

Short Films offer a variety of visual and narrative styles

by Pedram Fouladian

The first international festival of short films is an interesting selection of nine films from USA, Great Britain, Canada and New Zealand. The program also includes four films by student filmmakers.

Although the selection ranges from art cinema to commercial filmmaking, it leaves one single problem: no films from non-English speaking nations are included (probably resulting from the high cost for subtitling.).

The most striking aspect of the films at this festival is that the filmmakers have come to terms with their cinematic tools, realizing that short films and feature films are two different mediums (even the student films at this festival seem to reflect this point).

New Zealand's first entry, *The Lounge Bar* (Don McGlahan, Harry Sinclair), focuses on three people in a waterfront bar who have a feeling that they recognize each other. *The Lounge Bar* has the most interesting narrative form, connecting the past and present to advance the plot towards the climax.

The USC (University of Southern California) production *Stealing Altitude* (Roger Teich, John Starr) is a



Rushes, a quirky little New Zealand comedy about obsession, presents people in search of unique

highs reaching absurd states. Winner of Best Short - Chicago International Film Festival

FILM

The First Annual International Festival of Short Films by various filmmakers Festival Cinemas until Oct. 12 (Info: 631-4500)

documentary about a base jumper in Los Angeles. (A base jumper is a person who parachutes down from highrises, towers, etc.) Shot in grainy

black-and-white, the filmmakers approach their subject without involving the element of heroism in their

film.

One of the most interesting films in this series is Canada's sole entry,

It's a bird, it's a plane, it's crass commercialism

by Sean A. Veira

"What the matter, Bunky? All that merchandising got you in its grip? Those warm fuzzy feelings you used to associate with you comic books been corrupted by crass commercialism? Are the heroes you once held so dear now poisoned by over-heated hype? The maybe you need to take King Hell cure..." — introduction to *Bratpack Collected Volume*.

Writer and artist Rick Veitch, creator of *Bratpack* and *The One*, has begun his second cycle of the revisionist *King Hell Heroica* with *The Maximortal*.

Like the first cycle of the *King Hell Heroica*, *The Bratpack*, *The Maximortal* examines an old and tried concept of superhero comic book from a different perspective than the mainstream. Where *Bratpack* exam-

COMICS

The Maximortal written and illustrated by Rick Veitch King Hell Press in association with Tundra Publishing Limited

ined the nature of kid sidekicks, *The Maximortal* examines the impact of a truly powerful being upon the world and it changes with the present of True-Man, *The Maximortal*.

You quickly realize that True-Man, is both an intelligent parody and cynical critique of Superman. To Rick Veitch, Superman is the archetype superhero with godlike powers and unbending sense of right, and one who has to be copied several times over the years. Such archetype characters, Veitch believes, represent the American Dream, but the Dream remains unfulfilled as their tales have no ends; they are forever frozen by commercial potential. Veitch hopes to explore the Dream to its creative potential by having the climax, the ending mainstream comic books lack.

The first issue of *The Maximortal* is available now in comic book specialty stores. It's a chance to see how

Metamorphosis (made in 1975 by Barry Greenwald). It is a simple story of an office clerk who sets up a race for himself in the elevator that he takes every morning. Greenwald uses sound and editing as the main elements for reaching his goal.

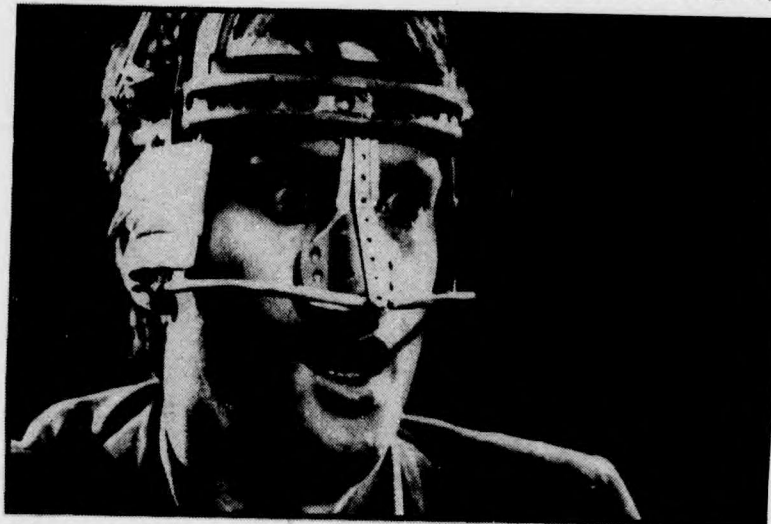
Dean Parisot's *Tom Goes to The Bar* is another absurd — but slightly more spectacular — film in this year's festival. Beautifully shot by Yuri Neyman (*D.O.A.*, *Liquid Sky*), *Tom Goes to the Bar* concentrates on a young pollster who is hanging upside-down from the ceiling of his favorite bar while talking about some important things in life. This bar is a place where people meet, talk and play darts, but not necessarily in an ordinary manner.

Fear of revealing too much about these short films makes it difficult for me to get into details about every single one of them. But one thing is certain: these short films offer a wide variety of visual and narrative styles. They also show the limitations and capabilities of short films.

the comic book can become serious forms of literature. *Bratpack Collected Volume* contains the five issues of *Bratpack*, along with 14 new pages and an introduction by revolutionary comics writer Neil Gaiman (*The Sandman*).



Maximortal's True-man is a clever parody of the Superman series



The Lounge Bar plays with time and three characters in a waterfront bar who have a feeling they've met before.

cue W S ctte

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, October 1st
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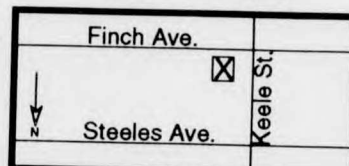
Nat Taylor Cinema
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AGENDA

Report from the Bargaining Team
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