

SEATO

Vancouver

Vancouver edit suites are busy with features this winter. Currently in post-production are Bruce McDonald's *Hard Core Logic*, Mark Sawer's *Skyscraper* and Lynn Stropkevich's *Wide Awake*. Although shot in Ontario, Jessica Bradford's *The Restlessness of Water* was posted in Vancouver, and is expected to be finished in March. Over at Cineworks, features expected to be completed this spring include Chaker Ayadi's *The Last Station*, Andree Faucher's *Out of this Mind*, and Ileana Petrobruno's much anticipated *Cat Swallows Parakeet and Speaks!* It tells the tale of a contemporary Scheherazade (Tara Frederick) who resists the medicalization of the female body through the retelling of tabloid tales while she is hospitalized. The Edison Electric, where Pietrobruno's film will premier, bills it as a "triumph of mid-vaginal modernism" and promises "enough raw passions to ignite the sensibilities of even jaded feminists."

Genie-award winner Mina Shum (*Double Happiness*) is working on *I Will Be 32 in 1997*. Three years in the making, this docu-diary will follow the reversion of Hong Kong to Chinese rule through the eyes of the Shum family. First-time feature director Anthony Couture and veteran producer Michelle Bjornson have received development funding from B.C. Film for *Ask Me Tomorrow*. Bruce Sweeney (*Live Bait*) has also received development funding and is workshopping *Dirty*, his next Mike Leigh-influenced project, with Babz Chula and Tom Scholte. Two scripts have been chosen for development assistance through the Premiere program, administered by Telefilm, B.C. Film and the NFB. Funding was given to Ogden Gavanski and Tara Cowell-Plain to produce Sally Clark's adaptation of her stage play, *Moo*, and to screenwriter Graeme Mason (who is currently a resident at the Canadian Film Centre), and director Johnathon Tammuz and producer Robert Straight for *Rupert's Land*. ■

Winnipeg



Photo courtesy of E.K. Soul Films
LATENT GREATNESS

The Winnipeg Film Group premiered 11 local short films at the Cinematheque, including the acclaimed *Odilon Redon* by Guy Maddin, *Victoria Beach* by Kathryn Martin, and *Latent Greatness* by Jeff Solylo (art director on *Careful* and *Archangel*). *Victoria Beach* and *Latent Greatness* were shown at this year's Local Heroes International Screen Festival in Edmonton.

At least 25 films are in various stages of production at the Film Group. These include *Soft Like Me*, a surrealist period piece by Jeff Erbach; *Good Citizen Betty Baker*, a "lesbian mystery-comedy" from Lorri Millan and Shawna Dempsey (who previously directed *We're Talking Vulva*); *Starwatchers*, a mock-documentary on sci-fi conventions by Dennis Valdrone and Dean Naday; and two National Screen Institute projects, *Iris and Nathan* by Arlea Ashcroft and *Motus Maestro* by Carole O'Brien. On the animation front, Richard Condie is putting the finishing touches on his computer-animated *Lasala* (Italian for playroom), as is Neil McInnes on his long-awaited, *Lovehound*, while Cordell Barker (*The Cat Came Back*) is still plugging away on his NFB short, *Strange Invaders*. ■

Toronto

In its second year of operation, the Toronto-based Cyber Film School is visited by thousands of people from around the world on a weekly basis. Cited in *ComputerLife Magazine's* 101 Great Hangouts Online, the web site has been the focus of rave reviews in numerous books, magazines and other web sites. Created by Impact Pictures, a Toronto-based film, video and new media production company owned and operated by award-winning filmmaker Maurizio (Moe) Belli, the Cyber Film School is an Internet web site thematically structured around the concept of a film school, a place where one can obtain high quality film instruction and information. The Cyber Film School is aimed at both the novice and professional filmmaker, covering movie-making basics such as writing, producing, directing, acting, shooting, lighting, sound recording and editing. The site offers an Action Newsletter full of tips and articles; classrooms with graphics-rich film; a lecture

hall (for example, spotlighting Paul Schrader's screenplay for *Taxi Driver*); interaction with Artist-in-Residence producer Stavros Stavrides (*The Michelle Apartments*); a student lounge with movie mags and games; and a media library where one can download film databases.

Film and TV producers spent \$488-million filming in Toronto last year, and 1996 is shaping up to be just as big a year for production. Wrapping this spring are big-budget blockbusters *Bloodstone*, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme and directed by Ringo Lam; *King of the Volcano*, starring Armand Assante and Anthony Quinn, directed by Robert Harmon; *The Long Kiss Goodnight*, starring Geena Davis and directed by Renny Harlin; and David Cronenberg's *Crash*, based on the book by J.G. Ballard, starring James Spader and Holly Hunter. *Crash* is anticipated to be in theatres by fall. ■