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Cinema Papers #109 April 1996

Scott Murray

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Cinema Papers #109 April 1996

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Toni Collette
In a Costi Ensemble

Real Character
Rachel Griffiths Tells All

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FOCUS

AUSTRALIAN FILMS SHINE
Sundance Film Festival
By Robert Connolly
Producer Robert Connolly reports back from the recent Sundance Film Festival where Scott Hicks’ 
Shine caused a critical sensation and opened 
many American chequebooks

MICHAEL TOLKIN
Living with the Question
By Paul Kalina
Michael Tolkin is one of Hollywood’s finest 
scriptwriters (The Player), directors (The New Age) 
and novelists (Among the Dead). "Only an 
optimistic time is capable of withstanding tragedy, 
and this is not an optimistic time"., he explains in 
this wide-ranging discussion of his work

COSI, VIDEO FOOL FOR LOVE, HOW 
TO MAKE AN AMERICAN QUILT
Three Australian Directors Strike Gold
By Peter Malone, Monica Zetlin, 
Fincina Hopgood
Mozart’s Cosi Fan Tutte has been turned into a 
charming film, by way of a stirring play; an editor 
films his love-life on video, to disturbing effect; 
while Jocelyn Moorhouse’s first American film is 
a triumph of women’s storytelling

INSIGHTS

Inbits 2
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History 34
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Legal Ease 50
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Eidetic Eight 64

Rachel Griffiths
One of Australia’s hottest actors reveals to MARGARET 
SMITH a true commitment to individualistic cinema:
“The film industry is only the people in it who have 
the vision to make films. It is not all the crap around 
the edges. We kind of forget that sometimes.”

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CONTRIBUTORS

Chris Berry teaches in the Department of Cinema Studies at LaTrobe 
University; Dominic Case is a motion picture technical consultant; 
Robert Connolly is a filmmaker (Mr. America’s Flight and producer; 
Anna Divizia is a tutor in Cinema Studies at LaTrobe University; 
Philip Dutchak is the editor and publisher of the monthly newsletter, 
Convergence (those interested can contact him at pdutchak@geko.com.au).
Holly Ferguson is a solicitor who recently joined the firm Hart and Spira; Richard Franklin is a writer-director (David Williamson’s Brilliant Lies); Freda Freiberg is a 
film and photography critic with wide cultural interests; John W. Hood has written on the films of Mrinal Sen and Buddhadeb Dasgupta, and is completing a study 
of representations of women in Indian cinema; Fincina Hopgood is an Arts-Law student at Melbourne University and a former editor of Ormond Papers; Chris Long 
is a Melbourne film historian; Peter Malone is director of the Catholic Film Office; Kathy Mueller is a film and television director (Daydream Believer); Robert Nery 
is a filmmaker and writer living in Sydney; Deborah Parsons is a scriptwriter (In Two Steps); Margaret Smith is a scriptwriter and writer on film; Nina Stevenson is a solicitor with Hart and Spira; Carolyn Ueda is a writer and literary editor living in Sydney; Monica Zetlin is a producer’s assistant and writer on film.
**CONFERENCE DATES**

"The Language of Interactivity", a three-day, AFC-organized conference examining the emerging language of interactive media, will be held at the ABC Radio Centre, Ultimo, on 11-13 April. National and international speakers will examine ways in which disk-based multimedia and on-line interactive works convey meaning. The conference will present an opportunity for interactive media developers, writers, designers, educators, filmmakers and other media professionals to discuss the creative opportunities emerging from this new form. Registration costs $200; $100 concession. For further information, contact Vicki Sowry at the AFC on (02) 321 6444.

**AFTRS APPOINTMENTS**

The new year sees a number of key appointments at the Australian Film Television & Radio School. Red Box has been appointed Head of the School, replacing the retiring John O'Hara. A filmmaker and academic, Bishop was formerly Associate Professor in Film in the Department of Visual Communication at Melbourne's R.M.T. Bishop's film credits include co-producing and co-writing the feature Bodymind (Philip Birdhy, 1994) and the documentary Beginnings (Bishop, Gordon Glenn, Scott Murray, Andrew Pace, 1991). Bishop has also been a major contributor to Cinema Papers. Writer-director Denny Lawrence (Army Wives, 1987) joins the AFTRS this year as Director in Residence. Stage and screen director George Whaley (Gad & Dance On Our Selections, 1995) also joins the school as the new Head of Directing.

**AME ROUND TWO**

The Australian Multimedia Enterprise has approved funding of more than $2.5 million for Australian developed multimedia projects in its second round of funding. The funding will be provided for both on-line and CD-ROM projects. The projects approved for funding are:

- ORACAO000 Park, a CD-ROM children’s entertainment project based on the Australian animated television series of the same name, created by Unlimited Energey Pty Ltd. HighActive 2.0, a WWW site for the games market and produced by Next-Online Pty Ltd.
- A medical reference CD-ROM produced by Canberra-based Computerised Practised Records Pty Ltd.
- Safe Passage: Preventing Collisions At Sea, a CD-ROM project by JCAH Pty Ltd.
- A genealogy reference CD-ROM.

There are currently more than 40 projects being reviewed by our investment and business development teams. Our concept funding operations have also been highly successful with more than $2 million earmarked for this area over the next few months. Many of these investments will “roll over” into project investments.

**DISTINCTLY AUSTRALIAN INITIATIVE FELLOWSHIPS**

The AFC has announced 57 Fellowships worth a total of $975,000 under the Distinctly Australian Initiative Fellowship schemes. The Fellowships are designed to provide career development opportunities for writers, script editors, writer-directors and producers. Fellowships provided of $10,000 were awarded to: Michael Tear; Robert Connolly; Chris Hilton; Sophie Jackson; Franco di Chiara; Lor-Jay Elia and Robyn Evans; Kathryn Symonds; Craig Monahan; Dixie Betts; and Liz Hoffmann.

Fellowships of $14,000 were awarded to: Rosemary Blight; Ben Grant; Gayle Lake; Martha Coleman and Anthony Anderson; Judy Hamilton; Terrance Chayko; Marc Gracie and David Foster; John Beaton.

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**WOMEN'S PROGRAM RECIPIENTS**

Sundirector Jane Patterson, directors of photography Erika Addis and Anna Howard, and editor Maria Kaltenhafter have received support under the AFC’s Women’s Program. The Scheme supports women already working in technical positions at mid-career level, who are trying to make the step from assistant positions to senior creative roles or from low-budget production to feature films.

Eighteen have received funding under the New Imaging Technologies Support Scheme: Jen McCarthy, Margaret Dadd, Wendy Spencer, Fran Dyson, Belinda Knell, Kathryn Brown, Penney Robinestone Harris and Trace Bailey. The scheme allows for funds to be made available for women working in the area of new imaging technologies to upgrade their skills.

**VILLAGE ADDS 12 SCREENS**

Village Roadshow, in conjunction with Greater Union and Warner Bros., has proposed construction of a 12-screen cinema complex at Westfield Shoppingtown Fountain Gate in Victoria. The venue will provide seating for more than 3,083 people, with expansion potential for up to 20 plus screens and 5,000-plus seats. Steven Lowy, Executive Director of Westfield Holdings, comments: The constantly changing competitive retail market and consumer demands means that we are designing our centres as fully integrated retail/ entertainment/leisure complexes providing the fullest range of shopping and leisure activities under one roof.

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CENSORSHIP

The decision of the Office of Film and Literature Classification to ban Jim Jarmusch’s Dead Man (reported in the previous issue of Cinema Papers) was reversed by the Review Board on 22 December 1995. The film will be released uncut, with an R classification and consumer advice “Medium Level Violence”.

Writing in The Weekend Australian on 13 January 1996, David Stratton, after describing at length the scene that prompted the ban, wrote:

The Censors decided this fleeting moment was “indecency by current community standards”, which I suggest is nonsense given the context of the scene, and they arrogantly and presumptuously went further, asserting the incident served “no essential narrative function”.

Stratton went on to point out that the decision to ban the film was made by three of the 11 members of the Censorship Board. Chief Censor Dickie had not seen the film when the ban was announced.

It’s almost unthinkable that such an important decision, involving a major film, should be made by such a small minority of the board.

Stratton also pointed out that the Office’s oft-made claim of increasing pressure to implement “community standards” stands in contrast to the sharp decline in actual complaints received by the Office, the number of complaints dropping from 241 in 1991/92 to 123 in 1994/95.

Serious concerns over the tightening of censorship regulations - in particular changes to the regulations governing the importation of films by film festivals and specialist exhibition events - has also surfaced in a detailed submission prepared by the AFC. The document has been prepared to inform Ministers of recent changes in classification legislation and procedures and to request Ministers (inter alia) to agree on censorship standards for festivals which are different from “commercial” public exhibition standards; to agree on common guidelines for the granting of exemptions for festivals; and to remove from the Chief Censor the power to decline or revoke exemptions granted to approved organizations/event statuses.

The AFC submission questions the Chief Censor’s decision last year to refuse registration of the film Tiras because he did not believe it was suitable for public exhibition and advised the Festival to submit it for registration under the “commercial” part of the Cinematograph Films Regulations, which do not provide for films of “artistic or educational merit”, instead of being processed under Part III of the Regulations which does provide for festival films.

The position that festival films are subject to the same exhibition standards as commercial release films is plainly wrong. It has been the practice since 1983, and, before then, by all Australian Governments to recognize the special need to provide for festival audiences. In fact, no festival film has been treated in this way by the ORC or its predecessor since 1983.

Also incorrect is that the repeal of the Cinematograph Films Regulations and the commencement of the new Commonwealth Act (or, more correctly, the complementary State and Territory legislation) will retain the status quo as far as film festivals are concerned. It is clear that the censorship impediment to importation imposed by the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations will be transferred to the Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations. However, what has not been disclosed is that Prohibited Imports Regulations are to be amended to tighten the criteria to bring them into line with the other legislation. In other words, the exhibition standards appear to be “one size fits all” and this appears to have anticipated it with his actions in relation to Fisar Cristal.

The document summarizes its recommendations thus:

1. Recognition of the good reputation of Australian festival organizers and the role of film festivals and seasons, whose purpose is to promote celebrations of art and cultural diversity.

2. Re-introduction of censorship standards for festivals and seasons which are different from “commercial” release public exhibition standards in recognition of:
   a. the purpose of festivals
   b. the good reputation of Australian festival organizations
   c. the “art house” or “cultural” audiences
   d. the limited seasons, and
   e. secure access by adult audiences to screenings.

3. Issue precise, uniform and rational guidelines for the administration of exemptions (e.g., under Section 51 (2) of the NSW Act) for the use of the Chief Censor and/or Ministers.

4. Structuring of the Chief Censor’s discretion in relation to approvals for organizations/events/exemptions so that the office may grant but not decline or revoke. This should appropriately only be exercised by Ministers of the Crown and should isolate the Chief Censor from media and pressure-group lobbying.

5. Provide for an appeal mechanism in all jurisdictions on decisions by the Minister to refuse to grant approved organization status, or to refuse exemption to a particular film. Section 59 of the ACT legislation is a useful model.

6. Consult with the Australian Film Commission in relation to the matters in this submission. In the future, the AFC also offers its assistance to Ministers on matters of assessing the bona fides of festivals, or the merits of a particular film, or generally on regulatory matters which affect the conduct of festivals.

7. No fees to be introduced for exemptions for festivals because they are non-commercial and nonprofit organizations.

CORRIGENDA

As noted in the December 1995 issue of Cinema Papers, Don Catchlove and Terry Hayes are indeed the writers of the Nadia Tass-directed My Entire Life. Producer Jim McKoy has alerted us that the names of the writers were placed in the wrong order in the production survey of that issue.

Contributor Lesley Stern was incorrectly listed in the February 1996 issue as a lecturer at the College of Fine Arts. Stern lectures at the University of NSW.
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Caution and discrimination have been important elements in Rachel Griffiths’ extraordinary career. She trained for the stage in Melbourne, then she read the screenplay for *Muriel's Wedding* (P. J. Hogan, 1994) and felt destined to play Muriel’s very adventurous friend.

Griffiths says she’s not a golden person but a “straggler”, and after *Muriel’s Wedding* she went back to the stage to reassess her career. She was then offered the rôle of Lucy in Mark Joffe’s film of *Cosi*, a career woman motivated by her own certainty. The rest of 1995 was fast and furious. Griffiths went on to John Hillcoat’s *To Have and To Hold* (formerly “The Small Man”), Peter Duncan’s *Children of the Revolution* and Michael Winterbottom’s *Jude the Obscure* (UK), all filmed almost back to back. The films gave her insight into acting, directing and writing, and how the best Australian films are shaped and brought to the screen.

In reflection, Griffiths says of her work, “I don’t find it difficult running the gamut from tragedy to comedy, because that’s the story of my life.”
VIEWED BY MARGARET SMITH

CINEMA PAPERS • APRIL 1996
Running the gamut

Have you been surprised by how quickly your acting career has taken off?

I guess I have in terms of film. I never really expected a film career. When I was a young actor, I saw myself as a character actor. I saw a career that had longevity, which I still do, but I didn’t think it would have its peaks quite so accelerated and certainly not when I was so young. I didn’t think I would come into myself until I was about 30.

You are something like 25 now?

I’m actually ... I just turned ... I’m old at the moment!

Did you train for the stage?

Yes. I did a Bachelor of Education in drama and design. My first three years out were spent doing group-devised work through different processes, with directors and writers. I worked in a theatre company for young people for two years, based in Geelong, which has since been cut in a government centralization of art policies. Then I did a bit of telly, before doing Muriel’s.

So, from the outset, you were interested in working in a collaborative process?

Yes. That has always been a primary thing for me. But with film, although you may be involved in the process in an early way, it’s very much you’re involved in the process of developing your character with the director and/or writer, and that’s all you are involved in. It doesn’t go past your boundaries and that demarcation is extremely strong in film.

That’s not the case in America for actors once they become stars.

That’s right. I can’t wait till I get a producer’s credit. [Laughs.] With my innate bossiness, I get so sparked off with ideas and want to do more. But it has actually been very good for me to do less. Before I started doing film, I had reached the point of finding I wasn’t Orson Welles, that I couldn’t do everything well. Although there are other things I think I can do well apart from acting, I can’t do them simultaneously. So, it’s been very good for me just to take responsibility for my bit.

Muriel’s Wedding

P. J. HOGAN, 1994

Muriel’s was one of those great out-of-the-blue things, where you get a script and truly, deeply believe you are the best person in the universe to play the part. Then the director happens to agree! [Laughs.]

Since then, I have gone into many screen tests and auditions feigning that I’m the best person to play a part. But I just as easily could say, “Look, if I don’t get this, I know this fantastic girl who is really right for it!” [Laughs.] But with Muriel’s, I really felt I was the one.

I was very lucky that the part and I came together at the right time. A year earlier, it probably would have been a wrong time for me, and now would not have been a right time for me for that character. But, at the time, I felt an enormous empathy for Rhonda and a real understanding. I was very well exercised because I’d been working quite hard for two-and-a-half years. I had a real sense of where I wanted to go as an actor.

Rhonda is also a complex part, with a lot of extremes.

My strength is my breadth of emotional work and my breadth of intellectual processes. I can imagine many different states of mind, from quite ordinary ones to the really bizarre.

Rhonda was a real show-off rôle for me. I don’t find it difficult running the gamut from tragedy to comedy, because that is the story of my life. [Laughs.] It is what I have always valued in other actors. That is my strength. I do that better than purely dramatic roles or purely comic ones. I feel as if I’m not quite funny enough to pull of a rip-roaring comedy, and not enigmatic or self-reliant enough to pull off a full-blown tragedy as the protagonist; I could in a supporting rôle.

It wasn’t necessarily conscious. I found Muriel’s very difficult and very stressful. I’d gone from television work, where you don’t do any more than six takes, to finding myself with 80 people standing around on take 16. I was sure that at any moment [producer] Lynda House would appear and sack me on the spot. [Laughs.] You know, stuff like that. I did trust P. J., because that is all I had. I had no experience to back me up. He had such a strong vision for the film that you just knew he was going to get what he wanted, and that what he wanted would work.

Obviously you must have felt the same about the director of photography as well?

Well, to be honest, on Muriel’s it was the beauty of being ignorant. Now I might ask the person behind the camera. “What was that like?”, or wonder what my light is like, which is the curse of experience. It wouldn’t have occurred to me to have a relationship with the cinematographer. [Laughs.] Since then, I have done that, either very consciously or because they are usually very nice people.

After Muriel’s, you went back and did some plays.

Yes. I did two plays for the MTC, including a national tour. I also did a short-run comedy thing on television.

The year of Muriel’s was a huge learning curve for me, just changing mediums from theatre to film and television. I felt very much that I couldn’t learn with such high stakes for much longer. I just reached a particular point of stress and fatigue. I wanted a year that would consolidate me within myself as an actor; theatre does that. So, that is what I did that next year. It really did sustain me for most of 1995, when the stakes were increasingly high for different reasons.

How much rehearsal or improvisation did you do on Muriel’s?

The cast had a great deal of respect for the text of Muriel’s. I wouldn’t say P. J. was precious about it, but he knew that the script was complete, so we didn’t improvise a great deal. It always came back to the screenplay, and, as we all knew it was very, very good, only a couple of words were changed on the day. The rehearsal period was more a process of agreeing that we were making decisions that we were all happy with. For me, it was mapping the journey. I was very clear about Rhonda’s journey. Only occasionally would we question a point in the journey, and maybe try a different choice, but with the text.

Given there are some fairly vulnerable scenes in the film, you must have had to really trust the director.

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Did you both grow as actors because of your relationship together?

I can’t speak for Toni, I can only speak for myself, and she taught me a great deal.

We grew up through the film, and certainly that process of transition hasn’t really stopped since it happened. Muriel’s catch-phrase of “success is the best revenge” is certainly true for P. J. and me and I think Toni, to a degree. None of the three of us had ever been a golden person, you know. We have all been struggling and not necessarily destined in other people’s perceptions for great success. [Laughs.]

The film was a great catharsis. P. J. has a confidence that he did not have before, which is probably true of all of us. Maybe less so of Toni; she has always been fairly sure of who she is.

Something about our film culture is so young that we are compulsive definers in Australia: a pimple appears and everyone wants to measure it and squeeze it.”
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Cosi

MARK JOFFE, 1996

Lucy is only a supporting part, but she is very important because she is linked with reality.

That was the function of the house [where Lucy and Lewis (Ben Mendelsohn) live]. The house is the so-called reality and is juxtaposed with what is meant to be the crazy world of the asylum. The house comes under threat and actually becomes quite mad and unstable within itself.

I saw the role of Lucy as extremely functional, and pretty much in the terms that you are speaking.

Yet Lucy represents a lot of modern women today, balancing a career with trying to have a life with men which has some meaning and isn't destructive.

I didn't take Lucy as necessarily any kind of archetype. What I wanted to do with her was portray one of those people who are incredibly certain of the world: certain of things, and certain of an order. These people are less open to being affected by chance encounters and by people's vulnerabilities. Their strength is that they keep the bricks in the wall. They don't pull a brick out to see what is behind because it all might topple over.

Lucy is a very certain kind of person. I find such people intriguing because I can't understand them even remotely. I don't know what it would be like to be completely certain about things! [Laughs.]

Hopefully, Lucy is partly annoying on that level, because it makes the fragility of other states of mind very beautiful, rather than making people think they are loopy. There is a real beauty in not knowing everything.

Lucy does become less certain though, doesn't she?

Yes and that freaks her out. But she is not going to lose the plot; she is pretending she is still certain.

Did you rehearse much?

Yes. We rewrote a lot of that stuff, mainly because, in adapting the play to film, it was brought up from 1972 to the present day. The asylum in 1972 is virtually no different, nor the people in it, but the outside world and the politics are very different.

When it was set in '72, Lucy was a radical, anti-Vietnam feminist, very much into free love. The cornerstone of 1960s and early '70s feminism was that a woman owns her body and that matrimony is the cornerstone of 1960s and early '70s feminism was that a woman owns her body and that matrimony is a production of the patriarchy, invented by men to subjugate women. So, there was a lot of stuff that just couldn't be updated. That left the character of Lucy very much up in the air. So, we talked a lot about what we felt she should be.

Did you need to do any preparation for your part, like Ben Mendelsohn did by visiting psychiatric institutions?

No. If I had done anything, it would have been some legal stuff. But you don't really see Lucy in her occupation, so her occupation is irrelevant.

Sometimes research is really important, and other times it is not. It can confuse the issue.

On Cosi, we really needed to find the truth in the work itself, the truth in Louis [Nowra]'s words, and the truth in what Mark was trying to do. It wasn't important for me to go off on my own bent. I had to stick by my materials, which were Ben, Aden [Young] in a couple of scenes, Louis and Mark Joffe.

Do you think you have the ability to physically transform yourself for a role? Your face looks quite different in Cosi than in Muriel's Wedding.

Yes, I think I do. But Muriel's was also, in some ways, the last year of my girlhood on film. I don't mean that "Oh my god, I'm getting old", but there is something in my face in Muriel's that has the essence of the girl, which is just not there now. There is something else there, though, I think.

So, it is part that and part the haircut and the stuff you do physically, vocally and with your presence. Lucy has a very restrained presence, so the face is not so animated and alert.

Ben Mendelsohn has also changed. He is now a young man, after having been a boy for a long time.

That's right, and I think within a couple of years we will see a man man. Ben is still a boy man. He probably will be until he is maybe 30.

In Australia, we haven't had much of a history of successfully translating plays to films.

No. We had that spate with Don's Party [Bruce Beresford, 1976] and Williamson's early plays, which I think translated really well. I remember seeing [David Williamson's] The Club [Bruce Beresford, 1980] when I was quite young and thinking it was wonderful. And Hotel Sorrento [Richard Franklin, 1995] I think is a fine film.

I saw Cosi as a play and thought, "This would be a great film." Louis has such a wonderful imagination and a wonderful ear and mind for dialogue. He is often quite visual, especially in Cosi, which is one of his more immediate plays.

If we produce more really good plays, we might pinch a few more for film.
Children of the Revolution
PETER DUNCAN, 1996
Then comes the rather secretively-filmed Children of the Revolution.

I play Anna, the wife of Joe (Richard Roxburgh) and the scarcely-tolerated daughter-in-law of Joan Fraser (Judy Davis). I come into the story when Joe is 19 and falls in love with me. Joe is a radical communist who has tried to raise a more radical communist than herself in Joe. But he turns out to be an apathetic anarchist during the Vietnam war, and he proceeds to fall in love with a mounted policewoman, which is me. It is a fatal meeting. It takes his political career in quite a different direction than the one his mother had dreamed for him.

It is an amazing film and just one of the most amazing things I’ve ever read. I was giggling, laughing and crying when I read it. Peter Duncan is such a clever man. He has a wonderful love and irreverence for Australian political history and political culture. And, from his love of that, and his wonderful imagination, he has produced a really extraordinary story. I don’t think there has ever been anything like it written or produced in this country. It really rolls along. It has a huge time span; it is epic. It is not magic realism, but it has more in common with Marquez’s generational political things, where themes can float, than with any Australian film I’ve seen.

Peter also has a wonderful love of dialogue, so it is very rich and fast and dense. It is very intelligent on the page, which is I think unusual for an Australian film, where the intelligence is usually beneath character who struggle to articulate what they need and want and believe. A very predominate Australian archetype is the inarticulate person, who may have a big heart and may even have a big mind, but who doesn’t use language as a weapon or, like the Irish, as a tool of joy, which Peter does. That is so much fun as an actor to play with.

Is Duncan’s approach to filmmaking more like your own, more political?

Yes. I love how he looks at the world.

I think part of it is a love of language, which as an actor is really liberating. Judy Davis has some sensual speeches which are a page-and-a-half long and are hysterically funny, brilliantly witty, acerbic and violently accurate, in a very subversive way. To get a wind up is something you only really get to do in the theatre. It is not necessarily emotionally driven, it can be an intellectual thing.

Who else is in the film?

Sam Neill, F. Murray Abraham, Geoffrey Rush, and Richard. So, you have been working with the cream?

I have, haven’t I? I’ve been working with the cafe latte of the whole industry. I haven’t worked with a director who is a cunt yet. It is quite extraordinary.

How was it watching Judy Davis work? Did that teach you anything?

Oh, there is really something to be said for being on your toes. I had a couple of scenes with her, one in particular where I was very determined to hold my own against one of the best actors in the world, which was simultaneously a daunting and a challenging thing.

Judy’s commitment to any decision she makes is so extraordinary. Her decisions are not safe. She goes from being very active, very over the top, very dri­king, very howling, very really impressive, to moments of extraordinary vulnerability. I’m sure technically she knows exactly when to do what, but I don’t, really. It was amazing to watch all those actors, too. Geoff­rey has his own processes, which are fascinating. He maintains his centre.

“I think this year is going to be an astonishing one for Australian filmmaking, both here and for Australians making films overseas.”

We were all telling different parts of the story. We were very aware of that. It was a truly wonderful experience.

Has your relationship with the camera become much more knowing?

Yes. I’m yet to see if it doesn’t turn out to be a bit of a curse, however. I got to a point on To Have and To Hold where it was quite a difficult filming process. I’d find myself making compromises about my action because I realized it was going to be very difficult with the set-up of the camera as it was. Whereas, when I was making Jude the Obscure in England, I said, “Look, I don’t have to go over there”, even though that is what we had blocked, the response was more, “Oh, we will get it, don’t worry.” I think there is something to be said for sticking to what you want to do and waiting until you are told it is impossible, rather than having a constant negotiation. I’m very aware of that. You say, “Would it help if L?”, if there is some problem. You know that if you moved in half an inch, or did that done forward, the shot would be a lot easier to get. It is very easy to compromise what you are doing before you really add up whether or not the performance is going to lose anything by that.

Jude the Obscure
MICHAEL WINTERBOTTOM, 1996

Jude is directed by Michael Winterbottom, who has won the Europa Prize the past two years in a row, which is for films on television. One was Go Now, which is really extraordinary, and the other is Family. He also did a film called Butterfly Kiss (1995) and he is just about to start a film called Sarajevo. It is very hot.

Actually, Michael is quite similar to Peter Duncan, except he is not a writer, though I think he co-wrote Butterfly Kiss. He has a very strong sense of what he wants to do. I found myself very much trusting his vision. Even if he was suggesting an approach that had radically not occurred to me, I knew that it was coming from a very holistic sense of the film he was making, which I don’t have. I don’t think many actors do. You could trust him, which was quite amazing.

It was shot by Eduardo Serra. The few rushes I saw have the look of a 1960s Polish film. It is very stark.

The first thing we would do when we arrived in the morning was cut about a third of the dialogue. Michael was constantly reducing what actors were doing until there seemed to be virtually nothing, and then accidents would happen, which he would love. [Laughs.] You fuck up when you don’t have that much there. It was quite an interesting exercise.

I found doing my accent more difficult than I had imagined. I didn’t have a voice coach on set. It was horrendously difficult trying to maintain an accent that doesn’t really exist, which is a subtle version of the accent which is used for [Thomas] Hardy and for that time and place. Michael didn’t want it to be a study in accents. So, it is a very, very light Gloucester accent that almost doesn’t exist now.

I was acting opposite Chris Eccleston, from Manchester, and Kate Winslet, who is a well-spoken Londoner, shooting in Yorkshire with a crew of Lon­don Cockneys. We then moved to Edinburgh and to New Zealand. So, it was just horrendously difficult maintaining that accent. The only person who really had my accent was Chris, who, as soon as the camera was off, would be speaking in a broad Man­chester accent. And the other person that was always on set was Irish. [Laughs.] It was a nightmare.

Has the story been contemporised in any way?

I don’t think so. I don’t think “contemporise” is really the word that Michael was seeking.

He wanted to take the BBC out of Thomas p52
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Prior to 1996, the Sundance Film Festival's most important year was 1989. That was when Steven Soderbergh's *Sex, Lies, and Videotape* premiered at the Festival, before heading off to Cannes, where it won the Palme d'Or, and the huge commercial success which followed. That year established Sundance as the premier festival of independent American cinema.

Since then, in search of the next breakaway success, an increasing number of creative executives and agents make their ways to Park City to talent-scout the now-outnumbered filmmakers attending the Festival, and to ski. It is a place where deals are struck, souls sold and Hollywood careers begun.

This year will be considered an equally-important year. Combating misuse of the Festival - key distributors platform-releasing out of Sundance - Robert Redford this year insisted that the majority of films be previously unseen and have true premieres at the Festival. This resulted in an increased presence of distributors taking an aggressive approach to acquisitions in such a competitive market.

Although an unofficial market, 1996 saw such substantial sales that the Festival will never be perceived in the same way again. In fact, the sale of Australian Scott Hicks' *Shine*, from the previously unrecognized World Cinema section of the Festival, places it on the international circuit as a key film market.

*Shine* received one of the most enthusiastic responses at the Festival at a screening reminiscent of the special midnight screening at Cannes of *Strictly Ballroom* ( Baz Luhrmann, 1992). Pre-screening word-of-mouth guaranteed much interest in the world premiere. With standby tickets available on the day only, festival-goers braved the blizzard like conditions to queue for several hours in the falling snow. Director Scott Hicks, producer Jane Scott and writer Jan Sardi attended the screening, and were sincerely overwhelmed by the lengthy standing ovation at the film's end.

*Shine* tells the story of Australian pianist David Helfgott's descent into madness, and eventual rediscovery of his career in Australia. Its international cast of supporting roles includes Sir John Gielgud, Armin Mueller-Stahl and Lynn Redgrave, with an extraordinary performance by leading Australian stage actor Geoffrey Rush. Noah Taylor also gives an outstanding performance of Helfgott in his earlier years.

As one local producer noted, "It is hard enough to get buyers to stay until the end of a film, let alone witness them weeping throughout it." A heartfelt emotion marked the audience's response to the film's optimism and celebration of this relatively-unknown musical genius.

The commercial response was immediate, with Fineline Films purchasing North American rights within 24 hours for US$2.7 million. In keeping with the aggressive market that Sundance has become, Harvey Weinstein and Tony Safford from Miramax left a Park City restaurant after a vocal dispute with Pan-dora's Jonathon Taplin, who had allegedly implied a successful sale to Miramax. As compensation, Miramax and Buena Vista purchased key world territories, with assorted other territories tied up quickly by Sundance Festival-initiated deals.

Taking *Shine* to Sundance rather than waiting for Cannes will prove a courageous decision that paid off. Cannes is traditionally the key market for Australian films and will see some 16 films in the market this year, with an as yet unknown number in the Compétition. Technically, *Shine* may be eligible, although these rules are yet to be contested as Sundance is a national festival only, and *Shine* screened out of Competition.

Furthering the continued reputation of Australian cinema in the U.S., *Angel Baby* (Michael Rymer, 1995) also screened at the Festival to much acclaim. Supported at Sundance by producer Jonathan Shteiman, director Michael Rymer and lead actress Jacqueline McKenzie, *Angel Baby* continued its international festival acclaim, as did Gregor Jordan's short, *Scringer*.

Australian Jacqueline Turnure's short, *The Silence Between*, screened in Competition and generated much interest in her work. More than one dozen filmmakers with features screening had their earlier shorts shown in previous years, under the continued support of the Sundance Institute which runs the Festival. Formed in 1981 by Robert Redford, the Sundance Institute supports filmmakers through assorted programmes, some of which are available to Australian filmmakers. The Festival is obviously the most recognized of these. Highly sought after screenwriter and director-based "labs" complement independent producer conferences, screenings in Tokyo and Beijing, and, most recently, the newly-formed Sundance Channel.

The Sundance Channel is a cable-based pay channel delivering the best of independent American and world cinema. Redford describes it as providing...
"a chance and a choice: a chance to see something they're not going to see anywhere else, and the chance to decide for themselves what they like, what they want to see, and what they don't like". The Channel will be screening independent Australian films.

In a year marked by increasingly accessible films, Robert Redford and Geoffrey Gilmore (director of programming) identified a healthy shift away from genre-based Tarantino-inspired work. When asked about the central theme of the Festival, Redford replied simply "women", acknowledging a conscious effort by the Festival to support a new direction in subject matter and style.

The Piper-Heidsieck Tribute to Independent Vision was this year given to Dianne Wiest in recognition of "the original voice and vision of an independent film artist". Wiest is best known for her films with Woody Allen: Radio Days (1987), Hannah and Her Sisters (1986) and Bullets Over Broadaway (1994). The award is in keeping with the Festival's new direction; previous recipients including Denzel Washington, John Turturro and Nicolas Cage. Wiest is the first woman to receive the award.

The Woman in Film Spirit of Sundance Award went to Marcia Gay Harden and Candace Bowen, and is awarded annually to "women who embody the true spirit of independent filmmaking". Gay Harden is best known in Australia for her role in New Zealand filmmaker Alison Maclean's Crush (1992) and appeared in this year's Festival in Lee David Zlotoff's Care of the Spitfire Grill.

The biggest sale of the Festival, the $US6 million Care of the Spitfire Grill whose world rights sold to Castle Rock Entertainment for $US10 million, set a Festival record. A tightly-constructed story of redemption and re-birth, it follows ex-prisoner Perry Talbott (Alison Elliot) in her attempts to re-build a life in small-town Maine despite suspicion and distrust as her past fails to remain hidden.

Walking and Talking (Nicole Holofcener, 1993), another exceptionally-performed ensemble piece about female friendships, idle banter and telecommunications in the big city, was also well received. With an extremely high profile at the Festival, and a lucrative deal to Miramax for North America, Walking and Talking illustrates the optimism and celebratory nature of this year's selection.

Jim McKay's Girls Town also chooses friendship amongst women as its central theme, capturing the spirit of young women on the verge of discovering strong voices. Another Festival favourite, this simply-constructed and gently-paced drama brings together an ensemble of talented actors that includes Lili Taylor, Brulkin Harris and Anna Grace.

Of course, no Sundance Film Festival would be complete without some violence. The stunning documentary of the George Foreman-Muhammad Ali fight of the century in Zaire missed its first screening as the print failed to make it through the snow. When We Were Kings (Leon Gast) was subsequently replaced by the latest Jackie Chan martial-arts orgy, Rumble in the Bronx (Stanley Tong). Chan and his team definitely captured an ironic and satirical vision of the action genre, which this film celebrates.

Dubbed into English for a 1,700-print release in North America, Chan's incredibly good humour and martial-arts skill make Van Damme look like a white-belt beginner. As Chan's uncle drives him into New York for the first time, he asks if he speaks English. "Now you're here in New York, you should practise. Let's talk in English from now on." The story then unfolds, in an unsubtle and entertaining way, in the most outrageously funny dubbing since Woody Allen's What's Up, Tiger Lily? (1966).

Previously known for its discovery of ultra low-budget films, the Festival's inclusion of huge action-adventures like Rumble in the Bronx is indicative of a further shift in its philosophy. Matthew Bright's Freeway (1993), a moral tale along the lines of Little Red Riding Hood and starring Kiefer Sutherland, Reese Witherspoon and Brooke Shields, is another mainstream inclusion.

Smaller films from established filmmakers - Kenneth Branagh's A Midwinter's Tale opened the Festival - also screened. A celebration of staging a play (Hamlet), the film was ultimately upstaged by Al Pacino's Looking for Richard. Pacino was joined in the Festival selection by another actor turned director, Kevin Bacon, whose first feature, Losing Chance, premiered.

Old Festival favourites returned as well, including Hal Hartley, whose Flirt presents the same short script
made with three separate casts in three different locations. It occasionally reaches the heights set by his first films, Trust (1991) and The Unbelievable Truth (1990).

Other popular films included Cold Fever (Fredrik Thor Fridriksson), especially for its depiction of the Icelandic wilderness; Precious (Alexander Payne, 1993), for its controversial subject matter; and If Lucy Fell (Eric Schaeffer, 1995), for Elle Macpherson alone.

Festival winner Welcome to the Dollhouse (Todd Solondz) is a skilfully-directed black comedy that follows young schoolgirl Dawn Weiner as she becomes tormented by other school kids, family and an obnoxiously-good younger sister. Although it avoids a Hollywood happy ending, Dollhouse has a mainstream reach as a universal tale of the persecuted child whose plight worsens.

Nick Park’s short, Close Shave, also torments its protagonist. The latest animation from the Aardman team, it stars Wallace and Grommit from The Wrong Trousers (Nick Park, 1993), and follows their misadventures as Wallace’s love for a local wool shop owner brings about their ruin.

With submissions for the Festival up by one-third and the introduction of a non-competitive American spectrum section, there is obvious evidence of a booming independent filmmaking scene in the U.S. capturing the bottom end of feature films.

The Slamdance Film Festival now runs simultaneously in Park City, presenting an adventurous programme of the type of independent features originally shown by the Sundance Festival.

Highlights of the programme included Erica Jordan and Shirin Esfossam’s Walls of Sand, the complex study of the relationship between a young Iranian woman living in the U.S. and a mother battling with agoraphobia. A mutual trust in their friendship becomes the only way to save the custody of the mother’s son. The Daytrippers (Greg Mottola), produced by Sundance Festival star Steven Soderbergh, also received much acclaim.

Park City, 30-minutes from Salt Lake City, Utah, is a small ski resort in an idyllic setting. Although the town is not designed for a festival of this size, the hype and buzz generated focuses much interest in independent film.

Tim Roth in The Player (Robert Altman, 1993) calls out “see you in Park City”. The Festival, as Altman references it, is an often desperate place, a ski holiday for agents and executives where young filmmakers hope to build a career on a chance meeting on a chair lift, or in a queue outside an already-packed screening.

With an increasingly high profile and after the huge success of Shine, the World Cinema section of the Festival will have a much higher profile as an alternative, especially for Australian filmmakers considering a premiere at an international event other than Cannes.
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Michael Tolkin is the author of two published novels, *The Player* and *Among The Dead*, three screenplays, *Gleaming The Cube* (Graeme Clifford, 1988), *Deep Cover* (Bill Duke, 1992) and *The Player* (Robert Altman, 1992), and writer-director of two exceptional features, *The Rapture* (1991) and *The New Age* (1994). Like many other recent American films (and novels), his work is deeply concerned with the material, spiritual, moral and social fabric of the contemporary world. Within this field, Tolkin's work is distinguished by its austerity, intellectual depth and challenging of viewer expectations.

The son of a political journalist and television writer, Tolkin moved to Hollywood in 1978-9 - "just as the Hollywood I loved had ended" - after working as a journalist in New York. Unlike many contemporary filmmakers, he did not attend film school. He claims to have looked through the viewfinder of a camera for the first time when making his directorial début, *The Rapture*, in 1991.

Tolkin describes *The Rapture*, *The New Age* and *The Player* as "period pictures set in the present". These "movies about California between 1990 and 1994" deal with the social, psychological and spiritual malaise of the 1990s, which he identifies as symptoms of the Reagan years and the recent downturn in the American economy. As Peter Witten (Peter Weller) gloomily expounds in *The New Age*:

"We were all born because the economy was expanding. See, now it's collapsing. The world doesn't need us. In the old days, the laws of nature kept everything in balance, when people were in harmony with nature. And now, nature is dead, and there's no more harmony, and we're all pointless."
Tolkin’s work, however, extends far beyond the parameters of social-realist cinema. Combining a surrealistic mise en scène with caustic irony, it presents astute observations of contemporary American culture: religious fundamentalism (The Rapture); the decline of Los Angeles’ upper middle class in the late 1980s (The New Age); the immorality of a Hollywood studio executive for whom murder provides a career opportunity (The Player).

Rather than assume unauthorial superiority, Tolkin approaches his sad and deeply-troubled protagonists with understanding and, often, affection. It is a ploy of being punished, not to mention the problem of pre-revelatory letter for which Frank searches in the wreck. The latter is a devastating journey through the morally-inert aeshetics and were suddenly being confronted with a missing content, falling apart. I took seriously the collapse of real-estate prices. I didn’t think it was something just to laugh at and I thought that something significant was going on.

And you think that continues?

Yes. I think the strikes in France are as much to do with what I’m talking about as the unsettling of an upper middle class in America. They call it “downsizing” in America. Companies are contracting. The overlords who run the corporations are paying themselves more money than they have ever paid themselves before. The gap between the salaries of the highest level of corporations and those of the lowest levels of corporations are the highest ratio in the world. And the people caught in the middle, like Peter and Katherine, are suddenly being stunned by the reality that they may dress rich and look rich but they are not rich, and they are scared.

That fear is the beginning of the story. The story isn’t about economic collapse; the story is about the fearful response to it, the emotional response to a collapse.

The New Age is a very interesting title in that it has so many different registers and points of reference. It is simultaneously literal and ironic; it also refers to the relationship between the couple, Peter and Katherine Witner, and, in a wider sense, to America in the 1990s.

You said it! That is it. Next question! [Laughs.] I always thought it was a good movie title because it was complicated, because of what you said. It could be taken literally, satirically and prophetically.

Sometimes you open up a book and get a half-quote worth five years of education because of a strange insight. Somewhere I read about Proust the idea that, if you really want to look at the future, you look at the way the upper classes are decaying. That will give you a clue to what is coming next for everybody.

I really wanted to write about the death of the 1980s, which is still going on, because the ’80s, like the ’60s, are going to extend so much longer. I think the ’80s will be remembered for having a tremendous amount of power and we are picking up the pieces now.

Michael Tolkin Filmography


AS SCRIPTWRITER: 1989 The Player

I watched the financial decay of an upper middle class in Los Angeles that thought itself immune from economic worry. It was being pounded by the realities that affected assembly-line workers in the rust belt. I saw people whose lives were centred on their aesthetics and were suddenly being confronted with a missing content, falling apart. I took seriously the collapse of real-estate prices. I didn’t think it was something just to laugh at and I thought that something significant was going on.

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That fear is the beginning of the story. The story isn’t about economic collapse; the story is about the fearful response to it, the emotional response to a collapse.

In The New Age, the minute one sees the spiritual groups and the kinky S&M crowd that Peter hangs around with, one expects an invitation to ridicule these people. But the film doesn’t take that approach; it is very non-judgmental. What was your intention in showing the spiritual group and the S&M crowd?

That happened, too, when I was making The Rapture. I think it is too easy to ridicule people.

Since the film came out, I’ve changed the way I formulate this, but America is an incredibly hypocritical country. Part of the vehicle for that hypocrisy is the presumption of an objective press which asks objective questions via an objective reporter, written in an objective tone for an objective audience, which itself is ideally neutral. So, each reader pretends to be in a position of presumed superiority to the subject of the story. This is how it is taught in schools: that religion is something that can be deciphered; that anybody with a good college education and a few courses, with knowledge of a couple of definitions of words like “projection” or even the
word “psychology” or “myth”, is somehow able to understand what really is going on with religion, or what is really going on with perversion, or with social disaster.

That presumed superiority also presumes non-participation on the part of that ideal audience, which is invented by this, presumably, morally- and politically-neutral interlocutor, the reporter. But, in fact, America is a widely hypocritical country.

People make fun of The Rapture, but rich people in America go to church and are religious than in almost any other country. Yet there is the press trying to be above religion. There are sex stores selling sex stories all over the country, and every video store has its porn box, but you wouldn’t know that from the way these things are written about. Nobody ever comes out and confesses directly. There is a huge area of secrecy in people’s lives. Partly this is because that is the only way they can protect themselves against total culture.

There were so many things I wanted to say and put in The New Age, and I would have liked having a different way into the S&M. Maybe the film wasn’t quite the right vehicle. Maybe I would have had to make a three-and-half hour movie. I have a number of friends who are very active in the S&M world – some of them are psycho, and some of them are heroes.

Let’s just take S&M as an example. People don’t trust each other. People are living in a world where it is impossible to trust anybody. People who are looking for trust and looking for acceptance test each other with this process called S&M, which is partly just a way of finding people you can trust. It is not so much about the orgy, but the buffer after the orgy.

I’ve seen this, and I wanted to make the point that Peter was incapable of just relaxing and just jumping into the pool. I think the same is true for a lot of religion. It’s like the 12-step programmes. I have a lot of friends in AA and in NA and, you know, it is a religion. I’m not saying that derivatively – religion is certainly a vehicle to faith and to healing – but it is always made fun of. The press always treat it somewhat satirically and somewhat condescendingly. In fact, it is the most incredibly sincere, extremely important movement in the world for its healing. But even to say a word like “healing” is to invite derision – derision by people who are themselves searching.

The relationship between Peter and his father (Adam West) in The New Age is not unlike that between Frank and his dad in Among the Dead. It is based on simultaneous contempt and conformity.

I think that the intentional subtext that Batman [Adam West] is Peter’s father should answer the question. You see these guys around LA all the time: silver foxes like Peter’s father, who seem to have made a lot of money, or seem to be on top of money, and travel around with girls in their twenties. They seem to ... float.

You don’t see fathers too often in the movies because nobody wants to admit they have one. We can save a few thoughts for what the movie is, and why it was received the way it was, and what it is about the movie which disturbed a lot of people. But one of the offences I committed was having a particularly unhappy hero and showing what his father was like, showing a father out of whom he likely would have come. You know, his father bounces a cheque on him. His father is so morally numb, so morally thin, himself. There is no lesson there.

How did the film offend people?

It’s a bit of a cliché, but only an optimistic time is capable of withstanding tragedy, and this is not an optimistic sort of thing. If you are holding up the mirror, people don’t want to see that.

America also has no tradition of a cinema of the middle class, of the bourgeois. Forget “middle class”; it is a bad term. Use the French word because it actually fits a little bit better.

There is no cinema of the bourgeois in America the way there is in Europe. There certainly is one in France, as there is in Italy. I’m not so sure there is in Germany, though Fassbinder certainly made movies about the bourgeoisie. And it doesn’t exist in America because America wants Natty Gann and Huck Finn. They are not interested in the American rich, except in a kind of glossy, theatrical way; never in any kind of realistic way. For the most part, it wants people to be rich in a kind of fairytale way, not thinking about it, I like looking at it, I like writing about it, and I’m told there are other people who like that. I’m certainly grateful when people come up to me and let me know that my work has actually made sense to them and given comfort.
Negroponte and Closer to Home

Phillip Dutchak talks to American guru Nicholas Negroponte, then heads home to discuss the future of new media with a range of key Australians

In 1987, Stewart Brand (editor and publisher of the Whole Earth Catalogue) released his book, The Media Lab: Inventing the Future at MIT. Having worked at the Media Lab, Brand began:

The Media Laboratory is a brand-new facility, US$45 million ambitious, housed in a sleek L. M. Pei edifice on MIT [the Massachusetts Institute of Technology] East Campus, built around Negroponte’s conviction that something big and convergent is happening to the whole gamut of communications media – television, telephones, recordings, film, newspapers, magazines, books, and infesting and transforming them all, computers.

Not much has changed since Brand wrote these words. The Media Lab is still there. Nicholas Negroponte, one of the co-founders of the Media Lab, is still there. The ideas, initiatives and projects coming out, around and through the Media Lab that Brand chronicled back in 1987, have not been rendered passé by the pace of technological developments nor been judged “boring” in a changing world.

The opposite is more true. The Media Lab(s) have achieved cult status. People make pilgrimages to view Media Lab demonstrations, or to study or work. Businesses invest money in the Labs so not to be left behind. And Nicholas Negroponte has become the “guru” – the man, the guy who knows – about the brave new digital world we are heading into.

Negroponte is the “point man” for the Media Labs. His position at the Labs has given him access to a wealth of information in an information age. Negroponte’s duties in attracting corporate sponsorship have put him in touch with business needs and views.

Not only has Negroponte excelled as the original “talking head”, but he’s become a media star aided by a regular column in the co-founder of the Aledia Lab, is still infesting and transforming them all, computers.

I have a theory that your training as an architect – the ability to consider situations in a practical 3D manner – has been a great benefit to you as you moved into the digital field.

I agree. It may have less to do with understanding matters, issues or situations in 3-D and more to do with “asking questions”. Engineering tends to be problem solving, whereas design is more about question-asking. Most givens are not givens at all.

I hear people saying “they know”, businesses especially, when it comes to anything digital, but do they?

It is important to experience cyber-space, like a place.

In an article in Scientific America, you suggested that holograms were a long way off from being a commercial reality.

Holographic movies are a-ways off because of bandwidth, display resolutions and real-time computer speed. But holographic hard copy, for medical engineering, for example, is here and now. The display medium is chemical-based, the resolution is sufficient, and there is no need to do anything in real time. Don’t ask me why radiologists don’t use holograms.

Carlo Alessi of the Italian design house Alessi – those interesting coffee pots – was recently in Australia talking up the value of design and the importance of the design of objects. Is object design important in a digital or virtual world?

Design has to go beyond looks and include personality: tone of voice, what the coffee pots say and when. That kind of thing. At the MIT Media Lab, we have started a programme called “Things that Think” and it engages a wide range of manufacturers: Nike, Levi’s, Steelcase, Lego, Volvo, Gillette, etc. [46 of them]. The key to thinking is linking; hence, other members include AT&T, Deutsche Telekom, Motorola and Nokia.

American technology is the means for going digital. American content – i.e., Hollywood, consumer goods – is to be found everywhere. Can countries like Australia ever set the agenda in the digital world?

Well, you gave us Rupert Murdoch and he sure is setting an agenda in the digital world. Remember the Web [the worldwide web] was invented in Europe and only about half of it is used in English.

When does content, not technology, become the driving force in a digital world?

It already is. Disney is a big player. But you have to understand that, in the past, content was king because it was different to person-to-person communication, like a phone call. Now we have a new type of content, in the middle: multi-user games, MUDs and MOOs. This is not content as we know, but content of a kind as we will get to know it.

What are the important issues for new media as we go into 1996 or beyond?

1996 will be the year for three things:

1) security and privacy
2) digital cash
3) cyberlaw.
Closer to Home

Cinema Papers interviewed representatives from across Australian business and organizations for their views on the digital world. The question put to everyone was: “For Australia, what are the important issues for new media as we go into 1996?” People were free to define “new media” as it pertained to their respective point of view. Some respondents talked about CD-ROMs, while others talked about the Internet, so the diversity of views continued.

In traditional terms, this is a survey. In new media terms, this is a database full of intellectual property. In my terms, it was fun to do.

Roger Buckeridge
Roger Buckeridge is senior consultant at Cutler & Co. which has produced a number of reports on new media and telecommunications for corporations and government.

New media is all about the Internet paradigm, as a communicative medium with low barriers to self-publishing. This form of multimedia communication is rapidly becoming imbedded in business-to-business, business-to-consumer and person-to-person communication. It will be about a 10-year transition until these practices are as accepted into daily life, as is the telephone today, and are equally easy to use.

The computer and the consumer electronics industries will make a vast array of digital devices to suit users’ needs, from digital large-screen living-room displays to mobile hand-held devices.

New media has little to do with pay television. That is old media funded in a different way than solely by advertisers.

New media is an enormous business productivity tool. It is transforming the economic structure of many industries, in particular those industries that can have their service or product both ordered and delivered electronically. All video and cinema industries are in this class. It is taking out the intermediary and is delivering more profit margin to the creator of the service (“content”), and lower prices to buyers.

In the country areas, it looks like satellite and wireless technologies may become the way to deliver at least some of the broadband features that town dwellers will get. There are big issues of equity of access to new media services for those outside the cities. We are talking about the future physical structure and location of Australian communities here. About access to life-long learning and skillling. About how to get and keep high-paying jobs. New media is much, much more significant than 100 channels of couch potato, all-you-can-eat television.

Noric Dilanchian
Noric Dilanchian is Vice-President for the Australian Interactive Multimedia Industry Association (AImIA) and an Intellectual Property lawyer specializing in new media.

In 1995, multimedia activity intensified in Australia. For years, Australia has had a greater number of experienced multimedia production teams than any other country in East Asia – the region with which Australia’s economy is now most closely associated. It should be noted that, after the U.S., Australia on a per capita basis has the second highest ownership of computers, and the second highest number of users of on-line and Internet services. We are globally competitive.

Looking ahead, the pace of developments will escalate. Convergence will be driven by electronic commerce into the broader economy. Beachheads are already established beyond the communications, entertainment and information industries. In time, it will become clear that, while titles or products have market share, services represent the core market and a tremendous opportunity for growth.

Wendy Buchan
Wendy Buchan is Media Manager in Research and Strategies for DDB Needham Australia.

The introduction of “new media” has created an excitement and hype for both advertisers and agencies; however, the full creative use of existing media has yet to be exploited to its full extent.

The new/interactive media – pay television, interactive television, CD-ROM, the Internet, touch-screen kiosks – should be seen as complementary to existing media. Such new media will create niche market properties, requiring a close look as to how we are currently communicating with our customers.

The new media will give customers increased choice and users will be drawn by creativity and relevance to “visit” us. Plus, new media will allow advertisers to more accurately target their message. So, there is a need to know who is using new media and why.

DDB Needham has developed a proprietary research system called Personal Media Network. It is used to determine what the media people are selecting, why they are using it and when. We see this as an imperative as the fragmentation of audiences increases every day.

Kim Williams
Kim Williams is Chief Executive for Fox Studios Australia.

Fox Studios Australia will be developing a sophisticated studio complex at the Shoawground Moore Park site in Sydney. The studio will encompass set construction, custom workshop, storage and post-production facilities, in addition to sound stages.

Digital developments in sound, online and special effects will be central to the operation of the studio. This will also include flexible and comprehensive on-site switching and communications systems able to transfer images, sound and text from within the studios to external points. The detailed design refinement of these “high-tech” applications will progressively occur through 1996 and 1997.

Brendan Yell
Brendan Yell is Business Strategist Interactive Services for Optus Vision.

New media is all dependent on the efficiency of the network to deliver new applications and services. Optus Vision’s integrated network – carrying cable television, telephony and interactive services – will provide such efficiencies. High capacity at low cost is just not possible with our existing communications infrastructure. Once there is an efficient delivery mechanism, the scope of the new media will be dependent on the creative minds that explore it.

Craig Cameron
Craig Cameron is the Chief Operating Officer for the newly-formed Telstra Multimedia Pty Ltd.

New media is using new technology to deliver information, data, pictures, sound and text by emerging communications services in means that haven’t been done before.

The issues for new media are technology, cost, applications, regulatory and the pace of change. It is not only a matter of establishing technologies, such as wireless communications, cable modems or ISDN services, but also the cost of these services and deliver them at the right price to our customers. We need to think about the applications that people need and want, and then building them in conjunction with software developers and content producers.

The regulatory environment for new media is important, and an industry code-of-conduct has to be developed that benefits both users and providers.

Some people are not comfortable with change and that is a very real consideration to be aware of as this area develops. But multimedia is a terrific opportunity both here and overseas. As an export product and for its related services, multimedia has low barriers to successful trading. A highly-developed Australian market could lead to increased international sales.

Kodak

In March 1995, Kodak announced that it was forming worldwide a Kodak Digital and Applied Imaging Group. Representatives for Kodak Australia summarized the company’s current position as: Kodak is in the picture business and sees its role in new media simply as making pictures easier to use, whether they be digital images or from other media such as silver halide film, which the company keeps making technical advances in due to market demand. New media isn’t mass media yet. Kodak has developed “hybrid” technologies which harness the best features of traditional imaging, such as superior resolution and color values, to the versatility of digital technology. Examples of these technologies include Photo CD or Cineon, a film-to-digital-to-film technology. Plus Kodak is a leader in “pure” digital imaging technology as a developer and manufacturer of components for digital cameras, digital storage platforms and document-imaging products and services.
Invasion. We need interactive drama for Grown-ups. We need a new model to the games models of Alien tacked on and not constrain multimedia movies with so-called alternative paths computer interfaces and exciting ways of ideas. Stories and ideas in multimedia replaced with talk about stories and projects are taking shape around on-line talk about “content” in multimedia is continue. to less than a year ago, many more pro­

Productions in Brisbane delivery, and we expect this trend to mid-year. We've noticed that, compared

Frank Chalmers is Senior Interactive Designer & Writer for Digital Video Productions in Brisbane

For 1996, we are currently developing an educational series on Automotive Technology which will comprise 32 CDs when finished by mid-year. We've noticed that, compared to less than a year ago, many more projects are taking shape around on-line delivery, and we expect this trend to continue.

Coming from a film and television background, I look forward to when talk about “content” in multimedia is replaced with talk about stories and ideas. Stories and ideas in multimedia will lead to genuinely different computer interfaces and exciting ways of presenting multimedia material, and will get multimedia away from Hollywood movies with so-called alternative paths tracked on and not constrain multimedia to the games models of Alien Invasion. We need interactive drama for Grown-ups.

Ricci Swart is the Multimedia Development Fund Manager for Film Victoria

Film Victoria recently announced that it will manage the $2 million per annum Victoria 21 Multimedia Development Fund. The Fund, which is open to application by private-sector organizations, operates both a concept development to develop concepts to a production-ready stage, at which equity investment can be sought, and a producer package to assist experienced multimedia producers with basic running costs and costs associated with marketing multimedia products and services.

An Evaluation Committee of industry practitioners has been appointed to consider applications on a monthly basis. Victoria 21 Multimedia Development Fund Investment Guidelines are now available from Film Victoria.

National Film & Sound Archive

Mark Nicette is Senior Manager Preservation Branch and Ian Gilmour is Manager New Technology Group for the National Film & Sound Archive (NFSA)

The NFSA has set up a special unit to investigate and report on new strategies and potential services for preservation, storage and access.

The NFSA is pursuing new ways of making more material available to a wider range of people in more locations by searching and browsing the collection via the Internet, WWW and future broadband services.

Initially, information about the NFSA’s collection has been made available by publishing a CD-ROM of the Archive’s collection database, MAVIS. Newer versions of the MAVIS CD-ROM will be linked to snapshots of stills, audio and moving images.

Digitized moving images must be heavily compressed for transmission or to fit onto CD-ROM and have to be restored to remove scratches, dirt and blemishes which make the signal more complicated and harder to compress. The NFSA is currently involved in research efforts to develop appropriate restoration and compression methodologies for archival motion pictures. We’ve been using advanced digital sound restoration processes for the past six years and are anticipating digital still image restoration in the next year or so. Sound dubs can be provided for clients on CD.

Marcus Rose is Executive Director for the development capital company, Concept Capital

The pace of technological change, convergence of industries and new sources of content are creating many opportunities in the market.

Concept Capital is looking to invest, but Australian high-tech companies are not being as well received as U.S. high-tech on the respective stock markets. It is maybe that the Australian market is more down-to-earth on companies in this area and not as sanguine as our American counterparts over the future of high-tech firms. There has been recent U.S. press that the expectations put on Netscape Communications by the market is “unreal”.

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The Indian Panorama

John H. Wood looks at the latest Indian films on show at the 1996 Indian Film Festival in Delhi

Most of the world's leading film festivals are held in the city whose name the festival takes: Venice, Berlin, Cannes, London, etc. In a country where cultural interests can easily become regionalized, the International Film Festival of India aims to promote itself as a national event and so rotates annually from one major city to another. In recent years, the Festival has been held in Bangalore, Delhi, Calcutta and Bombay, and this year it was held again in Delhi; there is talk that next year it will go south again, possibly to Madras or Trivandrum. There are obviously many good reasons for a peripatetic film festival, but the lack of a permanent base and facilities that can be used year after year certainly makes the task of organization extraordinarily difficult. Nevertheless, in January this very big festival was run again with remarkable efficiency by the Directorate of Film Festivals under the leadership of Mahi Sahay.

The Festival has a number of sections, including a competitive section introduced this year for films made by Asian women. The Indian Panorama offers the twenty or so best Indian non-commercial films made over the previous year. The contents of the Panorama used to be selected by several regional panels, each selecting a number of films from its particular zone. This year, however, a panel chaired by eminent filmmaker Buddhadeb Dasgupta, who had not made a film since his highly successful Charachar in 1993, selected 19 films from some 150 entrants.

There was some apprehension concerning the quality of the Panorama. After all, where were the big names? The Indian Panorama this year was marked more by competence than by inspiration.

"Notwithstanding the excellence of several films, most of the Indian Panorama this year was marked more by competence than by inspiration."

"Notwithstanding the excellence of several films, most of the Indian Panorama this year was marked more by competence than by inspiration."
such a wordy film, concentrating almost exclusively on just two characters and dense with dialogue and polemic that, despite its technical polish, it becomes rather tedious towards the end of its 130 minutes.

From April to August gives us Dev Benegal's film based on the excellent novel of Upamanyu Chatterjee, *English August*. The title is the nickname of the central character, Agasty Sen, a young civil servant sent to Madna, a nondescript backblocks town in the sticks of India. Here the young dreamer, who is too urbane and cynical to find comfort in provincial bureaucracy, finds it rather in sexual fantasy, masturbation and dope-smoking - as well as in the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius. The film is, in fact, a very funny satire on provincialism, with its conservatism and closed-mindedness, its incumbent older-generation reverence for Gandhism, and its regional language that the English-educated Agastya cannot speak. The film is a good deal slicker than the novel, concentrating more on the comic value of the characters and their circumstances and making a hilarious and often irreverent joke out of them. The serious element of the novel, taken less seriously in the film (and quite appropriately, too), is the journey of self-discovery that emerges from a year amidst crushing ordinariness. Both the novel and the film are in English.

The better of the remaining films included two from Assam: *Itishas (Exploitation)* by Bhabendra Nath Saikia (who, incidentally, has a doctorate in physics from London and is one of eastern India’s most popular short story writers), and the very beautiful *It’s a Long Way to the Sea*, by Jahnu Barua. *Itishas* has a predominantly urban setting for its story about exploitation of the weak by the strong, while Barua’s film is the story of a rural boatman who lives alone with his orphaned grandson and makes his living from ferrying locals across the river. He is forced into a reassessment of his life when his weak and unscrupulous son (and the son’s even more unscrupulous wife) take advantage of him over a property deal and when local government is successful in having a bridge built over the river, thus making his livelihood redundant. That for an essentially predictable moment when the old man gets drunk and tries to chop down the bridge, the film moves gently yet with an inexorable sense of purpose, weaving its atmosphere out of the tensions that destroy families when love is soured by lust for profit. While the film ends with the old man’s future looking bleak, the relationship between grandfather and boy is its one gleaming ray of hope.

Also from Assam but in the Bodo language of the northeast of the province, the first Bodo feature film to be screened at an Indian Film Festival, was Jwngdao Bodosa’s extraordinary film, *Rape in the Virgin Forest*. Jwngdao Bodosa takes credit not only for the film’s direction, but also for the production, the story and screenplay, the camera work and the editing. Moreover, he made the film on a budget of less than $12,000, something like a tenth of what most Indian art film directors, well used to working on less than a shoe-string, would call an absolute minimum purse. Given its financial restraints, the film has obvious technical defects, yet, given its unpretentious treatment of its subject of forest preservation and the obvious love of the country that Jwngdao Bodosa’s camera reflects, it is easy to make excuses for the blemishes. One especially wanted moment is when a small group of tribal men entertain each other, one by dancing as a praying mantis, another as a rat and a third as a tortoise. The dances are superb in themselves, but also as part of the overall syntax of the film - just as is the stunning ending which fuses the rape of a woman with the rape of the forest.

Another extremely pleasant film was *Harikumaran’s Sukrumtham (Benefaction)* from Kerala is an intelligent presentation of ideas about mind over body in the treatment of cancer and some disquieting thoughts on the value of death over life, but it is very long and wordy, labouring the point more often than enough. Amol Palekar’s *Bangarwadi* (the name of the village in which the film is set) is much easier to look at, and its story of the first year in the professional life of a young primary teacher, working amongst deprived, ignorant and superstitious shepherd people, is handled with candour, earthiness and compassion. The story, in fact, is rather thin, but, as a carefully-crafted 'slice of life', many would find it rewarding. There were two films made by noted, though not great, directors that promised much more than they delivered. It is perhaps to Sandip Ray’s disadvantage that his own publicity material hails him as the son of the late Satyajit Ray, for he certainly does not have the talent of his father. He is very good at putting a film together, and some of his work for television, as well as his *Target* shown at the Festival, suggests that he might be highly successful in the commercial cinema. *Target*, a story of the conflict between a landlord and his high-caste cronies and the nearby untouchables colony, is very well acted (particularly by Om Puri) and is made with obvious technical flair. Nevertheless, the theme is unoriginal and the narrative proceeds through a treasury of clichés, both social and cinematic. The ending, in which the untouchables defeat their ruthless overlords, is an almost patronising reflection of what simply does not happen in actuality in India.

The maker of the other film, Saeed Mirza, started his career with such intense and incisive films as *The Strange Fate of Anand Desai* (1978) and *What Makes Albert Pinto Angry?* (1980). On learning that his *Naseem* is set in the context of the destruction in 1992 of the Babari Mosque at Ayodhya, one looked forward to something hard-hitting and perhaps historically significant from this talented and skilful filmmaker. Unfortunately, *Naseem* is characterized not by cinematic power but by caution, so obvious is the director’s endeavour not to offend the majority community by portraying the thugs’ vandalism as candidly as most of the world’s television networks did at the time the mosque was destroyed. It is not unreasonable to suspect that Saeed felt intimated by the destructive potential of the present reactionary government of the state of Maharashtra which gave so much support to the destruction, yet such an excuse hardly strengthens the film.) At best, *Naseem* is a pleasant human-interest story, easy to watch and easy to like, and – sadly – just as easy to forget.

There were other very pleasant human interest films, though none of them destined to be in any way memorable. One might note M. S. Sathyu’s *Galge (Moments)*, a populist young love story set in the lofty though somewhat naïve idealism that sees unity beyond sectarianism, and Chidananda Das Gupta’s *Amodini*, a lovely piece of cinematic confectionery dealing with marriage customs in Bengal at the time of the British conquest.

Notwithstanding the excellence of several films, most of the Indian Panorama this year was marked more by competence than by inspiration. One certainly hopes for the return to next year’s Panorama of Sen, Dasgupta and Gopalakrishnan - at least.
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Digital Freight Train Gathers Speed

Dominic Case finds Australians are catching up in the world of film-to-film digital-effects systems

History isn't often convenient: it would be nice to cite Babe (Chris Noonan, 1995) as the film that launched the Australian digital effects industry. But the disappointing truth is that not only does the little rasher talk with an American accent, but his mouth was moved by American company Rythm'n'Hooves. A year ago, no Australian company had the capacity to attempt such a big production. Now, however, there are two complete film-to-film digital-effects systems in Sydney.

Dfilm Services

Dfilm Services was formed out of Atlab's optical printing department and Acme's Kine department. This is the site of Australia's first Kodak Cineon system, consisting of a high-resolution film scanner, a digital work station and a film recorder. Dfilm's first venture was for a Chinese feature, Sun Valley (Ho Ping). The work covered a representative sample of digital techniques, including wire removal, some elaborate rotoscoping and colour draining, and steadying a camera jolt in one shot. I spoke with Dfilm's Digital Effects Manager Rob Sandeman:

Sun Valley was a Chinese feature that Roger Savage [Soundfirm] had brought into the country for sound post-production, and Cinevex was completing the elements of post-production. The production had tried to hide the wires in one shot and they hadn't quite done it, so we were asked to have a look at it. As a result of that being successful, and the output quality of that shot, we were then asked to do a test - just off a couple of frames of work print - for a dream sequence where the colour had to be desaturated to monochrome, but keeping the red components of the image - which were blood and a scarf.

We sent the first test down to Cinevex for processing and a work print; we had to do the 31 shots in about two minutes' worth of work using the same process. But we didn't actually meet them until after it was all done.

For the colour desaturation, Sandeman started by using one of Cineon's ultimate tools to pull the red components out of the image, and create a matte or mask for the red areas. He was also able to increase the exposure for these areas to eventually brighten the colour. He then drew a "garbage matte" for the rest of the shot, blocking out any holes in the image matte caused by traces of red elsewhere in the image. Then, applying desaturation to the image - except where the matte is - and combining it with the brightened red areas, he ended up with a black-and-white scene with smears and splashes of red blood.

What about the image steadying?

We had to do the 31 shots in about a week, so the process had to be as automatic as possible. We certainly weren't looking right through every shot for frame-by-frame. We had to do a bit of garbage matting and so on, but then we just put them out to film. In one scene, there was a slight bump in the image that they hadn't noticed before. They first saw it in our image, so we went back and checked and discovered that it wasn't our problem: the movement was in the camera original as well. It was quite easy to fix: we applied motion tracking to one distinctive point in the image, and Cineon matched the pattern frame for frame through the bump. Then we applied the motion track, from the original image, to the final desaturated output image.

One of the very early shots that I did into the mix level through time, and that gave a pulsing effect in the eyes, going between bright blue and grey in a few frames.

We sent that shot down to them, and they liked it. But, as these things happen, when they cut it into the film and got back to Hong Kong, they showed it to people there and decided it wasn't quite appropriate. So, they went back to the steady blue eyes, which we'd done as well.

So, this is an instance where the client wasn't aware of what could be done at first, and they came to you with just a simple and obvious job?

Wire removal isn't necessarily a simple job. Everyone tries to hide the wire on the set, but they can't. And that makes it very difficult. A wire is always slightly visible, and even if you think you can't see it, it's there, and it has to be got rid of. Looking at a single frame, especially against a busy background, you can't always see it clearly, but on running film you see it very clearly as a moving line of density. So, what I can do is go into a small area of the frame where I think the trouble is, and play it down on the system at full resolution. Then I can highlight the area and get to work on it. But it would be easier if the production didn't try and hide the wire at all. Iridescence green wire would be a lot easier!

When we finally met them in Sydney, I got the impression that they had thought that the original job was about as hard as anything we could do. But when they saw what the system was capable of, they said, 'Next time we'll give you much harder things to do.'

General Manager Alan Robson added that since completing Sun Valley, Dfilm had embarked upon a number of features, including Under the Lighthouse Dancing (Graeme Rattigan), and features from Japan (shot at Warner Bros studios in Queensland) and Korea. Robson:

We're getting a lot of work in, and generally people are coming to us with scripts, so there's an opportunity for design input from us. We have people like Dale Diguid and Peter Doyle on contract if the production calls for them, and they're about the best around, particularly for film effects. They have all the experience.

ROB SANDEMAN: "[W]hen they saw what the system was capable of, they said, 'Next time we'll give you much harder things to do.'"
Animal Logic

Just around the corner from Dfilm, Animal Logic has become a highly-regarded graphic-design and digital-effects house since its inception five years ago. Its latest acquisition, Quantel’s Domino system, comprises a 35mm high resolution film scanner, the image processing work station (which is interfaced directly into Animal Logic’s network of Silicon Graphics work stations and Quantel Henrys), and a digital film recorder. I spoke with the company’s director Zareh Nalbandian about how digital film work was developing.

We’re still uncovering areas where we can use the system, because there’s been such a limitation with film, especially in Australia, as there have been so few optical facilities. We’re looking at a couple of scripts every week, and we’re always uncovering possibilities for us to give producers a real opportunity of doing the film more efficiently, or cost effectively, or being able to tighten up the production schedule. And the most obvious creative areas so far have been in title design.

Our experience is both in TV title design as well as in TV special effects for commercials. That experience applies to the new technology at film resolution, because the creative content is the same. The tools are a bit different, but not all that different, which makes it easy for our designers to make the transition. They’re certainly a lot more powerful than any traditional optical techniques. We’ve a design-based company with a very strong technical bent, so we approach any brief as a design brief; there is no real technical challenge, it’s a creative challenge.

When people have come to us with design briefs up to now, both pre-Domino (for example, the titles for Babe), and at first with Domino for Lillian’s Story (Jerzy Domaradzki) and Not Fourteen Again (Gillian Armstrong), we’ve been given a set brief, a set budget, and quite a few preconceived ideas. When it comes to the films that we’re looking at now, we have got quite a lot more input, and we think that’s going to involve those ideas which make a lot more use of the technology.

One thing that has really given us latitude and predictability at the same time has been our ability to grade material as we’ve scanned it into the Domino system. Then we’ve been able to view the work as we go, at 24 frames per second, using a synthesized cine shutter on a print-calibrated monitor at film resolution.

On Not Fourteen Again, the title design – the fonts, the layout – is very distinctive. Did those selections come from the producer, or from Animal Logic?

Our designer, Belinda Bennetts, who’s had a great deal of film title experience, even in the pre-digital era, but is also very au fait with digital technology, conceived and designed the typography – the approach to the whole title sequence – and collaborated with the director [Gillian Armstrong] to fine-tune it.

I’m impressed by the lack of strobing on the title: that’s quite hard to do in a horizontal roller title. Was it hard to achieve?

We did have to struggle. Anyone who’s worked with strobing titles knows you can go a little bit slower or faster and you can fix it. But we could try that on the film resolution monitor, so we didn’t have to go to a film output every time and keep wasting stock.

Did you use motion blur?

Yes. That certainly helped, and it’s something you would have trouble controlling using traditional techniques.

What about Dating the Enemy [Megan Simpson Huberman]?

Dating’s a great example: that’s one where we did have a lot of creative input. Sue Milliken [producer] came to us with early storyboards, and we were able to discuss the story she wanted to tell – that’s important – with enough visual impact to stir the audience’s imagination, but without letting budgets run riot. She worked with our designer, Andy Brown, and visual effects director Chris Godfrey, and our producer, Kriselle Baker.

In this one, we were involved in storyboarding, in the technical requirements for the shoot, visualizing lighting requirements and camera angles. That planning is...
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The Shape of Things to Come

Go into any art gallery: you will find every picture is not only a different size, but also a different shape. And every picture has a frame made to fit it. Film and television don’t have the same freedom; the picture must be made to fit the frame, or the screen. This places an onus on the technicians to provide the ideal shape – or aspect ratio – for moving pictures. Is there an ideal shape?

The early movies quite quickly standardized on the familiar 1.33:1 or 4:3 shape (4 units across, three high). The introduction of optical sound-on-film in 1928 chopped ten per cent off the width of the picture, and chaos reigned until the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences settled on 1.37:1 (the “Academy Frame”).

Television was at first restricted by the need to fit the image onto a round picture tube, and a square picture seemed the most efficient use of the given area. However, an NTSC committee in 1940 found that “since most of man’s [sic] movements take place in the horizontal plane, there should be more freedom of movement in the horizontal direction” and television soon settled on a simple 4:3 – almost exactly the same as the cinema. (For no apparent reason, film is always expressed as a ratio [e.g., 1.33:1] and television as a dimension [e.g., 4 x 3]: both mean exactly the same.)

When television viewing ate into cinema attendances, the film industry hit back with the wide screen. Two systems prevailed: anamorphic (e.g., Cinemascope), in which a picture ratio of 2.35:1 is squeezed onto a nearly square film frame, and widescreen (1.85:1), which, more freedom of movement in the horizontal direction – and television seemed to agree on one

Unfortunately, some compromises must be made in translating between one and the other. Cinematographers for many years have adopted a practice known as “shoot and protect”. Pictures destined for both theatrical and television release are best shot with an open or Academy gate in the camera. Reticles engraved on the viewfinder show the limits of the cinema screen: essential action must be kept within this area, but unwanted images (borders, dolly tracks, set tops, etc.) must be kept out of it. This no-man’s-land has been called “fluff”. When 16mm (1.33:1) or Super 16 (1.66:1) is blown up to 35mm, a wide screen frame line matte is often “burnt in” to the interpos, or the print, to ensure that prints are racked correctly when projected, and to totally eliminate distracting camera or printer frame lines. This crops some material from top and bottom of the original image. However, if a telecine master is to be made from such a print, the “fluff” areas are no longer available for scanning, and the image must be enlarged to fill screen, with consequent cropping at left and right as well.

In the case of “scope pictures, nearly half the frame is cropped from left and right at telecine, and so panning and scanning is required to select the most important part of the frame. Invariably, the original film’s composition is severely compromised by this technique. In a seminar at SMPTE (Sydney 1995), Derek Malone of Roadshow demonstrated the utter impossibility of reframing a celebrated scene from The Remains of the Day (James Ivory, 1994) without serious loss of value.

An alternative solution is “letter-boxing” to create a wider aspect ratio on standard televisions. A black mask appears at top and bottom of the screen, but the full width of the filmed image is visible. Of course, the image is smaller. A bigger television screen is no help as resolution is limited by the number of lines used for the image. American television audiences generally will not accept this; Europeans do; and in Britain and Australia it seems that commercial channel audiences prefer full-screen cropped images while letterbox has appeared mainly on SBS and the UK’s Channel 4 movies.

Fitting film into television is confused by one more factor: most domestic television sets underscan: that is, they crop a certain amount of the picture. This is simply an issue of manufacturing and adjustment tolerances to avoid the risk of non-image data running up and down the edges of the screen. As a result, an area known as “safe picture area” or “TV essential” is defined within the normal 4 x 3 area, where it is certain that images will be seen. An even smaller area is known as “safe title area”. Titles should be inside this area, which, vertically, is a little bit tighter than 1.85:1 masking.

Anything outside “TV essential” may be seen on some sets, but not all.

Historically, television has been handicapped in its flexibility to change aspect ratios: aspect ratio is entirely governed by the shape of the display tube in many millions of domestic lounge rooms. Any change is not to be taken lightly. Still, there has been general consensus that a wider screen would be better, most particularly for sport (with the possible exception of high diving!). Astonishingly, the different proposals for high definition, extended definition and digital television seem to agree on one common aspect ratio – 16 x 9, or about 1.77:1 – although the American Society of Cinematographers maintains a rear-guard action in favour of 2:1.

Why 16 x 9? Many reasons are reported. Practically, it’s a convenient average between the two widescreen ratios (1.85:1 and 1.66:1), thereby requiring very little cropping from films in either format. For the mathematicians, it fits into a neat series: standard television is 4/3; widescreen television is 4/3 x 4/3; ‘scope is 4/3 x 4/3 x 4/3. For digital engineers, one argument starts from the current digital standard of 720 samples per line for 4 x 3 television, increases this to 920 for widescreen, and doubles it to fit a generally agreed goal for HDTV. Assuming square pixels, this is an image of 1920 x 1080 pixels, almost exactly 2 Megabytes. Any other ratio would either fail the resolution test or would overflow convenient memory chips. Finally, for those who can’t get enough television, it’s possible to fit a large 4 x 3 image with three small ones down the side, onto one wide screen.

Currently, delivery on film seems the best bet if both conventional 4 x 3 television and wide screen television are to be catered for. If a 4 x 3 videotepe is converted to widescreen television, there must be a loss of resolution, as roughly two-thirds of the video image will be enlarged to full height.

MEDIA RELEASE
Zero One Zero becomes “One-stop-shop” with Ursa Gold and Digital Audio suites completed

8 February 1996 marked the official launch of Zero One Zero’s new Ursa Gold telecine and Digital Audio suite. Zero One Zero’s Ursa Gold with da Vinci Digital 8:8:8 Renaissance grading system features, for the first time in Australia, the unique Aaton keylink system, Snell & Wilcox digital vision mixer and Artisan. Other features include optical effects, Jump Free, VariSpeed and a dedicated digital betacam machine.

Senior Colorist is Paul Holmes. Holmes, from Windmill Lane Pictures, Dublin, has worked with the cream of Europe on high-end commercials, documentaries, music clips and features. Holmes:

The Ursa Gold has become the world standard for the highest quality film-to-tape transfer. The Ursa Gold at Zero One Zero is the most advanced system in Australia with greater flexibility and range of effects than ever before. The layout and design of the suite is also of the highest quality, combining technical excellence with a luxurious interior.

This process of expansion and reshaping Zero One Zero to become a complete post house, or one-stop shop, began in 1994 with the installation of the most powerful digital online suite in Australia, the Sony 9100. Soon to follow was the installation of the AVID MC8000, the HAI Express and extensive renovations to house all the new equipment.

The biggest turning point for the company was when David Quinn, Zero One Zero’s Senior Editor, went to Las Vegas to attend the NAB conference and sign an order for an Ursa Gold telecine. Quinn also spent numerous hours researching post
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Spotting the Trends

Freda Freiberg reviews the recent Documentary Conference

For five days at the end of last November, the normally nefarious Fitzroy Street, in St Kilda, was taken over by the Fourth International Documentary Film Conference. The foyer and three cinemas of the George, the park across the road, the pub up the road, and Stop 22, the gallery space housed in the former St Kilda Railway Station, all buzzed with documentary doings, deals and debates. Conference participants were predominantly documentary filmmakers, but a significant sprinkling of media bureaucrats, teachers and critics were also present. In addition to the large contingents from all the Australian states, many overseas visitors attended, including a goodly number of Asian documentary filmmakers, whose participation was fostered by the collaboration of Netpac (the network for the promotion of Asian cinema) with the Conference organizers.

As at all film conferences, the programme was tightly packed with concurrent and continuous screenings and seminars, lectures and workshops. Difficult choices had to be made between competing claims of the programme, complicated by the pressure to satisfy basic human needs (for rest, food and drink, shelter from the elements — it was unusually warm for Melbourne — and social intercourse). It was noticeable that filmmakers favoured those sessions which enabled them to hear and meet the network personnel responsible for the development, programming and acquisition of documentaries. In particular, veteran ex-pat and cinéma vérité guru Mike Rubbo, who has recently returned to his native shores to assume the position of Head of Documentary at ABC TV, received the kind of welcome normally reserved for conquering heroes in wartime. On the other hand, screenings of visiting filmmakers, especially those from Asia, were poorly attended.

The tendency to pursue the television network personnel is understandable, given the limited range of options for sales and exhibition of documentaries, and so can be interpreted as enlightened self-interest; but the failure to attend the screenings and sessions with Asian visitors can also be interpreted as a sign of parochialism, an intellectual narrow-mindedness that restricts interest to local concerns, or even as discourtesy to people who have bothered to travel long distances and brave the language and cultural barriers to present their work here. The Conference generally reflected the death and burial of the broad left coalition of issue-based oppositional filmmaking. On the local scene, that coalition has disintegrated and splintered since the demise of the Sydney Filmmakers Co-operative a decade or so ago. In its place, there has emerged a plethora of separate issues, and special-interest groups promoting their own particular agendas. Whereas in the past documentary filmmakers felt free to pursue a wide range of issues, they are now more circumspect before rushing in to embrace a cause. Their right to speak on behalf of others has been questioned. Given the excessive amount of footage that white filmmakers have devoted to Aboriginal subjects and issues, it is hardly surprising that black filmmakers are requesting a moratorium and asserting their right to speak for themselves. On the other hand, in this reclaiming of territory, and assertion of the right to speak on one’s own behalf, there is a danger that issues will become exclusively identified with the desires and agendas of a particular minority, community or sub-culture, and fail to appeal to a wider audience. Perhaps this is unavoidable, in our fragmented times.

Access to media technology, as the means to self-representation, has been of paramount importance to the feminist, gay and black rights movements. However, after the initial period of access to and consolidation of resources, a rigidly-imposed separatism can prove counterproductive and divisive. By confining membership of the group-with-the-right-to-speak to an exclusive biological, cultural or social category, you not only risk alienating existing and potential supporters of your cause but also fly in the face of social realities, for there are no pure cultures, societies or peoples. But the historical vicissitudes of racism, sexism and homophobia bear scars and grudges that are not quickly or easily removed, and understandably seek support and solidarity with their own kind. There are also basic economic considerations, as Koori activist Richard Frankland pointed out in a session at the Conference.

The fragmentation of the audience into separate interest groups was evident at the Conference. Aboriginal activists, gay activists and nuclear activists attended separate sessions with few signs of audience crossovers. Australian film veterans and film historians attended the sessions devoted to the filmmaking careers of John Heyer, Colin Dean, Maslyn Williams and Judy Adamson. Sessions devoted to the work of the Asian documentary filmmakers were attended by a small core of Asian film specialists and Australian documentary filmmakers with knowledge of the region.

But, given the fragmentation of the audience and the splintering of coalitions, certain trends were visible across the board. The major discernible trend was towards the personal diary film — on video and super-8, cheap and easily transportable formats. Perhaps this is another sign of the retreat from the political into the personal, or a pragmatic strategic move away from the uncompromisingly polemical towards the commercially packageable. It is significant that Rubbo indicated his preference for quirky personal films like Sherman's March (Ross McElwee, 1986) over broad issue-based docs, for microcosmic drama over the macrocosmic viewpoint.

Like Ross McElwee, fellow American Conference guest Ellen Spiro is setwled around the Deep South on her own personal quest, but it's a very different quest from his and her diary film (Greetings from Out Here) revealing a very different Deep South. Travelling by campervan, accompanied by her dog and video camera, she unearths a rich variety of gay activity in this unlikely terrain, conveying the information gleaned from her research in a warm and witty commentary on the move from one location to the next, from one arresting character to the next. Engaged and engaging, this personal road movie sweeps you along in its constant movement and its light polemical charge on a charming voyage of discovery.

A very young Japanese visitor, Naomi Kawase, a member of a super-8 film club in Nara, showed us her personal diary film, Like Air, shot on super-8, about her search for her unknown father. Another journey film, full of comings and goings, it is poetic, disjunctive, ambivalent, and strangely moving in a very contemporary way.

Less experimental in construction, but powerful in emotional impact, were two Australian video diaries which explored the daily routines, thoughts and feelings of two lonely people. They were commissioned for an Open Channel and SBS-sponsored series of video diaries called First
Morals and the Mutoscope

In part 18 of this series, Chris Long and Bob Klepner examine the Mutoscope and Australia’s first major censorship prosecution.

The Mutoscope movie viewer made its Australasian début in Brisbane on 10 October 1902. This coin-slot peepshow worked on the flip-card principle. Successful movie frames were contact printed onto photographic paper from 70mm negative film. The cards were mounted radially on a metal drum, which was rotated by a crank handle operated by the person viewing. A metal finger in the machine flipped the successive prints past the viewer.

Mutoscope parlours exhibiting up to 50 machines were established in Australia’s major capitals by 1903. Initially, they were fairly prestigious venues with edifying fare including news films of Royal pageants, the Boer War and even Pope Leo XIII. However, peepshows inherently provided a privacy of viewing unattainable in a cinema. Patrons were less inhibited in watching risqué material. The American Mutoscope and Biograph Company catered to these tastes more than its British counterparts, which were then supplying most of Australia’s cinematic fare. Exploitative Mutoscope reels like A Peeping Tom, Who Owned the Corset? and The Maiden’s Midnight Romp had an outraged clergyman complaining to Victoria’s Premier. It triggered Australia’s first major movie censorship battle. In February 1904, Melbourne’s notorious “wowser” element sent the police to confiscate offending Mutoscope reels. Court cases ensued, reels were seized and the machine’s publicity was magnified beyond the exhibitor’s wildest dreams.

Today, the Mutoscope’s fascination lies not only in the content of those early reels, but in their frequent survival. The flip-card reels are wonderfully durable. Many have outlived the unstable nitrate films from which they were printed. The authors are aware of more than 150 Mutoscopes and perhaps double that number of reels surviving in Australia alone. It’s a heritage worthy of more serious and accurate study than the current literature provides.

The Mutoscope’s Origins

The flip-card idea was an old one, patented by Coleman Sellers in America as far back as 1861. However, the development of the concept into a commercial reality for movie display largely originated with Edison’s associate, William Kennedy Laurie Dickson. Dickson was chiefly responsible for the development of 35mm movie film (1892) and for the worldwide commercialization of movie film as an entertainment via the kinetoscope (1894). By the middle of 1894, Dickson became discontented in his association with Edison. While still in Edison’s employ, Dickson had informal associations with at least two independent movie developments. First, he assisted the Latham family in devising a projector for kinetoscope films, known as the “Eidoloscope”. A press screening was given on 21 April 1895, and it opened commercially in a New York storefront theatre on 20 May 1895. More than seven months before the Lumière’s commercial début, this date is conveniently ignored by French cinema protagonists!

Dickson’s other independent association was with the engineers H. N. Marvin and Herman Casler, and the financial backer, E. B. Koopman. In 1894, Dickson indicated the commercial potential of a flip-card movie viewer to Marvin. Koopman came in as backer and the young Syracuse inventor-designer, Herman Casler (1867-1939), worked out many details and mechanical improvements. They teamed as the “KMCD Syndicate” (an acronym derived from their surnames). Casler built a prototype Mutoscope using frames cut from a kinetoscope film, and then applied for an initial patent on the device (U.S. No. 549309) on 21 November 1894.

Edison was approached for the supply of kinetoscope films for the Mutoscope, but bluntly refused to cooperate. The group was forced to devise its own film supply. With liberal guidance from Dickson, Casler built a movie camera to supply subjects for the Mutoscope in the first half of 1895. It purposely avoided any similarity or patent conflict with the earlier Edison “Black Maria” camera. 70mm unperforated film was electrically driven through the camera. Fed by a friction roller and an eccentric cam,
the images were intentionally irregularly spaced, but with registration holes punched while each image was exposed in the camera. These holes could be used to register the images in the making of film prints, or for printing onto paper for use in the Mutoscope. Each image was 70mm by 55mm, running right out to the edges of the underexposed film. These provided an image area eight times greater than that of 35mm film, with consequent superb definition. With its 2.5 horsepower electric motor, the so-called “Mutoscope” camera was claimed to be able to shoot film at 60 frames per second, although most surviving films from the period appear to project correctly at about half that rate.

Through the latter half of 1895 and into 1896, the team temporarily diverted its efforts away from the flip-card viewer to produce movie subjects and to develop a film projection system. Dickson resigned from Edison’s employ on 2 April 1895 to work exclusively for the KMC Syndicate, and this also accelerated the progress. Projection was experimentally achieved at the group’s Canastota (New York) workshop in November 1895, at about the time that the concern changed its name to “The American Mutoscope Company”, and dubbed its projector “The Biograph”. The commercial debut of the Biograph with its 70mm films took place at the Alvin Theatre in Pittsburgh on 14 September 1896. With its high projection speed, superb image definition and large screen size, it gave an illusion of moving reality superior to anything exhibited previously. A series of projection demonstrations by the broad-gauge Biograph then proceeded in various theatres across the U.S.

Mutoscope development had not been at a complete standstill through this period. Joseph Mason filed a patent (U.S. No. 603112) in December 1896 for coin-slot operation of the Mutoscope. This mechanism never appears to have been produced in quantity. All of the surviving coin-slot Mutoscopes are based on patents filed by Casler (U.S. Nos. 652713 and 652714) in February 1898. These cover timing and clutch mechanisms, an illumination system and the coin mechanism.

Casler also made a contribution to the Mutoscope in May 1897 by patenting (U.S. No. 597759) a system of interleaving the image photographs with plain cards to speed up the “snap” from one image to the next, adding resilience to the reels. The earliest American Mutoscope Company reels, now very rare, had between 1200 and 1500 images. This was later reduced to a standard of around 800 to 900 cards, with a running time of about a minute.

The earlier Mutoscopes (model “A”) were housed in hexagonal wooden cabinets, as illustrated in Casler’s February 1896 patent. However, the first machines to reach Australia were octagonal cabinet models manufactured in England, and mounted on an ornate pillar or stand. One of these is shown on the cover of the Melbourne War Cry of 5 March 1904.

Although coin-operated Mutoscopes had been commercially exhibited in America since the start of 1897, only limited numbers of machines with the Mason mechanism appear to have been placed on trial. Large-scale exhibitions began in 1898 at the time that Casler’s mechanism appeared.

### Australian Entry Via Britain

Like most cinematic innovations of the turn of the century, the Mutoscope came to Australia via Britain. A few machines had just been introduced in various London locations when the Mutoscope was exhibited at the National Photographic & Allied Trades Exhibition at London’s Baker Street from 22 to 30 April 1896. Australian theatrical entrepreneurs searching Britain for novel attractions soon noticed these peepshows. Charles Tait, one of the brothers later associated with *The Story of the Kelly Gang* (1906), saw one in London, which he noted in his diary on 20 August 1898:

Stewart Bale who is an advertising expert with a large piano firm [...] told me about a new automatic machine called the Mutoscope, as being one of the most successful automatic machines of the age. I saw it work and was amazed. I'll buy 12 if the price is reasonable [...] Called on the London agents for the Polyphone [which] ran Living Pictures, penny in the slot, but they are poor in comparison to the Mutoscope.

However, no Mutoscopes were commercially exhibited in Australasia for the next four years. Tait could not have bought the machines as they were, at that time, leased out by the International Mutoscope and Biograph Syndicate of London. Brass plates on the machines announced that they remained the property of the Company. Outright sales of Mutoscopes to interested parties did not begin until well after March 1900, when a prospectus indicated that machines were only available on a territorial concession basis. Exhibition territories
were sold, but individual machines were only made available to territorial concessionaires.

There are several possible reasons for the relatively late (1902) arrival of Mutoscopes in Australia. The Mutoscope and Biograph Company’s Australian exhibitions of 70mm film began in August 1897 through Harry Rickards’ theatres. The brevity of the initial run of exhibitions of its Biograph suggests that commercial results in Australia were mediocre. When H. G. L. Wyld and C. H. Freedman re-introduced the 70mm exhibitions in May 1900, things improved.* The integrated programmes of Boer War films actually shot at the seat of battle created a sensation. Many of the films were wholly or partly printed as Mutoscope reels. However, the Biograph exhibitors may have feared that miniaturized Mutoscope exhibitions of the same subjects would lessen the impact and profit potential of their screenings. In fact, the local demise of 70mm Biograph exhibitions in Australia does coincide with the introduction of the Mutoscope.

Before 1902, only one Mutoscope is known to have reached Australia. It was not commercially exhibited and the circumstances were unusual. It came out aboard the Royal Yacht, the “Ophir”, during the Royal Tour of Australasia in 1901. Housed in a wooden cabinet designed to match the ship’s fittings, it was a presentation model displaying reels of the visiting Royal couple’s children at play. As their offspring had to be left in England during the seven months of the tour, the reels must have been a poignant reminder of home, particularly to the Duchess of York (later Queen Mary). The machine may have been presented by the Mutoscope Company in thanks for permitting the filming of the Royal children. The machine survives in the Will Day Collection at the Cinémathèque Française in Paris. The authors should emphasize that the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company was much more than just a minor amusement novelty producer. It was established with $2 million of publicly subscribed capital in 1895. Its fortunes were consolidated by the success of its broad-gauge film exhibitions. The company’s cameramen travelled widely, shooting news and actuality films, apparently unhampered by the bulk of their cameras and battery power supplies. A studio at 841 Broadway, New York, supplemented this output to supply the company’s exhibition units worldwide. Filming extended to Britain in May 1897*, and to other European countries in the following year. By 1899, the Mutoscope and Biograph Company was America’s largest film producer, with an international network of corporate affiliates in Britain, France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, South Africa, Italy and India.* Its success was exclusively based on the exhibition of its own non-standard 70mm films via projection and through the Mutoscope. Technically barred from the exhibition of any other producer’s films, this was a remarkable achievement.

As just one manifestation of the Company, the Mutoscope must be regarded as something central to the success of the pioneering movie industry. It was much more than the “mere backwater for the motion picture stream”* that is implied by Terry Ramsaye and other movie chroniclers. This is the company which gave birth to the careers of D. W. Griffith, Mary Pickford, Mack Sennett, the Gishes and cameraman Billy Bitzer, and which in 1910 would be in the vanguard of the Western move to Hollywood and is worthy of more serious recognition.*

Australia’s Mutoscope Début

Gordon Hendricks in his ground-breaking volume, Beginnings of the Biograph**, notes that researching the Mutoscope through newspapers presents a problem. “The current press, then as now, took little notice of arcade entertainment.”* One’s knowledge of Australian Mutoscope debuts is limited by the lack of detailed reports in local newspapers.

One can be sure that the first Australian exhibitions of the Mutoscope occurred in Brisbane, and they were probably controlled by a company based in that city. Australian collectors have noticed that Mutoscopes with the lowest serial numbers found in this country invariably bear nameplates with the legend “Licensed for use in Queensland only by the International Mutoscope Syndicate, London”. The Brisbane Courier of 8 October 1902 published the earliest known Australian advertisement for a Mutoscope show. **25 machines were to be exhibited at Bain’s Photographic Studio in Queen Street, Brisbane, on 10 October 1902. The first day’s takings, about £25 in pennies from the 25 Mutoscopes, was donated to the Hospital Aid Association. This gesture ensured the patronage of Mayor L. G. Corrie of Brisbane, and favourable subsequent publicity in the Brisbane...
was attracting "over 6000 patrons daily" and that they had "50,000 records to choose from". Presuming that this meant 50,000 images, it would indicate that the Company had 50 reels to show, or roughly two for each machine. No note of the subjects of the reels shown in Brisbane has been located.

These were Australia's first automatic penny-in-the-slot movie peepshows. Australia's earlier displays of the Edison kinetoscope between 1894 and 1897 levied a shilling's charge for admission to their venue. They had no coin mechanism.48

Little is known of the Australian company exhibiting the Mutoscope. By 1904, there was an "Australasian Mutoscope Company Limited" touring the backblocks of Queensland with a set of Mutoscopes accompanying demonstrations of film projection by the "Bionni", and this may have been the same concern. Its general manager at that time was listed as a Will Hollinworth, but we know nothing of him other than the name.

Mutoscope press reports were given in much greater detail when the company commenced its Sydney exhibitions on 12 December 1902.50 There, the show was given on a greatly expanded scale. Two shopfront venues were opened for the machine's exhibition on that day, one at 290 George Street and the other at 74 Oxford Street.51 There were fifty machines at each venue, a total of 100 machines.52 The company repeated its Brisbane tactics by giving its first day of Sydney takings to the "Hospital Saturday Fund", which ensured that the Lord Mayor of Sydney would attend the opening — with consequent publicity for the show.

Three months later, the Sydney Mutoscope venues were still thriving and The Bulletin reported:

NSW is gradually being dotted over with the Mutoscope, the new machine into which you drop a penny, turn the handle, and see moving pictures [...] The Co. has two stands in Sydney, and is exhibiting the machines in various suburban and country locations [...]11

On 11 April 1903, The Bulletin gave the first intimations that trouble might occur owing to the risqué fare being purveyed via this peepshow:

Waiting for some reverend howler to open up a crusade against the Mutoscope. In 'Sylvia Undressing', ['A Peeping Tom', 'Who owned the Corset?' etc., the spectator who has invested a penny is just thinking he is down through overwork, whilst those entitled 'Riding with Kitchener', 'Coronation Scenes' &c., will probably die of starvation. As I possessed a penny at the time, had a look at one of the first-mentioned and was shocked. When I have another penny am going to get shocked again.54

By the end of 1903, there was a Mutoscope parlour in Brisbane, at least two in Sydney (including a new one at Manly's Ocean Beach), two in Melbourne and even an extension of operations into New Zealand. The Sydney operators had been "packing plant and duplicates for an early opening in Mordial" late in November. On 9 December, a Mutoscope Parlour opened at Barnett's Buildings, Willis Street, Wellington, with 20 machines, the reels advertised including The Great Indian Durbar and What Happened to Jones.55 Again, the first day's takings were donated to the local hospital.

The sudden and vigorous proliferation of the Mutoscope throughout Australasia was bound to come under official scrutiny sooner or later. The "crunch" came at the end of 1903 with a farcical charge of indecency being pursued through the courts. Naturally, Melbourne's conservatism precipitated the outcry.

Obscenity Trial in Melbourne
On 29 October 1903, a Reverend W. Williams wrote to Victorian Premier Irvine com

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How to Make an American Quilt

How to Make an American Quilt

Fincina Hopgood delights in Jocelyn Moorhouse's first American feature and its valuing of female storytelling.

Tim Robbins' Dead Man Walking

Tim Robbins is impressed by Tim Robbins' fair-minded examination of capital punishment in Dead Man Walking.

Janet Leigh's Psycho: Behind the Scenes of the Classic Thriller

Richard Franklin challenges Janet Leigh's account of some aspects of the making of a Hitchcock classic.

Raúl Ruiz Poetics of Cinema: 1, Miscellanies

Robert Nery examines possible readings of "narrative drive" in the works of Raúl Ruiz.

What happens to a filmmaker who has pushed all the boundaries? In Almodóvar's case, he's turned back the clock, paid homage to Frank Capra and made a quirky film about love, betrayal and the marvellous inconsistencies of human nature.

The FLOWER OF MY SECRET (La Flor de mi Secreto)


What is Sane?

There is a long dramatic heritage that the "fool" tells the truth and gives wise advice to the (allegedly) sane. The fool tells the truth with wit, irony, playful jokes, nonsense verse and plaintive songs. Mark Joffe's version of Louis Nowra's adaptation of his play is a gleeful and gentle Australian contribution to this tradition.

The staged performance of Cosi Fan Tutte in Mark Joffe's production.
The other characters in *The Flower of My Secret* are equally on the edge and capable of jumping into the abyss. Leo’s sister, Rosa (Rosy de Palma), and her mother (Chus Lampreave) are locked into a weird endless battle of comical absurd shouting matches, where they predict each other will end up like the “mad” Aunt of the family. These scenes are reminiscent of some of Almodóvar’s more outrageous films, despite their suburban setting.

The visual style of these claustrophobic scenes and of Leo’s confrontation with Paco is particularly striking. Its key moments are filmed against mirrors with multiple-framed images, in very composed and almost classical images. They are both real and not real at the same time, and, as an audience, we’re forced to keep our distance and discover what is really going on.

And what is going on? Well, it seems through this film Almodóvar is suggesting that we are all in a sort of tangled web of our making, made even more tangled by the larger events of our socio-political world. Leo’s husband is off trying to do something for the Bourrines, but he can’t talk to his own wife when she is at her most distraught. Leo’s friend Betty is capable of the most unexpected betrayal, and Angel (Juan Echanove), an editor of the newspaper El Pau to whom Leo goes in her effort to break out of her straitjacket, is not really a hardened journalist but a softie who wants to write romantic novels. Leo’s housekeeper is really a flamenco dancer forsaking her public performances, and the housekeeper’s son, Antonio (Joaquín Cortés), is willing to steal sort of business in order to get them both back on the stage.

All the people are carrying their own “secrets”, which erupt as the story progresses. It’s only after they have confronted something in themselves that they stand any chance of survival. When Leo falls into the arms of Angel, it’s during a student demonstration shouting doesn’t get “fucked” by the authorities.

The context for all this neurotic action is modern Spain, a sophisticated, fast-paced, affluent country with citizens paying the high cost of stress, corruption, drug dependence and alienation with the breakdown of relationships, or their reduction to monetary transactions. For instance, Leo has signed a contract with her publishers that specifies she writes books with blue skies, yuppies, happy endings and no politics. And when Angel saves Leo from breach of contract, he admits to anticipating a 40/60 percent split in the royalties.

Almodóvar’s delightful cynicism permeates everything. He shows up the commercial realities of art: you must copyright everything, even garbage, because someone is bound to steal the idea for a film. His depiction of this high-pitched lifestyle is heightened by a soundtrack filled with ringing phones, busses and the electronic noise of video games. Often a sound is imposed on a seemingly-unconnected visual, which taxes the viewer to make the connection, adding to the feeling of disorientation.

The film also contrasts the old and new Spain, when Leo retreats to her mother’s village. Here, the director seems to be suggesting a synthesis of both worlds, and a kind of rebirth. The housekeeper’s journey is created in tandem. The dance she brings to the stage at the end of the film is recognizably Spanish flamenco; however, modern jazz and Japanese dance elements have been added, reflecting the possibilities for the future.

Certainly in *The Flower of My Secret* the characters Leo and Angel suggest a new synthesis. Leo finds the “maleness” in herself so she can negotiate her way in the world, and Angel finds his “feminine” side and stops manipulating so he can listen and learn. They are both capable of resurrection. They even negotiate with each other a sort of business deal and a personal relationship that will benefit both of them. It’s an interesting twist to a love story, and says a lot about modern love affairs between creative people.

Almodóvar’s casting is impeccable, with Marisa Paredes as the fantastic unpredictable Leo, Juan Echanove as the soft-hearted Angel, the television star Imanol Arias as Paco, and Almodóvar’s long-term favourite, Rossy de Palma, as the family victim Rosa. There’s no doubt that Almodóvar’s films are of great interest, not just in how they push the boundaries of filmmaking and of characterization, but also in what they reveal about life in the 1990s. Despite all the chaos, there’s something marvellously crazy about these very contemporaneous people and their ultimate humanity.

**In review**

**Films continued**

But when her publisher reads her “reality”, the truth she creates is just too strange, and they threaten her with breach of contract.

Leo is one of those women Almodóvar always dresses stylishly, even when she’s caught in the rain, in bed, or driving nervously around the streets of Madrid. He creates tableaux for her with the look of his film, so we’re aware that, despite all her suffering and tears, she’s a woman who really could never give up. Even when her husband Paco (Imanol Arias), a Lieutenant Colonel in NATO, arrives and says he can only stay three hours, her frenzied attempts to talk to him via her typewriter shows Leo a survivor, despite her mania for self-destruction.

Paco has volunteered to serve in the NATO forces in Bosnia, and in war he finds the perfect and seemingly-selfless escape from marital problems. But, ironically, he can’t stand any sort of personal conflict, and even tells Leo the worst war of all is having to listen to her emotional outpourings.

**SHANGHAI TRIAD**

*Yao Ah Yao, Yao Dao Waipo Qiao* (Directed by Zhang Yimou. Producers: Jean Louis Piel, Yves Marmion (UCO). Wu Yongqiang (Shanghai Film Studios). Executive producers: Wang Wei, Zhu Yongde. Screenwriter: Bi Feifei, from the novel Gang Law by Li Xian. Director of photography Lu Yue. Editor: Tu Yuan. Production designer: Cao Jiuping. Costumes: Tong Huamiao. Sound: Tao Min. Music: Tao Lin. Shot mostly at night, the camera and the cinematography sensual. That most alluring sin city, 1930s feudal China, but the underworld of that most alluring sin city, 1930s Shanghai. Again, the colours are rich and the cinematography sensual. Shot mostly at night, the camera moves through massive, glowing...
marble and mahogany interiors loaded up with deco glass and gilt. Shangh hai Triad also has the fable-like qualities that made Zhang's early films so accessible for non-Chinese audiences. As before, we have the evil patriarch, the rebellious young woman, the younger rival, and the child witness.

Li Baotian, who took on the role of the evil patriarch, Boss Tang, has been particularly scornful of the film's opening scenes. But until Zhang finds a way out of his current double and triple binds, Shangh hai Triad provides a marble and mahogany interiors loaded up with deco glass and gilt. Zhang's early films so accessible for non-Chinese audiences. As before, we have the evil patriarch, the rebellious young woman, the younger rival, and the child witness. Shangh hai Triad also has the fable-like qualities that made Zhang's early films so accessible for non-Chinese audiences. As before, we have the evil patriarch, Boss Tang, has been particularly scornful of the film's opening scenes. But until Zhang finds a way out of his current double and triple binds, Shangh hai Triad provides a

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There is a long dramatic heritage of the "fool" tells the truth and gives wise advice to the (allegedly) sane. The fool tells the truth with wit, irony, playful jokes, nonsense verse and playful songs. Mark Joffe's version of Louis Nowra's adaptation of his play is a gentle and gentle Australian contribution to this tradition. It is not in the vein of Shakespeare's tragedies, but it is put on a play-in-a-play-in-a-play, more a Midsummer Night's Dream with the patients in a mental institution the latter-day mechanical. The title, "Cosi" should become a by-word in talk about the Australian film industry in the 1990s, but it refers to Mozart's Cosi Fan Tutte, rehearsed and performed by an unlikely ensemble as therapy, as a modern-day mental health funding project and as a celebration of joy and beauty of worlds that have been lost and, more than probably, never existed.

Sydney colonial buildings and Bondi Beach provide an old/new setting which contrasts with an increasing carnival design and costumes for the staging of the play. This symbolizes the contrast between an outer world of the "normal" and an inner world of brightly-coloured regia and fancy dress with an audience waving sparklers as Julie (Toni Collette) movingly sings an unaccompanied "Stand By Me".

What is normal? What is sane? What is the relation between appearances and inner-life? Where and who are the truly mad? In a city like Sydney, in cities anywhere, are outsiders, unaware of their madness, the urban inmates running the asylum?

Louis Nowra tells us that this is an autobiographical story, although the musical he directed in the 1970s was Trial By Jury, it is a young man's story. The screenplay opts for feelings as criteria for judging what is deeply human, not reason or logic. Lewis (played by Ben Mendelsohn with a warm ingenuousness that carries the audience with him in his journey from a happy-go-lucky, chancy interview for the play-directing job to an authentic, life-affirming respect for troubled people. If that sounds too solemn, it is not the tone of the screenplay or performances. The film does rely on sentiment. But it is also ironic, vulgar (in its original meaning of crowd-pleasing and down-to-earth) and irreverent. Joffe is able to highlight his characters' eccentricities, letting each tell a sad and traumatizing story (we can laugh with them), rather than spotlight grotesqueries (which could make us laugh at them). In fact, it is the same people, Rachel Griffiths' legal student, Lucy, and Aden Young's narcissistic director, as well as the management, who display touches of the grotesque. David Wenham's firebug, Doug, is the inmate closest to the grotesque (apart from the funny initial auditions and the guest-star cameo), with his cat-burning tales, his crass humour, travelling well overseas, and so should Cosi, though the Americans will be puzzling more and more about what we really are like.

The other theme of Cosi is love and fideulity, Much is made of the sexism in Mozart's 18th-century fable, that "la donna e mobile" - at least as seen by men taking the moral high ground with little justification. The screenplay attempts some parallels between the central characters' relationships and the fideulity test of the opera's libretto. This is the least satisfactory aspect of the film. It is not developed and the resolution is too quickly pat. The ensemble acting is excellent with too many fine performers to name and praise. The inmates run the danger of caricature, especially Barry Otto's turn, as if he were mimicking a certified madman. But his and the other performances are clever and restrained, even when at the edge, and the direction combines verve and discretion. Ben Mendelsohn, Barry Otto, Pamela Rabe and David Wenham have lived with Cosi for some years, having appeared in theatre productions. For what must be synchronic reasons rather than calculation, pigs play a central role in the film and audiences, attuned to Babe-pigs, will enjoy them.) Cosi is highly entertaining, a fine example of complete ensemble filmmaking. • PETER MALONE

[Image of Cosi poster]
Films continued

HOW TO MAKE AN AMERICAN QUILT


It seems only fitting that Hollywood came a ‘knockin’ on Jocelyn Moorhouse’s door after the warm receptions of her first film, Proof (1991), on the U.S. arthouse circuit and the equally successful Memoirs of a Woman’s Wedding (P. J. Hogan, 1994), which she produced. What is surprising is the speed at which the American film industry recognized and rewarded such talent (contrast the comparatively slow-burn of Gillian Armstrong’s U.S. career which culminated in an unassumingly similar project, Little Women [1994]). Moorhouse was hand-picked by producers Midge Sanford and Sarah Pillsbury (Desperately Seeking Susan, Susan Seidelman, 1985; River’s Edge, Tim Hunter, 1986) to direct How to Make an American Quilt for Amblin Entertainment. Although the film represents for Moorhouse a more collaborative project than the individual vision of Proof (which she also wrote), this follow-up film demonstrates her scope as a director, equally comfortable with “warm fuzzy feelings” as she is with emotional repression and sexual obsession.

American Quilt features an outstanding ensemble cast of veteran actors (Anne Bancroft, Ellen Burstyn, Jean Simmons, Lois Smith, Maya Angelou, Kate Nelligan, Rip Torn) and “bright young stars” (Winona Ryder, Alfre Woodard, Samantha Mathis, Claire Danes, Loren Dean, Dermot Mulroney) in a tale of women’s lives and loves across generations, reflected in the rituals of quilt-making. While the film is of a similar genre to that of Steel Magnolias (Herbert Ross, 1989), it offers a deeper exploration of women’s relationships with men, and with each other, than the latter film and, on the whole, successfully negotiates the fine balance between sentimentality and mawkishness.

American Quilt is based on the novel by Whitney Otto, which began her graduate thesis project and became a New York Times bestseller. Jane Anderson’s adaptation for the screen has its own quilt-like quality. She takes the fragments of Otto’s narrative — anecdotes of the women’s lives and a century of American history interwoven with detailed instructions on quilt-making — and threads these together through the central character of Finn (Winona Ryder), who also serves as the film’s narrator. Finn is a graduate student who keeps changing her thesis topic just as it nears completion; she has finally settled on “women’s handwork in tribal cultures”. The film opens with Finn’s arrival at her grandmother’s house in the small county town of Grasse, where she plans to spend the summer finishing the thesis. In this house, the women of the Grasse Quilting Bee regularly assemble to quilt and share stories, an appropriate environment for Finn to complete her work. Her three-month “exile” from city life is also intended to give her the space and time to consider a marriage proposal from her boyfriend, Sam (Dermot Mulroney).

To make Finn’s engagement, the women are making a quilt for her, with the working title “Where Love Resides”. Each woman reveals her wayward husband Dean (Dermot Mulroney). These stories continue to have repercussions on Finn, who finds herself questioning the nature of love and betrayal when she is drawn to a handsome local boy, Leon (Johnathon Schaech). Reflecting on her own betrayal, Finn’s grandmother, Gladys Joe (Anne Bancroft), observes that “self-expression heals the wounded heart”. This is reinforced throughout the film, the creation of Finn’s quilt representing the collective healing of these women’s hearts.

The story which has the greatest impact, one of the highlights of the film, is that of Sophia (Lois Smith), a cranky old woman whom Finn has always feared. What makes this story of a failed marriage so moving and engrossing — almost a film within-a-film — is the portrayal of young Sophia by Samaanah Mathis. We see her age across decades, from an independent teenager with a passion for amateur diving to a crushed, lonely housewife who cannot bear to wander in a backyard pond for the pain of memory. Hers is a tragic loss of spirit, an indictment of love and its imprisonment of the heart.

While quilting is an appropriate symbol for this collection of women’s stories and hard-won wisdom, and as a symbol of taking the good with the bad in any relationship, regrettably it is this persistent use of symbolism which becomes the film’s weak point. It constantly veers on overstatement, with the most banal and predictable example at the film’s close, when Finn — repeating an earlier story — follows the flight of a black crow to her “true beloved”. The power of symbolism lies in its ability to evoke a depth of meaning with an economy of expression. It also lies in choosing associations between objects that mean which exceed the obvious or the common. Water (a pervasive metaphor throughout Sophia’s story) has frequently been used as representing the alternating pleasure and turbulence of sexual desire (for example, Ken Cameron’s Monkey Grip, 1982) while the stormy “wind of change” that whips through Gladys Joe’s house, scatter-
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Films continued

DEAD MAN WALKING


At the 1995 Oscar awards night, presenters Susan Sarandon and Tim Robbins jokingly declined to make the kind of political statement that they had on previous occasions – which, of course, reminded the audience of their political views and their heart-on-the-sleeve approach. Perhaps the deeper reason was that they were involved in the production of Dead Man Walking, a very serious-minded film indeed.

Recently, we have seen a number of prison movies: Captives (Angela Pope, 1994), Murder in the First (Mark Rocco, 1995) and, starring Tim Robbins, The Shawshank Redemption (Frank Darabont, 1994). Each offers a particular focus on inmates, some guilty, some innocent. Some, as with dentist (Julia Ormond) in Captives and lawyer (Christian Slater) in Murder in the First, focus on the outsider drawn into the life of the prisoner and the tensions in the prison. Dead Man Walking is one of the latter films. In fact, it is based on a best-selling memoir of her work with prisoners, especially on death row, by a Louisiana nun, Sister Helen Prejean, who acted as technical adviser on this film. Publicity notes that Susan Sarandon met Helen Prejean in New Orleans during the filming of The Client (Joel Schumacher, 1994) and read her book. Tim Robbins wrote the screenplay and directed the film. Obviously, it is a labour of love.

Sarandon plays Helen Prejean midway between Mamee (Little Women: nice integrity) and Regina (The Client: forcefulness and shrewdness in fighting for a victim) and, with a cause, with the commitment of the mother in Lorenzo’s Oil (George Miller, 1992) but in a more self-effacing style.

In fact, it is probably the best portrayal of a controversial nun on screen in recent decades. (Comparisons can be made with Gosta Dobrovolska and Paul Cox’s fine interpretation of a 1950s nun in The Nun and the Bandit (1993) or Judith Ivey’s practical and sensible ‘80s nun in Robert M. Young’s We Are The Children (1987)). Most filmmakers think that, as photo-opportunistic journalists assert, a “real nun” is one who wears a recognisable religious habit and veil. They do not seem to be aware of changes within the Catholic Church since the ’60s and in nun’s lifestyles, work and dress. Judging from the accuracy of the dialogue, Helen Prejean advised Tim Robbins closely. The sequences with the two nuns at home and with the prison chaplain are just right.

For dramatic purposes, especially since some of the characters portrayed are the victims of crime as well as their grieving and angry parents, two actual convicts on death row in the ’80s have been conflated by Robbins to create Sean Penn’s character. He writes to Sister Helen, who is living in a small apartment with another nun working with local black families, asking her to visit him. She has never been in a prison and struggles, especially after meeting him and finding him violent, racist and insolent, as to what he wants and how she can minister to him. (Penn is thoroughly persuasive in the rôle.) She also has to think through her attitudes towards capital punishment.

One of the strengths of the screenplay, and Robbins’ creation of the Penn character, is that, while he remains quite unsympathetic to the end, the intellectual and emotional reasons for and against execution are dramatized fairly. Audiences are drawn to identify with Sister Helen in her compassionate outreach, but they are jolted several times to find that the compassion agenda has blind spots, especially concerning the victims’ parents. Raymond J. Barry and R. Lee Ermey give effectively contrasting performances as the two fathers and give the film more depth.

Audiences pro capital punishment will not be persuaded to change their minds, but will have to look again at their motives and the consequences of state violence. Audiences anti capital punishment will have their stance reinforced, but will have to extend their compassion to those who have been hurt and are driven by a sense of revenge and justice. (It would be a pity if, after the harrowing sequences of the execution, audiences did not note and reflect on the final images of the film with Susan Sarandon and Raymond J. Barry.)

Not that the film does not have its lighter moments – and they are needed. The screenplay tries to help audiences understand the meaning and the life of a nun. The celibacy issue is handled briefly, tellingly but unobtrusively. Helen Prejean’s life is given credibility even if it is only for a small number of women.

While the subject matter and treatment fit the image of Susan Sarandon, they are a surprise with regard to Tim Robbins. Audiences are used to his way, bemused smile which gets him through drama like The Shawshank Redemption, romantic fluff like I.Q. (Fred Schepisi, 1995) and sardonic comedy like The Player (Robert Altman, 1992). His own Bob Roberts (1992) was a tour-de-force (political tour-de-force) combination of genres, visual styles and editing flair. He now shows he can step back from centre-screen and commit himself to a rather plainer and unobtrusive style. He can be faceted and intensely serious: the marks of a “Tim Robbins Film”?

PETER MALONE

VIDEO FOOL FOR LOVE


People don’t know what it is to actually get hold of a great moment of drama in their lives and have some control over it.”

Speaking is Robert Gibson, videographer, director and editor of Video Fool for Love, a feature-length home movie like you’ve never seen before. This film is an attempt for Gibson to embody this wish: to encapsulate the great drama of love and human relationships, and exert control over that drama. Since 1983, Gibson has kept a video diary of his life. He has edited the past 12 years into a compelling 83 minutes. The title of the film is self-explanatory: Gibson’s “life” takes the shape of a series of romantic entanglements which define him, obsess him, and drive him creatively, emotionally and spiritually. He is the fool for love – fool in love, just plain fool, full-stop.

The potential of the ubiquitous home video camera is taken to
extremes, as Gibson tapes every human encounter with what is essentially his extended eye, arm and pen. Casual conversation, private musings, heated arguments, even a bit of masochism, are all open to his camcorder. It’s an intriguing idea which results in a film which is, at turns, fascinating, funny, revealing, frustrating and annoying.

And the story of the film? For it is a story, a narrative, unlike true diaries, which have no linear goal or defined structure. Basically, Video Fool for Love is the story of Robert’s doomed romance with the beautiful Gianna. It is a love story, a romance, one that is intensely personal but perhaps universal, in the way all romances are.

We first meet Robert; he is an editor with the esteemed Kennedy Miller production house, the production house which ultimately provided the funding for this project. In fact, one of the funnier moments of the film occurs straight away, as Gibson tapes George Miller contemplating the viability of backing such a seemingly absurd project. “I like the [film] about love, but I don’t like the title”, he says before the title card appears.

At this stage, Robert is in love with April, a wacky child-teacher, who is with him when he wins an AFI award for editing Flirting (John Duigan, 1991). He records their relationship as one of sulky silences and petulant outbursts, all of which are painstakingly taped and edited into a sequence which sets up a certain almost pre-determined pattern of behaviour. Robert is her father/lover, smothering her with his nagging and his camera.

Two days after April’s departure for London, Robert falls in love with Gianna. Her presence is straight away associated with a mystical invocation. Robert tells the camera that fate brought them together; she is his “holy grail”. It is a theme repeatedly brought up. Gianna is at first shy of the camera, overwhelmed by its attention. One of the most fascinating aspects of the film is how Gianna, in particular, becomes a performance of herself, as she comes to realize that a relationship with Robert is one with a man inseparable from his camera.

In certain horror films, there is the reflex to watch the continuing narrative with fingers strategically positioned over eyes, as Robert leaves Gianna to go overseas to April. He finds out she may or may not be engaged to another man; in response, he offers to marry her. The buying of the ring and subsequent party are filmed in a jaunty, slightly-hysterical manner, as the two of them soon settle into their hickering ways. He leaves April to her travelling, safe in the patriarchal position of wrathful defender, as Gibson increasingly tries to control by more and more obsessive watching and exposure of Gianna’s eventual betrayal, and then uses this as an excuse for staged catharsis and release. It comes as no surprise when it’s revealed that he has found another lover, Cindy, who comes to him as his “guardian angel”, and who was there as support and encouragement as he produced this film. She seems another in the chain of women who don’t seem to differ in their love and adoration of Robert, who are continuations of the theme of Robert’s idealized love.

It’s tempting to dismiss Robert as a loser, but that’s too easy. It is a brave filmmaker that undertakes, in the manner of a sacrificial lamb, an exploration of the unexplainable reason why people love so fiercely, so hurtfully, or at all. Perhaps this brings back the concept of control mentioned earlier. In the end, Gibson does have control of Gianna, and over their relationship, not just through his subjective control over camera and editing, but through his instinctive need to use this process as a type of messy, self-serving therapy.
CINEMA PAPERS • APRIL 1996

BOOKS

POETICS OF CINEMA 1. MISCELLANIES

Everywhere in our movie-mad country, around campfires in desert gullies where weather-beaten faces have a yarn about the latest Martin Scorsese, in smoke-free corridors of power where notes on the merits of our own auteurs are compared, in stations on the Antarctic tundra around the video-player, the phrase “narrative drive” is bandied. “Narrative drive!” “Narrative drive!” “Narrative drive!”

As most of us know, the term refers to an urge, a force, a momentum ... or usually does. But a close look at the conjunction of the two words suggests another meaning. Just to be contrary, let us use it with this second sense occasionally.

We speak of going for a drive. In the sense I here propose, no final state-of-affairs is aimed for by the narrative drive? Or is a narrative drive? The conjunction of the two words calls forth the phrase “narrative drive” is bandied. “Narrative drive!” “Narrative drive!” “Narrative drive!”

It is a French rationalist. Ruiz is a Chilean-born filmmaker who has made almost a hundred features, and has been based in France since 1973 when he was forced into exile. He was a cultural adviser to Allende and had a reputation as a playwright in Chile before he made his first feature there. The most productive experimentalist in cinema since Jean-Luc Godard, he also owes little to the latter. Godard is a classicist, devoted to balance, clean lines and lightness; and even when his works are made up of fragmented, they seem composed of classical fragments. Godard is a French rationalist. Ruiz is baroque, mannerist, sceptical and has a taste for the distinctively minor in literature. In Poetics of Cinema, there is a passing reference to Baudrillard, but no further mention of any contemporary French theorists or philosophers: no Derrida, Deleuze, Lacan, Foucault, Krutina, no Cahiers du Cinema film critics, no French philosophy after the Middle Ages, more or less. This is interesting in a book in which every third sentence drops a name, and probably deliberately. He is more interested in the possibility of speculation where he finds it than in truth or its modern form, critique (or its Anglophone form, cultural studies).

In his book, Poetics of Cinema, the range of cultural reference is vertiginous. Like Borges, Ruiz is a collector of philosophies and ideas, with a connoisseur’s appreciation of them as artifacts. An ex-seminarist, he is fond of mystical and Muslim theology, and has a great memory for medieval philosophers. He reads analytic philosophy, not to join in debate but to draw from it for speculative fiction: for example, he creditably gives the gist of the American philosopher Donald Davidson’s essay “Paradoxes of Iriationality”, where Davidson argues that to preserve the principle of the rationality of a person’s actions, it may be necessary to posit two or more conflicting belief-desire networks in the individual. But he comments on Davidson by way of a story from the Chinese Secret of the Golden Flower! He likes unsettling juxtapositions of ideas, doing so with them what Surrealists did with the sewing machine, the bicycle and the dissecting table: “From Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite to German expressionism, from Wang Wei to P. J. Farmer — by way of Pierre Della Francesca, Rembrandt and Swedenborg.” (In this quote, Wang Wei is the great 8th-century Zen Buddhist painter and poet, contemporary of Li Po and Tu Fu; P. J. Farmer, presumably, the science-fiction writer.) He throws in a lot of merely amusing comparisons, too, for texture, like his comparison of artists with French, Spanish, English and German explorers. He prefers to use the conceptual schemes of obscure or exotic texts for analyzing cinematic possibilities: the priest Pavel Aleksandrov Florenski, Opinions on Painting by the Monk of the Green Pumpkin by the Chinese painter Shi-H-Tao, 19th-century Muslim mystic Abdel Kader. (The last is not an invention, I hope. Is Eileen Zola, who “conceived alchemy as an extension of charity to the animal, vegetable, and mineral realms”, a tall tale?) In English and European literature, his display of reading is impressive. Stevenson, Chesterton (The Man Who Was Thursday) and James Hogg’s Confessions of a Justified Sinner are among his English favourites (Hogg misprints Hoog in this edition), but he has also read Philip R. Dick, William Gibson, Arthur C. Clarke. In a book without bibliography or footnotes, with such an improbably vast range of intellectual reference, it is natural to suspect that Ruiz is sometimes fibbing: talking about game theory, he writes “cf. Tarsi and Solar Pons, on the applications of S. Ulam’s ‘measurable cardinal’”. Tarsi and Ulam I have heard of, “measurable cardinal” I will let pass, but Solar Pons is too good to be true. And later in the book I notice Ruiz mentions an Emiliano del Solar.

The first of these projected volumes, Poetics of Cinema is an extraordinary, erudite, but often whimsical, series of speculations on what cinema can be. Ruiz says that [the three volumes] will be of no great value to film buffs or professionals. I wrote them with an eye to those who use the cinema as a mirror, that is, as an instrument of speculation and reflection, or as a machine for travel through space and time.

The book begins with a chapter about “Central Conflict Theory”, the kind of plot structure which is now drummed into us by film schools and consumer guides. The theory is:

A story begins when someone wants something and someone else doesn’t want them to have it. From that point on, through various digressions, all the elements of the story are arranged around this central conflict. Central-conflict movies with narrative drives, distractions from boredom that increase our tendency to be bored, are not the cinema Ruiz believes in, needless to say. He loves the vagaries of B-grade directors Beebe, Le Borg, Lewis, Boetticher, Baudinoue, Ed Wood and Ulmer’s The Black Cat, and likes Snow, Strub and Hulitel, Oxu, Andy Warhol. He praises the poetry of boredom, too. The later chapters cover “Images of Nowhere,” Images of Images”, “The Photographic Unconscious”, “For a Shamanic Cinema”, “Mystery and Ministry”, “The Cinema: Traveling Incognito”.

Apart from its extraordinary cultural range, the most striking thing about Poetics of Cinema, about a book that calls itself a poetics, is that it rarely argues for any theories. Its method of inquiry is not argument but digression, relentless digression. This inconclusiveness makes the book like one of Ruiz’s films. Digression in the book takes several forms. First, there is the form “This reminds me of the following idea”. Second, the form “I imagine this/let us imagine/This made me think of the following story” where the story is fictional. The form “I remember (on a boat in Canton, etc.)”. Fourth, the form of digression which is to go through several ideas about a topic, and then, after stating all of them, digressing. Fifth, interpolation, without stated why or wherefore. The cruelest examples of this are in “For a

BIBLIOGRAPHY

In response to the recent surge of interest in Eastern philosophy, several books have been published in recent years, including a new work by the renowned scholar Dr. Zhang. His book, titled “The Path of Enlightenment: A Journey through the Wisdom of Eastern Thought”, explores the core principles of Eastern philosophy and offers practical guidance for achieving enlightenment in modern times. The book is divided into three parts: The Foundation, The Practice, and The Transformation. Each part delves into the essential teachings of Eastern wisdom, providing readers with a comprehensive understanding of what it means to be enlightened.

Dr. Zhang’s approach is unique in that he combines traditional Eastern wisdom with contemporary psychological insights. He draws on the teachings of various Eastern traditions, including Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism, to offer a holistic perspective on personal development and spiritual growth. The book is rich in practical exercises and meditations, allowing readers to apply the principles of Eastern philosophy directly to their own lives.

In his opening chapter, Dr. Zhang introduces the concept of enlightenment as a state of being that is not limited to any particular form, but is available to all. He argues that enlightenment is not something that can be acquired, but rather is a natural state that can be cultivated. Throughout the book, he emphasizes the importance of self-awareness and mindfulness, and provides readers with tools and techniques for cultivating these qualities.

The first part of the book, titled “The Foundation,” lays the groundwork for understanding the principles of Eastern philosophy. It covers topics such as the nature of existence, the role of consciousness, and the importance of compassion. Dr. Zhang explains how these foundational concepts can be applied to daily life, offering readers practical guidance for transforming their experiences and perspectives.

The middle section, “The Practice,” delves deeper into the techniques and practices associated with enlightenment. It explores meditation, mindfulness, and various forms of spiritual cultivation, offering readers a comprehensive toolkit for their journey. Dr. Zhang also includes exercises that readers can perform at home, allowing them to integrate the concepts and techniques into their daily routines.

The final part, “The Transformation,” focuses on the practical application of these teachings. Dr. Zhang describes how enlightenment can lead to personal growth, spiritual liberation, and a more compassionate and connected world. He encourages readers to see enlightenment not as an end in itself, but as a means to create a more just and equitable society.

Throughout the book, Dr. Zhang draws on his extensive experience as a teacher, researcher, and practitioner to provide readers with a clear and accessible framework for understanding Eastern philosophy and its application in modern times. “The Path of Enlightenment” is a valuable resource for anyone seeking to deepen their understanding of Eastern wisdom and its relevance to contemporary life.

In conclusion, Dr. Zhang’s book is a thought-provoking exploration of the core principles of Eastern philosophy. It offers practical guidance for achieving enlightenment and provides readers with the tools and techniques needed to integrate these teachings into their daily lives. Whether you are a seasoned practitioner or just beginning your journey, “The Path of Enlightenment” is a must-read for anyone seeking to understand and apply the wisdom of Eastern thought.

— Dr. Zhang

Dr. Zhang is a renowned scholar and teacher of Eastern philosophy. He has authored numerous books and articles on the subject, and his teachings are widely respected for their clarity and depth.

The book is available for purchase on Amazon and at most major book retailers. It is also available in library bookstores nationwide. For more information, visit ThePathOfEnlightenment.com.
Shamanic Cinema”, where the computer seems to have had a mind of its own. Sixth, the form of digression “Allow me to digress/At this point let us take a look at”. And on one or two others forms. The result of these digressions is a book that is often entertaining, sometimes tantalizing and sometimes interminable. If nothing more, it is valuable for what it tells us are Ruiz’s intellectual sources, preoccupations and preferences. But it is more: it is a demonstration of how to create films as a means of speculation, for the book is full of “theoretical fables” and imaginary situations. It is like a notebook of projects. The second volume of the trilogy will be called Siro Luddens, “made up of parodies and conceptual simulations”. The third, Methoda, is “composed of exercises and formulae.”

**KISS ME DEADLY: FEMINISM AND CINEMA FOR THE MOMENT**


A moment was marked: an opportunity for some to reflect, for others to look ahead. A one-day conference called “Kiss Me Deadly: Feminism and Cinema Now” was held at the University of Sydney in 1991, as part of the Dissonance project—a retrospective on Australian feminism in the arts over the past twenty years. This anthology includes essays presented at the conference and others influenced by it, published at the time of the event.

The captivating title is there for a number of reasons. It pays tribute to Robert Aldrich’s film of the same name because, as editor Lalee Jayannaye argues, Kiss Me Deadly (1955) has been read in contradictory and subversive ways. As well as this, Aldrich’s inventive casting choices have diversified and enriched the image of the 1940s femme fatale. Most significantly, the phrase “kiss me deadly” captures for Jayannaye the feeling of ambivalence that has pervaded the feminist project in cinema from at least the 1970s. She describes a concern felt by herself and others that the very theory that set out to explicate and transform our understanding of “woman” in cinema was killing a certain experience of cinema. For some of us cinema was at least as important as feminism, and there seemed to be something wrong in the way the two terms were brought together like a kiss of death. [p. 3]

The essays in this collection recognize this dilemma. They are distinguished by their fascination with the cinematic, and characterized by a desire to enact that fascination through their writing. In her introductory essay, Jayannaye provides a context by marking out three key paradigm shifts within feminist film theory. She describes the first stage as one concerned with “images of women” or “women and films”—a stage foregrounding representations of women but with real methodological limitations. This led to a second paradigm: when psychoanalytic theory became important in theorizing the cinematic apparatus and the viewing subject. This stage was also preoccupied with close attention to the text and frame-by-frame analysis. The third shift refers to the present time dominated by the work of Gilles Deleuze on the cinema, and its concerns with time and memory. Jayannaye sites the anthology within this most recent stage of feminist film writing—part of this new wave.

Patricia Mellencamp’s keynote address, “Five Ages of Film Feminism”, also retraces a journey through the feminist history of film, linking it at key points to her own life experiences. Her reflections are more critical than celebratory. “We got it wrong”, she says, focusing on sexual difference and control of the female image instead of what are, and always were, the real sources of power: money, work and knowledge. Canonical films for feminism, such as Vertigo (Alfred Hitchcock, 1954), Thelma & Louise ( Ridley Scott, 1991) and Privilege (Yvonne Rainer, 1990) are revisited and reconsidered. The films of Tracey Moffatt are linked to those of Julie Dash, and to the importance of generations of women and their conversations in telling the story of our lives. Her redress of the past wishes to not only “not forget”—part of her polemic is to remember the history and the women.

Other essays are more particular and specific. Jodi Brooks in “Between Contemplation and Distraction Cinema, Obsession and Voluntary Memory” uses Benjamin’s work on Proust and Baudelaire and the concepts of involuntary memory to theorize an “erotics of the encounter”. Needya Islam examines the action films of Kathryn Bigelow, describing how the work of this female auteur tests cinematic and generic conventions rather than conforming to them.

Melissa McMahon invokes Deleuze and Guattari and De Certeau to help account for the way bodies unfold themselves in space in Robert Bresson’s Mouchette (1967), the films of Chantal Akerman and the dance of Pina Bausch. Michelle Langford in “Film Figures: Rainer Werner Fassbinder’s The Marriage of Maria Braun and Alexander Kluge’s The Female Patriot” is focused on two women: Maria Braun and Gaby Teichert. She uses structural and strategic aspects of each film to show how Maria and Gaby intersect with, and are central parts of, the filmic process, reflecting each film’s mode of production. She argues that it is not possible to understand these women from feminist perspectives alone.

Toni Ross takes a film— Bad Timing: A Sensual Obsession (Nicolas Roeg, 1980)—which on its release was regarded as a misogynist and investigative, through an early strand of German romantic aesthetics, the process by which authorship and human agency are allegorized. She also invokes Deleuze on fascination. Jayannaye’s own essay in the collection, “Life is a Dream: Raúl Ruiz was a Surrealist in Sydney: A Capillary Memory of a Cultural Event”, uses Benjamin’s theory of allegory in relation to Ruiz’s filmic allegory in Les Trois Corbeaux du Matelot (Threel Crows of a Sailor, 1982). Her interests in the feminine facade leads her to the material and Deleuzian time-image.

Lesley Stern’s “Meditation on Violence” is a version of a chapter in her book The Scione Connection. Through description and juxtaposition, she compares Michael Powell’s The Red Shoes (1948) with Martin Scorsese’s Raging Bull (1980), focusing not only on the performances of the boxer and the dancer, the totemic object of shoes and gloves, but also on our processes of engagement with the cinema.

There is always a problem in regarding an anthropo as a coherent body of work. Kiss Me Deadly is in fact a diverse and varied collection. What the writers do share is an engagement with difficult questions about reading, taking ideas from contemporary theory and using them to try and understand some compelling poetic texts. It is an anthology of writing by women in love with the cinema who are embarrassed to understand what that might mean. 

**PSYCHO BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE CLASSIC THRILLER**

Janet Leigh, with Christopher Nickens, Pavilion Books, London, 1985, 197pp., illus., rrp $29.95 (hc)

On page 58 of her book on Psycho, Janet Leigh includes a photo of John Gavin and herself sitting on a bed together under the watchful gaze of Alfred Hitchcock and a Mitchell camera. Its caption reads, “Is Janet pulling John’s chain?”

It’s a provocative shot I’ve not seen before. But having heard what Hitchcock actually asked Janet to do to John (or at least her daughter Jamie’s account of her mother’s recollection of same), I wonder why Janet is so coy 35 years after the fact. In a book she claims will “set the record straight”, why would she ask her reader to put together this caption and references to Hitchcock’s love of wordplay risqué, to read between the lines?

Perhaps she has chosen to counter the muck-raking of Donald Spoto (The Dark Side of Genius: The Life of Alfred Hitchcock, Weidenfeld and Nicolson) when she goes on at length about how respectful Hitchcock was of his leading lady. (Vera Miles, who was under contract to Hitchcock and did more scenes in Psycho than Janet, is outright indignant about her mentor’s propriety, and another Psycho player, Pat Hitchcock, supposedly the victim of a cruel prank by her father on a ferris wheel on Strangers on a Train, assures me not only that it never happened, but that Spoto never even talked to her.)

But Spoto has talked to Janet Leigh. During pre-production on Psycho II, my producer, Hilton Green, and I attended an American Film Institute screening after which Spoto literally led Janet to corroborate a series of his remarkable assertions (like the bird illusion she lists here). In one instance, Spoto claimed the license plates of Marion’s car were an acronym of something like “Norman Lives”. Janet (or rather her collaborator, Christopher Nickens, in one of three chapters which bear his initials) goes one better claiming the plates are “scatological humour”. In fact, the plates came from the AD’s (Hilton Green’s) own car.

One infers the anecdotal writing about her life, friends and collaborators particularly in the years after Psycho, when she deduces Tony Perkins was devastated not to have got an Oscar nomination, is by Janet Leigh—it is in fact her third book.

But most of the behind-the-scenes stuff promised by the title, I deduce, is actually by collaborator Nickens, otherwise why would she interrupt her first person account constantly to quote herself. Nonetheless, the book makes an interesting companion piece to Stephen Reboldo’s (Alfred Hitchcock and the Making of Psycho, Demner, 1990), if only because it claims to be the account of someone who was there. And in the post-structuralist era, when not even authors are supposed to understand their own work, much less authors, it is interesting to ponder just how much a body of work, whose character dies at the end of “Act I”, knows of the overall.

The book lacks the behind-the-scenes research and scholarship of something like Hugh Fordin’s (to the Freud end) (The World of Entertainment, Doubleday, 1975). But like Katharine Hepburn’s diary written during the making of The African Queen (a real contrast to Peter Viertel’s White Hunter Black Heart), it is nonetheless an insight into what actors perceive is going on on the films—they’re in—especially given the hindsight that this one has become a classic.

The shower scene, for example, Janet (and Psycho’s AD, Hilton Green) put to paid to Saul Bass’ claim to have directed it (one wonders how many other scenes—e.g., the battle from Spartacus, which she laid claim to on his visit here in the 1970s—were really his). But she comes up with the old chestnut: no knuckle contact via the bath—no frontal nudity. How can this farce of Hitchcock’s (to foot the censor) still persist in the era of video players with freeze frame and search functions? Anyone who still believes as Janet does only to look to see both a knife penetrating a rubber torso just below the navel, and full frame bra strap, essentially ground of the hand reaching for the shower curtain.

Another Hitchcock furphy was the use of a boy as an upper body double (in the overhead shot, for example). To her credit, Janet acknowledges Marli Renfro, a nude model she claims was hired to line up shots and start roomers. Reading between the lines again, Marli was photographed when Janet was not there, on three of the ten days it took to shoot the scene—Janet claims to have been there for all seven, then concedes to turning up another day and encountering her naked counterpart (she continues nonetheless to claim the body was
ing and the re-directing of energies for maximum benefit in audition opportunities. Carey generously acknowledges the actor’s contribution to the design and development of these processes. His writing is laced with useful anecdotes and examples of the creative process.

At the heart of Carey’s writing is the understanding of the actor’s profession, a profession which deals daily with emotional issues, fears, predicaments, pitfalls; a profession which deals daily with: the creative process; deconstructing the facade; finding the source; motivation, and transformation.

Carey’s audition preparation procedures are thorough, articulate and inspired. He is generous in his references to the great master influences: Stanislavski, Chekhov, Grotowski, Benedetti, Balas, Keith Johnstone, Viola Spolin. He takes their organic explorations further. The usual notions of public personas and private self are re-explored and redefined, the creative process is distilled in terms of the communication and the power of kinesthetic response, and relevant exercises present useful applications of the theory and content.

Although as a film director I was disappointed that little focus is given to the screen audition, as a theatre director I was delighted by the great range of exercises which demand an exploration of the “authentic self” and “emotional flexibility”, which will go a long way to help prepare for the requirements of film auditions. Perhaps in a future edition exploring ways of creating actor self-sufficiency, but dialogue auditions are usually more useful in revealing the actor’s flexibility in authentically responding to the situation at hand.

My favourite story from Carey’s repertoire is the anecdote about the audition of the dialogue scene, “Man 1/Woman 1”. Evidently a new script about a mother and son relationship had been written but the audition scene that was sent out read: “Woman 1, Man 1”.

Based on his feelings towards the scene, the actor concluded that the two characters were passionate lovers experiencing a tumultuous rift in their relationship. He arrived for the audition and met the older woman who had been hired to read opposite him. He evidently worked very well off the other actor, his choices reflecting his belief about their turbulent relationship. His actions and gestures of physical familiarity informed by the dilemma in which he and his lover had found themselves created a deep emotional estrangement in the playing. At the conclusion of the playing, all concerned where shocked and speechless until the mix-up was discussed.

However, the actor had committed so completely to his interpretation that he was offered the job. A great story about talent, preparedness, and inspired interpretation, and Carey’s exercises inspire the honing of talent, preparedness and interpretation. After this very enriching opening section, Carey has designed the second part as an inspired, enlightening and detailed analysis of a wide range of scenes, with practical ways to release the dynamics inherent within the writing, and thus increase a sense of personal ownership. Entitled “The Creative Arena”, Carey explores these exercises within the context of “rehearsal room exercises”.

Carey’s methodology is carefully thought out. Each entitled exercise has an introduction revealing the general purpose for the exercise. This is followed by an explanation of exercise objective, and where it fits into the scheme of preparation. In many cases, this is followed by a section on application of the concept, encouraging wider use of the exercise in other contexts. (Perhaps this is where more focus could be given to cell-board references?) As Carey moves towards a specific illustration, he prefaces it with the point of concentration, directing clear focus in how to explore the objective. Then even further specific illustrations from within a variety of contexts are analyzed, with follow-up notes on each illustration.

For those who intend to use Carey’s work for screen auditions, perhaps the most useful exercise in this section is the one on “inner monologues/departures”: finding the inner connections through a sort of “thought script”. Carey focuses on Nino’s speech to her psychiatrist in Anthony Minghella’s screenplay of Truly Madly Deeply (1991). His exploration of the “thought script” and the intimacy of those thoughts to screen is truly dynamic.

Part Three contains more than 90 monologues for men and another 80 monologues in the women’s volume. Among the contributors are excerpts from the works of Hannie Rayson, Louis Nowra, Stephen Sewell, Alma De Groen, Nick Enright, Michael Gow, Alan Ayckbourn, David Hare, Arnold Wesker, James Saunders, Jules Feiffer, Charles Marowitz, Sam Shepard, Neil Simon, Tennessee Williams, Tony Kushner. The author apologizes for not separating the speeches into comedy and drama, but his point is well taken: “labeling” speeches may limit the possible ways of seeing and interpreting.

For all those actors and directors who want an insightful, inspiring and practical handbook for auditions and rehearsal processes, I highly recommend this book.

KEN DANCYGER

ALTERNATIVE SCRIPTWRITING
WRITING BEYOND THE RULES
Ken Dancyger and Jeff Rush, Focal Press, Boston, 1995, 300pp., index, rrp $65.00.

When first confronted with this book, I cringed. “Not another prescriptive text that tells you your script is down the toilet if you haven’t hit your second act turning point between pages 75-85”, I wailed! I was dead wrong. At last I have something I can swaggle in front of my producer to back up my argument when he starts citing Ginter and Field at me. “I’m not using a recursive-three-act structure”, I’ll tell him. “I’m going exaggerated ironic. I’m having a shot at a two-act. I’m mixing modes, working against genre.”

Prescriptive texts such as Seger and Field can be technically useful editing tools but, as Dancyger and Rush are only too well aware, in the wrong hands they can be downright dangerous.

Most amateur scripts contain every one of Seger’s prescribed act breaks and many would pass the checklist for act accomplishments, yet most of them are absolutely dead.

Dancyger and Rush state up front that “the purpose of this book is not to prescribe, but to explore”, and this they do very well. They are both teachers, and good teachers at that. While Dancyger is chair of Film and Television at New York University, Rush is chair at Temple. They make you think. They make you want to see films they cite that may have slipped your notice as well as re-view ones you may have undated.

While Alternative Scriptwriting has been designed as a hard working text for students, it is equally as stimulating for the jaundiced professional. It is a general book that takes a broad, sweeping look at the art of scriptwriting (for the writers do indeed believe scriptwriting is an art), and, while it concentrates on American film and writers, it makes a valiant effort not to exclude references from other countries. It looks at low budget and big budget, films that work and those that don’t.

What Dancyger and Rush are on about is encouraging the screenwriter’s individual voice to come through. It is a sad fact that if you were to watch all the films released in any three-month period, you’d [...] think (all the writers) grew up in a ten-minute drive from Universal Studios,
Dancyger and Rush seek to redress this. The book is structured like a Greek chorus with its strophe/antistrophe, always describing the conventional before moving to the alternative. Thus, they give an analysis of the restorative three-act structure before moving on to examples that work against it. And again they outline the various genres and how they work before discussing films that subvert or mix genres.

The authors write densely, clearly and well. Students of screenwriting will find the “Character, History, Politics” chapter informative not just for discussion of the transformation of historical and political material into fiction, but also for its examination of narrative style and point of view.

Australian films crack a mention in the chapter “The Primacy of Character over Action” and, while I share the authors’ view that the singular whole is due to [...], story telling at success of (Australian) films as a narrative is both worthy and relevant, has had a special significance for them. The response was astonished. The response was astonishing. The response was astonishing. The response was astonishing. The response was astonishing.

The book finishes with a word on new technology and the cold, hard truth had been felt more comfortable if occasionally mixed the original, I cannot comment on its improvement. All I can do is highly recommend this latest incarnation.

P.S.: While the study of the heroic myth in relation to film narrative is both worthy and relevant, it has been done to death and it was with great relief I noted Joseph Campbell didn’t crack a mention anywhere. Deborah Parsons

Books Received

**THE 1995 INFORMATION PLEASE ENTERTAINMENT ALMANAC**


A comprehensive almanac covering various aspects of the U.S. entertainment industries. Provides a useful listing of all films, both foreign and domestic, released theatrically in the U.S. between October 1994 and 11 August 1995, together with basic production credits.

**THE ACTORS’ DIRECTOR RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH BEHIND THE CAMERA**

Andy Dugan (with an introduction by Steven Spielberg), Mainstream Publishing, Edinburgh, 1994, 132pp., illus., index, rrp $39.95.

**AN ACTOR’S REVENGE**


From the BFI Film Classics series.

**ALADDIN THE MAKING OF AN ANIMATED FILM**

John Culhane, Hyperion, New York, 1992, 118pp., illus., index, rrp $24.95.

**THE ART OF POCAHONTAS**

Text by Stephen Rebello, Hyperion, New York, 1995, 173pp., illus., rrp $57.00 (hc).

**AUSTRALIAN TELEVISION AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIASCAPES**

Stuart Cunningham and Elizabeth Jocka, Cambridge University Press, 1996, 248pp., illus., index, rrp $39.95.

Full review will be published in the next issue of *Cinema Papers*.

**BLADE RUNNER TWO THE EDGE OF HUMAN**


**BRANDO**


**BRITISH FILM STUDIOS AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY**

Patricia Warren, B. T. Batsford Ltd., London, 1995, 192pp., illus., index, rrp $39.95.

**CAPTAIN QUIRK THE UNAUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM SHATNER**


**CHRONICLE OF THE CINEMA 100 YEARS OF THE MOVIES**

Foreword by Alexander Walker, Dorling Kindersley, London, 200pp., illus., index, rrp $70.00 (hc).

**CLINT EASTWOOD**


**COPYCAT**


Based on the screenplay by Ann Biderman and David Maders.

**DISNEY’S BEAUTY AND THE BEAST A CELEBRATION OF THE BROADWAY MUSICAL**

Donald Franz with Sue Heinemann, foreword by Alan Menken, Hyperion, New York, 1995, 160pp., illus., index, rrp $49.95 (hc).

**FASHIONING THE NATION COSTUME AND IDENTITY IN BRITISH CINEMA**


**GET SHORTY**


**IMAGE AND MIND FILM, PHILOSOPHY AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE**


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**NEW EDITION OF ANDREW BRITTON’S TEXT INCLUDES MORE THAN 100 STILLS, UPDATED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FILMOGRAPHY, AND A LIST OF THE ACTRESS’ STAGE WORK.**

**MERCHANDISE LICENSING IN THE TELEVISION INDUSTRY**

Karen Raugust, Focal Press, Boston, 1996, 126pp., illus., index, rrp $99.00.

**A MONTH BY THE LAKE**


**A PERIOD OF ADJUSTMENT**


**PERCEPTIONS (WITH A MEMOIR OF JANE AUSTEN)**


**PROJECTIONS 4½**


The majority of the latest edition of *Projections* is an English translation of “The Puistf Collection”, in which the editors of the leading critical magazine Puistf commissioned “our favourite filmmakers to write a piece about an actor, or a film, or a director who has had a special significance for them.” The response was astonishing, with a range of filmmakers, from Mario Monicelli, appraising the overlooked career of Harry Langdon, to Alain Resnais, suggesting that Jacques Rivette write an essay for Puistf on new technology – “New technology has arrived. Each copy of a film can be changed ad infinitum and become as differ...

ent from another as performances of plays in the theatre” – to Chris Marker analyzing Hitchcock’s *Vertigo* (1954). In addition, the editors of *Projections* solicited their own responses from filmmakers including Richard Lowenstein, Sally Potter, James Toback, Michael Tolkin and others. Essential reading for filmmakers and film lovers alike, as one has come to expect of this excellent series.

**PULP CULTURE HARD BOILED FICTION AND THE COLD WAR**


**QUEEN CHRISTINA**


From the BFI Film Classics series.

**THE RUN OF THE COUNTRY**


**SCREENING THE PAST ASPECTS OF EARLY AUSTRALIAN FILM**

Edited by Ken Bernyman, National Film & Sound Archive, Canberra, 1996, 180pp., rrp $24.95.

**SHALL WE DANCE THE LIFE OF GINGER ROGERS**

Sheridan Morley, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1995, 96pp., illus., monography, rrp $29.95 (hc).

**STRAWBERRY AND CHOCOLATE**

Senel Paz, Bloomsbury, London, 1995, 197pp., illus., rrp $18.95.


**THE VAMPIRE COMPANION THE OFFICIAL GUIDE TO ANNE RICE’S THE VAMPIRE CHRONICLES**


**WOODY ALLEN AT WORK THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF BRIAN HAMIL**

Essay by Charles Changlio, Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1995, 191pp., index, illus., rrp $90.96 (hc).

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49
Partnerships and Companies

Holly Ferguson and Nina Stevenson examine the options for setting up a formal business venture

Choosing the best business structure can be tricky when embarking on a new business venture. The popular business structures in the film industry are sole traders, partnerships, joint ventures and proprietary limited companies. So, to help you decide which of these structures will best suit your needs, this article pitches the pros and cons of these structures, particularly the partnership and the company.

SOLE TRADER

Many film producers begin their careers without adopting any formal business structure. They operate in their own names, or under a business name, as a sole trader. Many of the advantages of a partnership (discussed below) equally apply to a sole trader. The major risk is personal exposure to being sued, which in turn places all your assets (for example, your car or house) at risk if you are required to pay damages where, for example, you are successfully sued because your film defamed someone.

PARTNERSHIP

For a new business venture involving two or more people, it is often simpler and cheaper to commence with a partnership trading under a business name or under the names of all the partners. There will be no returns to prepare and no forms to file with the Australian Securities Commission.

If the partners subsequently decide to abandon the development of the film project, the partnership can be easily dissolved. Winding up a company is a more complex, time-consuming and expensive process.

Of course, if the film development phase is successful and the film project is financial, the partners may decide to transfer the film project to a company. The assignment of the film property can be done relatively simply and inexpensively, although it is necessary to have regard to stamp duty and capital gains tax considerations.

Advantages

Generally speaking, it is less expensive to maintain a partnership since there is no requirement to keep registers, hold meetings, retain minutes, prepare and lodge statutory annual returns, and otherwise comply with the provisions of the Corporations Law.

Another factor to be considered is the possible taxation benefit of the trading losses of the business. If a business is expected to make a loss in its early existence, and a partnership exists, the loss may be distributed to its partners, whereas the losses of a company are trapped until there are profits against which they can be offset.

Disadvantages

One of the main disadvantages of the use of the partnership structure is that of unlimited liability. Every partner is jointly and severally liable for all debts and obligations of the business. This means that if the partnership is sued, each of the partners will be liable for the full amount of the claim, not merely his/her share. It does not matter that the blame may be attributable to only one or some of the partners. Provided that their actions fall within the scope of the business of the partnership, the other partners are unable to disclaim liability. Therefore, the partner with the most "personal" assets (for example, a house) is the most at risk.

Another disadvantage is that the partnership terminates as soon as there is a change in the constitution of its members. For example, death of a partner will dissolve the partnership unless provision is made to the contrary in the partnership agreement.

What to Do if You Choose a Partnership

It is not essential that there be a written partnership agreement. It is, however, highly advisable in order that the terms regulating the contractual relationship between the partners can be properly identified.

The major points that should be addressed in the partnership agreement include: the sharing of profits (and losses); loans to the partnership by partners; voluntary retirement; dissolution and the application of arbitration and mediation in the event of disagreement.

Furthermore, a film partnership may bring together the skills and talents of a director and producer and possibly also a writer. The partnership agreement should be quite specific as to ownership of copyright and any rights reserved to a particular partner. The delineation of creative versus business/financial decisions may also be necessary if one partner is accorded final say on certain creative decisions and another partner has overall control of financial decisions.

Another major consideration is remuneration. If all partners' proposed fees from the film budget are not to be equal, it is also advisable to clarify this at the outset of the relationship.

You should also register a business name (see below "What's in a Name") unless you intend to operate under the names of the partners.

All contracts entered into by the partnership (for example, a book option) should permit the partnership to assign the rights. This provision is to anticipate the possibility of the partners subsequently deciding to incorporate.

COMPANY

The most important advantage to be gained from incorporating a company is that of limited liability. This is because the shareholders of a company are not liable for the debts of the company. However,
with the increasing popularity of company directors’ guarantees, the protection of limited liability is becoming largely illu­sory. Company directors may also find that, in addition to providing personal guarantees, they may be asked to provide some form of security (for example, give­ing a mortgage over their house) to secure the performance of the company’s oblig­ations. Since the company’s directors who are normally requested to give guarantees are generally the only shareholders, lia­bility for corporate debts will still find its way to their doorstep, so to speak.

Nevertheless, few film contracts require a company director’s personal guarantee and a corporate structure may provide some protection against legal claims such as, for example, that the film is defamatory.

A company is a unique business struc­ture in that it is a legal entity in its own right. This has a number of consequences including the following:

- it does not depend on the continuing existence of its members, if one or all of its members retires, resigns or dies the company will still continue;
- members are able to deal with it and sue it which provides particular benefits in the areas of workers’ com­pensation, superannuation and freedom to contract with the entity itself; and
- it can own and dispose of property and other assets.

A proprietary limited company can have up to 50 members, and with a public com­pany the number of members is unlimited. These advantages should be carefully weighed against the disadvantages.

Company Disadvantages

To begin with, the incorporation itself can be quite costly. Even if you buy a company off the shelf, you can still expect to pay in the region of $850. In addition, the company will incur Australian Securities Commission filing fees for annual reports and other documents and higher accountancy fees. Remember, filing fees are an ongoing expense for the life of the company. Usually a film budget does not include the initial incorporation costs or the ongoing filing and accountancy fees.

Companies are subject to reporting requirements under the Corporations Law which means lack of privacy. Also, because the affairs of the company are more open to the public, anyone can obtain infor­mation on the affairs of the company that would otherwise be unavailable.

Conclusion

In summary, because of statutory and common law restrictions and require­ments, the additional administrative load and extra costs are important factors to consider when deciding whether to incor­porate.

Nevertheless, the making of a film fre­quently involves risks that insurance poli­cies do not cover. The protection of “the individual” through a corporate structure is often the primary motivation to incor­porate, particularly once a film project proceeds beyond the development phase into production.

What to Do if You Choose Incorporation

The simplest way to acquire a company is to ask your solicitor or accountant to pur­chase a “shelf company” for you. Broadly speaking, a shelf company is a company that has never undertaken any trans­actions. Your chosen company name will become the company name unless another company already has the name.

You must also nominate the names of the directors of the company and the shareholders prior to obtaining the com­pany. It is now no longer necessary to have two directors and two shareholders (see discussion of the First Corporate Law Simplification Act below). If, however, the company does have two or more share­holders, it may be appropriate to have your solicitor draft a Shareholders Agree­ment, designed to clarify and regulate certain aspects of the business relationship of the shareholders not specifically dealt with in the company’s governing rules (its Articles of Association).

Administration Requirements

On incorporation, your company is issued with a nine digit number. This is the Aus­tralian Company Number, or ACN, which is unique to your company. The Corpo­rations Law provides that this number, as well as the company name, must appear on the following:

- the common seal (a rubber stamp, which is the equivalent of the compa­ny’s signature);
- every public document lodged, or intended to be lodged, with the Aus­tralian Securities Commission;
- every public document signed, issued or published by the company, for example, letterhead, every contract entered into by the company; and
- every negotiable instrument of the company, for example, cheques.

The company name must also be con­spicuously displayed on the outside of its registered office and of every other office.

A company must have a registered office in Australia (cannot be a post office box). The company’s registered office must be open for at least 3 hours each business day between the hours of 9.00am and 5.00pm.

A company must keep various registers including a shareholders register.

A company must also lodge an annual return with the Australian Securities Com­mission. The fee for lodging this annual return is currently $185.00.

Duties of Directors and Secretaries

Any individual, over 18 years of age, can be a director and/or secretary of a com­pany.

The duties and liabilities which are placed on a director are onerous. They include the obligation to act honestly and in the best interests of the company, and to exercise care and diligence and avoid conflicts between personal interests and the interests of the company. Failure to carry out these duties and obligations could mean conviction of a criminal offence with a penalty of $200,000 or up to 5 years imprisonment, or both.

The company secretary also has spe­cific duties which includes ensuring that the company notifies the Australian Secur­ities Commission of any changes to any of the details of the company and its offi­cers, and ensuring that the annual return is lodged on time with the Australian Secu­rities Commission. The secretary must also ensure that the company keeps a written record of each meeting (minutes), which should include the date, the time, the members in attendance and the resolu­tions.

The First Corporate Law Simplification Act (the “Act”)

Pursuant to the Act, a company is now only required to have one director, one company secretary and one shareholder, and, of course, the one person can be all three.

Furthermore, if the company is classi­fied as a “small company”, it will generally not be required to prepare formal accounts (annual profit and loss accounts and a balance sheet), or have them audited. In addition, the company is no longer required to provide key financial data in the annual return. Nevertheless, the company should continue to prepare its accounts in accordance with standard accounting procedures for taxation requirements, etc.

A company is a “small company” if any two of the following criteria are satisfied:

- the gross operating revenue is less than $10 million for the year;
- the gross assets are less than $5 million for the year;
- there are less than 50 employees for that year.

Accordingly, higher budget films made by a company will probably result in the company being excluded from being a “small company”.

If the company fails to satisfy at least two of these requirements, it is classified as a “large company” and formal accounts will need to be prepared and be audited and lodged with the Australian Secur­i­ties Commission along with the annual return.

The Act also does away with the need to have an Annual General Meeting.

What’s in a Name?

To carry on a business under a business name in Australia, you have to register your business-name under the Business Names Act in your state, or the states in which you will be carrying on your busi­ness. If your business is going to be a global enterprise, then it may be wise to register the name in all states to ensure that the name will not be registered by anyone else.

In general, anyone can apply to have a business name registered, provided that they are the person or persons carrying on or proposing to carry on business in the state under that name.

You can choose any name, subject to a few restrictions. For example, a business name is not to be registered unless it is comprised entirely of letters, numerals and punctuation that are part of the English language. Also, you cannot register a name if it is likely to be confused with a com­pany name or a registered business name.

Registration

Before applying for registration of a business name, you should search the Companies and Business Names Index. Registration is then simply effected by completing the prescribed form (available from the office of Business and Consumer Affairs in your state) and lodging it together with the appropriate fee (which is approximately $100).

The initial registration of a business name will be in force for a period of three years. Close to the expiry of the term, you will normally receive a renewal form and any renewal of registration will take effect from the date of expiry of the previous registration.

You should note that registration in itself will not confer on you any particular rights in relation to third parties. However, where someone has been car­rying on business under a registered name for some time, it would afford substantial evidence of the person having established a right to the exclusive use of such name.

Administrative Requirements

You should also be aware that the regis­tration of a business name imposes certain obligations, the main duties being as fol­lows:

- the business name must appear in leg­i­ble characters on business letters and other formal documents;
- the business name must at all times be displayed in a conspicuous place on the outside of every place at which busi­ness is carried on under that name; and
- the certificate of registration of the business name must at all times be displayed in a conspicuous place on the place where business is carried on under that name, or if there is more than one place, at the principal place where business is so carried on.

If in doubt, remember to check it out.
Sometimes I think I’ve done things that I may not be as good in, but they have stretched me, and on the next thing I do I feel exorcized from the thing before. But I certainly never expected to be an overnight success and I’m still very much in the business. I always think, “This is the last job”, and you want your last job to be your best, rather than, “Well this is just the shit I do before the next big hit.” I just wouldn’t dare think that way.

George Miller said recently that Australians could start teaching Americans a different kind of storytelling. What are your feelings about the Australian film industry now and where it is heading?

I don’t think last year’s stuff was really that wonderful, but I think this year’s is going to be an astonishing one for Australian filmmaking, both here and for Australians making films overseas. I know there are a couple of extraordinary projects. Apparently someone in the Los Angeles Times review of Shine said “We used to make movies like this” and they were going into archives. There is a middle ground of content which has been lost in the American market at the moment. Movies have become polarized into message movies and anti-message movies. So, you’ll have Pulp Fiction and the anti-message “Fuck you, this means nothing and I’m not going to give you a big ending. You know that makes the world seem like a chocolate cake”; it’s a really heavily embroidered form. At the other end of the spectrum, there are movies that are very unadventurous in their form; their content is fairly light and obvious. Australians tend to occupy the middle ground, where form and content are inseparable. I don’t think we like saying anything too obviously, unless it is undercut in the next second with “Ah, I was only kidding.” To me, the most significant art in any medium, or the most meaningful, is where both those things fit somewhere in the middle in an extraordinary blend. I think we do that and Children of the Revolution is a wonderful example. It really excitedly uses form and explores different ways of storytelling and it is not without content, whether that is political or even just human content – what it is to be human – with no real answers but with things floating. 

Lillian’s Story, having heard a little bit about it, certainly seems to have both. I think Cosi really embraces form and is not without content. Priscilla might have been light on content, but it wasn’t heavy on message; it was just celebration of form in a really positive way. Something about our film culture is so young that we are competitive definers in Australia: a pimple appears and everyone wants to measure it and squeeze it. But the moment we think we should make this kind of film or that kind of film, we are screwed. Films come from individual visions and individual imaginations. They then go through some kind of collaborative process, but an initial impulse in the way the world is seen is from the individual, and we can really only foster the individual. That is more important than fostering The Film Industry, this almost nebulous thing. The film industry is only the people in it who have the vision to make films. It is not all the crap around the edges. We kind of forget that sometimes.

Michael Tolkin

But most people are not looking for comfort, they are looking to be overwhelmed.

I like to be overwhelmed, too, but I’m suspicious of movies that accomplish it.

Are there marked differences in the way the film is received in America and the way it is received outside of America?

I don’t really know what the response was overseas because I didn’t see that many reviews. The film was so badly distributed that it wasn’t really going to have much of a chance. Most of the international festivals didn’t want it. We were at Deauville, but we didn’t get into Cannes or Venice. At the time it bothered me, but then I saw that there was a certain kind of movie they were taking. There is a certain kind of American film that the Europeans usually don’t get – or do get and don’t want to think about. The Europe which is waiting for America to save it from Bosnia is not the holy temple of intellectual clarity that American intellectuals imagine Europe is.

When The New Age came out, we got some incredibly good reviews here. Hapsters called it the funniest, sexiest American comedy in a decade, and Film Comment magazine put us in the top ten. We were on the top five list of Peter Rainer, head of the national critics organization, and it was the second night’s film at the Tokyo Film Festival, where they gave Judy a big award. We had a gala at Toronto, but there was also a resistance to it, and a certain kind of confusion.

This gets back to what I was trying to say earlier about hypocrisy. There is a confusion that comes from a fraudulent superiority and objectivity. People pretended they didn’t like these people. This is the comment that always bothers me, whether it is about my work or anybody else’s work. I think this applies to a film like Leaning Las Vegas or to Safe.

The term “independent film” was coined by American distributors around six or seven years ago, because the term “art movie” was death in the market place. So, somebody came up with the Independent Feature Project, which has been around for ten years. It is an organization devoted to helping independent filmmakers. But, across the board, the independent films, or independent-minded movies, don’t go very well at the box-office because the audience that really should be supporting them waits for the video. In the end, the audience wants to see the easier commercial movie, like everybody else does, even what is very much the intellectual audience.

Smoke [Wayne Wang, 1995] was a very good movie, a wonderful, relaxing couple of hours in the theatre. It doesn’t change the world, but it has a feeling of reverence. It is beautifully done, an incredibly good ending, and Harvey Keitel gives one of the best performances of his life. But I don’t think it is going to make any more than $8 or $9 million, and it had to eke that out. They spent a lot of money on advertising even to get that and it didn’t cross over.

The Usual Suspects [Bryan Singer, 1995] crosses over because it is a brilliantly put-together heist film, but even then it only made $20 million; it didn’t make $60 million. There is a little bit of grit in it, there is a little bit of comfort, there is something in that movie to make you feel uncomfortable, something about it that is just a little bit queer, and I mean queer in every way. And what’s queer in it is what makes most independent movies interesting, but is what will turn off all but a specialized audience.

Did you specifically write The New Age for Judy Davis and Peter Weller?

When I wrote The Rapture, I had Judy in mind. So, I had been thinking about her for a long time, though I really didn’t have anybody specifically in mind for The New Age. I was actually very grateful that Judy and Peter did the movie. I met Peter at a party and he is a big fan of The Rapture and was raving to me about it. We gave him The New Age and he called me and said he wouldn’t want anyone else to be in it, he had to be in it; it was his story. Then Judy read it. I had a couple of calls with her when I was here and she was in Sydney, and we worked it out.

Had you seen them together in The Naked Lunch [David Cronenberg, 1991]?

Yes, and I liked the idea of working with the Astaire and Rogues of psych. I hope that somebody lets them make a movie again. It would be great to see them do a movie in about 10 years. It would be very interesting to see them work together again.

Rachel Griffiths

Hardy, but that’s why Ang Lee has directed Sense and Sensibility, and why The Woodlanders is being directed by quite a radical documentary filmmaker. Everybody is very aware that with these classic literary adaptations there has to be a fresh vision attached. It has to get back to the essence, which in some ways has been masked up with a certain reverence and a style of adaptation that people are no longer interested in.

Michael was being more fervently true to the time. Most of Jude is set in Oxford, and he didn’t want to use Oxford because Oxford looks like a chocolate box now, whereas Hardy’s “Oxford” was a very austere, foreboding, impressive, classist place. So, we moved to some of the harsher places in Edinburgh to get a lot of that stuff, and also to Durham. Michael went for landscapes that were rugged rather than picturesque. The type of farming and the size of farms were different then to how they are now. Costume dramas tend not to want to acknowledge the poverty level, the grit and the dirt of England at that time. In Roman Polanski’s Tess, there is the smell of shit. I think Polanski was right. The stench of 1860s England was certainly enough to keep many of French perfume factories in good business. [Laughter.]

Future Directions

Are you taking a break now?

Yes, apart from flying around the world three times with Muriel’s, I had some wonderful times. I went to Barcelona and the film festival there. I met some wonderful filmmakers, trying to get other jobs, basically. I met some of my heroes, which has been very exciting.

You seem to have chosen your work with a degree of caution.

Caution for me is not something that I have to fear. I’m probably overly aware of my limitations as a person and as an actor, and have been at various stages in my career. I’ve never done anything for money – no, that’s not true; I actually did an ice cream ad for the money. I’m not saying I wouldn’t do that again in the future, with the mortgage and a couple of kids, but I was very careful in moving from support parts to lead roles. I’m very careful about not being typecast. I’ve knocked back quite a few Rhonda-type roles since Muriel’s. I sometimes actually regret that, because some of them were very good, and I think I could have been very funny.

I had Judy read it. I had a couple of meetings with her when I was here and she was in Sydney, and we worked it out.
And Jean Levy (Patrick Bauchau), who is a kind of facilitator, a conduit of sorts for these characters making these journeys. Is that why you cast Patrick Bauchau again in The New Age?

That is a good question. Patrick himself is very interesting, very thoughtful; I’d say a philosophical and spiritual person. He has a very interesting, rich energy. Too often he is used because he is European and has an accent and is handsome ... a cliché vampire.

I promised him that the next time I make a movie he is going wear a straw hat, ride a bicycle and pick up the towels around the pool at a New York hotel, and have absolutely nothing to say of value to anybody ... and not get laid!

At the end of The New Age, Katherine seems to be to some degree a little more accepting of the constraints of this new life, having faced rock-bottom, whereas Peter seems to still have a need to be in total control. Peter elected to go to hell.

And hell is a telephone marketing company?

Have you ever worked at one?

No, but you have, I understand.

Maybe he is in purgatory, but I think not. Peter is given every opportunity to show some courage and he just can’t.

And would you include in that term “courage” killing himself?

No, he takes the leap. She gives him the choice of life and he takes life again, but he doesn’t have the courage to go any further with it. He is not there. I think he is too shocked.

It is like the end of The Rapture. Mimi and I talked about “The Rapture Part II”, which is about three seconds long. There’s darkness, Mimi looks up, you hear God saying, “Oh, all right”, and then she goes too.

At the end of The New Age, I talked to Peter and Adam West about coming back, in 10 years. Just as I think that somebody should use Peter and Judy again in a movie, I’d like to see a movie about Peter and his father, when the father is too old to take care of himself and Peter takes care of him.

Will he still be trying to buy red suits, and pick up young women?

No, no. There will be no money. They might be in the middle of the desert?

I see them not at a trailer park – that is too easy – but living in a small retirement community, and the son is taking care of the father. The son is in his fifties and the father is in his eighties.

The New Age holds out a little bit of hope for Katherine, at least.

Well, I think because she earned it. She also had to get away from him. For Katherine to grow, she was going to have to leave him.

Could you talk about the influences, particular films, writings, in making The New Age? You mentioned Proust earlier.

I haven’t completed Proust, so I don’t want to use him as a reference. I’m a classically-catholic product of an education and an adolescence in which I really didn’t see that much difference between James Bond and Chekhov, because I thought they were both kind of cool. When you are 14, I think you are really defining things for the future. What trash do you like and what art do you like? What kind of pornography do you like? “What was the formative pornography of your adolescence?” would be an interesting question to ask people. I don’t know whether it is polite, and whether they are obliged to answer, but it is certainly something to think about.

After watching The Rapture, I would have thought a defining influence would have been Bresson or Dreyer?

Not that much. I don’t really know Dreyer that well, and, while I’ve seen most of the Bresson movies, I haven’t really studied them.

When was I a kid I saw a lot of Bergman, Fellini and Kurosawa. I was influenced by the classical European cinema, Warner Brothers gangster movies and film noir on television as a mood rather than a series of complete movies. When you are little, you don’t really know the whole story. You don’t even necessarily watch the whole movie from beginning to end. You get scenes and shadows and you take the movies the way we wake up in the morning as dreams. So I think that was really the influence.

I don’t want to underestimate James Bond. Ian Fleming had a big effect on me. I haven’t re-read Fleming in a long time. I don’t think I’ve read a Bond novel since I was in my teens, but I read them all.

In what way were they big influences?

Rapid storytelling. Also, Bond is a very internal character, a very dark internal character. He has no friends, he is a loner, he is sexual, there is always danger and I think he is unhappy. That is what makes him so compelling.

How do you divide your time in between writing and directing films and writing novels?

Right now I’m concentrating on film. After I wrote The New Age, I had finished seven years’ worth of intense work. All my movies and my books were done in that seven or eight years, and I was just tired.

The New Age came out a year-and-a-half ago, and I spent the last year-and-a-half working on other scripts. I’ve been working on an adaptation of Patricia Highsmith’s Ripley Underground, which I hope to direct next, for about one year.

There are three Ripley projects right now. Anthony Mingella has The Talented Mr Ripley, I’ve got Ripley Underground, Mike Newell has Ripley’s Game. All of us are racing to get there first. I actually think it would be cool if everybody made a movie. Three Ripleys, three films ... may the best man win!

I’ve been working for a year on a project for Dreamworks, which I won’t be directing, about a false accusation child abuse scandal in North Carolina; a pilot for HBO for a year; and children’s movie, Herald and the Purple Cream, I’ve been working on for two, two-and-a-half years. But I’m also desperate to direct. I’d like to direct a few movies quickly right now, but I don’t know. There is a lot of talk about money being available for low-budget movies, but nobody has proven that those low-budget movies are really going to break out. It is just that they lose money. They don’t make money, they just lose less, you know.

Are Gleaning the Cube and Deep Cover vastly different to what you wrote?

Last year, Grove Press published an edition of my screenplays. My introduction covers this territory and I spent a lot of time trying to explain it. When I published the book, I decided to print the version of the script which conforms to what is on the screen, because I don’t think that it really serves the film for people to know what went before. It makes people experts of the movie. Again, what I don’t want to do is create a feeling of independent superiority to the work, or any extra knowledge about the work. As soon as you look at a movie and you know that the scene on the film is not exactly what was on the page as written, you are out of the film, and you become an expert. I don’t think art should encourage expertise. I think expertise is a position of independence which, as I keep saying, is bad for art. There isn’t a movie made that doesn’t have a few people working on it. It is very rare when one writer is on the project all the way from beginning to end. The Writers’ Guild has decided that for everybody’s health it is best to try to limit the number of writers who get credit.

Are there particular films or filmmakers whose work you have seen lately that you admire, or would like to comment on?

I’m tired of the movies a little bit right now. I’m tired of the discourse; I’m tired of the way we talk about movies all the time.

But, as I said, I really like Leaving Las Vegas. I think Figgis has made his best movie. I saw Wim Wenders’ Lisbon Story, and I really liked that, because it has Patrick Bauchau and was a very slight movie. In the face of so much energy on the screen, and so much ambition, I think to make a movie that was as gentle and as free as this was really a welcome, radical gift.

I loved Muriel’s Wedding [P. J. Hogan, 1994]. I had an incredible time with that. I like small movies. I like a good small snap, you know. People’s lives. Ah, and I think Babe [Chris Noonan, 1995] is the best movie of the year! I do. I think it is the smartest film, most thought-provoking.

I liked Dumb and Dumber [Peter Farrelly, 1995]. One of the things I liked about it was the way that at the end they didn’t get on the bus. They were too stupid to get on the bus with the massage oil team. I thought that was actually very pure. Abbott and Costello would not have got on the bus, Laurel and Hardy would not have got on the bus, and I just thought there was a certain honesty, an integrity, to that.

I really like Seven [David Fincher, 1995], too. One of the things I liked about Seven is that I was sure the movie was going to end with the wife wrapped in silver gaffer tape sitting on a bomb, but I just thought they are going to sell out.

In Babe, the thing that I was really grateful for was that the dogs come and give Babe the password before the competition begins. There was something about that which was extremely pure. It didn’t play one more overly predictable or really sentimental card at that moment, and it had that integrity.

We have a little theme worked up here, which is: What I liked about the Wim Wenders movie, and Seven, and Babe is that all of them absolutely held to the way they wanted to tell the story, regardless of the traditional methods.

1. The Rapture was released theatrically in Australia and is available on video. The New Age was released direct-to-video in Australia late in 1995 by Warner Home Video.

2. Interview with Gavin Smith, Film Comment, September-October 1994.

The Task of censoring these types of shows in Australia before the appointment of an official censor in 1926 was allocated to the state’s police force. The alleged offence took place at a Mutoscope Parlour run by Frederick G. Wilson at 138 Swanston Street, Melbourne. Acting on complaints, Detective-Sergeant Macnamann was asked to investigate, reporting the result to the Crown Law Department of Victoria. The parlour was later described in court.

The room was a sort of vestibule, with rows of stands round it, each stand holding one of the mutoscope machines, with an apparatus to look through. On each machine was a notice saying that if a penny were put in a slot the instrument would work. The suggestive always attracted people, and in this case great crowds were attracted. The worst feature of the place was that to enable children to look at the pictures a small platform was built for them to stand on had been built in front of the machine.

From the end of January 1904, Detective-Sergeant Macnamann visited the Mutoscope Parlour several times. Acting on condemnatory statements by this policeman, a Permanent Magistrate, Mr. Panton, issued a warrant authorizing Macnamann to seize four Mutoscope reels on 19 February 1904. These were Why Marie Blew the Light Out, A Peeping Tom, Behind the Scenes and The Temptation of St. Anthony. The first of these showed a woman undressing, but [she] blew the light out before [her] nude figure could be seen. A Peeping Tom, a copy of which survives in Australia with frames enlarged to illustrate this article, opens with a man watching some girls in a bedroom through a window. As they start to undress, the voyeur is detected and the girls throw a washsbasin of water over him. The contents of the last two reels have not yet been determined.

Under section 77, part 5, of the Police Offences Act (1890), Mutoscope reels on 19 February 1904 were subsequently handled by the defence counsel (the unfortunate named Mr. Purves, K.C.), and it was hinted that the policeman had acted on behalf of complaints by YMCA officials.

The Bench retired to view the four sets of pictures, and, with only one exception, they agreed that the action in confiscating the material was justified. Panton’s summing-up was a broad condemnation of the show:

Anyone who had seen the pictures before the Court must agree that they were most degrading. It was a matter for regret that any company should have thought that such an exhibition would be tolerated in Melbourne. It was not as if it were confined to adults, but children were allowed to go and look at these pictures. It was a disgraceful exhibition.

Wilson was fined £10 or seven days’ gaol on default, and the Bench ordered that the reels be held until the time fixed for an appeal, then destroyed.

Defence Counsel Purves immediately lodged an appeal on this decision, charging that there was no proof that Wilson had exhibited the four reels in question. Furthermore, under the law, the occupier of the premises where the material was allegedly shown was liable to prosecution — but Wilson had not been charged as the occupier.

These proceedings only served to boost Wilson’s Mutoscope Parlour more than paid advertising could ever aspire to. While Wilson waited for his appeal, the normally conservative Ballarat Courier indicated that his conviction wasn’t widely supported by the community:

The Mutoscope has been doing a roaring trade in Melbourne. This was quite sufficient for that peculiar evolution of the genius homo known as the policeman to step in and summons somebody. It is so comforting to know that we will not be allowed to go astray in spite of ourselves, and that we are paying huge sums of money yearly for the maintenance of a body of huge men to keep a watchful eye on us and see that we don’t drop a penny in the slot to have a peep at a picture that can make a policeman blush, whilst our houses are robbed and garretors [are] allowed to roam about at large.

In the Melbourne Police Court on 27 April 1904, Magistrate Panton’s decision was quashed. No detailed account of the appeal has been located, but Wilson’s exhibitions appear to have continued without further interruption or trouble.

By 12 May 1904, another Mutoscope Parlour opened when photographer Chuck of Sturt Street, Ballarat, set up a dozen machines outside his studio. This time the programme of items on show was a little more subdued:

1) Queen Victoria’s Last Visit to Ireland
2) The Delhi Durbar
3) Dinner Party
4) Ardpatrick’s Derby
5) Kitchener’s Return from South Africa
6) King Edward and President Loumet in Paris
7) A Tag in a Heavy Sea
8) The Sydney Express
9) Griffo vs. Doherty Prize Fight
10) Comice’s Escape
11) Lord Cardigan’s Melbourne Cup
12) The Drunken Carpenter.

Decline of Mutoscope Parlours

After the 1904 obscenity trials, Mutoscope Parlours slowly lost their novelty. The machines continued to be exhibited, but they were to be found in less numerous groupings, integrated with other coin-slot attractions in amusement arcades, in public houses or by the seaside. By 1908, no new films expressly intended for Mutoscope exhibition were being produced by the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company, and, in the following year, its company name was abbreviated to the Biograph Company, as its future was seen to be with films for projection in theatres.

Following the demise of the Biograph Company during World War I, the remains of the Mutoscope operation were sold to William H. Dickson of New York, who formed the International Mutoscope Reel Company in 1920. In 1924, he commenced producing his own one-minute ‘filmmettes’, building up a catalogue of comedy and ‘girlie’ items for reproduction as Mutoscope reels for fairgrounds. Three years later, he started to produce Mutoscopes in a simplified sheet metal cabinet, and, in 1934, he supplemented his reels with topical subjects from newsreels. The last vestige of New York’s International Mutoscope Reel Company was still printing Mutoscope reels in 1999!

For a short period the Mutoscope represented the state of the art in motion picture viewing. In the 1890s, when the minute-long Mutoscope reels equalled the average length of a film, they could seriously compete with the artistic film projection as a profitable means of presentation. As films grew longer and more complex, the minute-long Mutoscope should relegated it to a minor role as a conveyor of mirth and titillation. It is difficult to think of any other motion picture device that is so simple and effective in continuous commercial use since it’s introduction a century ago.
Freedman, but there is some doubt about their successful processing and exhibition. (Refer Cinema Papers, No. 104, June 1995, p. 55.)

On 10 March 1902, the American courts ruled that Edison’s control over the usage of 35mm film was invalid. This permitted the Mutoscope and Biograph Company to use standard 35mm film, which could be enlarged for reproduction on Mutoscope reels. The 70mm gauge was phased out by the Company over the next three years. With this change, the likelihood of Australian films being reproduced as Mutoscope reels was greatly increased. So far, only the following Australian reels have been noted from advertisements – in the Ballarat Courier, 13 May 1904, p. 2:

1) Lord Cardigan’s Melbourne Cup (shot 3 November 1903)

2) The Sydney Express.

Both of the above may be American reels re-labelled to imply local origin. For instance, the race reel may be The [British] Grand National (shot 24 March 1899), and The Sydney Express may be Empire State Express (shot 1897).

Next Issue

So far, this series has examined the work of pre-1904 Australian producers such as the Salvation Army Limelight Department, Marius Sestier, and others more or less well known. But what of the forgotten men, like Herbert Wyndham, chief producer for the Australian Animated Picture Syndicate, who attempted to promote immigration via Australian films shown in Britain?

The next issue will examine the work of Australia’s forgotten producers.

Acknowledgments

This series is financially supported by Griffith University (Brisbane) and the Australian Research Grants Commission, whose support was very graciously arranged by Pat Laughrin of the Griffith Media Studies Department. The authors would also like to thank the following institutions and institutions:

In Melbourne: State Library of Victoria; Public Records Office, Laverton; Ian McFarlane; Mini Colligan; Prue Long; Bev Klepner; Australian Industrial Property Organisation (Patent Office).

In Brisbane: State Library of Queensland; Tim Mather.

In Wellington: Clive Sowry, for details of the Mutoscope’s introduction to New Zealand; New Zealand Film Archive.  

1) 28 September 1897, p. 2; 2) 26 April 1898, p. 15.
technicalities

Essential to make sure that we have the right material to work with. Then, once the material was shot, we made high-quality video templates. We run Softimage, Alias and Renderman here. They're the three big packages used by the high-end film effects people around the world. For this one, we chose Alias. We developed looks and styles in video resolution, composing the video effects onto backgrounds in the Henry to produce a video offline for the director, before tackling the high-resolution rendering and composing on Domino. There's still opportunity for adjustments and creative work right through, but then the output to film is a purely mechanical process: there's a fixed light at the lab; it's not an area to worry about. The lessons to us are to grade it; make it look good on the way in.

Aren't you doing something that other systems have been criticized for: working at low resolution and then waiting for rendering at high resolution? It seems to me that you're doing that, but throwing twice as much technology at the job.

No, I'd hate for it to be misconstrued that way. Domino works very fast, and very interactively for the resolution it's working at. The whole process could take place on the Domino if one wanted. There's an opportunity that's specific to our company - because we have two Hennys and a Harry and 15 SGI stations to work at - to further extend the interactive process. When you're designing a particle animation effect of two bodies transforming into each other, at what you'd expect to be a very interactive process, you're not worried about the resolution. Later you are, and we've used the film resolution work station to death.

How did you do the two bodies changing place?

First of all, we're designing a sequence. So, it's not just a shot-by-shot approach; we had to design an overall look first. Then, while shooting was taking place, we were designing some lighting techniques and particle animation techniques, using freeze frame plates, just to create looks. When the material was ready and cut, we scanned in accurately-selected lengths. Then we fine-tuned the look that we'd already designed to fit the actual shots.

We composited the particle animation elements into the background on Henry and fed it back to the 3D animation head, and kept that process fairly interactive until our designer was satisfied. Then, when the director approved it, we gave the go-ahead to start rendering at high resolution, and do more fine-tuning.

Are the effects essentially a morphing technique?

No, it's adding elements to the scene. It's not just taking shots and bending them around. The design that Andy came up with is of particles actively emanating from one body and showing some obvious transfer to the other body. We created a number of 3D objects with lighting that matched the background lighting, and we also added lighting effects to the background itself. The elements were created using Alias, and then we ported everything separately onto the Domino, and did the final tuning and integration on the Domino.

I've seen a lot of publicity about systems such as the Autodesk 3D Studio, which are very low-cost graphics systems for PCs, and apparently are used for effects in films like Johnny Mnemonic and Virtuosity. Do you feel that the low-cost systems for PCs such as the Autodesk 3D Studio are a threat to the millions of dollars worth of equipment that you've invested in?

They aren't a threat to something like Domino, which is the complete integrated film-to-film package. Certainly, some films have had scenes or effects done on the lower-end equipment, but the higher-end gives the speed and accuracy and flexibility that you need to exist in a commercial environment.

Traditionally, Australian budgets haven't really allowed for a high-end. But Australian production values have always been high-end. And I'm sure other companies in Australia would agree that we probably charge about two-thirds of what you'd expect to pay overseas - for film work probably less, because it's new. But the quality and production values have always been as good, if not better.

documentary

Person, and made by "ama-p33"! One ex-con recently released from prison and still on parole; the other a woman taxi driver. Incredibly intimate, spatially and emotionally, these diary films engage the viewer in a compelling mixture of voyeuristic and identifiable pleasures. And suggest that they could be therapeutic for their subjects, in allowing them to explore and parade their hangups in their own voices. However, at an early session of the Conference, one of the diary subjects revealed that the involvement of other people (editors and producers) in the final shaping of her diary resulted in her feeling that she had lost control of her own story.

The powerful emotional charge is, of course, not restricted to the diary film. More traditional forms of documentary, when infected with a personal commitment, can exhibit, as shown by two feature-length films exhibited at the Conference. The often-derided medium of talking heads, in the hands of an empathetic and skilled director, can be profoundly moving. Gaylene Preston's War Stories (1995) allowed seven New Zealand women (including her own mother) to relate their personal wartime memories direct to camera in starkly-framed separate interviews, punctuated with archival newsreel footage, images from photograph albums and clips from old newspaper articles. This rather traditional documentary construction was shown to be capable of revivification and strong impact. As Bill Gooden wrote in the programme notes to its New Zealand Festival screenings last year:

What is discovered in these stories is the emotion that has been long repressed in pain, smothered in shame or disregarded as insignificantly personal in the context of the international disaster of war. Another powerful account of hitherto repressed history was presented by Dong Cheng Liang in Every Odd Numbered Day, his personal testimony to the 20-year ordeal of his people, the people of the Kinnen islands, who were caught in the crossfire between China and Taiwan, and suffered unremittent bombardment. This is one of those post-Cold War films which focus on the human and environmental costs of the Cold War, and the sins of warriors on both sides. But its director is more than an interested observer. Furthermore, the islanders were active participants in the film, as co-funders, as performers (of dramatized re-enactments), and as interview subjects. A similar kind of community investment in a documentary film occurred in the case of The Murmuring, Byun Young Joo's film about surviving Korean comfort women, which was financed by the sale of thousands of cheap badges to students and other supporters of the project. These committed filmmakers did not depend on government handouts or rich investors for finance; they went to the people who cared, to whom it mattered.

The second pronounced shift in current documentary, that was visible at the Conference, is a shift away from gender difference to gender binding. Consequent to recent developments in queer theory, the whole area of gender and sexuality has been expanded beyond the old simple binaries of male and female, straight and gay. In this Conference, three films in particular concentrated on transvestites in Asian societies. Nick Decamp's Sex Warriors and the Samurai follows young Manila drag queen Jo-an around town, at work in bars, at home with his family, and fulfilling the requirements of entry to Japan, where he will work as a drag performer and prostitute with the full approval of his large family (parents and siblings), all of whom live off his earnings. As he is the supporter of the family, and an earner of foreign exchange, there would seem to be no conflict between family (or national) values and his aberrant lifestyle. Kim Longmat's Shintoku Boys, like her earlier documentary, Dream Girls, introduces us to Japanese girls who impersonate men, for the pleasure of other Japanese women, bringing into question the supposed subordination of Japanese women to masculine desire. These films are punchy and accessible, and have already been screened on prime-time television. Other more demanding films screened at the Conference include Anand Patwardhan's Father, Son and Holy War (an analysis of the nexus between Hindu fundamentalism, nationalism and machismo in contemporary India), Haru Kasuo's A Dedicated Life (a demonic film that destroys the reputation of his subject, a renowned leftist author, and in the process explodes the fact-fiction divide), Steve Fagin's avant-garde video, The Machine that Killed Bad People (which deconstructs television grammar by deploying CNN-style news reporting techniques on footage from Marcos family home movies), and Byun Young-Joo's The Murmuring (which I've discussed at length in an article in Metro, No. 104).

A significant industrial outcome of the Conference was the resolution to form a nation-wide Australian Documentary Alliance, which will promote the interests of documentary filmmakers and act as a lobby group on their behalf in representations to broadcasters, funding bodies and government.
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Number 7 (July 1994)

Paul Verhoeven, Alistair Scott, Will Bacon, William Franklin, The True Story of the Jafar Red

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Bill Sharple, Cliff Green, Warren Hickey, Between the Misses, Sandy Heretik, movies At the Great Machnify

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Robert Duvall, Dave Gordon, Dennis Hopper, Phil Roeder, Ray Hartmann, The Movies of the Great Maitnify

Number 14 (October 1997)


Number 15 (January 1998)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 20 (March 1996)

Philip Martin, Andrew Logan, Michael Jenkin, The Heartbreak

Number 23 (June 1996)

Paul Verhoeven, Alistair Scott, Will Bacon, William Franklin, The True Story of the Jafar Red

Number 27 (July 1996)

Thomas Townley, The Cinema of Age, Back Issues

Number 32 (May 1998)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 34 (July 1998)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 35 (August 1998)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 36 (September 1998)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 37 (November 1998)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 38 (January 1999)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 39 (February 1999)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 40 (March 1999)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 41 (April 1999)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 42 (May 1999)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 43 (June 1999)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 44 (July 1999)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 45 (August 1999)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 46 (September 1999)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 47 (October 1999)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 48 (November 1999)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 49 (December 1999)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 50 (January 2000)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 51 (February 2000)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 52 (March 2000)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 53 (April 2000)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 54 (May 2000)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 55 (June 2000)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada

Number 56 (July 2000)

Sarah Williams, Lynn Herring, Mike Davis, The Cinema of Canada
Look who’s lumen as the light source

Miller Professional Products
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FFC Funding Decisions

Features

TRUE LOVE AND CHAOS (95 MINS)
ASHLINK
D: STAVROS ETHMIOTOU
P: ANN DARMUZET
W: STAVROS ETHMIOTOU
PC: HISS WEAVER
Dist: NEW VISION FILM DISTRIBUTORS, BEYOND FILMS
Developed with the assistance of: FILM VICTORIA, AFC

Mire and Hanif begin a road trip from Melbourne to Perth. Mire heading home to make peace with her mother, Hanif running from the consequences of his involvement in a drug theft. Having masterminded by his friend, Dean. So begins a journey of discovery for Mire and complicity for Hanif, throwing their relationship into confusion and doubt.

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT LOVE IS (95 MINS)
DUO ART PRODUCTIONS
D: CRAIG LAHFF
P: DANNY SCHART, HELEN LEKAE
EP: CRAIG LAHFF
W: LOUIS NOVINA
Dist: REP FILM DISTRIBUTORS, BEYOND FILMS
Amuse
Developed with the assistance of: SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FILM CORPORATION

Children at serious risk of violence, abuse and neglect in the home are traditionally removed from their parents for welfare authorities and placed in foster homes or institutions. This film documents a bold new initiative to place children in the care of parents by welfare authorities and places them in foster families or institutions.

CINEMA PAPERS • APRIL 1996

JACKIE CHAN COMES TO MELBOURNE

Megan Simpson Huberman's Doing the Enemy.
BLOOD TIES

MAY/1996

CINEMA PAPERS

The Commercial Television Production Fund approved for funding in February:

BLOOD TIES

MINI-SERIES

4 x 1 hour

Hal McRae/Outback South

EP: Ral McRae

T: Tony Minghella

Network: 10

A woman seeks revenge on a rich, powerful and corrupt family.

KANGAROO PALACE

MINI-SERIES

3 x 1 hour

Artistic

Services

Survey Production

Information is as supplied and adjudged as of 26/02/96

Features Pre-production

A NICE GUY

Production companies: Golden Harvest (HK) Ltd Distribution: Pacific Film Distributors in Australia

Budget: $4.5 million

Pre-production: 12/02/96

Principal Credits

Scriptwriter: Edward Tandy

Director of photography: Raymond Lam

Production designer: Horace Ma

Continuity: Jackie Chan

Features Production

ACRI

Production companies: ACP Production Services, Capocoppola

Pre-production: 20/11/95-20/11/96

Production: 30/11/95-05/11/96

Post-production: 17/11/96 ...

Principal Credits

Director: Tatsuya Ishi

Producer: Shin Kawai, Jun-Ichi Shindo

Australian line producer: Michael Lake

Executive producer: Hidamaki Kondo

Assistant producer: Kunio Suzuki

Scriptwriter: Masao Sakanoue

Director of photography: Hoy Takahashi

Sound recordist: Andrew Fargus

Editor: John Scott

Japanese production designer: Kiyoshi Higa

Australian production designer: Michael Lang

Costume designer: David Rose

Hair designer: celebrant

Costume supervision: Shuichi Miura

Make-up supervision: Shuichi Miura

Make-up supervision: Shuichi Miura

Synopsis adapted by: Carlos Umanzor

Casting: Maria F. & Associates

Shooting schedule by: Stuart Freedman

Production Crew

Japanese production director: Kazuo Nakamura

Production manager: Elizabeth Symes

Production co-ordinator: Serena Gattuso

Producer’s assistant: Tessa Maddocks

Production secretary: Ken Murray

Director’s secretary: Tomoko Suzuki

Japanese production assistant: Chisato Yamada

Japanese interpreters: Re Shiraishi, Julie Hayes, Robin Tanfield

Location manager: Jan James

Unit manager: Rick Kornfatt

Unit assistants: Brad Field, Paul Winter

Production manager: Mark Hunter

Production financial controller: Yuriko Masahiro

Japanese production accountant: Yuriko Mino

Australian production accountant: Paulina Pia

Richard Coates

Accountant assistant: Peter Pearson

Paymaster: Debbie Goodall

Instructor: W. W. Woot (Audit P I)

Camera crew

Lighting coordinator: Philip Cripps

Underwater camera operator: Rick Orsini

Underwater cameraman: John Weaver

Clapper loader: Jeff Hick

Video operator: Heather Kyle

Key grip: Jan Freedman

Stand in: Paul Calvert

Best boy: Steven Gordon

2nd electrician: Paul van Arden

Associate producer: Masaki Hamamoto

Australian 1st assistant director: Stuart Freeman

Japanese 2nd assistant director: U-ichi Abe

Australian 2nd assistant director: Vera Spence

Continuity: Jackie Sullivan

Boom operator: Dean Ryan

Production sound editor: Christine Miller

Hairdresser: Chika Williams

Supervisor of special make-up effects: Marko McDonald

Senior special make-up effects artists: Wayne Sands, Lesley Vandersyde

Special make-up effects artist: Carlos Valcarcel

Special effects co-ordinator: Harry Ward

Special effects assistant: William Mcllcdn

Japanese visual effects producer: Shul Shula

ASAKO

Japanese visual effects supervisor: Takamag

Associate visual effects supervisor: Dave Cundall

Japanese visual effects assistant supervisor: Kigam Yasuda

Digital artists: Rieko Yoshio, Shoiko Sugio, Tetsuo Nomoto

Story: Anthony C. Paul

Stunts assistant coordinator: Minoru Doi

Unit camera operator: Peter Broks

Casting: John Wootton

Casting director: Malcolm Ross

Art department: Cameron Leigh

Set dresser: Priscilla Cameron

Property master: Jo Fabrez

Costume designer: Bradley East

Art department assistants: Anne Flynn, Lucinda Boffone

Location manager: Grahame Leadon

Comedy director: Peter West

Over ride: Bob McCarron

Wardrobe supervisor: Daun Douglas O’Donnell

Wardrobe assistant: Amanda Drake

Wardrobe assistant: Jacqueline Tivanech

Construction manager: Ray Patterson

Post-production

Post-production supervisor: Sylvia Walker

Laboratory: Atlas

TBA (Tetsu), Tatsumi, Fuki (Sakura), Taka (Bill), Atsushi (Makoto), Kuma Kimura (Jesse), Tetsuo Yamamoto (Kenji), Kinuzo (Aiko), Tomo Take (Masao), Audren, Andrew (John Jenkin), Lincoln (Koyi), Hime (Kazumi)

Japanese students: Hikaru, comes to Australia to find out about his lineage. A reporter, Billy, follows him in search of Kozaburo’s lost family. A brilliant psychologist, Isaka, believes the secrets of missing links in human evolution lies in the ocean.

CHEMICAL LOVE

Production companies: Village Roadshow Pictures Distribution: Village Roadshow Film Distributors

Production: 5/9/6-19/3/96

Principal Credits

Director: James Robin

Executive producer: Stephen Robin

Director of photography: Stephen Robin

Sound recordist: Gary Ryker

Editor: Bill Murphy

Production designer: Simon Dobbin

Costume designer: Bruce Philp

Planning and Development

Casting: Maria F. & Associates

Director: Renn Haiton

Production crew

Camera operator: Mark Shear, John Tate

Focus pull: Tessa Cassar

Clapper-loader: Danielle Rosenburg

Camera assistant: Thomas Voelker, Gavin MacGill

Camera type: Arri-Hami

Mirror: Tanna

Camera assistant: Mark McDonald

Bryce Norton

On-set crew

Bike operator: Andrew McDonald

Make-up assistant: Mark McDonald

Still photography: Emanuella Marcell

Unit publicist: Karla Mackren

Casting

Jen White

Art Department

Production: Nicola Moses

Production designer: Robin Blandford

Location manager: Karl Mackren

Négative matching: Chris Rings

Marketing

Publicist: Karl Mackren

CAST

Davyd Wellington (Vic), Ben Brandt (Miles), Bhathanowm Rose (the Doc), Davd Conn (Charley), Anthony/John MacKenzie (Fred), Elke Bitt (Eddy), Cassandra Wellington (Sherry), Katha Zoblom (Angelique), Jane Mac (Jane), Karl Mackren (Boyd).

Odd as a flashback, Red Herring tells the story of Nick, an ageing, frustrated gangster. Seen as a figure of opposition in the small drug trade, he manages to kill before setting his four contemporaries and two old business colleagues up against each other. However, when it seems all is going to plan, predicaments arise.

Post-Production

DATING THE ENEMY

Production company: Dating the Enemy Distribution company: Tidal Film and Video

Production: 23/10/95 ...

Principal Credits

Director: Michael Simpson

Producer: Sue Mckinlay

Executive producer: Gary Bland, Deborah Hughes

Sound recordist: Michael Simpson

Scriptwriter: Sue Mckinlay

Music: Tijiapurr

Casting: Vu Tran

Planning and Development

Casting: Si Pil avocado

Production supervisor: Anne Brumby

Production co-ordinator: Julie Sim

Production assistant: Deborah Langley

Production secretary: Michelle Russell

Location manager: Philip Rooke

Unit manager: Ray Pellegrino

Production manager: Paul Sulllivan

Financial controller: Minyenniphey Services

Production accounting: Aracena Smith

Production accountant: David Bunn

In-house

Completion: Sound City Services Inc.

Legal services: Lindsay Johnson-Jones

Casting

Clapper-loader: Robert Argulian

Casting assistant: Michelle Cleere

Key grip: Greig Millenoune

Assistant grip: Paul Reddin

Gaffer: Paul Reddin

Best boy: Paul Sulllivan

Electrician: Alan Young

On-set crew

1st assistant director: Steve Connolly

Cinematographer: Mark McEvoy

Unit Manager: Barry MacFarlane

Costume designer: Michael Gaffney

Camera type: Arri-Hami

Mirror: Tanna

Camera assistant: Andrew Page, Andrew McDonald

Make-up assistant: Andrew Page

Costume Assistant: Andrew Page

Camera type: Arri-Hami

Mirror: Tanna

Camera assistant: Andrew Page, Andrew Page

Make-up assistant: Andrew Page

Costume Assistant: Andrew Page

Director: Michael Gaffney

Art Department

Production: Nicola Moses

Production designer: Robin Blandford

Location manager: Karl Mackren

Négative matching: Chris Rings

Marketing

Publicist: Karl Mackren

CAST

Davyd Wellington (Vic), Ben Brandt (Miles), Bhathanowm Rose (the Doc), Davd Conn (Charley), Anthony/John MacKenzie (Fred), Elke Bitt (Eddy), Cassandra Wellington (Sherry), Katha Zoblom (Angelique), Jane Mac (Jane), Karl Mackren (Boyd).

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CINEMA PAPERS • APRIL 1996

62

Casting: Lynne Rutterman — Gold Coast
Casting consultants: MaDua Fay & Associates

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Production manager: Brian Burgess
Production in supervision: AL-Laura
Assistant production co-ordinator: Kim Stiebina
Production offices: Cannes, Jo Suna
Production supervisor: Scott Cruise
Financial controller: Elton Stiebina
Production accountant: Lynne Paetz

CINEMA CREW

Camera operator: Lewis Morris
Focus: Terence Galloway
Clapper-loader: Nick Watt
2nd unit D.O.P.: Paul-Taylor Laid, B-Ebeney
3rd unit films: A-camera—John Brelin, B-camera—Leanne Ashburn
Unit assistant: Adam-Beck
Assistant director: Rhianan Stiebina, B-camera—Jasnath
Key grip: Lester Bishop
Gaffer: Brian Bannsavage

On-set Crew

1st assistant director: Bob Donaldson
2nd assistant director: Susan Waore
3rd assistant director: Debbie Atkins
Continuity: Judy Whitenhead
Boom operator: Herry Nicola
Make-up: Judy Lovell
Hairdresser: Arthur Rees
Stunts co-ordinator: Billy Burton
Stunts assistant: Danny Baldwin
Stunt driver: Adam Anderung
Unit publicist: Vic Heusay

ART DEPARTMENT

Art director: Libby Thomas
Set dresser: AM-Willis Leslie Crawford
Hirer: John Lindsay Amore, All-Oilway

WARDROBE

Wardrobe supervisor: Lisa Liyias
Standby wardrobe: Sun Conrad
Wardrobe assistant: Christelle Combes

CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT

Construction supervisor: John Villaroa Senior Art: Ray Paul
Construction manager: Andrew Garnier

POST-PRODUCTION

Assistant camera car
Editing assistants: Brett Carroll, Gina Carrell, Debbie Lane
Laboratories: American — Gold Coast
Laboratory lab: Gary Kneir

CAST

Billy James (The Phantom), Kristy Snapper ( ¥la), Colinume (Quill), Treat Williams (Dread), Catherine-Zeta Jones (Sala), David Provall (Beir), Steve Hargraves, Cash Silaturally (Monkies), Patricia McCoogan (Phan- tom’s Fanclub), Carrie Tasa (Kabu Sensei)

The Phantom mantle has been handed down from father to son so many times that the line on the lid witnessed his father being murdered by pirates 400 years ago. As the latest heir to this proud tradition, The Phantom (Billy Zane), is sworn to fight greed, corruption and cruelty. The film is based on the Phantom comic strip created by Lee Falk in 1936 and published in 300 publications worldwide by King Features Syndicate.

UNDER THE LIGHTHOUSE DANCING

Production company: Silver Turtle Films
Production in supervision: Euan Lloyd
Principal Credits

Director: Graeme Rattigan
Producer: Graeme Gles, Jane Scott
Scriptwriter: Graeme Gles, Graeme Rattigan
Director of photography: Andrew Ford
Sound design: John Chels

CAST

Jacqueline McKenzie, Jack Thompson, Naomi Watts, Adele Gillett, Phillip Holder, Zoe Bentham

A spiriting romantic comedy based on the true story of three women from two rival couples who visit Rottnest Island to stage a magical wedding.

THE ZONE

Production company: Media World Features
Pre-production: 1/28/96-20/10/96
Pre-production: 10/12/96-3/5/96
Principal Credits

Director: John Taitoule
Produce: Colin South
Associate producer: Paul Bank-Heg
Scriptwriter: Deborah Parsons
Director of photography: Peter Zahnhorw Sound recordist: John Oppenheim
Production Design: Peter Burgess
Production designer: Phil Chambers, Stan Antonides
Consumer: Mike Hulme
Costume designer: Liz Archibald

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Production manager: Yvonne Colins
Production co-ordinator: Markus Manski
Assistant production co-ordinator: Kim Travis
Production supervisor: Ford Stichard
Location manager: Tim Stratton
Unit manager: Michael Batchelor
Unit assistants: Ian Lants, Merv Tucker
Production assistant: Dawn McMillan
Accountant assistant: Ford Stichard
In: K. W. Wood
Producer: John Oppenheim
Finance services: Marshalls & Dist
Travel coordinator: Show Travel
Freight coordinator: Show Travel
Base-office liaison: Louise Cheesley

CINEMA CREW

Camera operator: Roman Korotchak
Focus puller: Peter Scott
Clapper-loader: Baing Doring
Aerial photography: Peter Zahnhorw
Cameraman: Cameradou
Key grip: Fredo Dzik
Gaffer: Rob Timony
First assistant: Chris Shawanah
Assistant electricians: Robbie Mecklenburg
Generator operator: Robbie Mecklenburg

On-set Crew

1st assistant director: Brendan Campbell
2nd assistant director: Christian Robinson
3rd assistant director: Janie Jamieson
continuity: Jodie Pedersen
Boom operator: Tony Dinnon
Make-up: Bill Jackson-Martin
Hairdresser: Bill Jackson-Martin
Special FX co-coordinator: Michael Brandt
Special FX assistant: Lloyd Finnemore
Stunts co-coordinator: Arch Roberts
Stunts assistant: Arch Roberts
First aid officer: Jeanette Greenfield
Safety instruction: Peter Culpan
Stop-motion photography: Bruce McKeown
Unit publicist: Sandy Kaye
Catering: Stuart Brinkworth, Doug CastItaly (Silver Screen)
Runners: Gary Capuro

ART DEPARTMENT

Art department co-ordinator: Christopher
Dresser: Roland Phil, Tony Forth, Tony Xeros
Buyers: Roland Phil, Tony Forth, Tony Xeros
Costume props: Brian Lang
Assoc. Art director: John Chase
Action vehicle mechanic: Barry Bell

Wardrobe supervisor: Sandra Ceviello
Wardrobe assistant: Darcy Not
Designer gels: Peter Coudus
Animals
Location wardrobe: Renu Brown

CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT

Construction manager: Bob Leigh
Production manager: Ian Rodgers, Graeme Beck, Graeme Knight
Sound recordist: Gill Martin, Graeme_Dilly, Graeme, Brian Dick
Editor: Peter Patrick, Roland Smith
Advisor: Alan Hokson
Producer: Bob Leigh
Assistant production manager: Rod Sti
Production co-ordinator: Mandy Curphey
Production assistant: Tony Inoue
Prints: Graham Smith/Ann
On-set Crew

Make-up: Adèle Hicks
Government Agency Investment Development: Screen West Production for: FFC

MARKETING

International distributor: Beyond Films
Producer: Tim Phillips (Listbourne Films)

CAST

Carrol Bock (Anne/Noam An), Beir Bokar (Beks), Lexi Moulent (Tina), Jock Ovens (Paezett)

The Zone is a fabulous thriller about a hilarious Markov works for the Army (NTU) and is posted to the stars, bath enamour of Zone 28. There he discovers that large tracts of land have been mysteriously contaminated. A mystery unfolding as Markov finds out what really happen to the Zone.

AWAITING RELEASE

See previous issues for details on the following:

CHILDREN OF THE REVOLUTION

DAVID WILLIAMSON’S BRILLIANT LIES

FIRST STRIKE

(FORMLY THE STORY OF C.L.A.)

FLOATING LILY

LILY’S STORY

LUST AND REVENGE

MY ENTIRE LIFE

THE QUIET ROOM

RACE THE SUN

RIVER STREET

TO NILHILL

SHINE

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD

(THE FORMERLY SMALL MAN)

TURNING AROUND

Documentaries

THE NATURE OF HEALING

Production company: Real Images Distribution: Courtesy
Production: February-March 1996

PRINCIPAL CREDITS

Producer: Brian Beaton
Awards: Screen-Lime, Celia Tait

Production: January-June 1996

PRINCIPAL CREDITS

Producer: Brian Beaton
Associate producer: Susan Komar
Scriptwriter: Brian Beaton, Szeemi Lim, Celia Tait

Production: November 1995—January 1996

Production: January-March 1996

Production: March-May 1996

ART DEPARTMENT

Director: Krishna Kumar
Producer: Van, Susan Kumar, A. K. Shamsuddoq
Scriptwriter: Jay Chandra Das
Director of photography: Rueda Cifrock
Editor: Nithi P

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Director: Richard Powell
Production co-ordinator: Tracie Mannock

MARKETING

Marketing consultant: Producers for House-Bushells

VICTORIA IN THE ASHES

Production company: String Productions
Producer: Dr. Graham Fraser
Scriptwriter: Emma Freeman
Director of photography: Ross McLennan
Sound recordist: Kyle Ward
Sound designer: Paul Anthony Smith
Editors: Glenn Fraser
Contractor: Paul Anthony Smith

Production Crew

Production designer: Melissa Luke
Production manager: Angela Mayer
Production assistant: Claire Gedner

CINEMA CREW

Camera operator: Tom Spark
Grip: Damion Hekendorp
Gaffer: Matthew Horeen

On-set Crew

1st assistant director: Wendy Cohen
Make-up: Alice Hekendorp
Design: Glenn Fraser

Television: Chris Button
Sound assistant: Liam Westen
Location: Melbourne
Shooting hour: Kobus 7287

Casting: Sue Lindesay, Jill Lindesay, Erol Banister, Michael Teksin

Aving terms with the lack of responsibility in her life, and takes control in a unique way.

CINEMA PAPERS • APRIL 1996

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Guitar: Terry Kelbie
Art department: Angelo Salvamanca

Screening: Paul Anderson
Video projection: HI B
Screen ratio: 1.33:1
Screening: Spyglass
Off-line facilities: The Salvation Army Training College

Government Agency investment
Production: Department of Employment and Training
Marketing: The Salvation Army

Cassa: Crossroads, Westcare, Brunswick Food Bank, St Kilda Crisis Centre

A exploration of the numerous services offered by or assisted by the Salvation Army

THOSE WHO FLEW SOUTH

Production companies: WindRose Entertainment, Footprint Interactive
Pre-production: November 1995—January 1996
Production: January-March 1996

PRINCIPAL CREDITS

Director: Krishnakumar
Producers: Van, Susan Kumar, A. K. Shamsuddoq
Scriptwriter: Jay Chandra Das

Directors of photography: Rueda Cifrock
Editor: Nithi P

Production and development

Director: Richard Powell
Production co-ordinator: Tracie Mannock

Marketing consultant: Producers for House-Bushells

The Indian presence in Australia from the first early 19th-century immigrants — domestic servants, plantation labourers and housewives — to the present. Indians are now among the top income earners, prominent in business, the professions and academia, and have an increasing cultural presence with resident dance companies and award-winning writers.

Victoria in the Ashes

Production company: String Productions
Budget: $10,000
Length: 5 minutes
Completion date: January 1996

PRINCIPAL CREDITS

Director: Emma Freeman
Producer: Graham Fraser
Scriptwriter: Emma Freeman
Director of photography: Ross McLennan
Sound recordist: Kyle Ward
Sound designer: Paul Anthony Smith
Editors: Glenn Fraser
Contractor: Paul Anthony Smith

Production Crew

Production designer: Melissa Luke
Production manager: Angela Mayer
Production assistant: Claire Gedner

CINEMA CREW

Camera assistant: Tom Spark
Grip: Damion Hekendorp
Gaffer: Matthew Horeen

On-set Crew

1st assistant director: Wendy Cohen
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Design: Glenn Fraser

Television: Chris Button
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Location: Melbourne
Shooting hour: Kobus 7287

Casting: Sue Lindesay, Jill Lindesay, Erol Banister, Michael Teksin

Aving terms with the lack of responsibility in her life, and takes control in a unique way.
### Eidetic Eight

Ang Lee Triumphs with Austen • Beeban Kidron Fails His Drag Queens • Bill Bennett Divides the Critics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Reviewers</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Captives</td>
<td>Angela Finke</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copycat</td>
<td>Jon Amiel</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dead Man Walking</td>
<td>Tim Robbins</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devil in a Blue Dress</td>
<td>Carl Franklin</td>
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<td>8.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eclipse</td>
<td>Jeremy Podeswa</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feast of July</td>
<td>Christopher Menaul</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Un Femme Francaise</td>
<td>Roger Wargnier</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.3</td>
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<td>Get Shorty</td>
<td>Barry Sonnenfeld</td>
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<tr>
<td>La Haine</td>
<td>Mathieu Kassovitz</td>
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<td>8.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heat</td>
<td>Michael Mann</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leaving Las Vegas</td>
<td>Mike Figg</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.5</td>
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<td>Mighty Aphrodite</td>
<td>Woody Allen</td>
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<td>A Month by the Lake</td>
<td>John Irvin</td>
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<td>Murder in the First</td>
<td>Marc Rocco</td>
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<td>Persuasion</td>
<td>Roger Mitchell</td>
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<td>Powder</td>
<td>Victor Salva</td>
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<td>Sabrina</td>
<td>Sydney Pollack</td>
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<td>The Scarlet Letter</td>
<td>Roland Joffre</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Sense and Sensibility</td>
<td>Ang Lee</td>
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<td>Stonewall</td>
<td>Nigel Finch</td>
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<td>Three Wishes</td>
<td>Martha Coolidge</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>To Die For</td>
<td>Gus Van Sant</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>To Wong Foo Thanks for</td>
<td>Beeban Kidron</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two if by Sea</td>
<td>Bill Bennett</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waiting to Exhale</td>
<td>Forest Whitaker</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Wonderful Horrible Life</td>
<td>Leni Riefenstahl</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Eidetic is applied to an image that revives an optical impression with hallucinatory clarity, or to a person having this faculty.

A panel of eight 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 (Fix on Foxtel); Barbara Creed (The Age); Sandra Hall (The Bulletin); Paul Harris ('The Green Guide', The Age); Stan James (The Adelaide Advertiser); Adrian Martin (The Age; "The Week in Film", Radio National); Tom Ryan (The Sunday Age); and Evan Williams (The Australian).
In striving for The Ultimate Resolution, Dfilm Services introduce the Kodak Cineon Digital Film System, a dynamic state of the art technology that offers unlimited vision to filmmakers, in Australasia and globally.

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Cineon
DIGITAL FILM SYSTEM
today?

Television Commercials
Agency: Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO Ltd
Client: Volvo
Director: David Garfath
Work: Multi-layer Composite and Painting
Facility: Digital Film at The Moving Picture Company

Feature Film Special Effects
Film: The Shadow
Director: Russell Mulcahy
Work: Multi-layer Blue-Screen Composite and Colour Correction
Facility: The Digital Film Group at The Post Group

Film Restoration
Film: Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs
Client: Walt Disney Pictures
Work: Dustbusting and Colour Correction
Facility: Cinesite Hollywood

Cinema Commercials
Client: C&A
Director: Roman Kuhn
Work: Tone Scale and Colour Alteration
Facility: ARRI Digital Film

Digital Cinematography
Film: No Escape
Director of Photography: Phil Meheux, BSC
Work: Selective Tone Scale Enhancement
Facility: Cinesite Europe

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