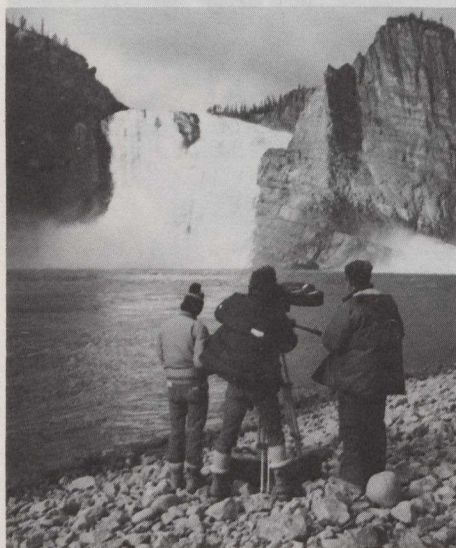


design the new projector, incorporating the unique Rolling Loop. With no previous experience in film technology, and with the Osaka deadline looming, he set out to build a projector that would have to out-perform any other ever built.

A totally new camera was needed too, so that the film crew could start shooting. Shaw and Ferguson chose a Norwegian designer of specialized film equipment, Jan Jacobsen. He constructed the first IMAX camera in a record-breaking three-and-a-half months.

Donald Brittain, one of Canada's most prominent documentary film directors, agreed to write and direct the Expo '70 film, with Roman Kroitor and Kiichi Ichikawa as co-producers.



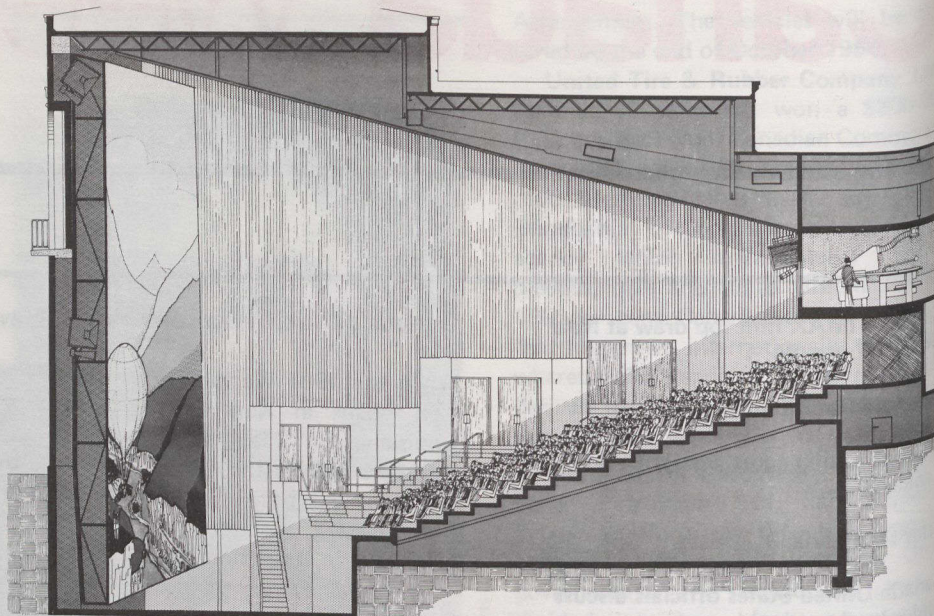
IMAX camera crew shooting segment of new 15-minute film *River Journey*.

Robert Kerr took on the difficult task of finding the financing. When he and Ferguson canvassed the financial community, they found not a single investor willing to take a chance on the new idea. Finally Kerr succeeded in obtaining some support from the Canadian government's Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

Together, the team achieved the almost-impossible: they designed, built, and delivered the IMAX projector, on budget and on time, for the Osaka premiere.

The IMAX system was an instant success. Thirty thousand people a day boarded the huge revolving turntable in the Fuji Pavilion to watch *Tiger Child*.

The Osaka success was repeated a year later when Ontario Place's Cinesphere, the first North American IMAX theatre, opened in Toronto with Ferguson's spectacular *North of Superior*, which became



An IMAX theatre. Since the IMAX film frame is ten times the size of a 35-millimetre movie frame, the IMAX screen can also be ten times the size of a conventional screen.

perhaps the most widely-seen Canadian film. During the following years, Ferguson and Kroitor produced several films, exploring IMAX's potential and refining their technique.

At the same time, they encouraged other filmmakers, including Academy Award winners Christopher Chapman and Francis Thompson, to use the system. In 1973, a further innovation was realized: dome-screen OMNIMAX

premiered in San Diego's Reuben H. Fleet Space Theater, and *Newsweek* marvelled that it was "the ultimate trip". The public was quick to agree.

Today, IMAX Systems Corporation continues to design and build cameras and projectors, and licenses their use world wide. It designs theatres, produces and distributes films, and is engaged in an ongoing research and development program.

Canadian film captures robot arm's rescue feat

The space shuttle's dramatic rescue of a stranded satellite using its Canadian robot arm will soon appear on film.

IMAX Systems, a Toronto company that makes larger-than-life films for Ontario Place and other wide-screen theatres, sent a special 70-millimetre camera into orbit with the astronauts. And with the dramatic rescue of the crippled *Solar Max* satellite, IMAX got even better footage than it bargained for.

"They didn't film the actual moment when the robot arm grappled onto the satellite, but we've got some good shots of *Solar Max* being berthed (in the shuttle's cargo bay)," said IMAX president Graeme Ferguson. "When the astronauts go EVA (outside the shuttle) to repair it, we'll get some really sensational stuff."

Ferguson was at Mission Control in Houston, Texas, to direct the astronauts as they used a specially-adapted IMAX camera to film the deployment of an experimental satellite by the robot arm, the *Solar Max* rescue and other experiments.

The modified movie camera uses a special 70-millimetre film whose individual frames are stretched to three times their normal length to produce the wide-screen effect. Film from this and the next two shuttle flights will result in a 27-minute production called *The Dream Is Alive*, set for distribution next year.

While few Canadian theatres can handle the hi-tech film, a theatre with a wide screen is tentatively planned as part of the new National Museum of Man in Ottawa. The \$3.5-million project — the second space shuttle film produced by the company — was sponsored by the Smithsonian Institute and Lockheed Corp.

Ferguson said the special camera will also be sent aloft on the June space shuttle flight. It was originally scheduled to film the launch of a Canadian *Anik* satellite on that mission, but that launch has been delayed.