



# FILM WEST

WINTER 1989

PRICE 50p

**INSIDE**

Filming The Field

Údarás and the Fund

Bob Quinn at Cannes

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FILM WEST is the quarterly magazine of the Film Resource Centre, which was founded in 1988 as a non-profitmaking facility for information, training and technical aid to independent and emerging filmmakers in the West of Ireland.

The Centre is funded by members, grants from FAS, RTE, Galway County Council and private sponsorship.

FILM WEST is now into its fourth issue, and is actively publicising the activities of independents (as well as FRC services) and is the only magazine here doing this. We welcome information and views from all interested in film, for inclusion in the magazine, and any contributions to the ongoing debate on the Irish film industry. Letters, news items, your opinions on the magazine, everything for the Gossip page - do send them in!

The views expressed by contributors to FILM WEST do not necessarily represent those of the editors.

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PHONE 091-66744

4 NEW DOCKS, GALWAY

# FILM WEST

Winter 1989

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# GOSSIP

## BOND GOES WEST

Galway-based Kevin McClory, who produced one of the most successful Bond movies in the Sixties, Thunderball, is ready to film another Bond movie next May in Connemara, Kerry, Canada and Australia. McClory was in the news here in '88 when his two pet dogs chomped their way through one of the natives who ventured too close to his Craughwell, Co Galway, mansion. McClory, who works from John Huston's old haunt at St Cleren's, seems set to repeat his earlier success with this one, called Warhead Eight. Meath born heart-throb, Pierce Brosnan, has the title role.

## L'ETAT C'EST L'ART

The enlightened attitude of the French Government towards the arts seems to know no bounds. They've even extended it to "poor" philistine Ireland this autumn in the form of scholarships for young artists in music, dance, theatre and the plastic arts. (And they don't mean your Tupperware set.) One of the scholarships is to a cinema school in France up to a maximum of two years. This includes course fees, £300 a month allowance and return fare. Closing date 31 January 1990; details from French Embassy, Kildare Street, Dublin 2. Sample films or videos may be requested.

## COMING TO THE GALWAY CINEMAS

The Christmas and New Year films hitting the West include the reportedly slowpaced and disappointing Ghostbusters II, which retreads the yawn-inducing setpieces of the 1985 film, and Back To The Future II (which is understandable only if you've seen the first one also). Oliver Stone's Talk Radio also opens at the same time. Neil Jordan's We're No Angels (with De Niro, Madonna's ex-hubby Sean Penn and Ray McAnally) should reach us by January.

## CHRISTMAS TV

RTE, always ahead of the pack with goodies (!) at Christmas have lined up Crocodile Dundee (the original) as the family matinee for the big day, along with Out Of Africa to induce further yawns.

## NEW TOP DOG AT FILM BASE

Congratulations to Patsy Murphy, new administrator of Film Base Dublin.

Her excellent credentials - organiser of the Irish Film Festival in New York, ex-film critic of New York's Irish Voice newspaper, and head of the Communications Department at Rathmines College - should bring new impetus to the Base.

## NEW FILM OFFICER AT THE ARTS COUNCIL

Warmest wishes also to Paul Freaney on moving into the limelight in Dublin. Paul is no stranger to film; his Metaxy Films produced Mincéir and Trinity Ball.

## CHANNEL 4 LOOKING FOR NEW IDEAS

C4 seek submissions from independent filmmakers "keen to encourage experiment in TV forms and work with communities over extended periods." Send your ideas by December 4 to Rashpal Dhalwal, Independent Film and Video Department, Channel 4, 60 Charlotte Street, London W1.

## MORE TALL TALES

Tall Tale Films (the Galway Film & Video Co-op of Nuala Broderick, Tadhg Fleming and Maria Gibbons) are not a group to rest on their laurels. Fresh on the success of their documentary on Galway's waterways, Town of Streams (which was shown recently), they are now into production on a short promo for Mervue Adult Education Centre. Not only that, they're preparing a new project (through women's workshops in the city), with grant aid from the Combat Poverty Agency. VHS copies of Town of Streams can be had for £20, or £25 to groups, from Tall Tale at 091-64937.

## PLAN C?

Plan B Films are heavily into their next shoot, a 16mm 20 minute documentary about a haunted house in Abbey-knockmoy. No title as yet. (Perhaps the ghost might have a suggestion?) Director-producer is Dagmar Drabent, with the ever-busy Tadhg Fleming on camera. The charismatic Dick Donoghue does the interviewing on screen, researcher is Martina Lammers. The film is being made for German TV.

## WANT TO WORK IN THE FILM BUSINESS?

If you're over 25 and registered for State assistance or benefit, the FRC have

vacancies on their SES scheme. Details from 4 New Docks, Galway.

## HUSH-A-BYE DERRY

Derry Film and Video Workshop had a very successful world premiere on November 23rd of Hush-a-bye Baby, their feature length TV movie which stars Emer McCourt and singer Sinéad O'Connor.

## HOLLYWOOD BOUND?

Fergus Tighe's cameraman on Clash of the Ash, Declan Quinn, has lit Maggie Greenwald's new American thriller The Kill-Off (set on the US East Coast) which is getting good reviews all around, and has just been shown at the London Film Festival.

## COMING FESTIVALS

Dublin Film Festival, this year organised by Maretta Dillon, will be on 22 February to 2 March. The Celtic International Film Festival has now reach its 11th birthday, and anyone wishing to apply for the shortlist of ten best possibles to be included should contact Colm O'Brian at PO Box 2683, Dublin 4, by 12 January. The categories are drama, factual, children, and entertainment.

## NEXT FRC FILM PROJECT

The FRC will be getting off to a very bright start for the new year. In January we hope to begin shooting our next project, a fantasy drama being made with the Macnas theatrical group. The film which will be under ten minutes, is to be funded by RTE. FRC are immensely grateful for RTE's marvellous support for its film projects. Any member who wishes to help out on the next film, please contact Pat Comer or Celine Curtin at the FRC, who hope to involve 6-8 members in this exciting project.

## ARTS COUNCIL AWARDS

Alan Gilsean of Yellow Asylum has won the top Arts Council Film Award for 1989 of £20,000. Frank Stapleton of Ocean Films got £15,000. Hilary Dully received £10,000, Ted Sheehy, £3,000; Peter Butler £2,000. Film West must commend the Arts Council for their astute geographical spread of awards this time around and for their faith in these young filmmakers.



## WORKING THE FIELD WITH SHERIDAN

Sometime during the summer the prospect of living on the dole induced me to enquire about working in the movies. (The trouble with all SES schemes is that one can only work for only one year on any given scheme, and thus my remuneration for working in the FRC was to cease in October '89.) I learned that the conventional method is to acquire union status and so I applied for a trainee assistant director's ticket. Having completed the application form from Branch No.7 of the ITGWU, my application was approved at their September meeting. BY this time I had called into Ferndale Films who I'd heard were crewing *The Field*, and had met Arthur Lappin (Line Producer), who was very helpful. he explained that although they had dozens of CVs from hopeful trainees he would do his best to take me on, as I was Galway based (an unlikely advantage!) He encouraged me to keep in touch and finally just before the shoot began I went out to Leenane where I met the eponymous Kevan Barker (1st A.D.) who offered me a week's work for the shooting of the major crowd scenes. (By the end of my time I had actually worked 15 days, roughly 195 hours; an average working day exceeding 13 hours.)

Day One- 4.30am arise and take the car on the long and difficult road to Leenane, not quite knowing

what to expect, having never worked on a film set before. (Well apart from the FRC films, which don't really fall into the big movie category.) I arrive on the set on time (it's 6.30), in one piece, after negotiating the roads in the pitch dark. The location unit is a lit-up assortment of caravans, old buses, articulated trucks and generators. In the dark it looks like a cross between a circus and a used vehicle dump. I approach the 2nd A..D. who passes me onto the 3rd, who gives me a walkie-talkie and tells me to radio wardrobe and to get their breakfast orders. I do so and ten minutes later a long list of combinations of eggs, and fried mushrooms, beans and toast, full Irish or "everything but lose the white pudding". My shorthand acquired as a waitress becomes useful again, as does the extended arm technique of balancing ten plates in a row. When the order is ready I hail a minibus and am chauffeured up the school hall, half a mile away, where 125 extras -men women and children are being dressed, coiffed and powdered for the dance scene. I announce the arrival of the breakfasts and the four make-up artists and the six hairdressers are all munificent in their thanks.

After being chauffeured back down to base, I am told to look after the principal artist's hair and make-up people. Sludging around between caravans I finally hit upon the right

one, knock and enter. I introduce myself to the crew therein and the two women do likewise-Tommy and Ken. I didn't bat an eyelid but fulfilled their requests for porridge et al.

After all the waitressing I spend the day running from base to Wardrobe, even up as far as the production office, a good distance away. I also act as a bouncer for a good part of the day being put in the unenviable position of turning away droves of tourists and locals alike from the doors of the dancehall. But Richard Harris, John Hurt and Tom Berenger were extremely charming when surfacing from the smoke filled confines of the old tin hall, and posed endlessly with breathless women who giggled with them and passed very intimate comments (displaying a knowledge of the star's personal lives gleaned from the well read pages of *Hello*). I would then be instructed to break up the party and usher Mr Harris back on the set oft times to his chagrin.

At coffee breaks of which there are two a day, consisting of large containers of tea and coffee, sandwiches, scones, jam and butter and boxes of biscuits, I once again had the unpopular job of segregating crew from crowd (the reason being that the crew can't delay), so there are always two depots of grub. Now the Irish character is not one to obey such rules and the fact that the crew table was denied them only fuelled

their determination to eat off it. The odd indignant crew member would reprimand me if I wasn't sharp enough to detect the enthusiastic extra, but I would be instantly rewarded by secretly observing said crew member pilfering all the chocolate biscuits on the top tray of the "assorted tea" biscuits!

During the course of the day it invariably rained and particularly heavily when any of the principal types, ie: Hurt, Harris, Berenger, McGinley exited the hall to partake of fresh air and so my elbow power was called upon to do "brolly duty", which is essential for continuity more so than the health of the actors. This afforded me the opportunity of close proximity with the stars and I found myself having very stimulating conversations with John Hurt in particular.

At the end of the day, which was sometime around midnight, the massive job of transportation had to be tackled; buses to deliver extras back to wardrobe and crew back to base. At this point the director, Jim Sheridan, would return to Renvyle House, and watch the rushes which were sent to London every three days. With the call-sheets for the following day distributed, the extras are dreading their call-time which is invariably 6:30 am, as it is for the A.D.'s, make-up, wardrobe, sparks and caterers.

That night I too stayed in Renvyle House Hotel for roughly four hours. The stalwarts of the crew were having a drink so I had a quick pint of Guinness and went to bed at 2:30, rising at 6:00 to be on set at 6:30. I was extremely stiff this next day, as my job demanded Olympian fitness and strength. Anyhow, second and third day were much the same as the first, albeit easier, as I was steadily familiarising myself with the 88 names of the crew. If I was asked to find Paddy, Pat, PJ, Peter or Paul I would be able to decipher from the request which department said Paddy was attached to. But alas, when I was told to tell Peter to "86 the honey-wagon" I was well and truly flummoxed and needed assistance in translating the lingo, which simply meant to lose (get rid of) the mobile toilets, as the jenny (generator) was causing problems with the sound. And when asked to find a full apple-box I didn't think Hamilton (the local grocer) would be too pleased to be roused from his bed at 7 am, but I was quietly told that

this was a simple prop, a wooden box on which to raise lights or to use as a step. One quickly learns that when asked to do something one doesn't understand, or find someone you don't know, you do it anyway. The real difficulty for me was getting used to the formality of protocol, which called for the principal artists to be addressed as "Mr." and "Ms." and more senior A.D.s - "Sir". The latter really bothers me as I mused upon the notion of a woman 2nd or 1st A.D. and wondered what her title would be - "Ma'am"?

In many ways, a film in production is not unlike the military, in the immense structural organisation required. Each department has its Heads and trainees, and the relationship between the two could be seen as master - servant, so those interested in working their way up the ladder should not be intimidated by the system. The scale of *The Field* called for strict discipline

and optimum efficiency, but on smaller production, the segregation between departments would not be as pronounced.

All in all, I was pleased to get the opportunity to work on the film, more to avail of the chance to see the dramas behind the scenes than to "get my foot in the door". If you are under the erroneous impression that being an A.D. is a step towards directing, think again. Your body and its guts are all that are prevailed upon in this particular category, especially while a trainee. The level of creative input is less than zero, nobody wants to hear your opinion - even when you are bursting to tell them that there were no lettuces in rural Ireland markets in the Thirties! I enjoyed it nonetheless as the local actors (Sean McGinley, Máirtín Jaimsie and Johnny Choill Mhaide) delightful extras, most notably Bina, and even the odd crew member made it a memorable experience.

*Aisling Prior*



On location at Beerna pier for D.M. Film's *Still Waters* are (l to r) actor Fiona Nolan Kelly, camera operator Tadhg Fleming, director Monica Ennis (head visible) and producer Dick Donaghue. The film is now editing.

#### Script Competition

The Galway Film Resource Centre is in a position to undertake its most ambitious work to date in the new year. This will consist of a short film (app. 20 minutes duration) which will be produced to the highest possible professional standards attainable by the Centre. To ensure that this work is based on the best possible foundations, the directors of the Centre are anxious to ensure that the best available script is used. Although a number of promising scripts are already with the producers their remains the conviction within the Centre that its search for a script has not been wide enough and that this opportunity should be drawn to the attention of all aspiring scriptwriters, young and old, who may be interested. While it would of course be preferable if scripts could be submitted in a finished form, what is most important in the final analysis is the potential quality of the material submitted. Therefore submissions from writers who have little or no experience of film will also be welcomed. The producers will be willing, if the material is of sufficient interest, to provide assistance in bringing the script to the required level. The budget available to the Centre for this project is limited, so that productions involving casts of thousands, exotic locations or elaborate technical requirements are not feasible. Simple concepts of originality and relevance are what will be most welcomed.

# THE DUBBING CELL

**Máirtín Mac Donncha is one of the talented actors who provide the voices for the new Janosch animated series on RTE. The work involves precise synchronisation of voice, tone and lip movement so that the original German script comes out in mellifluous Conamara Irish. The work was done in Telegael, an Spidéal and Máirtín found the process.....captivating?**

For an outsider the technology used in sound dubbing is complicated and awe-inspiring. Walking into a studio these days is like walking onto the Star Trek set. The feeling for a technically unaware performer like myself when introduced to this environment is comparable to introducing an alien to Star Ship Enterprise.

I am welcomed at the door and marched to a cubicle measuring four feet by four. Furniture is sparse in here - a chair, a table and a spotlight. Having asked what this is all about one is told: "We have ways of making you talk." The guard brings in a glass of water (no bread), attaches earphones to one's head and adjusts the seating in such a way as to assure that one's lips are never more than one millimetre from the microphone. He then secures one set of double-glazed doors and double bolts a second set of doors. At this stage one realises it is too late to panic. Cooperation may well be the best policy. My only contact with the outside world now is by means of the mike and earphones.

The prison governor starts experimenting. He opens and closes folders, twists knobs and presses buttons. While he does so he insists on my reciting gibberish that will move the needles on his dials. Evidence of his satisfaction is expressed as follows: "Yes", "again", "how's that?", "more welly", "can you

hear me" and finally "OK".

At this stage I notice a television screen placed at eye level between the two sets of double-glazed doors - a safe place, lest one should break out in a moment of panic or frustration and smash it to pieces. My attention is also drawn to a script placed strategically under the spotlight but at such an angle as to allow me to read it with one eye while observing the t.v. screen with the other. I notice it is written in our alien language - a kind consideration on the part of my captors. The pictures start to roll on the screen. I hear music in the earphones and as the character's mouths move, strange sounds roll off their tongues. I am now informed of the purpose my imprisonment serves and the ransom price for my release. Using the words in the script, I am to implant my alien tongue in the mouths of these weird though amiable characters. (No doubt the overall plan is to invade our planet - the first step is to learn our language.)

At first it seems a simple enough task. But before moving on from that very first sentence, complications set in. I am told to start as soon as I hear the fourth bleep in the earphones.. Just getting that right takes a great deal of concentration - not after the third bleep, not after the fourth bleep, it has to be spot on! Eventually I start on the right bleep but what I say is too fast, too slow,

too serious, too flippant, too...

After a while I feel as if my mind is splitting up into separate parts. I have one eye on the script so as to use the appropriate words. My ears are taking in the words in the original language - I have to listen closely so as to get the pacing and mood right-my second eye is on the screen to ensure that I am speaking when the character's mouth is open and silent when his mouth is shut. Meanwhile I have to imagine I am a character other than myself experiencing a predicament beyond my wildest imagination and using a voice so high-pitched it seems to pierce my eyeballs rather than emerge from my lips.

At times I feel it cannot be done. I panic a little, sweat alot. I'll give up - I'll do anything. Then I look at my jailers; not a pretty sight, hardly what you would call sympathetic. No, if I am to survive I must satisfy their requirements.

I identify and relate to the four or five separate sections which is now my brain. I try to coordinate their functions. This excites me. The adrenalin starts to flow. The right words come out at the correct pitch, fast, slow, serious, flippant, as required. The characters open and close their mouths, releasing a flow of effervescent bubbling "blas". "Time for a break" says the guv. We review the work done to date. The guard refills my glass with water (no bread).

*Máirtín Mac Donncha*



POTTERY WORKSHOP 11, CROSS ST. GALWAY, IRELAND

# WAITING FOR CHARLIE

During the first Galway Film Fleadh last summer, Ruan O'Bric, chief executive of Udarás na Gaeltachta, announced a £500,000 film fund. Miriam Allen talked to him four months later to discover what developments have occurred concerning the fund and the much debated Teilifis na Gaeltachta.

*What is happening in regard to the £500,000 film fund?*

The fund is integrally linked to Teilifis na Gaeltachta and is intended to fund Irish language television programmes for same. It is still in place but we have deferred activating it until such time as Teilifis na Gaeltachta is announced.

*So the announcement of the fund was premature?*

Only in so far as we expected some announcement on Teilifis na Gaeltachta before now.

*You produced a feasibility study for the Government concerning Teilifis na Gaeltachta, which was rumoured to be too expensive at £9.6 million per annum?*

The study was funded by the EC Media '92 programme. An examination of some minority language television stations in Europe was carried out. The Faroe Islands, S4C Wales, and various minority language stations in Spain. There are three options:

(a.) A national station which would be in direct competition with RTE and other stations. Such an undertaking would have to achieve a similar standard of programming to reduce the possibility of Irish becoming a second class language.

(b.) A community-based station with headquarters in Casla, Conamara, with a rebroadcast link system, which would require the installation of a UHF network. The estimated capital cost of such a system is £2.7 million. 80% of Gaeltacht areas could be served along with the cable systems in Dublin, Galway, Cork and Limerick.

(c.) An opt-out scheme which would use the existing infrastructure, that is RTE. But Teilifis na Gaeltachta would have a separate identity and would be broadcast at off-peak

hours. The reason being that when RTE broadcast Irish language programmes, revenue drops.

*You mention your fear that damage could be done to the Irish language if the standard of programming on a national station was not similar to that on other channels. Is it not fair to say that ultimately more damage would be wreaked on the Irish language with the opt-out scheme? The off-peak time slot from RTE could only be late at night or early*



*in the morning. So it would be self-defeating. A separate identity could only be determined by the time slot, not the programming. So the only feasible option must be the community-based television service?*

We have to put all the options on the table with their plusses and minuses. Maybe there is another model. We have gone back to the drawing board.

*Udarás recently spent £600,000 promoting the Irish language by advertising on RTE. It is also sponsoring an external training scheme in television production which is being run in English. Could you explain this anomaly?*

That's a good point. Our brief to the organisers was to run a course with people who

(1) had the skills required to teach  
(2) an ability to impart those skills  
(3) and fluency in the Irish language.

The course is being taught in Irish as far as possible. When Radio na Gaeltachta was established, the technicians were trained in English. We are laying the infrastructure for Teilifis na Gaeltachta with the training scheme, Telegael, and the up-and-coming conference being organised by Donncha O' hEallaithe, which we are supporting financially. Udarás na Gaeltachta is trying to create an environment for Teilifis na Gaeltachta in which to develop. All of the above initiatives help to put pressure on the Government.

*How many people are on the course and are they receiving a wage?*

There are twelve participants on the course which is being organised by VideoCam. One of the instructors, Eoghan Harris, said that they were one of the best group of students he had worked with for a long time. No, they are not receiving a wage. In fact, some of them gave up jobs, (one person even came from London). There is a small travelling allowance of £30 per week for individuals who must commute long distances from outside the area. The course is six months long, and at the end of it, it is envisaged that we will have two twenty to thirty minutes of broadcast quality programmes.

*Are you optimistic about the future for Teilifis na Gaeltachta, despite all the seemingly insurmountable obstacles in its path?*

Yes, I am, though I acknowledge that much work needs to be done.



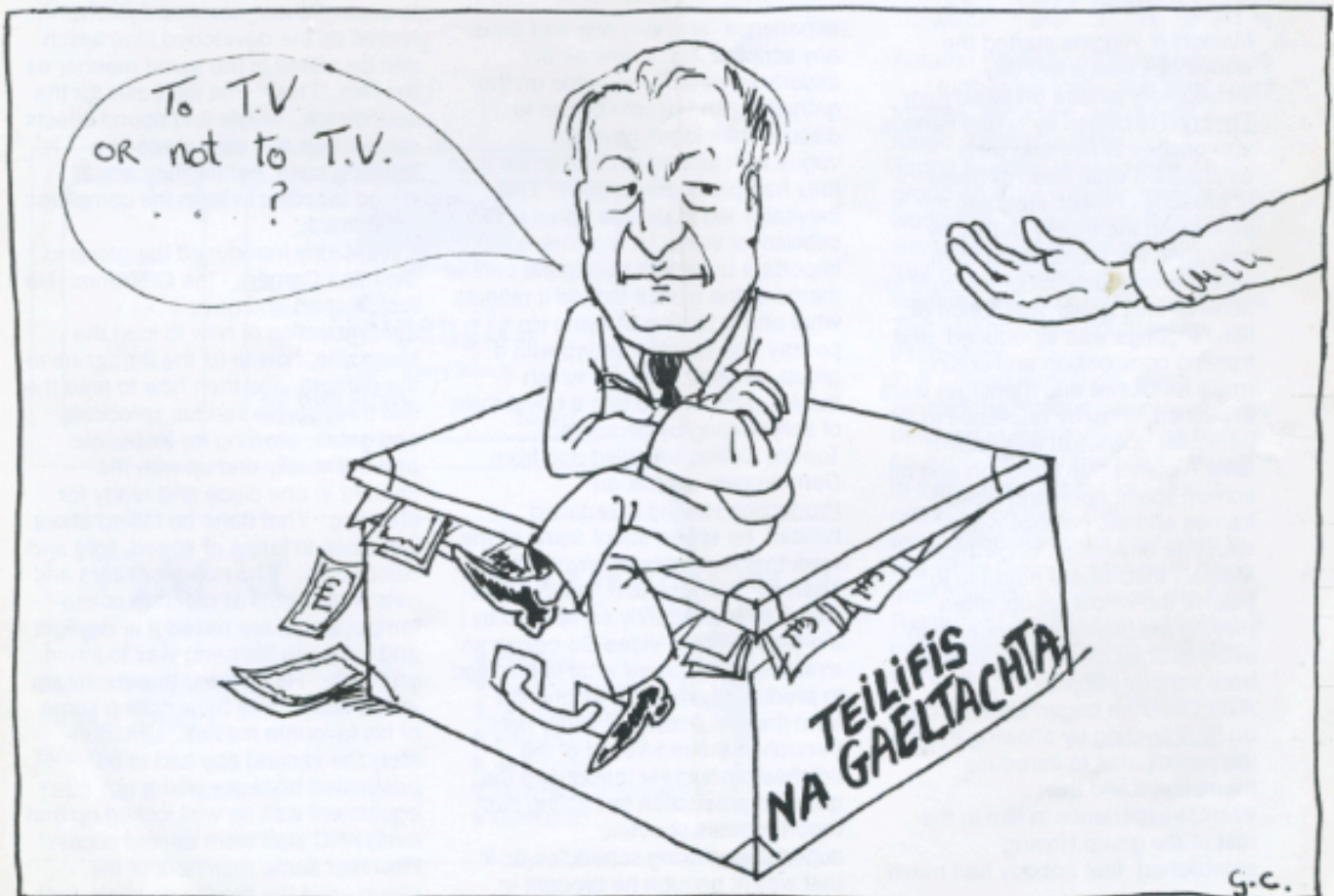
## HISTORICAL NOTES

\* IN 1987 a working party representing RTE, Roinn na Gaeltachta and Bord na Gaellge produced a major report on a possible T.V. service in Irish. They said a small regional pilot scheme (presumably for the Gaeltacht) would need £8 million plus £10 million a year to broadcast two hours of programming a night. This possibility they dismissed as impracticable. A week later a pirate/pilot T.V. was set up in Rosmuc and broadcast for 18 hours.

\*The new Udaras na Gaeltachta (unpublished) report says a full Gaeltacht service to include major cities as well, would cost £5.5 million to start up and £9.2 million per annum to run. It believes T.V. commercials would be attracted to the service.

\*The group who set up the pirate T.V. station in Rosmuc in 1987 said at the time that all it needed was £0.25 million to set up a community T.V. service for the Conamara Gaeltacht and £0.25 million to per annum to run.

Moral. Financial estimates are always arbitrary and a debased form of creative fiction. Teilifis na Gaeltachta has been, is and always will be a matter of political will.  
(No wonder Charlie Haughey has done nothing.)



G.C.

## AUTUMN WORKSHOP REPORT



Malachi o' Higgins started the workshops with a two day introductory lecture on basic Film Theory. He began by laying various approaches to film and then established what each of these approaches reflect. He then developed the theory further by indicating the elements of form, style, content and structure used to achieve their goals. The notion of film language was introduced, and framing composition and editing (mise en Scène and montage) were explained, often by reference to particular scenes in well known films. A discussion about on and off screen space, open and closed frames and the point-of-view structure ensued, during which Malachi tried where possible to involve the whole group, often playing the devil's advocate in an effort to draw ideas and reactions from various people. Alan Gilsean began his workshop on Scriptwriting by allowing each of the participants to introduce themselves, and their interest/experience in film, to the rest of the group. Having established that nobody had much

experience and very few had done any scriptwriting, a new air of assurance seemed to settle on the gathering, and people began to discuss their ideas, however vague, with a lot more confidence than they had previously shown. This inevitably led to debate about and criticism of work. It is perhaps more important to remain true to the central theme of the work if indeed it reflects what one is feeling of trying to portray. The session ended with a group scripting exercise which quickly deteriorated into a novel form of scriptwriting by democracy. Tommy Collins travelled down from Derry to give his talk on Production. Having introduced himself, he spoke about some of the work that he had been involved in. Then by using the film "Hush-a-Bye-Baby" (a film recently completed by the Derry Film & Video Co-op) as an example, he showed what is involved in producing a feature length film from the initial concept stage right through to the marketing of the finished product. He introduced the group to production budgeting, cost report formats, shooting schedules, crewing schedules, as if that wasn't enough he brought in

problems of insurance, contingency allowances, catering and transport. Union rates and the function of all the various members of a film crew were also covered at the request of some members. Finally Tommy covered sources of finances for different types of projects and the best approach to take to tap into these.

Liam Saurin stood before the group armed with his Nagra 4.2 reel-to-reel recorder (complete with syncpulse crystal) and an array of microphones, blimps and wind jammers. His two day Sound workshop, while technical in content was conducted in as practical a format as possible. Each member of the group fought to use the equipment. The effects obtained with, and strengths of, one mic over another were discussed, demonstrated and where possible illustrated by referring to particular scenes and sequences. Next Liam introduced the group to the whole area of post production, the transfer of sound from quarter inch magnetic to separate magnetic tape (same format as the developed film) which can be edited in the same manner as the film. This forms the basis for the soundtrack. Music and sound effects are built up at a later stage in a dubbing suite, before they are all mixed together to form the completed soundtrack.

Kevin Liddy introduced the group to their first Camera - the CP16mm. He took it apart and gave a demonstration of how to load the magazine, how to fix the magazine to the camera, and then how to feed the film through the various sprockets and gates, allowing for loops, etc, and eventually end up with the camera in one piece and ready for shooting. That done he talked about film stock in terms of speed, light and colour bias. The need for filters and gels when lights of different colour temperatures are mixed (i.e. daylight and tungsten filament) was touched on briefly. He decided that the group would learn more by watching some of his favourite movies. Unfortunately the second day had to be postponed because all the equipment was so well locked up that even FRC staff were denied access! However some members of the group used the time to develop [p11

## THE F.R.C. SES SCHEME IN 1989

The Film Resource Centre is heading into its third year. Since its inception in January '88, the Centre has provided a facility for its members that was non-existent in the country beyond the boundaries of the Capital. That facility, which includes 8mm and 16mm film equipment, an information bank, training and expertise, (and hopefully within the near future a complete 16mm editing suite), is available to anyone who wishes to join and make films.

Yet, while ideally such a service has been long overdue, the reality of setting up a facility such as the Film Resource Centre far outweighed the necessity - that is until 1988. In the early months of that year, a tremendous amount of work was undertaken to seek support and funding from both the public and private sector, in order that the services of the Centre could be established and maintained. People began to listen to our pleas, and slowly but surely things began

to happen. In October '88, the Centre in conjunction with FAS (the National Employment Agency), started its first Social Employment Scheme employing 12 participants and a supervisor. Like all FAS schemes, the employees would be paid £65 for a 20 hour week, and the Centre now had the personnel to maintain offices and services for our members. Things were beginning to look up.

Unfortunately though, Social Employment Schemes only last for 12 months and in October '89, the first scheme ended and we could no longer employ the initial 12 people. Fortunately FAS had no problem in agreeing to continue their support for the Centre, and a second SES scheme was initiated in October '89. This time we felt it would be better to employ nine people with specifically defined roles so that the momentum and rhythm of things at the Centre could continue.

The Centre is open from 10-5 Monday to Friday. If you'd like to make a film, if you wish to learn about films, or even if you only have a passing interest in filmmaking, the FRC can assist you. The less you already know, the more we can tell you. Check us out at 4 New Docks, (above the Harbour Betting Office)--you'll enjoy the experience.



Autumn Workshop - contd from p 10:  
/ further the 'collective idea' script for their short film, and finally a rough script was done.

Tadhg Fleming worked with the group on what was the most intense workshop - The Shoot. It began on Saturday and ended on Monday. The group divided up and different scenes were shot by different crews. The end product should prove interesting.

The Editing workshop, given by Bernadette Moloney went well. She believed in everyone getting hands-on experience at the editing bench, in syncing sound to film. Due to pressure on time, Galway workshop members continued to edit while the out-of-towners made their way home. All in all, the Film Resource Centre's second series of introductory film making workshops were well worthwhile.

Ciaran Barry

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## BOB QUINN IN CANNES

### MIPCOM or What's a nice filmmaker like you doing in a place like this?

The nearest thing to it I've seen is the 'souk' or marketplace in Tangier; hundreds of stalls filled with gaudy geegaws, their owners blaring their virtues, in this case on TV screens. Imagine going to an Arabic market and trying to sell them something. That's what Mipcom is like. If you're a salesman it's the place for you. If you're a filmmaker, stay away.

If one possesses a magnificent building on the seafront in Cannes whose principal industry is the famous Film Festival it is incumbent on you to fill it for the rest of the year. And that's what Reed Exhibition Companies - the new owners of Mipcom - do. They invite TV moguls, producers, cable and satellite companies, broadcasters to come and - for a large fee - commune with each other. In September last they came, in their thousands.

No small independent could afford to attend. So Euromedia provided an umbrella under which many independents could huddle, occasionally darting out to try and capture a buyer, persuade him/her to glance at their work, commit themselves to buy or at least look at

a full programme back home. Miraculously, this occasionally happened.

The Irish independents had a further buffer against harsh reality in that C oras Tracht ala substantially contributed to their expenses. (But if you lost the magic badge that entitled you to pass the many bouncers, it cost you  70 to replace it).

Being a coward I stayed away from all these thrusting personalities, left my producer to do all the dirty work and spent the time exploring Cannes. I saw Batman in French and visited the Isle of Lerins which libels itself by claiming that St. Patrick stayed there before returning to Ireland. Still, the chanted Mass nearly made me revise my status as a lapsed atheist. I met a buyer from RTE, an old friend, on the Croisette and we had a great conversation about our hernias. Film was not mentioned. We are not vulgar people. I called to the church where Napoleon prayed for a comeback and heard a Breton choir singing out of tune, which restored my cynicism.

On Friday I attended the three hours of Peter Brook's latest epic called, I think, the Mahabarata. Every TV station in the cosmos,

including RTE, was a backer. Amazing what a reputation will enable you to get away with.

In one of my occasional guilty forays back into the mele  I heard a buyer from some American octopus express amazement that the American people were actually interested in some excerpts from Russian TV which her network had shown. I pointed out to her that her astonishment was a good reason for herself and all her out of touch fellow-executives to resign their positions. She smiled, TV executives always smile - like tigers. I doubt if she'll buy my films.

Later I heard a colleague's voice raised at two other buyers and thanked the Lord I wasn't alone: in the wrong place at the wrong time. Towards the end of the week panic was clearly visible in the eyes of some who took the whole thing seriously. All this time and money, for what?

Repeat: this is not a place for filmmakers. It's a place for salesmen and a lot of those I saw there, I wouldn't buy a used film from. But, believe me, that's what TV and film are all about - and why I've been trying to get out of it for years.

Bob Quinn

## LATEST ON TEILIFIS NA GAELTACHTA

As we go to print, a major conference on Teilifis na Gaeltachta is being organised for Carraroe, on the 2nd December. The aim of the conference is to bring together Gaeltacht community activists and others, interested in "Teilifis na Gaeltachta", to discuss the recent Udaras na Gaeltachta report, referred to elsewhere in this issue. The morning session of the conference will consist of contributions from expert guest speakers, such as Bob Collins (RTE), Seosamh O Cuaig (Radio na Gaeltachta and Udar as na Gaeltachta) and Ned Thomas, an

expert on the effect of mass communications on minority languages, who was very active in the Welsh campaign, ten years ago, which resulted in the setting up of S4C.

In the afternoon session, various people from the Gaeltacht areas involved in various ways in the making of television programmes or in the campaign for a Gaeltacht TV service will air their views. Bob Quinn, from Cinegaeil, will explain what he means by community television. Dan Joe Kelleher from the Cork Gaeltacht area, will outline the type of local community TV

service he provided in his area for 5 years.

The final session will consist of an open forum, under the chairmanship of Gear oid O Tuathaigh, Dean of the Arts faculty, UCG. The upshot of the conference should be that a broad Gaeltacht campaign will be set up to continue the struggle for Gaeltacht TV, initiated in Ros Muc, 2 years ago by the Conamara based Meitheal Oibre Theilifis na Gaeltachta.

The crack for the evening is in Ost an an D oil in (music by Maimean Cajun Band), bar extension until 1am. All are welcome.

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## BOOK SHOTS

**Light Years.** Douglas Kirkland's book of photographs of assorted actors, yuppies, bimbos, wrinklies, crinklies and twirlies, has just been published by Thames & Hudson at £24.95 stg. This excellently produced, printed in Japan, whopper of a book - large format A3 hardback - has 130 photos, most in colour. Kirkland's "photo essays" of 75 celebrities were taken over the 60s, 70s and 80s, and reveal much about his (and our own) obsessions. The publishers have included his telescope shot of the Milky Way (at start and end) as a reminder that, yes folks!, we're looking at some glamorous stars here. Among the subjects - Bardot, Chaplin, Coppola, Tom Cruise, the Fondas, O'Toole, most in unusual and technically splendid shots, from 1959 to 1988. Kirkland used a Hasselblad, Nikon or Mamiya, and the captions give technical info and anecdotes. We asked Joe Geoghegan, the well known master photographer working in Galway for many years, to assess *Light Years* from a professional angle. He also gives his provocative view on photography in Ireland today, which is just as pertinent to film.

**Light Years.** Joe agrees, is a technically excellent work. A photographer is always interested in books like this and can pore over its pages for hours. What you or I would dismiss as "so what?" glamour poses would yield valuable information to him. Lighting, composition, pose, a rapport with the subject - these are the basic requirements once technical proficiency has been achieved.

"The general public don't really understand what's involved in photography. It's not all point and shoot, then run to the chemist. They don't stop and think, take their time over a shot. The popular camera manufacturers have exploited this weakness, have automated everything so much, made it seem so simple, that people haven't an idea of what they're doing."

People, his message is, don't look before they shoot, search for that essential shape, pose, gesture, moment which is the spirit of the subject. Looking, searching, discovering a unique vision is the goal of all artists, though he himself seldom uses the word 'art'.

"There is no mysticism involved in photography. But many in the trade like the public to think there is - because they don't know enough of their craft, or they haven't bothered to learn it properly, or they're insecure, they're afraid of competition from outside. It's not enough to do a three year course, or whatever. You've got to work under professionals, learn their tips and shortcuts, their craft

then apply it to your own."

Joe spent fourteen years apprenticing, much of it in London where standards are high, before returning to Galway to set up on Quay Street. He seems driven by a vocation to educate the public more about the value of photography, which is why he mounts regular international exhibitions at his premises. There have been eleven so far, and he's the only photographer doing this outside of Dublin's Gallery of Photography. Photographers, he believes, don't bother their arses promoting the profession. Take the money and run?

"That's why I believe photography today is on the brink. The profession in Ireland don't market themselves. The public look on them as chancers."

He also agreed that film making here was in a critical state, with Government apathy the chief cause. Although it is the more visible and glamorous of the photographic arts, yet it is equally beset by insecure, inadequately trained types. And again, the public don't fully appreciate the sheer density of work involved. Did he ever wish to emulate the *Look* and *Life* stills photographer Stanley Kubrick, and convert to the 'moving' image?

"It would be a whole change for me. What I'd like to do is get out of the studio here and do more personal work around the West. But in a way you're trapped by the business end of things all the time, having to pay the overheads, and deal with the incredible Semi-State bloodmindedness."

The reality behind the glamour - having to clock up the regular wedding and studio shots to pay the rent - when what you really want most is to progress your own photographic vision. Joe is in agreement that the true professional never stops learning - that's why *Light Years* and other books by professionals are always of great value.

Faber's latest in their series of published screenplays is *My Left Foot*, £4.99 stg, by Shane Connaughton and Jim Sheridan. Dubliners have a habit of whimsicalising their past, and both film and script are a testament to this. There is no denying the fine achievement on Sheridan and producer Noel Pearson's part in getting this to the screen and succeeding with it around the world. However if Christy Brown himself had possibly lived long enough to get behind the camera a much more potent version would have emerged - not the sanitised portrayal here. Sheridan excuses this in his intro by analogy with the seanachai tradition, which he incorrectly labels "Irish mythic tales with happy endings".

**Once A Wicked Lady** by Hilton Tims, published by Virgin Books at £12.95 stg, is the posthumous biography of Britain's first "home grown" film star, Margaret Lockwood, who was the most successful British screen actress of the Forties. She was directed by Carol Reed, Alfred Hitchcock and Michael Powell.

**The Guinness Book of Movie Facts and Feats** (£8.95 stg) and **The Guinness Book of Movie Clips** (£4.95) serve the market for cinema trivia books and are admirable examples of the genre.

**La Sheridan - Adorable Diva** is the long overdue biography of the Mayo-born world renowned opera star Margaret Burke Sheridan, whose birth centenary falls this year. Both *Wolfhound* and the biographer Anne Chambers are to be congratulated on producing this splendidly readable large format paperback, printed in Ireland. Unfortunately, some photos (admittedly difficult to reproduce rare stills) tend to be slightly grey. The book retails at a reasonable £9.95, and comes with excellent notes, discography, genealogy, etc. A great film could be made from her story, and this book has it all.



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