

# Argentinian film explores women and dictatorships

By ALEX PATTERSON

High quality imports from South America are still relatively rare in Ontario's movie-houses. Those directed by women on women's concerns are rarer still.

*Camila*, an Argentine-Spanish co-production at the International Cinema on Yonge Street, is based on the true story of a free-spirited young woman from a high society family and her unfortunate love affair with a local priest. A tricky situation at the best of times, this was made all the more complicated by its time and place: by the 1840s Argentina may have gained its independence, but its women certainly had not. It was the time of the Rosas military dictatorship, when adherence to patriarchal authority and belief in the Trinity were enforced by the terror of his Gaucho goon squad. The ill-fated love of Padre Gutierrez and a woman with the unlikely name of Camila O'Gorman has been brought to the screen with exquisite taste by a director with the equally unlikely name of Maria Luisa Bemberg.

As the lovers, Susu Pecoraro and Imanol Arias are superb; their restrained and understated performances convincing and powerful.

Camila's father (Hector Altiero looking like George C. Scott playing John A. MacDonald) reveals the sinister side of the 19th century head of the household. All muttonchops and starched collars, he is given to making pronouncements such as "the natural anarchy of a woman can only be contained by marriage or the convent." He is the kind of autocrat Bernard Shaw was mocking when he said that "home is the girl's prison and the woman's workhouse."

The plight of women in a man's world and, by extension, the plight of anyone who resolves to do what they know to be right in the face of official opposition, are the concerns of director Bemberg, who also shares

the writing credits. She makes it clear that the reason this affair is upsetting community standards is not because it may offend God, but because a woman's defiance of her father's wishes offends the dominant moral code. This is a sin against the established social order, and must be punished most severely. Camila and Gutierrez flee to another town, reinvent their identities and, in an early example of Liberation Theology, open a school for peasant children. When they are caught (by another priest) they are both sentenced to death for their sexcrime. Awaiting the firing squad, a brief moment of hope flashes when the doctor discovers that Camila is carrying the padre's child. By law, a pregnant woman cannot be executed... but in Camila's case they will make an exception.

Bemberg has shot her film with an admirable low-key quality. Her images are bathed in a diffuse, pale yellow light and her camera is unobtrusively lyrical. But the film's visual beauty is deceptive, because its content is so unsettling. *Camila's* portrait of an intensely repressive society, where the respectable ladies and gentlemen of the town wear ribbons on their chests proclaiming their allegiance to the dictator as they take communion, and where the separation of Church and State is just an hypothesis, is ultimately a frightening one. It is all the more disturbing for its similarities to the Latin America of today. That over a century later there has been so little fundamental change is what gives *Camila* its contemporary relevance: it is not merely a sad story from the history books, but is part of the continuing saga of the struggle for the right to love freely without interference from self-appointed arbiters of conduct. Canadians seeing *Camila* may be made more aware of our own colonial past, and how it lingers in subtle but insidious ways.



# U.S. theatre alliance stages T.O. conference

By REBECCA CANN

When considering American theatre, an image comes to mind of big bucks, bright lights and an array of stars. In a word, Broadway. But Toronto caught a glimpse of a completely different aspect of American theatre from August 4 to 7 when it hosted the American Theatre Association's (ATA) 49th Convention at the Sheraton Centre. The ATA is concerned with the growth and development of non-commercial theatre, ranging from children's theatre, secondary school and college theatre to community and army-base theatre. The combination of theatre professionals and academics at the convention reflected a movement committed to the expansion of theatrical education and culture within the United States, a movement of which few Canadians are aware.

The convention offered an opportunity to Canadian and American artists and academics to develop a better understanding of each others' experience of theatre. Coordinated locally by the Toronto Theatre Alliance, nearly 1,500 delegates from across the United States attended the convention which offered a wide selection of seminars, films, workshops, speakers and performances. Topics ranged from "Finding the Ring in the Actor's Voice" to "So

You've Written a Canadian Play, What's Next?"

The final showing in a nationwide tour of the exhibit "Adolphe Appia 1862-1928: Actor-Space-Light" was held throughout the four days, providing a comprehensive survey of the influential stage designer who pioneered a modern approach to settings, light and theatre architecture. On the final day of the convention Canadian actor Douglas Campbell played William Blake in the one-man play *Blake: Innocence and Experience*.

Keynote speaker for the convention was Irish actress and director Siobhan McKenna "understudying" Christopher Plummer, who was scheduled but unable to attend. McKenna, who played at the Abbey Theatre of Ireland early in her career, is known for her film and stage work throughout the English and Gaelic speaking world, including a performance as Hamlet and a season at the Stratford Festival of Canada. ATA President Douglas Cook introduced McKenna as a "one-woman United Nations of the theatre," endorsing her appropriateness as keynote speaker at a convention which brought together the theatre communities of two nations.

Canada's John Hirsch, an All-Convention Event Speaker, voiced his concern with "the fragmentation of the theatre community." He described what he called "the ongoing, somewhat hostile attitude between professional theatre and academic theatre" as "a terrible cancer on the ecology of the theatre on this continent." He declared that theatre has to "make sure people begin to value their humanity" for "humanity is a skill that has to be learned. It is not

something that is natural to the animal." Hirsch urged the audience to move towards integration in their work in the theatre; to "teach people how to work towards a goal that transcends the group, however large or small that group is."

Hirsch's call for integration echoed a similar statement made at the ATA Women's Program Conference on Women in Canadian Theatre. Held at York University the conference took place the Friday and Saturday prior to the opening of the convention. Women from the Canadian theatre community appeared as guest speakers, discussing issues of concern such as "Canada, Women, and Colonialism" and "Canadian Theatre and Feminism: Defining the Issues." The American delegates were exposed to a first-hand experience of Canadian theatre: playwrights Judith Thompson, Erika Ritter, Rachel Wyatt and Banuta Rubess read from their work.

During the two days it became apparent that inherent aspects of theatre in Canada were completely foreign to the Americans at the conference, who had no notion of the role and function of the Canada Arts Council, the existence of radio drama and the question of a national identity. The ensuing discussions and explanations tended to lead away from the issues and topics at hand but the development of communication and an understanding of Canadian theatre by the Americans was clearly a step away from "the fragmentation of the theatre community."

Throughout the conference it was clear that many of the Canadian women were not committed to a singularly feminist approach in theatre. Marilyn Stasio, drama critic for the New York Post, described what she saw in the Canadian women as "a fear that if women do organize they could undermine the structure" of the theatre community in Canada. In her post-conference summary Stasio, like Hirsch, called for integration, stating that "a sense of community was there but not a sense of action. Women have to explore new forms and find a new voice" and only then will there be a step towards "a feeling of collectiveness" in the theatre community of Canada.

The ATA's decision to hold its convention in Toronto this year marks the first time they have gathered outside the US. It provided an opportunity for Canadians and Americans to meet, learn about each other's experiences and discuss common issues and aims. The theatre world has nothing to lose and everything to gain from events such as this. It can only be hoped that this fact will be recognized and the initiative of the ATA will be followed through in the future.



# PART-TIME



## MALE / FEMALE

Applications will be accepted for part-time year round positions immediately available.

Positions involve 3 - 5 hour shifts, 5 days a week, twilight, midnight or very early morning hours convenient to most school schedules; no week-ends; excellent wages and benefits. Work involves strenuous physical exertion loading, unloading, and sorting packages. Sort and safe work method training provided.

Applicants must be 18 years of age or older and should not be seeking full time employment, or be otherwise gainfully employed.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE:	HOURS:	START RATE:
* Package Handlers	5:45 p.m. Twilight Shift	6.50/Hr.
* Package Handlers	11:00 p.m. Midnight Shift	6.50/Hr.
* Package Positioners	4:00 a.m. Morning Shift	7:00/Hr.

### APPLY IN PERSON

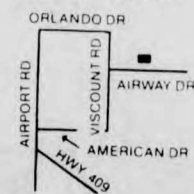
MONDAYS	6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
FRIDAYS	2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

UNITED PARCEL SERVICE CANADA LTD.

3195 Airway Drive, Malton

(Airport Rd. & American Dr.)

### JOB LOCATION



LET US PREPARE YOU FOR THE OCTOBER 5, 1985 LSAT OR THE

OCTOBER 19, 1985 GMAT

- Each course consists of 20 hours instruction for only \$150 or 32 hours for only \$220
- Courses are tax deductible
- Complete review of each section of each test
- Extensive home study materials
- Your course may be repeated at no additional charge

Classes for the October 5 LSAT  
20 hour course Sept. 27, 28, 29/85  
32 hour course Sept. 14, 15, 28, 29/85

Classes for the October 19 GMAT  
20 hour course Oct. 12, 13, 14/85  
32 hour course Oct. 6, 7, 13, 14/85

To register, call or write:

GMAT/LSAT Preparation Courses  
P.O. Box 597, Station "A"  
Toronto, Ontario M5W 1G7  
(416) 665-3377

## WE TYPESET

Résumés  
Posters  
Books • Leaflets  
Journals  
Other stuff

Wide Variety of Typefaces  
Low Prices  
Design Consultation

EXCALIBUR  
TYPESETTING  
111 CENTRAL SQ  
YORK UNIVERSITY  
CALL 667-3201



AUGUST							85
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
				1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

HANDI POCKET CALENDAR