



Left, Keram Malicki-Sanchez in *Sadness of the Moon*; right, Hadley Obodiac in *Gun Control*

teach film production at the University of Regina. My real education was in retail sales—a lot of summer entrepreneurial things.

INFLUENCES: It would have to be films out of the American cinema in the '70s, like *Five Easy Pieces*. It's when I first realized there was something intriguing there. I saw *Midnight Cowboy* maybe eight times. *The Guns of Navarone*, *The Bridge Over the River Kwai*—things that my parents would have taken me to. The influence of someone like Antonioni is kind of irresistible in the way he uses film as a text, open to multiple interpretations. I worked in an impressionistic, documentary style at film school. After school, I was influenced by people like Michael Snow and Stan Brackage, and pursued an avenue of formal concerns. I felt that the only way to learn the craft was to work in these more experimental or documentary practices.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: Even with the machinery of feature filmmaking, I'm still back to my old tricks, and that's using the film form to work for me. My agenda for making films is to try something new each time out. I am interested in the forms of communication and the forms of film, but I've always flirted with narrative. When you're 40 years old, you should know your muse. You learn it is very hard to occupy 75 to 90 minutes of screen time •

NAME: Midi Onodera

BORN: I don't like to talk about that.

CURRENT PROJECT: *Sadness of the Moon* deals with a lot of issues, identity, self-identity, issues of race, gender and sexuality. It's not a gay film, it's not a people-of-colour film, it's not a woman's film, it's exploding all those myths and stereotypes which have evolved and stopped people from communicating with one another. What is not on paper is the amount of people, labour, assistance and time that goes into a low-budget production. There have been 103 people who have contributed to this film, and many more people helped us in one way or another. It is a collaborative effort, and one has to acknowledge that. It's not just the work of the producer, writer and director.

BACKGROUND: I got involved in film when I was quite young. I went to a high school that had a film studies program. Basically, what we did was see a lot of films. A lot of Canadian documentaries and classic films, which we would discuss afterwards. It was something that was completely fascinating to me. As a kid, I always watched movies on television. I was just glued to the set. Both



my parents are artistic. My father used to do Japanese brush painting. I got my first Super 8 camera when I was 17. I went to OCA in the early eighties and took a few film studies courses. It just evolved naturally, I think, because I was involved with painting, photography and a bit of writing. All of those elements built up into a cohesive grouping of interests that focused on film. The way I started to approach film in the first place was from a very basic level. I have done a lot of Super 8 where I was concentrating on composition and framing, different stocks, various processes and pushing stock, trying all those "experimental techniques."

INFLUENCES: I do remember seeing *Lonely Boy*, and I remember thinking Paul Anka is such an idiot in that film, and revealed himself to people as such. I thought the power of movies, exposing this kind of personal stuff, was just so fascinating. I saw a variety of films. I saw Japanese science fiction films like *The Attack of the Killer Mushroom People*. Certainly I was very influenced by the visiting filmmakers coming into the Funnel (I worked there for two years right after OCA), Scott B. and Beth B., the whole New York punk thing, a lot of filmmakers from Berlin, and a lot of women who have broken out of the old boys network.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: There is a growing number of films from people of



Left, Kirsten Johnson and Von Flores in *Eclipse*; right, Sean O'Mara, Dianne Heatherington and Kevin Bundy in *Love and Oysters*

colour and first nations who are feeling empowered by documentary, telling their own stories. Women are using documentary in terms of social issue films. The documentary tradition continues to be strong, but the voices behind the camera and in front of the camera are different. Making films for me is not just an ambition, but a way of life ●

NAME: Alan Zweig

BORN: 1952

CURRENT PROJECT: I was attracted to *The Darling Family* because it is two people in a room, and I consider that an important challenge for me. A lot of my writing contains two people in a room. I was attracted by the thought that people figured it was a hard film to make—a play with two people in a room, where they're speaking their thoughts. There are some interesting elements, but they may not be cinematic. This was a challenge that I couldn't resist.



BACKGROUND: I was on the law school track, but then I put the brakes on law school and went to India for a couple of years. I returned to York University and made films with my friends. Basically, I spent a whole semester in the basement at York, cutting together a Super 8 film. Then

I went to Sheridan. The teachers I had there were Rick Hancox and Geoff Paul. We didn't come near dramatic film. All we saw were experimental films, and the vast majority of filmmakers who come out of Sheridan make experimental films. I'm not an experimental filmmaker, but it did effect me forever, in that I never learnt the rules. To this day I know them a bit, and I can stretch myself into them, but I didn't learn them.

INFLUENCES: Coppola's *The Conversation*, Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* and *Mean Streets*, Cassavetes' *Husbands*, Jacques Tourneur's *Out of the Past*. I'm old enough to remember and be influenced by those early sixties filmmakers. I loved the first four Shebib films when I was a kid, even before I wanted to be a filmmaker.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: I never believed I would get the chance to do a feature if I waited to be crowned by the agencies, even though I've always hoped the day would come when I would be finally let into that club. I didn't really believe it would happen, therefore I always believed I would have to do one on my own. When *The Darling Family* came along, I said make it this one. Since my last half-hour, which I directed four years ago, I have written four or five scripts for other people, some of which are now being made, Richard Kerr's *Gun Control* being one of them. I like films that are about people in pain with a threat hanging over them. Now that threat in *The*

Darling Family is the ticking time bomb of deciding to have an abortion or not ●

NAME: Jeremy Podeswa

BORN: 1962

CURRENT PROJECT: *Eclipse* is centred around a series of interconnected relationships. There are 10 characters, and the backdrop for these encounters is an impending solar eclipse, which is anticipated throughout the movie, and occurs towards the end. It's pretty specifically set in Toronto, and I think the characters reflect the very urban and ethnic cultural mix that is here. I think people who live in Toronto will recognize Toronto, although it doesn't have the CN Tower and things like that. We shot a real eclipse in the Baja, Mexico.



BACKGROUND: I've always been in love with movies and I've always wanted to make movies. I come from a family of artists. My father is a painter, my father's father was a painter, my father's brother was a painter, and my brother is a painter. For me, it's been important to nurture that side of my personality. From a very early age, I was very interested in pictorial detail and art history. My dad was a big movie buff. *Les enfants du paradis* was the first film I saw at the old New Yorker theatre. It was my dad's