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Cinema Papers #105

Scott Murray

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Mark Joffe by Margaret Smith After Grievous Bodily Harm and Spotswood, director Mark Joffe returns with Cosi, a comedy about a drama therapy course in a psychiatric institution. Adapted from the award-winning play by Louis Nowra, the film has one of the most extraordinary casts ever assembled for an Australian film.

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Louis Nowra, Miramax and an All-Star Cast

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Miracles of Light
Slawomir Idziak photographs Toni Collette in Lillian’s Story. He talks to LINDSAY AMOS about his life’s work and what being a DOP really means to him. PAGE 22
Everyone has their highs and lows. Sometimes when you are feeling bad, it’s easy to forget that good news is only one phone call away. I was thinking about this idea and started trying to work out what would happen if the phone call came too late. But I also wanted to give a sense of hope for people so I put in a happy ending. Swing on... Three Australian short films were selected for Cannes. Swinger, Despondent Divorcee and Lessons in the Language of Love were all part of a selection of 58 films from various countries.

Since completion, Generation Films has been working on its second film, Lucky Break. Lucky Break was produced by Weis’ Generation Films and released in Australian cinemas in October last year. Since completion, Generation Films has sold all North American rights to Samuel Goldwyn Co, while the international sales agent for all other territories, Pan-dora, has reported strong early sales to France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the UK, Switzerland, Japan, Latin America and the Middle East.

Morris said, The scheme was introduced by the FFC as a reward for commercial success, and Lucky Break has achieved that.

AUSTRALIAN SHORT FILM WINS JURY PRIZE AT CANNES

Austrailian filmmaker Gregor Jordan has been awarded the Prix de Jury (Jury Prize) for short films at the Cannes International Film Festival for his 3 minute and 25 second film, Swinger. Jordan self-funded the production of Swinger with the Australian Film Commission providing post-production finance.

Jordan has been a film fan all his life and spent the past ten years working in the industry as a music video director, script writer, assistant director, storyboard artist and as an actor.

Swinger is a story of John Simms, an avid fan of big band music, who is on a major losing streak. He decides to end it all and so he runs a noose and jumps. While he swings, the phone keeps ringing. As he hears the messages coming through the answering machine, he learns that his bad news has turned to good. It is too late for him to get down!

Jordan says: Swinger is, believe it or not, about depression and how to deal with it.

Dear Editor,

Congratulations! The Billy’s Holiday Christmas issue is a clear indicator that the gritty, sleazy side of Melbourne life is no longer hidden in the shadows. Melbourne’s image, the dusty Swinburne thong less has faded, and we’re presented with something easily capable of making a magazine reflecting the true commercial and art image of our business.

At full speed with research on our Rock Pavilion project, which commemorates this country’s families in the 1950s and 60s period, and in the face of the city’s fast pace, I was more than thrilled to read of Doneg and Tristan’s adventure with the very talented Max Callen in Billy’s Holiday. Such a unique concept and will surely be a hit with all your readers.

Very sincerely,

Warwick Freeman

I note in Richard Warren’s recollections that he cites the feature, Demonstrator, as having an ‘important influence’ on him. But who is this Warwick Armstrong character that you’ve credited with it’s conception? Any relation to G'day?

Surely your quest for ‘contemporary’ is not about to reduce the Billy/Mc-Murray bible reputation

Regards,

Warwick Freeman
The 44th Melbourne International Film Festival
The City of Melbourne Awards for Short Film

Grand Prix: The City of Melbourne Award for Best Film ($5,000)

TwiLights (Tengai Amano, Japan)
The City of Melbourne Award for Best Short Fiction ($2,000)
The Salesman and Other Adventures (Hannah Weyser, U.S.)
The City of Melbourne Award for Best Animation ($2,000)
The Big Story (Tim Watts, David Stoten, UK)
The City of Melbourne Award for Best Documentary ($2,000)
Hello Photo (Nina Davenport, U.S.)
The City of Melbourne Award for Best Experimental Film ($2,000)
The Shell of Burning Ants (Jay Rosenblatt, U.S.)
The Film Victoria Erwin Rao Award for Best Australian Film ($2,000)
Writer’s Block (Leon Ciepielowski)
The Kia Cinemas Award for Creative Excellence in an Australian Short Film ($2,500)
Teenage Portraits (Greta Morton)
Melbourne International Film Festival Citation for Best Student Production
The Secret (Clare Kilner, Royal College of Art, London, UK)

In addition to these official jury awards, the following specialist citations were presented within the Festival:
The International Ecumenical Organisation, O.C.I.C, Special Citation for Outstanding Australian Short Film Promoting Human Values
Small Treasures (Sarah Watt)
The ANZAS-Auscenworks Award for Most Outstanding Film dealing with a Science-related subject ($1,500)
Noah’s Ark (Vivienne Howard, UK)

Director: Special Mention
Great Moments in Science: Falling Cats
(Andrew Horne, Australia)

The 42nd Sydney Film Festival
Dendy Awards for Australian Short Films

Documentary Category ($2,500, sponsored by The Dendy)
Eternity (Lawrence Johnston)

General Category ($2,500, sponsored by The Dendy)
Food for Thought: Three Ingredients from the Mass Consumer Diet (Daniel Crooks)

Fiction Category (more than 25 minutes:
$2,500, sponsored by The Dendy)
Audacious (Samantha Lang)

Fiction Category (less than 25 minutes:
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A Modest Proposal (Lawson Bayly)

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Redback (Ned Lander)

Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW Award ($2,500, sponsored by The Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW)
50 Years of Silence (Ned Lander with Carol Ruff and James Bradley)

Round Midnight Award ($2,500, sponsored by NSW Film and Television Office)
Something to Sing About (Martin Daley)

The Editor replies:
Warwick Freeman’s enthusiasm for the new format has been mirrored by many readers, who have written, faxed and phoned in.

We thank them.

As to the wrongful attribution of surname to the director of Demonstration, that was a gaffe made during the editing and not by the article’s author. Cinema Papers apologises to Freeman and assures him that the spirit of scholarship which has attempted to inform every issue continues with even greater resolve.

His Natural Life (1927), to Picnic at Hanging Rock (1975), The Last Wave (1977), The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith (1978) and the Mad Max movies (1979, 1981, 1995), to Rawhead (1984), The Howling (1984) and Celia (1988), and up to the recent Body Melt (1994), Australian film history unfolds an array of mechanical colonial antagonists and post-nuclear human monsters that are moral primitives or cannibals or executioners, avenging assassins, deviant children or maidsens preoccupied with death.

In the exhibition, still images from film are matched with stamps, in a partnership that blends cinematic with global and national philatelic anxieties about AIDS, disease, war, terrorism, religious memories of martyrdom, murderous Shakespearean fatal flaws, cultural taboos and ghost stories that recognise the fears deep within their cultural origins, and the human fear of nature which is often at the heart of the horror genre’s preoccupation with transformation and metamorphosis.

The horror genre belongs to a special realm of storytelling fiction, a scary form of entertainment that also has a cautionary effect in terms of the real world and our place in it as vulnerable human beings. The horror film’s capacity to play on individual anxiety in a sense is counter weighted by the stamp’s reference to mass global and national concerns. In looking across from the signs, symbols and emblems of horror in film, stamp designs share from the same pool of representations, a vocabulary of visual archetypes that endure and are recycled.

“Little Horrors” includes such intriguing horror memorabilia as the coffin made from car parts from Chamber Made Opera’s production of Peter Weir’s The Cars That Ate Paris and Yahoo Serious’ Rockest Kelly costume.

Sculptror Loretta Quinn, well known for her macabre figures, was commissioned to create several objects for the exhibition.

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Sandy Taylor (Murray Bartlett) and Kate (Jane Davis)
George Whaley’s Dad and Dave
On Our Selection.

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On Our Selection.
Lewis (Ben Mendelsohn) is at a difficult time in his life. Lucy (Rachel Griffiths). His sponging friend, Nick (Aden Young), in order to earn money, Lewis gets a job directing patients, before and the institution's overseer, Errol (Colin Friels), Roy (Barry Otto), a domineering manic-depressive, d
Erlinda, the jaundiced nurse who hates the trendy idea. To make matters worse, she demands that Lewis direct the patients in his favourite opera, _Cosi Fan Tutte_...
since directing *Grievous Bodily Harm* (1988) and *Spotswood* (1992), Mark Joffe has read literally hundreds of scripts. He is very careful about what he chooses to direct, so it wasn’t until he saw Louis Nowra’s loosely-autobiographical play, *Cosi*, that he felt he’d found the right project. (Nowra directed Gilbert & Sullivan’s *Trial by Jury* in a psychiatric institution in the 1970s.)

Joffe joined forces with Nowra in finalizing the screenplay. The film updates the play to the present, and has an incredible cast, which also includes Toni Collette, Paul Chubb, Kerry Walker, Jacki Weaver and Aden Young.

**How did you come to direct Cosi?**

I was approached by [producer] Richard Brennan. We both saw the play two or three years ago, and thought it could make a very interesting film.

I’m always on the look-out for anything half decent in terms of storyline. You get so many scripts that are either formula-driven or clichéd. Anything in an original form, or with an original slant, attracts me.

Nothing really happened for quite a few months, though, because I was working on other things. Then Richard and I talked to Louis [Nowra]. Louis and I got on very well, and seemed to have the same ideas of where the film script would go.

**How different is the film script from the play?**

Reasonably different, though the essence hasn’t changed. The major difference is that the film is now set in the 1990s, whereas the play was set in the late 1960s and early 70s, with the Vietnam war as the backdrop. Louis and I decided that modernizing it would give it greater poignancy, and more relevance to contemporary life. It also took away any novelty or cuteness attached to that particular era, especially given a lot of films set then were coming out.

At the same time, we lost the positive effect of having something significant like the Vietnam war as a backdrop. We tried to utilize other things. There are many other problems going on now involving psychiatric treatment and hospitals, and people generally growing up. There were enough issues to deal with.

Presumably, you felt the way patients are left in psychiatric institutions today is not all that different from the 1970s.

It has improved quite a lot. We filmed at a couple of hospitals, and most of the patients were being transferred to more modern facilities. Their actual surroundings and treatment seem to be a lot more modern, and are probably more beneficial than 20 years ago.

Were the patients present at any of the mental institutions you shot in?

Yes, at Gladesville Hospital. We also saw quite a few patients while we did our research. The hospital staff and the administrators were very co-operative.

It wasn’t easy filming on actual locations. You had to be very sensitive about how you approached it, and quite truthful with the patients and staff. They can see if you’re not being honest.

It was a great bonus for the film to have the legitimate physical characteristics of an actual psychiatric hospital to work with. We cheated quite a bit, too, but hopefully no one will notice.

In *Spotswood*, you comment on the way modern industry devalues people. In *Cosi*, you are telling a hopefully-enthralling story which also has an edge of social comment.

There is some slight similarity, but I don’t think there’s any profound analysis of business practices in *Spotswood*. I don’t think it’s superficial, but we certainly didn’t get into the ins and outs of economics.

In *Cosi*, we don’t really get into the issues. You won’t leave the cinema and say, “Ah, that’s what is wrong with psychiatric hospitals.” It doesn’t really touch on that. All we do is try to take a human perspective when dealing with these patients. Without being too profound, we treat them with some respect and dignity.

We found a lot of the patients have a wonderful sense of humour. They are just like normal people. They just have a slight problem, either chemically-induced or hereditary. We tried not to deal with them for the sake of laughs. I hope the script portrays them in a very realistic but very humorous way, and that the poignancy comes out of that.

But it does attempt to increase one’s understanding of these people’s lives?

It should... it should. We definitely don’t portray them in an absurd way, although so many of the things they do are quite absurd.

Do the so-called ‘normal’ people in your film also behave in absurd ways?

Yes, because that happens all the time. Once you interrelate with these folks, you start to behave
in that if the film doesn’t work, though it will, he can just say, “It wasn’t my fault! I wasn’t there!” [Laughs.]

Louis did so much good work beforehand, and I was more than happy to take it to the next step myself.

The play had some great stage and screen actors, such as Barry Otto and Ben Mendelsohn. You cast some of them in the film.

W e went through a very extensive casting process. I’m a great believer in screen tests. We didn’t screen-test Barry, however. I thought he was just absolutely perfect for the role [of Roy] and there was no need.

W e did extensive testing for nearly every other character, because you have to give actors a chance to show what they can do, even for those few minutes it takes to do a test.

W e happened to choose a few people who had been in the play, as well as a lot of different people who weren’t. Your first reaction may be one of surprise at who plays certain parts.

Like Jacki Weaver as Cherry, for example.

Yes, Jacki hasn’t done a film for a long time and this is something completely different for her.

Uniformly, I think the cast is really good. I’m very happy with the performances. They teamed very quickly and all got on famously, which was a great bonus for me.

Were you surprised that you were able to gather together such an excellent cast? It has many of the best actors in the country.

Well, I’m very happy it does. The play has a very good reputation and I’m sure the script would have attracted them as well.

The feeling is that the film will be of some quality. I’m hoping that it is, so that their faith is rewarded.

It must have been difficult to afford so many name actors on a $3.5m film.

Oh, I stay out of budgetary matters! I think it’s like a domino theory: when actors hear that other actors of a certain quality have been cast, they realize what levels you are aiming for.

The actors were very generous in giving their time. It is truly a big ensemble cast, and we couldn’t afford to pay them what they would normally get, or what they normally deserve.

Ben Mendelsohn plays Lewis, the semi-autobiographical character. This is one of his first adult roles.

Well, he is an adult. He’s not that young any more. After Spotswood, I told him he should be focusing on more adult roles.

Ben was very excited and enthusiastic about his part. He is in nearly every scene of the film, so he was under quite an immense pressure. I think he comes through it very well, and looks very good in the picture.

The part of Nick [Aden Young] has been written up from the stage play. You’ve made him more important.

Yes, I think he is more relevant. The social worker aspect of the character wasn’t something that we wanted to pursue in the picture. So, we gave Nick more of a personal relationship with Lewis and with Lucy [Rachel Griffiths], Lewis’ girlfriend. There is a bit of a triangle going on.

What we tried to do was write a parallel between the story of the opera and what was happening out there. Hopefully, it is subtle and not too heavy-handed. It’s the old art imitates life – or, life imitates art, actually.

Did you cast Toni Collette and Rachel Griffiths after having seen Muriel’s Wedding?

No. Toni’s first part was in Spotswood, years ago.
In a recent interview, Barry Otto said that he felt he was only now coming into his own and being recognized. He had to wait a long time.

Barry is an exceptionally fine actor, and a wonderful guy.

In Australia, we are influenced so much by the material we do, and there isn’t a lot of great material out there. You sometimes have to do things you normally wouldn’t.

In the past few years, I’ve tried to avoid doing that, which means not doing anything for a while and concentrating on projects that I really like. For a working actor, it must be really difficult.

Barry returns to the stage between films, which must be a great benefit for him and his psyche. But in the film sense, after Bliss [Ray Lawrence, 1985], he did a few things that didn’t get recognized or released. It’s just the nature of filmmaking.

Now there seems to be a few interesting projects going around and he is up there being cast in a great variety of roles. He did a wonderful job on our film, and I’m sure he’s doing equally well on other films.

This project came about quite quickly, in a two-year period. Before then, I was working on three or four others, one of which was very close to being ready to go. I was also being offered quite a lot. Only one I regret not pushing forward. All the others I said “No” to didn’t turn out that well, which is good. You are always going to get that.

I don’t know where the last three or four years went, but certainly I was very busy with a variety of things, including travelling and working overseas on different things in development. You have to give yourself a base of things you really like to do. If you are emotionally and financially secure, you can choose to do the things you want. There is nothing better than doing a film that you really enjoy, rather than having to do it for the money ... and making excuses later! But maybe that’s what I’ll have to do after Cosi. [Laughs.] You just have to be realistic about your place in the process.

How much workshopping did you do?

I workshop every project. On this, we did two weeks. It was of great benefit, because there were so many other facets I had to concentrate on. It wasn’t so much the performances, but just getting a through-line on each of the characters. Having the whole cast there, and discussing things quite freely, was a huge advantage.
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When Emir Kusturica’s Under­ground won the Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival this year, those members of the international press watching the awards in an adjacent auditorium, courtesy of Canal+, erupted in jubilation and applause.

Just previously, Theo Angelopoulos had been awarded the Grand Prix (effectively the “runner-up” prize) for To Vlemma Tou Odyssea (Ulysses’ Gaze), a trophy he accepted with bad grace. He had clearly expected to win the top prize, and his refusal to say anything because he felt snubbed (“I’m not going to speak because this is all you have given me”) stunned the Cannes Jury, particularly Présidente Jeanne Moreau and novelist Nadine Gordimer, who both looked shocked, then glanced at each other wryly.

At the press conference later, Angelopoulos made a playful attempt at reconciliation by biffing Kusturica on the head with his rolled certificate. But his disappointment is understandable. Cannes is a fiercely competitive festival and the Yugoslav Kusturica, with his wild hair and gravelly voice, is a Cannes favourite. He won the Palme d’Or first in 1985 for Otac Na Sluzbenom Putu (When Father was Away on Business) and won the Prix de la Mise en Scène (Best Director) for Dom Za Vesanje (Time of the Gypsies) in 1989.

Angelopoulos is also an acknowledged master. He has ten impressive films to his credit, and has won the Cannes International Critics’ Prize three times: for O Thanass (The Travelling Players) in 1975, Taxi (a) sta Kitiri (Voyage to Cythera) in 1984, and for Ulysses’ Gaze. However, as significant as this prize is, it is not the Palme d’Or, and it must have rubbed insult to injury that he shared the Critics’ Prize this year with Ken Loach’s Land and Freedom.

What sharpened competition between Kusturica and Angelopoulos for the Palme d’Or was the fact that both films deal with the ongoing war in the Balkans. Both directors have universalized the conflict to make profound commentaries on the human condition. But that is where the similarity between the two films ends.

Ulysses’ Gaze is magisterial and bleak. Harvey Keitel plays a Greek-American filmmaker (called “A” in the credits) who returns to his homeland, ostensibly to attend a screening of his own controversial films, but really to search for three missing reels of undeveloped film shot at the beginning of the century by the legendary Manakia brothers. This odyssey leads him on an epic journey across the Balkans, from Athens to Sarajevo.

Ulysses’ Gaze impresses through the majesty of its images. Spectacularly photographed by Yorgos Arvanitis, the most enigmatic and haunting scene is the loading of a barge on the Danube with a giant statue of Lenin which has been dismantled for the voyage, and reassembled in a grotesque parody of itself. The most moving sequences, shot on location in the shrouded mists of Sarajevo, involve Erland Josephson as Ivo Levi, the film archivist who represents both the beginning and the end of A’s quest.

But the film has difficulties. For the first hour of Angelopoulos’ three-hour epic, Keitel seems hope­lessly miscast. The film’s pace is slow and deliberate, and Keitel has been directed to adjust his speech and make every word count. This cuts across his natural speech patterns, with the result that much of his early dialogue sounds laboured and unnatural.

Only as the film progresses, and A pursues the missing reels, does Keitel settle into his rôle, and
the wider meaning of the quest asserts itself.

_Underground_ is very different from _Ulysses’ Gaze_. Untidy and passionate, Kusturica’s epic covers more than 50 years of Yugoslav history, beginning with the bombing in 1941 of the Belgrade zoo by the Germans (a heart-rending opening), and ending in the present. The story follows several partisan families hidden in underground tunnels beneath the ruined city, who are tricked into making ammunition for the Resistance 20 years after the war is over.

Kusturica’s savage attack on the forces tearing his country apart is both surreally funny and tragic. By focusing on three very different brothers – the treacherous Marko, the patriotic Blacky and the sad zoo-keeper Ivan – he locates the cause of the conflict in the intractability of human nature. Yet the film is marked by boisterousness and optimism, and it has a marvellous score sourced in Gypsy music which affirms life and refuses to admit defeat.

The film’s first cut was six hours in length. Kusturica trimmed it to three hours for its Competition screening, but agreed the film could benefit from further pruning. “I listen to my critics”, he said.

Of all the national groupings at Cannes, British films made the strongest impact. The six films selected for official screening were all quality features, exciting talk about the revival of the British film industry. After years of neglect, and in the wake of such worldwide successes as _The Crying Game_ (Neil Jordan, 1992) and _Four Weddings and a Funeral_ (Mike Newell, 1994), it seems to have penetrated government circles that there is an international market for non-formulaic, well-written films with interesting stories.

Christopher Hampton’s _Carrington_ was panned in a Cannes edition of _Variety_, which did more damage to the critic who penned the piece [Derek Elley] than it did for the film itself. Set in England during World War I, this lyrical film about the strange passion of Dora Carrington (Emma Thompson) for biographer Lytton Strachey (Jonathan Pryce) won the Prix Interprétation Masculine (Best Actor) for Pryce, as well as the Prix Spécial du Jury.

Hampton wrote _Carrington_ 20 years ago, and has been trying ever since to get it made. He was fascinated with the story in the 1960s and spent a year writing it, courtesy of Warner Bros., which was interested initially in producing it. Out of desperation, Hampton decided to direct it himself. “It’s difficult raising money for a story about a girl who falls in love with a faggot and kills herself”, he said at his press conference.

All the film’s characters are subtly and convincingly played by a strong cast. Pryce’s characterization of the eccentric biographer is particularly complex and moving: this is no stereotypical gay portrait. The script is genuinely funny, and the whole is rhythmically linked via six episodes, named for the characters and events in the couple’s life.

_Carrington_ avoids the staginess of literary set pieces such as _Mrs. Parker and the Vicious Circle_ (Alan Rudolph, 1994) and _Tom and Viv_ (Brian Gilbert, 1993), and characters move in their environment (which has been lovingly recreated) with great naturalness. Michael Nyman’s score runs through the film like a stream. “I felt I was making portraits of the characters”, he said. “It was very different to [Peter] Greenaway, where you make music for the trees.”

Nicholas Hytner’s tragi-comedy, _The Madness of King George_, shines in all departments. The script has been admirably adapted to the screen by Alan Bennett from his play, and Hytner, a theatre director who makes his feature film début after directing the stage production, is in full command of his new medium.

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**Film. Cannes**

by Jan Epstein
Reprising the rôle that he made famous on the stage, Nigel Hawthorne gives a virtuoso performance as the mad king. He shows himself to be an actor of great emotional power and depth, and those who only know him as Sir Humphrey in Yes, Minister will be very surprised.

Hawthorne was miffed at being pipped at the post by Jonathan Pryce for Best Actor. Accepting on Helen Mirren’s behalf her award for Prix Interprétation Féminin (Best Actress), he chided the Jury for only giving the film a single award, and, assuming his screen persona, quipped that he would ask “Mrs Queen” to place her prize on the mantelpiece for all the family to see.

Ken Loach’s Land and Freedom, about an unemployed youth who leaves Liverpool in 1936 to fight the Fascists in Spain, won widespread critic acclaim, and was touted early as a contender for the Palme d’Or. A moving love story, as well as a tough political drama which engages in discussion about Stalin and the Communist Party betrayal of the people’s revolution, the film has the feel of a documentary. This is Loach’s most ambitious film to date, and he tackles the much broader canvas without any loss of intimacy. As well as sharing the International Critics’ prize, Loach won the Ecumenical Jury Prize “for keeping the memory of the past alive in a society losing its values and forgetting its roots”.

Terence Davies’ The Neon Bible was similarly ambitious but less successful. His adaptation of John Kennedy Toole’s novel about a young boy growing up in a small 1940s Bible Belt town in America’s Deep South is finely crafted. The film is luminously lit and there are some breathtaking sequences. Gena Rowlands is superb as Aunt Mae, who brings glamour to the small backwater town, and newcomer Jacob Tierney gives a haunting performance as the boy. But the material is slight, and stretched too thinly. This dilutes the emotional impact and the whole seems mannered.

Christopher Monger’s The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill but Came Down a Mountain, a modest film about Welsh villagers who challenged the measurement made by two English cartographers which finds that their local mountain is really a hill, was one of the few surprises of the Festival and a genuine delight. Starring Hugh Grant and Colm Meaney, it is a nostalgic throwback to the good-natured, inoffensive films which became Britain’s trademark in the late 1940s and ‘50s.

Mike Newell’s An Awfully Big Adventure, which screened in La Quinzaine des Réalisateurs (Directors’ Fortnight), is about a 16-year-old girl in Liverpool in the ‘40s who escapes from family life into the theatre, only to fall prey to the repertory company’s two dominating presences, played by Hugh Grant and Alan Rickman. The story, obliquely told, is downbeat but polished and accomplished.

As usual, the American presence at Cannes made itself felt. Of the six screened in the official selection, the best was Ed Wood, Tim Burton’s whimsical but warm tribute to Ed Wood D. Wood Jr., described as the worst director of all time. Filmed in black and white in gentle parody of Wood’s film-making style, the film boasts inspired performances from Johnny Depp as Ed Wood, and Martin Landau in his Oscar-winning rôle as Bela Lugosi.

Depp also starred in Jim Jarmusch’s Dead Man. This strange film has an unfathomable plot, which is no doubt deeply allegorical. William Blake (Depp) loses his innocence in American Wild West in the
1990s. The film is peppered with Tarantinoesque killers who spout incongruous dialogue, and there are cameos from such actors as John Hurt, Robert Mitchum and Gabriel Byrne. Shot in black and white, the film is worth seeing for its striking visuals, although response to the film is best summed up by the man at the film's premiere who leaned over the balcony and called: "Pourquoi, Jim?"

Most disappointing were two big-budget American films. James Ivory's *Jefferson in Paris* was launched with much fanfare, but the film sank like a lead balloon. Scripted by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, and starring Nick Nolte and Greta Scacchi, it depicts Thomas Jefferson as fathering a child by his negro slave (Thandie Newton), while he was American Ambassador to France during the early days of the French Revolution. The film was savagely attacked in the U.S. press for playing with historical facts. It fared little better with the Cannes critics who accused it of being dry and stuffy.

John Boorman's *Beyond Rangoon* was received more gently. A political thriller about the atrocities committed by the ruling military Junta against those who supported Burma's democracy movement, it focuses on a young American woman, Laura Bowman (Patricia Arquette), who comes to terms with a tragedy in her own life by becoming involved with dissidents.

The film is a passionate call for the world to pay attention to what is happening in Burma and few will see the film and not be moved, or feel they have learned something. But glaring plot contrivances, some shaky performances and a tendency to simplify complex issues prevents *Beyond Rangoon* from being much more than a message movie.

The Festival's most controversial film was *Kids*, a powerful first film by photographer Larry Clark which follows 24 hours in the lives of a group of hip young people addicted to sex, drugs and booze — anything that gives a buzz. The film was scripted by Harmony Korin, who was a 19-year-old high-school drop-out when he wrote it to Clark's specifications. Clark wanted to show the other face of teenage- hood — the side that adults don't want to know about, and show. The story centres on Telly (Leo Fitzpatrick), whose speciality is deflowering barely-pubescent virgins, and Jenny (Yakira Peguero), one of his victims who discovers she is HIV positive after only one encounter with him. The spectre of AIDS hangs like a time bomb over the kids who, as they hip-hop like fleas from one to the other, are appallingly ignorant that they are dying with life.
French housing project. Kassovitz's previous film was Café Old, a hard-edged comedy about a Jew and Moroccan in love with a pregnant woman who is not sure which of her lovers is the father of her baby.

The most intriguing French film was Le Cité des Enfants Perdus (The City of Lost Children), by the directors of Delicatessen, Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro. This is a surreal fairytale about a freakish ogre, Krank (Daniel Emilfork), whokidnaps children in order to steal their dreams.

More fantastic in conception than Delicatessen, with costumes designed by Jean-Paul Gautier and special effects which are quite phantasmagoric, the outlandish cast of characters includes One (Ron Perlman), a fairground strongman, six clone brothers (all played by the rubbery-faced strongman Dominique Pinon), a brain floating in a tank which speaks through the bell of a gramophone (with the voice of Jean-Louis Trintignant), and a pair of wicked Siamese sisters. The plot, which involves One's saving the stolen children, is perhaps too elaborate at times, but, in the course of asserting the right of children to a childhood, Jeunet and Caro provide many affecting moments.

Smaller films which drew attention to themselves were Diane Keaton's debut feature, Unstrung Heroes, a warm, off-beat story about a young boy coping with the imminent death of his mother; Le Confessionnal (The Confessional), by Canadian Robert LePage, a stylish cross-genre mystery-thriller which plays on Hitchcock's I Confess; Todd Haynes' Safe, a film about the fragility of identity; and Heavy, a slow-moving, affecting film by first-time director James Mangold (U.S.), about a repressed, over-weight pizza chef who emerges slowly from his cocoon when his domineering mother (Shelley Winters) becomes ill.

Also impressive was the New Zealand documentary, War Stories, by Gaylene Preston (Bread and Roses), in which seven elderly women tell stories about what they did in the war with unforgettable candour and humour.

The silliest film as the Festival was Manoel de Oliveira's O Convento (The Convent), a pseudo-mysterious mish-mash starring Catherine Deneuve and John Malkovich, which is precisely the type of film that gives Cannes' Official Selection a bad name. Judgement was swift and cruel, with thousands of critics from all over the world spontaneously booing and hissing like geese.

n the home front, there was no Strictly Ballroom (Baz Luhrmann, 1992) or The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (Stephan Elliott, 1994). Richard Wherrett's bright but slight offering, Billy's Holiday, tried to fill the breach, but couldn't engender the same buzz, although news of its sale to Miramax was a welcome shot in the arm. Most successful critically was All Men Are Liars, by first-time director Gerard Lee (who co-wrote Sweetie with Jane Campion), and Gregor Jordan's short film, Swooper, which won the Prix du Jury.

The Caméra d'Or was won by Iranian director Jafar Panahi for Le Ballon Blanc (The White Balloon), a gentle film about a seven-year-old girl who, on the first day of spring, dreams of buying herself a goldfish.

In the year many are celebrating the century of cinema, special thanks is due to the Cannes Festival committee for commissioning 30 wonderful "Préludes". These four-minute entries to screenings in the Official Selection, composed of thematically-linked clips from known and less well-known classic films, were a delight, and deserve to be shown again and again.
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The World of Jacqueline McKenzie

At just 27, actress Jacqueline McKenzie is being touted as the fresh, new face of Australian cinema. While the films in which she has appeared to date – Romper Stomper (Geoffrey Wright, 1992), This Won’t Hurt a Bit! (Chris Kennedy, 1993) and Traps (Pauline Chan, 1994) – have not all met with universal acclaim, her very diverse performances have. From the abused, epileptic Gabe, ricocheting between two skinheads in Romper Stomper, through the lisping southern English beauty queen who falls for a dentist in This Won’t Hurt a Bit!, to the coquettish child-woman caught on the edge of a couple’s sexual confusion and the Franco-Viet Minh war in Traps, McKenzie has shown a marked disdain for cinematic type-casting.

Meanwhile, her career has burgeoned on two other fronts. On television, she has had starring rôles in Ben Elton’s other fronts. On television, she has had starring rôles in Ben Elton’s mini-series, 1994), opposite Gary Sweet, and will soon aptly appear as a woman with a multiple personality disorder in an episode of Halifax f.p.

In the theatre, a string of powerful performances have also earned her awards, rare plaudits (her performance as Ophelia in the Belvoir Street Company’s production directed by Gale Edwards.

Soon, McKenzie is about to hit the big screen again in Talk (Susan Lambert) and Angel Baby (Michael Rymer), in which she gives a disturbingly impressive performance as the schizophrenic Kate.

**Beginnings**

How did the interest in acting begin?

I was very into rôle-playing as a kid, and I always wanted to sing. The singers that I used to try to sing like were into performance, not so much just sounding good. If you listen to Barbra Streisand’s earlier stuff, there’s a journey to each song. I used to do that sort of character singing.

When I was at school, I debated and did the odd play. But I wanted to be all sorts of things: a vet, a doctor, a lawyer, a zoologist.

Did you go straight from school to the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA)?

No, I had two years off. I went to New South Wales University to do drama, which I hated. I really wanted to act; I didn’t want to talk about it. All research and no action isn’t that much fun. So, I threw in the towel and did some ads, sang in a band and prepared for NIDA the next year. Looking back, I would love to do that drama course, because I now love all the research.

What was good about NIDA?

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What was good about NIDA?

I also lived at home during the whole time and met with my old school friends, so I had a good support. Sure I went out and socialized with people from NIDA, but I had another life outside of it. That keeps you fresh and helps maintain a sense of humour about yourself.

At NIDA, you work and push so bloody hard. Because of that, time is completely maximized. I’ve no doubt that people don’t need to go to an acting school to learn things, but it takes ten times as long if you don’t. Acting school is so condensed. Plus, you meet the most amazing bunch of people. [Miranda Otto, Jeremy Sims, Andrew Blackman and Colin Moody are some of McKenzie’s contemporaries.]

I couldn’t wait to do Saint Joan because there’s a guy in the play who taught me at NIDA: Tony Taylor. In our second year, he came in and saved us.

Second-years are renowned for losing their sense of humour, because they’re really feeling the pressure – any minute someone can be thrown out. Tony put the perspective back. He reminded us that it’s a fun thing to do, that it’s make-believe and magic, and that it shouldn’t be a chore. You have to keep a certain lightness.

**Romper Stomper**

Did you get the part in Romper Stomper straight from NIDA?

I did about four plays back-to-back. And when you’re doing plays, you rehearse from 9 till 5. If there are any film rôles coming along, you’re just not available to audition for them. It’s really the luck of the draw.

Miraculously, I had a director who was kind enough to let me out of rehearsals to go and try out for Romper Stomper. I was doing Rebecca at the time, and they sent the film’s producer up to see the play.

Romper Stomper had been on the drawing board for a long, long time, and it had been cast and recast ten zillion times. Apparently, I wasn’t the first choice; I was about the fourth.

**Traps**

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**This Won’t Hurt a Bit!**

Vanessa Prescot McKenzie) becomes the wife of Gordon Fairweather (Greig Pickhaver), a mentally-unsable runaway from an orphanage, who blows his way into becoming a fully-unqualified dentist. He promptly embarks on a trip to England where he plans to wreak revenge on the English population for past injustices, both historical and personal.

**Angel Baby**

Kate (McKenzie) and Harry (John Lynch), who suffer from mental illness, meet at a day-care clinic and fall in love. They set up house together, engaging each other in their living fantasies. Harry hears voices that torment him; Kate has a guardian angel that sends her messages through Wheel of Fortune.
Interview by Daniel Scott
Was the violence in the film something you were very aware of in the filming process?

No, not completely. I was aware when we were going through the rushes, but less so when we were actually doing it on the day. In some of the sequences, however, I certainly was aware of it because they were done in one hand-held shot.

There was one particular shot where we were all bloody running down this alleyway. [DOP] Ron Hagen was chasing us with the camera and pulling focus at the same time. I just remember watching Hando [Russell Crowe] and Davey [Daniel Pollock] lay into some poor victim, and I thought, "Oh my God, that looks really painful." And then when they called "Cut", Russell picked the victim up and patted him on the back, asking "You all right there, mate? Everything all right?" It was so needed.

The Vietnamese gang tried to work together as actors and get some sort of gang feeling going, because they only had a short amount of rehearsal time. The Australian gang did the same. And at the end of some of these bash scenes, they’d get together and just put everything back into perspective.

This Won’t Hurt a Bit!

Your next two features, This Won’t Hurt a Bit! and Traps, didn’t really succeed. What made you choose to do them?

I loved the characters. What turns an actor on is good characters and a good yarn. I thought they were great characters and great yarns.

As to whether or not they succeeded, it’s all relative to what you think success is and what the film is aiming for.

Traps

As for Traps, it doesn’t go successfully into the heart of the place; it just uses Vietnam in the 1950s as a backdrop.

It is essentially about the [Duffields’] marriage, not so much about Vietnam.

Perhaps because the book on which it is nominally based is set in Tuscany.

The book is entirely different. My character is an amalgam of two from the book – the brother and sister.

I find it hard to judge. I just go in there and do the character and hope for the best. But the experience of filming in Vietnam was magic – good magic and bad; the full gamut.

I find that happens with film: every production you do is like entering a new world.

Directors

You have worked with a diverse range of directors. What is your definition of a dream director?

Someone who has done the work and who is not floundering. And, if they are, they are seeking help from everybody else, because there are so many bloody intelligent people on the set.

If you are having any trouble, even as an actor, ask. Someone will help you out; someone will have an idea. It’s not just the heads of department, for me it’s the first people you meet in the morning: make-up and hair; the people who pick you up in the car.

Some teachers are of a school of thought that if you haven’t been raped yourself, then you can’t play someone who has. I just don’t agree with that at all.

This Won’t Hurt a Bit! seems to be aiming at a particular type of comedy that doesn’t come off.

I thought it was funny.

If you have a really difficult scene to do that morning, then you want the 1st A.D. to have told the person who’s picking you up, “She might be a little bit nervous today, so go easy around those corners. Don’t drive at a 150.” It’s all about communication.

Kirsten Veysey [the make-up artist on Stark and Angel Baby] is probably one of the most important people on a film set for me. She’s not only read the script, she’s read it ten times. She knows exactly what scene I’m doing and can tell by the look of me whether or not I’m shitting myself. She’s a magnificent comrade to have around on the set.

Angel Baby

How did you research for the part in Angel Baby?

I just sat in the medico section of the library and pulled out books.

With schizophrenia, there are a million conflicting explanations. In the 1960s, there was even a school of thought that it was because of mothers not breast-feeding – as if there isn’t enough guilt associated with bringing up children.

It’s onset can be quite late. You could have a normal, healthy, socially-adjusted child – smiling, happy, bright – who’s getting A’s grades one day and then starts slowly deteriorating. Within a year, they could completely socially outcast – tortured because they’re hearing voices and demands.

There’s a great responsibility you must feel if you are playing a character like Kate, especially in a tale that purports to show how schizophrenics really suffer. You don’t want to do people suffering from the disease any more disservice than has already been done them.

Kate doesn’t think she’s mad. She has her own logic that appears illogical to other people. But she knows what she’s talking about; she knows how she feels. There’s no confusion there. I hope that one thing that we do through Angel Baby is give the sense that these are real people.

When I first went to meet some people who had schizophrenia at the Clubhouse in Melbourne, I’d done a hell of a lot of research and everything I’d learnt told me not to be afraid of those people. But the day I went, I was really scared. The fact they were so nice and welcoming made it a wonderful experience. It just goes to show you can’t do it all from the books.

Have you ever known anyone personally who was schizophrenic?

Yes, but I didn’t know until I studied this. He was an incredibly-gorgeous-looking bloke, incredibly funny. Slightly loopy, but shit so am I. And he’s a very loving sort of person. He is very human and that’s what we were determined to achieve with Angel Baby. It is a love story between two people who just happen to suffer from schizophrenia. It was never meant to be a treatise on the disease; it couldn’t be. With Kate, I kept going back to her courage. I mean, she met some guy – no, not just some guy, the most beautiful man alive! – and she accepted his love and this reality. To be able to do that anyway, let alone if you’re both suffering from schizophrenia, is just so wonderful. It’s something to look up to. I hope it can happen to me.

Kate uses Wheel of Fortune as a kind of guidance.

She gets messages through the Wheel of Fortune from her guardian angel, Astral.
A Co-Respondent’s Course

Ken Berryman argues his case in “Legions of the Lost, Forgotten and Underrated Australian Cinema”.

This included the importation of state-of-the-art equipment: Mitchell 35mm cameras and RCA Photophone sound gear. More important, Thring had the good sense to gather around him a wealth of talent to put the equipment to best use. Efftee staff at different times included such famous names as Norman Lindsay, C. J. Dennis, Arthur Higgins, Raymond Longford, and Tom Holt (father of Harold). Before commencing production in 1931, Thring sent Holt (his general manager), Higgins (his cameraman) and his sound engineer, Alan Mill, to the U.S. to familiarize themselves with the latest studio practices and to bring back with them someone conversant with the RCA recording technology. Having committed himself to this extent, it seems odd that Thring would then balk at the additional expense of hiring one or two people with talkie directorial credentials on the basis of excessive salary demands, as Shirley and Adams suggest.

In the event, Thring did engage a young European director, E. A. Dietrich-Derrick, to make A Co-Respondent’s Course, the first film on the Efftee production slate. Dietrich-Derrick was assisted by American RCA sound expert Dan Bloomberg, and had Australia’s most experienced cinematographer, Arthur Higgins, behind the camera. The result, as Shirley and Adams also point out, was the “least typical of all the Efftee output”. To what extent the comparatively jaunty pacing and confident use of Melbourne bayside locales was due to directorial input, or to the absence of the proprietor’s heavy hand, is difficult to gauge. Dietrich-Derrick’s screen credit is not differentiated in any way from the remainder of the crew, and his name is noticeably absent from the film’s Press Sheet. The familiar leaden visual treatment is also evident in Dietrich-Derrick’s only other film for Efftee, the comedy melodrama, The Haunted Barn.

There are elements of staginess, the odd plot creak and the obvious limitations(527,784),(996,995) imposed by the early sound recording requirements in A Co-Respondent’s Course, but the film has a degree of sophistication, an insouciance, not to be found in the later Efftee work.

It is not as if the film has no admirers. Shirley and Adams find merit in the
clear use of post-production dubbing over the various location shots, something of a rarity in the context of local production in the early sound era. Chris Long, too, praises the association of sound with visual narrative:

Nothing even vaguely approaching this had been attempted in Melbourne before, but few Efftee productions ever came up to the standard of this initial experiment. Pre-publicity for A Co-Respondent’s Course emphasized its trendiness: a “modern society comedy drama”; a gentle marital farce on “modern divorce”. The original story was written by Montague (Monty) Grover, his first effort to write directly for the screen. Grover, a former editor of The Sun (Melbourne) and The Sydney Sunday Sun, had also written plays and short stories before turning his hand to this screenplay.

The plot revolves around the jealousy of two men for the women they love, the comic element supposedly deriving from the numerous errors made by three private detectives hired to gain evidence for one of the men who suspects his wife of adultery.

Thring obviously hoped to attract live theatre audiences to the cinema by casting several J. C. Williamson regulars – including John D’Arcy, Donalda Warne, Pop Cory and Adele Inman – in the principal roles, despite their lack of screen experience. Much was made of the two leads: John D’Arcy (father of the former HSV7 personality) as James Lord, and Donalda Warne, still only 19 when A Co-Respondent’s Course premiered. Warne, who plays Lord’s society sweet-heart, Nellie O’Neill, is described variously as a “charming blonde” who “typifies the real Australian girl we all know and love”. She is depicted indulging in the “fast seaside sport” of aquaplaning, and featuring in the latest in bathing attire which also serves, ultimately, as her wedding outfit.

To stoke the then controversy among fashion authorities about the respective virtues of blondes and brunettes, arising from the publication of Anita Loos’ Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, Warne is also cast alongside Patricia Minchin, a “decided brunette”. Featured together on the cover of Table Talk (23 April 1931) after being chosen for the leading feminine rôles in A Co-Respondent’s Course, Warne and Minchin are described as being given the opportunities “to become the Greta Garbo and Norma Shearer of Australia”.

From what we see in this Efftee comedy drama, Garbo’s status was in no real danger but, apart from Warne’s lesser rôles in The Haunted Barn and His Royal Highness, it is puzzling why Thring opted not to use Warne in his later films, after the major studio attempt to turn her into one of our first talkie stars. She certainly seems to have been chosen for the role of a society girl, its fascination attempts to evoke byside locations, its considerable period charm, its throwaway humour (as, for example, when one of the jealous husbands abandons counting sheep in a vain attempt to get to sleep because they are “moving too fast”).

In keeping firmly within the modern society comedy/drama formula, locales are confined to those which might have been expected to appear in social pages at the time: South Yarra, Chelsea, Frankston, sections of Beach Road, and Portsea, “the playground of the society of Victoria”. A trip from Melbourne to Portsea circa 1931 is, in film journey terms, something akin to Priscilla’s more recent pilgrimage to the desert. We also learn from the film’s publicity that “well-known Melbourne society girl”, Miss Noel Clapp, daughter of the then Victorian Railways Commissioner, has a small role in the film – as D’Arcy’s secretary: “her titian hair and expressive features ideally fit her for screen work”.

The film’s moral inclinations are indicative of the times as well. On the one hand, married men need to beware of jealousy, the green-eyed god which can cause undue stress, worry and misunderstanding. On the other, we are assured that after seeing A Co-Respondent’s Course, most wives will be unwilling to snatch that extra few minute’s sleep in the morning. They will want to obviate a hurried breakfast and do away with the chance of burning hubby’s toast. Otherwise they may set in motion a sequence of events similar to those in this comedy drama.

The film’s studio sets, designed by W. R. Coleman, for the most part complement the location work. Thring had taken over the burnt-out shell of His Majesty’s Theatre – still in disrepair after a disastrous fire in 1929 – in Exhibition Street, in the absence of other suitable studio premises in Melbourne, and constructed several elaborate soundproof stages to facilitate his continuous production plans. Shot between April and June 1931, A Co-Respondent’s Course was held up for release until Thring’s desire to present a full-length unit programme could be realized. The trade paper Everyones duly announced the completion of the first Efftee package on 9 September 1931.

The Gala World Premiere was scheduled for 6 November 1931 at Melbourne’s Plaza Theatre, below the Regent in Collins Street. A Co-Respondent’s Course was billed with the six-reel wartime comedy feature, Diggers, starring Pat Hanna and George Moon, and four shorts: Selections from the Desert Song, presented by Will Cade and the Regent Theatre Orchesters, Jack O’Hagan: Vocalist Composer, Cecil Parkes Strand Trio present Selections from their Repertoire; and the travelogue, Melbourne Today. Thring also had filmed, in June 1931, an introductory speech for the first Efftee programmes, citing them as “merely the forerunners of a succession of productions of increasing quality, which from now on will be produced here in Australia”. In addition, a Fox Movietone News crew was on hand to record the excitement of this first really professional Australian sound film premiere. Happily, given the attrition rate of films from this period, all of this material survives.

At the time, the prognosis for Effite Films appeared favourable. A distribution-exhibition deal with Fox and Hoyts had been honoured. The first unit programme fared ordinarily on initial release, but did better business on its city re-run and the country circuit. Ultimately, though, the brave experiment for various reasons proved unsustainable, and most of the Effite output gradually disappeared from view – save for the odd revival of the George Wallace features and a screening of Thring’s sound version of The Sentimental Bloke (1932).
A Co-Respondent’s Course, Efftee’s first modest venture into narrative filmmaking, is now possibly the least-remembered and most-rarely-screened of all the studio’s drama productions.

Why should this be so, given its legitimate place in our film history? Is it because its subject of matrimonial merri ness and mayhem is so slight, or that its avowedly Melbourne setting is too parochial, or that it boasts no enduring film marquee stars, or name director? More likely, its original billing as a support feature (to Diggers, which doesn’t stand up nearly as well) and its awkward length (3800ft) have not helped its cause.

By today’s standards, it would fill a commercial television hour. For cinema release in Australia, or more particularly since the demise of the B picture, a film of this length has always been awkwardly situated – neither “short” nor “full-length”.

As a post-1930 short feature, it also failed to qualify for separate entry listing in Pike and Cooper’s feature ‘bible’, *Australian Film 1900-1977: A Guide to Feature Film Production* (though it’s mentioned in the *Diggers* entry). Apart from the writings of Chris Long, and Ina Bertrand, very little critical attention has been paid to the film, or to the Efftee work in general, for reasons probably apparent already. The films of Hall at Cinesound, and Chauvel, produced in the same era, by comparison have remained firmly in view and under discussion. With the full restoration of Melbourne’s Regent Theatre now underway and re-opening planned for 1996, a revival screening of some of the gems from the Efftee collection, with provision for a new 35mm print of *A Co-Respondent’s Course*, would not be an inappropriate way of getting this period charmer back in the spotlight it enjoyed so briefly more than 60 years ago.

### A Co-Respondent’s Course

Director: E. A. Dietrich-Derrick. Producer: F. W. Thring. Scriptwriter: Montague Grover. Director of photography: Arthur Higgins. Sound: D. J. Bloomberg. Settings: W. R. Coleman. Cast: John D’Arcy (James Lord), Donalda Warne (Nellie O’Neill), Patricia Minchin (May Barry), Pop Cory (Andrew Rouse), Norman Lee (Arnold Dane), Suzette Lander (Mrs Dane), Noel Clapp (Mrs Willis), Monte Moles (Farmer), Beatrice Egerton (Mrs Hope), Leal Douglas (Mrs O’Neill), Royce Milton (Clergyman), Reginald Wykeham (Sleath), Ed Warrington (Detective), George Moon (Detective), Oliver Peacock (Detective). An Efftee Film Production. 35mm. 44 mins. 1931.

1 Efftee’s plans to exhibit the first local talkie unit programme were slightly thwarted by the single screening of *Isle of Intrigue* and *Spur of the Moment* at Melbourne’s Palace Theatre on 26 September 1931. These were presented along with a filmed introductory speech by the director of both films, A. R. (Dick) Harwood.

2 Efftee Entertainers and Efftee’s Australia, released as a set by the National Film & Sound Archive in 1989.


Slawomir (Slaweik) Idziak is one of a select group of Polish cinematographers who have become major figures in international cinema over the past few years. This group includes Janusz Kaminsky (Schnidler's List and How to Make an American Quilt), Andrzej Sekula (Reservoir Dogs and Pulp Fiction) and recent Academy-Award nominee Piotr Subocinski (Trois Couleurs: Rouge).

Idziak, whose career spans nearly thirty years, has become widely known through three films for Krzysztof Kieslowski: Krótki Film o Zabijaniu (A Short Film About Killing, 1988), Le Double Vie de Véronique (The Double Life of Véronique, 1991) and Trois Couleurs: Bleu (Three Colours: Blue, 1993). But his earlier work includes fourteen films for Krzysztof Zanussi including Bilans Kwartałowy (Balance, 1975) and Rok Spokojnego Slonca (The Year of the Quiet Sun, 1984), Andrzej Wajda's Dvorya (The Conductor, 1979), Kieslowski's first television film, Przejscie Podziemne (Pedestrian Subway, 1973), as well as films in Germany, France, Italy, Finland and Iceland. Last year, he photographed John Duigan's The Journey of August King in North Carolina.

Idziak was in Australia recently to shoot Jerzy Domaradzki's Lilian's Story, based on the life of legendary Sydney identity Bee Miles, with Ruth Cracknell and Toni Collette sharing the title role. During breaks in the shooting, Idziak offered his often controversial views on films and filmmaking.

Although you are in Sydney to shoot Lilian's Story, you are working with a fellow countryman as director. What attracted you to work on what seems at first glance to be a very Australian story?

I knew Jerzy, who finished film school in Lodz at the same time as I did. We didn't work together in Poland, but we were in the same production group. Later on, Jerzy left Poland and is now a resident of Australia. Simply being a Pole and getting a chance to do Lilian's Story, he asked me if I would do it. I read the script and it seemed to me to be a kind of announcement, an invitation to a journey. It is a better presentation of the protagonist, especially the first close-up of Lilian [Ruth Cracknell], who is standing in front of a window with her eyes covered by a bar. We see only her mouth, which seems to me to be a clear indication to the audience where we are into.

Part of the film is apparently set in the 1950s. Yes. We use flashbacks, which is a very common technique. In our case, we have a slight colour difference. Generally, the flashbacks are more yellowish and the contemporary period is warm.

I know you don't want to say too much about a film which is still in progress, but are there any major differences for you making a film in Australia compared with Europe or the U.S.?

There is a general problem in that films are being made in different ways all over the world. The systems used to organize the crew, the ways a film is done, are completely different. What puzzles me is that we very easily adapt to a bad system. I call it "Americanization".

There are two approaches to production. One is to have a high budget with an enormous number of personnel and vehicles around, and a compacted period of shooting. The other method, which in my opinion should be taken under consideration, is a small crew and a little bit more room for shooting. That way, the time pressure is not so enormous.

We should try to analyze the different experiences in different countries, because there are a lot of positive examples, not only in Poland, where the relationship between the director and cinematographer is completely different from the west.

In Germany and Scandinavia, for example, Lilian's Story would have been made with half the personnel. But what is important is that we would get the same result on the screen. Of course, you are always dependent on the human talent, but in terms of production values — meaning the money invested being visible on the screen — you'd probably get the same having much less people around.

What is the director-cinematographer relationship as it exists in Poland?

Our country was for so many years in seclusion we somehow developed a different system. It was first of all grounded in the film schools, which had only two departments: the director department and the cinematographer department.

In Poland, the cinematographer is number two, and starts work on the project very early. Kieslowski, for example, gives the cinematographer the first treatment — the first three pages. In nearly 80 percent of cases, the cinematographer is co-author of the shooting script. Directors expect cinematographers to bring their own world, their own vision.

So, it was something very unusual when I all of a sudden realized that here in the west it was the director who was telling the cinematographer, "Put the camera here." For me, they are two different professions. I really don't believe, with some exceptions of course, that it's possible to have total control of the actors and the flow of the story, and also decide about each single take. Directors shouldn't be too close, because very quickly they lose the sense of the wholeness.

I really believe in creative group work, and somehow our example in the Polish cinema, where we are really creative partners of the director, is a very good example. It works.

To be a future cinematographer, you have to change your attitude, because the technique is simpler and simpler. It's not enough to be simply a technician; you have to be a partner; you have to understand the construction of the story; you have to bring your own vision.

Probably the most controversial film in The Decalogue series, and one which brought both you and Kieslowski international attention, is A Short Film About Killing. There has been a lot of discussion about your use of filters — some say 600, others 200. Did the filmstock help with the garish effect you were trying to achieve? It was Orwocolor, wasn't it?

No, it was Agfa, and they were my filters! Agfa is a very good negative and it was me who destroyed its qualities.

Decalogue is very interesting because in a way I didn't want to do A Short Film About Killing. Kieslowski approached me and gave me the choice of all ten films. The problem was it was
ight

cinematographers to be regarded as co-authors

There is a general problem in that films are being made in different ways all over the world.

The systems used to organize the crew, the ways a film is done, are completely different.

What puzzles me is that we very easily adapt to a bad system. I call it "Americanization"
planned as a 16mm television series. For a Polish cinematographer, doing 16mm is a nightmare because the quality of our laboratories is very low. I decided to do number 9, a very simple story about love and jealousy.

Then Kieslowski told me, "I know your trick: the moment I'm ready to do number 9, you'll be abroad and have no time to do it. And now when I'm ready to do A Short Film About Killing [number 5], you won't do it!" I said to Kieslowski, "Listen, why do I have to do such a story? After an hour one person gets killed; after another half an hour another person gets hanged in prison. It's terrible! Why do I have to do it?"

But Kieslowski's a very stubborn person. So I told him, "Okay, I will do the film, only with a condition that I do it green and using all my filters." Kieslowski replied, "I don't want to have it green! I'm doing a TV series. I can't have all of a sudden one green!" So I said, "It's up to you. Either I do it green, or I don't do it."

The next day, Kieslowski came to me and said, "I'm doing ten films, okay. If one has to be green, let it be shit green. It's your decision. Do it green." And, you know, it's the first time in my life that it happened: a director telling me to do crazy things. Normally, you carry this burden of responsibility. Normally, you are afraid to do something new. You have to calculate very precisely how far you can go to risk something. It's something which is very unusual in my profession; it's telling us something about our subconscious: we are under pressure which is somehow devasting.

So, this movie was in a way a kind of guide for me. You have to find a method so that you are not a prisoner of this incredible responsibility.

And when you started to see the results?

I was scared, because it was so unusual. The first screening was really disappointing. With the second screening, with two or three scenes cut together, we realized there was something there. Kieslowski is open to any kind of risk. He really gives room to the cinematographer, because he strongly believes that the look is more important than anything else. The stories are always the same, only how you tell them is different. He understands to what extent the style affects the story, how the style is the story itself. Changing the style changes the story.

What I really like is not so much the shooting, which is challenging and interesting of course, but to work with directors before we start shooting. All important decisions should be taken in pre-production. The cinematographer should be an important collaborator in the scriptwriting process.

Were the filmstocks you used on the earlier films you did with, say, Zanussi and Wajda primarily East German?

Not necessarily. The leading directors usually managed to get a certain amount of Eastman Kodak. But, in many cases, if we didn’t have enough, we shot the daytime scenes in colour and the night scenes on black and white. The main problem was that our shooting ratio was five-to-one maximum, and the average ratio here in the west would be twelve-to-one.

I shot a lot of scenes on Orwo. You may say it is bad, but it has a completely different look. There is not much difference between Kodak, Fuji and Agfa in terms of the colours, because the technology is very much the same. Professionals may see the difference in various filmstocks, but for the average spectator they are more or less the same.

It’s a pity we don’t have richer possibilities in terms of the material, but there is in the future the possibility to change colours with computers. It will be a completely new age in cinematography, and I’m really looking forward to it.

The Double Life of Véronique, in contrast to your Decalogue episode, has a striking, warm, romantic look. It is an audacious twist on the theme of twin personalities: you are telling two different stories in one film.

I like very much The Double Life of Véronique because it was a film on which we were sort of innocent people. It was Kieslowski’s first foreign film. It had a great atmosphere on location, which for me is one of the most important things. It was the film on which I had wanted to work all my life.

The film had a miracle atmosphere because all the elements of production worked. One miracle was the way we found Irène Jacob, who was a completely unknown actress. Kieslowski had planned the movie with a different actress, but he couldn’t get her because of financial problems. One month before the production started, we didn’t have an actress.

What were the major problems which you were able to solve as the cinematographer?

The first problem was to make the unbelievable believable, to find a key to make the story, which sounds very, very, literal, work on the screen. A great help was Zbigniew Preisner’s incredible music.

The most important problem was to solve the knot between the end of the first act and the beginning of the second: the death of the Polish Weronika and the introduction of the French Véronique. It was something that we knew from the very beginning had to be very strong visually to persuade the audience to swallow something which is completely, totally, unbelievable!

We were also conscious that the first phase of the Polish Weronika was easy to achieve because it was part of our lives, but somehow France is the exotic land for us. So, the second challenge was to bring these two worlds together. Instead of differences, we tried to find similarities. We decided that it’s much more important to concentrate on her inner landscape, because this very specific, sensible character is so concentrated on her own subconscious, forgetting the reality around her.

This puts a considerable responsibility on the cinematographer, not merely to visualize this inner landscape, but to put it on screen.

Kieslowski is a director who has the ability to change a lot during the shooting. He doesn’t mechanically follow the script. He’s the one who understood that the film had its own, independent life. Each day after shooting, we used to discuss it and we changed a lot. The second part and the end of the film are very different from the original script.

When you came to do the Three Colours trilogy, once again with Kieslowski, you chose Blue, though Kieslowski claims you could have shot Red and Piotr Subocinski Blue.

Kieslowski was always very nice to me, because I shot his first TV films, his first feature [Blizna (The Scar, 1976)], the first film shot in the Decalogue series and his first foreign film. He asked me to decide which of the Three Colours I wanted to do, and I decided to do the first one, Blue.

Red was another option for me. But Three Colours seemed to me a very, very personal project, and I was afraid that my vision and his vision may grow too far apart. Later on, I realized that the risk of Blue was that it was a little bit too close to Véronique. Again, the function of the music was important. All these elements were a bit of a problem for us, because we are always afraid we are going to repeat ourselves. But, I decided to do Blue and I’m happy because it was the first in the series.

I like Red as well, I very much like the work of my younger colleague, Subocinski. It’s completely different. I would never have photographed the film in such a way. It’s an example of what I was saying before about the way Kieslowski works with the cinematographer: he’s open to various different visions. The Three Colours and Decalogue series are very good examples.

Re-viewing Blue, I was surprised how few overt blue references are there. There is a lot of warm light.

Well, I decided to use the colour blue as a kind of dramaturgical colour – a colour which has a meaning. We tried to use music and light as a
guide to the inner life of Julie [Juliette Binoche]. It is a cinematic representation of an inner monologue.

The strong blue scenes are the scenes of her loneliness in the swimming pool, reflections on her face, the glass-bead lampshade. But we tried to use blue in a very economical way. We kept the film with a warm atmosphere and gave it a quite strong, very aggressive blue at important moments.

The blue we used is artificial. I took the strongest gel and did a lot of tests trying to find the most theatrical blue, which has nothing to do with the natural blue that already exists.

There is a lot of concentration on details: an eye, a mouth, the musical notes, a teaspoon, a coffee cup.

In the case of Blue, it was clear for me that Julie’s world is as much inside as outside, so I tried on purpose to narrow her anger. For this reason, I came up with the suggestion of macro-photography as a way of showing how Julie sees the world around her. Always, if I have time, I try to do quite a few additional takes. They give the director the chance during editing to put in small elements, which very often help a lot.

As a non-musician, I was fascinated by the shot where you show Julie in the process of composition, following the notes. It gives the audience the impression of being able to read music. Music seems to inspire you in your work, too.

You know, for most movies, it would be much better to have music before the shooting! But the system is that you do the movie and add the music later. If you have music on the location, it has enormous impact on your work – on the atmosphere, on how the scene is blocked. Hearing the music, you know where you are into.

Sure, it’s easier for the composer to see the film and write the music, but perhaps it would be interesting to give the composer the script the same way you would the cinematographer. It may open several doors that weren’t open before.

Did you use a Steadicam on Blue? Sometimes it is hard to tell.

No, I never use a Steadicam. For many years I have been working with a hand-held camera. Steadicam dampens the rhythm between the actors walking and the cinematographer’s steps. So, I am trying a different technique. I am trying to adapt my way of working with the actors. I am breathing with them. I am walking the same steps. In my opinion, I am getting the identical effect, and much faster because you don’t need all the preparation, or a special operator.

Again, in Europe, a Steadicam is always a certain budget problem. Now I am very well-known as a cinematographer who is doing a lot of hand-held camerawork – up to 90 per cent of the takes are hand-held in some of the movies I’ve made. You’ve actually shot more films with Zanussi than anybody else.

That’s true. Zanussi was my first permanent partner.

In the beginning, I was a little bit insecure, but it was evident that with each new project I was part of his team. Maybe it gave me for the first time a sense of security, a sense of development. I learnt a lot, because I realized that it’s not only a problem of one movie, it’s the kind of personal relationship which we somehow developed through the years with all the advantages and disadvantages. The director and cinematographer are like in a marriage; they survive all the ups and downs.

As far as I know, Zanussi’s very interested in doing something new with me, but change is always interesting. You’re getting other options, another chance, and it’s something extremely interesting in this profession that you learn to see the world together. And this is one of the risks: that your kind of imagination would not be responsive enough to somebody else.
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An Assortment of “A”s and a “B”

Dominic Case looks at film stock changes at Agfa; Animal Logic’s work on Alex Proyas’ Adidas commercial; Avid’s new Australian office; and post-producing a puppet film, The Bell

by the time you read this edition of CINEMA PAPERS, the SMPTE Conference and Exhibition in Sydney will be over. Following the trend of the past couple of shows, this one is overwhelmingly electronic, with barely a sprocket in sight. Still, there’ll be a review of any cinematic aspects of the show – and of the Conference seminars – in the next “Technicalities”.

So, for this time, an assortment of pieces with nothing in common except the initial ‘A’. There’s a retrospective of Agfa negative stock, bowing out of the world film scene after more than 80 years; a look at Animal Logic’s work on the Adidas spot for Andrew Mason and Alex Proyas; mention of the new Australian office of Avid; and an interview with the makers of a short film, The Bell, which doesn’t begin with A, but which did start life at the AFTRS and finish up with the AFC.

As is often the case, I have interests to disclose: an occasional consultancy with Animal Logic (though not concerning the Adidas ad) and a credit as post-production consultant on The Bell.

Vale Gevacolor

The sudden announcement earlier this year that Agfa-Gevaert was to cease manufacturing colour negative film stock marked the close of a long era in which the company was a leading player, in both worldwide and Australian filmmaking. The company was in the forefront of colour film technology during World War II, with the German Agfacolor well ahead of competing processes in America and elsewhere. Arguably the first substantially Australian colour feature film, Jedda was filmed in 1955 on Gevacolor. Possibly the biggest production in Australia – in terms of shot footage, and, by all repute, in terms of crew employed – Mighty Morphin Power Rangers was shot on Agfa XT negative, shortly before manufacture ceased this year.

The story started in 1913 when Agfa began production of motion-picture film at Wolten, Germany. Twelve years later, the Belgian company, Gevaert, introduced a faster, but orthochromatic, film emulsion, with limited sensitivity to red colours. Soon, however, faster panchromatic emulsions became possible – the first ones approximately 12 ASA! Accelerated by the introduction of sound films, demand grew for more and more film speed, and the two companies – Agfa in Germany and Gevaert in Belgium – among others, competed with faster and finer-grained emulsions. In 1936, Gevaert was one of the first companies to introduce triacetate safety base film instead of the highly-flammable nitrate base.

Black-and-white films have continued to be manufactured up to the present, but both companies moved on to play a leading role in the development of colour systems. My own collection of film relics includes a sample book of coloured tints and tones manufactured by Agfa in the late 1920s. In the mid-1930s, a process known as Gasparcolor – after its Hungarian inventor Dr Bela Gaspar – was operating in London, and less successfully in Berlin. The process used a complicated combination of double-sided film, with emulsion layers front and back, and rotating filters in front of the camera lens, to expose alternate red, green and blue separation images. The negative stock was manufactured by Gevaert, but prints were made on an Agfa tripack film which worked by a silver dye bleach process (very similar to today’s Cibachrome process). This early pan-European venture predates the post-war Agfa-Gevaert combination by several decades.
Meanwhile, Agfa had been working hard on the colour coupler process, first devised in 1911. The main difficulty had been in preventing the colour couplers - chemicals that cause the dyes in each layer to form colours - from diffusing through the three layers at once. Eventually, Agfa's emulsion chemists, led by Dr Wilhelm Schneider, solved this problem, and Agfa launched its tripack negative-positive process in 1939. Production on a feature started almost immediately at the Babelsberg Studios in Berlin, encouraged by a government that was keen to see German product compete with American colour pictures. Remember that this was the heyday of Technicolor three-strip: Becky Sharp, the first Technicolor feature, was made in 1933, and 1939 was of course the year of Gone with the Wind.

It would be two years before Frauen sind doch Bessere Diplomaten was completed. The delays were not caused by the outbreak of war, so much as the constant re-shooting demanded as the Agfa negative was modified and improved almost with every roll. However, its release was followed immediately by a second production, Die Goldene Stadt, and 11 features were shot, Agfacolor during the war. While German film production was not interrupted, other countries did experience delays. It was not until Agfa launched its tripack process on a feature started almost immediately at the Babelsberg Studios in 1939 that Agfa had no rivals. However, as soon as the Allied forces occupied Berlin in 1945, technical missions were sent to investigate and report on the colour process. The report of the Field Intelligence Agency (Technical), dated January 1946, covers, in just 39 pages, details of chemical emulsion manufacture and coating, methods for special effects, film printing and processing, and even shows film stock costs and the rates of pay of laboratory workers. According to World War II exchange rates, colour negative stock cost 11 cents (U.S.) per foot, compared with 3 cents per foot for black-and-white negative. As a yardstick, unskilled labour was quoted at 25 cents per hour.

When Berlin was partitioned, the original Wolfen emulsion factory equipment was moved to Shooka, in Ukraine, and film manufacture continued under the name Sovcolor. The Wolfen factory was eventually re-commissioned and operated under Russian management, but meanwhile, in the West, a new Agfa factory was built at Bayer Works in Leverkusen, West Germany, to restart the Agfa business.

With Agfacolor patents now one of the spoils of war, other manufacturers around the world could improve their colour negative process. The first Eastman colour integral tripack films based on this technology appeared in 1950, and Fuji in Japan followed the same unprotected patents. However, at Mortsel in Belgium, Gevaert moved faster, and released its first colour negative film - type 6.51 - based on the Agfa patents in 1948. Local documentaries and short films led up to a major French feature films, Bluebeard - in 1951. For the next few years, Gevacolor was to dominate the European market, although in Britain and America the well-established Technicolor process faced a greater challenge from the American Eastmancolor than from European products.

In Australia, feature production in the early 1950s was limited to a few overseas productions, and even fewer locally-funded or-controlled films. The first colour feature was a 20th Century Fox production, Kangaroo, shot in Technicolor in 1952, starring Maureen O'Hara and Peter Lawford - with, further down the list, Chips Rafferty and Charles Tingwell. However, three years later came Charles Chauvel's Jedda, photographed in Gevacolor by Carl Kaysar.

Australian laboratories at this stage were still operating a complicated two-colour process, already obsolete overseas, and their output was restricted mainly to cinema commercials. As a result, negative for Jedda had to be processed at Rank laboratories near London. This was no simple exercise, as the production location was some distance from Katherine in the Northern Territory. Ice boxes were placed strategically along the Roper River, in caves and under rock ledges. Raw stock, held in refrigeration in Katherine, was passed along this chain to the location, exposed in 40-degree sunshine, before starting the week-long trip back to London.

For urban Australian and over seas audiences, Jedda was the first sight of the vivid blue skies and orange earth of the Northern Territory. Nowhere else had Gevacolor film produced life-like colours that were so unfamiliar to its audience, but so central to the film's impact and value.

Fifteen years later, it would be found that, despite its success at the time, the early Gevacolor emulsion had one shortcoming: it didn't last. When the National Film & Sound Archive came to reprint Jedda, the negative dyes had almost completely faded, taking with them the striking colours. Fortunately, black-and-white separations of the entire film - albeit in an overseas cut version - were located at Rank laboratories, and a full-colour duplicate negative and prints were possible. Film stock manufacturers have since then become much more conscious of preservation, and modern colour negative emulsions should stay unchanged, for hundreds of years, under the proper archival storage conditions.

The Eastman colour process was first set up in Australia in 1958 at Filmcraft laboratories. However, the Gevacolor stocks at that time used a different process. In Europe, this favoured the well-established Agfa and Gevaert stocks: in Australia, with barely enough business to operate one colour process, Gevacolor had little chance. In 1964, Agfa and Gevaert companies merged, although both negative types continued to be produced. Meanwhile, Eastmancolor negative stocks were gaining ground, and had a significant advantage in colour reproduction: integral dye masking. This technique, which gives negative its characteristic orange-pink appearance, compensates for the imperfection of the colour dyes in the film, resulting in richer, truer colours. Agfa and Gevaert negatives at this stage were still unmasked. In 1968, however, a new Gevacolor negative, type 6.53, was introduced, with masking. In 1974, this was replaced by type 6.80, masked, and compatible with the Eastmancolor process.

1974 was the year that Australian feature-film production boomed. Labs by this time had proved their abilities with colour film after the first locally-processed (Eastman) colour feature, Journey out of Darkness, in 1968. At last, it seemed, there was an opportunity for Gevacolor. It was taken up, in 1976, by cinematographer Peter James, to shoot The Irishman. The slightly-pastel 新 colours of the stock compared with Eastmancolor suited the Tom Roberts style of colouring that was preferred for the film. However, the Eastman colour process that the Gevaert negative used was already obsolete, having been replaced in late 1974 by the faster, high-temperature ECN2 chemistry. Colorfilm labs had retained the older process for the tail ends of the old stocks, but The Irishman would be the last major production to be processed this way.

In 1978, Gevaert released its new ECN2 compatible stock 6.82. At this stage, each manufacturer supplied only one type of colour negative film stock. It was tungsten balanced, medium speed, and used the ECN2 process. In the mid-1980s, Fuji - by now the only other manufacturer outside the Iron Curtain - introduced a new dimension to the competition with a high-speed stock. Before long, all three manufacturers - Eastman, Fuji, and Gevaert - had an extensive range of emulsions. Competitive research was leading to a new technology: T- or XT-grain. Named for the flat tablet-shaped silver halide crystals with an X-shaped cross-section, the new emulsions collected light much more efficiently, with a consequent increase in speed. The newest generation of Agfa-Gevaert's negatives - XT125, XT320 and later XT400, all balanced temperatures, including a very slightly lower contrast that favoured telecinic transfers, and lent a subtly different "look" to film images.

Although the two companies, Agfa and Gevaert, were fully merged by this time, stills materials were marketed as Agfa, while Gevaert continued as the established brand name for motion-picture products. However, the XT generation of emulsions was launched under the Agfa name, showing their relationship to the more widely-recognized Agfa stills emulsions. The film stocks were still manufactured in Gevaert's Mortsel, Belgium, manufacturing plant.

Overseas, particularly in Britain and Europe, a number of feature films were shot on Agfa film stock. Most noteworthily was David Watkin's cinematography using XT120 in Out of Africa. Watkin also used Agfa negative for Moonstruck, Hamlet, and Memphis Belle. Gorillas in the Mist was also shot on Agfa XT320 by Australian cinematographer John Seale. On television, the series NYPD Blue - celebrated for its television "film look" - was shot on Agfa negative.

In Australia, some notable successes and some competitive pricing gradually overcame the reluctance of many filmmakers to try anything other than the
familiar Eastman Kodak emulsions. The last decade's list of films on Agfa negative is a fairly representative cross-section of Australian productions. Shooting the 16mm television mini-series Harp in the South and Poor Man's Orange, Peter James used Agfa negative for exterior sequences set in Europe, selecting the slightly different, greener look to distinguish them from Australian sequences.

More recently, The Delinquents, Exchange Lifeguards and Tunnel Vision have all been shot on Agfa negative. Film stocks have their loyal supporters, and others who will not consider them. In Australia, one or two names can be noted as consistent users of Agfa negative. One of those, Paul Murphy, shot Mighty Morphin Power Rangers on Agfa negative last summer: probably the biggest single use of negative stock in this country. DOP Martin McGrath, who had previously shot The Mystery of Edwin Drood, returned to Agfa XT100 for Dad & Dave On Our Selection, produced by Tony Buckley, who was also responsible for the Harp and Orange mini-series, and, towards the beginning of this episode, for The Irishman.

Why stop now? Agfa's Motion Picture Division Manager, Graeme Wisken, explains that it was a head-office decision based on worldwide sales and forecasts. While Agfa has stopped making camera negative, it remains a leading manufacturer of laboratory stocks. Having been a leader back in the 1930s in the introduction of safety acetate base, the wheel has turned full circle, and Agfa has for some years placed heavy emphasis on the newer, stronger, and more environmentally-friendly polyester film base. Theatres increasingly are finding that polyester prints last longer with less wear, while laboratories processing the new CP10 print film can reduce their water usage. A further advantage, according to Wisken, appears at the end of a print's life. Many American distributors are finding difficulties in disposing of old friends. Still, the loss should not go without at least a nod towards the significant role played by the Agfa and Gevaert companies in our film heritage.

The whole job represented the most intricate form of seamless integration. It's very hard to tell what's 3D and what's not.

Perhaps the reduction from three to two negative types is an inevitable sign of the times, as economic rationalization and digital technology converge on old friends. Still, the loss should not go without at least a nod towards the significant role played by the Agfa and Gevaert companies in our film heritage. From Babelsberg to the Power Rangers, from Jedd to Dad and Dave: Vale Agfa, Vale Geva.

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Animal Logic
in world
Adidas ad
LEADING DESIGN, 3D and digital post company Animal Logic recently completed work on director Alex Proyas' latest television and cinema spot for Adidas, entitled Microchip, for British agency Leagus Delaney. The 60-second commercial, produced by Andrew Mason and intended for worldwide release, involves more than 70 shots, all but one involving work by Animal Logic.

Amid the live-action, 3D animation and multiple models, there is just one product shot, resulting in a campaign that "sells a feeling rather than a shoe". General Manager and Animal Logic producer for Microchip, Maury Strong, commented:

This job was a breath of fresh air. While we get to work on much of the best local and international productions, it's not often that we see ads as filmic as this one. The 3D team, led by Lyne Cartwright, and comprising Steve James, Chris Godfrey, Lindsay Flethy, Peter MacDonald and Justin Mettam, designed, modelled, lit and animated an enormous number of elements. Robots, droids, memory machines, memory bubbles, explosions and extensions of sets and backgrounds were all produced in 3D to match the live-action sets and vast array of physical models.

All of the 3D animation was carried out using Renderman and Softimage, linked by Animal Logic's own designed Softman and Eddie, plus other proprietary software running on a network of SGI workstations. Says Cartwright:

A lot of the 3D problems were solved in pre-production. We had an enormous amount of interaction with Alex and Andrew, and lots of storyboard meetings, although the final look of each scene was finalized in the 3D environment.

Technical directors David Booth, Andy Brown and Zelko Dejanovic worked on Henry and Harry using a "whole range of different integrating techniques including depth control, adding grain and texture, and colour grading within SGI workstations. Says Cartwright:

The whole job represented the most intricate form of seamless
integration. It's very hard to tell what's 3D and what's not. Everything sits so beautifully together that it all looks 'in camera', which was the director's intention.

Producer Andrew Mason remarked on the astonishing six-week turnaround for the entire production for Animal Logic. The business of scheduling the 3D and post was very cleverly organized by Animal Logic. The reason Alex and I want to keep coming back to Australia to shoot is that it's a heck of a lot more fun doing the post here.

Avid opens in Australia

Australians are known to be rapid adopters of new technology. VCRs, CDs, CD-ROMs and mobile phones have all grown faster here than almost anywhere. Now non-linear editing can officially be added to the list, as Avid Technology Inc. announces the establishment of a wholly-owned subsidiary office in Sydney.

According to Lou Shipley, Vice President, Asia Pacific and Latin America:

Avid is the ninth fastest-growing public company in the U.S. according to Fortune magazine, and the Asia Pacific markets [Japan, China, Thailand and Australia] are the fastest growing part of Avid's business.

Previously, Avid was distributed in Australia by Amber Technology and by Innovative Sound and Media Technology.

The new operation will be headed by Belinda Hanna, previously Managing Director of Borland International Australia. She said:

The local companies that have represented Avid Technology deserve recognition for the success that they have achieved. However, Avid has now acquired a broad range of multimedia technology through acquisitions and mergers in recent times. Now is the appropriate time to bring these diverse products under a single banner locally.

Avid Technology now owns Basys, the leading newsroom computer system, Digidesign, Parallax and Elastic Reality, in addition to its own range of off-line and on-line systems. The new company is to be officially launched at SMPTE '95.
The Bell
“A story about place and ritual and memories held in trust.”

The Bell – also titled La Cloche – is a short (13 minutes) Super 16 film written and directed by Bart Groen, and produced jointly with Valérie Quéva. Although it started out as a design exercise at the Australian Film Television & Radio School (where Groen was a design student), the project has grown, and eventually attracted post-production funding of $90,000 from the Australian Film Commission, largely for an innovative optical printing technique that runs through most of the film. The Bell uses puppets to tell the story of a stonemason living in a Parisian working-class quarter, who has been secretly keeping alive a memory that will be revealed to his neighbours only in his final moments.

AFC Project Officer Michael Hill confirmed that, while he had been impressed by the script, and by the quality of the work that had already been done, he was particularly interested in the technique of the film. It was an unusual form for the Australian scene. The detail of characterization in the puppets is rarely seen here, and the film shows a good balance between storytelling and craft.

Most significantly for the AFC, the team had already committed a lot of time and work to the production, and had shown “guts and determination” to get to the stage they had.

I spoke with Bart and Valérie, and with the film’s DOP, Jackie Farkas. Valérie explained that Bart had originally written the film as a short story while living in Paris. They had considered shooting it in Paris, but returned to Australia before doing anything more.

Quéva: The script was in pretty good shape at that time, and Bart pitched it at the Film School pitch-and-toss session, and got a very strong reaction. He came home and said, “It’s really worth shooting – but we’re in Australia, we can’t do it: what about puppets?”

I was a bit reticent – the characters also were very much a part of Paris. But the idea progressed, mainly as a design exercise for the Film School.

We made a test, using shaving brushes for puppets, but this took into it a comical animation kind of style, although the story was very dramatic, in a tragic sense. Then the production started, with lots of design input – the reconstruction of Paris in model-making. Three weeks before starting the shoot, there was still a problem with the puppets. Then, by good luck, Bart met Melinda Doring, who has a background in sculpture and painting, and from this moment on it evolved from the minimalistic puppets to very realistic puppets. And that’s when the tragic sense of the story could be brought back into the production.

What were some of the problems you faced in shooting the miniature puppets?

Groen: With stop-frame animation we could have full-length characters moving in the background, but with hand-operated puppets shot live action, as we had, it becomes more complicated to make them move, so we had to restrict ourselves on the storyboard to what movements could be done.

Farkas: The storyboard had to take very much into account the limitations of what the puppets could do. We had to get the sense of the architectural space through the interweaving of closer shots. It’s rather spare in terms of the wider shots – just because of the physicality of having to manipulate things.

Would you have had that many close-ups of faces if they were not so realistic?

Groen: I had always wanted to relate the shooting style to realistic ways of shooting, rather than having it become a sort of toy-town look. In some ways, by restricting ourselves to get closer to the puppets with the camera, with the shot sizes, it was drawing us closer to the characters themselves. In that way it was good to have the detail on the faces of the puppets.

So the need to come in closer to avoid the wires on the puppets allowed you to make use of the greater realism of the puppets?

Groen: Yes, with simpler faces you can only get one expression – one signal – so we would have had the choice of changing the faces between each shot or, as we ended up doing, having faces with so much more character in them that they created their own versatility.

Quéva: All the puppets are real people. For example, the stonemason himself is modelled on the French poet and writer, Jacques Prévert.

Farkas: Something that was difficult for me was that we had to artificially introduce the depth of field. I think we were working at f/8, sometimes 11, to get enough depth of field to lose the sense of scale. Working out the depth of field was tricky. The focus puller – Emma Cooper – had a critical role. Each day she worked out what depth of field we would have had in a full-sized set, and then we had to work with the aperture that would give us that, in the model.

Groen: We had a set that was no more than a quarter of a metre wide, and yet we had a 10K light blasting through the window in order to get enough light. There was one scene where one of the characters is looking out of the window and whistling. And we had so much light, to try and reproduce the effect of sunlight, that the hot glue that we used to hold her hands by her mouth for whistling kept melting, and her hands kept falling down.

Farkas: This was the biggest amount of light I’ve ever used consistently throughout a shoot, and yet the smallest set. I’d be bouncing a 10K onto a mirror a couple of inches across. I used mirrors quite a lot. Instead of a forest of C-stands, if you just wanted to pick out a particular detail, it was easier to bounce a powerful light. That effectively became the light source, and to some extent you could control the shape of the light at the mirror.

Quéva: Jackie and Bart spoke to people who’d done miniature work, and they said the ratio of lighting time to shooting time was the same as for a live shoot, but no one understood that this was a live-action puppet shoot. In stop frame, you might spend six hours to light a set you’re going to shoot on for three days in stop frame, so that’s a good ratio. But in miniature, you spend only half an hour on the shot because it’s shot live. So, all of a sudden, the ratio is quite different.

Farkas: I spoke to a friend of mine afterwards who said that the ratio of lighting time is the same as the...
**“All the puppets are real people. For example, the stonemason himself is modelled on the French poet and writer, Jacques Prévert.”**

scale of the set: so when we were working quarter scale, it would take us four times as long to light as one to one, and for an eighth scale it would take eight times as long, which is exactly what happened.

**GROEN:** Originally, we expected it would take us a week, but soon we realised it wasn’t going to happen, and it ended up taking us three weeks.

What about the puppet movements: did you have any sense of how well the actions would work?

**GROEN:** We had done one test with a cardboard set and a shaving brush, but there wasn’t any time for any other tests. Because of the pace of the shoot, it was a few days before we started seeing rushes, and it was only then that I started to get a sense of whether the action was working at the right speed.

**FARKAS:** I just have memories from behind the camera always of saying “faster, faster”. There was always the temptation to be very deliberate.

**GROEN:** In the end, it worked in our favour, because we found that the optical sequence gives it an anima­tion that compensates for it, and the poetry of the shots on the screen worked much more than I’d anticipated. Jackie’s storyboard was based on there needing to be a certain rhythm and resonance, a certain poetry, so she had to structure each shot as well as the way the shots would work together. But after we started shooting, I realised that the movements of the puppets had to fit in with that as well.

**QUEVA:** There’s also the thing you learn in acting: that by slowing down each movement very slightly, it gives so much more weight to the expression.

**FARKAS:** But, at the end of the day, there was just an intuitive feel for what looked to be about the right sort of speed.

**GROEN:** Being so much involved on the design side of it, and with the puppets, it ended up with Jackie behind the camera making a lot of those intuitive choices.

**FARKAS:** There were times when I wished I didn’t have that much responsibility. A video split would have been nice, because Bart was doing so much of the puppeteering himself.

You’ve used a complicated optical-printing technique throughout all the puppet sequences: a mixture of stretch and skip printing with dissolve between frames once a second. When did the idea for the optical printing sequence come in, and how?

**GROEN:** It was before we shot. I was very concerned about the effect of the puppets; when you see it on screen, it’s always going to be a kids’ film. We had to establish in the first few seconds that this was a drama. We had to avoid the Thunderbirds look. So, Glenn Watson, our model-maker, told us about a project he’d worked on before, a stop-frame graphic animation, where they used a dissolve between frames rather than having them jump across the screen. Then Graham Sharp at the AFTRS introduced me to the Oxberry, and helped me do a few tests. We didn’t get a perfect result, but we got enough to know that it was going to work.

**QUEVA:** Bart gave a test shot to a friend who simulated the movement with a computer. When we saw the result, the difference was amazing, even though it was a really-rough puppet and a really-rough shot.

**GROEN:** His computer only gave us every fifth frame, because of restrictions in his set-up. But it gave us the feeling of real time staying the same – a second is a second, a minute is a minute – but within that minute you get a completely different sense of time passing. And with all the optical tests we’ve done since, it ends up that the one we’ve picked is the one that’s closest to the original computer test.

It was shot on 7248. Did you consider why you chose 7248?

**FARKAS:** We did some tests on ‘93, I’d never used it before, and it was really disappointing. I’ve seen other films shot on ‘93 looking really fabulous. But it looked so flat. So we chose 7248.

All the way through the shoot, I had in mind that it would be blown up to 35mm, and I knew the contrast we would get in the blow-up. So I always made sure we had the latitude that we needed – just knowing the final thing would be a bit more contrasty. I made sure there was plenty of detail in the shadow areas.

This started out as a volunteer-labour student exercise, and yet you managed to get a fully professional AFC budget for post-production several times greater than the total cost of production.

**GROEN:** Well, if the whole production were budgeted professionally, it would have been around $250,000. So, in that respect, even though the AFC has put up a lot, they’re getting good value. And they’d seen material before they made the decision – for them, it’s a bit like backing a horse after the race has started.

In fact, one of our options before we got the money from the AFC would have been me spending the next six months locked in with the Oxberry – the dinosaour of the Film School – because it was theoretically possible to do it that way. But I’m constantly surprised at how archaic some of the technology is. For example, there’s no computer control on Atlab’s Oxberry, so to do 80,000 frames you have to push a button 80,000 times – although maybe it’s only on projects like this that it becomes relevant.

Post-production has included blow-up to 35mm interpositive followed by a massive optical-printing operation, with more than 11 minutes of the film being manually step-printed, frame by frame, in Atlab’s optical department. This sequence involves more than 600 dissolves, and nearly 4,000 freeze-frames. Even with a fully-budgeted post-production phase, the film has taken months longer to finish than was originally scheduled.

Michael Hill suggests that this confirms that supporting the film was the right decision: there was some possibility that they could have struggled through the finish with less – or no – funding, but the same difficulties could have arisen, with the distinct possibility that the film would have taken years to finish, if it at all. As it is, at the time of writing, The Bell was in sound post-production, with the aim of finishing in time for AFI Awards entry.

The Bell

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he heroine of Marie Craven's new film, *Maidenhead*, is called Alice. The name not only shrinks the gap between performer and rôle, as the performer's name is literally Alice (Garner), but rings with references to that other Alice, the creation of Lewis Carroll. Like Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, the film is half dream and half nightmare. If she doesn't actually grow bigger or smaller, Craven's Alice nevertheless shrinks and swells in stature; and, at the opening of the film's first extended narrative sequence, even if she doesn't walk through it, Alice is literally looking in a looking glass.

If the name Alice has remained in common usage, however, one cannot say the same for the term 'maidhead'. This word has an anachronistic ring: it was a euphemism for virginity in a fictional era when young ladies kept theirs until the time when they were bedded by the hero, on marriage, thus ensuring respectability, or seduced and abandoned by the villain, thereby ensuring that they would forever after live in a state of disgrace; in the first scenario, becoming one man's property, in the second, every man's property.

Perhaps Craven is reviving the term to underline the connections with Victorian fiction (children's and women's); perhaps also to remind us of the history of the repression of female sexuality. But maybe too she is using the term, Godard-like, as the sum of its component parts, maiden + head, whereby maiden = young single woman, old-fashioned girl and/or virgin, and head = the seat of the intellect and the imagination, the exercise of self-control and common sense, and/or an addict. The film is made up of a series of sketches which dramatize the fantasies of a young woman; their source is in a maiden's head.

However, there is no head to be seen in the opening anecdote which precedes the title. We see only the clothed torso of the young Alice, a headless torso. Alarm bells are ringing. She presses first one hip-pocket button, then the other, but the bell keeps ringing. Finally, she succeeds in silencing the ringing by pressing the right belly-pocket button. We would seem to be confronted with fears residing in the body of the young woman (an old-fashioned girl), fears that must be quelled so that she can emerge confident, self-assured, active and capable.

Alice is overcome by paranoia in three of the sketches: in the encounter with the saleswoman in the hatshop; in the encounter with adult sexuality in the bus; and in the street scene, when a suburban jogger transforms into a murderous pursuer. The panic situation, heavily dramatized by the use of handheld camera, fast cutting, and other filmic means of generating suspense and provoking identification with the heroine, arises out of an everyday experience, and is resolved in an anti-climax. In the process, common feminine fears are highlighted: fear of entrapment in marriage, of the hard sell (social and commercial), of the feminine mystique, of sexuality (hetero and homosexual), of rape and violence.

Some of the film's scenes can be described as classic Freudian scenarios representing primal fantasies: fantasies of seduction and of the primal scene. The film is not just about feminine fears, about seeing oneself always as potential victim. It is also about feminine desires: for control, for recognition, for intimacy, for the caress of flesh on flesh. These desires emerge most strongly in the final two sketches, when the heroine is transformed into a mature, confident adult, enjoying the experience of sexual encounter and the approbation of her peers. This trajectory, whereby Alice progresses from playing the rôle of victim to playing the rôle of active protagonist, suggests that this short film is perhaps a parable about the fragile female psyche learning to overcome feminine repression, and gaining the confidence to act and move in the world.

But, if it is a parable, it is not a plodding or humourless one. The humour is there at the start: in the witty, aphoristic verve of the pocket buttons; in Alice's over-reactions to ordinary situations; and in the excess of her popular acclaim in the final fantasy of fame. It is also there in the hyperbolic transformation of the ordinary into the extraordinary in the scene in the littlest room, when plain white toilet-paper transforms magically into flowing silk drapery, exquisitely light and richly colourful.

Colour is a primary component of the film. Through the skill of Nicolette Freeman's photography, its use in costume and decor assumes an almost abstract quality and a powerful resonance. At times (as in the disco scene), the film seems like a symphony in red and blue. Over and above the symbolic associations of particular colours (e.g., red connoting passion, desire, danger), which are deployed in the costume design, there is also the sensual delight in colour for its own sake.

In the street scene, where the suburban jogger pursues and panics Alice, Alice wears a red shirt and blue pants; her pursuer wears red pants and a blue top. This not only suggests that this short experimental film is perhaps a parable about the fragile female psyche learning to overcome feminine repression, and gaining the confidence to act and move in the world.

in salmon satin dress and tiara, singing to a select audience of women at a private concert in a domestic interior. She sings a strange aria, called 'The Queen's Lament', after which she is applauded by the audience, which includes the figure of Alice, whose presence has been suppressed until the end of the scene.

Freda Freiberg examines the emerging cinematic voice of Marie Craven and her first 35mm film.

**Sourcing a Maiden's Head**

**[...] a parable about the fragile female psyche learning to overcome feminine repression.**
The song bemoans The Queen's "cursed hair", the "crown" that every woman must wear. Is this another variation on the meaning of "maidenhead" - a head of undisciplined hair? Is the diva a rôle model for Alice or a cautionary tale?

The formal situation, indoor setting and mature age of the diva contrast with the informal street setting and youthful person of Alice in the finale, when Alice is applauded by a group of cheering young female fans in a passing bus. Alice would seem to reject the diva's kind of fame. She prefers the street to the concert stage; pop culture to high culture; youth to age; the informal to the formal.

These interpretations notwithstanding, I found the concert scene heavy and opaque dramatically, even if it was supposed to represent a stagey and contrived situation (it's the old problem of how to represent boredom without boring the audience). Furthermore, the lyrics of the song are not clearly communicated to the audience because they are not clearly distinguishable on the soundtrack.

Otherwise, Philip Brophy has done an excellent job of crafting the soundtrack, so that it is more like a soundscape than a soundtrack composed of separate musical and sound elements. Like the colour, the sound contributes most effectively to the dream-like effect of the film. This film enjoys higher production values than Craven's last film, *Pale Black*. Unlike the earlier film, it was shot on 35mm film, in full colour, and employed the considerable professional skills of an experienced cast and crew. While acknowledging the contribution made by the beautifully-crafted and -edited photography and soundtrack, and the fine performance of Alice Garner as Alice, *Maidenhead* remains a work that was conceived and directed by Marie Craven, and one whose concerns are not dissimilar from those of her earlier film, *Pale Black*.

The higher production values and lack of voice-over narration may make the film seem less personal, but it retains Craven's signature, in its enigmatic quality, its ambivalences and tentativeness, and its formal playfulness, while displaying an increased confidence in the manipulation of the medium of film. Craven operates in a space somewhere between the avant garde and the popular, in the general territory of Chantal Akerman's musicals in shopping malls, if not yet with the stamina or assurance of Akerman. Her film is a welcome addition to the increasingly diverse range of feminine voices to be seen and heard in the Australian cinema.
In 1901, Melbourne’s Salvation Army Limelight Department made a 56-minute film, the longest and most important production of New Zealand’s colonial period. 1901 Royal Visit to New Zealand is New Zealand’s oldest surviving movie, excepting a fragment of Boer War troop footage. New Zealand government correspondence on the commissioning and production of the Royal Visit film also survives to indicate our industry’s early methods, problems and costs.

A Novel Offer

On 5 March 1901, with the Duke and Duchess of York’s New Zealand visit approaching, the Salvation Army offered New Zealand Premier Richard Seddon its film facilities to produce “some permanent memorial of the festivities”. In an attempt to make profit from its Limelight Department, the Salvation Army had already made similar offers to Australia’s colonial governments, and arranged to produce similar Royal Visit coverage in Victoria.

With the precedent of the Salvation Army’s filming The Inauguration of the Commonwealth for the New South Wales Government in January 1901, New Zealand’s cabinet gave the offer favourable consideration. It requested a quote for filming “the proceedings at the Maori gathering at Rotorua, and of, say, a quarter of a mile of a procession at each of the four principal cities, namely Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin”.

An estimate of £100 to £250 was given for filming 200 to 300 feet (three to eight minutes) of festivities in each of the five locations mentioned. The film stock would cost a shilling per foot (£3 per minute) for both negative and positive “being the present English price”. Travelling and incidental expenses were also to be covered by the New Zealand government.

The New Zealand cabinet approved the expenditure on 20 April 1901. Working details were subsequently negotiated between the Salvation Army Limelight Department’s chief, Major Joseph Perry, and Hugh Pollen of the New Zealand Colonial Secretary’s Department.

A Distinguished Director

Joseph Perry was an ideal director for the New Zealand Royal Tour film. Although born in England, he emigrated to New Zealand with his parents as a boy of ten in 1874. At nineteen years of age, the young bootmaker and Dunedin Fire Brigade member attended one of New Zealand’s first Salvation Army meetings and joined shortly afterwards.

He spent more than two years at various New Zealand Salvation Army Corps before his posting to Australia in October 1883.

Perry revisited New Zealand in 1896, by then in command of the Salvation Army’s Melbourne-based Limelight Department. Touring various public halls and Salvation Army venues in the South Island and lower North Island, he exhibited his large collection of lantern slides, many of his own making, with a bi-annual disintegrating projector. The accrued profit was raised for the Pension Fund of the Army.

Another Limelight tour of New Zealand occurred late in 1898, when Perry accompanied Commandant Herbert Booth to present the lecture, “The Social Work of the Salvation Army”, illustrated by 200 life-model slides and 14 one-minute films. Perry had produced all of the visuals and supervised the screenings as Booth delivered the narration. En route to New Zealand, they presented the lecture in the saloon of the R.M.S. “Waikare”, and in the following fortnight gave further screenings in six towns to an enthusiastic reception.

The Lumière Cinématographe used for their film presentations could also function as a camera, and Perry reported taking “two or three Maori films” during this tour, the first films to be made abroad by an Australian producer. It is probable that these were shot at Otaki on 2 December 1898, where they had a Maori welcome at the [...] railway station, this being one of the leading corps in Major Holdaway’s division. The blood-and-fire natives [Salvation Army members] greeted the Commandant in characteristic fashion; nose-rubbing being indulged in ad lib, to the delight of all concerned.

These films were taken during their rail journey from Wellington to New Plymouth. Only one New Zealand film is known to have been shot earlier, that being A. H. Whitehouse’s film The Duchess of York’s New Zealand visit, taken the previous day.

With the advent of Australian Federation, Perry’s major film commissions to record the celebrations for the New South Wales government (January 1901) and for the Victorian government (May 1901) made him our leading documentary producer.

Perry in New Zealand – 1901

Perry was the most widely travelled and experienced filmmaker in Australasia when he returned to New Zealand on 19 May 1901. He accompanied Commandant Booth on this tour, presenting the lecture, “Soldiers of the Cross”, in Auckland, Wanganui, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill. Described as “a story of the Christian Martyrs, specially illustrated by 200 life model views and 20 bioscope pictures” (not a feature film), the lecture drew packed houses. Adjutant James Dutton took over as projectionist for the South Island venues, as Perry was busy preparing to film the Royal Visit.

Major Perry arranged with the Government and with local reception committees for the erection of special platforms from which to film the processions, “not only that he may be free from interruption by the public, but also because it is essential that the machinery should be as free from vibration as possible”. To travel to each locality visited by the Royal Couple, Perry arranged passage on the special government train and boat services. Travel passes were provided for Perry and his crew of three assistants. Two, Captain John Brodie

Left: The 1901 Royal Visiters: Their Royal Highnesses The Duke (later King George VI) and Duchess (later Queen Mary) of Cornwall and York, the son and daughter-in-law of King Edward VII.

Above: First moments of a mammoth event: Auckland Wharf, 11 June 1901, just before the blessing of the Royal Visit and commencement of the Royal Visit to New Zealand, 1901.

In part 14 of this series, Chris Long and Clive Sowry examine the first major film made by an Australian production unit overseas.
and Adjutant Ebenezer Jackson, came from the Limelight Department in Melbourne, while the third, Ernest Gladding, was from Auckland. Official passes to let them through police and military barriers were also issued, along with “N.Z. Government Kinetographer” labels for their baggage. With these arrangements completed, Perry’s freedom to choose subjects to shoot in each location was maximized.

Filming began on 11 June 1901 at Auckland. Shortly after the berthing of the “Ophir”, the Governor, the Premier and ministers boarded the ship to welcome the Royal Couple. Perry filmed the arrival of the welcoming party and afterwards filmed the Duke and Duchess stepping ashore. The next camera position was beside the Mayor of Auckland’s platform. Photographs show that the Warwick Bioskope Model “A” camera was used here, but we have no record of what – if anything – was filmed. Following the mayoral welcome, the royal procession moved up Queen Street and on to Government House, where Perry was on hand to film the arrival of the royal carriage and its escort. A march-past of Friendly Societies was also filmed here. No further filming took place in Auckland.

The Royal Couple’s first day in Rotorua was spent viewing the thermal areas of Whakarewarewa and Tikitere. At Whakarewarewa, Perry filmed the Pohutu and Wairoa geysers erupting, and other scenes of the royal party viewing the region’s natural wonders. A highlight of the visit was the great Maori “hui” of welcome at the Rotorua racecourse on 15 June. Here Perry filmed hakis, poi dances and the presentation of gifts from the many Maori tribes attending to the Royal Couple.

In Wellington, The New Zealand Times of 19 June 1901 reported on the progress of the filming:

Some successful kinematograph films of yesterday’s proceedings were secured on behalf of the Government by Major Perry, of the Salvation Army, and his assistants. The operators had a commanding stand on the wharf, and had a ‘good shot’ at His Royal Highness as he stepped ashore, in a favourable light. Their next position was on the sunny side of the Westport Arch, close to the line of the procession. Here about 270 feet of excellent film was secured. At the Town Hall ceremony, the stand available was not very suitable, but some results will follow. Major Perry will take other films in Wellington, and he will also be at work during their Royal Highnesses’ visit to Christchurch and Dunedin. It may be mentioned that he took over 2000 feet of film at Auckland and Rotorua. In addition to fine Kinetograph pictures of hakis and poi dances at Rotorua, he has taken numerous stereoscopic and ordinary photographs.

In Christchurch, the military review at Hagley Park was the principal event of interest, more than 600 feet of film being exposed. The parade of troops, 10,700 strong, was drawn from the Volunteers and Cadets, including men recently returned from the Boer War, who were presented with medals by the Duke.
New Zealand had already sent six contingents to South Africa, and medal presentations to returned men were made by the Duke in other New Zealand centres he visited: Auckland, Rotorua, Wellington and Dunedin, where the tour ended on 27 June 1901.25 Perry finished filming that day. The last shot covered the departure of the royal train from the Dunedin railway station as the royal party left for Lyttelton to embark via the s.s. "Ophir" for Tasmania. It was stated at this time that Perry had used some 5,000 feet (83 minutes) of film in New Zealand.26

Cameras, Budget and Results
In a letter dated 22 May 1901, Perry advised the Colonial Secretary, "I have two of the very latest cameras with me."27 Although it was reported that one of Perry's cameras was capable of being "operated for 35 minutes continuously, 1250 feet of film being used without a stoppage"28 - a reference to the Warwick Bioscope Model "A" camera - none of the films taken appears to have exceeded 150 feet, the capacity of the Warwick Bioscope model "B" camera, which he also had with him. It would appear that negative film was available to him in lengths of no more than 150 feet. Reference is made to some films being "duplicates"29 which could indicate that the two cameras were in use simultaneously in some locations to produce a negative for users other than the New Zealand Government. It is known that some films taken by Perry were not included in the list of subjects supplied to the New Zealand Government, and it is likely that the Rotorua films advertised for sale by Baker & Rouse would not have been made from the government negatives, but from negatives exposed simultaneously in another camera.

Perry reported on the results of his filming in a letter dated 17 July 1901 to New Zealand Premier Seddon.30 This letter gives us a good idea of the content of the completed film, with brief descriptions and lengths of the subjects covered (see Filmography). Perry noted that, while the contractor only called for 2,500 feet (42 mins) of negative to be shot, he actually shot 3,360 feet (56 mins). The government, feeling it was entitled to claim all the negatives, indicated a willingness to purchase everything listed by Perry.31 This lifted the cost of the film itself from the expected £250 to £336. A file note reveals that Pollen expected incidental and travelling expenses to be £60 or £7032, but the final total came to £107/10/-33 It would have been even higher if Perry and his crew hadn't been given free government travel passes.

The invoice for producing the film was issued by the Salvation Army on 22 November 1901. It is curious that this was issued in favour of the general fund of the Salvation Army rather than The Australian Kinematographic Company, which the Army had set up in January 1901.34 The amount charged for the film itself was £452/5/-; the two projectors sold to the New Zealand Government to exhibit the films comprised an extra £170, which with travelling and incidental expenses of £107/10/- brought the project's total...
budget to a massive £729/15/-: This was roughly 30% more than the budget on their much-touted “Soldiers of the Cross”\textsuperscript{15}.

**Exhibiting the Royal Visit Film**

As the New Zealand government had no means of screening its film, Perry offered to sell it a projector “of the latest type”\textsuperscript{16}. When the government responded with an order for two projectors, Perry saw an opportunity to sell a second print, and offered to make it at the reduced rate of ninepence per foot.\textsuperscript{37} The negatives, two prints, two projectors and accessories finally arrived in New Zealand on 20 December 1901.\textsuperscript{18} The shipment of five cases remained unopened in the Government Buildings until February 1902.\textsuperscript{19} Although the government could then screen the film, no immediate plans were made to do so, but private enterprise had already seen to that.

A Wellington syndicate, The Royal Tour Bioscope Company, gave the first screening of the films “taken for the New Zealand Government” at Wellington’s Opera House on 30 July 1901.\textsuperscript{40} On the following day, touring exhibitors Cooper and Macdermott began exhibiting its print of the Rotorua films at Wanganui.\textsuperscript{41} Both companies probably obtained their prints from Perry’s sales agents, Baker & Rouse. Cooper and Macdermott apparently only had the Rotorua Maori coverage, whereas the Royal Tour Bioscope Company had the complete tour film, including several scenes which were not filmed for the government (see filmography.).

The first planned screening of the Royal Tour Bioscope Company at Wanganui on 25 July 1901 was abandoned owing to technical problems.\textsuperscript{42} Even its first successful show, on 30 July 1901 at Wellington, was poorly reviewed by *The New Zealand Times*:

> The pictures around which the greatest interest centred were those depicting incidents in connection with the Duke’s visit, especially the Maori display at Rotorua. ‘A Maori Haka’ figured on the programme, but not on the sheet, but the picture was well represented. A picture of the ‘Peapod Geyser’ was promised, but not performed. Some very effective pictures of the Hagley Park review were shown, and the Duke’s arrival at Auckland was vividly depicted, though the length was not great.\textsuperscript{43}

A reviewer in Wellington’s *Evening Post* also expressed disappointment:

> The exhibition, though good on the whole, was scarcely up to expectations, the screen being small, and some of the pictures rather blurred.\textsuperscript{44}

The Royal Tour Bioscope Company’s Opera House season was limited to three nights, and was managed by the 28-year-old W. F. Brown\textsuperscript{45}, “later known as ‘Walter Franklyn Barrett’”, the famous producer of Australian silent films. He later claimed to have filmed the Royal Tour as “Official Cinematographer on behalf of the New Zealand Government”\textsuperscript{46}, a claim contradicted by official records.\textsuperscript{67} The only known subsequent exhibition of the syndicate’s print of the film was given at the Missions to Seamen in Wellington on 11 April 1902, by John Henry Brown\textsuperscript{48} (brother of W. F. Brown), a Wellington photographer. Six weeks earlier, J. H. Brown had inspected the films, projectors and accessories purchased from Perry by the government, at the request of the Colonial Secretary.\textsuperscript{49}

The government’s copy of the film was privately screened at Wellington’s Sydney Street Schoolroom on 2 April 1902 to an audience invited by Premier Seddon, including the Governor, Lord Ranfurly.\textsuperscript{50} The films were introduced by Robert Loughnan, official historian of the New Zealand tour. It was reported that the second print had been dispatched to New Zealand’s Agent General in London for screening during the Coronation festivities, but no reports of London screenings are known.\textsuperscript{31}

The last known screenings of the film (or perhaps of a new print struck from the original negatives) were in 1910, given by the New Zealand Picture Company at Wellington’s Town Hall on 25 May.\textsuperscript{52} Later it was shown in the Living New Zealand picture programme screened at several picture theatres in the West’s and Hayward’s Pictures chains.\textsuperscript{53}
t he Gaumont Company, according to chairman Nicholas Seydoux, is the world's oldest film producer. Largely funded by Renault (the connection goes back to the 19th Century), a massive Gaumont retrospective was sent to New York, complete with new subtitled prints, an English version, a compilation history and a booklet. The season was popular enough to be held over for a month.

A fragment of the programme was then detached and shipped to Sydney. What happened next is one of the most revealing episodes in the ongoing saga of specialist exhibition in this country...but let's not race ahead.

The more recent material in the programme was familiar from television, video and theatrical showing: Joseph Losey's Don Giovanni (1979), Rainer Werner Fassbinder's Querelle (1982) and Hans Jürgen Syberberg's Parsifal (1982). The compilation's glimpse of unreleased Yves Montand films, and Italian productions from Etore Scola and Duccio Tessari, looked more tempting.

It was welcome, though, to get our first sight of Luc Besson's new, U.S.-made Léon (The Professional), where Besson regular, Jean Reno, finally moves to the centre of the action.

Reno plays the "cleaner" assassin who finds his life complicated by 12-year-old Mathilda (Natalie Portman). The opening where she must walk past the heavies, who are in the act of killing her entire family, and knock on his door, is the best thing Besson has done. Léon has already achieved the controversy it courted.

More significant was the most ambitious early film event yet mounted in this country. After horror shows like the AIP's trying to do Victor Sjöström, one feared the worst. However, Paris had taken the matter more seriously than we are used to seeing here. Gaumont flew to François de Becker, a pianist and composer experienced in screening at the Musée d'Orsay, and required that the material be shown in the manner intended. One programme needed a single projector load to go through four changes of aperture, speed, lens and masking, with a ricker-free shutter setting. The Pitt Centre rose to the challenge.

Here, at last, was a demonstration of the Cinémathèque model that Australia needs. Of course, for an unmotivated audience, film from the silent period was of no interest. As always, the invited crowd that filled opening night went away when there was no more free liquor at subsequent screenings. The officials who might have been expected to be sitting with notebooks open in their laps were conspicuously absent.

What was on offer, however, was one of the largest missing pieces of film history jig-saw. This material included the pre-WW1 period when Europe, and France in particular, was the dominant force in world cinema, simultaneous with film's evolution from a novelty into the major entertainment form of our time.

Our notion of the development of the movies has always had an American accent for various reasons, some of them sound - the availability and excellence of much U.S. material - and some of them suspect - the chauvinism and buy-power of some American institutions.

While many of the pre-WW1 short trick films, melodramas, newsreels and comedies shown were unsurprising, there were items which appear to have no U.S. counterparts. Day in the Life of a Pair of Legs (1909) and Trichromie (1912) were done entirely and effectivly in shorts of feet and hands respectively, until the final tilt up reveals the faces of their players.

It was good to finally see comedians like Onésime and Calino, but the real pay-off was Jean Durand's Le Railway de la Mort (1912), one of his series of short Westerns with Joe Hamman. Playing a character based on Broncho Billy Anderson, Hamman used to gallop across the Carpathians and shoot it out with Gaston Modot. This film had effective tinting and silhouette effects, and a plot that pre-figured Greed (Erich von Stroheim, 1925) and The Treasure of the Sierra Madre (John Huston, 1948). Hamman leaps from a railway bridge onto a moving train (and slips) and de-rails a locomotive, untroubled by the fact that his Silver City home is dotted with those triangular European metal power posts.

Attention centred on the work of Alice Guy, much discussed since the 1970s, since she is, we are told, the first woman director. She also filmed in décors before Georges Méliès.

In the examples on show, there was a curious, 19th-Century sensibility, Sur la Baricade (1907) had a mother intervening to save her son from the firing squad. Madame a ses Envies showed a pregnant woman (in badly-matching costumes) sulking down any object in the scene, before giving birth in the cabbage patch. The second of Guy's lives of Christ, La Vie du Jesus Christ, at a half-hour, was the biblical spectacular of 1906, but it proved an uninspired re-staging, in painted Menessier-Garnier décors, of Bible illustrations, which picked up remarkably in Victor Jasset's exteriors. The pop-up Jesus ("one of our best super-impositions") is comic now.

The body of Guy's work, her transfer to the U.S. and marriage to Herbert (The Young Painter) Blache were still to come.

Guy had also handled some of the Gaumont Phonoscenes of 1900-7. These turned out to be mechanically-perfect filmings of then popular artists, like Mayol, lip-synching to their recordings of pop numbers of the day in front of scenic cloths. Also on show, and particularly striking, were the examples of the Trichrome colour process from the 1910s. The still lifes of flowers and plants, including a stop motion, drew gasps of admiration, though the process was subject to fringing and convergence faults out of doors, on the evidence of the modern copies.

Certainly, the event's stand-out was the running of two of Louis Feuillade's serials, Les Vampires (1915-6) and Judex (1916). These are the link between the last century's penny dreadfuls and Mabuse, the Hollywood Chapter Plays, James Bond and Manga, a list that may see as a decline.

In these, fantastic secret organizations play out their intrigues on the still recognizable real streets of Paris. Hooded figures scampers across rooftops or clambers up apartment-block walls. Rene Cresté, as the caped crusader, pilots a motor boat past rural towns. The weighty trunk of the missionary is represented as containing a bell for his South American church. Actually, it houses a cannon which shells the prison ship from his hotel window. On a train, a group of butterfly hunters surround a spade-bearded banker and assassinate him with Irma Vep's hat pin. Like Edouard Mathé, as the Mondial Reporter, we recognize her name as a cryptogramme before it animates on the Club des Vampires poster.

In this character, and that of the man-ruining Diana Monti, Feuillade offers his most memorable star, Musidora, her expressive features and style of performance still appealing to a modern audience. Her "vamp" characters (the word may derive from its use by Feuillade) are more involving than the forces of righteousness. Contrast her stripping to black tights and diving by Feuillade) are more involving than the forces of righteousness. Contrast her stripping to black tights and diving into the mill race to avoid the vengeance of the De Tremese brothers, or wowing her accomplices with her surprise stage act at the Club des Vampires, with Rene Cresté's stiff elder Jexud or Mathé in his bowler hat, overcoat and pyjamas leading the kep'i'd SWAT team: agreeably ridiculous.

Feuillade's heroes all seem too reliant on their grey-headed mothers. Which would you rather attend: Mathé/Philippe Guérard's bourgeois engagement party, where the highlight

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"A Hundred Years of the Daisy"

Barrie Pattison examines the recent Gaumont Retrospective held in Sydney and seen by all too few.

Now, the most ambitious film-history event yet mounted in this country, using first-rate material in two city theatres, is being described as a disaster.
is poisoning the butler, or Irma Vep's betrothal to the master chemist-poisoner-gang chief, who is also a lighting sketch artist, with gang girls dancing on the table in their bloomers?

Marcel Levesque, the comic, also provides some of the films' most surprising moments. And how about the scene where the characters go to the movies—at the Gaumont Palais, of course? The screen image is contorted by having the actors stand behind a black surround, anticipating Keaton in progress beyond the stage-like patch is interrupted by the arrival of Pans like the one that shows the Vam­pire's office to be adjacent to that of Vanel, when he handles her roughly, bites him. She vanishes and Vanel faces the Captain's inquisition.

Outside of a peculiar masked-ball sequence, with the husband splashing his fingers in a goldfish bowl, the short­ening has given the work a precision, and the playing of Vanel and the couple are assured by any standard. The naval detail intrigues.

Also new to this country were two films by the legendary Sacha Guitry, both offering Michel Simon in top form. Le Poison (1951) had Simon locked into a vile marriage with Ger­maine Rouver. Hearing about celebrity lawyer Jean Debecourt, he has him advise on a hypotethical murder. Back home, he applies this knowledge just in time. His wife has poisoned his wine. Simon's defence becomes a comic cross-cut with the vil­lage kids' guillotine games.

Equally perverse, Les Trois font la Paire (1957) was co-directed by Clement Duhrout, who plays the gang leader. Guitry can be seen to be near death from tuberculosis, in his pro­logue appearance, and this was his last work.

Simon is the inspector investigating a killing captured on film by an (unlicensed) crew. Guitry's cameraman, Philippe Agostini, himself has quite a large speaking part as the on­screen photographer. Things are complicated when the clown recogn­ized from the film turns out to have a twin, neither of them being guilty, though both confess.

Even at the end of his powers, Gui­try was still able to communicate his own cynical-comic world view.

Over all, the Gaumont event achieved one of its aims. How many viewers had considered the company's output as a unit before? We went from the El Gee in the Daisy pattern (a pho­neticized version of Léon Gaumont's initials combined with the flower they call Marguerite, her wife's name) that was shown, and the clip from his L'Ego de Byzance (1916) was stunning.

This is a glimpse of world-class film history work, a reminder of the 1960s seasons with which Henri Langlois' Cinémathèque re-launched Feuillade, and which were shown, and the clip from his L'Ego de Byzance (1916) was stunning.

The wife meets crewman Charles Ceylan and, when he handles her roughly, bites him. She vanishes and Vanel faces the Captain's inquisition.

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There is a similar shift to conser­vatism with their re-working LAtalante (Jean Vigo, 1934) and Dinah la Métisse against their directors' wishes, and the support of establish­ment figures like Guitry and Gérard Dury, while the trendy Nouvelle Vague. However, he was Gaumont which brought back Robert Bresson out of a six-year retirement with Un Condenne à Mort Est Échappé ou le Vent Souffle où Il Veut (1956).

An event like this raises more ques­tions than it answers—as it should. Why is there a gap between the early years of sound and the end of World War II? What about the hundreds of other films of Alice Guy and of Feuillade? Some sources credit him with the early Lhomme Aimante (1907) and Une Dame Vraiment Bien (1908), which were shown, and the clip from his L'Agonie de Byzance (1916) was stunning.

And what happened?

Though it had been in the pipeline all year, the season arrived at a week's notice. Background literature, essential to an event of this nature, was confined to the usual glossy sheet which was, even if you got one of the copies amended by hand, inaccurate and inadequate. Press coverage horrid in on the participation of the events, performance by the cin­ema-goers (from bem used to eng­aging translation (from too fast and in silence. The viewing opportunities were given their due, but comparing it to the usual version, underlined the value of what is being done.)

And what happened?

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And what happened?
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Roman Polanski's *Death and the Maiden* finds Polanski has returned somewhat to form, though excessive theatricality and a less-than-convincing lead actress has him still nostalgic for Polanski's earlier, finer cinematic days.

What I suspect is most wrong with Polanski's new film is the credit which reads "Screenplay: Rafael Yglesias and Ariel Dorfman". I know nothing of Yglesias, though his work on *Fearless* (Peter Weir, 1994) is well-regarded. Dorfman is also the author of the prize-winning play on which the film is based, and it is as though he has not been able to let a word of it go. Polanski at his best - and one now needs a long memory to recall this - is a riveting filmmaker; however, in this case, he must share not merely praise for the film's power but also blame for its excessive and even embarrassing theatricality.

Private vengeance for matters of public outrage is at the core of the film. In a country in South America, after a dictatorship, Paulina Escobar (Sigourney Weaver) hears on a radio news broadcast that her husband, Gerardo (Stuart Wilson), is to head a commission to investigate violations of rights under the previous régime. He arrives home to her anger at what she sees as his co-operation with the people they had, as students years before, fought to remove from power. The processes of public revenge for the acts of torture and humiliation perpetrated on her are too slow, and, when there is knock on the door of their isolated coastal house later that night, she takes matters of revenge into her own hands.

The visitor is Dr Roberto Miranda (Ben Kingsley), whose voice Paulina recognizes as that of her tormentor and violator of 15 years earlier. He has called to deliver Gerardo's spare tyre and is subsequently submitted to a night of vengeance from Paulina, while Gerardo desperately tries to persuade her to listen to reason, fearing she will kill Miranda.

This is a drama about serious issues: it is articulate on the matter of the appropriateness of private vengeance and on the limited confidence many might feel in the procedures of properly-constituted authority to exact just reprisals. It is also as much about the male oppression of women as about the generalized political oppression endemic to dictatorships.
Dorfman, as a Chilean exile in 1973, knows about this, and living in such régimes. But a has to does not avoid these dangers and does not deal well with the movement must means that the movement must continue to stop the verbal onslaught. Polanski’s Death and the Maiden does not avoid these dangers and does not deal well with them at crucial places in the film’s action. In many ways, the film’s subject is him: the obsession with revenge, the rôle of sexual perversion, the tense balance of power existing among a small number of people. Here are motifs that recall the very earliest Polanski, the brilliant Polish film, Noz w Wodzie (Knife in the Water, 1962), the British Cad-de-Sac (1966) and Repulsion (1965), and the American masterpiece, Chinatown (1974), as well as the power struggles of his striking Macbeth (1971). Up to a point, the film succeeds as a chamber work. Apart from the brief framing sequences set at a string quartet concert, where the eponymous Schubert piece is being played, the whole film takes place in the one setting of the remote house by the sea and on the road nearby. The claustrophobic quality of the setting and the fact that the film is a three-hander focus attention on the stance of each of the three, and the nature of the relationships among them. The growth of Paulina’s passion for revenge, of Miranda’s terror as she menaces him with the gun that represents her seizure of phallic power, and of Gerard’s fear, made complex by his love for and gratitude to Paulina, that reason will be overwhelmed by violence: all this provides a strong framework for the film’s action. The world outside the rain-swept house is evoked only from what is said, and when, in the film’s penultimate scene, the three make their way at dawn to a cliff-top showdown the effect is properly cathartic. On the other hand, the limited setting and the tiny cast remind us constantly of the film’s theatrical origins and not always to its advantage. Polanski still knows how to move a camera with a maximum of sinister or shocking effect, but that sort of skill is not what this film most often demands of him. It serves him superbly. It is one of the most striking images of cinematic fluency. Paulina and Gerard move out to the balcony for her to explain the basis for her revenge; when Gerard moves inside to try to get a confession from Miranda, she remains out of hearing but visible on the balcony, for all the world suggesting an actor who has just gone offstage so that a duologue involving different characters can take place. The awkwardness with which this is managed is intensified by the heavy theatricality of Sigourney Weaver’s performance. She has admittedly an uphill job in making the character’s long speeches sound “realistic” – that is, in keeping with the mode of the film, rather than with the obvious artifice one is happy to accept on the stage. She is, in short, an embarrassment for much of the time, though this is probably less her fault than Dorfman’s; his ear for film dialogue is far from certain. The other two actors suffer less from the over-literary strain in the dialogue, and their performances gain as a result. As well, their characters are drawn with more complexity and there is correspondingly more for the viewer to grapple with in relation to them. Death and the Maiden is not a failure, as Polanski’s previous film, Bitter Moon (1992), was. It is, rather, the seriously flawed work of one who may still be a great filmmaker. © BRIAN McFARLANE
Dave On Our Selection

stutters and stammers his way through life.

The "dreadful" neighbour, J. P. Riley, quickly sizes up the Rudds, like in a good melodrama, and offers a job to Dan that will change his life. The work involves selling his soul to the 'devil', especially when Dan is ordered to pump the almost-dry river to irrigate Riley's very large cornfield. Dan takes the money and does the job and doesn't tell his own family. Meanwhile, back at the 'ranch', Dad Rudd and the other two sons water their corn crop with watering cans. Dad is convinced they will earn £75, a fortune in those days, but he doesn't know that Riley has 'flooded' the market with his ill-begotten corn, and brought the price down to a pittance.

Meanwhile, there are love sub-plots aplenty. Kate is being courted by Sandy Taylor (Murray Bartlett), who can sing but can't talk; Dave is courting Lily White in the most unlikely of love scenes, where he is almost upstaged by a redback spider; and Cyril is set on seducing Kate by any means possible. In one marvellous scene, Whaley has Cyril driving his red buggy through the bush like it's the latest sports car.

There are some excellent performances, especially from Noah Taylor as Joe (I just wish he had more screen time); Celia Ireland as Sarah; and Barry Otto as Riley (who's probably one of the most fantastic villains you'll ever see). It's hard to say anything about Leo McKern's and Joan Sutherland's performances because the actors are almost icons, and are treated as such. A bit more slapstick in the Ken. G. Hall tradition would have showed their talents off even more, and taken On Our Selection to where it belongs in our hearts. Dave in Whaley's version doesn't really achieve the prominence he deserves, and Geoffrey Rush doesn't leave an indelible impression.

As Riley (who's probably one of the most fantastic villains you'll ever see), it's hard to say anything about Leo McKern's and Joan Sutherland's performances because the actors are almost icons, and are treated as such. A potentially brilliant character, Riley, turned loopy, whom Dan takes on forever because he'll work for no wages. In one brilliant scene, Dad takes the money and does the job and doesn't tell his own family. Meanwhile, back at the 'ranch', Dad Rudd and the other two sons water their corn crop with watering cans. Dad is convinced they will earn £75, a fortune in those days, but he doesn't know that Riley has 'flooded' the market with his ill-begotten corn, and brought the price down to a pittance.

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So will audiences be storming the barricades to see it? When Ken Hall's On Our Selection was released, there was a national outcry from some of the more conservative elements of our society about its portraying Australians as half-imbeciles. Was it unAustralian? But the public voted with their feet and it became the most popular Australian film of its time. The sequel, Dad and Dave Go To Town, also introduced the world to a very young Peter Finch, in a great comic rôle.

George Whaley's On Our Selection does have a real contemporary feel, despite being about Aussie battlers a century ago. DOP Martin McGrath and composer Bruce Best help us capture the spirit of the past, while Herbert Pinter's set designs are rustic and full of atmosphere. I just wished the film could have really let go and pulled all the plugs out, and made itself irreverent and controversial.

But there's no denying that Whaley and his producers, Anthony Buckley and Bruce Davey (the partner in Mel Gibson's company, Icon), have created a funny, warm, feel-good movie for all the family. It depicts our Celtic Australian origins as larrikin, comic, half-insane and very haphazard, which may help the film do well in England because it confirms what they think about us. On Our Selection may also do reasonable box office in America, where they have their own hillbilly tradition in the cinema, which some say was partially derived from our early Dad and Dave films. And there's definitely room for a sequel!
EVERYNIGHT...
EVERYNIGHT


Alkinos Tsilimidos' low-budget, gritty portrayal of prison life at Pentridge Gaol's maximum security H Division is a movie that hits you from the proverbial left field. Tightly-directed and -written, this black-and-white, claustrophobic account of the sadistic brutality that remanded Dale (David Field) receives in prison graphically reminds us of our colonial heritage of cruelty and damnation, where England's socially-deprived and criminal elements were exiled to Australia's fatal shores.

Prison films - whether 1910s "message" movies like Mervyn LeRoy's classic I am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang (1932), or as film noirs in the 1940s and early-'50s, with Jules Dassin's Brute Force (1947) and John Cromwell's Caged (1950), or in the early '60s with John Hillcoat's disturbing, hyperreal Ghosts... of the Civil Dead (1988), Thankfully, Tsilimidos, as writer-director-producer, avoids engaging in character stereotypes and melodramatic narrative set-ups. Instead, we have a noirish, highly-graphic encounter with the dehumanizing realities of our correctional system.

The movie's title refers to Dale's nightly experiences of hearing his fellow prisoners being sadistically beaten by prison officers. (Why is it that our prisons and security services have seemingly more than their fair share of English/Scottish personnel? Is this a further elaborate twist of our colonial-cringe mentality?)

The premise of the movie - that Dale is a remandee and awaits his court hearing - fuels our emotional response to the brutalities he receives prior to his court appearance: by the time Dale goes to court, the harsh, inescapable system has entranced him.

EVERYNIGHT documents in many different and believable ways the dialectic of symbiosis that exists between prisoners and their guards - a universe of sado-masochism central to Jean Genet's highly-charged poetic universe. Dale's arrival to H Division consists of a systematic bashing where his ego defences are virtually shattered. His face and his taut, tattooed body is constantly framed in intense close-ups and mid-shots, as are the cruel prison officers, particularly Berryman (Bill Hunter). The tight visual economy of expression gives the movie an extra visceral punch: we empathize with Dale's refusal to play the game, to cringe and lick the prison walls as one prisoner does (who finally succumbs to the prison's panoptic morality by hanging himself in his cell). Dale, as he puts it, "becomes invisible": he constantly answers back to Berryman; he raves and rants and walks around in his cell naked; and he encourages the other prisoners to join in by "resigning" from the obscenely inhuman system.

These scenes have a raw-edgy, nervous quality to them - rapidly-cut with jumpsuits, pans and explosive, profane exchanges between the prisoners communicating amongst themselves as they start to agree to Dale's wisdom of going against the screws' "conquer and divide" agenda. Dale manages to persuade the others to create a great commotion, to send the hateful sadism back to Berryman in the war of nerves that takes place in a series of tension-ridden scenes. Dale forces Berryman close to the edge, the abyss, a world where his victims can defiantly assert their humanity to him.

EVERYNIGHT, given its low-budget production values, is a fairly-impressive directorial debut. Tsilimidos and his collaborators have approached their subject with thematic and atmospheric

EVERYNIGHT...
BURNED BY THE SUN

MOSCOW IN 1978: A 65-YEAR-OLD HISTORY TEACHER FACES A CROWDED CLASSROOM OF EIGHT-YEAR-OLDS. IN A QUESTIONING VOICE, SHE ASKS THEM ABOUT THE BATTLE OF LENINGRAD DURING WORLD WAR II. BUT SHE IS NOT CRYING ABOUT HER TIME IN THE SIEGE, SHE IS SAYING, "COMRADE STALIN WAS A GREAT MAN, A GREAT LEADER, A HERO! ONLY HE ALONE COULD HAVE MOBILIZED THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE SO THAT WE COULD WIN THE WAR!"

OVERCOME WITH EMOTION, THE HISTORY TEACHER PASSES AND LOOKS OUT THE WINDOW, HER GLAZED EYES SEEING ONLY THE TROUPELED PAST OF HER COUNTRY.

That is not a scene from a film I am writing about; that is a scene from my own childhood. But it enables me to wholly believe and accept the fervoured political beliefs, misconceptions and terrible self-delusions experienced by the characters in Nikita Mikhalkov’s Burned by the Sun.

A glance at Russian history since 1900 really makes one wonder how much hardship a person can endure. How could these people’s one century consist so entirely of political unrest, torture, hunger, war and general misery? How could a man like Stalin get away with committing horrendous crimes against his own people and then, astonishingly, be praised by them?

Burned by the Sun attempts to answer these complex questions with one single theory: it is the Russian people themselves who have joyfully created monsters like Stalin and then proceeded to actively participate in their own and their country’s destruction. What is remarkable about this film is that Mikhalkov offers his theory whilst being painfully conscious of not pronouncing judgements on any one person, political belief or era.

Set during one summer’s day in 1936, the film tells a story of Sergei Kotov (Nikita Mikhalkov), his daughter Nadia (Mikhalkov’s real-life daughter, Nadia) and his wife Maroussia (Ingeborga Dapkunauaite). Kotov is a famous Soviet military leader, hero of the Revolution, a true believer, a man of great ideals and courage, a friend and colleague of Comrade Stalin’s.

On this, his one-day holiday, Kotov is luxuriating in his country house, with his adoring wife, his precious daughter and his wife’s Checkovian, slightly-dotty and noisy relatives. The sun is shining, the pioneers are marching; somewhere beyond the birch trees, soldiers are building a special hot-air balloon in honour of Comrade Stalin. Today is a festive, happy day and citizens are celebrating Stalin because he has given them a good and prosperous life, because the horrors of the war and the Revolution are far behind, and only a bright and idyllic future, which Kotov and Nadia can see with particular clarity, remains. Beneath this glossy surface, however, lies a reality teeming with paradoxes which will eventually shatter it.

To begin with, the grand summer house is not Kotov’s. It is Maroussia’s family home in which her family has lived since long before the Revolution. Maroussia’s family is clearly wealthy once, and part of the intelligentsia - artistic, well-travelled, multilingual. There is a family maid, whose services are greatly appreciated by the Communist Kotov as they are by Maroussia’s old opera-singing aunt, who has no idea what new-fangled Soviet event they are supposed to be celebrating. And although Kotov is the man of the house, he and his beliefs are neither fully understood nor appreciated by the family. He, in turn, simultaneously participates in and criticizes this bourgeois lifestyle.

Only a couple of decades ago, Kotov and the men of Maroussia’s family would have been at war, or would have considered each other to be political enemies. But, on this day, life continues as if neither the Revolution nor the civil war ever took place. Or does it?

The atmosphere of the day is changed by the arrival of Miriya (Oleg Menchikov). An old friend of Maroussia’s family and her first lover, a multi-talented young man who has been mysteriously “away” for the past ten years, Miriya is finally home. And though Maroussia’s family is excited, this excitement is immediately offset by a great sense of unease. There is an understandable tension between Maroussia, Kotov and Miriya, but there is also a more sinister one between Kotov and this bright young man, which has nothing to do with his having been Maroussia’s lover. And though the sun continues to shine throughout the day, and into the late afternoon, Kotov’s life and that of his family are forever destroyed even before the sun finally sets, for the civil war and the Revolution did happen, and there was a time when people did take opposite sides.

The political issues raised in the film are complex, and extravagated by the cross-pollination of personal and political. As turbulent political changes affect people’s lives, people change and in turn affect politics - a self-perpetuating condition which has kept an entire nation in chaos for decades. In demonstration of this, Burned by the Sun never allows itself to become a mere ideological exercise, or a political thriller, or a historiographic drama. It is all of these things, plus a romance, a family comedy, and a film about childhood from a child’s perspective, and is altogether quite beyond generic definitions.

Stylistically, it is also somewhat of a collage. The film opens with a scene that could be mistaken for one of Tarkovsky’s: a farm boy running through the fields.
subtly in its manipulation of audience emotions and the build-up to the climax works in a different manner. 'Burnt by the Sun' is gorgeous to look at and the performances are superb, particularly Nadiya's. The film is worth seeing just for her outstanding effort. The title of the film is borrowed from the first line of an old Russian song, which is heard throughout the film in numerous versions. "Burnt" is a curious translation, the Russian word tending to mean something more like "weary": "The weary sun was saying its gentle goodbye to the sea whilst you told me that there is no love."

Or, trust, or peace, or hope, the film seems to suggest. © Alissa Tanskaya

WINDOW TO PARIS


Cast:
Agnes Soral (Nicolai), Sergej Dostov (Nikolai Tchijov), Viktor Michailov (Gorokhov), Nina Oussatova (Vera), Kira Kreydel-Petrova (Gorokhov's Mother-in-law), Natalia Ignatova (Gorokhov's Daughter), Viktor Gogolev (Kouzmitch), Tamara Timofeieva (Maria Ilinka), Andrei Ourgante (Gouliaiev), Jean Rupert (M. Preuviot). Films du Boute-Fontaine-La Sept Cinéma. Australian distributor: New Vision. 35mm. 87 mins. Russia-France. 1994.

Since glasnost and perestroika and the end of the readily available (to the approved few) Soviet government funding, there has been a spurt of Russian-French co-productions — most notably, Taxi Blues (Pavel Lounguine, 1990), Luna Park (Lounguine, 1992) and Burnt by the Sun (Nikitia Mikhailkova, 1994).

Yuri Mamin's Window to Paris is the latest Russian-French offering. Unlike its predecessors, this co-production does not just utilize French finances while shooting solely in Russia with an all-Russian cast, but sets roughly a third of its story in Paris and with a French actress in a lead role. The result is a novelty, as it shows a new Russia which is beginning to connect with the rest of the planet — and this is the main point of the film.

Nikolai Tchijov (Sergei Dostov), a down-and-out St Petersburg music teacher, moves into a room at the grotty flat of the Gorokhov family. They immediately become friends and get sloshed to celebrate. In their drunken stupor, Nikolai and his friends discover a concealed window in his new room. They climb out and down onto an unfamiliar street, have a drink in an unfamiliar bar where the barman will not take their money and, only once they are safely home and during daylight, do they discover that they have spent the night in Paris. The window in Nikolai's room is a magical "space-warp-type" thing (the film never bothers to try and explain this phenomenon).

This is where the real fun begins as Gorokhov's family goes berserk, trying to loot Western goods — anything from clothes to food to an old Citroen — and stash it back in St Petersburg, while Nikolai tries to find a decent job in Paris. Unfortunately, all this takes place over the skylight of a young taxidermist, Nicole (Agnes Soral), who, exasperated by her chaotic and destructive Russian neighbours, decides to visit them and, in the loony way in which the events proceed in this film, gets trapped in St Petersburg. (Though Window to Paris is a comedy-fantasy, Nicole's adventures in St Petersburg feel like anybody's worst nightmare, and could not possibly do much for the Russian tourist industry.) Then, Nikolai's little students also visit Paris and refuse to return to their derelict old world. Panic is added to the plot when everyone learns that the magic window is about to close for the next 20 years.

Window to Paris is a new-wave black-comedy, Russian style. It makes fantastical aspects completely acceptable, and it is both grim and funny as gloomy reality is packaged into animation-like caricature. Occasionally, it slips into the form of a musical; it is garrulous and rude (the Russians and even Nicole use such foul language it does not even get translated in the subtitles) and is at times quite surreal. But it makes a multitude of pertinent points, and ultimately serves as a touching and profound essay on the bewildering confusion of Russia, caused by the newly acquired capitalism.

The choice of Paris is not accidental. Prior to the Revolution, French was the language of choice for Russians above middle class, and many artists (such as Nikola), France was also the preferred destination for travel, and during the Revolution many White Russians fled there.

Before the Revolution built a shining wall around Russia, the country had a democracy as advanced as any in the world, including France's. So, for Nikolai and the Gorokhovs to visit Paris today is a physical and aesthetic demonstration of where Russian society could have been in the 1990s had the revolution not returned its society to point zero (for however noble reasons). Russia has been in a self-defeating time capsule, and the space-time warp of Nikolai's window is a brilliant metaphor for the political and cultural degeneration Russia has been through.

Given all this, Mamin could have done more with the plot and his characters once they reach Paris. As it is, the satire is on a fairly obvious level, but perhaps that is his point: this base, desperate, confused behaviour on the part of the Russians towards the French is what the relationship between St Petersburg and the great grand cultural metropolis - and Paris has degenerated into.

However, Window to Paris ends with hope for a more refined relationship and an easier access to the West. © Alissa Tanskaya

PRIEST


The BBC is noted for its elegant historical dramas as well as its down-to-earth, realistic and ironically-humorous contemporary dramas. Priest is a very good example of the latter style. Written by Jimmy McGovern (Cracker), with strong London accents and an authentic feel for the detail of life of the Catholic Church in that city, it is a look at contemporary problems in the priesthood, especially those of
The crises of the priest do not occur in the social vacuum. The parishioners and their expectations are significant.
Books

RE-VIEWING BRITISH CINEMA, 1900-1952: ESSAYS AND INTERVIEWS

Edited by Wheeler Winston Dixon, State University of New York Press, 480pp., index, illus.1994

For many people, there are areas of the British cinema which are virtually unknown. Certainly, the broad patterns and highs are well documented, but there is no widespread recognition of the filmmakers who laboured away on studio projects in less-than-ideal conditions throughout the 1920s, '30s, '40s, and '50s. Whilst Alexander Korda, Anthony Asquith and Victor Saville have joined Alfred Hitchcock, Michael Powell, David Lean, and Laurence Olivier in attaining some degree of recognition of the filmmakers as a whole has not been forthcoming, such as a railing or other items of clothing, would appear in location shots with abundant 'matte' paintings depicting castles, ancestral homes, county cottages and prisons. Against this background of rear-projection screens or glass shots, with a few props in the foreground such as a railing or telephone kiosk to preserve the illusion of space and depth, the actors would quickly perform their function so that the film could be quickly finished without having to venture outside the studio. After experimenting with this system in a children's film, Under the Frozen Falls (1948), Rank went ahead with its first full-length Independent Frame feature, Boys in Brown (1949), starring Jack Warner, Richard Attenborough and Dirk Bogarde, who were required for less than two weeks. Rank planned to export this system to the non-English speaking colonies where background footage, complete script, matte plates and storyboard components could be used by local actors replacing the British stars. Thus, as Dixon points out, the net effect would be to impart to foreign audiences the social values encoded in the background plates of the film, thus inviting production companies in other, often colonial nations to further identify with the representational then espoused by the British cinematic patriarchy [...] the informing instinct behind the system remained an attempt at cultural supremacy, with English societal modes of behaviour and class structure firmly centred as the desired model of the endeavour. Fortunately, Rank abandoned the process after a few features. Not all of the contributions to Re-Vewing British Cinema are as interesting or insightful as the chapters by Dixon, Brian McFarlane or Andrew Higon's study of This Happy Breed. The strong promotion of Brian McFarley's essay on Brian Desmond Hurst in the introduction, for example, which Dixon describes as brilliant, fails to live up to the promise that Hurst's career as a "filmmaker within the British studio system was continually moulded by his position as a gay filmmaker within an overall structure of heterosexual patriarchal cinema practice". McFarley's essay turns out to be a routine descriptive overview of Hurst's films in the 1930s and '40s with no kind of critical analysis of Hurst as a gay filmmaker.

Similarly, Lawrence Miller's thesis that British film noir "was as well developed as the American style in terms of content and quality, context and style", based on a primitive cataloguing of British examples according to selected themes (such as "revenge and vengeance"), and then comparing them with their American counterparts, fails to convince. However, like the rest of the book, at least draws critical attention to another neglected area in British cinema. 

VIRTUAL GEOGRAPHY

McKenzie Wark, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis. 252pp., index, pb, rrp $25.

In the wake of the recent Creative Nation policy statement, McKenzie Wark's first book, Virtual Geography, is a timely and significant contribution to our cross-disciplinary understanding of the shifting cultural, political and technological facets of contemporary media. Wark's prolific, fluent voice in antipodean cultural and media studies is noted for its originality in creating plausible diagnostic scenarios for explaining the 'white noise' of the globalization of media. Wark articulates a new form of cultural/media criticism that is a kind of vectoral writing interested in describing and analyzing the emerging "virtual geography" that is rapidly configurating our everyday lives.

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inreview
Wark’s main objective (told purposefully from an antipodean point of view) is to create a much-needed expansive map of how the various vectors of the new communication technologies are shaping a post-McLuhan world of weird global media events that have been germane to a recent narrative depicting the unravelling of the cold war. These global media events are “weird” not because they speak of the physical terrain we live in, but because they form an integral core of the elementary geography of virtual experience that is rapidly becoming the everyday order of electronic culture. This “virtual geography”, Wark argues, is responsible for making us experience the vectors of the new media technologies from afar – remote control (so to speak) – an experience of telesthesia. To make sense of the emerging GATT world of globalization, we are obliged to look at those events which are singularly irregular and troublesome in the regular flow of digital media, and examine how they cut across and in between different national, global and cultural spaces to form complex feedback loops, slippages and echoes. This question our more conventional maps of the mobile and elaborate connections between culture, economics and politics, and their audio-visual representations.

Virtual Geography addresses four such recent events (or “sites” as they are alternatively named): the Gulf War, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Beijing massacre and the “Black Monday” Wall Street crash of 1987. Wark focuses on these in order to illustrate how their rationales, within the global and regional spaces of information flows, reveal logics which denote how, as global events, they failed to exclude noise from overwhelming their particular codes and narrative strategies.

Virtual Geography also succeeds in addressing another critical issue: How do we account for history in a “post-contemporary” world of cultural amnesia? Wark’s explication of the future of cultural studies as a practice in the context of this question is an appealing aspect of the book – as is the author’s ever-present questioning of the orthodoxies of cultural and media studies as they are practised in certain circles in the academy today.

Non-dogmatically open-ended, Virtual Geography avoids dealing in neatly-resolved narratives about these four global media events; its improvised and autobiographical quality is expressive of Wark’s wish to create a writing that shifts across all areas of knowledge and subjects, and does not subscribe (in any banal and literal sense) to the institutionalization of “interdisciplinary studies”. Further, what we observe again and again is Wark’s specific objective not to generate a highly-systematic account of the underlying causes of these particular global media events, but to anchor them in the ever-shifting currents of everyday life. To this critical end, Virtual Geography is a success.

As Wark puts it, If the relations of globalized perception traverse the bounds of disciplines, then one must follow those transgressions too. If scholarship is to claim itself to be “radical”, then it must take a radical approach to scholarship itself as well as to its subject. If radical scholarship formerly went to the root of the problem of both method and material, now it must tune in to the frequencies of everyday life upon which the vector reshapes everyday life and its scholarly accompanists. [p. xi]

Consequently, Wark’s critical acumen in tracing the zig-zag media vectors of his four “weird” events is rooted in (a) the Sydney post-structuralism of the 1970s and ’80s as an antipodean critical response to the “master narratives” coming from the centres (Paris, London, New York), and (b) the author’s extensive background in attempting to make sense of how the multiplying media vectors of today’s global media network are problematizing the more established forms of storytelling conventions and reading protocols which have been central to our narrative understanding of the world.

Like the eerie, infra-red traces of the anti-aircraft fire in the nocturnal sky above Baghdad in the CNN TV Gulf War, Wark’s project is concerned more with shadowing the unpredictable movement of global media vectors around the world and how they are forming “critical mass” information overload (to echo the French urbanist Paul Virilio) than with trying to pin down their floating signifiers. Media events are complex clusters of shifting vectors, as Wark reminds us, obliging us to write along these vectors – that is to say, focusing more on media events’ trajectories rather than conceptualizing them as objects. What are the critical advantages and consequences of adopting this approach to understanding the virtual complexity and mobility of global media events as, to use Virilio’s term, “image-blocks”? It allows us to question the more traditional but limiting aim of getting to the “essence” of a global media event in the information landscape (as we have seen, for example, with most of the relevant scholarly analyses of the Gulf War) by exploring its trajectory, its relationality, rather than its “factual” or “critical” vicissitudes. Writing about the new media forces us to look off-centre in our enterprise to adequately negotiate the juxtaposed histories, effects and sites, and relations between global and local media events and their respective representations in our electronic media culture. To seek the marginal, the fugitive, off-beat moment or rhythm in media globalization information, Wark rightly contends, is pertinent to his advocacy of a vectoral writing that operates more as a “counter-point” than as a direct critique of the more familiar semiotic and “content analysis” approaches to this subject. Just when we think we have a “fix” on our global media events and their complex impact on our audio–visual culture, they seem to be located somewhere else – in an interzone (to evoke Burroughs) where their refracted fugitive and haunting televisual images, graphics and sounds are daily consumed by us as part of everyday life and its diverse cultural artefacts.

Though Virtual Geography is a book about the future in two vitally-related aspects – (a) the future of culture under the pervasive impact of globalization, and (b) the future of academic cultural studies and lay cultural criticism as practices in the context of the emergent cultural technologies responsible for the increasing blurring of all forms of analogue and digital media (photography, cinema, television, video, interactive multi-media) – it must be noted that Wark consistently avoids joining in with the clamorous chorus of hype that often heralds these new media technologies.

At the centre of Wark’s account of his weird global events is the critical metaphor of an event as a “logic bomb”. By this, the author is referring not specifically to the more customary computer hacker’s idea of logic bombs as a species of computer virus, but more with the notion of global media events as random, complex, accidental byproducts of our computerized information world. This has vast implications for the way we endeavour to grasp the kinetic cultural, commercial, historical and technological complexities of global media events as logic bombs. They are unintended effects and byproducts of institutions (governed by a New World order of rationality and transnational capital) that are responsible for the dissemination and control of information.

In order to come to terms with the more elusive mobile aspects of his subject, Wark’s elliptical, post-structuralist approach is germane to the book’s success. Rather than address front-on his aberrant global media events as vectors programmed by capital, technology, diplomacy, politics, culture, etc., Wark takes up an oblique, off-centre point-of-entry to his topic (that is, a central aspect of vectoral writing and post-structuralism), exemplifying Philippe Dubois’ recent suggestion that much more can be achieved by “slipping in from the side” than entering by the front door of your material.1

Virtual Geography is a passionate, clearly-structured and erudite book that marks an essential first step for anyone concerned with the open-ended, self-critical adventure of trying to make sense of the emerging digital tendencies in our audio-visual culture. Wark’s book illustrates by persuasive argument and a non-authoritarian essayistic style how critical global media vectors are in generating a virtual geography of the imagination that is shaping the lived experience of our daily cultural lives. It is a book – warts and all – that is, in a critical sense, an unfinished “crazy–quilt” of critical possibilities that see beyond the “gun-flare” of our media events and scholarly thinking on a subject that concerns us all.

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several critics have argued that the words “To Be Continued” on p. 1282 of Norman Mailer’s Harold’s Ghost are among the most alarming in recent letters. A challenger would be Simon Callow’s announcement that The Road to Xanadu is but Volume 1 in his coverage of Welles. After all, Callow is the one who assures us on the penultimate page of his text that: Callow is another in that last fully achieved, uncompromised work of Welles’ career [...] Yes, Callow is another in that annoyingly-long line of commentators who think Welles made one masterpiece and then went downhill. Have they not seen Welles’ other films? After all, The Trial (1962) and Chimes at Midnight (1966) are how Welles intended them; The Lady from Shanghai (1947) is pure Welles, apart from the score he couldn’t control (but what else is news in the studio system?); and Touch of Evil (1958) is available in both Welles’ cut and a slightly shorter version (which some find more enigmatic). All are masterpieces, as is the brutally refitted The Magnificent Ambersons (1942) and Mr Arkadin (1955), a film still way ahead of where other filmmakers are up to today.

That said, the book is a monument of dogged research. Callow has delved further than those before him, and has uncovered and corrected much. As a researcher, he triumphs. But just as soon as one is impressed by his diligence, up pops a trivializing remark or a bizarre view. Of Pauline Kael’s “Raising Kane” in The Citizen Kane Book, he writes: “sloppily researched, entertainingly written”. As Dominic (Peter) Cook asks in The Adventures of Barry McKenzie: “Is he for real?”. Kael’s article was an outrage that caused Welles immense anguish in the latter part of his life, when he shouldn’t have been under attack from the second-rate but lauded by all. Of what value is it to call W. K. (or craft areas. Try this on page 509-10, re Citizen Kane: Welles made the startling claim to Peter Bogdanovich that he knew from the first day of this, his first film [sic], where he wanted the camera: in other words, what the frame was, and how to achieve it. “I think I share with Hitchcock the ability to say what lens goes in the camera and where it stands without consulting a finder or looking in the camera,” he said. “I just walk over and say “There it is.” [...] These are heart-stopping words. [...] The instinctive placement of the camera and choice of lens (something to which cameramen with years of experience would hesitate to lay claim) is in the realm of the mystical, and is not, perhaps, susceptible to further investigation.

Welles’ claim is not “startling” and his words hardly “heart-stopping”. Any even half-interested director can learn within a few hours how the composition of a shot, from a determined camera position, will alter in scope and feel by changing, say, from a 35mm to 50mm to 100mm lens. Hitchcock didn’t need to look through the camera because he knew absolutely what the composition was once he had chosen the camera position and the lens. This is nothing magical about it: it is just craft. It is no more mystical than a shoemaker choosing the right needle to sew on a leather sole.

Callow’s lack of understanding about how films are made would be less of a problem in a book which didn’t attempt to come to terms with one of the cinema’s greatest and most uniquely-skilled craftsmen. The Road to Xanadu is but Volume 1 in his coverage of Welles. After all, Callow is the one who assures us on the penultimate page of his text that: Callow is another in that last fully achieved, uncompromised work of Welles’ career [...] Yes, Callow is another in that annoyingly-long line of commentators who think Welles made one masterpiece and then went downhill. Have they not seen Welles’ other films? After all, The Trial (1962) and Chimes at Midnight (1966) are how Welles intended them; The Lady from Shanghai (1947) is pure Welles, apart from the score he couldn’t control (but what else is news in the studio system?); and Touch of Evil (1958) is available in both Welles’ cut and a slightly shorter version (which some find more enigmatic). All are masterpieces, as is the brutally refitted The Magnificent Ambersons (1942) and Mr Arkadin (1955), a film still way ahead of where other filmmakers are up to today.

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Callow’s lack of understanding about how films are made would be less of a problem in a book which didn’t attempt to come to terms with one of the cinema’s greatest and most uniquely-skilled craftsmen.
he use of music in film is no longer just another component in the production of a film; it is now big business with associated soundtracks often enhancing box-office returns and the exploitation of a soundtrack as an album release generating substantial further income. Recent examples include The Lion King and The Commitments, and, on the local front, The Piano, Mariel’s Wedding and The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert. The creative process of selecting and commissioning the right music for your film is challenging enough; however, making your way through the complex maze of rights and negotiating the best is where the real fun usually begins!

Why All the Fuss?

At the time that music comes into existence, it is the subject of copyright. The owner of the copyright has the right, to the exclusion of all others, to deal with the music in certain ways, including the right to reproduce the music. If another party wishes to reproduce the music in the soundtrack of a film, then the permission of the copyright holder will need to be sought; otherwise, they will be infringing the copyright in the music.

As a filmmaker, you will need to determine what permissions are required for the music you propose to use in your film. This should be adopted as a preventative measure to avoid an infringement of copyright. Remedying an infringement can be very expensive and negative exercise, but the need can be avoided through good management. Just remember, it is no defence to assert that your infringement was accidental; you should also bear in mind that your intentions are not a relevant consideration.

The process of seeking permission should be commenced at the earliest possible stage in the life of a film. The earlier permission is sought, the greater the control you will be able to maintain over your production budget and the completion date of the film should you encounter difficulties. If the appropriate rights cannot be secured down the line, then the whole process of selecting music and then seeking permission starts again. Even if all permissions are forthcoming, it may take considerable time to identify the relevant parties and to finalize the licence agreements. You may ultimately decide that the production cannot afford a record company’s asking price for a well-known existing recording. You should also bear in mind that there may be potentially many parties from whom clearances may need to be sought. If the soundtrack in your film of the Copyright Act. To say the threshold for "substantial" is eight bars or less is an industry myth.

Once copyright in a work expires, the work enters the public domain and is free to be used without seeking permission. Copyright in music expires 50 years after the death of the composer, and, with a sound recording, 50 years after the date of first publication. However, never assume that particular music is in the public domain; for example, rights having previously been assigned to the publishing company by the composer (assuming the composer also wrote the lyrics). Occasionally, a composer will not contract with a publishing company, but will deal directly with a record company. This is not as common, however, as publishing companies often provide development assistance to composers attempting to get a foothold in their industry.

The holder of the copyright in the sound recording will almost always be the record company. Do not assume that the artist has any power to grant these rights.

The clearance procedure may be complicated if the copyright in the sound recording has been split and granted to different parties for different territories throughout the world. If this is the case, permission will need to be sought from the record company in each territory, assuming you are intending to distribute your film throughout the territories.

The good news is that not all existing music requires permission to be sought from a multitude of parties. If you select music from a production music library, the process is much simpler. The copyright in the music and the sound recording will both be held by the publisher and in most cases licensed through AMCOS (Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owner’s Society). These libraries contain music recordings which are intended to provide background music for film, amongst other forms of production.

Seeking Permission - How?

There is no system of registration of copyright in Australia. There is therefore no publicly available register which can be searched to identify the rights holders of a particular musical work or sound recording. Accessing the relevant information may prove very difficult in which case you should consider retaining a music consultant who specializes in the clearance of rights. AMCOS can also assist in this regard.

The U.S. does have a system of copyright registration; however, it is important to note that copyright protection will not...
Nevertheless exist without registration. Therefore, whilst it may be helpful for identifying a copyright holder in the U.S., it should not be treated as an exhaustive record of copyright ownership.

**Seeking Permission - On What Terms?**

Once the relevant parties have been tracked down negotiations may begin. You may find, however, that there is not a lot of room to negotiate with the publishing and record companies. They tend to issue standard licensing agreements which they prefer not to alter in any significant respects.

The asking fee for a licensor for well-known existing music can be substantial and naturally you will be confined by your budget as to the amount you are prepared to pay.

As to the rights, you will need to obtain the reproduction right, otherwise known as the synchronization right. This right enables the music to be reproduced in the soundtrack of the film. You will also need the right to exploit the music by means of the film in all media throughout the world, subject to the prior rights of the Australian Performing Rights Association (APRA).

If it is a possibility that the soundtrack will be released as an album, then you should ensure that you obtain a guarantee that the mechanical reproduction right will be licensed at the relevant time subject to the payment of mechanical royalties.

**Commissioning Original Music**

If you are commissioning a composer to compose an original score of music for your film, then you avoid many of the hoops advertised to above. You would contract directly with the composer, securing the synchronization rights in the music as well as agreeing to such matters as a fee, the nature of the music to be composed, and delivery date (unless the composer was tied to a publisher in which case the synchronization rights in the music would need to be obtained from the publisher). You, as producer, would be the owner of the copyright in the master sound recording since you commissioned and paid for its making. If the soundtrack is to have an album release, the contract would usually provide that these rights vest in you, with the composer being paid mechanical royalties.

**A Final Word**

It may be tempting to put the task of clearing the rights in the music you want for your soundtrack in the ‘too hard basket’; perhaps to deal with at the post-production stage, or even just prior to marketing. As the music is likely to be integral to the success of the film, delaying this procedure may expose your production to unnecessary risk.

**Seeking the appropriate permissions earlier rather than later will eliminate this risk - music to your ears.**

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**retrospective**

$11 to watch one 45-minute programme, commented “That’s a bit rude!” And the Australian premiere of Les Trois Font la Paire had 11 viewers. Though attendances (and this interesting) did increase as the word spread, they remained pathetically small.

A few greybeards among us remember the “Sixty Years of French Film” season which the Cinémathèque Française shipped out as a box of 16mm reels without leaders and the local film society types, with their fingers in the index of Film Till Now, sorted them out and ran them on home-movie gear in a church hall – to respectable three-figure audiences, at a profit!

Now, the most ambitious film-historical event yet mounted in this country, using first-rate material in two city theatres, is being described as a disaster. It comes at a time when Paddington Town Hall has closed once more, this time for more than a year; Film News went silent for a year, and has closed again; collections which would have been the pride of most archives have been used as landfill; and there hasn’t been a National Film Theatre in this country for sixteen years.

While saying it here is unlikely to change the situation, the simple fact is that taking serious film activity out of the mainstream of film production to unnecessary risk.

**Did you feel drained at the end of shooting?**

Exhausted. There was one scene where I am having an episode and lying in the bathroom. I was scrubbed up by the toilet bowl in a fetal position.

The scene took about four hours to shoot. We studied with a nurse called Jeremy, who has done extensive work with schizophrenics. He told me that some people, when they are having episodes, tense up all their muscles until they can’t tense them any more. So, naturally, I squeezed up my muscles like this, and four hours later I had the migraine from hell.

**A Common Thread**

The characters you play are often outsiders and quite tortured in one way or another. Romper Stomper was the start of that. How much do you identify with pain, because that’s what seems to be the only thing that links your performances, with the exception of This Won’t Hurt a Bit?

Torture was imminent for Vanessa, given the nature of her husband’s dental practice!

No, I’ve never suffered terribly at all in my time. I have seen it, but I’ve had a damn good time of it, frankly. I come from a very close, very funny and happy family.

**Does that give you the capacity to stand outside your characters?**

I think it does. If I were an unhappy person, all I’d want to do is play happy people. I don’t think I’d want to explore the pain.

I remember when I was doing Angel Baby, I couldn’t get over the courage required by people who suffer from an illness that is so misunderstood and who are treated like outcasts, except by a select few who are prepared to listen. You have the personal problems of the disease, where you’re hearing voices and you’re not quite sure what the reality is, plus the fact that society hasn’t made enough effort to understand or be charitable.

I felt like a sham in a way. At the end of the day, I could walk away and go, “Shit, that’s good to be out of that space”, and bloody oath it was. It was a really horrifying space to occupy and I wasn’t really occupying it. I was doing my best to manufacture something that would somehow represent this person. When they called “Cut”, I was fine.

I found that film particularly difficult because it was particularly real. The story was fictitious, but Kate’s condition was not at all.

**How much of yourself do you call on when you’re playing a part?**

I don’t go out to put them into pigeonholes like, “That’s my happiness there”, or “That’s the way I get angry.” In order to play a character, the bottom line is that you must be able to have some sympathy or empathy with her. There are elements in every role that do feel very close to me, but that’s the joy of being able to be a Charlie’s Angel when you’re eight. There’s a certain amount of being able to pretend to yourself.

Some teachers are of a school of thought that if you haven’t been raped yourself, then you can’t play someone who has. I just don’t agree with that at all.

**Coming Up**

After St Joan and the opening of Angel Baby, what’s next in the pipeline?

I’d like to follow Angel Baby on the festival circuit. After that, there’s nothing definite.

The bottom line for me is characters and quality work. My agent has striven to keep me on track with good quality characters and a little bit of an array of them as well. I’m not going to do a dicky role. I don’t mean small, I just mean something that doesn’t ring my bells. I know that you’re going to do something when you read a script and it moves you, and it’s different, and it has a certain vision and a newness.
Was the shooting script finalized after those discussions?

Louis was there for the rehearsals, which I thought was important. We changed things when we saw how things worked. We also walked through a few scenes, which also helped.

Having ten actors in nearly every scene is a time-consuming exercise. They are all very good and you feel like you want the camera to be on each of them nearly all the time. You have to be very expedient in your allocation of screen time. You don't want to miss out on anything.

The approach during filming was to get the best out of a scene, rather than doing ten singles. We had to shoot it in a hopefully interesting way and still capture the essence of the script.

Did you storyboard the film after the rehearsals?

I'm not a very good storyboarder. On a film like this, you have to be very flexible. It is very much performance-based. You can do wonderful storyboards and then pay no attention to them afterwards. They are an advantage for major action sequences, but, in terms of performers, they're not a great help.

Storyboards would have been of some advantage with the big finale, because the cast could have seen how I was planning to shoot it. But time didn't allow us to do that.

I think you have to rehearse in a location before you get a really clear understanding of what you need to do. I pre-plan quite a lot, but I don't do storyboards.

Did your DOP, Ellery Ryan, come to the rehearsals and get a sense of how scenes were going to be blocked?

He got an overall sense. But this is our third or fourth major thing together, and we have a shorthand that works very well.

I also have a very close relationship with my assistant director, Euan Keddie. He has a good perspective on what is working and what is not.

It's very much a collaborative process. Knowing each other for quite a long time quickens the process and makes it more effective.
but not as much as you would expect from shooting in those areas. If you are going to shoot in a city these days, you can’t just keep waiting for the best sound. DOPs have the luxury of occasionally trying to wait for the best light, but sound is often the poor cousin. Our sound team did a great job; they coped remarkably well.

The budget for Cosi was the same as Spotswood. How hard was that?

Cosi is a much bigger film than Spotswood and the budget was very tight, very tight. Hopefully it’s not reflected in the finished film.

Money and time are always going to be problems. Even if you double the money and add an extra three weeks of shooting, we would find something to complain about in terms of not enough time or money. The perspective changes.

You talked earlier about the actors’ fees. Well, if we’d had a bit more money, it would have been nice for everyone to have been paid a little bit more. Location fees and the cost of technical things, like film processing, have all gone up in recent years, but crew and cast costs have stayed down to old levels, which was okay on Cosi because nobody is getting a lot of money out of it. That camaraderie was reflected in the feeling on the set, which was very good.

What about the composer? What sort of music is this film going to have?

A lot of it will be opera-based, from Cosi Fan Tutte. We discussed music with a composer, Ricky Fataar, prior to shooting. Ricky did the music on Spotswood. Unfortunately, he dropped out, because there were a couple of delays, which was a shame.

We haven’t given the score much thought on our next comedy. We are talking to a couple of people at the moment. I have a fairly firm idea of the music I want for this film, not that I’m musically literate. A lot of it will stem around opera, but certainly not all of it. It has to balance out very nicely with a nice simple theme in the rest of the film.

What is your release plan?

I don’t have one as yet. But if the film looks like it’s getting a lot of positive feedback, I would prefer it to be out earlier rather than later.

It’s very hard to know. If it were ready now and released straight away, it might get labelled in the States as yet another quirky Australian comedy. You just don’t know. There are so many variables that go into it. As a general rule, though, I’d rather not sit on it if it’s ready. A film sitting on a shelf for more than a year can lose its momentum, although there are examples of films sitting on shelves for five years and coming out to be huge successes. I’d just rather not wait that long.

You’ve missed Cannes this year, so the next major festival that would suit would be Montréal.

No, Venice. After all, we have a nice Italian title. We’d certainly like to get into Venice, but I don’t know if we are going to be ready.

After Venice, there is Toronto, Montréal and New York, so there are a few to choose from.

Cosi is not necessarily a festival or arthouse film in any way. It’s a nice, fast-paced movie that I hope is entertaining without being too superficial. But, because of its unusual nature, it may get some attention on the festival circuit.

Miracles of Light

But I owe a great debt to Zanussi, because I learned a lot.

Although Zanussi’s and Kieslowski’s interests often seem similar, are they very different personalities?

They are very different, but they are friends. Most directors are doing always the same story. If I am working with Zanussi or Kieslowski, I know more or less what inclinations they have. It’s the quality of an artist: you know they are obsessed by certain developments, certain problems; that they are obsessed by a certain premise, not just for one film but all of their films. Maybe it’s very difficult to name it, but you sense it. It’s natural and I think it’s a very positive element. For example, Blue is a much more interesting film than Kieslowski’s Bez Konca [No Exit, 1984], a film about the same subject.1

You’ve also worked with Andrzej Wajda?

Only on two projects. One was as camera operator only, on Wesele [The Wedding, 1972], the other was The Conductor. It was a unique experience.

In Poland, there was a bit of competition between who were the two greatest directors, Zanussi and Wajda, and somehow I was connected with the camp of Zanussi, so I didn’t have much chance to work with Wajda. I would love to do another project with him, but working with Zanussi automatically cleared me from the Wajda camp, which I understand.

Bearing in mind your strong opinions on the cinematographer’s role, how do you approach a film which you are directing? You have made several prize-winning television films.

When I’m doing my own films as director, I find it very difficult to observe the actors from beside the camera. Looking through the camera is so organic for me. On my most recent film, Enaku, I asked the cinematographer if I could operate the camera. I had a cameraman who was a friend of mine – it was a nice collaboration as I understand this sort of cinematographer very well. This was not a film in which an extremely interesting look was necessary – just the opposite. We had to photograph it in a very ugly way because I didn’t want too much distance from the archival footage. A lot of the footage we made on the video camera and transferred to 35mm.

My early films were children’s films, but Enaku was a kind of experimental story, a very low-budget film. I started to do the movie as a kind of collage, having a lot of archive material which I collected from German, American and other archive houses, and NASA. Having collected it, I wrote a kind of speculative story about an astronaut who refuses to come back to Earth. We tried to experiment on the level of language, because the film is built like a television programme with a marriage of the archive film, and the footage we made on location. It was released in Poland, but it’s really a television film.

You’ve been teaching in many film schools around the world, including the Australian Film Television & Radio School. Apart from technical details, what kind of philosophical advice do you try to give your students?

Being a cinematographer is not only to have a lot of ideas, but being conscious of how a certain style is going to be accepted by the audience. You have to discuss the script with the director to get his personal approach, the reason why he’s doing the film, because it helps enormously to understand how he is seeing the world around him.

The first film you made in the U.S., The Journey of August King, happened to be with an Australian director, John Duigan. I understand that this is a literal journey, not a psychological one! How did you adapt to shooting in America?

It was an interesting experience for both of us. For a cinematographer, my way of working was completely not understood. For example, to place a lamp you have to speak with two heads of department. The electrician only positions the lamp; for anything to do with gels and cutters, you have to speak with the head of the grip department. It is ridiculous; it is another example of how strongly conservative they are.

We are working in Australia is much more healthy. America is so deeply traditional. You can do things much simpler, much faster, and give your director much more room and time for the important things.

Perhaps it was easier working with Duigan than an American director for your first film there.

It’s very difficult to judge. But it was a very enjoyable, though very difficult, experience. It was a period film, set in the beginning of the 19th Century, so again the look of the film was very important.

It seems that the producers and John were happy with the way I photographed the film. My impression is that the American industry will accept a different artistic vision, provided you fit in with their traditional system!2

2. Polish cinema is divided into production creativity groups. The head of one group was Andrzej Wajda, the leading Polish director for many years.
3. Grazyna Szałwolska plays a woman who attempts to adapt to the sudden loss of her husband in a car crash which opens the film.
Subscribe to Cinema Papers today and get up to 20% discount.
The above were stored with negatives shot by the New Zealand cameraman George Hescott at 1901’s Rotorua gathering, so that the amount of Perry’s footage surviving is in doubt.39

In June 1958, Miss Morrice, a descendant of Premier R. J. Seddon, gave part of a print of the Royal Visit film to the New Zealand National Archives.40 The Salvation Army’s involvement in the film was later publicized in The War Cry. This induced Cecil N. Sims of Lower Hutt to tell National Archives that he gave the film to Miss Morrice. He said that he inherited this (with other films, now destroyed) from his father, an early film exhibitor and distributor.41

The footage is probably part of either Cooper and Macdermott’s print, or of the Royal Tour Bioscope Company’s print, and contains only Rotorua coverage:

12 Maori Gathering – Pan across Poi Dance 66 feet (same as 1).
13 Royal Couple in Maori Costume with Seddon 14 feet.
14 Geysers – Horses and Crowd 16 feet.
15 Royal Couple, Seddon and Maori Guide 28 feet.
16 People looking at camera 2 feet.
17 Crowd milling in front of geyser erupting 36 feet.
18 Royal Party with Maori Guide. Steam visible 20 feet.
19 Crowd, with Seddon visible 2 feet.

Of the possible 56 minutes of the 1901 New Zealand Royal Visit film, only 14 minutes (25 percent) survives today. Nevertheless, it is the “permanent memorial of the festivities” that its makers intended, and it preserves a rare glimpse of colonial New Zealand in animated form.

Filmography: Perry’s 1901 New Zealand Royal Film Visit Films

(A) Coverage for the New Zealand Government

The sequence numbering, description and lengths are taken from Perry’s letter of 17 July 1901 to New Zealand Premier R. J. Seddon.

1 Auckland
2 Haka
3 Haka
4 Poi Dance
5 Maori Presentations
6 Geysers
7 Geysers
8 Geysers in action
9 Geysers in action
10 Geysers in action
11 Geysers in action
12 Rambles Among the Geysers

Wellington
1 Arrival of Duke
2 T.R.H. Passing Westport Arch
3 Guards and Naval Brigade passing Westport Arch
4 Artillery Brigade with Guns passing Westport Arch
5 Veterans passing Westport Arch
6 Submarine Explosion
7 Royal Cruiser, Royal Arthur
8 Royal Cruiser, Juno
9 Royal Cruiser, St. George
10 Stone Laying Wellington Town Hall
11 Stone Laying Railway Buildings

Christchurch
1 Reception and passing through Cathedral Square
2 Review at Hagley Park
3 Review at Hagley Park
4 Review at Hagley Park
5 Review at Hagley Park

Dunedin (positive)
11 Presentation of Medals at the Octagon 113 feet positive (Perry).

Rotorua (all negative)
1 Maori Gathering – Pan across Poi Dance 66 feet (definitely Perry footage).
2 Maori Gathering – Haka, “Ko-Parua” flag 52 feet (by Perry or Hescott).
3 Maori Gathering 139 feet (probably Hescott film).
4 Geysers 164 feet (by Perry or Hescott, or may be a later film by James McDonald).
5 Geysers (Pohutu?) and “Takitimu” flag 90 feet (by either Perry or Hescott).
6 Royal Party (in silhouette) touring geysers 16 feet (Perry or Hescott).
7 Royal Party touring geysers [Duchess present] 21 feet (Perry or Hescott).

Wellington: At Westport Arch, Lambton Quay
8 T.R.H. Passing Westport Arch in Carriage 28 feet negative (definitely Perry).
9 Procession with Cavalry [Mounted Rifles?] 34 feet negative (definitely Perry).
10 Procession with Cavalry or Artillery 5 feet positive (definitely Perry).

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6 Presentation of Medals
Shot 24 June 1901. Length: 100 feet (1 min 40 secs).

7 Inspection of Veterans
Shot 24 June 1901. Length: 100 feet (1 min 40 secs).

8 Stone Laying
Shot 22 June 1901. Length: 100 feet (1 min 40 secs).

Dunedin
1 Presentation of Medals
Shot 26 June 1901. Length: 150 feet (2 mins 30 secs).

2 Parade of Police
[H.R.H. Body Guard]
Shot 27 June 1901. Length: 50 feet (50 secs).

3 Royal Train leaving Railway Station
Shot 27 June 1901. Length: 50 feet (50 secs).

(B) Additional coverage not mentioned in Perry’s list of 17 July 1901

1 Ceremonies at the Mayor of Auckland’s Platform
Shot 11 June 1901. Length unknown. A photograph (see footnote 23) shows Perry, with two assistants, using a Warwick Bioscope Model “A” Camera.

2 Presentation of Medals at Parliament House, Wellington
Shot 19 June 1901. A photograph on p. 287 of Loughnan’s official history of the visit (see footnote 22) shows two men operating a Warwick Bioscope Model “B” camera at this ceremony.

3 Inspection of Veterans at the Octagon, Dunedin

4 Laying of the Foundation Stone of the Queen’s Statue, Dunedin

5 A Tram Ride Through the Decorated Octagon, Dunedin


The descriptions probably don’t relate to the government negatives but to negatives simultaneously exposed by Perry in another camera.

1 Haka
“showing a Maori Haka [a war dance] in full swing, and a panoramic of the vast crowd of people. The only film taken of this event.” Length unknown. Filmed 15 June 1901.

2 The Maori War Canoe, weapons, mats, etc., being presented to the Duke and Duchess
Shot 15 June 1901. Length unknown.

3 Poi Dance by the Rotorua Poi Dancers
Shot 15 June 1901. Length unknown.

4 A Maori Haka in progress
Shot 15 June 1901. Length unknown.

5 Geysers
Shot 14 June 1901. Length unknown. “showing the Seapod [sic] geysers in full action in the presence of the Royal Visitors”. This “Seapod” geysers did not exist. The film probably featured the “Wairoa” geysers, which was filmed, and “Seapod” may be a misinterpretation of the written form of “Wairoa”.

6 Geysers
Shot 14 June 1901. Length unknown. “A splendid film, clear and sharp, showing the Duke and Duchess, with Maggie the Maori Guide, passing the camera.”

Acknowledgements
An article of this type demands extensive research support, and we are pleased to thank the following institutions and individuals for their help:
- Pat Laughren, Griffith University and the Australian Research Council, for financial support.
- National Archives of New Zealand.
- Salvation Army Archives in Melbourne and Wellington: George Ellis & Laurence Hay.
- Wellington Public Library.
- Alexander Turnbull Library.
- Graham Shirley.

Last, but not least, our wives, Anne Sowry and Prue Long.

Next Instalment
Most Australian film histories skip over the years 1902-4, implying by omission that it was a sterile time. In fact, it was the peak production period of Melbourne’s Salvation Army Limelight Department. In August 1902, it exhibited its two-hour documentary presentation on Australia’s history from exploration to federation, Under Southern Skies. With 200 slides and 38 film segments totalling 6,000 feet (100 minutes), it was by far the longest and most complex Australian screen entertainment of its time. Previously overlooked by historians, its production saga will be recalled in our next issue.

1 A 33-second segment of one of A.H. Whitehouse’s films, Departure of the Second New Zealand Contingent, shot in January 1900.

2 National Archives of New Zealand, Wellington, (NA), IA1 1901/933, attached to IA1 1908/864.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 NA, IM15126.

7 Full Salvation, Melbourne, 1 September 1894, pp. 290-2; “A Limelighter’s Experience”.

8 The War Cry, New Zealand, 11 January 1896, p. 9 May 1896, p. 3.

9 The War Cry, Melbourne, 3 December 1898, pp. 9-10; 10 December 1898, pp. 9-10.


11 The War Cry, Melbourne, 10 December 1898, p. 9; “The Otaki Onslaught”.


15 NA S151/93, p. 175.


17 New Zealand Herald, Auckland, 20 May 1901, p. 5.

18 The Press, Christchurch, 4 June 1901, p. 5; Otago Daily Times, 7 June 1901, p. 7.

19 New Zealand Times, Wellington, 27 May 1901, p. 5.

20 NA IA1 1901/933 attached to IA1 1908/864.

21 New Zealand Times, 27 May 1901, p. 5.

22 NA IA1 1901/2279a attached to IA1 1908/864; R. A. Loughnan, Royalty in New Zealand: the visit of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York to New Zealand, 10th to 27th June 1901. A Descriptive Narrative, Government Printer, Wellington, 1902, p. 14.

23 For example, photograph No. 10383012, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.

24 New Zealand Times, 19 June 1901, p. 7.

25 Loughnan, loc. cit.

26 New Zealand Herald, 28 June 1901, p. 6.

27 NA IA1 1901/933 attached to IA1 1908/864.

28 New Zealand Herald, 24 May 1901, p. 5.

29 NA IA1 1901/2279a attached to IA1 1908/864.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 NA IA1 1901/933 attached to IA1 1908/864.

33 NA IA1 1901/3739 attached to IA1 1908/864.

34 Ibid.


36 NA IA1 1901/2279a attached to IA1 1908/864; A Warwick Model “F” projector.

37 NA IA1 1901/2783 attached to IA1 1908/864.

38 NA IA1 1901/3739 attached to IA1 1908/864.

39 Ibid.

40 New Zealand Times, Wellington, 29 July 1901, p. 6.

41 Wanganui Chronicle, 26 July 1901, p. 2.

42 Ibid.

43 New Zealand Times, 29 July 1901, p. 5.

44 Evening Post, Wellington, 29 July 1901, p. 4.

45 Evening Post, 27 July 1901, p. 6.

46 The Showman, Sydney, September 1950, p. 15.

47 NA IA1 1901/933 attached to IA1 1908/864.

48 Evening Post, 11 April 1902, p. 6.

49 NA IA1 1901/3799 attached to IA1 1908/864.

50 Evening Post, 3 April 1902, p. 5.

51 Ibid.

52 Evening Post, 26 May 1910, p. 6.

53 For example, at Hayward’s Pictures, Christchurch, on 14 July 1910 - see Lyttelton Times, Christchurch, 13 July 1910, p. 9; and at West’s Pictures, Auckland, on 23 July 1910 - see New Zealand Herald, 23 July 1910, p. 12.

54 The tour began at Warwick on 6 September 1901. See Brisbane Courier, 10 September 1901; 11 September 1901; Maryborough Chronicle (Qld), 12 October 1901, p. 2.

55 The War Cry, New Zealand, 16 August 1902, p. 3.

56 NA IA1 1901/3782. Hescott only filmed the Rotorua proceedings.


58 NA IA1 13/167.

59 NA IA1 1901/3728.

60 NA ARCH451/10a.

61 Ibid.
FCC Funding Decisions

Following the Board meeting on 31 March, the FCC has entered into contract negotiations with the producers of the following projects:

**CHILDREN OF THE REVOLUTION (120 MINS)**
TRISTRAM MURLI FILMS
D-SW: PETER DUNCAN
P: TRISTRAM MURLI
PC: JUDY DAVIS, RICHARD RISBURGH, GEOFFREY BUSH, RACHEL GRIFFITHS

Few known that Josef Stalin's last conscious night was spent in the loving and devoted arms of Australian Jean Fraser. Fewer still know that their love child brought Australia to the brink of civil war.

**Television**

David Williamson's brilliant lies
Floating life

Following the Board meeting in April, the FCC has entered into contract negotiations with the producers of the following projects:

**Feature**

**DATING THE ENEMY**

**Television**

HALIFAX F.P. 2 (3 X 100 MINS)
SIMPSON LE MURIER
D: PAUL MOONEY, STEVE DORRELL
PC: ROGER LE MURIER, ROGER SIMPSON

In this science-fiction adventure, five children reunteer on a large space platform hovering above Earth and prepare to return to a newly established mining colony on Ganymede, one of Jupiter's moons. Traveling on their state-of-the-art ship, the Liqor, the colonists encounter many dangers.

**Documentaries**

LIFE FORCE

**Television**

HALIFAX F.P. 2 (3 X 100 MINS)
SIMPSON LE MURIER
D: PAUL MOONEY, STEVE DORRELL
PC: ROGER LE MURIER, ROGER SIMPSON

These telemovies follow the adventures of Jane Halifax, a forensic psychiatrist retained by both police and solicitors. Using her specialized knowledge of criminal behaviour, she helps unravel a series of mysteries involving a convicted rapist, a cop gone wrong and organized crime.

**Documentaries**

IN A SMALL VALLEY

**Television**

THE LAST BULLET

**Television**

THE BITE (2 X 90 MINS)
PALM BEACH PICTURES
D: MICHAEL CARSON
PC: DAVID EDELS, LAURINA WARNER
SW: TERRY JOHNSON

An Australian adventurer and his new English wife decide to move to Asia and set up a business. The venture quickly turns to disaster and they face financial ruin until assisted by the exotic wife of a local businessman. But every favour has a price...

**Documentaries**

BETTER HERBS AND HONEY

**Television**

HEAT (80 MINS)
BARRON TELEVISION
P: PAUL BARRON, JULIE MONTO
D: PAUL BARRON
SW: TONY JOHNSON

A n idealistic solicitor heads bush after a disillusioning first encounter with the justice system. In a small country town, she witnesses an incident between police and two local Aborigines, and soon becomes embroiled in a fight for justice.
leaving her brain damaged. Not content with regaining a normal life, Alicia set up her own theatre company, Sole Theatre, dedicated to raising public awareness of so many people like herself. This documentary tells the story of Alicia’s long journey of recovery and her incredible determination to pursue her dreams.

SECRET FLEETS

SECRET FLEETS (55 MINS, ABC ACCORD) MASK PRODUCTIONS CINEMA PAPERS • AUGUST 1995

leaving her brain damaged. Not content with regaining a normal life, Alicia set up her own theatre company, Sole Theatre, dedicated to raising public awareness of so many people like herself. This documentary tells the story of Alicia’s long journey of recovery and her incredible determination to pursue her dreams.

SECRET FLEETS

SECRET FLEETS (55 MINS, ABC ACCORD) MASK PRODUCTIONS
**inproduction**

**Production Survey continued**

MALCOLM ROBERTSON (Father Neville), BELINDA DAVIES (Mother), ALEXIS ANTHOPOULOS (Gio Mio), IRIS PAPAS (Old Woman), DAMITI PREE (Neighbour), LIZ HUGHES (Koi One).

Petyr is a journalist who works by day. Bernard is a greyhound photographer who works by night. Newellweds Pixy and Bernard make full weekends to do the washing, go shopping and watch old footage from their wedding day. This film is a celebration of love, life and ordinary things.

FULL BODIED GREEN

Production company: SPARKLE Dot
Pre-production: April–May 1995
Production: June 1995
Post-production: Jan 1995

**PRINCIPAL CREDITS**

**DIRECTOR:** Paul Barrett
**PRODUCER:** Paul Barrett
**RUTH PETERSON**
**PRODUCTION DESIGNER:** Mirsza Cook
**PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATOR:** Marissa Cook
**COSTUME DESIGNER:** Assisi Assisi
**COSTUME CO-ORDINATOR:** Julianne McPherson
**STILLS PHOTOGRAPHER:** Martin Smith
**UNIT MANAGER:** Emma Field
**UNIT MANAGER:** Peter Bowers

**ART DEPARTMENT**

Set designs: Caroline Gibbes, Theree Liver
Animal trainer: Penny Dalzell

**ADDITIONAL CREDITS**

Scriptwriter: John Broomun
Based on the novel by Peter Temple.
Written by: John Broomun
Director of photography: Meaddy Walker
Editor: Sue McMillan
Production designer: Sarah Stollman
Costume designer: Louise McCarthy

**PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Scriptwriter: Annemarie Bitterball
 Casting: Prototypix Casting
**PRODUCTION CREW**

Production manager: Debra Anear
Production secretary: Kim Keizer
Location manager: Melissa Rimer
Unit manager: Gene Van Dam
Production accountant: Bernadette Bretherton
Inspector: Holden Insurance Brokers
Legal service: Roth Van Wouken Solen

**CAMERA CREW**

Focus puller: David Lindsay
Clapper loader: Andrew Cummins
Key grip: Ian Bellmann

**ON-CREW**

1st assistant director: Monica Pearce
2nd assistant director: Julie Pedder
Make-up: Stephanie Lannan
Catering: Eat Your Heart Out
Runner: Sandy Austin

**ART DEPARTMENT**

Art director: Ruther Guthrie
Art department runner: Chris Saunders
Stands prop: Hugh Richards

**POST-CREW**

Assistant editor: Jack Schultz
Editor: Jayne Schulte
Sound engineer: Edwinn Wilson
Sound editors: Peter Jones–Nelson
Laboratory: Cheverx
Laboratory liaison: Ian Anderson

**GOVERNMENT AGENCY INVESTMENT**

Development: AIC
Production: AIC
Marketing: AIC

**CAST**

John Broomun (Ozil), David Tedich (Narald).

This is a story of two prisoners, and their lives as they discover themselves and the true meaning of friendship as they confront their final days in a prison AIDS wing.

LOVE AMONGST THE MUFFINS

Production company: Life Force Films
Budget: $15,000

**PRINCIPAL CREDITS**

**DIRECTOR:** Chris Arndt-Guinness
**PRODUCERS:** Chris Arndt-Guinness, Caralyn Squires
**SCRIPTWRITER:** Carol Arndt
**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** Hans Henrik
Sound recordist: David Shiner

**Casting**

**Production co-ordinator:** Cheryl Manfield
**PRODUCERS’ ASSISTANTS:** Christine Little, Julie Arches, Paye Naqier

**CAST**

Gallers: Nick DeLane, "Chick" McDonald
Assistant galler: Nick Seckold

**UNIT MANAGER:** Will Koenig
Hairdresser: Willi Kemrick
Stunt coordinator: John Bowman

**BUDGET**

Pre-production: 1/95–30/6/95
Production: 3/7–2/10/95
Post-production: 3/7–28/7/96

CAST

MANJIN SUGIMI (Nori), SHANE FORD (Mike), ARTHUR BROWN (John), GARRY EDWARDS (Steve), RALPH CRAMER (Dan), LESTER WHITE (Kevin), SHIRLEY MILLER (办公.misc)

**POST-PRODUCTION**

Post-production supervisor: Peter Flynn
**EDITOR:** Martin Mundel
Sound: Keenan Delbridge
Music performed by: Ian Laurence, Andrew Oh
Video support: John Iam Daines

CAST

Alicia Clarke, (Suzy), Jan Hackett, (Neil), Philip Rinton (Jimmy), James Printon (Bill), Vincent Printon (Emms), Nick McKay (Mate), Paul Byrne (Jarred).

Through a bizarre twist of fate a woman meets her mate.

See previous issue for details on:

**LET ME DIE AGAIN**

**LOVE HEAVEN**

**MAIDENHEAD**

**THE WEB 2**

**Television Pre-production**

**FIRE II (SIEVE)**

Production company: Extra Dimensions in Association with Life Films
Production: October 1995–March 1996
Distributor: Beyond Distribution Pty Ltd

**PRINCIPAL CREDITS**

**DIRECTOR:** Peter Fox, Geddy Bennett
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS:** Michael Caufield, Tony Cavanagh, Samantha North
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER:** Michel Bourdain
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER:** Eberto de Ricke, Peter Schroeck
**COMPANY:** Logo Motion

**POST-CREW**

Focus puller: Barry Bottomley
2nd unit DOP: Phil Cross
2nd unit director: Ross Isaac
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR:** John Hargreaves
**PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATOR:** Andrew Moore
**ASSISTANT EDITORS:** Kim John
**EDITOR:** Darrin Fox

**ON-CREW**

1st assistant directors: Janice Leslie, Lisa Mackenzie
2nd assistant director: Rachel Evans
**ASSISTANT PRODUCER:** Mark Hardy
**UNIT MANAGER:** Sara Malcolm
**UNIT MANAGER:** Tanya Ferrier
**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT:** John Wicklund
**MAKE-UP:** Madeleine Koval
**ASSISTANT MAKE-UP:** Dianne Glenn

**SPECIAL EFFECTS**

Production assisted by: Michelle Schnitz
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR:** Eddie Stott
**PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATOR:** Jack Peston

**Wardrobe**

Wardrobe supervisor: Albin Farnwell
**STANDS:** Bronwyn Doughty
**CATERING:** Bronwyn Doughty
**POST-PRODUCTION**

Post-production supervising: Jane Lyle
**EQUIPMENT:** Bronwyn Doughty
**POST-SUPervising:** Andrew Scott, Ray Dale
**RADIO:** Bronwyn Doughty

**Government Agency Investment**

Development: Film Queensland, Film Victoria
Pre-production: 1996
**FILMING:** Victoria
**MARKETING**

**produce:** Beyond Distribution

**Agent:** Beyond Distribution
**FILM:** TEA LEAF/TEA/TEAL

**CAST**

**MADGE DODSON** (Nori), BARRY HOPKIN (Jason Bates), JEFFREY WALKER (BARRY DUNNE), BARRY AMBRIDGE (DANIE BAXTER), ALEX PENTER (WINSTON SUTHER), LAUREN HEWITT (ANCA). JASON ANGLED (NORI), KERI SLOAN (SUZIE), HILARY ROBINSON (SUZIE). MARY STIRRUP (SUZIE). THE UNDERWATER CITY OF ORCA set out in search of an alien device capable, when assembled, of controlling the very movements of the planet. But the dark forces of URIE have also stumbled upon its existence and the race is on. At Earth’s salvation or its destruction.

RETURN TO JUPITER (SERIES)

Production companies: Film Australia, NUOB
**PRODUCTION:** EARLY 1996...

**PRINCIPAL CREDITS**

**DIRECTOR:** Kate Woods
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER:** Ron Saunders
**PRODUCTION MANAGER:** Kazumi Tajima
**DIFFERENTIATION:** David Ougly
**PRE-PRODUCTION DESIGNER:** Karon Badak
**SPECIAL EFFECTS:** DALE DUBOIS
**FACILITIES:** Finance, NHK
**LENGTH:** 13 X 25 MIN

CAST

**JUST RODIN**, **ANA CHIKA**, **DANIEL TAYLOR**, **ABRAMS FORSYTH**, **FAYE ROBERTSON**

In this science-fiction adventure, five children reunite on a larger space station hovering above Earth and prepare to return to a newly established mining colony on Gammymede, one of Jupiter’s moons. Travelling on their state-of-the-art ship, the Icarus, the colonists encounter many dangers.

SUN ON THE STUBBLE (SERIES)

Production companies: Film Australia, ZDF (Germany)
**DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES:** Film Australia, ZDF (Germany)
**DISTRIBUTION:** 4TH QTR 1995

**PRINCIPAL CREDITS**

**DIRECTOR:** Robert Marchand
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER:** Barry Jongens
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER:** David Narmour, Sinclair Naney
**DIFFERENTIATION:** Noel Robinson
**PRE-PRODUCTION DESIGNER:** Cathy Flannery

The adventures of the 14-year-old son of a German wheat farmer, growing up in a small farming community. Based on the novels by Colin Thilie.

THE VIOLENT EARTH (MINI-SERIES)

Production company: CAIWARENT, CRAWFORD
**PRODUCTION:** 7 AUGUST 1995

**DIRECTOR:** Michael Jenkins
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER:** Philippa Viscott (Sagannah), John Kearry (Crawford)
**PRODUCTION MANAGER:** Graeme Farman
Based on the novel by JACQUELINE SINSING FUNDING: ZDF

Set in New Caledonia, where the French settlers and independent Kanak “sea work” out their differences. Together, they follow the Survivors, a pioneering Australian-Irish family, and the Kanak farmers who live between the conflicting legacies of the South Sea Islands and French colonialism.

Television Production and Post-production

**AFTER THE BEEP (SERIES)**

Post-production: 12/8/95...

CINEMA PAPERS • AUGUST 1995 62
Directors: T
1st assistant directors: R
Production: 9/2/95-13/5/95 ;
Length: 47
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Production company:
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Executive Producer:
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Scriptwriter:

Production companies:

Post-production supervisor:

Film gauge:

Post-production supervisor:

Post-production supervisor:

Post-production supervisor:

Assistant unit manager:

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**nihil obstat nine**

In a period of staggering cinematic mediocrity (so the scores indicate), few stand tall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amateur: Hal Hartley</th>
<th>4</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before Sunrise: Richard Linzlater</td>
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<td>Boys on the Side: Herbert Ross</td>
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<td>Bravetheart: Mel Gibson</td>
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<td>Caro Diario (Dear Diary): Nanni Moretti</td>
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<td>Crimson Tide: Tony Scott</td>
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<td>While You Were Sleeping: Joan Turtletaub</td>
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*Note: “Nihil obstat” i.e., “nothing stands in the way” used on the title page or elsewhere in the regular pages, indicating that it has been approved as free of doctrinal or moral error.

A panel of nine film reviewers has rated a selection of the latest releases on a scale of 0 to 10, the latter being the optimum rating (a dash means not seen).

The critics are: Bill Collins (The Daily Mirror, Sydney); Barbara Creed (The Age); Sandra Hall (The Bulletin); Paul Harris (RRR); Stan James (The Adelaide Advertiser); Adrian Martin (The Age); "The Week in Film", Radio National; Tim Ryan (The Sunday Age); David Stratton (Variety SBS); and Evan Williams (The Australian).*
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