding is about half as onebig again as a complete print of a 33mm feature. Not just one frame – 15,000 frames. These really are “big” pictures. Of course, promotion is a vital part of the filmmaking process.

Analogue, digital, 4-2-2, 4-4-4: What it all means

All video systems represent the image by a series of values, describing the colour at each point on the screen. In analogue systems, these images are conveyed through the channel by a signal of varying voltage – a higher voltage represents a brighter point.

This signal, although easy to generate, has always been difficult to process as precisely as is needed, leading to compromises, distortion and some variability in the results. Digital systems represent the image values by actual numbers, as in a computer. A set of numbers describing an image can be manipulated through, so-called “look-up tables” and other computations to give exactly the results wanted by the equipment designers. As well, there is little or no distortion or variability in the digital chain. Although many machines have some digital components, the Rank Ursa was the first telecine to be completely digital right through from the scan detection to the output.

How precisely is the picture described? Colour video signals are encoded from the red, green and blue values into y, u and v components: y represents the brightness, while u and v describe the colour.

The common standard for digital video describes the linear resolution of the image. The 4 in 4-2-2 represents 4 times over-sampling in the brightness signal, while the 2s indicate two times oversampling in the colour signals. Thus there are effectively only half as many pixels for colour information as there are for brightness. This compromise was possible because the human eye is less sensitive to colour resolution than it is to brightness resolution – or sharpness. However, as signal processing and digital effects have become more advanced, there has been a need for more precision, and so the 4-4-4 standard has come into being.

As you might guess, this has twice the colour resolution of the 4-2-2 system, although in fact the 4s relate to the internally-used red, green and blue values, rather than the encoded y, u and v output.

Simply put, as computer-driven projectors become more advanced, the human eye is less sensitive to colour resolution than it is to brightness resolution – or sharpness. However, as signal processing and digital effects have become more advanced, there has been a need for more precision, and so the 4-4-4 standard has come into being.

Post-production has been revolutionized as a result of the advantages of random-access, fully-controllable digital imaging, but production methods have not been affected in quite the same way. Not yet, anyway! The introduction of video-assist systems to film production has been, in my opinion, the single greatest change that has happened on set since sound and colour were introduced. But systems were always limited by the complexity of tape image control. Now post-production thinking is being brought forward to the shoot, and digital power comes directly into contact with film. And an idea from the sound people finds an application with the camera department. Expect many more changes from this area.

NEWS EXTRA

Avid technology honoured by Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

Avid Technology, Inc. has been awarded a 1994 “Scientific and Engineering Achievement Award” from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for its film Composer digital non-linear film editing system. The award, to be presented at a Beverly Hills ceremony on March 4, applauds Avid’s development and engineering achievements and recognizes the Avid Film Composer’s contributions to the motion picture industry.

Curt Rawley, Avid’s president and CEO, said:

This affirmation by the Academy of Motion Picture Television Arts and Sciences confirms that the revolutionizing impact Film Composer has had on the art of film editing, and the level of respect this system has achieved among the entire film community.

We are truly honoured to receive this prestigious award.

Scientific and Technical Awards are bestowed upon developers who contribute to the art and science of filmmaking through technologies or inventions that have proven value to the motion picture industry. Avid’s Film Composer, the first digital non-linear editing system to provide digitizing, editing and playback of images at 24 frames-per-second, has revolutionized filmmaking among film directors, producers and editors around the world for feature films such as The Fugitive and True Lies.

Avid’s latest industry accolade joins the company’s Emmy Awards earned previously from the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences for engineering and development of non-linear editing systems for digital images and sounds.
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Sunday April 23 – 4.00pm, 6.00pm and 8.00pm
Monday April 24 – 6.00pm and 8.30pm
Tuesday April 25 – 4.00pm and 8.00pm Awards Night

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Significant Sites, Future Trends

John Conomos visits the XVe Festival International de la Video et des Arts électroniques, Forum des Nouvelles Images et de la Culture émergente, Locarno, and Europäisches Medienkunst Festival, Osnabrück.

European film and video festivals are often significant sites to gauge current and future trends in film and electronic media. In Europe, with its massive post-Berlin Wall-Soviet communist cultural and demographic turbulence, there are numerous critical, aesthetic, curatorial and stylistic developments emerging that are suggestive of wider cultural undercurrents operating in late-capitalist culture.

Two important festival sites are the Locarno Video Art Festival and the European Media Art Festival at Osnabrück in Germany. Both Festivals, in the context of European film and video festivals, are well-established and enjoy a fairly-high critical reputation as important events for showcasing past and recent significant works.

What I wish to underscore are how certain films, installations, videos and seminars are indicative of certain aesthetic, formal and technological trends in experimental film and video-making, and to contextualize these trends in terms of the new media arts that are proliferating in the northern hemisphere. (It should also be remembered that what follows is not by any means a comprehensive critique of European film/video festivals as a particular cultural institution for screening moving image works, but, rather, an impressionistic overview of two critical festival sites in the overall context of European media culture.)

The Locarno Video Art Festival, which was organized by Lorenzo Bianda (whose parents, Rinaldo and Ines, are the founding members of this important Festival) and curated by the prominent Italian media critic and curator Marco Maria Gazzano, in association with the French video artist Robert Cahen, featured numerous stimulating videotapes and seminars. Located in the sunny climes of southern Switzerland—a landscape of alpine mountain ranges, a massive tranquil lake dotted with pleasure craft and bungalow-style hotels—reminding one of Nabokov’s early émigré European novels of the 1920s and ’30s, the Festival showcased numerous works that are suggestive of the new emerging digital forms in electronic media.

David Larcher’s extraordinarily quirky neo-Dadaist videos, Videovoid (1993) and Videotext (1993), are emblematic not only of the artist’s highly-processed collage form of electronic image-making, but indicate in their conceptual and formal architecture a markedly playful self-reflexivity that questions the tapes’ historical and generic markers. The latter work is particularly suggestive for Larcher’s zany deconstructive impulse to stretch the limits of video’s electronic signal in the immediacy of his studio. (Both works were funded by British, French and German sources, and produced at the Montbeliard TV Centre in France, a site organized by the indefatigable Pierre Bongiovanni, and rapidly becoming one of the most critical places for the emergence of digital cinema and new technologies in Europe.)

Dominik Barbier’s engaging documentary, J’étais Hamlet (1993), a deftly-constructed portrait of the German avant-garde playwright Heinrich Müller, was one (along with the Larcher tapes) of the Festival’s screening highlights, as were Bruno Saparelli’s evocative La Chambre Verte (1993), a languid delineation of Madagascar as a site for memories, reverie and tropical travel, and Irit Batsry’s multifaceted, haunting work, Traces of a Presence to Come (1993), a videotape that was shown outside of competition, memorable for its liquid imagery and a powerfully-resonant voice-over dealing with identity, collective memory and language.

Also, there was Gianni Toti’s massive collage video, Planetopolis (1994). Just over two hours in duration, this “video-poem-opera-essay” (Toti) explores many various cultural, historical and sociological facets of the urban metropolis of our mass-mediated society in the artist’s inimitable style of image-making.

Like Osnabrück’s European Media Festival, Locarno featured a videotheque as well. The selection of tapes were quite varied and grouped under the aptly-named title of “Neo-television”. Several interesting examples come to mind: Lari Flash and Jerome Ledup’s witty One En (1993), a documentary work (notable for its deadpan humour and zappy visual style) featuring Brian Eno discussing...
his Zen-like approach to artmaking; Lars Movin's excellent *The Misfits – 30 Years of Fluxus* (1993), a rare video documentation of the Euro-American Fluxus artists of the late 1950s and '60s who sought to "deglamorise" the visual arts – many of the relevant artists in question are interviewed in this instructive work; and, finally, Lynn Hershman's *Recovered Diary* (1994), a 30-minute tape that encapsulates Hershman's characteristic thematic and visual concerns of her on-going video autobiography (*Electronic Diary*): highly personal images of the familial, the Vietnam War, and phallocentric violence in the context of Hershman's own socio-cultural ethos as an artist, art educator (and, most significant, mother).

As for the seminars, various significant topics and issues were addressed by a number of different videomakers, theorists, curators, critics and exhibitors/distributors. Gazzano, who was primarily responsible (in association with his Festival colleagues) for the selection of the seminars, gave a comprehensive and stimulating overview of Woody and Steina Vasulka's innovative videowork (whose works not only resonate Larcher's own generic heritage as a videomaker, but the Festival itself, through its major UNESCO affiliations and its world-renowned Laser d'Or prize, have given prior recognition to the Vasulkas' rôle as "first wave" pioneers of video art).

Pierre Levy, fresh from the International Symposium for Electronic Art in Helsinki, gave an eloquent presentation on cyberspace in the context of its various shifting cultural, theoretical and technological problematics. Levy's paper elicited numerous observations and responses from the audience, especially a lively, engaging response from René Berger, one of Europe's eminent media theorists, and a vital figure also in terms of the Festival's formation and history.

Among the numerous seminar contexts, the Paris-based filmmaker and film theorist Michel Chion gave an informative presentation on his notion of "audio-vision" apropos of European modernist cinema, experimental video and American narrative cinema. Like the late Serge Daney, Chion's importance as a film critic and theorist is finally starting to be noticed in the English-speaking world. Chion, who is a prolific author, and whose background stems from his early work with Pierre Schaeffer (concrete music), illustrated his talk with examples from Robert Cahen, Gerardo Silva, Akira Kurosawa, Krzysztof Kieslowski, Jacques Tati and David Lynch, among others.

Another rewarding presentation that should be singled out (one of many among the impressive colloquiums on new technologies, computer art and virtual reality) was Georges Heck's discussion of the issues concerning the distribution and exhibition of experimental film and video in France and elsewhere in Europe. Heck, like Pierre Bongiovanni, has been instrumental in helping to set up the current distribution landscape in French video.

All in all, the Locarno Video Art Festival was a rewarding experience for this participant. It accentuated some emerging audio-visual trends in current electronic media, especially the rapidly-converging phenomenon between analogue and digital media (as spoken about in various different contexts over the years by such people as Jean-Luc Godard, Gene Youngblood, Raymond Bellour, Anne-Marie Duguet, Nicholas Rodowick, the Vasulkas, et al). Further, it showcased a wide variety of works that suggest an on-going substantial development in forging new aesthetic, cultural and technical agendas for electronic art.

The European Media Festival at Osnabrück, like the Locarno Festival, also exhibited similar thematic and stylistic concerns. However, with this particular festival site (also like Locarno, one of the oldest in Europe), what was quite evident in its overall programming is the emergence of film and computer-generated work by young artists. Clearly, the new media departments and colleges in Germany, the Netherlands and England are starting to have students graduate from their amply-resourced courses, and are having an impact on such festival sites as Osnabrück.

This well-organized and highly-stimulating festival had a few interesting works (both film and video) and symposiums. Curated and administered by Hermann Noring, Alfred Rotter and Ralf Sausmikat and their resourceful colleagues, Osnabrück's open-ended, mixed-media programming philosophy partly stems from its Experimental Workshop roots.

The Jack Smith retrospective (curated by New York director-writer Uzi Parnes, who gave a very helpful introduction to Smith's films, performances, plays and writings) was one of the Festival's strongest attributes. *Flaming Creatures* (1963), with its camp/parodic erotic concerns and fad­ing black-and-white granular look, a veritable benchmark film for the American avant-garde film and Pop Art, was definitely one of the more rewarding moments at this Festival. So too was seeing Stan Brakage and Phil Solomon's new hand-painted collage film, *Elementary Phrases* (1994). Its pulsating vivid colours, asymmetrical temporal pacing, and
Korean Diary

Solrun Hoaas, writer-director of Aya (1991), visits the fourth Pyongyang Film Festival of non-aligned and other developing countries, in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

My visa is ready in ten minutes at the DPRK embassy in Beijing. I catch JS 152, on Air Koryo, the twice-weekly flight from Beijing to Pyongyang. Aya has been in more than twenty overseas festivals, but I decided this was an opportunity not to be missed.

From the air, Pyongyang has an almost surreal beauty. Its mythology and monumental architecture creates a sense of unease, but also anticipation.

Evening television is a constant reminder that Korea is still in its 100-day official mourning period. There are repeated broadcasts of eulogies in memory of the 'Great Leader', Kim Il Sung, with clips from his four-decade-long career, and scenes of his wandering among the people – inspecting factories, farms, construction projects – always surrounded by note-taking followers. Aside from news and other programmes designed to heighten morale or productivity (a programme on happy street cleaners), I see little else while there, except one local drama. They normally have more entertainment, including foreign films, I am assured.

As I thought, my invitation was triggered by the screening of Aya in Shanghai last year, where the Festival manager, Kim Kwang Su, saw the film and liked it. The Pyongyang Festival began in 1987 and grew out of the Non-aligned Countries Conference. As the first Australian filmmaker, I am treated as a special guest. Film body and government officials and producers seem to outnumber directors among guests, and there are very few women.

Our first official visit is to Mansu Hill to lay flowers and stand for a moment in silence in front of a towering bronze statue of the deceased leader, Kim II Sung. We are immediately followed by a group of women and children who do the same, heads deeply bowed. Later, we are bussed through the wide, eerily-empty streets to Mangyongdae, the Great Leader's birthplace.

My conscientious interpreter, despite his scholarly air, has a welcome sense of humour and self-irony. Over a vodka-and-lime in the bar, we go through some of his queries on the translation of the dialogue in Aya for the Korean voice-over. We sort out 'fair dinkum' and subtle points missed, such as the sexuality of Mac (Chris Haywood). I ask about the attitude to homosexuality and am told it is just not talked about. Not an issue? He is vague, but has no problem talking about it or anything else, I find as time goes by. It is not an interpreter's job to offer opinions.

The Festival is officially opened in the 2,000-seat hall of Pyongyang International Cinema House – on Yanggak Islet in the Taedong River. In the foyer is a photomontage of the Great Leader meeting various foreign leaders. His presence is everywhere, from the elaborate Moscow-style metro to the Children's Palace. A military band in full uniform occupies one corner of the full house. Men and women in uniform are also present everywhere.

I am told they had thought of cancelling the Festival at the sudden death of Kim Il Sung, but, as it has been planned for two years, they decided to go through with it. But there will be no music or dancing at the opening and closing ceremonies as the country is still in deep mourning. Later, I am also told that, although they would not normally censor my film, the brief nude scene would be 'left out' using their 'special technique' – all out of respect for the Great Leader himself.

There is an interesting Togolese film in the morning, Aziaha, a 60-minute drama on family planning shot on video (all they can afford, says the modest director). I find it refreshingly humorous and quite good.

I call in on the film market, which consists of a few small suites with video-viewing facilities, a meeting room with a bar in a corner. There are local films on display, a few from Hong Kong, Thailand and Eastern Europe, but few buyers.

SEK (Korean Scientific and Educational Film Studio) has quite a large animation production and makes animated films on order from countries like France (Les Misérables, Gargantua), Poland and Japan. I watch one of their own highly-accomplished animated films, The Boy General, set against the exotic backdrop of the Koguryo dynasty (277 B.C. – 668 A.D.). Not unexpectedly for a country of tae kwan do champions, their martial arts scenes are expertly done. In period pieces, women fight as tough as the men. There have been co-productions with the former Soviet Union, including one where heroes from both countries join forces against the Japanese come to pillage the nation's treasures.

I escape my minder and find the salesgirls behind the counter in the local department store no different from elsewhere. A wander at dusk along the river embankment past boys fishing and strolling lovers, too, gives the feeling I could be anywhere. At night, there is little streetlight, and you can tell a man is approaching by his cigarette. Yet I feel safer than in the streets of Melbourne. Only once, when I point my camera into the dark part of a smaller subway station, do I get into trouble with a stern-looking young female officer.

I sit through a long, but engaging Nepalese film about exploitation, murder and revenge against a background of village revolutionary struggle, writ-
ten and directed by visiting R. B. Shrestna 'Kavita Ram', who also plays the hero. This Festival offers a great opportunity to see unknown work from small film industries, not often programmed elsewhere.

Then it is my turn to be introduced in highly-formal, almost chanting, tones, by an actress who leads me by the hand to face the 2,000-capacity audience. The two actors doing the voice-over (that almost drowns the subtle M & E track) unfortunately do not speak English, and guess at the timing. “Tell him he is a wonderful lover” comes over a shot of Mac and Aya (Eri Ishida), rather than Julie Forsythe’s hippie girl and the Okinawan fisherman. The audience might be forgiven for thinking it is a happy romantic ending, but then the fact that Mac is gay escaped the Japanese subtitlers as well, and even some Australian critics.

All delegations join in a guided tour of the Pyongyang Film Studios, built in 1947 and covering a 100-hectare expanse 16 km from the city. Their first feature film, My Native Homeland, was produced in 1949. During the Korean War, we are told, they produced films in caves. Now there are five studios, some decorated with elaborate murals. Again, our visit begins with flowers and silence in front of the giant statue showing Kim Il Sung ‘guiding’ the direction of the film, The Flower Girl.

Kim Il Sung marble statue and sunset-coloured mural of the sacred M t Paekdu in Grand People’s Study House.

At present, production of feature films is around thirty per year, but they have capacity for much more. I walk through a mock-up mediaeval village set with the Korean actress, Kim Kyong Ae, who played the lead in An Admirable Girl, the Korean film in competition, a tear-jerker about a young woman who sacrifices herself (including her prospects of marriage to a man she loves) in order to look after two orphans. She does an admirable job with the role. Like most actors here, she is on a monthly salary and has to take the roles she is given. She prefers “noble roles” such as in the film we saw.

They have a system of ranking actors, after they have appeared in several successful films and been well received by the public, as Merited Actor, and, ultimately the highest accolade, a “People’s Actor”.

We observe filming of a period piece about a famous kiseng (courtesan) who enticed and killed the leader of the Japanese invaders in the 16th Century. ‘Chinatown’ is a set often used in films from the 1930s, a period particularly popular for its films on the long liberation struggle against the brutal Japanese occupation (1905-45), when many in the Korean resistance were in exile in China or the Soviet Union. The significance of this period in shaping national pride and resistance to outside interference is often disregarded and overshadowed by Western focus almost exclusively on the Korean War.

In a sound studio, a mixer continues working as we crowd around and see a woman in uniform get shot among river reeds on screen. Later, there is a disco scene - set in Sydney, a Korean writer tells me. The storyline involves a Korean who went to Australia many years ago, a story of old loyalties and betrayal.

In the dining room, I notice new delegations, an elegant-looking trio from Uzbekhistan, a trio from Iran, and, seated apart from us, a group of Korean residents from Japan on a visit to their home country. There are numerous other delegations at the hotel - including Irish and Thai, and a new group of hefty-looking Russians who disappear into a special dining room. I am told Zhirinovski is here, but not for the Festival.

On an excursion to the Myohyang Mountains, I have lunch with two Cambodians, one of whom has worked on Norodom Sihanouk’s films. We saw one of them, Miserable Life of a Peasant Brother and Sister (1994), a melodramatic story of love and jealousy set against guerilla
Australia's First Films:
the Royal Visit Films of 1901

In part 12 of this continuing series, Chris Long and Clive Sowry examine the film bonanza that accompanied the Royal Visit in Australia's federation year.

Three days later, the visit culminated in the Duke's opening of Australia's first Federal Parliament at the Exhibition Buildings. On 10 May, 15,000 Australian and Imperial troops were reviewed by the Duke at the Flemington racecourse. Ballarat and Sale were visited on the 13 and 14 May respectively. Ballarat's oldest surviving film was taken during that visit.

Leaving Portsmouth on 15 March 1901, the "Ophir" visited British colonies at Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, Ceylon and Singapore before reaching Australia. Two British cameramen also covered it, being the first foreign producers to visit Australia since the Lumière Company's Marius Sester departed in 1897.

New Zealand's government commissioned Melbourne's Salvation Army Lime­light Department to film its section of the tour—the first major film made abroad by Australians.

Several of the films were more than an hour in length. This tremendous burst of production was unprecedented in Australia, and would not be equaled for almost a decade. A representative sampling of the 1901 Royal Visit films survives in our national archives as a testimony to their proliferation and popularity. The Victorian tour film from May 1901 was released on the National Film & Sound Archive video Living Melbourne as recently as 1988.

The 1901 Royal Tour
Bound to Mother England by "the thin red line of Empire", Australia's colonial governments invited Queen Victoria's grandson, the Duke of York (later King George V), to visit them as early as 1893. Following Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, the invitation was renewed by the government of New Zealand.

The Federation of Australia's colonies in January 1901 rendered a Royal Visit not only desirable, but politically expedient. Australian troops supported Britain at the Boer War and Boxer Rebellion. Demonstrations of Royal recognition and solidarity were advisable.

On 17 September 1900, Queen Victoria assented to an Australian tour by the Duke and Duchess of York, and on 29 September similar assent was given for a New Zealand tour. The Orient steamship liner "Ophir" was hired and refitted for the voyage, as no Royal yacht could span the required distances between coaling ports. The Duke chose the tour's Royal Suite and the ship's officers—an illustrious band of ADCs, ladies-in-waiting and distinguished military officers.

Queen Victoria's demise slightly delayed the arrangements, and the surviving films indicate that officers associated with the tour wore black armbands during most of the official functions.

Most of the events surrounding the 1901 Royal Visit were filmed. Leaving Portsmouth on 15 March 1901, the "Ophir" visited British colonies at Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, Ceylon and Singapore before reaching Australia. The Royals' landing at Melbourne's St Kilda Pier on 6 May was followed by a spectacular procession through the city's crowded streets. Camera tripods with "pan heads" were used for the first time in Australia to cover the day's events.

The Duke and Duchess rejoined the "Ophir" at the Royal Suite and the ship's officers— an illustrious band of ADCs, ladies-in-waiting and distinguished military officers. The Royal couple at Rotorua's racecourse on 21 June, after laying another foundation stone for some railway buildings, the Royals left per the "Ophir" and steamed to Lyttelton on the 22nd. In neighbouring Christchurch, their reception was filmed, as well as the laying of the foundation stone for the Canterbury Jubilee Memorial in Victoria Square. Near Hagley Park, a Review of 10,000 New Zealand troops on 24 June. The Royal couple travelled by train to Dunedin, where Boer War servicemen were presented with medals on the 26th. The last event of the Duke's New Zealand tour to be filmed was his departure from Dunedin railway station on the 27th. The "Ophir" left Lyttelton for Hobart the same day.

Australian Boer War Troops made a magnificent procession in escorting the Royal couple into Melbourne over Princes Bridge, which was recorded minutely by Salvation Army cameramen for the Victorian Government. The Mayor (Mr. Stretton) and his Aldermen are stationed in the Council Dais on the left, against the foot of the temporary Municipal Arch built to honour the Royal visitors. Author's collection.

Looking South Down Swanston Street to Princes Bridge, Melbourne, 6 May 1901, a city on fire, with an unsurpassed crowd of spectators lining the streets to view the Duke's procession. No royal welcome, before or since, has surpassed those attendances which were vividly recorded on film. Courtesy of P. A. Wollonden.

Three days later, the visit culminated in the Duke's opening of Australia's first Federal Parliament at the Exhibition Buildings. On 10 May, 15,000 Australian and Imperial troops were reviewed by the Duke at the Flemington racecourse. Ballarat and Sale were visited on the 13 and 14 May respectively. Ballarat's oldest surviving film was taken during that visit.

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16 May was originally chosen for the "Ophir"'s embarkation from Melbourne, but a bubonic plague outbreak in the port of Brisbane changed the plans. Instead, the Duke and Duchess left Port Melbourne station by train on 18 May, bound for Brisbane. There, Aborigines played a large part in the proceedings, but no further films are known to have been made. The Duke and Duchess rejoined the "Ophir" at the Hawkesbury after a rail journey down from Brisbane, and they entered Sydney Heads on 27 May. On the following day, a military review was held for the Duke at Centennial Park, which was

filmed by Joe Rosenthal of the Warwick Trading Company. A visit to the Blue Mountains proceeded on 4 June, and two days later the "Ophir" left Sydney for Auckland, escorted by the cruisers "St George" and "Junoo.

Melbourne's Salvation Army Lime­light Department officially filmed this tour for the New Zealand Government. On 11 June 1901, there was a welcome at Auckland wharf and a pro­cession through the city to Government House. Rotorura's geysers were visited on 14 June, and Maoris performed for the Royal couple at Rotorura's race­course on the following day. They returned to the "Ophir" at Auckland and set sail for Wellington, arriving on 18 June. Another harbourside welcome was followed by a city procession beneath commemorative arches, and the laying of a new Town Hall's foundation stone. On 21 June, after laying another foundation stone for some railway buildings, the Royals left per the "Ophir" and steamed to Lyttelton on the 22nd. In neighbouring Christchurch, their reception was filmed, as well as the laying of the foundation stone for the Canterbury Jubilee Memorial in Victo­ria Square. Near Hagley Park, a Review of 10,000 New Zealand troops on 24 June. The Royal couple travelled by train to Dunedin, where Boer War servicemen were presented with medals on the 26th. The last event of the Duke's New Zealand tour to be filmed was his departure from Dunedin railway station on the 27th. The "Ophir" left Lyttelton for Hobart the same day.

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Looking South Down Swanston Street to Princes Bridge, Melbourne, 6 May 1901, a city on fire, with an unsurpassed crowd of spectators lining the streets to view the Duke's procession. No royal welcome, before or since, has surpassed those attendances which were vividly recorded on film. Courtesy of P. A. Wollonden.
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The Royal Tour of Australasia, 1901, showing places visited by the Royal Yacht "Ophir", May–June 1901. Author’s collection.


Australia’s Royal Visitors, 1901, the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, later King George V and Queen Mary (1867–1953). Photo by W. & D. Downey of Belgravia, 1901.

The 1901 Royal Visit films were part of the mechanism of linkage to England, and are now a valuable record of Australia’s changing attitudes and affiliations. The rigidly-structured protocol and class system so evident in the films seems laughably distasteful to today’s egalitarian Australians.

The Tasmanian visit may have been filmed by cameraman McGregor of A. J. West and Company. West later recalled the British exhibition of an Australian log-chopping film during the tour, probably at the Hobart Domain on 4 July 1901. If so, it was the first film taken in Tasmania. The Hobart visit concluded on 6 July, later stops being made at Adelaide (9–15 July), Albany (20 July) and Perth (21–6 July), where no further films are known to have been shot.

After their Australian departure, the Duke and Duchess continued through Mauritius, South Africa and Canada, returning to their children in England on 2 November 1901.11

The tour promoted Imperialist sentiment in a manner later paralleled by the 1954 Visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Australia – the first local visit of a reigning British monarch. Both visits were carefully-staged reminders of our ties with “Mother” England, timed to coincide with periods of increasing Australian independence.

Today, Britain’s offshore has attained a maturity in administration, in population, in trade and in the arts. "Parental" ties are being shed as Australia moves towards Republicanism. The 1901 Royal Visit films were part of the mechanism of linkage to England, and are now a valuable record of Australia’s changing attitudes and affiliations. The rigidly-structured protocol and class system so evident in the films seems laughably distasteful to today’s egalitarian Australians.

Official film – Victoria

The Salvation Army’s January 1901 Inauguration of the Australian Commonwealth coverage, made for the New South Wales government, was so profitable that it forced the Army to register The Australian Kinematographic Company on 30 January 1901.12 It was Australia’s first production company, allowing the Salvation Army to make further films for external agencies.

Only five days after the company’s registration, the Salvation Army offered the Victorian government its facilities to film the forthcoming Royal Visit.17 Victoria’s Chief Secretary referred the offer to an independent “Celebrations Committee” headed by Thomas G. Watson.18 Although this committee’s records appear to be lost, press reports indicate that the contract was given to the Salvation Army no later than 23 March 1901.19 The Limelight Department immediately discarded its old Lumière Cinématographes and upgraded to Warwick Bioscope cameras.20 These had up to 25 minutes of magazine capacity, tripods with “pan” heads, and a range of camera lenses of different focal lengths.21

The photographic firm of Baker & Rouse imported the cameras for the Army and later acted as a sales outlet for the films,22 as they had for the Sydney federation coverage. On 22 April 1901, Baker & Rouse’s magazine, The Australasian Photographic Review, announced the Royal Visit events intended for filming. Victorian and New Zealand coverage would be shot by the Salvation Army, Sydney events covered by the Warwick Trading Company, and Brisbane films were planned.23 This Brisbane filming probably didn’t evenuate.

The Limelight Department’s Joseph Perry directed and shot most of the Victorian films with assistance from Sidney Cook.24 Perry left with Commandant Herbert Booth to present “Soldiers of the Cross” in New Zealand before the Melbourne Royal Visit ended. They boarded the S.S. “Mararoa” at Sydney on 15 May 1901 and disembarked at Auckland on the 19th.25 Sidney Cook alone shot the Ballarat coverage on 13 May, and the Royal Train’s Melbourne departure on the 18.26

Two variant sets of the “official” (governmentally-contracted) Victorian films survive, one from the vaults of Herschells Films27, the other from the Sydney-based Pearson collection which may have originally been the property of the pioneering cameraman-exhibitor Ernest Higgins.28 They were combined and mostly released on the NFSA video Living Melbourne (1988). Notes taken from the films, newspaper reports and advertisements in The Australasian Photographic Review allow the authors to assemble a composite filmography:

Filmography:
Official Victorian Royal visit films, 1901

1 The Official Landing of the Duke and Duchess of York at St Kilda [Pier]
   Shot 6 May 1901. P. S.”Hygeia”, conveying the Royals from the “Ophir”, arrives at St. Kilda pier. The Duke and Duchess disembark, and are introduced by Governor-General Hopetoun to Australia’s first Federal Cabinet. The Duke inspects the Permanent Artillery squad, then proceeds with the Duchess along the pier to the shore. A long camera pan shot follows them without a break (the
first such shot in an Australian film, made with a Warwick model “A” camera. Length 280 feet (4 mins 40 secs).

2 The Duke’s Procession Over the Princes Bridge
Shot 6 May 1901. Medium shot of Melbourne Council Dais under the Municipal Arch temporarily built across the South end of Princes Bridge. Colonial Mounted Rifles escort three Vice-Regal carriages, followed by the Royal landau, which halts to acknowledge a presentation from Major Gillott. Length 225 feet (3 mins 45 secs).

3 [Posing for Official Photographs on Government House’s steps, Melbourne]
Probably shot 6 May 1901. The Duke and Duchess with their Suite and officers of the “Ophir”. Matches a photo in Table Talk, Melbourne, 23 May 1901, p. 17, which identifies each participant by name. Length 50 feet (50 secs).

4 Chinese Procession
Shot 7 May 1901. Mentioned in The Australasian Photographic Review, 22 May 1901, p. 15. No print is known to survive.

5 [Royal Party Going to State Reception at Parliament House, Melbourne]

6 Royal Guests Leaving Parliament House, Melbourne

7 The Opening of Federal Parliament
Shot 9 May 1901. The Duke and Duchess in their State landau en route to the Exhibition Buildings with a military escort. First shot is taken near the Municipal Arch on Princes Bridge, the second in Spring Street near Parliament House. Length 105 feet (1 min 45 secs).

8 [Raising the Flag Over the Exhibition Building’s Dome, Melbourne]
Probably shot 9 May 1901 at the moment of Australia’s first Federal Parliament’s opening, although the Duchess presided over another flag-raising at the same venue on 14 May 1901. Length 24 feet (24 secs).

9 The Grand Review at Flemington of 15,000 Troops
Shot 10 May 1901 from centre of the racecourse, looking across the parade to the Duke, wearing a busby and taking the salute on horseback. Pearson footage includes gun carriages, Colonial Artillery, Infantry, Victorian Mounted Rifles, Military Band, Naval Contingent and Colonial Artillery Band. Living Melbourne has another section with State Militia, Queensland’s Cycle Corps, Highland Contingent, Fijian Native Constabulary, gun carriages and Medical Corps’ Ambulance. Combined length 140 feet (2 mins 20 sec).

10 The Trades Procession
Shot 11 May 1901, probably in Spring Street, Melbourne. Mentioned in The Australasian Photographic Review, 22 May 1901, p. 15. This may be the Warwick Trading Company film (Cat. 6190a). No print is known to survive.

11 Laying Foundation Stone of Soldiers’ Statue, Ballarat
Shot 13 May 1901. Taken at corner of Sturt and Grenville streets, with the Mayors of East Ballarat and Ballarat present. NB: The statue was moved to its present site opposite the Town Hall in 1906. Length 35 feet (35 secs).

12 [Royal Train Leaving Port Melbourne Station for Brisbane]
Shot 18 May 1901. Taken from opposite side to passenger boarding platform, indicating that problems may have arisen with obtaining an adequate vantage point. Train leaves station and Naval Escort marches away. Length 69 feet (1 min 9 secs).

The Australasian Photographic Review of 22 April 1901 (p. 20) announced plans for filming other events which may not have been accomplished:

13 Official Reception at Ballarat

14 The Duke Descending the [South Star] Mine at Ballarat
The total aggregate footage shot for the “official” Victorian coverage was probably about 1,500 feet (25 mins). Footages quoted above are surviving lengths, not the lengths originally shot, for which no record has yet been found.

Commercial films of the Victorian tour

1) Mark Blow’s Coverage
Sydney photographer Mark Blow’s pre-1899 local films, made for his “Polytechnic” venue, were described in Part 5 of this series. [p56]
I
n early October, I became intrigued when I heard of a recent judgement where Elizabeth Taylor’s lawyers failed to stop NBC’s broadcast of a mini-series about her life. She had attempted a “Slapp suit”, a common action in the U.S. where a person brings an action quickly in order to stop a defendant trying to exercise his or her First Amendment right of free speech.

The Lanham Trademark Act has, in the past, together with common-law unfair competition and infringement of the right of publicity, provided comfort and protection for celebrities and famous persons. In particular, Section 43(a) of the Act states:

Any person who, in connection with any goods or services, [...] uses in commerce any word, term, name, symbol or device, or any combination thereof, which (A) is likely to cause confusion, or association of such person with another person, or the origin, sponsorship or approval of his or her goods or services, or commercial activities by another person [...] shall be liable in a civil action by any person who believes that he or she is or is likely to be damaged by such acts.

Taylor’s case sought to stop the following alleged infringements:

• The use of her name and image.
• The use of her trademark by NBC and the use of her name to promote the mini-series solely for NBC’s profit.
• To stop the use of another actress to portray her (Liz Taylor) in a fashion which is not intended to be a parody but rather is intended to be a factual presentation of her.

On 29 September 1994, Judge Diane Wayne in the Los Angeles Superior Court decided, surprisingly enough, that Elizabeth Taylor was not entitled to stop NBC from going to air with the mini-series.

The obvious impact for Australian producers seeking to make films, mini-series and documentaries about or portraying famous persons and celebrities sprang to mind. Does this mean that we no longer need to acquire rights or permission from them?

The U.S. courts have been more recently grappling with a way to balance the right to reward for the use of someone’s name, image and likeness with the right of a filmmaker to free speech.

In recent dealings with U.S. attorneys in relation to the acquisition of rights from celebrities and famous persons, I became aware of a distinctly new and broader approach. Many U.S. attorneys now approach the acquisition of rights from celebrities or famous persons on the basis of, “Well, just go ahead and make the film or mini-series and we’ll see what happens.”

The Taylor decision and this new approach seemed so unique and different to the law as it had been laid down in the Estate of Elvis Presley v. Russian 513 F. Supp. 1339 (1981), which in its day clarified in the U.S. the position in relation to the right of publicity of famous persons. In that case, the court found that individuals, especially public figures or celebrities (such as Elvis), had the right to control the commercial value and exploitation of their name, picture or likeness, and that they could prevent others from unfairly appropriating the value in those rights for their own commercial benefit.

The court based its decision on the premise that during Presley’s life he owned a proprietary right in his name and likeness which he could license or assign for his commercial benefit and that right of publicity survived his death and became part of his estate.

In the U.S., the law used to draw a clear distinction between a public figure or celebrity being portrayed in a way that was not false or defamatory and being portrayed primarily as a means of commercial exploitation. The first was permitted, the second was not.

In view of the Taylor case, the boundaries of the second appear to have been pushed out further. In both cases, the Plaintiff sought injunctions. In 1981, the Estate of Presley got the injunction; in 1994 Taylor, in person and seemingly alive, failed. What had changed?

The law in the U.S. has been moving in favour of free speech, so much so that in another recent case: CBS Inc. v. Davis (1994) 510 US 127 L.Ed.2d 358: the Court held that the “most extraordinary remedy” of a prior restraint (an injunction) may be granted only in “exceptional cases” in which “the evil that would result from the reportage is both great and certain and cannot be mitigated by less intrusive measures”.

With this emphasis on free speech, it is little wonder that the U.S. has such a premise for denying a celebrity protection in these circumstances in the U.S. is founded in the U.S. constitution and in particular in the First Amendment. In Australia, there is no constitutional guarantee of free speech and hence not the same degree of focus on the issue as there is in the U.S.

It has been accepted U.S. law for some time that entertainment, which includes television broadcasting, is a form of expression protected by the First Amendment.

As far back as 1928, in the Chaplin case, U.S. courts have granted injunctions in favour of a public figure plaintiff when the expression involved included specific copying of the public figure. In Taylor’s case, the judge went so far as to say that she did not believe that a viewer would assume that Taylor endorsed or sponsored the mini-series just because her name appeared in the title. This is clearly a dramatic shift in the law.

Therefore, now that the remedy of prior restraint (injunction) is no longer available in the U.S., the law has shifted to the extent where it is or has become a free-for-
**Gillian Armstrong's Little Women**

EMMA COLLIER examines the most recent of the several screen and television adaptations of Louisa M. Alcott's enduring novel. She finds Winona Ryder once again a modern girl in period garb, but is impressed by the intelligence of the direction and the beauties of the cinematography and production design.

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**Viva La France Viva Les Deux**

Yves Angelo's Le Colonel Chabert was the toast of Paris late in 1994. Who is the finer: Depardieu or Luchini? Who is Luchini? SCOTT MURRAY explores.

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**Setting the Scene: The Great Hollywood Art Directors**

In an auteurist world where directors and screenwriters dominate much critical debate, SARAH STOLLMAN finds a book which does much to preference the key role of the production designer.

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**A Siegel Film: An Autobiography**

After several years in the critical wilderness, Don Siegel is experiencing a slow but steady re-emergence. R.J. THOMPSON finds Siegel's autobiography yet another reason for buffs to give his films a try.

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**JODIE COMES IN FROM THE WOODS • FANNY ARDENT IS BAD AND SUBLIME • MARY BECOMES A SAINT**

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**Nell celebrates the return of the enfant sauvage**

Michael Apted's Nell, starring Jodie Foster and Liam Neeson, follows François Truffaut's L'Enfant Sauvage and Werner Herzog's The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser in celebrating the "wild child", "the mysterious or enigmatic outsider who is suddenly discovered and thrust into society in order to reveal its shortcomings and faults".

By deconstructing Foster's woman of the woods, the film cherishes the part wildness can play in restoring modern people to the connections with nature celebrated in stories but lost in everyday lives.  

Review by Raymond Younis
woman (nun and educator) who lived from 1842 to 1909. With a small-budget, Pavlou and producer Rosemary Blight have opted for docu-drama. This has enabled them to select what they consider the most significant episodes of Mary’s life, as well as intersperse them with interviews. These propel the action (giving relevant dates and filling in chronological gaps), as well as comment on action and characters. One might say that the film is an annotated drama.

“Cinema hagiography” is not a phrase that immediately springs to mind (or runs smoothly from the lips), but there is a not inconsiderable body of films that offer movie lives of the saints. Francis of Assisi has been dramatized by Robert Rossellini, Michael Curtiz, Franco Zeffirelli and Liliana Cavani; Joan of Arc by Carl Theodore Dreyer, Robert Bresson, Victor Fleming and Otto Preminger. Bernadette of Lourdes has been popular and there have been movies such as Edward Dmytryk’s The Reluctant Saint, Ben Gazzara as Don Bosco and Pierre Fresnay as Monseigneur Vincent (Maurice Cloche, 1947). Alain Cavalier won Canne awards for his stylized Thérèse (1986). And this list does not include those post-biblical epics of early Christian martyr.

Kay Pavlou is aware of the pitfalls of trying to please audiences who want humanity and some substance to their saints’ stories and those who, influenced by the De Milles legacy, want their saints to be seen to be haloed and hallowed. By and large, Mary is down-to-earth and human (the visit to Finsbury Park), however, seems too hush-holy and the use of light at the end of the miracle sequence seems over-other-worldly). Perhaps a good way to put it is that there is enough explicit piety to satisfy those who need it spelt out, and enough implicit sanctity to show how saints are not plaster figures but people who experience struggle and are involved in a real world.

The ABC’s Clare Dunne has written and produced radio programmes on Mary MacKillop, and she provides a personalized yet objective-enough commentary throughout the film. The Irish accent, however, militates against the ‘Australianness’ of the production. Two sisters of St Joseph (the religious order Mary MacKillop founded), Marie Therese Foale and Margaret McKenna, offer genially shrewed comments and a German Jesuit official, Peter Gumpel, from the Office for Saints in Rome, gives background information about the process of saint-making, sometimes with a wry touch that indicates we are not simply getting the party line.

But it is dramatized re-enactments that, although brief and often filmed on small and confined sets, stay in the memory. This is largely due to the screen presence of Lucy Bell as Mary: her initial appearance in a striking red dress and then on horseback, so that she is seen as a woman before being seen as a nun, her broad Australian accent which gives her performance an atmosphere of authenticity, and her speaking of dialogue, much of which is taken from Mary’s own letters. The bush landscapes, the interiors of old railway carriages and the colonial ways also all contribute to Mary’s being experienced in an Australian context.

Audiences not familiar with the detail of Mary MacKillop’s life may wish for more information and a clearer timeline of events. They may be puzzled by the yen and zest for bizarre mystical experiences that Father Tennyson Wood, who inspired Mary to start her work and education, and thought appropriate and desirable (some of which were later exposed as self-deceivingly fraudulent). But this kind of spiritual practice was prevalent at the end of the 19th Century – as may be seen vividly and with far greater elaboration in Cavalier’s Thérèse.

The film is a collaboration of women filmmakers about an Australian pioneer woman who serves as something of an ideal for contemporary women, and their place in modern society and in today’s churches. Mary believed in herself and in her causes, and looked male authorities, especially Bishops, unfailingly respectfully in the eye. (The film has a fair amount of warranted bishop-bashing.) And, despite her being excommunicated by the Bishop of Adelaide, Pope Pius IX received her and wanted to “lay my hands on the head of the excommunicated one”. The photos of the children educated by Mary and her sisters bear witness to a significant life for others which still has its influence in Australian society.

John Duigan, who subsequently directed Roma, made what seems to me to be a fine example of Australian cinema hagiography, Fragments of War: The Story of Damien Parer (television, 1988). It opts for the implicit treatment of personal integrity that we might call holiness and shows Parer as a decent human being, a man of his times and a photographer who understood his reporting of World War II battles as a vocation to personalize war, and as mediating the war to those who were not on the battlefields. Duigan’s well-researched screenplay also
Nell represents, like Kaspar Hauser, a type of purity and innocence which is uncorrupted by contact with "civilization", and which the film suggests has been lost in the emergence of social and institutional structures such as the psychiatric hospital (where they "screw you and leave you", according to a doctor). However, it is, needless to say, the central irony in the film that she is the one who is called by doctors, media representatives and others a "wild" one.

Nell's sympathetic doctor, Jerome (Liam Neeson), and the psychologist, Paula (Natasha Richardson), clearly become recipients of her redemptive and healing presence. (The fact that they are both doctors means that it is difficult to resist the reading that she embodies the "way of nature" in a restorative sense, in contradiction to a scientific approach which the film's rhetorical modes puts across as uncaring and, paradoxically, quite harmful.)

The two doctors, Jerome and Paula, accordingly, find that the defensive mechanisms which they had erected as barriers to shield them from one another and from others - barriers which may be necessary in cities and towns - crumble in the presence of this beneficent woman and her wondrous environment. The fact that they gradually learn to decipher and speak her language is a transparent metaphor that really needs no commentary.

Significantly, the viewer (a societal being who is a long way from the pristine forests) also learns her language - or, to be more precise, learns to recognize and acknowledge her language as a meaningful and effective alternative, along with the two doctors in the course of the film. The implications, however, should not be ignored, especially with regard to the two discourses in the film and the nature of the relation which the film meticulously constructs: the contrast between the societal (read "pseudo-enlightened") view and the nature-centred, as well as theologically-based view. Nell is contrasted to a number of young men (in "civilization", naturally) who seem to spend all of their time in a pool hall thinking of lascivious matters; she is also linked repeatedly with children both in and out of the hospital. The significations are clear.

It also becomes clear that the hierarchy which is overturned in such films is also overturned here. Just as the doctor realizes that the infant savage is no savage at all in Truffaut's film, and, just as the viewer sees the death of Kaspar as a tragedy in Herzog's film, so too Nell comes to be seen as a stable, sensitive and insightful subject whose language is coherent and meaningful, even though it has been developed partly in response to childhood traumas and anxieties. Nell, ironically, is needed by individuals and doctors like Jerome and Paula. She also comes to be seen as a type of restorer of innocence and of those connections which differentiate the child's perceptions from those of the (fallen, of course!) adult. In this sense, the largely conventional film language, with its lyrical and spectacular shots of vast expanses of water, mountains, forest and air, actually serves to heighten the sense of purity and innocence which the film otherwise seeks to foreground.

Certainly, there are very strong performances here. Many will no doubt respond to the positive points, of which there are many. There are points made about sections of the media which need to be made, about perceptions which are based on biases, ignorance, heartlessness and strategic exclusions, particularly where the mentally ill are concerned, about the therapeutic effects of interpersonal connections and commitments, and about the rather irresponsible appropriation of the environment.

But this is a very rhetorical film in both substance and style, and the strategies through which familiar can be very seductive. They are intended to be. The oppositions which are set up and rhetorically amplified will not convince others, because these oppositions are constructed in such a stark and polarized manner. The court scene in which Nell's prognosis (on the subject of the film of contemporary society) is stated, though poignant and lucid, will strike some viewers as too naïve and simple-minded. There is something inaudious, notwithstanding the film's many laudable intentions, about the rather partial (and largely negative) view of the work of psychiatrists and psychologists in hospitals: this aspect may trouble some who are aware of the dangers of scientism but who see no need to advocate an anti-scientific stance.

Still, the fact that the film can raise so many important issues within a well-acted, competently-directed and attractively-mounted story and still be quite entertaining is very much a point in its favour. It is worth a look. — RAYMOND YOUNGS
Beliefs and practices (some secular Australia can handle explicitly the life of a saint. But it is interesting to see how a who has not only appropriated by his wife, Comtesse Ferraud, ... and one's acquaintances, to things worse than for a society, to convince people he is whom he is penniless and unable to existence.

It is the most recent of Balzac's novella, a work of such greatest critical attention in era in this dread of a world swayed by lawyers; it is also a tribute to his quality as a writer that he should prove so prophetic.

Yves Angelo, whose work is little known in Australia, has fashioned a traditional but solid adaptation of Balzac's tale. The film is all rather theatrical, and looks at times like a filmed play, especially given the design and execution of several sets - particularly at the lawyer's, the most important location in both film and novella. But even if one feels at times part of an audience at the Comédie Française, one is there on a very good night. The cast is simply superb, with many of France's top actors at their peak: Gérard Depardieu, Fabrice Luchini, Fanny Ardant, Claude Rich and André Dussollier.

All this is not to say Angelo cannot be cinematic when he wants: the battle snowscapes of Eylau, for example, are masterly, painterly and extremely powerful - a difficult feat given audiences' blasé attitude to much cinematically-depicted carnage. Angelo's mise-en-scène is always crisp and the tale always moves, despite the (inevitable) wordiness.

Given the tragic ironies that befall the noble and hapless Chabert, it is hardly surprising that Depardieu should have been chosen; he is, after all, one of the cinema's finest actors, and here he can majestically rekindle the soulful resignation seen at the end of Cynane de Bergerac (Jean-Paul Rappeneau, 1992). What is surprising is that, in many eyes, Depardieu is ousted by Luchini, in the rôle of Maître Derville, the lawyer to whom Chabert entrusts his fate. Luchini has a long career (one thinks back to his rôle as the recipient of a tidally-timed sex act in Walterian Borowczyk's 1974 Contes Immoraux, as well as to several films of Eric Rohmer), and he has long been gaining a reputation. But certainly in France his performance as Derville has lifted him to near iconic status. One simply cannot mention Depardieu's name without being told how the real star of Le Colonel Chabert is Luchini.

Yet another surprise is the performance Angelo gets from Fanny Ardant as Comtesse Ferraud, a striking actress in the later Truffaut films who has never really managed to escape criticism for being a model-turned-actress. Here, she is sublime, especially in the heart-rending scene where Chabert has dinner in his chateau with his devious wife, and touches her best and worst sides in a dialogue that imperceptibly shifts between betrayal and nobler senses catalyzed by guilt.

It is a great scene in an excellent, if conservative, film.

In the film which held the greatest critical attention in France as 1994 drew to a close was Yves Angelo's Le Colonel Chabert. It is the most recent of several silent and sound adaptations of Honoré de Balzac's novella, a work of such biting irony that it is generally ranked amongst Balzac's finest. It tells of Colonel Chabert, a French army captain who miraculously survives the massacre of Napoleon's forces at Eylau, but is considered dead in France and thus stripped of all identity. When Chabert returns to Paris two years later, he is penniless and unable to convince people he is whom he says he is. There could be few things worse than for a society, and one's acquaintances, to deny so totally one's very existence.

The greatest denial is that by his wife, Comtesse Ferraud, who has not only appropriated his fortune but remarried. For her to preserve the life she holds dear, Chabert must not be recognized. Adrift, Chabert has no choice but to abandon his fate to the world of lawyers. This is the most bitter irony in a very black tale: a hero returns not to glory and renewed life but to a world motivated by uncaring greed.

[...] after the second-hand clothes shop, a lawyer's office is the most horrifying of street markets our society has to offer. It is on a par with the gambling house, the courts, the lottery office and the brothel. What is the explanation? Because perhaps they place dramas of the human soul in a scene which is utterly indifferent to their hopes.

Balzac was clearly ahead of his time in this dread of a world where lawyers are the most important location in both film and novella. But even if one feels at times part of an audience at the Comédie Française, one is there on a very good night. The cast is simply superb, with many of France's top actors at their peak: Gérard Depardieu, Fabrice Luchini, Fanny Ardant, Claude Rich and André Dussollier.

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LITTLE WOMEN


When Louisa May Alcott wrote a novel based on her own childhood and her family's life during the American Civil War, it became an instant hit upon its publication in 1868. Ever since, Little Women has featured as a "must" on the reading lists of generations upon generations of good middle-class children. It is little wonder, then, that such a popular factor has proven to be so attractive to filmmakers. It has been adapted for the screen in the English language at least five times already: once as a silent version in 1918; George Cukor's 1933 remake with Katharine Hepburn in the starring rôle of Jo March; Mervyn LeRoy's 1949 attempt with Elizabeth Taylor, June Allyson, Margaret O'Brien and Janet Leigh; as a TV film in 1978 with Greer Garson, Meredith Baxter, Susan Dey and Dorothy McGuire; and yet again, as the least-known and even-less-appealing BBC mini-series; and yet again, as the least-known and even-less-appealing BBC mini-series.

What is especially interesting about the latest adaptation is that it seems to be an "all-girl" initiative - befittingly, one would suggest, in the case of this peculiarly "all-girl" novel - with producer Denise DiNovi, writer Robin Swicord, "foundling" star(let) Winona Ryder and director Gillian Armstrong as the driving
forces behind this project. This fact alone may be sufficient to explain why 1994’s *Little Women* is the best, the most intelligent and truly feminine/feminist version to date. But there are, of course, further reasons.

To begin with, the film is a visual feast. It is relentlessly and ravishingly beautiful. Production designer Jan Roelfs has already proven his talent in *Orlando*, and here he does it again by creating the most historically-accurate, yet beautifully-inviting-for-the-modern-eye, settings. In this, he is aided by director of photography Geoffrey Simpson’s best work to date. The fearlessness of lighting or, to be more precise, of not lighting too much; the cinematography and the lighting or, to be more precise, of the setting, is suggested by a possible Academy Award nomination. And fake snow has never looked so good! Even the second unit’s “seasonal” montages are entrancing. The aesthetic appreciation of all this is further enhanced by the expansive and lush scoring by Thomas Newman.

Then there is the cast. As the above mention of past casts may suggest, *remakes of Little Women* have often tended to attract names that would not become easily lost in the annals of film history. The present cast is unorthodox in its combination and stalwart in its total performance output.

Samantha Mathis, who should also be given to Armstrong for these) all are suggestive of a possible Academy Award nomination. And fake snow has never looked so good! Even the second unit’s “seasonal” montages are entrancing. The aesthetic appreciation of all this is further enhanced by the expansive and lush scoring by Thomas Newman.

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Susann Sarandon (Mrs March), who has already demonstrated her ability to play gentle-but-heroic mother types in *Lorenzo’s Oil* (George Miller, 1992), is a powerful, if temporally-economic, presence throughout the film. Eric Stoltz is quite funny and eccentric as the slightly repressed tutor, John Brooke. With a stroke of a light contemporary touch upon an old-world character, Stoltz’s performance imbues Brooke with something rather kingly behind the prim and proper façade. Christian Bale, playing the difficult part of the rapidly-maturing Laurie, demonstrates again the talent he showed in *Empire of the Sun* (Steven Spielberg, 1987). Gabriel Byrne is an odd choice for Professor Bhaer’s part, but miraculously it works — not just because of his overall performance, but in the complete romantic mismatchment to Ryder’s Jo. This is one instance of intelligent casting where it is as much a part of narrative as anything else in the film: Jo is an unusual girl with unusual ideas about marriage and romance (for her time, anyway), and it is only appropriate that she should end up with a man who looks so peculiar beside her.

Of the four “little women”, the best performance, by far, is that of Claire Danes in the rôle of Beth. A newcomer to the big screen, Danes is subtle and quiet in her charm and sweetness, yet devastating in her dying scene. Trini Alvarado (as Meg) does nothing outstanding, but, then again, perhaps this is the best manner in which she can contribute to the ensemble. Kirsten Dunst as *Young* Amy is, unfortunately, not entirely likeable. She either does nothing to hide the modern American kid of her real self, or interprets her rôle into cloying kitschiness, reminiscent of Victorian soap advertisements. Older Amy, played by Samantha Mathis, is rather odd as well. Cool and distant, she seems to be in a different film for much of her on-screen time. This, however, may just be part and parcel of how she has interpreted her character, or how she was advised to.

Ironically, the most difficult performance to admire is that of Winona Ryder. Admittedly, having the uneasy task of the eccentric Jo, who ages ever so subtly in 118 minutes, Ryder does do some things well. But one would be hard pressed to assess this as her best performance. Ryder tends to be spot-on in anything X-generational – *Heathers* (Michael Lehmann, 1989), *Night on Earth* (Jim Jarmusch, 1991), *Reality Bites* (Ben Stiller, 1994), etc. — but, no matter how hard she tries, she remains somewhat of a misfit in any other era but her own. She is not entirely successful in * Bram Stoker’s Dracula* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1992), or in *The Age of Innocence* (Martin Scorsese, 1993), and here, once again in period garb, she does not adapt well.

The point is arguable. Is it beneficial to have such a thoroughly-modern girl in a period character’s part so that she can be understood and related to by modern audiences, and therefore make the rest of the film’s narrative more easily accessible? Or is it, in fact, unsettling for the unifying tone of the whole film, so carefully constructed through the production design, the cinematography and the dialogue?

Whatever the outcome of this debate, her “modernity” often extends too far, particularly in the scene where Jo tells Professor Bhaer of her unusual upbringing by progressive Transcendentalist parents. One forgets for a moment that one is looking at Jo March, and instead sees Ryder being interviewed by someone like David Letterman on the topic of her intellectually hippy parents.

Moreover, though Ryder’s performance is extremely energetic, it is perhaps too energetic when it comes to her face and eyes in particular. It seems to be based on the lines...
out of the novel describing the character of Jo thus: “She had [...] sharp, gray eyes, which appeared to see everything, and were by turns fierce, funny, or thoughtful.” Ryder’s eyes are brown, but she takes this description to be indicative of Jo, not of the young woman who is not altogether comfortable with feminine wiles. Jo is supposed to be gauche, but what gaucheness Ryder displays seems too cute. Ryder is smart in her acknowledgement of the public’s perception of her as the cute-but-hip waif, and she milks it for every drop. One could argue she is simply doing her job of being a Hollywood star.

Ryder does not, though, manage to undermine what is a thoroughly well-done job on behalf of the writer and the director. Structurally, the novel does not, in fact, lend itself easily for narrative compression and interpretation to the big screen. It is fragmented and episodic, lacking in strong narrative drive. Written as a fictional family journal, it sacrifices narrative cohesion for the sake of fair allocation of time to each of the characters and their particular stories. Swicord’s and Armstrong’s process of extracting the essential dramatic plot points, and embellishing them with descriptive background detail, makes for a less-than-fluid narrative and some rather dull moments. Nevertheless, it is still a highly-admirable effort. Also, the archaic morality and dialogue of the novel require talent and intelligence to make it acceptable to 1990s audience, and here Swicord and Armstrong are again successful. All this, though, begs one question: Why, if it’s so difficult, would one bother tackling this novel yet again, particularly when it has already been tried so many times before? The answer may lie in the US dollar figures this film has already returned in America since it opened there, on Christmas Day.

**Briefly Noted**

**ETERNITY**


Lawrence Johnston’s *Eternity*, as many would now know, is a 55-minute documentary ostensibly about Arthur Stace, the first Australian graffiti artist, a man who, inspired by a personal religious vision, went out and wrote the word “Eternity” on the streets of Sydney and surrounds some 500,000 times over 40 years.

This is a film obsessed with the tone and textures of image (thus echoing Johnston’s earlier *Night Out*, a touching and photographic love story with gay undertones). Alongside *BeDeval* (Tracey Moffatt, 1993), *Besken Highway* (Laurie McInnes, 1994) and *Memories & Dreams* (Lyn-Marie Millburn, 1994), *Eternity* is a celebration of the visual in preference to the literary. It believes images can impart and evoke memories and ideas and emotions as powerfully, if not more so, than the spoken word.

The images also record a filmmaker’s love of a city. A Melburnian, Johnston sees Sydney with rapturous eyes and finds there frissons and feelings local filmmakers have not. Dion Beece, whose earlier cinematography had been so impressive, lights with the touch of one in love with ‘40s noir, who sees in the deceptively confining but in fact limitless palette of black and white the tools of a true artist. The collaboration between Beece and Johnston is one of the most striking in recent Australian cinema.

At times, though, this preferring of image is expected to raise or present a connection between the material and the viewer from having to make the effort, Jackson achieves what Nabokov’s character could not.

The film travels with the girls in their headlong rush to passion and dismembered reality. To the audience, the parents appear as caricatured as they do to the girls. But as the inexorable steps to murder become more certain, Jackson subtly shifts the audience’s perspective from travelling alongside the girls to standing in front of them, the headlong rush is now towards us, and we are powerless to stop them, no matter how much we might scream.

The parents have become only too real, with lives and feelings as gloriously flawed and precious as all others. This makes the lead-up to the mother’s death harrowing in the extreme; it has the quality one imagines a live telecast of a real murder execution might have. Few films have so powerfully preferred life, so plainly evoked the wrongness of its forced deprivation.

*Heavenly Creatures* is worlds apart from most modern cinema – not only in the brilliance of Jackson’s craftsmanship, but the maturity and complexity of the defining vision. If not already seen, track it down – in the cinema where it belongs, and with the photography of Alun Bollinger (New Zealand’s finest DOP) glowing in its autumnal richness.

**HEAVENLY CREATURES**


*Heavenly Creatures*, Peter Jackson’s fourth feature, will already have had its run by the time this issue is released. However, it is such an important work – surely the finest by any New Zealander – it deserves at least brief mention here.

Much will presumably have been written about Jackson’s dazzling technique, but it is the subtlety of the moral shifts that really set the film apart.

In a Hollywood world of cocaine-induced scripts and Oliver Stone excess, films about young murders can hardly be expected to raise or present moral dilemmas beyond the most superficial. Rarely, does the filmmaker take one down a path only to reverse one’s perspective tellingly. In his Nabiowt wrote a novel (*Look at the Harlequins!*), where a character, after having walked down a street, is unable to imagine the reverse journey. Her vision is too space- and time-bound. But by freeing the viewer from having to make the effort, Jackson achieves what Nabokov’s character could not.

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The publication of a book on production design in film is in itself cause for instantaneous purchases, so rare are books of any sort on this misunderstood realm of film. Robert S. Sennett’s beautifully-illustrated survey attempts to demystify the proper credit to the little-known designer/art director, while following the complete history of set design, he manages to concentrate heavily on “the golden age of art direction”, the golden age of art direction, the period of his obsession, 1930-1955. Although his analysis and insight on this period is often engrossing, this depth of insight on this period is often disappointing for Sennett to extend to the present. In fact, his few inaccuracies of recent film history, such as declaring Blue Velvet Patricia Norris’ only production design credit to date, questions possible inaccuracies about earlier designers of whom less is known.

The recent films that Sennett describes most fully are all of epic quality. This includes period films (Barry Lyndon, Anna and the King of Siam, The Godfather II), futuristic films (Star Wars, Blade Runner, Brazil), or films portraying a warped reality (Blue Velvet). He mentions in passing that “truly realistic dramas such as Raging Bull (1979) or Midnight Cowboy (1969) have deliberately modest and iconoclastic art direction”. This points at Sennett’s bias and why his book is far from comprehensive. It is disappointing for Sennett to take such a limited view, thereby including only about 35 films out of more than 200 from the period post-1975, as so little information is available. Possibly the most complete book on the subject was written in 1976 by Leon Barsaqc, himself an art director (Caligari’s Cabinet and Other Grand Illusions).

In the complete examinations of films such as Citizen Kane, Stagecoach and North by Northwest, Sennett tends to romanticize the designer as the “unsung hero” of film. In his piece on Citizen Kane, Sennett discloses the importance of the actual art director, Perry Ferguson, and thankfully explains the credited name of Van Nest Polglase on this and nearly every other film at Paramount and RKO of this period. Polglase acted as an administrator and link to the studio, but in very few cases as a creative contributor. Similarly, Sennett outlines the role of Ward Ihnen as designer with John Ford on Stagecoach, and Roberts Boyle with Hitchcock on North by Northwest.

Although it is accurate that the designer is the least celebrated of the three main creative roles in film, Sennett’s words evoke the Hollywood of the 1930s, ’40s and ’50s rather than a less innocent contemporary viewpoint. His introductions and closures, particularly maintain this trite style beginning with his first line, “The first art director was a carpenter.” This allusion to Christ sets a nostalgic rather than historical tone to the book. Sennett’s anecdotes and wonderful stills and sketch collection shape this book, but a serious and complete history of set design in film is still expectantly awaited. 

© SARAH STOLLMAN

A SIEGEL FILM: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Don Siegel, forward by Clint Eastwood, Faber and Faber, hb, 500pp., rrp £45

Hollywood biographies are chancy enterprises, tending toward self-congratulatory sameness. Siegel’s A SIEGEL FILM certainly knows whom its hero is, but that doesn’t keep it from being a lot better than the average.

Don Siegel’s career as editor, director, writer, and producer ran from the 1930s to the ’80s. He began as a gopher in Warner’s film library, at the bottom of the rigid studio system, rose up the ranks thanks to luck, bluff, talent, hard work, intelligence and strategic mendacity, finishing as an independent producer-director in the dispersed, chaotic production environment of the 1980s. From his first film, The Big Steal in 1949, he was a practical, commercial director, successful enough to make thirty-some features, finishing with Jinxed in 1982. Along the way, he directed Dirty Harry, Invasion of the Body Snatchers, Riot in Cellblock 11, The Killers, Escape From Alcatraz, The Beguiled, etc. Nor was he prissy in review.
was nonetheless closer to the vantage point. While Siegel — in top than the bottom — a good industry as one of its icons, he last word in conversations, he detailing feuds or been; Production; Distribution; professional persona, the immersion in Siegel's

Picture is the best yet and an of information in three areas: the operation and development of the Hollywood production system; production history details from films Siegel has been involved in; and, perhaps most interesting of all, how Siegel thinks about creating a sequence — how he breaks it down into elements and joins it to a central movement. His work defines the centre of the modern American action film: clean, wasteless, action film: clean, wasteless, multi-layered, unselfconscious. Siegel fashions the autobiography as a screenplay, crammed with dialogue scenes from his life, some of which are fundamentally accurate, some of which are probable, and some which one would like to be true. As a junior-junior assistant at Warner’s in the 1930s, an which one would like to be true.

CINEMA PAPERS • MARCH 1995

According to this small gripe, which is a much less warts-and-

ANALYSIS

EDITH WHARTON: AN EXTRAORDINARY LIFE
Eleanor Dwight, Abrams, New York, 1994, 260pp., illus., hb, rrp $69.95

G
given the rarity of the Louis Auchincloss' pioneering pamphlet (University of Minnesota, 1961) and brilliant short biography (Viking, 1971) on Edith Wharton, the field has been rather dominated by R. W. B. Lewis with his excellent if 'standard' biography (Harper and Row, 1975).

However, there is now Eleanor Dwight’s "illustrated biography" as an excellent alternative. It will be of particular interest to those whose interest in Wharton starts with the recent spate of film adaptations, given the number and quality of photographs. Like all Abrams books, it is beautiful to look at, bold and read. It is also sympathetically-written, making it a must for anyone with an interest in one of America's finest and, until recently, least-appreciated writers.

GRETA & CECIL
Diana Souhami, Jonathan Cape, London, 1994, 371 pp., illus., hb

INGMAR BERGMAN: FILM AND STAGE
Robert Emmet Long, Harry M. Abrams, New York, 1994, 238 pp., illus., hb, rrp $80

LOOKS AND FRICTIONS
Paul Willemen, British Film Institute and Indiana University Press, London-Indiana, 1994, 253 pp., pb, rrp $29.95

VIDEO MOVIE GUIDE 1995
Mick Martin and Marsha Porter, Ballantine Books, New York, 1994, 181 pp., pb
It was very hard for me to contemplate sending someone else to direct any shots for my movie. This wasn’t like sending out a second unit to do dawn shots; these were shots that had to be fitted into the story.

I had the idea then to check if any of the Australian cinematographers who live in LA would be able to do it. I said, “Ring an Australian cinematographer and see whether there is a commercial director to do it. I said, “Ring an Australian cinematographer and see whether there is a commercial director around, because I trust their opinion.” They rang [DOP] Peter Levy, who live in LA would be able to do it. I said, “Ring an Australian cinematographer and see whether there is a commercial director around, because I trust their opinion.” They rang [DOP] Peter Levy, who said, “Well, Mark Lewis is here and we’ve worked together. We’d be happy to do it.”

It was a very odd situation to sit down and draw my storyboard and go through the scenes with Mark and Peter and say, “You know, I want the soldiers coming in here. And, if you get the church again, the second print, and the first press junket with all the girls. The attitude here is that there is a commercial director around, because I trust their opinion.” They rang [DOP] Peter Levy, who said, “Well, Mark Lewis is here and we’ve worked together. We’d be happy to do it.”

There were fantastic and I felt a wonderful brotherhood in being helped out by some other Australians. I said to Peter, “You know, this has got to look good. This is Geoffrey’s Academy Award that you are helping!”

So often Academy voters vote for landscape shots. They never understand what a cinematographer really does. Movies that have pretty landscape shots in them are the ones that get nominated. So, I said, “You have a huge burden on your shoulders! You’re going back for the landscape shots!”

They did a great job with the Fall sequence and I owe them both a big lunch!

How much of the post-production did you do in Australia?

We did it all in Australia. [Editor] Nick Beauman came over to Canada and was cutting as we were going. As soon as we wrapped, we all flew straight back to Sydney. Nick, unfortunately, had to start with a new assistant: he had a Canadian assistant there and an Australian assistant here. He did the final cut here.

We also did all the sound here. Lee Smith was our sound designer and he had a huge team of sound editors, because it was such a short post-production. I think we had almost twelve people working on the sound.

Tim Jordan, who did all the dialogue tracks, came back to me in America, while I did all the post-sync with the actors.

I then had to point out to the studio that the best way to make use of the time we had was to shoot the titles in Australia as well, and to do all the initial grading here. So, Belinda Bennetts from Animal Logic, who did the titles on [The Last Days of Chez Nous] (1992), designed the title sequence and they were shot here by Roger Cowland at Atlab.

Then, Arthur Cambridge, Peter Levy, who had done the timing [grading] on all my films since The Singer and The Dancer (short, 1976), did the timing and the interneg here. It was only taken back to America for the final print, at the studio’s wish.

We did the sound mix at Soundfirm with Gethin Creagh and Martin Oswin, and also with Phil Heywood from Atlab. Because it was so pressured, we also did some FX mixes at Atlab. We were actually using two sound stages at once. Only the final prints to the soundtrack were done in America, because the studio wanted a Sony Digital track and the Americans are the only ones who have the technique to do that.

So, the entire post-production was done in Australia. Rosemary Dority at Spectrum was our post-production co-ordinator.

Everybody worked day and night to get this film out. We finished the sound mix at 3.30am on Thursday in Sydney. Gethin had to get back in the next day and do transfers so they could go off to LA. By Sunday, they were printing in LA.

Nick Beauman arrived on Monday to check the first print off. I arrived on Tuesday and checked the second print, and the first press screening was that afternoon. Then I checked the various prints and Dolby SR, Dolby A and the Sony Digital soundtrack. It was crazy not to have the sound mixer there to check the prints. Gethin then came over to LA.

One day later, we started the press junket with all the girls. The premiere was on the Sunday night and the following Wednesday it opened.

So how are you feeling now?

I’ve had three weeks at the beach, and now I’m ready to have the next six months off! [Laughs].

Do you know what you might be doing this time next year?

Actually, my aim now is to go back to reading books and see a few movies. I haven’t seen a movie in a while.

At one stage, it looked as if you might have wanted to be a writer.

You’re a filmmaker who is very attracted to writers.

Someone else has pointed out to me how many stories I’ve done about writers; The Last Days of Chez Nous is another. I said, “It’s not that I go looking for stories about writers, but that writers have written stories about themselves. They have often been their most honest works and I’ve reacted to the honesty of their writing.”

To me, they are stories about people trying to find their artistic pathway. It happens to be writing because writers have written those books. But no, I’ve always wanted to be in the visual arts.

Simpson

The only scene I think we storyboarded was the ice-skating sequence, partly because we were very pinched for time and money. We had to make sure that every single shot was used.

By the way, that’s not ice either. It is all pretend: teflon and all that sort of stuff. It was quite a tricky thing to pull off.

Now that you are doing many American films and working with bigger budgets, is it harder to come back and do Australian films?

A little bit harder, probably. But even in America there are compromises on big-budget films, though of a different degree, obviously.

I remember being very surprised when I walked onto one of the location surveys with Green Card. I’d been muttering to the gaffer about how three cherry pickers and 12Ks in each of them would be good for such and such. We then had a production meeting and someone piped up, “Geoff wants this and this.” I got everything I had mumbled about on my wish list.

That sort of thing is unusual in Australia. Americans have the attitude that the way to solve a problem is to throw money at it, whereas Australian crews try to make it work with a number 8 piece of fencing wire. The attitude here is that there is always another way to solve a problem; it doesn’t have to be the most expensive way.

Still, it can be difficult coming back to do pictures. Obviously you want to keep the standard as high each time, and probably get better on each film you do. That means you have to be even more thorough with pre-production and planning here, and make that lack of time and money work for you.

Are you doing an Australian film next?

Yes, it’s a film called Shine, about David Helfgott, a child pianist who basically becomes a very damaged human being and is institutionalized for 10 years. He then gets out and comes back, still damaged, but a brilliant musician.

It’s a fantastic story, a father-son relationship, partly set in England and partly back here in Australia. Scott Hicks, who is directing it, has had the screenplay for five years. He won an Emmy last year for his documentary Sharks of Steel. He’s also made several features and documentaries. He has been itching to do this for a long time, and I’m really looking forward to it.

What, in fact, attracted you to cinematography?

My background was art school. I went to the South Australian School of Art and did a Graphic Design course. I was very interested in still photography and had a dark room in the bathroom.

I also started to watch a lot of festival-type films and really fell in love with the medium. I travelled to England and did a year at the London Film School, then back to South Australia in the early days of the South Australian Film Corporation. That was a fantastic time for all of us, because we were working in different departments on a lot of different films, on documentaries, short dramas and a lot of the early SAFC features.

Like Picnic at Hanging Rock [Peter Weir, 1975]!

I was Electrics 1 on Hanging Rock, and an assistant director on Sunday Too Far Away [Ken Hannam, 1975]. I had a wide range of experience and worked with a lot of different people, which was fantastic.

I then started shooting documentaries and television commercials for the SAFC. It was a great training ground.

How do you feel about your work at the moment?

It is wonderful and totally extraordinary that I am able to pick and choose the sort of projects that I do. Being able to say “No” feels very strange, but I am very lucky to have reached the point in my career when I do have that freedom of choice to do a film which is the sort of film I’d go and see in the cinema.
new media

the occasional black frame made this film (in contrast to the more "retro-filmist" inspired films on exhibition) a welcome viewing experience.

Karl Kels' black-and-white zoo film, 1993 Karl Kels, a precisely-crafted "minimalist" work, redolent with absurd humour and a self-reflective exploration of the vocabulary of structural cinema, was an accomplished film of note. Featuring two identical takes of hippos from the same camera position, this popular film deftly examined the cinematic and structural relationships between the animals, light, space, movement sequences and water. The colour animation film, Ah Pook is here (1994), by Philip Hunt, a witty and subtle adaptation of a William Burroughs text, displayed a very elliptical use of analogue and digital concerns and techniques. Hunt's playful approach to his subject - "Ah Pook the Destroyer" is situated in a post-apocalyptic universe debating with his alter ego the metaphysical dialectic between life and death, etc. - colours the conceptual and formal architecture of this impressive puppet animation work.

Klaus Wyborny's autobiographical film, Aus dem Zeitalter des Ubermuts (Diszucht und Wahreheit) (From the Age of High Spirits (Poetry and Truth), 1981-1994), a multi-faceted comic and lyrical work, loosely based on Goethe's representation of his own youth, is notable for the filmmaker's accomplished, subtle approach to his subject. In a major critical sense, this film (which is the fourth part of a five-part series) is a clever exploration of recent European intellectual history as experienced by an individual who sees the world as a place for the continual enrichment of one's own emotions and thoughts.

For this writer, one of more impressive tapes was Mike Kelley and Paul McCarthy's collaborative colour piece, Heidi (1992-3). Its transgressive themes, structured on Joanna Spiry's novel of the same name, dealing with sexual abuse of children, death, insanity/normalcy, and the illusory nature of life, are graphically rendered by the innovative use of partial and life-size rubber dolls and two large painted backdrop sets. It was shot entirely on a claustrophobic set which was installed at the centre of gallery. Heidi, with its powerful Bataillean undercurrents and many references to horror cinema, modernism and performance art, polarized the audience. It is a scorching performance video (one of the best in recent years) that critiques the seamless architecture of filmic language and the myths lived by all in the name of art, social conformity and rationality. Robert Cahen's Voyage d'Illeve (1993) was also one of the more laudable tapes on show. Its bright colours (reds, blues, yellows and greens), shot in Cahen's characteristic pointillist style of electronic image-making, effectively captured the poetic silence of the Antarctic. We see and hear the earth, sea and wind in a slow-motion choreographed image, and the soundtrack is of exquisite beauty. People are shown in extreme close-up and long shot as they journey in the awesome ice wilderness. Cahen's tape, with its haunting, fleeting images, evokes a lost childhood; it speaks of memory, reverie and the unattainable.

The installation component of the Festival had several interesting works. Boris Gersh's meditation on time as an expression of immobile eternity (inspired by a St. Augustine text), entitled Time/Piece (1994), with its spherical structure of a twirling monitor enclosed in a cosmological-looking globe, is a captivating work that propels the viewer to walk around the installation like a satellite going around a planet. Our perception of the vividly-coloured images on the monitor changes as we navigate this highly-resolved installation.

Martin Spanjaard's neo-Dadaist rolling interactive robot ball, Adelbrecht, is also a witty work (that speaks to you) as it zig-zags its way across the floor of the gallery. Adelbrecht is a seven-year-old robot that signifies to the engaged gallery spectators not only the complex history and iconography of the robot in the history of science-fiction cinema and the new electronic media, but in its dialogue with you, conveys quite directly a sense of reflexive humour as it interacts with the patrons.

Nigel Johnson's interactive installation, Observer, Observed (1994) - as its title suggests - is a fairly uncomplicated T-shaped delineation of the artist's long-standing interest in the fascination for our own self-reflected images. Johnson's piece consists of two basic parts structured towards rendering the gallery viewer's interactive bodily movements as a source of voyeurism for other visitors. Another installation which had a large spectacular form to it was Haruo Ishi's Hyperscratch. The gallery-goer can interact quite easily with a touch-screen monitor, thereby manipulating images and sounds that resemble the audio-visual forms and concerns of a video game which are projected on to a large video screen. Immersed in an enormous creative space, the gallery-goer experiences these images and sounds in a form of real-time synchronisation that is in marked contrast (so Ishii argues) to the hyper-reality of our global communication systems.

The various seminars and workshops at Osnabrück centred on the current issues of the information superhighway and contemporary media practice; interactivity as it relates to installation art (the Australian electronic artist Simon Biggs gave an informative talk on his more recent works) and the cinema (curators/producers Ingeborg Füleep and Heiko Daxl also gave a stimulating presentation on their involvement with interactive cinema); virtual art (Ulrich Plank spoke about his current experimental work inspired partly by the visual ambience of the Sahara Desert); and, finally, the present-day distribution and funding problems facing experimental filmmakers and cultural producers/curators working in a post-MTV Europe. On the latter theme, notable British film curators David Curtis and Steve Bode participated, as did the German filmmaker Klaus Wyborny.

Onsbruck provides one with a significant keyhole appreciation of the current aesthetic and cultural forces shaping today's European media-scape. Clearly, it is a significant festival site that has much to offer (like the Locarno Festival) in the way of what established and less-established experimental film and media artists are doing in terms of the newer directions of virtual reality, interactivity and computer animation. Above all, both Festivals provided ample proof that analogue and digital artsforms are co-existing and enriching each other in ways we still have to chart.

festivals

fighting, written by Sihanouk and shot right here in the Myohyang Mountains, using a Korean crew, some extras and technical back-up, but imported Cambodian actors.

The range of films at the Festival is surprisingly broad. It includes three Polish films (including a Feliks Falk), three Hungarian (including a Sandor Sara), three German (among them Fassbinder's The Marriage of Maria Braun), films from Sweden, Finland (Rauni Mollberg), China (Country Teachers), Bangladesh (the suble Chekhovian sister-drama, The Conch-blue Prison), films from Colombia, Peru, Cuba, Malaysia, Indonesia, India and Lebanon, among others. There are no American films.

I was told they have attempted to arrange screenings of South Korean films and invited filmmakers, who wanted to come personally, but were refused permission. (A South Korean film team I dealt with before the Festival expressed a desire to visit the North and have more contact, but could only meet filmmakers from the North at overseas film festivals.)

At the closing ceremony, Aya is given the most prestigious award in the Information section, the Prize of the Federation of Art and Literature Workers' Unions, its third international award. The Korean delegation is very warm in their congratulations. Many comment particularly on the detail in the film. Ironically, the film has been so well received here, but could not be released in South Korea, despite distributor interest, because we were told, there is a ban on screening films that have Japanese songs in them.

The top Jury Award goes to the very moving and restrained Vietnamese film, Wild Reeds, screened after the closing ceremony. At the closing banquet, I sit at a table with, among others, members of the Palestinian embassy, representing their documentary Intifadah, who, on hearing I am of Norwegian background, tell me “Norway is our friend.”

At the start of my 23-hour train ride from Pyongyang to Beijing, a cheerful Mongolian producer rescues me from the compartment I was due to share with two well-dressed Chinese gentlemen, who have taken over all the luggage racks. We lunch with a Mongolian director and actress on fried fish, ham sandwiches and Korean soju liquor. They have a two-day trip to Ulan Bataar, and speak only Mongolian and Russian. I quickly exhaust my vocabulary and we carry on via a Russian-English phrasebook - much like writing an absurdist script. They are wonderfully warm people and have a marvellous sense of humour. As they were the runners-up in the Information section, we congratulate each other and apologize for missing each other's films.

I think this might be my last festival with Aya, unless I am invited to Ulan Bataar - or perhaps Bathurst next year.

legal ease

all and not surprisingly caught up with the "let's see what happens" practice which has been emerging amongst U.S. entertainment attorneys. However, one contingency: do not forget the laws of defamation and other actions in damages that would still exist for Taylor after the publication of the mini-series by NBC.

In Australia, the Trade Marks Act together with the Trade Practice Act, and in particular ss52 (false and misleading actions), provides protection for famous persons and celebrities within Australia. Obviously, when Australian films travel to the U.S., filmmakers must be now aware of the shift in law and the weaker position of celebrities.
history

After attending the Paris Exhibition in 1900, he contracted with British distributors to send films for exhibition at Sydney’s Centenary Hall in York Street. They opened with the 23-minute *Funeral of Queen Victoria* on 23 March 1901, barely two months after the event. With shipping delays between England and Australia, it was then considered to be a speedy exhibition.

Noting the profitability of exhibiting news films of recent events, Blow planned to be the first to exhibit coverage of Melbourne’s Royal Visit in Sydney. He travelled to Melbourne with his assistants, shooting most notable events in the first week of the Royal Visit from carefully selected photographic stands. Concluding his coverage on 11 May 1901, he purportedly secured longer and more lively films than the “official” cameramen. Only Blow managed to film the interior of the Exhibition Hall during the first opening of Federal Parliament on 9 May 1901. The scene is now a national icon through the famous Tom Roberts painting of the scene. The loss of Blow’s films makes the prediction of their value to posterity particularly ironic:

> It is doubtful whether any historian of English history after years of study and research, has given such true and valuable information of any royal event [...] The coming generation may yet be taught history by way of entertainment.

The films were quickly processed and printed at Blow’s “Crown” photographic studio. He combined them with Warwick Trading Company films of the “Ophir’s” departure from England. The whole series went on show at Centenary Hall on 18 May 1901, weeks ahead of the official films’ first Sydney screening. While Blow’s operator F. J. Jenkins projected the pictures, a Mr. Lyne narrated from the stage. There were no identifying titles on films at that time.

The quality of Blow’s show attracted a Command Performance, which he gave for the Duke and Duchess at Government House, Sydney, on 1 June 1901. Blow had then begun to shoot coverage of the Sydney Royal Visit, but no complete listings of his Sydney coverage have yet been found.

Perhaps the most notable aspect of Blow’s coverage was its length. His film of the Royal Visit at Flemington Racecourse, shown on 13 June 1901, was 10 minutes long. The whole show extended over two hours. Even given that the introductory films were British, it was a significant, feature-length Australian film presentation by anyone’s standards.

Following the season at Centenary Hall, Blow took the Royal Visit films for a tour of country New South Wales from 20 July to 5 October 1901, when he briefly re-occupied Centenary Hall. His last-known association with Australian film production was in December 1901, when he shot footage of England versus Australia cricket test matches in Sydney. On 23 January 1902, his operator, Jenkins, gave a lecture on cinematography to the Photographic Society of New South Wales, but subsequently Blow wholly reverted to a career in “still” photography.

Filmmography:

Mark Blow’s 1901 films

As slides alternated with films in Blow’s shows, some items below may be just “stills”. Only Blow showed the films. There is no evidence of their sale to other exhibitors, and none of them is known to survive:

1. **Arrival of the “Ophir”**
   
   Port Phillip Bay
   

2. **The Landing at St Kilda Pier**
   

3. **Reception by Mayor and Aldermen at Princes Bridge**
   

4. **The Procession through Swanston Street, Melbourne**
   

5. **The Stockmen’s Procession**
   

6. **The Chinese Procession**
   

7. **Royal Party’s Departure from the Reception at Parliament House**
   

8. **Scene Outside Exhibition Building: Opening of Federal Parliament**
   

   

    

11. **The Trades Procession [Melbourne]**
    

12. Fijian “War Dance” performed at Sydney Showground by Fijian Native Constabulary
    

13. **Sydney: The Duke Awarding Medals to Boer War Veterans**
    

14. **England versus Australia Test Cricket**
    

2) **Stephen Bond’s Coverage**

The pioneer Melbourne projectionist and film equipment manufacturer Stephen Bond has been discussed in Part 3. Stephen Bond’s coverage of the Royal Review at Flemington Racecourse, shown on 17 May 1901, lasted “nearly two hours”, which “was much longer than any (the Duke) had seen in the old country”.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 13 June 1923, p. 38.

More films were almost certainly shot locally by Stephen Bond in 1901, as the Royal Command presentation on 17 May 1901 lasted “nearly two hours” and included one film which lasted “over twenty minutes”, which “was much longer than any (the Duke) had seen in the old country.”

Next instalment

British cameramen come to Australia to film the Royal Visit.

Acknowledgements

Pat Laughton and Griffith University (Brisbane), and their Australian Research Council Grant, provided the core financial support for this series. Their commitment to the importance of documenting Australia’s oldest films...
contrasts strongly with the lack of archival work in this area. Others directly providing assistance for this article were:

Melbourne: Victorian Public Records Office: Ian McFarlane; Salvation Army Archives: George Ellis; National Film & Sound Archive Melbourne Office: Ken Berryman, Helen Tully, Zsuszi Szucs; military consultants: Barry Videon, Warrick Lisle; Ross Cooper; La Trobe Library Newspapers; Mimi Colligan; Bob Klepner; Peter Wolfsden.

Sydney: Judy Adamson, Graham Shirley, Alan Davies, New South Wales State Library.
Canberra: National Film & Sound Archive: Meg Labrum.
Brisbane: Richard Fortheringham, Ron West, Kev Franzi.
Gladstone: Pamela Whitlock.
Britain: John Barnes of St Ives, Cornwall, our inspiration and mentor.
New Zealand: Turnbull Library, National Archives, Wellington.

As always, we also extend thanks to our wives, True Long and Anne Sowry.

2 Ibid.
3 Ibid, pp. 6-7.
6 Ibid, pp. 15-112.
7 Video compilation Living Melbourne, released by NFSA, Canberra, 1988, includes the 6 May 1901 pan shot to which the authors refer.
8 Video compilation Living Ballarat, NFSA, Canberra, 1990.
9 Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, loc cit., p. 158.
10 Ibid, p. 211.
11 National Archives of New Zealand, Wellington, Colonial Secretary's Correspondence, I.A.1, 1900/864.
12 Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, loc cit., pp. 238-60.
13 National Archives of New Zealand, Wellington, Colonial Secretary's Correspondence, I.A.1, 1908/864. Letter 1901/2279. Letter from J. Perry to Premier Seldon listing film sequences, 17 July 1901.
14 A. J. West, Unpublished Memoirs (c. 1930), held by John Barnes, St Ives, Cornwall.
15 Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, loc cit., p. 440.
17 Victorian Public Records Office, Launton: Chief Secretary's Correspondence Index, 1901, p. 15. Lists letter from Salvation Army's Secretary, W. Peart, offering to take a film record of the opening of Federal Parliament, dated 4 February 1901.
21 Ibid, 22 May 1901, pp. 22-5.
23 Ibid, 22 April 1901 p. 20. The planned Brisbane films were "The Arrival of The Governor" at Queensland and "The Procession Through Queen Street, Brisbane". Pamela Whitlock, formerly of Brisbane Town Hall Archives, says that in 1982 some Queensland Royal Visit 1901 films were found in their keeping, but that the material was in nitrate decomposition by that time. The material is more likely to have been 1934 Royal Visit material, but the possibility of the earlier material being shot can't be entirely discounted.
25 National Archives of New Zealand, reference SS1/93, p. 175.
26 Ballarat Star, 13 May 1901, p. 3.
27 The print was sent to the Archive by the late Roy Driver, formerly of Hershells Films Limited.
28 Pearson collected some of Ernest Higgins' personal collection of film soon after Higgins' death.
29 Australian Photographic Journal, 20 March 1900, p. 54.
30 The Sydney Morning Herald, 23 March 1901.
33 The Sydney Morning Herald, 23 May 1901, p. 10. The departure films described here coincide exactly with Warwick Trading Company films nos. 6018 to 6024.
34 The Sydney Morning Herald, 18 May 1901, pp. 2, 12.
36 Ibid, 1 June 1901, p. 10; 3 June 1901, p. 8.
37 Ibid, 20 May 1901, p. 3.
38 Australian Photographic Journal, 20 August 1901, p. 170.
39 The Sydney Morning Herald, 20 July 1901; 5 October 1901, p. 2; 9 October 1901, p. 2.
40 The Australasian Photographic Review, 21 December 1901.
41 Ibid, 21 February 1902, pp. 57-8.
42 Punch, Melbourne, 23 May 1901, p. 60.
43 Eyewitness, Sydney, 13 June 1923, p. 38: "Another Pioneer of the Movies".
44 Punch, Melbourne, 23 May 1901, p. 607.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.

From the Soil

So, you feel the Queensland film community is on a level footing with the rest of Australia and is developing good relationships with the other bodies, federal and state?

Not yet, but give me a year and I think I'll be able to answer that in the affirmative. Certainly in terms of the AFC I'd love to see at least a part-time office up here.

The FFC is very good. They are very concerned to allow access on a broadest possible range, and this upcoming seminar is evidence of that. We'd also certainly be interested in helping people get down to Sydney to talk with its investment managers. Equally, I'll be suggesting to the FFC that we mutually bring to Brisbane an investment manager at regular intervals, simply for interaction, for information-sharing sessions.

We are not talking about a lot of people in my client base to whom this applies, and they will also get some interaction by attending SPAA conferences. We underwrote attendance at SPAA last year for a number of emerging producers, all of whom found the experience extremely worthwhile. MIP and MIPCOM also afford natural opportunities to not only talk to the feds, but to network with more experienced people.

One of the problems here is that there really is no one to talk to. There has been a lot of apprehension and lack of confidence caused by the fact there is no opportunity for informative networking, simply because everyone is on about the same level. FQ has a natural role to play in reversing that situation.

My aim is to see filmmakers in this office all the time, coming in chatting, whatever. That hasn't been the case in the past.

Do you have any other initiatives in development at Film Queensland?

There are two of special interest. One is the establishment of a Executive Development at Film Queensland?

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FFC Funding Decisions

Following the Board meeting on 23 September 1994 (see previous issue), the FFC entered into contract negotiations with the producers of the following documentaries:

**Documentaries**

**THE BUSINESS OF MAKING SAINTS** (55 mins)

*Albert Street Productions*
D: Martin Brook.
S: Julie Macken.

*Bringing Pope John Paul II's Visit to Australia*.
Mother Mary Mackillop. This documentary looks at the process of saint-making in an attempt to demystify this ancient tradition of beatification and canonization. What does it mean to be a saint? How does the Church decide who is one? Why are miracles important to the Church and what role does politics play in making saints?

**SPEAK QUIET, SPEAK STRONG** (56 mins & 30 mins)

*Coopilme Films*

This film looks at domestic violence within the Aboriginal community through compelling personal accounts and shows the positive steps these communities are taking to heal the problems of abuse.

**Television Drama – Television Features**

**CODY 2** (3 x 90 mins)

*Southern Star Xanadu*
EP: Errol Sullivan, P: Sandra Levy, John Edwards, D: Ian Barry (plus one other to be announced).
S: Christopher Lee, Peter Schreck, C: Gaby Sweet, Robert Maimone.

**Television Drama – Adult Mini-series**

FIDELITY (55 mins)
D: Nick Frazier, P: Lindsay Frazier.
S: Stephen Sparke, Lindsay Frazier.
A documentary about the Tamworth Country Music Festival which attracts over 70,000 fans and big name performers to a NSW country town for 11 days in January.

**RED RIDES** (55 mins)

*Crow Films*

**Production Survey**

**Features Pre-production**

Bertie – *Black Russian* (59 mins)
D: Flora Tignor.
S: Ermis Story.
Rose. The Nut.
The Phantom.
Love Stories.

**Features Post-production**

Bertie – *On the Dead Side* (60 mins)
D: John bikini.
S: Richard Jenkins, D: Jane Doe.
The life and times of a criminal in the NSW police force in the 1980s reveal the connections between police and criminal cultures.

**The Century of Cinema – 40,000 Years of Dreaming** (51 mins)

*Kennedy Miller*

D: Douglas Mitchell, George Miller, D: George Miller, S: George Miller.
George Miller makes the connection between Aboriginal creation myths and the 100-year history of Australian cinema. This documentary will combine archival footage from around 150 Australian films with interviews with contemporary film practitioners and sequences in locations including Kata TJuta in Central Australia.

Since the 28 October 1994 Board meeting, the Board has approved investment in the following television mini-series:

**Television Drama – Adult Mini-series**

**BLUE MURDER** (2 x 95 mins)

*Southern Star Sullivan Productions*
S: variations in the NSW police force in the 1980s reveal the connections between police and criminal cultures.

**Documentaries**

**Faces of War: The Battle for the Empire** (55 mins)

*Feature*
T: the story of Australians fighting in the Second World War against Germany and Italy to defend the British Empire. We will follow Australian soldiers, sailors, airmen and nurses from recruitment through battle to their eventual return to Australia. Veterans, some of whom were “3bers” who signed up as teenagers the day war was declared, will give their perspective on what that history means for Australians today.

**Ladies Please** (55 mins)

*Alpine Images Productions*
A rare insight into the artistry and personal lives of three of Australia’s most innovative and creative drag performers: Cindy Pastel (Neofiger), Stryker (Mark Fitzgibbons) and lady Bump (Stuart Wilson). Their work and lives not only inspired the feature film The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert but also influenced performers throughout the world.

Since the November meeting, the FFC Board has approved investment in the following feature film project:

**Feature**

**Shine** (100 mins)

*Momentum Films*
EP: Jane Scott, P: Scott Hicks, S: Jan Saro.
After succumbing to the pressure of his father’s obsessive love and the fierce competition of the concert world as a child prodigy, David Helfgott makes a new start in London inspired by his passion for music and the woman he loves.
DEALING WITH THE DEMON (2 x 55 mins)
ASPIRE FILMS
Producers: P. Chris Hilton.
Writers: D. Robert Collins, Chris Hilton.
O ur neighbouring region of Asia is facing a drug crisis. Hard-core drug addiction has jumped to unprecedented levels and is spreading throughout South-east Asia, India, Pakistan and China (and into the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe). Asia is also facing a HIV/AIDS catastrophe due to the widespread spread of opium addiction.

This two-part documentary examines the newest drug wave in Australia and Asia, and shows Australians on the ground in Asia are pioneering new approaches: education and rehabilitation programmes designed to contain the fallout of policy gone wrong.

15 December 1994
Feature
LILIAN'S STORY (100-MIN FEATURE FILM)
CML FILMS

The unconventional life of a legendary eccentric who recited Shakespeare for a dollar on the streets of Sydney and rode taxis for the price of a sonnett. Lilian's story is a celebration of being alive. Based on a novel by Kate Grenville.

Television Drama Adult Tele-feature series
NAKED (6 X 1 HOUR)
Jan Chapman Productions

Six television plays reveal what men and women are thinking about today. Written by men, the anthology aims to present male attitudes with piercing honesty and uncover the passions beneath the facade of maleness.

Children's Mini-series
OCEAN GIRL 3 (26 X 23 MINS)
Jonathan M. Shiff Productions

Neri, the Ocean Girl, accompanied by her friends from the futuristic underwater city of Circa, discovers the existence of a fellow space traveller, who brings knowledge of an alien device that is capable of helping the oceans. When a man-made catastrophe threatens the sea and the entire Universe, Neri and her friends must race to find the device and assemble it before the sinister UBIK organization beats them to it.

Information is correct and adjudged as of 62/95.

Features Pre-production
BEARFIRE - "BLACK RUSSIAN"
Production company: ARTS & ENERGY
Principal Credits
Director: James Michael Vernon
Producer: Penny Wall
Associate producers: Kay Vernon, OUP: Brian Breheny
Sound recordist: Phil Timpe
Costume designer: Lillian J. Associates
Production manager: Phil Lymm
Producers: Neri and her friends
Entertainment beats them to it.

THE LAST TRUE ACTION HERO (55 MIN ACCORD DOCUMENTARY)
LOOK TELEVISION PRODUCTIONS
Producers: P. Will Davies.
Writers: K. linen Boher.

The image of firefighters has always been one of fairness, heroism and courage. In Australia, with the constant threat of bush fires, the public is reminded seasonally of their mettle.

In recent years, firefighters have even become sex symbols in both the straight and gay community. The documentary will attempt to explore the world of the firefighter: the risks, the danger, the excitement and the glamour.

Production Survey

PRODUCTION COMPANY: ROBERT LAWRENCE PROD, FOX
Principal Credits
Director: John Watts.
Producers: Robert Lawrence
Executive producer: Stratton Leon.
Screenwriters: Joe Gross, Alan McKay.

UNDER THE GUN
Production company: SILVADORA PICTURES
Principal Credits
Director: Matthew George
Producers: Paul Eliot Cumlie, Richard Norton
Co-producer: Martin Goodwin
Executive producers: Fred Weintraar, Tom Kuhn.
Associate producer: Miranda Bain, Tim Jenkins.
Screenwriter: Matthew George
DOP: Ian Jones
Sound recordist: Lloyd Carnick
Editor: Gary Woodard.
Production designer: Ralph Moser.

ROUGH RIDERS
Production company: Cowell Pictures Distribution company: Rowan Films
Principal Credits
Director: Jenny Hicks
Producer: Tricia Waters, Graeme Issue DOP: Brian Breheny
Editor: John Scott
Length: 80 mins

A young female rodeo rider who is also studying Law at University makes her mark in an arena traditionally seen as a domain of men.

THE PHANTOM
Producers: John Pyce-Jones
Costume designer: Edie Kunzer.

SHINE
Production company: Momentum Films Distribution company: Panorama Cinema, Rowan Films, BBC Entertainment
Pre-production: 25 – 30/95
Production: 3/3/95 – 18/6/95
Post-production: 19/6/95

A fearless musician must fight for his life against an ex-Russian naval admiral with links to the Russian Mafia, who is determined to control a young girl who stands in the way of his finding the wreck of a Spanish galleon. This sunken ship contains a fortune in gold and silver. David is the strikingly-beautiful marine biologist Kris Morgan, who unfortunately operates on her own agenda that involves the lost treasure but not necessarily our hero, or his music.

FLYING TIGERS
Production company: Trilogy Entertainment, Morgan Creek Prods Distribution company: Warner Bros.
DOP: Gary Scott
Principal Credits
Director: Deran Sarafian
Producer: John Watson, Pon Donge Ham.
Executive producer: Gary Barbour
Screenwriter: Joe Bateer, Pon Donge Ham.

THE SMALL MAN
Distribution: PALACE
Sales: Filmsales
Principal Credits
Director: John Hillcoat
Executive producer: Denis Palent sale: Steve Wraggett
Government Agency Investment Production: FFC, SAFEC, Film Victoria

A fisherman's obsession with the fierce competition of the concert world as a child prodigy, David Hofflett, makes a new beginning in London inspired by his passion for music and the woman he loves.

A family's search for survival and the immediate threat of the constant threat of bush fires, the public is reminded seasonally of their mettle.

Television Drama

Documentaries

Children-in-need charity

ORANGE 3 (26 X 23 MINS)
Jonathan M. Shiff Productions

Children's Mini-series

DIEU CHINNY DILLS (52 MINS ACCORD DOCUMENTARY)
PRINCIPLES FILM PRODUCTIONS & SARADO FILMS
Producers: Andrew Weisman, Richard Koidie.
Writers: Andrew Weisman, Richard Koidie.

A documentary about survival for the farming families in the drought-striken plains of the Darling Downs, where the land has been ravaged by rain and where many have brought them to a point of crisis. The members of two families will tell their stories how they have recovered from endless dry seasons and what their fears and dreams are for the future.

YOU MIGHT AS WELL LIVE (55 MIN ACCORD DOCUMENTARY)
Forntia Productions
Producers: P. Con Amoianossian, Judy Marczel.
Writers: Con Amoianossian.

AN investigation into suicide in Australia. The documentary will look at Australia which has one of the highest suicide rates in the world and what can be done to bring it down. It will investigate suicide-related issues in Australia such as euthanasia, the suicide of the elderly, Aboriginal deaths in custody and the high incidence of youth suicide.

Documentaries

BERT HINKLER FLIES AGAIN (55 MINS)
CHASE PRODUCTIONS
Producers: P. Graham Chase, AP. Michael Condon.
Writers: Graham Chase.

In 1927, Bert Hinkler became the first person to fly solo to England from Australia. A retired Army pilot, Lang Kiddy embarked on a quest to re-enact this historic journey in a refurbished Avro Avion similar to the one Hinkler flew. Kiddy’s journey paralleled Hinkler’s story since both men are eccentrics, obsessed with trail blazing and forced to battle for funds.
COUNTDOWN
Production companies: PHILLIP EMANUEL PRODS, HIPS FILM & VIDEO PRODS
Budget: $50,000

PRINCIPAL CREDITS

DIRECTOR: VINCENT MONFORT
Producer: PHILLIP EMANUEL
Co-producer: JOHN HIRIPEL
Executive producer: DAVID RANSAY
Supervising producer: VINCENT MONFORT
DOP: IAN JUNGS
Sound recordist: PHIL STERNINGS
Sound editor: TAYLOR HODGSON
Production designer: NEIL AUSTIN
Costume designer: ALEXANDRA BENSON
Visual effects: GRAHAM GREEN

Production assistants: CHARITY MURRAY, JAMES McGUIRE

Production manager: ANASTASIA SQUIRES
Production coordinator: MELINDA BANK
Production supervisor: DEBORAH MURRAY
Location manager: STEVIE BEATTY
Unit assistant: JUDE MURRAY
Hairdresser: RAY MINTON

PRODUCTION CREDITS

MAKE-UP: AMANDA ROWNBOTTOM
Hairdresser: AMANDA ROWNBOTTOM
Choreographer: CASSANDRA MILLER
Stunt co-ordinator: ELIZ ELFERTHSOHN
Stunt driver: WALTER DALTON
Stunt driver: BRIAN MCKENZIE
Catering: FOOD FOR FILM (KEITH FISH)
Runner: NICHOLAS NICHOLSON
MICHAEL ZAHKIM

ART DEPARTMENT

Props: PHILIP HENKINS
Armur: JOHN FOX

SOUND DEPARTMENT

Sound assistant: PHILIP D. SMITH
Editor: NAHME TAMAH
Composer: GHARMAI TARIB

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS

Countdown... Planning and Development
Casting: LIZ MULLIN
Budgeted: John Hiripeel

Production manager: ANASTASIA SQUIRES
Production assistant: BRAD RASSELLE
Continuity: JUDIE FODERELL
Boom operator: STEVEN KING

EPISODES

Producers: DOMINO PRACCI
Director: ROLF DE HEER

Co-producer: DOMINO PRACCI
Digital Arts
Associate producer: SHARON JACKSON
Scriptwriter: ROLF DE HEER
DOP: TONY CLARK
Sound design: PHILIP D. SMITH

THE story of four contemporary teenagers, three girls and one outsider, who enter a magazine photo competition. In consequence, one is propelled into an international modelling career.

LOVE STORIES

Producer: MURRIN FANAYE
Scriptwriter: MURRIN FANAYE

JOE SMITHERS, MARK LEWIS, MARY TAYLOR

An intergalactic love story about a planet earth.

MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS

Producer company: TIGER PRODUCTIONS Distribution company: 20TH CENTURY-Fox
Producer: JOHN HIRIPEL
Production manager: DAVID DOUGLAS
Production assistant: ERIC LOW

Visual effects: ELENA ELIZABETH

MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS

Producer: MURRIN FANAYE
Scriptwriter: MURRIN FANAYE

JOE SMITHERS, MARK LEWIS, MARY TAYLOR

An intergalactic love story about a planet earth.

GIRL

Producer production company: PHILLIP EMANUEL PRODS, HIPS FILM & VIDEO PRODS
Budget: $400,000

PRINCIPAL CREDITS

Director: BRAD RASSELLE
Producer: JOHN HIRIPEL
Executive producer: DAVID HANNAWAY

Screenwriter: BRAD RASSELLE

Casting: LIZ MULLIN

Based on the novel: FAMILY HOLIDAY
Written by: TERRY DOUNCEN

A small town is terrorised by an unspeakable horror. Two unlikely heroes must save their town and indeed the world from the threat of the Chthullu cult. Battling a savage cult and an invisible creature proves to be an adventure of terrifying proportions.

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CONTINUED

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Executive producer: JOHN HIRIPEL

Production manager: ANASTASIA SQUIRES
Production assistant: BRAD RASSELLE

CONTINUED

IN PRODUCTION

Production Survey

continued

Production manager: DAVID HANNAWAY
Co-producer: JOHN HIRIPEL

President: MARK LEWIS
Co-producer: JOE SMITHERS

SOFT SIGNALS

Producer: JOHN HIRIPEL
Co-producer: JOE SMITHERS

Production manager: ANASTASIA SQUIRES
Production assistant: BRAD RASSELLE

CONTINUED

MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS

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Producer: JOHN HIRIPEL
Production manager: DAVID DOUGLAS
Production assistant: ERIC LOW

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Production Survey continued

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6 /2 /9 5 - 5 /2 /9 5

2nd unit nurse: PATSY BUCCAN Stunt driver: PRODUCER SALVATI
Grooming: JOHN FAITHFULL Hair: RAY FRANCIS

ART DEPARTMENT

WAREHOUSE


POST-PRODUCTION
1st assistant editor: WARREN PAUL, LINDA ANEST Assistant editors: NICK COLE, RICHARD PAUL, ABBY MCRANERY Assistant assistant editor: SAM SAVAGE Sound mixer: SIMON SHIFFLIN Laboratory: ATRAB

Liston: DENISE WOHLFORD Tape op: VIDEODALE Shooting stock: ASIA Video tere: VIDEODALE

Camera: JASON FRANK (TOMMY WHITE FALCON), STEVE CARDENAS (ROCKY RIS AYE), AARON JO JONSTON (KIMBERLY PINK CRANE), JENO BUSCH (ALEX BLACK BEE), KARIN ASHLEY (ASHA YELLOW BEAR), DAVID YOST (BILLY BLUE WOLF), PAUL FREEMAN (IVAN OZIE), JULIEETTE CORTIZ (RITA REBEL), JENNIFER SAYSAYA (D_size-
cl), PAUL, SCHERR (BLIX), JASON NWANKY (SKILLS).

Zordon summons the Power Rangers to save the planet from the evil and destructive forces of Ivan and his army of monsters.

ON OUR SELECTION
Production company: ANTHONY BUCKLEY TELEVISION PRODUCTIONS Distribution companies: ROADSHOW DISTRIBUTORS Pre-production: 19/6/94 Production: 19/6/94 Post-production: 19/12/94

PRINCIPAL CREDITS
Director: GEORGE WANELEY

NOSE DANCE

Production manager: MARVIN BAIKEN Production - ad: COLIN STONE Assistant producer: MARK MCCULLOCH Production manager: MATT MCDONALD

For the complete listing of our selection, please refer to the blog post. If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to contact us at info@cinemapers.com.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movie</th>
<th>Director</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tr>
<td>An Affair to Remember</td>
<td>Leo McCarey</td>
<td>8.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barcelona</td>
<td>White Stillman</td>
<td>7.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Browning Version</td>
<td>Mike Figgis</td>
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<td>China Moon</td>
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<td>Dangerous Game</td>
<td>Abel Ferrara</td>
<td>7.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disclosure</td>
<td>Barry Levinson</td>
<td>7.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drop Zone</td>
<td>John Badham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eat Drink Man Woman</td>
<td>Ang Lee</td>
<td>7.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heavenly Creatures</td>
<td>Peter Jackson</td>
<td>7.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview with the Vampire:</td>
<td>Neil Jordan</td>
<td>7.6</td>
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<td>The Vampire Chronicles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Kay Pavlow</td>
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<td>Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein</td>
<td>Kenneth Branagh</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Mask</td>
<td>Charles Russell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Naked in New York</td>
<td>Dan Algran</td>
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<td>Nell</td>
<td>Michael Apted</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Nightmare Before Christmas</td>
<td>Henry Alecs</td>
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<td>No Worries</td>
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<td>Once Were Warriors</td>
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<td>Only You</td>
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<td>Pulp Fiction</td>
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<td>Quiz Show</td>
<td>Robert Redford</td>
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<td>Searching for Bobby Fischer</td>
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<td>The Shadow</td>
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<td>Shallow Grave</td>
<td>Danny Boyle</td>
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<tr>
<td>To Live</td>
<td>Zhang Yimou</td>
<td>8.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*NB: "Nilo-hamitic" is a term used to describe a film that is not only entertaining but also contains elements that are unexpected or unconventional. It is often used to describe films that break the mold of conventional storytelling.*

*Panel of reviewers rated the films on a scale of 0 to 10,* with the latter being the optimum rating. The critics were: Bill Collins (Daily Mirror, Sydney); Barbara Creed (The Age); Gavin Dible (Herald-Sun); Paul Harris (E.G.); Stan James (The Adelaide Advertiser); Scott Murray; Tom Ryan (The Sunday Age); David Stranton (Variety, SBS); and Evan Williams (The Australian). Barbara Creed and Adrian Martin, who have replaced Neil Jellit in The Age, will alternate. Gavin Dible has stepped in for Ivan Hutchinson, who is on leave. Sandra Hall was uncontactable.
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