

FILM WEST



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE: Community TV / Close-up: a profile of cameraman Billy Keady / Parallax View: Information & Disinformation / Film insurance - expert advice / The Film Resource Centre wins at Cork / Crossword, Inserts, Flashback, and more!

FORBAIRT NA GAELTACHTA



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Údarás na Gaeltachta

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Editorial

The Bunny Carr school of political charm used to be treated as a joke. He took political sow ears and turned them into hackneyed silk purses. He represented the humble beginnings of personal hype in this island. Since then, media consultancy has become, if not big business, certainly a growth industry. It is strange that no matter how cynically this activity is regarded, how suspect are its practitioners, media consultancy has become something all-pervasive in our lives. All makers of books, plays, films, pop songs, TV programmes, sensitive novels, slim volumes of poetry, arts events, all are as dependant on the media consultant as the big firm which wishes to be associated with intellectually safe activities like art. To the media consultant everything is simply a product for sale.

Outside Dublin 4, the job of media consultant is called 'public relations'. But whether it is upfront Maurice Pratt or unmentionable backroom boys, the craft is the same: persuading people to buy something.

It is one thing to know how to practice this craft; it is another to know what effect such a practice has on the person. Both aspects are covered in Parallax View in this issue.

FILM WEST is the quarterly magazine of the Film Resource Centre, Galway, Ireland. The FRC was founded to aid emerging film-makers in the West of Ireland. It is funded through membership, grants from FAS, RTE, the Arts Council, Galway Corporation, Galway County Council, the Ireland Fund, and supportive local business which are credited individually in each issue. The Centre is administered by Celine Curtin. Directors of FRC: Aisling Prior (founder), Barra de Bhaldráithe (co-founder), Miriam Allen, Joe McMahon, Steve Woods

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FILM WEST

WINTER 1990

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Inserts

TRAINING INSTITUTE

Ireland's newest training establishment, the Media Training Institute, is the recently announced offshoot of Christy Kenneally Communications in Dun Laoghaire. Unlike colleges, the Institute will offer additional or supplementary training to media professionals, who would be sent on courses, and have them paid for, by their employers. Three distinct training schools; a film school, broadcast TV, and a corporate video school, will be provided under one roof at the centre. Facilities available to film school students will include three 35mm cameras, a film cutting room, and a 1100 foot studio open to all courses, plus full post-production suites for the broadcast and corporate video schools. Courses will cater for all the technical grades and a wide range of production support services. Animation training will be offered to film students. The curriculum will be tailored to suit either beginner or advanced personnel, with fees tiered to match training intensity. A full schedule of courses will be available throughout the year. The emphasis will be on small groups and workshops with lectures given by industry professionals working in Ireland. The centre's official launch is set for before Christmas.

FILM-MAKING TOO EXPENSIVE IN IRELAND?

At a seminar organised by Film Makers Ireland at the Cork Film Festival, British Screen's Simon Relph criticised Irish work practices stating that it is notably more expensive to film in Ireland. British Screen, a finance fund run with public and private backing, is currently co-financing *Hear My Song*. In recent years *Joyriders*, *Hush-a-bye Baby*, *December Bride*, and *The Miracle* have been among the Irish films to benefit from the £2 million spent by British Screen. What does the future hold in store for Irish film-making if British Screen is wondering what the point of their investment is? Secretary of the Irish film group of unions, Pat Keenan, responded to the criticism by stating that costs are marginally more expensive, but this reflects the cost of living here.

THE BIG SCREEN

Cinema attendances in Ireland have continued to rise and the year-end figures for 1990 are certain to surpass last year's figures. Among the principal contributors to this year's figures are a few movies which are taking a lot of money: *Pretty Woman*, which was brought back to Galway due to popular demand. *The Field*, which has fared far more successfully on the Irish market than *My Left Foot* on its first outing, and seems certain to take in more than £1 million at Irish cinemas.

Thaddeus O' Sullivan's *December Bride* opened in the Lighthouse cinema on the 23rd Nov, it was very well received on the festival circuit. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* also opened on the 23rd, aimed at a much younger audience.

Inevitably children's movies dominate the new releases for December, led by *The Neverending Story 2* with George Miller taking over as director from Wolfgang Peterson, and Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, also *Home Alone*, written by John Hughes and directed by Chris Columbus, starring Malachy Culin as an eight year-old boy fending off dim-witted burglars while his family are away, and *Problem Child* which deals with the adoption of a particularly unruly orphan.



A still from the 16mm project film, *Larry Love*, at the December series of Film Foundation Workshops, just finished, which took place at the Film Resource Centre in Galway. All past Film Foundation Workshop project films and videos can be viewed at the FRC, by arrangement.

HOLLYWOOD AT GARBALLY COLLEGE

At the rate things are going in Garbally at the moment, St. Josephs College may soon become a training-ground for aspiring film-makers, producers and directors. Already four graduates from the Communications Course - which is run during the Transitional year - have had films

presented on the RTE programme 'Scratch Saturday'. Darragh Finnernan and Richard Hickey combined to make *Schoolboy Blues*, a film that deals with aspects of college life, as experienced by a boarder. Barry O' Brien and Edward Mitchell moved out into the wider world of Ballisloe to film their impressions of *The Country Fair Day*.

FARMERS TURN ACTORS!

A group of Galway farmers turned actors have helped produce a highly professional video, detailing the work of the Farm Relief Services in Ireland, which was launched recently in Ballinasloe. The 22 minute video *A Farm in Need* came about as a result of Tom Casey's great interest in film collecting, and his friendship with film-makers and fellow film-buffs Roy and Noel Spence from County Down, who were both persuaded to make the film for Farm Relief Services. Many of the scenes in the Eclipse Promotions production were shot on Tom's farm, and feature a number of his neighbours as well as people who are involved in the affairs of F.R.S.. Copies of the video can be purchased from Galway F.R.S. at Mulpit, Athenry, phone 091-44551.

THE IRISH FILM INSTITUTE

The Irish Film Institute's Archive section was the recipient of the premier award of £25,000 in the Communications category in the first A.I.B., 'Better Ireland' awards. The award is to aid three aspects of the Archive's work: computerisation of the collection; increasing public access to the films by transferring them to video; and funding the repatriation of Irish films held in foreign film archives. It is the most generous private sector contribution yet made for the preservation of Ireland's heritage on film.

Already four people are being employed on a half-time basis on a SES scheme to help with work in the Archive including the computerisation of the catalogue of the Archive's collection, which now exceeds 3,500 titles.

With the support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and the British Council two members of

Croyden, Surrey, to identify, and arrange to bring home, all of the Irish material from the stock of the defunct Humphries Laboratories. John Lucas, now with Hendersons, went to some considerable trouble to preserve 25,000 cans of material, a significant percentage of which is Irish. This will certainly include a substantial number of negatives.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Michael J. Fox, whose *Back to the Future* movies have earned nearly \$1 billion for Universal worldwide, has signed a first-look deal with the studio through his Snowback Productions. The arrangement covers Fox's services as producer and director as well as actor. Fox, whose other Universal credits include *The Secret of My Success* and upcoming John Badham action-comedy, *The Hard Way*, will be exclusive to the studio for all television projects and at least two films, following the now-shooting Warner Bros vehicle, *Doc Hollywood*.

Gerard Depardieu is to star in Gerard Lauzier's next film, *Mon Pere, Ces Heros*, which will also feature Catherine Jacob.

20th Century Fox has signed prize commodity, Keenan Ivory Wayans, producer-star of Fox Network's *In Living Color*, to an exclusive overall production/development deal for both features and television. His other credits include *Hollywood Shuffle* and *I'm Gonna Get You Sucka*.

Kathleen Turner starts shooting *Warsawski* on December 5th in Chicago and Los Angeles, directed by Jeff Kanew. The film is the first in a planned series of pictures based on the popular crime novels by Sara Paretsky about a hard-bitten female private detective.

Nastassja Kinski, Albert Finney, Hannes Jaenicke, and Rutger Hauer star in *Der lachende Tod*, being directed by Carl Schenkel in Berlin, Rostock and London. The film is about a bank robber who escapes from the DDR and takes his money to the West looking for a new life.

White Palace director, Luis Mandoki, has signed a two year deal with Universal, which released both the steamy Susan Sarandon - James Spader romance and the Mexican director's first major American release, *Gaby*.

Alan J. Pakula will direct Imagine Film's *Friday Night Lights*, based on a non-fiction account of a small

Texas town's obsession with high school football. Sam Shepard is reportedly being courted to star in the film. Pakula will make *Significant Other*, starring Tom Hanks and Debra Winger for Touchstone.

Patrick Swayze will star in and produce psychological thriller *Double Fault*, as part of his recently signed first-look deal with 20th Century Fox. The studio paid a reported \$383,000 for the script by first-time writers David Arate and Alex Sokoloff.

Midnight Rider is the working title for the new John Travolta starrer, being directed by Jeffrey Hornadya. The Universal film also includes Richard Jordan and Heather Graham.

Former Columbia Pictures president, Dawn Steel, is to produce the sequel to Disney's *Honey I Shrunk The Kids*, the first under her exclusive three-year deal.

BARCELONA FILM FESTIVAL

Europe's biggest film festival cash prize, the 200,000 ECU Premi Europa, has been awarded by the jury to Pat O'Connor's *Fools of Fortune* and Jaques Davila's *La Champagne de Ciceron*. The jury decision was booed by Spanish critics and the public, which saw the local favourite Jose Luis Guerin's acclaimed docu-drama, *Innisfree*, relegated to the award for best artistic contribution.

BUDAWANNY FOR SPAIN

Budawanny, directed by Bob Quinn, has been selected to compete in the Official Section of the 1 Exhibition of Experimental Cinema. The jury will be meeting in Madrid from February 1st to the 6th and will announce their decisions on the 7th of Feb.

SPIRAL STAIRS

Final stages of editing are in progress on the Film Resource Centre's production *Spiral Stairs*. Editor is Paddy O'Connor assisted by Dez Kirby, with supervision by Dermot Diskin. "Things are looking good," says producer Pat Comer. "We hope to have the film completed by the end of January."

I'D LIVE THERE

I'd Live There is a twenty minute, comparative lifestyle documentary between two youth groups; Artillery Youth Club from New Lodge, Belfast, and a youth group from Claddagh and Westside, Galway.

The project came about through a Co-operation North exchange, and received additional funding from the Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Pre-chosen locations, showing aspects of their lives and towns, were shot by the youth who also set up a series of interviews exploring issues which they found relevant.

The project was co-ordinated by Nuala Broderick and Tadhg Fleming in Galway, and by Seamie Murphy, Pat Henry, and Harry Murphy in Belfast. It is a Live Artillery/NT Films production, shot and edited on Lo-Band U-Matic. The tape will be screened in the Film Resource Centre early in 1991.

EUROPEAN SCRIPT FUND

Two Irish writer/directors are to receive funding from the latest quarterly disbursement from the European Script Fund. Johnny Gogan's *The Bargain Shop*, based on an antique shop in a rundown area of Dublin, and Joe Comerford's *High Boot Benny*, a story of a seventeen-year-old's inadvertent involvement with an IRA smuggling operation, are set to receive amounts undisclosed as yet.



December Bride, which had its first premiere at the Galway Film Fleadh in July 1990, continues to dazzle audiences with its sumptuous photography, costumes, Northern Ireland scenery and splendid acting. What with Ingmar Bergman's reaction, it may yet go on to garner an Oscar at the Academy Awards in March 1991.

DECEMBER BRIDE

Thaddeus O'Sullivan's *December Bride* has just been presented with a special jury prize at the European Film Awards in Glasgow. The film which had only been nominated in one category - music - made such an impression on the jury that there was a widespread feeling that it should have considered in other categories including Best Film. Chairman of the jury, Ingmar Bergman was said to be particularly enthusiastic about the film. Donal McCann accepted the extra award on behalf of the film.

Ag tosú i 1993, beidh Rialtas na Breataine ag cur 8 milliún breise ar fáil, le cláracha teilifíse a dhéanamh i nGaidhlig na hAlban. Faoi láthair, tá 4 mhiliún dhá roinnt ar an dá stáisiún neamhspléach, S.T.V. agus Grampian, le uair a chloig in aghaidh na seachtaine, i nGaidhlig a chraoladh. Úsáidfean an 8 milliún breise le 200 uair breise a dhéanamh agus beidh ar STV agus ar Grampian, áit a aimsiú ar an sceideal dona cláracha breise seo.

Seo mar a oibreoidh an **Ciste Teilifíse**. Bunófar Coiste ochtar, a mbeidh sé mar dualgas orthu, liosta na gcláracha a shocrú. Iarfaidh siad ansin ar léiritheoirí tairiscintí a dhéanamh le haghaidh cláracha ar an liosta. Mar shampla, má shocraíonn siad go mba cheart irisclár leath uaire a bheith ar fáil, iarfaidh siad ar léiritheoirí a chur in iúl cén cineál clár a dhéanfaidís agus cén costas a theastodh uathu lena dhéanamh. Roghnóidh an Coiste ceann dena tairiscintí agus craolfar an clár ar STV nó ar Grampian. Beidh an Coiste, a bhéas i bhfeidhíl an chiste mhór, ag glacadh chomhairle ó Choiste eile, a bhéas i dteangbháil le painéal de 350 cainteoirí Ghaidhlig, le fáil amach uathu, cén cineál cláracha a theastaíonn uathusan. Dála an sceil, níl Gaidhlig ar bith ag Sir Kenneth Alexander, Cathaoirleach an Choiste Chomhairleach!

Ar ndóigh tá tionscail na teilifíse, in Alban an sásta leis an airgead breise seo. Cheana féin, tá comhluchtaí ag treascairt a chéile, ag eagrú ranganna Ghaidhlig, sa gcaoi is go mbeidh daoine acu in ann na cláracha a dhéanamh nuair a

An Ciste Teilifíse na Gaidhlig agus 'After Eights' na hAlban

le
Donncha O hEallaithe

thagann an tam chuige. Agus tá leasainm tugtha orthu cheana féin - na After Eights.

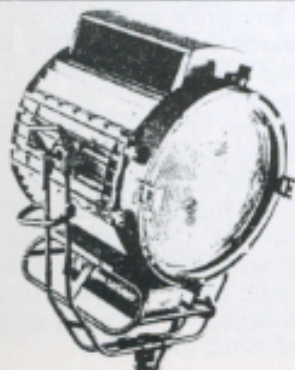
I gcomparáid leis an mbealach atá Rialtas na hÉireann ag caitheamh le ceist Teilifíse na Gaeltachta i láthair na huaire, caitheann a admháil go bhfuil Rialtas na Breataine an fhlaithiúl. Ach níl aon chinnteacht ann go mbeidh an tairgead dhá chaitheamh sa mbealach is mó a dhéanfaidh leas na bpobal bhfuil an Ghaidhlig mar ghnáth theanga labhartha. Ceaptar go gcuirfean suas le 160 post breise ar bun, i dtionscail na teilifíse ach is sna cathracha móra, a chruthófar na postanna seo mar is ansin atá na comhluchtaí, a bhéas ag fáil an tairgead. Níl aon phlean ann áiseanna ar nós Telegael, a bhunú sna cheantracha Gaeltachta ná le daoine óna Ghaeltachtaí a oiliúnt sna scileanna éagsúla a bhaineann le

cláracha a dhéanamh.

Tá contúirt mhór ann, ós rud é go mbeidh na cláracha ag dul amach ar dhá stáisiún tráchtála, atá ag braith ar ioncam fógraíochta, go dtabharfar na hamannaí chraolta is measa ar an sceideal, do na cláracha Ghaidhlig. Tá contúirt eile ann freisin, sé sin go mbeidh na comhluchtaí teilifíse ag iarraidh cláracha a dhéanamh a bhéas inghlacaithe ag daoine gan Ghaidhlig, lena chinntiú nach gcaillfidh siad lucht éisteachta agus ioncam fógraíochta dá réir. Cheana féin tá caint ann ar cuid mhór den airgead a usáid ar 'soap opera' i nGaidhlig, le fotheidil Béarla. Is cinnte nach mbeidh sé dírithe ar an 80,000 a deireann go bhfuil Gaidhlig acu, mar níl iontu siúd uilig ach 1.6% den lucht féachana atá ag STV agus Grampian, le chéile. Is cinnte ach oiread nach mbeidh morán béim ar chláracha do pháistí, cé gur iad is riachtanaí, má tá an Ghaidhlig le maireachtáil mar theanga bheo phobail.

Ó 1993, beidh 12m. in aghaidh na bliana dhá chaitheamh ar sheirbhís teilifíse tré Ghaidhlig na hAlban. Ar an airgead sin, craolfar 6 uair a chloig in aghaidh na seachtaine idir an dá stáisiún tráchtála, STV agus Grampian. Ar an airgead céanna tá stáisiún iomlán teilifíse, dhá reachtáil san Ioslann agus ag craoladh 53 uair sa tseachtain. Tá sé an soiléir domsa, nach mbeidh an tairbhe is mó, dhá fháil ar airgead na Banríona ach fós féin, dá mbeadh an Rialtas againn féin, chomh fial leis an nGaeilge, d'fhéadfaí Teilifíse na Gaeltachta a bhunú. Is fada muid ag fanacht.

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Access Community Network, the only organisation of its kind in the country, was established to provide a non-profit making community access television service catering for the people of Dun Laoghaire Borough.

This television service is different, exciting, and innovative because it offers members of the community access to local television production.

Although Ireland is sadly and significantly remiss in offering such services, community access television has successfully proved a very valuable resource throughout the world, e.g. the Netherlands, Argentina, and especially the U.S.A., where it has existed for over forty years.

By providing advice, personnel and resources, Access Community Network will facilitate and encourage people in the Borough to relate to and teach each other through television programmes of their own creation. Advice and help will be available at every stage of the production process to those groups and individuals working or wishing to improve the quality of life in their areas.

Who are Access Community Network?

Access Community Network is a project employing fifteen half-time employees and one full-time manager. It operates under the auspices of Options, a community development organisation, is sponsored by Dun Laoghaire V.E. C., and funded by Fás through a social employment scheme.

How will A.C.N. run itself?

A.C.N. plan to be constituted as a company limited by guarantee, its shares held individually and corporately by the people of the Borough, who will also provide its board of directors. A. C. N. propose developing a diverse funding base, and envisage that likely sources will include: shares, private, statutory, European, sponsorship, advertising.

How will A.C.N. offer community access television?

The obvious, and easiest and most effective, form of distribution would be through the existing cable network which already has a high penetration into the homes of the Borough. A. C. N. propose programming of a half-hour, developing to one hour per week.

ACCESS COMMUNITY NETWORK

Who can benefit from this community television service?

Community groups, associations, or similar organisations can avail of the access facility to express themselves, and to benefit from the received exposure:

Agencies or bodies, e.g. Eastern Health Board, V. E. C. The Hanly Centre, State Departments who can offer information.

Trade, industry and commerce can improve and develop links with the community through the support of their local television service.

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My Roof Is Not My Home

On Wednesday 6 December 1990, Galway Film & Video Co-op launched their latest video *My Roof Is Not My Home* at Club Rapparee in Monroe's Tavern, Galway. The launch was sponsored by "Speedy" Smith and it was attended by representatives from Simon, Threshold, Gaway Civil Rights, Galway Social Services, The Samaritans, Telegaol and the Film Resource Centre.

The idea for the 13 minute drama-documentary on homelessness arose from a course of workshops given by the Co-op and funded by Women In Need. Many of the women in the workshop group had personally experienced homelessness at some time or other. When the workshops were completed and it was found that some funds were still available, it was decided to spend them on producing a film which would

highlight homelessness in Galway. While all the members of the Co-op were involved in this project, it was headed by Nuala Broderick. Nuala's research involved speaking to the usual bodies who attempt to deal with the problem - Threshold, Simon, etc. She also spoke to two local poets Rita Ann Higgins and Kathleen O'Driscoll, who had written on the subject. One piece from each poet is used on the video.

The format of the video was decided. It would focus on three women whose stories were untypical - they were not the kind of people anyone would ever expect to be homeless. Finally last June the film was shot in two days, and edited in two more. The talents used, artistic, dramatic, etc., were from within the women's group. All services were given freely. As Nuala says, "We borrowed someone's house, someone else's baby, and everyone gave their time".

Viewers at the launch were deeply affected by the stories of the three



women. We saw a middle-aged woman whose story seemed oh-so-familiar in ways. A country woman, whose husband 'married into' her house and farm, had problems when he started drinking heavily and locking her into the house. She escaped and went to Galway. She was put up in a hostel, with the help of a social worker, but this was only temporary. Now even her house is gone.

The second woman portrayed was a single parent. Her scenes highlighted for us the abuse given to

many single parents when they are attempting to rent accomodation - "How can I rent my property to people like you?".

The third case was a sixteen-year-old girl, originally from County Cork. In care from the age of nine, she was constantly running away. She left a foster home to move in with her older sister, who married at age sixteen. When her sister's husband began abusing her, she ran away again and ended up on the streets of Galway. Although diagnosed 'disturbed' the local psychiatric unit would not admit a 'child'. When she received some money from the authorities, she headed for England.

The film was not made to offer solutions, its makers just want to point out that the problem of homelessness exists, and it exists in Galway. It also points out that physical shelter does not necessarily mean a 'home'. "Just because you have a roof over your head doesn't mean you're not homeless", emphasises Nuala. Watching it, hopefully awareness will be heightened to the extent that some solutions may be found. We can't always ship our problems across the Irish Sea.

The video retails at £9.50 to individuals, £12 to groups, and is available from the Galway Film & Video Co-Op: 091-68474 and 64937.

A rough edit has already won a Special Merit Award in the Blarney Trophy Section of the Cork Youth

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Film Resource Centre wins at Cork!

Galway Film Resource productions *Buille an Óir / Fool's Gold* and *Fun Food* are recently announced winners at the Tenth Cork Youth International Video & Film Festival.

Buille an Óir / Fool's Gold, the mining awareness film produced by the Film Resource Centre in conjunction with West Aware, won awards in several sections including Best Irish Language Film, Best Environmental Film, and third overall in its category. A category Best Actor Oscar also went to 'Mouse' McHugh for his role as the fool.

Fun Food, the work of the Sixth Class in St. Nicholas' School, Claddagh, in association with the Film Resource Centre, took three awards in its category; Best Editing, Best Animation, and Most Entertaining Film.

The Video and Film Festival is probably the most recognised part of the Irish Youth Video and Film Company which was established in 1978. The main emphasis of the company is involving people in the art of film-making and other organised activities. It caters, directly and indirectly, for approximately two thousand young people in age groups from three



'Mouse' McHugh, Best Actor award-winner at the 10th Cork Youth International Video & Film Festival. Two FRC productions won awards. The photo (below, left) shows the second award-winner, *Fun Food*, during production last year: the FRC's Steve Woods supervises the children.

years to twenty-five years. The company has established eight main areas of work: Community Organisations; Unemployment Groups; Loaning Equipment; Groups working with handicapped people; Schools; Workshops; Painting and Art; and Travelling Roadshows. The company, which is a registered charity, has eight young people employed through Fás. They operate under the advice of a management committee headed by


president, Helen Prout.

The judging of entries in the Festival took place on November 10th. Experienced members involved in the world of cinema, television, and the arts, (including a representative from the Film Resource Centre) judged film and video competitions (among others) in categories for Under - 12's, Under - 18's, Under - 25's, and Adults. Work could also be nominated for awards in the special sections for Sporting, Irish Language and Legend, Environmental, Computer Animation, and work on the theme of Peace.

All of the films were screened during the Festival which ran from November 22nd to 29th. Workshops were held on the topics: 'Make Your Own Film', 'Teaching Film-Making in the Classroom', and 'Understanding Video Technology'.

Entries in the film and video competitions came predominantly from the U.S.A., mainland Europe, the U.K., and Ireland. Our representative noted that the only Irish entries came from Cork and Galway. Where are all the other shorts made in Ireland? Are Irish film-makers aware of the existence of this festival?



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Close-up

This issue sees the start of a new series, Close-up, which will profile people in the different areas of the film business. To start, we have chosen Billy Keady, a cameraman who lives in Furbo, Co. Galway. Bernie Wyndham spoke to Billy in Telegaël, where he is currently employed as cameraman.

B.W. The usual question first, how did you get started, and did you always want to be a cameraman?

B. K. Well no, I didn't always want to be a cameraman. When I finished school, I went to the RTC in Galway and did a course in Civil Engineering, hoping to go on to become an Architect. If I wasn't a cameraman, my number one choice would be Architecture. I loved working on construction, I have designed the plan for my house and hope to follow it through and build it. Maybe doing this would help me get over this 'thing' I have for being an architect.

I used to watch my brother Tadhg (a photographer, who also has a video business) work, it seemed interesting, it tickled my fancy, so in 1985 I left the construction business and began working with Tadhg.

In 1986, I met a friend, one of a group which was going on a canoeing expedition to Nepal. They were thinking of making a film about it, but didn't know how to go about it. I approached RTE with the idea, they were interested, so they gave me a camera, film stock, and the equipment needed.

B.W. Did you know how to use the equipment?

B.K. No, I was used to video but this was film. I went to Fintan Ryan in RTE, he showed me how to use the camera. I went away, shot some film, went back to RTE and was told it was fine.

So off we went to Nepal for six weeks. The original idea was to have someone else edit the film, but when we returned I was advised to edit myself. This was my first project, it got me started. I had no formal education in this kind of thing, I didn't

go to college to become a cameraman, I was just one of the lucky ones to have a brother, who had some connection with the business. It's not the kind of career you get out of a book, there are no specific rules or formulas to follow. It's mostly cop-on.

B.W. You mentioned that you were advised to edit the film yourself, was that new to you?



Alan Essalment, Bob Quinn, Billy Keady

B.K. Well, again I had edited on video, but not on film. I started editing my film - *White Water* - in January '87, in Bob Quinn's house in Carraroe. I worked full-time at it for over a month, but then I felt the need to work, I needed the money, so I took a job on a boat, for the summer season. That didn't leave me with a lot of time for editing - an hour here and there. I finally finished editing it in '88 and it was shown on RTE on Whit weekend and again in August '88. I really enjoyed it, but it took more editing than shooting.

B.W. So, what did you do after *White Water*?

B.K. The Film Resource Centre had just started up, so I joined. I was there for six months, then I got a job in Telegaël. In between that I did some work for Teilifis na Gaeltachta.

B.W. So, what do you do at Telegaël?

B.K. I have been with Telegaël a year and a half now, and shoot the various jobs that come their way, for example last year we did "The Whole World In His Hands", for RTE and Channel 4. In October '89 I went to Boston to work on Bob Quinn's 'Pobal I mBoston'. I really enjoyed

that, great crack! The beginning of this year was taken up with a course the Údarás was running, to train potential television producers. The course was based in Údarás na Gaeltachta in Furbo, and their 'hands-on training' was here in Telegaël. That lasted a few months, I supervised the shooting and helped out generally. I did some pop videos and some work for Galway business. We also worked for "Cúrsaí", once or twice a week, it was nice to see our work on television. This summer we did an Irish language series "As Seo Amach", six half-hour programmes, that will go out sometime in the spring. I didn't shoot all of that, there was an assistant cameraman, I supervised. As well as that we shot a programme for Ocean Films called "Doctor Browne Also Spoke", Micheal D. Higgins interviewed Dr. Noel Browne, it was very interesting. There was also a profile of Garret Fitzgerald, we started in Dublin and interviewed himself and his wife over a period of three days - a very nice guy actually.

B.W. Is there any glamour involved in being a cameraman?

B. K. Well, very recently I was going to Germany, again with Bob Quinn, to shoot "Pobal I Deutschland". We were leaving on a Thursday morning. On the Tuesday, Ocean Films rang me and said they had decided to go to Paris to interview Dr. Fitzgerald, the idea being to give him a more European look. That was really hectic. I packed my bag, headed for Dublin on Tuesday, flew to Paris on Wednesday, flew back to Dublin on Wednesday evening and headed for Germany on Thursday morning.

B.W. Tell us a little about Germany?

B.K. We were in Germany for nearly three weeks, we had a lot of work to do but it was great crack. We did a fair bit of travelling around Germany, but it was great fun. I love working with Bob. While I was there my wife, Ellen was expecting our first baby, she was pretty near her time, so whenever I would pass a phone, I

would dive for it and ring home. Thankfully Ellen waited until we got home and on the 9th of Nov. our baby girl Orla was born.

B.W. Would you be interested in making another film?

B.K. Oh yes, I would be very interested but the whole area of finance that goes along with it doesn't interest me. Anyway, I wouldn't know where to start. Also I wouldn't be interested in the script-writing side of it, as I have no interest in drama or fiction. Documentaries interest me. I have some idea of the kind of film I would like to do, but then ideas come and go.

B.W. Do you prefer video to film or vice-versa?

B. K. There is a lot of confusion about video as opposed to film. Video is relatively new and it seems to have a bad name with a lot of people. It seems to some people, that video is very 'high tech'; it's seen as computer wizardry and complicated, but it is just a recording, broadcasting, and editing medium. I think too much emphasis is put on the technical side of video and that takes away from the creative side. Generally speaking the rules and the

principles are the same, basically they are just mediums. It is hard to say which one I prefer, I enjoy both.

B.W. Is there any particular cameraman you admire?

B.K. Well, different cameramen are suited to different types of work. Probably the one I admire most for what he is good at is Eugene O'Connor. When I was starting off I met him a few times and saw some of his work, I was impressed.

B.W. Would you feel he has influenced your own work?

B. K. Yes, well I suppose to some extent. I remember watching a TV programme and thinking that has to be Eugene O'Connor's work- and sure enough it was. When you are about to shoot something, you think about the way other cameramen would go about it, it gives you ideas. I also like some of Godfrey Graham's work; he was the cameraman for the programme made on Sam Stephenson. I thought that it was very good. I also admire the work of Breffini Byrne.

B.W. Billy, you seem to be very busy most of the time, when you get free time what do you like to

do the most?

B.K. Well I am not a very competitive person, so I am not very interested in sports, but I do love sailing. I call it a 'fix' if it happens that my work has something connected with boats or the sea. I sail with friends and on any opportunity I get. Two years ago I bought a sailing boat, a small yacht. That might sound like an extravagance, but it is the only pastime I enjoy. Ellen also has an interest in sailing, so it is a good way to spend time together outside work. I dabble a bit in art as well, but not as much as I'd like to as I don't have the time.

B.W. Finally, how do you see yourself in ten years time?

B.K. Well if I am still a cameraman, I would like to be in a position where I was respected for the work I do. I would want people to come to Telegael and ask for me for a certain job because they know I am good at it. I would like to have a good reputation as a cameraman. At the moment I am very fortunate to be in Telegael because it helps me get recognition. But I would like to have gained the respect and recognition in less than ten years time.



Insuring your film production

In this article, the first of a series, Phillip O'Dwyer gives an introduction to film insurance and how you can insure your production against all eventualities, including weather, accidents and actors.

Something in excess of 4000 films are released each year, with approximately 500 of them coming from Hollywood. Insurance premium income is around \$400 million per annum, or approximately 1% of budget. But no one standardised insurance package could possibly cover all eventualities. It is mind-boggling to think about all the risks hidden in a 120 page script - just to entertain an audience?

The greatest risk faced by producer and insurer alike is abandonment of a film, whether covered or not. Having effected an insurance contract and commenced filming, it is amusing to note the lengths to which the underwriter will go to save a film. Take for example Philippe de Brocca's film *Louisiana* (1983), which had two false villages as part of the set, built on the banks of the Mississippi River. Prior to photography the insurers and producers checked the flood history and statistics for the area for that time of the year, as well as checking current weather forecasts with the U.S. Weather Service.

Nevertheless they were flooded and the villages destroyed during photography one day. Quick action and a bit of innovation on the parts of the insurer and loss adjuster mitigated against what could have been a disaster. The insurer hired and flew in by helicopter a 200 hundred strong chain-gang from the local penitentiary, and sandbagged the access roads. The shoot was rescheduled, the script rewritten to include what actual footage they had got of the flood, and the film with a \$7 million budget was saved at a claims loss of £700,000.

Local Insurance

For a few short years there was no film insurance underwriter in this country. Basically there was no demand for it. It was satisfactory to have the insurance contract written abroad. In any case, film and TV production was in a few hands. Now

with deregulation, independent producers have an opportunity to make a go of it. This then bolsters an indigenous industry. Most producers here, besides making TV programmes or films, make corporate or training videos, or advertising films to earn their bread and butter and help with overheads. Not many have annual packages, but it is beginning to make more sense now.

The type of basic film information needed by the insurer is as follows: type, stock, details of rushes (generally it is expected that there would be daily rushes to a reputable laboratory), experience of producer, storyline, locations, script, shooting schedule, budget, details of stunts or hazards, length of time in post-production, equipment being used and any special processes, fire extinguishers, paramedics, and alternative locations or props etc. in case anything might happen.

Given all this information the underwriter will indicate a premium and terms and conditions, which may then be adjusted later on. Your broker will negotiate your insurance package but it doesn't always follow that the insurer will cover everything he is asked to cover.

Hazards present themselves in the most ordinary circumstances and you do really have to be alert. A production manager, alert to the job, rang his insurer about cover for a shoot at an indoor swimming pool, because he was afraid of lights falling into the pool and electrocuting the swimmer. You have to think of everything.

Adequate insurance can sometimes be a necessary prerequisite to hooking your final investors. Indeed some investors have been known just to pay for the insurance as being their investment.

Insurance Features

Some of the most important aspects of the average insurance package are: completion bonding; errors and omissions; cast /extra expense; negative/videotape; equipment; props/set/wardrobe; and faulty stock/camera/processing.

Completion bonding: this is a good time to point out that insurance and bond is no more than a pecuniary

assistance to the producer. It cannot guarantee either artistic quality or box office success. The bond guarantor has only agreed to pay the necessary expenses to complete the production on time and in accordance with the agreed specifications.

He will also have the right to take over the production and change the crew, or whatever is needed to complete the production. To get a bond, insurers will scrutinise your budget, script, shooting schedule, and personnel. You and your senior staff will have to meet with them. Then having 'looped the loop' you may be covered under very strict conditions, like weekly accounts and daily progress reports, depending on the size of the budget. It can cost up to 6% of budget and the premium cannot be included in the budget.

Errors and omissions: this is a minefield. Again the producer has to 'loop the loop'. It can be extremely expensive - £15,000 for £1 million. Your legal advisor will have to check title on all properties to do with the production - music, soundtrack, script, etc. He will have to make sure that you can't be sued. The cover is basically for libel, invasion of privacy, plagiarism, breach of contract, and other legal exposures after transmission of the product to the public. There is a sliding scale of exposure in terms of type of production for the insurer. He will not insure:-

- (i) satirical comedies
 - (ii) documentary dramas (fiction based on fact)
 - (iii) current affairs/documentaries.
- You cannot distribute to the U.S. without E&O cover.

Cast: this covers the producer against financial loss due to non-performance of specified cast in the event of injury, illness, or death. It costs around 1% of budget and has huge deductibles.

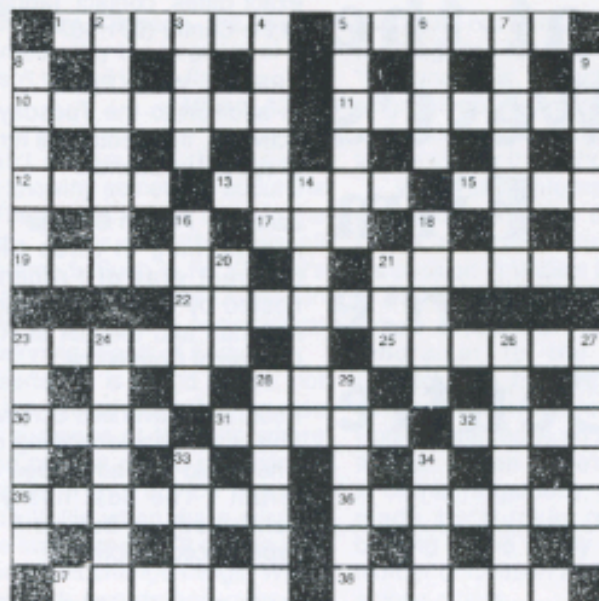
[Philip O'Dwyer's article will be continued next issue of Film West]

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Film West's unique film crossword competition!

Welcome to Film West's competition crossword no - 2.

The first correct solution received at Film West, Seaport House, New Dock Street, by 31st January 1991, will receive a special prize - choice of either a book token (value £10.00) or a year's membership of the Film Resource Centre (which entitles you to a year's issues of Film West magazine). Entries on the box (right); please include your name and address written clearly. Winner and solution listed in each issue.



SOLUTION TO COMPETITION CROSSWORD NO.1 (AUTUMN ISSUE OF FILM WEST):

B	L	A	C	K	M	G	A	R	B	O						
A	P	A	E	R	I	A	L	S	L							
Q	U	I	N	N	L	A	T	T	I	C						
R	A	G	E	M	M	A	T									
L	E	A	D	E	R	S	O	S	H	E						
E	L	L	A	A	S	U	M	M	E	R						
N	L	A	C	T	O	R	I	A								
G	R	E	E	N	E	L	O	T	O							
H	U	N	O	M	A	R	S	H	A	L						
N	P	R	I	O	R	M	M									
A	N	G	I	E	U	Z	O	N	A	H						
E	S	W	A	N	S	O	N									
A	R	I	A	S	T	E	D	G	A	R						

Prize won by Patricia Murphy, 115 Monalee Manor, Knocknacarra, Salthill, Galway.

Clues Across

- Hungarian Horror Actor , Bela(6)
- Director in High Spirits? (6)
- The , A. J. Cronin's fortress (7)
- Dirty Sway See, dancing we hear. (7)
- O' Brien , the Country Girl.(4)
- 13 & 28 Down, She got her gun? (5,6)
- Scarlett O' Hara, will go there tomorrow. (4)
- Quixotic Professor (3)
- & other strangers (6)
- Director of The Paleface. (6)
- The , 1953 film starring Glenn Ford as a tough cop. (3,4)
- Marlene Dietrich's native language (6)
- Lelia, producer of Reefer and the Model.(6)
- How many flew over the Cuckoo's Nest? (3)
- Palindromic Swedish group (4)
- Sister of Zsa Zsa and Eva. (5)
- It must go on. (4)
- Did Gary mill about the err? (7)
- Could have been Cassius Clay's baby? (7)
- Wilkes, Rhett's competition in Gone with the Wind. (6)
- Durbin, one time rival of Judy Garland.

Clues Down

- Nero, in Quo Vadis. (7)
- They are never evens (4)
- R.L. Stevenson's was a treasure (6)
- Scott with a sting. (6)
- Was she worth her hay? (4)
- Give life to. (7)
- Austrian leading man with maximum appeal. (6)
- This Brit was Swedish we hear?(6)
- O. Sacred? (7)
- Travolta's type of cowboy. (5)
- Male Thesplan (5)
- With bad, he was a sailor (3)
- Mel's Max, it goes without sane (3)
- Small screen award. (6)
- Jason, Senior or Junior.(7)
- Carla was in Acacia Avenue (7)
- Nothing old about this man (6)
- See 13 across. (6)
- With Mrs Simpson, on and off screen.(6)
- Lee Dunne said goodbye to the this. (4)
- La Lollo's gain ? (4)

Winter at the West's Film Resource Centre

SERIES OF SPECIAL EVENTS

In January 1991, the Film Resource Centre will re-launch itself at its new premises at Seaport House. The Centre has organised a series of special events for the winter in addition to its regular activities. On Tuesday evenings people who have worked in, or in association with, the industry will speak and host discussions at the Centre. The series will begin in January. Speakers confirmed to-date are:
Miriam Allen: Continuity / Production
Robert Quinn: Assistant Direction
Alanna O'Kelly: Video in Fine Art

Representative: Trade Unions
Representative: Film Makers Ireland.

For more information on cost and exact dates, contact Tadhg Fleming at the Centre (091-66744).

SPECIAL WEEKENDS

In addition to the Tuesday evening activities, the Centre will run a series of special weekends.

January: French Cinema

A screening of three films from different eras of French cinema hosted by Malachy O'Higgins, film historian and theorist at Rathmines College of Commerce.

February: Advanced Scriptwriting

This is for people working on scripts who would find advantage in such a forum. The host has yet to be confirmed, but will be an experienced scriptwriter.

March 3 - 4: Documentary-Making

Again, this is for anyone particularly interested in this field. The host will be Bob Quinn, film and documentary maker for over twenty years.

Numbers will be limited at these events. For more information, again please contact Tadhg Fleming at the Centre (091-66744)

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

The Centre's darkroom will be fully equipped and operational from January. Introductory courses in photography and video are currently being planned. It is expected that the courses will run over ten weeks. Specialist weekends are also being planned in these areas.

STEENBECK

The Centre is a fully-equipped 16mm facility with a new 6-plate Steenbeck editing bench. Contact the Centre for rates and conditions of hire.

FILM FOUNDATION COURSE

The Fifth Film Foundation Course run by the Centre has just been completed. Participants were mostly those who were disappointed in their efforts to get places on the September course. Instructors for the course were: Malachy O'Higgins (Film Theory), Dick Donaghue (Scriptwriting), Lelia Doolan (Production), Liam Saurin (Sound), Tadhg Fleming (Camera/Lighting), Maria Gibbons (Shooting), and Dermot Diskin (Editing). The students were delighted with their short film, *Larry Love* [see page 4].

The next Film Foundation Course will be held in early Spring of 1991.

S.E.S.

The Film Resource Centre wish to welcome on board its new workers under the Fás SES, and to bid farewell to its much-missed previous employees.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

All members will receive notification by mail of the A.G.M. which will be held in the New Year.

MEMBERSHIP RULE

From January, membership of the Centre will run from January to December.

All rental of equipment and inclusion in courses is for members only. Membership is £10 for waged and £5 for unwaged.



Flashback

In this issue of Film West we decided to have two people review the same film. We chose *Fools of Fortune* which recently shared Europe's biggest film festival cash prize, the 200,000 ECU Premi Europa, awarded by the Barcelona Film Festival jury.

This is the second time I have watched *Fools of Fortune*. Two weeks ago I rented it from my local video shop, (which also sells meat, hardware, drapery, etc.). The Film was No. 7 in the Top Ten. Today I discover that it is at No. 107, and it cost me 50p less to hire.

The opening shot in this film consists of a wild man screaming from Dun Aengus on the Aran Islands. At first I thought he was screaming at me: Miriam or is it Marian? - Has the face from the cutting room floor finally made it into a film?

This film should have been a mini-series. It might even have been labelled 'A thinking man's Irish RM'. It is a confused and confusing film, I wonder what the book was like?

The film is set in 1918/19 and tells the story of a "big house" (Kilneagh) and its occupants. It begins in fairytale fashion, with an assortment of characters: husband, wife, 3 children, 2 spinster aunts, several adoring servants and even a defrocked priest. The children are beautiful, the parents madly in love, the servants very happy with their lot. These parents communicate with their children, they listen to them. Here is a sample of dialogue between father and son (who is anything between 6-9 years old):

Father, "Ah yes, poor Fr. Kilgarraff was defrocked Willy, which means he is not allowed to be a priest anymore. That's why he is here with us at Kilneagh."

Son, " I like Johnny Lacey."

Father, " So do I, Willy we are Irish Willy, and so are they, but you see, it has'nt always been easy to be an Irishman in Ireland".

What can I say! Not much that the combined talents of such fine actors as Niall Tobin, Mick Lally, John Kavanagh, Tom Hickey and Rosaleen Linehan cannot save this film. Not even a nomination for yet another art award can save it.

By the way, Kilneagh, the house, was burned. Pity the negative of this film wasn't tossed in the flames.

Miriam Allen

"We can't understand the present without knowing something about the past. The past is always there in the present. That's something we all learn in time." Such is Fr. Kilgarraff's advice to the young Willie Quinton in director Pat O'Connor's controversial award-winning *"Fools of Fortune"* (see Inserts). It is sound advice, not just for the central character, but also for the audience of this film where past and present merge confusingly. We wonder if this advice has any effect on Willie when more wisdom from the same source, "It can be love and mercy that change things, Willie, not men with swords and guns," is later proven to have gone in one ear and out the other.



Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio of *Fools of Fortune*

Based on William Trevor's novel which won the Whitbread Award in 1983, the film attempts to trace the misfortunes of three generations of the Quinton family - Protestant factory/landowners from the Midlands (one wonders why O'Connor saw the need to move from the book's setting in Co. Cork). Unlike Trevor, who told the story from the perspectives of each of the main characters in turn, O'Connor relies primarily on flashbacks - to distant past, not-so-distant past, and on, and on. In the first few minutes of the film alone, the viewer is presented with scenes from all of the major time periods of Willie Quinton's life. Indeed, it is a very sharp viewer who

can figure out from the beginning that the haggard-looking man shouting "Marianne!" is, in fact, young Willie all grown up. Trying to tell who's who and what's what, remains a problem for the viewer throughout.

Willie's problems begin in the period directly after the Great War. Doyle, a soldier, returns to resume his position in Willie's father's factory, to the disgust of the other workers. Doyle reports a visit by an IRA fundraiser to the sympathetic Quintons to his friend Rudkin, a sergeant in the Black and Tans. Rudkin later leads an ambush on the IRA car. When Doyle's body is found in Quinton's gardens, a revenge visit made by Rudkin results in the burning of the family home and the murder of Quinton and Willie's sisters among others.

The story of tragedy and revenge resumes when Willie finishes school. He falls in love with Marianne, an English cousin visiting his mother (Fr. Kilgarraff's love and mercy?). But his mother's suicide starts the next cycle - Willie must avenge his family. Rudkin must answer for his crimes. The remainder of the film focusses on the effect Willie's revenge has on each of the characters involved - remaining?

Iain Glen in the role of the adult Willie is sometimes powerful, sometimes seemingly overwhelmed by the transitions his character must undergo. Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio (Marianne) improves from a weak beginning and seems credible by the end. Tom Hickey as the defrocked Fr. Kilgarraff is outstanding. His agonising over Willie's revenge is truly believable - his somewhat trite advice to the boy Willie of no help in trying to cope with the actions of the adult. John Kavanagh, Niamh Cusack, Niall Tobin, and Mick Lally, among others, all deserve honourable mention - why are actors of such calibre relegated to character parts?

I enjoyed the film the second time I watched it - during the first I was too busy trying to figure out what was happening. If the viewers in Barcelona only saw this film once, I can understand their annoyance. The telling question is - how many people will pay to see the same film twice?

Sheila

Parallax View

INFORMATION V. DISINFORMATION

It is no accident that in many economically advanced democratic nations politics is tending to become more of an elaborate exercise in staged image management and less of a meaningful conceptual dialogue. Current technology can offer politicians a second-by-second continuous read-out, in graphics, bar charts, and numbers, of responses by selected audiences to their speeches (the audience members hold electronic response mechanisms in their laps). The politicians' 'handlers' then can gauge exactly which words, facial expressions, body gestures, and language tone are correlated with positive and negative reactions and make the necessary adjustments. The carefully staged appearances of Oliver North before a congressional committee themselves caused huge swings in public opinion on US aid to the anti-Sandinista forces in Nicaragua.

The paradox of the so-called information society is this: on the great issues of society and politics, the role of knowledge in the composition of informed judgement very well may decline in proportion to the increase in available information.

The notions of information society and information technology, at least in their present form, show the impoverished state of technocratic thinking. Erected on flimsy conceptual foundations, composed of hastily recycled terminology, and motivated solely by the conviction that the show must go on, they offer us the old routine: a new technology demands a response from us that is appropriate to its essence and modes of action. Since little can be specified about the larger significance of the so-called information society, the actual message can be stated in stark simplicity: whatever is happening is inevitable, and therefore we should prepare for it (whatever it is).

Few will deny that the marriage of the computer and communications technologies will have a noticeable effect of occupational structures, industrial and office productivity, employment opportunities and everyday life. However, acknowledging this effect does not automatically allow us to assert that

we are in the throes of an 'information revolution' that will rival the Industrial Revolution's impact on the major qualitative changes in social relations will occur as a result of this effect. What is still in the balance is whether the stock of information will exceed that of misinformation, or vice versa.

This sceptical perspective is grounded in a more general outlook concerning the nature of major policy issues in society today. This outlook in turn is based on the conviction that it is not new technologies, or the 'new possibilities' for action embroiled therein, that do or will govern the definition of those issues or our responses to them. Rather, our political debate increasingly will be dominated by what may be called 'allocative' issues, and the solutions to them, such as they are, have zero-sum characteristics. Examples are income policy, national versus regional interests, and the relation between employment and social status: in such matters, individuals and groups who increase their advantages *vis-a-vis* others do so by decreasing the existing shares of others. Thus we are back to Francis Bacon's illusionary premise that technological progress would displace, once and for all, zero-sum solutions to social conflict.

The great task for public policy today is to assist us in finding reasonably civilised ways of dealing with allocative issues. If we can do so, we will discover that managing the social impact of new technologies is by comparison mere child's play. [From *Under Technology's Thumb*, by William Leiss. McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990.] *This article is reproduced by kind permission of Michael Traber, Editor of 'Media Development', World Christian Communications, 357 Kennington Lane, London SE11 5QY, England.*

ON THE OTHER HAND...

It came from the gut. One day I was passionately committed to Ideas, Principles, Ideologies. They had provided me with a good living for 25 years. Gradually I realised nobody knew what I was talking about. Worse, my ideas were unintelligible even to me.

There was a clue: me. What could I do with me. Could I build on the only

sure ground I knew: Myself? But I was opaque. Nobody could see through me. I must develop a more transparent image with which people could identify, feel comfortable with. So, like St. Paul, I opened myself like a book, revealed myself as an ordinary bourgeois, believing nothing except that which would save my soul i.e. bring me personal advantage, shying away from any evil ideas or bad company that would suggest I was a radical.

I returned to the faith of my people, ordinary decent Fianna Failers who realised the customer is always right. And who was the customer in my case? The Irish electorate. Were they terminally ineducable? Probably. What about manipulable? Of course! That was the answer. It didn't matter what they bought, as long as I could sell it to them. Thus began my reincarnation in which I singlehandedly brainwashed the rural idiots into buying several dail Deputies, an MEP, an Abbey play, and my great triumph, a female President. All on my own and without my products having even the customer appeal of coca cola. By the way, it's a little known fact that I personally brought down the Berlin wall, gave the coup de grace to Ceausescu, designed Raisa Gorbachev's clothes, gave U2 their born again christian image, showed the Pope precisely how to kiss my sorry... the earth. Thatcher learned how to fake sincerity from me, but she didn't keep up the lessons so I organised her removal. Now Michael Heseltine; he is somebody I could work with. Oh? Gone already, is he?

If this appears rather self-congratulatory it is because nobody will give me credit for my achievements. The list is endless. My talents as an image maker are now available to anybody. Are you listening, Albert?

Mind you, I'm up to my eyes at present, trying to salvage a pretty awful movie which by the time I am finished with it, will get a record number of Oscars. First we must do something about the title: 'Gone With The something or other'. Come on Hollywood! We can do better than that!

I must rush now because I have a supper appointment with the devil.

(From Karl Marx diary)

Bookshots

American cultural domination and obliteration of European values proceeds apace, and books like Douglas Brode's *FILMS OF THE EIGHTIES* (Citadel, £9.99 pb 288 pp), just out, is a case in point. Rather like the Russian government photographers who used to retouch out any unfavourable citizens, Brode's book leaves out the entire output of European cinema of the past decade, except for Britain. Worse, it manages to cover this year's Oscar winners and not mention *My Left Foot*.

One of the great scandals of our century, yet to be exposed, is how the American film distribution stranglehold forces small local cinema-owners around the world to show only American-produced films on a minimum-run basis, whether they are already hits or failures. In other words, a cigar-chewing yuppie in New York is telling his Wardour Street lackey what may and may not be shown next week at the Claddagh Palace Cinema - and never mind what the natives want - even though a hefty percentage of the box-office take is funnelled out of Ireland to shore up the biggest debtor nation on earth. Back in the 70s our own Restrictive Practices Commission looked into this and did nothing. (Were they paid off, or was the American monopoly - touched on by Liam O'Leary in the last issue of *Film West* - too hard to break?) It's to be hoped the EC will show a tougher line in 1992. Meanwhile, the scandal remains: the Irish cannot see the latest European films in their own cinemas, except in the country's few specialist venues and membership clubs, or during festivals. Not only that, but native film-makers cannot show in their own cinemas, without cinema-owners notifying Wardour Street and New York.

The European SCRIPT Fund was setup to counter-attack on the production side, unfortunately with purist, arty, provincial or obscure multi-funded works which are lucky to break even. Why? Because they have forgotten what every brothel madame knows: the punter wants to enjoy the experience. A few clever Europeans showed they knew this already in films like *La Cage Aux Folles* (so good, Americans couldn't



improve on it, but turned it into a hit stage musical), *Quest For Fire* (the first truly Euro-film; not a word is spoken), *Diva*, *My Beautiful Laundrette*, *The Bear*, *Cinema Paradiso* - box-office hits of the Eighties, none of which are covered in this book. Sheridan and Pearson must be added to the list because they have cottoned-on too, whilst many established Irish film-makers continue to turn out uninvolved, clumsy, pretentious, or plain boring films for a clique of nodding friends, thereby aiding the American domination of the market.

Looking back on the Reagan-Bush-Thatcher decade covered by this book, it is easy to see why "Hollywood" films have done so well, and why there seems to have been output of a very high quality compared to previous decades. There are many potential cinema classics in here: *The Elephant Man*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Reds*, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, *Born on the Fourth of July*, *E.T.*, *The Killing Fields*, *Witness*, *Salvador*, *The Fly* and *The Last Emperor* among them. Brode's intelligent short essays on over 100 illustrated films set them within the socio-political events of each year, and is free of the usual hype beloved of well-greased newspaper critics. However, judging by the 'endorsement' photos of him with Michael Douglas, Tom Cruise and Danny De Vito, Brode needs to be told that 70s-style safari jackets, wide open shirt lapels and action



man haircuts are passé; all he's missing is the gold medallion. If you want a review of Hollywood cinema of the last decade then this is as good as any. But Europe, cradle of genius? Forget it.

Niall N Bruce

THE MODERN HORROR FILM by John McCarthy is unconventional in that it lavishes the title "classic" on the modern horror movie. The author emphasises the need to look to the present and recognise that films don't have to be pre-1957 to be hailed as "classics". This book looks at fifty such films, from "*The Curse of Frankenstein*" (1957) to "*The Lair of the White Worm*" (1958).

McCarthy lays special emphasis on Hammer Films Production Ltd as having lifted formula horror out of the gothic setting and thrust it into contemporary urban landscapes, and consequently, as having launched a great cycle of screen horror and given birth to the modern horror film.

The book is informative and well-produced, containing a large amount and variety of photographs and film posters. Each of the fifty films chosen is looked at in depth and evaluated in terms of its contribution to the genre. The writer considers contracts, budgets, style, story line, and reasons for success or failure at the box office. The book would be of use to anyone with an interest in film and not just to horror fans, as it documents changing approaches within the industry and contains useful and sometimes untypical information about various directors, Fisher, Russell, Polanski, and Hitchcock, to mention a few. It also gives good insight into the essence and creation of horror in the hands of such artists.

This well-written text contains such titles as *Psycho*, *Rosemary's Baby*, *The Shining*, *Straw Dogs*, *Alien*, and *Repulsion*. If you have a problem with classifying any of the above titles into the realm of horror I suggest you read this book yourself. It is a Citadel Press book, published by Carol Publishing Group and sells at £10.00, and is available to members at the Film Resource Centre.

Nuala Broderick

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