



York film grads reap Awards and Rewards

By PAULETTE PEIROL

While some York film majors are still busy completing their final productions, others are celebrating their recent CBC Telefest '86 awards, and still others wait in anticipation of this Saturday's (May 31) Gala Film Screening and Awards Night, sponsored by The Student Entry Project.

According to David Adkin, a York film graduate and Co-ordinator of The Class of '86 Student Film Showcase (by The Student Entry Project), "this has been a late year for student film work...there are still some 4th year productions needing to be finished." York's Film and Video department usually holds their annual public film screening by the end of March. This year, however, the event has been postponed until June 14 or 21, pending completion of student films.

TELEFEST '86

On May 16, CBC announced the winners of their Telefest '86 contest, an annual student competition which includes categories in film, video, and radio broadcasting. Three York students were on the list of first-prize winners: Tracy Kennedy, for her short video documentary *Teenage Things*, about teenage birth control and sexuality; Tambre Hemstreet, for *Metamorphosis*, and Lenka Holubec, for her long film documentary *The Man Who Fell From The Apple Tree*. Holubec's film, which has also been entered in The Class of '86 Student Film Showcase, was described by Telefest '86 judges as "sensitively capturing the love the artist has for his (sic) Shelley in a poignant moment

and the wonderful feelings throughout this perfect scene."

York also won two second place prizes and two honorable mentions. Mark Forler's 20 minute black comedy *Passion and Gasoline*, and New Delhi/York University exchange students Ali Kazini and Premika Ratnam's *Sexual Assault: Can Rapists Be Cured?* were each second prize recipients.

Renee Duncan and John Detwiler won an honorable mention for their film *Music Gallery*, as did Bernadette Shanahan for her short television documentary *Lovers Ghost*. CBC will broadcast the winners of the Telefest '86 competition in a special programme this fall.

THE CLASS OF '86 STUDENT FILM SHOWCASE

This Saturday May 31 marks the first annual Class of '86 Student Film Showcase, organized by The Student Entry Project, an independent consortium of filmmakers and film teachers. York film professor Seth Feldman was a founding member of the organization, and is now its Vice-Chairman. Professor Ken Dancyger, Chairman of York's Film and Video Department, is one of the Student Entry Project's Film School Representatives.

Taking place at the Ontario Science Centre, the gala awards ceremony, film screening, and subsequent reception are open to the public and free. This is an opportunity for both the public and private film sectors to view graduating film students' work from across the province. The ultimate purpose of the showcase is in accordance with The Student Entry Project's mandate:

"to help graduating film students make the transition from film training to career work within the professional Canadian film community."

Showcase Co-ordinator David Adkin describes the event as "a meat market forum to make contacts." He notes that the Ontario film schools, especially universities, have not been able to set up adequate job placement programmes for their graduating students. The Student Entry Project found that "students didn't have contacts or marketing and fundraising knowledge when they graduated," Adkin said. Attending the gala awards ceremony will be a broad spectrum of members from the Canadian film community as sponsors, jurors, and invited guests.

Ten film programmes from universities and colleges in Ontario have entered the competition. Each institution is allowed to submit up to four entries for adjudication, totalling over 30 films in this year's showcase. The films will be judged categorically, as either dramatic, documentary, experimental, or animated. Jurors were chosen from professionals in the Canadian film industry, and include Atkinson film professor Robin Wood, an independent film critic and editor of *cineACTION!*

The winning entry in each category will be screened at the gala awards ceremony. Awards consist of over \$7000 worth of prizes, including film laboratory services and apprenticeships.

York's Film and Video department has entered four films in this competition; three dramas and one documentary, all by senior students. The dramatic films consist of David Adkin's short comedy *The Salesman*, Mark Forler's *Passion and Gasoline*, and Luc Chalifour's *The Inkwell*. Lenka Holubec's *The Man Who Fell From An Apple Tree*, a first prize winning film at Telefest '86, has been entered in the documentary category.

Excalibur will publish the Student Film Showcase winners in next month's issue. So stay tuned. Or better yet, come and see for yourself on Saturday, May 31, 7:30 p.m., at the Ontario Science Centre. Space is limited however, so call ahead for guaranteed seating: 973-3012 or 973-3014.

THE ACADEMY CINEMA

Never heard of it? Considering that it hasn't opened yet, that's not surprising. But wait; it's official. York graduates Jasna Stefanovic and Michael Hannan have announced that on June 27, The

Academy Cinema will open its renovated doors to the public with *Veronica Voss* and *A Place in the Sun*, a 1950s Hollywood Classic.

Why another revue cinema? "We noticed that there weren't enough good classic films being shown in Toronto," said Stefanovic, "the Bloor (Cinema) is getting too mainstream, and there's room for a lot more."

Stefanovic and Hannan have planned for special film series to be shown, and a top priority of theirs is to screen good short films (under ten minutes) made by students and amateurs. The only restriction on short films is that they must be shot on 16 millimetre single system film, and would be screened ahead of time.

A few of the weekly series already scheduled are Marlon Brando films (on Monday and Tuesday nights) and a Fassbinder retrospective (Friday and Saturday nights). All films will be screened at 7 p.m. one evening, then at 9 p.m. the following evening.

A feature of the Academy Theatre will be "Angst Sundays", which Hannan jokingly described as "for people who doubt God...a substitute for mass." The films will center on the theme of existential alienation: Billy Wilder's classic *Lost Weekend* (which won every major academy award in 1945), Rainer Fassbinder's *A Year of 13 Moons*, Ingmar Berg-

man's *Shame*, and Roman Polanski's *The Tenant* are all on the upcoming schedule.

Stefanovic and Hannan's original motive for opening the cinema was to create steady work for themselves while still being able to pursue their individual careers in art directing and film editing respectively. "Film production is always very irregular," Hannan stressed, "and in order not to be a waiter or a taxi driver, you need something like this that still allows you to do other work on the side."

"It's important to have a partner," Hannan said, "in order not to get too discouraged. It's very easy to get discouraged; in fact, it happens every day. People in the film business don't care if you have a university degree, so you have to get used to their attitude from all sides (of the industry)."

Yet Hannan and Stefanovic are optimistic about the theatre, and they themselves are looking forward to seeing their favorite classic films again. The Academy Cinema is steps away from the Christie subway station, at 667 Bloor St. West (adjacent to the Metro Theatre). Tickets will be \$3 per film.

For those interested in submitting short films for possible future screening, contact Jasna Stefanovic or Michael Hannan at Flux Films: 922-3829 or 588-3372.



No, this is not quite Hollywood. But close...Before you proudly stands the Space Age Lodge, in Gila Bend, Arizona. Now then, are you sure you'd rather be in summer school?

Boo bricks breed improv lafs

By GREG GAUDET

"Laugh or you get your money back." That's the guarantee offered to customers of Theatresports, the competitive improvisational comedy at Harbourfront on Wednesday nights. And judging from the Canadian Theatresports National Tournament held in Toronto April 23-26, it's highly unlikely any customer has been able to collect a refund.

Theatresports is a dynamic mix of comedy, audience participation and competition. Using suggestions called to them by members of the audience, two teams take turns competing for points and stage time by improvising the funniest skits. A panel of three judges rates the performance on a scale of zero to five. At the end of several skits, the team with the most points is declared winner.

Sponsored by Molson's and a variety of other companies, the Theatresports National Championships pitted four-member teams from Calgary, Vancouver and Toronto against each other in an improvisational fight for the funniest material. For the first three days the teams—with names like "Creeping Venom'd Living Thing" (Calgary) and "Dr. Jeckyl and Nauga Hyde"

(Toronto)—went through elimination rounds.

On the last day the consolation final and finals were held. In the consolation, the Vancouver "All Stars" competed against Toronto's "Dr. Jeckyl." After a slow start both teams quickly warmed up. With creative use of audience members and props, Vancouver offered up the funniest material of the evening as they went on to win the consolation championship. Not only were Vancouver team members good comedians, they were excellent actors.

Toronto's second team "Trouble Boys" went up against Calgary for the championship. Once again, both teams got off to a slow start. Neither recovered, however, and the material was never as funny as in the earlier competition. Toronto prevailed nonetheless and was awarded "Art the Pig", the championship trophy.

Created 10 years ago by Calgary native Keith Johnstone, Theatresports has grown in popularity for both comedians and audiences. This is not surprising, considering that some of the best comedic gems can only occur in an improv situation. The competitive nature adds considerably to the enjoyment value.

Audiences are not only encouraged to call out suggestions to the teams, they are also provided with

small foam rubber bricks (boo bricks) with which to pelt the judges when an unfair score has been awarded.

Unfortunately, the best element of Theatresports—improv based on audience suggestion—can also be its worst. While some suggestions worked well, even when they seemed impossible, others had no chance of succeeding. Imagine trying to spontaneously do something funny with the sentence "Life would be better without more fish."

Part of the enjoyment, though, is in watching the incredibly quick comedians' minds work to present their audience with something that is not only funny, but makes sense. And even a skit that gets off to a slow start often needs only one or two exceptional lines to be successful.

Even on the rare occasion that a skit fails, the laughs provided during the rest of the competition make up for it. Theatresports is sure to make its audiences laugh at least once during the performance—making their money back guarantee virtually risk-free.

Theatresports can be seen at Harbourfront every Wednesday night at 7:45 pm; four bucks for a bucket of larfs.

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