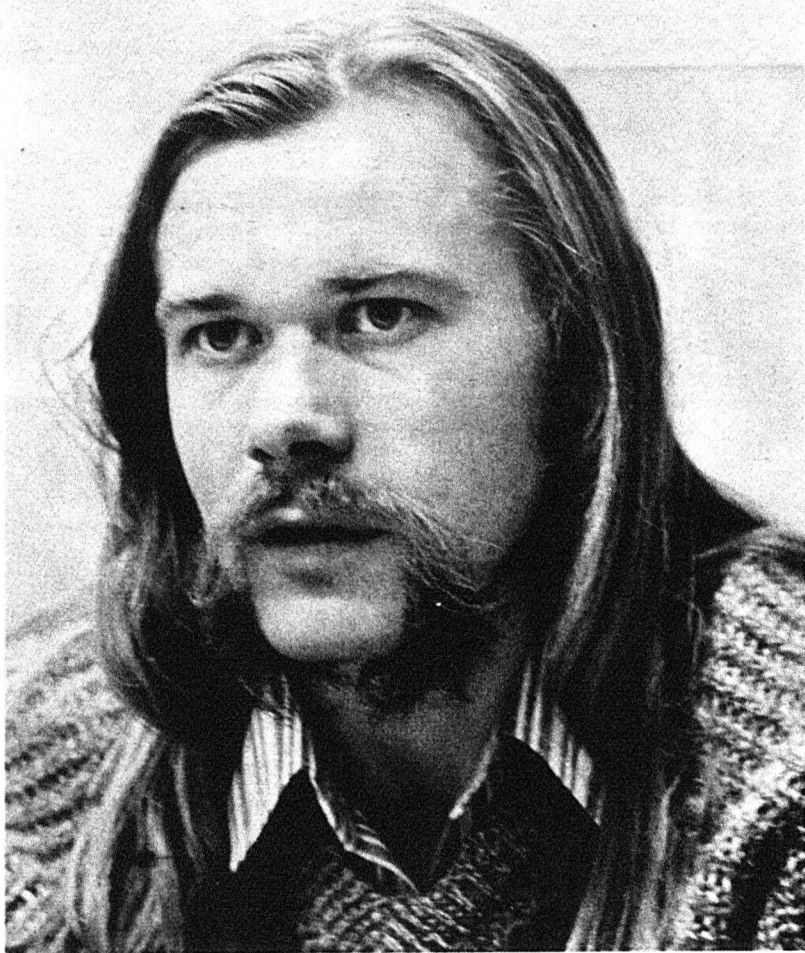


Radical cinema . . .

THE TRIALS OF



A number of people who attended the radical cinema presentation that Ihor Todoruk and his friends brought in from Vancouver October 14 and 15 left the show feeling that they had been ripped-off because of the type and content of the films shown. It is possible that this feeling arose from being unaware, first of what Mr. Todoruk was trying to do and second, of what is going on in radical cinema in general today.

In the interests of remedying this situation, the Gateway Arts Section hereby presents two interviews with Mr. Todoruk. The first is actually a transcript of part of a conversation that transpired between Mr. Todoruk and a dissatisfied viewer (hereafter identified as D.V.) who demanded his money back at the second Friday showing. It is included in the hopes that it will illustrate what Mr. Todoruk was trying to do with the show he organized.

The second is a proper newspaper interview that was recorded in the hallowed halls of the Gateway later that same Friday afternoon.

photos by Don Stanton

Part I: Ihor Todoruk Meets the Dissatisfied Viewer

Todoruk: I wanted to show a general program first of all to give some kind of a definition of what I think is radical cinema. That same movie, the A & M Movie (*Listen to Your World* -- ed.), was submitted to us at the underground film festival in Vancouver and was screened along with 30 other films. We can't make a judgement until the time that we get an audience reaction or the time that we ourselves decide on the reaction. Do you understand what I'm saying? That film, although it's a commercial, slick hollywood film, which is what I said it was, utilized the very same techniques and the way this guy used the techniques were for two totally different reasons. One was commercial--he used his application commercially--and the other used his application as a true explorer would, as an explorer of that line of cinema.

So now, the situation that we presented is showing you how the next phase of very slick programming will be made. Now, I should have given a speech and I should have told people or suggested that this is the coming possibility--this is what you'll be getting within the next little while.

D.V.: So "radical cinema" was a conception of yours completely, like you had an idea of what you were doing.

Todoruk: Uh, not exactly, no. You see there's--I'm fighting an obscenity charge in Vancouver right now. And the obscenity charge--the movie was a masturbation flick made by Neil White. Now his movie used the philisophic theme of technology versus humanity. But he used as subjects a train as the technology thing and the humanity thing, for that he used a naked man--it's a very obvious symbol.

So this naked man was going down these railroad tracks and he decides to contemplate himself through masturbation. Now to the police--they're not interested in that. They're interested in "Ah! He's masturbating! It's a dirty flick!" To the serious cinematographer who's researching the language of the cinema--you know it's a language, it says certain things; it can program you the way A & M Records did or it can program you the way Bartlett did.

So the conception that I have is I always try to show variety in my programs. Sylvia Spring, she conceived it (*Madeliene* -- ed.) by herself, she funded it by herself. So what if the National Film Board put a tag to it after it was complete. So they bought it--that means they produced it.

D.V.: Can I ask your opinion of that film?

Todoruk: I don't like it.

D.V.: Neither do I. You know, like--

Todoruk: That's my personal opinion, okay? But, I also have to be fair to Sylvia Spring. Do you know what I'm saying?

D.V.: Yeah, okay, yeah. I'll tell you from my point of view what was happening. I didn't know you were the person that was being busted. When I saw the thing, you know "the person was being investigated" I thought, well, "Jesus!" And then some people came out the door and this guy came over to us and he said "It was a rip-off," and I said, "Shit, man, like this guy must be a serious cinematographer; the money's going to go for something that's worthwhile; and, you know, like there's got to be something in it."

Like maybe this guy was a big jock or maybe he didn't understand or maybe, you know, it just wasn't his bag. But the films I saw, I thought--

Todoruk: What did you think of Kieth Rodin's S?

D.V.: The one after Cat Stevens?

Todoruk: No, that was *Off-On*.

D.V.: Okay, well, which one was that?

Todoruk: It was the one utilizing still photography and translating it into cinematography. He's a Canadian film-maker on the west coast and what he does is he uses still photograph and makes it, you know, makes it move, through a series--

D.V.: Okay, that was the one that was shown after Cat Stevens.

Todoruk: No.

D.V.: It had stark colours like red and blue and then, was that the one?

Todoruk: Yeah but that one won the first prize, it was a first prize winner, you know like it's been in every festival in the world and its won first or second prize in every festival in the world.

I cannot see where you can sort of just--I cannot see with that film particularly where you can say "that film was trite". In other words your going against the normal--not normal but your going against every critic that has applauded that film as a break-through film. It's in every museum, every major museum in the world, in its library. It's one of the most important films of that type, of that genre--

electrovideographics

D.V.: I have seen things like Norman McLaren's stuff--

Todoruk: Norman McLaren scratches. This guy works with electrovideographics, man. You don't know what each artist is trying to do.

D.V.: You know like to me, a layman, that technique, that idea had been done before.

Todoruk: Well then obviously you should be, if you're really interested in cinema, like as I am, you know, you should--I'm at the point where I can't make anything, I can't make any valid critical judgements on cinema because I know that every filmmaker, if he's half way competent, if he's got half a brain in his head, will be trying to say something in his way of saying it. Like Jim Morrison, okay, saying what he said to you might be trite. But the man died at 27 a poet and he went through, and he went through a lot of things--personal things--that the public was never aware of.

One of the things, although it's a five minute version or film or whatever you want to call it, a song, or eight minute song was *Unknown Soldier*. Now when they made that and what they were trying to do with that--again, you know, you would never see a movie like that in a movie house. You wouldn't see a man tied with coloured string which is a bit absurd, which is exactly what radical cinema is, it's very absurd. *Moon* was a trip to the moon. It wasn't a trip to the moon in a NASA sense but it's a trip to the moon in your head if you really can appreciate what he's doing with the sound and what he's doing with the screen and how he's, you know, how he's applying his art.

The application, and I consider the application in the case of the A & M Records thing, even though its commissioned by A & M Records, you cannot say it's a bad film because it isn't. Let's put it this way--wouldn't you say that if the commission to the filmmaker went through, instead of rock acts as content went through the museum as content and what if he achieved the same spectacular effect with the one that he did for A & M? Now would you suggest that his art is less?

D.V.: Well I couldn't, not from the way you put it, no I couldn't. But the point--okay the form is still the same regardless of the content.

Todoruk: No, the content is different.

VW ad

D.V.: Okay, the content is different but the form is there and you're saying that that film is fantastic, like, cinematically it was done very well and it was almost--

Todoruk: Don't you think that that makes it--

D.V.: But that's a point that everyone of us gets to realize every time we turn on the teevee and see these clever, clever adds for volkswagon and alka seltzer and so on.

Todoruk: Yeah but it was a 20 minute ad for A & M Records, man, it wasn't a one second deal.

D.V.: Okay, but in terms of aesthetics I think the one minute ones are a lot more powerful and a lot heavier.

Todoruk: Well what are you going to get--how do you know this one's not powerful. I could give you a description of how they're programming you through that film when you're not even aware that they are. Although the things that are very obvious. There's a lot of very subtle things that they've done. But that again they've done them through the medium of

applying--you know they're using techniques from people who really

D.V.: I somehow think that's a funny thing. I watched the Mickey Mouse cartoon and I was trying to come up with a way to create a discussion of it. Now The reason it's not popular is because it's so easy to use a minute of lovemaking on screen because it's organic in content because us--like, are going to be very busy people are going to come with an idea of smut, you know. But the thing is very makes you really really, you get you understand it more completely.

would h

D.V.: Man, I wouldn't have you grooving to have sat in a seat for somebody.

Todoruk: Okay but the problem is that you a lecture. Believe it or not the student body didn't have to go to cinema. But they had this argument. But because I made this argument allow me to give a lecture of they not allow this program to be presented.

D.V.: Like, 'cause in terms of relative it would have really done a lot because made me realize a hell of a lot about sitting there in ignorance and don't towards just the old content.

Although I really dug the one, may one, but I dug the one which referred

Todoruk: S. Kieth Rodin's

D.V.: There was one there though

(interruption)

But there were, you know, some *Madeliene* one--I thought that it was through "Ah ha" you know, a film

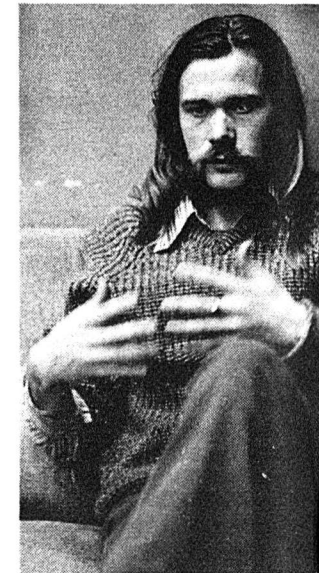
Todoruk: It's not 1950.

D.V.: University students from B.C. : they got it for 59 cents down the N. & M--

Todoruk: That's not true, I got it

D.V.: Well obviously. Like, I got you

Todoruk: I got it from the filmer.



D.V.: Sitting here by myself, that "My God! Like is this the the st

o'clock news", you know, I really thought that. I just couldn't believe

Todoruk: And I'm saying, "Yes."

D.V.: It probably is, right.

Todoruk: It probably is. But what *D.V.:* Okay, well I guess I wonder

Todoruk: Oh yeah, a lot of people went there for dirt, 'cause they didn't want to *D.V.:* Yeah well I think I'm beyond *Todoruk:* Well, but a lot of things *D.V.:* Like, I'll tell you, you know, if I that blood and it falls on the floor