

Vancouver girl stars in new "Oz" film

Fairuza Balk from Vancouver, British Columbia, a poised, freckle-faced nine-year-old, has landed the leading role — over thousands of other hopefuls across North America — of Dorothy in Walt Disney's feature film *Return to Oz*.



Canapress

Vancouver's Fairuza Balk captures top role.

Fairuza was among the final 12 selected from 269 girls between nine and 13 who auditioned for the part after an extensive search throughout the United States and Canada. She was then invited to fly to Los Angeles in November to audition for the role made famous by an older and taller Judy Garland.

Filming of the new *Oz* film begins shortly in England and should take four-and-a-half months. The movie will be a compilation and reinterpretation of Frank Baum's *Oz* books written after *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, which was published in 1900. It was the book that the 1925 silent movie and the 1939 MGM classic film were based upon.

Talking Dirty, a comedy by Vancouver, British Columbia writer Sherman Snukal, captured the \$5 000 Floyd S. Chalmers Award for the best Canadian Play performed in Toronto in 1983. Jim Betts of Toronto took first prize of \$1 500 for his play *Mystery of the Oak Island Treasure* in the best Children's Play category.

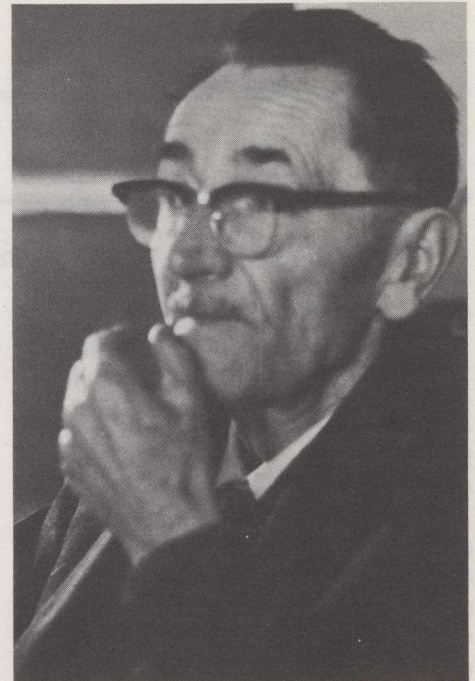
Comic strip creators featured in NFB documentary

Two new National Film Board (NFB) profiles featuring comic strip cartoonist Lynn Johnston and Ukrainian artist Jacob Maydanyk were shown recently on the CBC-TV network.

In *See You in the Funny Papers*, 36-year-old Lynn Johnston, creator of one of North America's favourite comic strips, *For Better or for Worse*, talks candidly about the difficulties of juggling fame and fortune with her role as wife and mother. Her syndicated comic strip, based on the daily activities of her own family, is carried in 500 newspapers in ten countries.

Full of Johnston's down-to-earth wit and charm, the film cuts back and forth from her hectic home life in Lynn Lake, Manitoba to her life as a public figure coping with inquisitive TV talk show hosts and crowded lecture halls. The film is directed by NFB filmmaker Grant Munro.

Laughter in my Soul, the second film profile, looks at 90-year-old Jacob Maydanyk, one of the first wave of Ukrainian immigrants who settled in the Canadian West in the early part of this century. Painter, satirist, publisher and teacher, Jacob Maydanyk created a satirical cartoon character named Shteeff Tabachniuk. Shteeff, who was Archie Bunker and Laurel and Hardy rolled into one, quickly



Ukrainian artist Jacob Maydanyk.

became a Ukrainian folk hero. The film also chronicles the experiences of the first Ukrainian settlers as they adjusted to a new culture. *Laughter in my Soul* is narrated by John Colicas and directed by Halya Kuchmij.



Cartoonist Lynn Johnston (centre) working with National Film Board director Grant Munro (left) and film editor Judith Merritt (right).

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