

Lightning over Toronto

Elliott Lefko

"If I only had 10 days to live each year," said the little film buff, "I would choose the span between September 4 and 14. It's Festival of Festivals time, a unique opportunity that is worth skipping the rest of the year for." Toronto's Festival practically guarantees every film. If it's there, it's good. Festival Director Wayne Clarkson and the eight programmers painstakingly chose the handful of films they are to display.

Clarkson has trimmed half of the glamorous "Galas" and doubled the absorbing "Critic's Choice" section. Gone are the Valerie Perrines and David Steinbergs, in are the Lino Brockas and Mrinal Sens.

Brocka's Philippines-made *Jaguar* leads the "Critic's Choice" of films from nine countries. Programmer David Overby's selection also highlights Australia's *Palm Beach* and Sen's India-made *And Quiet Rolls The Day*.

New Canadian product is available in the premieres of Michael Grant's *Head On*, with Steve Lack and Sally Kellerman, and Robin "One Man" Spry's *Suzanne*, darkhorses that could reap some much-needed critical praise on the much-maligned

Canadian film industry. They could also make stars out of Steve Lack and *Suzanne's* Jennifer Dale.

York's John Katz, programmer of last year's "Documentary" section, which included *Best Boy*, has this year programmed a "Less Is More" section for Canadian and American films made for under \$600,000. The films will not suffer for their limited budgets, but instead capitalize on their underdog appeal.

Heartland, winner of the grand prize at this year's Berlin Film Festival, *Union City*, Deborah Harry's dramatic acting debut, and *The Return of the Secaucus 7*, about the reunion of some '60s freaks 10 years later, are featured.

Katz's "Reel to Reel" documentary section promises *Lightning Over Water*, Wim Wenders' film about/with Nicholas Ray. Together on Ray's deathbed they scheme to make a film about sailing to an exotic island for a cure to Ray's fatal disease.

At the forefront of Germany's energetic wave of young filmmakers, Wenders is about to reach your neighbourhood theatre with his first American-made feature *Hammett*, based

on the American detective novelist's life, and starring Frederic Forest. Ray has long been a hero in European film circles for his Hollywood works including *Rebel Without a Cause*.

look sharp with *Resurrection* and *Head On*. Pulitzer prize winner for best dramatist, Sam Shepard stars with Ellen Burstyn and 83-year-old screen newcomer Eva La Gallienne, in *Resurrection*, a drama about a faith healer. This is Shepard's second film following his debut in *Days of Heaven*. His plays (including *Seduced*, on Friday at Stong) have inspired both acting companies and audiences.

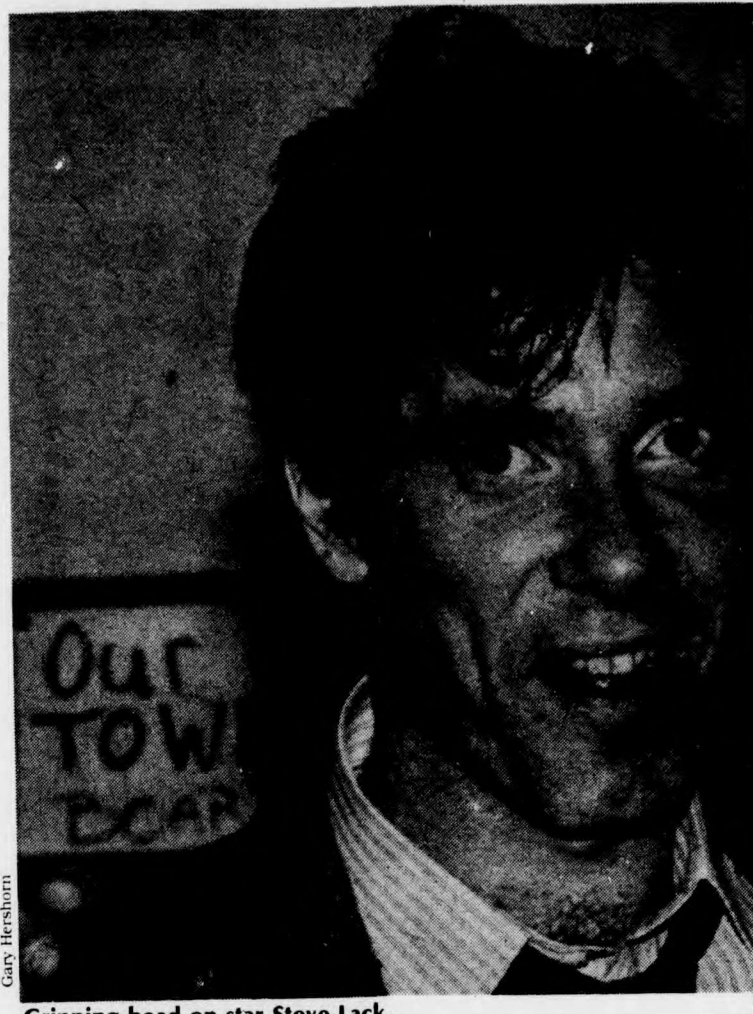
With *Head On*, Steve Lack realizes his first starring role. Using the low-budget *Montreal Main* and *Rubber Gun* for experience, Lack made this comedy-drama about the love affair of a psychologist and a university professor following a head-on car crash.

Following previous tributes to the cinemas of Germany, Sweden and Australia, comes this year's "Tribute to the Cinema of France". Isabelle Hupert (*Bronte Sisters*) and Gerard Depardieu (*Get Out Your Handkerchiefs*) lead in the romantic triangle *Lou Lou*. Romy Schneider is in two films—*La Banquiere* with Jean Luis Trintignant, and in *Deathwatch* with Harvey Keitel.

In the "Buried Treasures" program, chosen by *Variety's* Gene Moskowitz, is the 1933 *Gabriel over the White House*, worth going out of your way for according to York film prof Ken Dancyger. And legendary German directors Douglas Sirk and Max Ophuls along with Ben Gazzara and John Garfield are stars of this corny series.

"Israeli Cinema" reels nightly at 7:30 at Harbourfront. Operating within tiny budgets the youthful cinema makes sensitive films using the livewire tension of Israel as a backdrop. Also at Harbourfront is "Kid-stuff", live and animated film. This Sunday at 1 p.m. is the touted *Take me up to the Ballgame*.

Missing in Action: Where are Gille Carle's *Fantastica* and Dennis Hopper's *Out of the Blue*. Both 1980 Canadian features were booed at Cannes and therefore scared Festival people from booking them. Yet Laure and Furey are world-class entertainers, and Hopper earned acclaim in recent pictures. Toronto audiences should have a chance to judge these films for themselves.



Grimacing head on star Steve Lack.

York films score

Norman Bates

The 1980 Ontario Film Awards Dinner was held recently at the CNE, with York students claiming the Norman Jewison Award for Best Picture, and the Carlsberg Festival Award for Best Narrative.

Robin Campbell's *Performances*, and Dennis Connolly and George Czernicki's *The Man From Zodiac*, split 2000 film dollars, for their top prize. Norman "I've been listening to Foster Hewitt since I was 8" Jewison, personally arrived late to present the awards.

Richard Zywockiewicz collected 500 big ones for his *The Silent Laugh*. Following the roast beef dinner, the Agatha Christie-inspired director spoke to *Excalibur* on the significance of the awards:

"The evening's comments reflect a renewed nationalism in artistic circles. Many in attendance, including Jewison, spoke clearly of a Canadian identity, in this country's arts."

There were strong hopes for Canada's place in the international arts."

demented yak



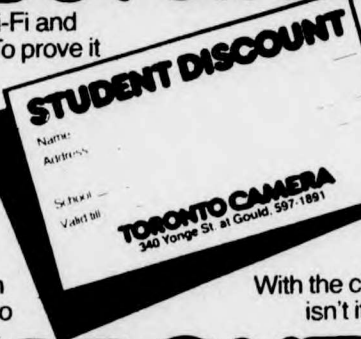
Got your Ph.D.'s ready? Just identify the guy in the pic above and get your entry to *Excalibur*, Yak, Central Square 111. Of correct entries received, two will win a trip for two to *The Great Santini*, courtesy of Famous Players. *Excalibur* staff and their trained iguanas not eligible for this dream draw. S.R.



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