

A VANCOUVER FILM FREAK

they... it because they've applied their... really really researched the whole trip,

< that's a point that all of us who have ever... ed on up--... g to coming to Edmonton is to show that--try... f it. Now it's not a popular discussion, okay... ular... use a lot of people don't want to bother... n that... ing, which will be *Lovemaking*, has 20... g on... creen, okay? Now, a lot more people... cont... ecause it's closer to home for a lot of... ously studying that film, okay? Uh, a lot of... e wit... idea that they're going to be seeing some... the... is very very beautifully executed and it... You... get into the art part of cinema--makes... comy.

uld have paid

t have... you--I wouldn't--It would have been a... a se... room or sat in a theatre and talk to

e prob... that the censor did not allow me to give it... or na... how messed up the roles are here. So... 't have... to pay for a lecture on underground... this... ment, okay, they made this arrangement... this... ment, what happened--they would not... ture of... they would not allow me to--they would... to be... ed for educational material.

rms or... ative naivety and ignorance about films... done... ecause like, you know, you've sort of... of al... out what was happening there when I was... ince... don't know, maybe my bias was going... ntent...

lug th... maybe we're not talking about the same... who... eferred to as S is it?

fin's... ere thought was really fantastically--

know... some of the other ones there. Like that... jht th... know what I thought when I saw that I... know... a film made in 1950 by a bunch of--...).

nts fr... C. and they just chucked it in because... ts dow... the National Film Board and then that A

ue, I... ot it from the National Film--... -like, I... you--... the film.

too--that's just too tuna fish sandwich for me, you know.

Todoruk: Well what do you want?

D.V.: I don't know, just something that does it to me in a different way--

Todoruk: Do you want Andy Warhol for two hours?

(at this point we were all kicked out of the SUB Theatre lobby because people were cleaning up. Thus endeth the confrontation.)

Part II: Ihor Todoruk at the Gateway

Gateway: When you decided to bring these films in, why did you choose those particular films?

Todoruk: Well as I said before, the Cat Stevens one was submitted to us because it is the first--it's one of the songs that is to be included on a forth-coming video-cassette, and it's something that's being experimented with, I think, in Hollywood and in England, in London, England. And because it's a relatively very new media form--the cassette, the video-cassette--they're approaching it that way.

Now, there's obviously comments about it--that's why we have it--they want a comment they want to know whether that's the direction to take with video-cassette. In the next 20 years you'll have video monitors, and some universities have this already, ranging from total pornography or so-called "porno" to this type of very smooth, very British, very sort of Anglo-Saxon approach to the whole area. In other words, a very safe thing. It's almost like it's the video version of the Moody Blues.

In Los Angeles at USLA they have video monitors now there and they have something called "radical software". Now radical software consists of approximately 12 1/2 hours of video programming, television programming and what they program is not Cat Stevens. What they program is the total reverse of that, that kind of thing. What they do is they show things like couples balling, they show, you know, quite a lot of--they're trying to show man's nakedness, in other words. I agree that this should be done because we've been so fettered and you know what that's like in Canada or in B.C. or Alberta. Your head has been so fettered and my head has been so--I'm originally from Alberta--that you get a result where there are certain taboos placed on your life's experience and it's unfair to you as a person growing up. And if you're exposed to a lot of possibilities, I believe you become a more tolerant individual, less prone to be subjective in your outlook and you'll certainly be more fluent in the language of social activity, you know, the language of social fluency. And that's another area that a lot of us lack.

Gateway: And what about *Madeliene*?

Todoruk: Okay, *Madeliene* was submitted to us by the filmmaker herself. *Madeliene* is the first--the film that the audience saw here is the pilot to the feature film which she has just completed and which is showing, I think, in various places and for that pilot film she received a great sum of money from the Canadian Film Development Corporation.

We included that film simply because it is the first film that has received--she is the first Canadian filmmaker ever to receive a bundle of money from the film development corporation. And I think it's important to at least catalogue that fact.

A lot of people don't agree with the way we program but we program with that in mind and we have a reason for including almost every film.

city and it was the closest thing, like, I think it was a cinematic success. Like it was a very closely related film to Zebretski Point, Antonini's *Zabretski Point*. Now, Antonini failed, you know--the guy just couldn't shoot, right? The guy just couldn't shoot his victims down so Antonini copped out.

Jim Morrison--there was just a slight mention--he played the hitchhiker in the desert and he killed the guy that he copped the car from. And then he tried destroying the car. And the whole thing is a scenario of him and he's trying to kill himself, which he's always been trying to do. Like he's always tried to kill himself, he's always tried to crucify himself, Morrison has always been into this Death/Life trip. And finally his body gave up at 27 years old. He coughed up blood and--he's a slight man, a very small man.

personal tribute

We became friends through this association that developed in the last 2 1/2 years or so. So to me it's a personal tribute--it's a tribute to him and this is the only example that I--one of the very few examples of him in cinema. I think it's not a documentary, it's sort of him attempting to convey some sort of message.

The song when it was released when the film was released--what they tried to do wasn't as dated as I think *Easy Rider* is going to become, do you know what I mean?

Gateway: Was the song made from the film or was the film made from the song or were they made together?

Todoruk: I think they were made together. In *Easy Rider*, no, not in *Easy Rider*, in *Highway* he doesn't have any of the Doors' songs, he has a flute playing throughout. Jim Morrison at 27 or 26 or 25 at that time was probably one of the most cynical--he approached our whole generation very cynically because, you know, while he loved all of us for breaking out, I think he pretty well finalized in his own head that we were going to get bought out. That's what I tried to show with the A & M thing--showing how they're going to buy us. And then right after the A & M super-slick Hollywood thing, there was another film included which is *Moon* by Bartlett and that is probably one of the finest--one of the most important films to come out of our generation. And it was totally funded--the money was totally his; he didn't get his money from A & M Records as the other guy did.

You see if I can show these two possibilities, if I can show these two reactions in our own generation then I think that I will have succeeded. And after all, you know, that's what I'm trying to do is create a discussion.

Another route might be Dennis Hopper and Peter Fonda. Peter Fonda is, with *Easy Rider* saying well that was his. Dennis Hopper is saying, no that wasn't--I directed it. And so Fonda went on to direct *The Hired Hand* and produce *The Hired Hand* and Hopper produced *The American Dream*, which is the whole thing I'm selling, and you'll find a difference between Hopper and Fonda.

Gateway: So there was a definite plan to the program.

Todoruk: Oh yeah. The plan to the program was that. Now since being here I've spent a considerable amount of time with the censor and I've been--I spent well over five hours with the censor board and I've been discussing film with them and trying to find out where their heads are at and how we can create a new category for a new kind of film which includes a lot of free thinking. It includes a great amount of freedom and--you know, in the areas of erotica, in the areas of political expression and so on.

Now these are the films that are not currently allowed in for example, *Sympathy for the Devil* which is Jean Luc Godard's film of a few years back, it was not allowed into this province for blasphemy, for political blasphemy, okay? Now, what is political blasphemy?

And this is what our festival has been doing in Vancouver is creating a discussion, trying to promote a discussion in a new, totally new, art form which not too many people know about yet, that understand and know about its full implications.

censor board

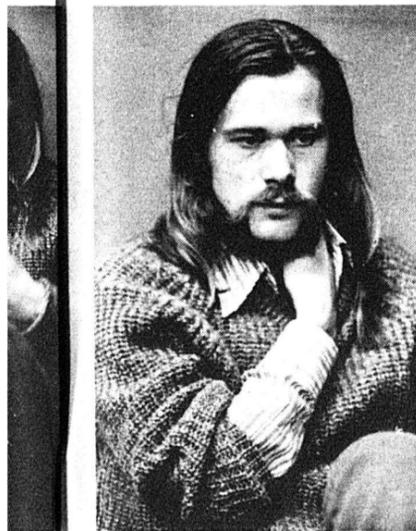
Gateway: You spent about five hours at the censor board. What impressions did you get while you were with them, like how did they impress you, what do you think is the way the censorship board is functioning in Alberta right now?

Todoruk: I think they don't know what direction they're going because they're being assaulted from every side. In other words, the distributors are demanding more freedom and politically, you know, I think the audience right here demands a bit more sophistication, a bit more, you know, if you want, charitable understanding of where we're all at. You cannot continue showing a fast-paced, very communication-minded world and then expect the province or the people in the province to sort of sit back 20 years and say well we're not going to be there.

See, the point is the North American frame of mind has always really really suspected anybody who, you know, promotes smut or anybody that promotes porno. Anybody that promotes erotica gets damned. Anybody that promotes war is glorified to no end; anybody that promotes bloodshed is certainly going to get a fantastic amount of money; anybody that promotes that area is going to make it. The guy that promotes a different kind of life style, that promotes understanding between bodies, a communication with folks, with the breast, with the cock, with the--you know, just the whole thing of making love and making it physically and translating it into art is not going to be rewarded. Anything that advocates drugs is not going to be rewarded.

Gateway: Do you think that this type of show that you just had here is going to change that, is going to improve the situation?

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myself... that's--and seeing that A & M I thought... the... they show in Los Angeles between the six... now... Ralph William's... ads for his used cars? I... ust cou... believe it... ing, "Yes... ight.

is. But... what I'm trying to turn you on to... ess I... there with just completely the wrong--... lot of... vent in there, like a lot of people--when... nd film... al in Vancouver, a lot of people went in... hey did... ow what underground movies were... k I'm... beyond that, you know... lot of... uring students here aren't... ou, you... if I--I--just the part where he coughed... s on these... flowers. I can't handle that. That's just

S by Kieth Rodin is a Vancouver film again, and he's a man who works in a tiny little attic garrette and he produces these very very sort of, I think very delicate films. And that's the result that you get from one person doing that.

Gateway: And *Unknown Soldier*?

Todoruk: *Unknown Soldier* was given to me personally by Jim Morrison about six months before he died and he gave it to me as an expression of I think good will between artists or whatever. We produced a Jim Morrison film festival in the city of Vancouver.

Gateway: So he's done other films.

Todoruk: Jim Morrison originally graduated with a Masters degree from UCLA in cinematography and he made a feature film called *Highway* which we screened, we world premiered that in the city and we did that at 12 midnight and we made 2,000 or there were about 2,000 people that walked from the Queen Elizabeth Theatre to the Orpheum Theatre in the