

SEATTLE

VANCOUVER

MINA SHUM is in pre-production on her second feature, *Drive, She Said*. Producer **STEVE HEGYES** reports that Shum is writing the final draft and casting is in progress. The production is being bankrolled by Fine Line Features, who are currently distributing her first feature film, *Double Happiness*, in the U.S. Shooting commences in January either in Canada or the American Southwest. Another local indie success, **BRUCE SWEENEY**, will be following up *Live Bait* (which won the Toronto CITY-TV Award for the best Canadian feature at the Toronto festival) with *Dirty*. Sweeney reports that a development deal with British Columbia Film is "in the works" and shooting should commence in March. Sweeney again intends to keep funders at arm's length by keeping the budget very low. Gulf Island animator **GAIL NOONAN**'s short film *Your Name in Cellulite* has earned three awards already and is continuing its heady progress through the international festival circuit.

EDMONTON

HELEN FOLKMANN, executive director of FAVA in Edmonton, reports that 89 projects are in various stages of development and production, and attributes this situation to a "steady building surge" in the local filmmaking community. Telefilm Canada announced the first batch of winners of their new Horizon program, comprising development assistance for low-budget features from the Prairie provinces. Three of the four recipients are Albertans: **LARRY PEDERSON** (*Just Across the Line*), **DAVE SCHULTZ** (*Jet Boy*) and **JOHN HAZLETT** (*Bad Money*). Previously Hazlett had some festival success with *The Suburbanators*, which he co-produced. *The Song Spinner*, a family feature from Calgary-based Bradshaw, MacLeod and Associates recently won the Gordon Parsons Children's Choice Award at the Atlantic Film Festival. The U.S. broadcaster is Showtime and negotiations are under way for a Canadian theatrical release.

WINNIPEG

Two National Film Board documentary features recently had their local premieres. *The True Story of Linda M.*, directed by **NORMA BAILEY**, is a 65-minute sequel to her 1980 film *Nose and Tina*, which documented the trials and tribulations of **LINDA (TINA) MIGWANS**, then a prostitute living with her working class boyfriend. Fifteen years later, Bailey was asked to do a sequel, and in *Linda M.* Bailey follows Linda for a year as she valiantly tries to beat a drug addiction, raise her kids, and deal with her past. "Linda asked me to make this film and I have," explains Bailey. "But it's Linda's story, and she tells it with astonishing intimacy, gut-wrenching honesty, and refreshing humour." The film was screened at the Winnipeg Art Gallery as part of ReVisions, Winnipeg's women's film festival.

JOHN PASKIEVICH's *If Only I Were an Indian...* premiered locally at Cinema Main to generally good reviews and audience response and will be shown on TVOntario in December. Co-written and researched with anthropologist **DAVID SCHEFFEL**, the 70-minute documentary follows three Manitoba aboriginal elders, **BARBARA DANIELS**, **JOSEPH** and **IRENE YOUNG**, who journey to the Czech Republic to visit that country's own Indian tribe—a group of idealistic Czechs intent on living an Indian lifestyle on weekends in handmade teepees and traditional dress. Inspired by romanticized visions of the Wild West, especially the books of the 19th century German writer **KARL MAY**, members of the "White Wampum" tribe seek refuge and community in a pre-industrial utopia, escaping the moral decay which has accompanied the collapse of communism in central Europe. Paskievich previously directed the IMAX short *Heartland*.

TORONTO

In response to the difficult and almost non-existent distribution channels for Canadian film, Toronto entrepreneur **RICK TRUS** has come up with an idea on how to distribute

Canadian films to a potential television market of over three million viewers. Taking advantage of a clause in the CRTC act governing cable service providers that requires a station to show a requested program if five people ask for it in writing, Trus has created *Canadian Film Scene*, a show that local cable companies are required to air if viewers demand it. Trus is hoping that filmmakers across Canada will take advantage of this to showcase their work to larger audiences.

Thanks to the creation of Cinema Canada Online, filmmakers can now access the country's most complete directory of video production resources through the Internet. Available on site are international lists of producers, actors, studios, rental houses, labs, movie magazines, relevant newsletters and more. Key in <http://www.io.org/cincan>.

Rhombus Media has announced that it will produce a feature film inspired by the Stratford Festival's production of **EUGENE O'NEILL**'s *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. A CBC/Bravo!/Telefilm Canada collaboration, the film will be directed by **DAVID WELLINGTON** (*I Love a Man in Uniform*) and star **MARTHA HENRY** and **TOM MCCAMUS**. Principal photography has been completed in Toronto on **DAVID CRONENBERG**'s new thriller, *Crash*, the acclaimed director's first feature since *M. Butterfly*. Based on **J.G. BALLARD**'s novel, the movie about car crash survivors subject to bizarre experiments stars **JAMES SPADER** and **HOLLY HUNTER**.

MONTREAL

After years of trying to overcome endless organizational and structural problems, the Institut national de l'image et du son (INIS), Quebec's version of the Canadian Film Centre, will finally open for business. Starting in January, 1996, students and young professionals alike will have the opportunity to study directing and script writing, or simply enhance their filmmaking skills under the aegis of some of Quebec's most distinguished cinema and television figures, among whom are TV director **RICHARD MARTIN**, screenwriter **MAR-**



members of the "White Wampum" tribe of the Czech Republic from *IF ONLY I WERE AN INDIAN...*, directed by John Paskievich

CEL BEAULIEU, and veteran producer **ROCK DEMERS**. **LOUISE SPICKLER**, best known for her years spent at the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television, has been appointed general director of the institute.

On another front, it will be interesting to see if the ongoing David and Goliath confrontation between Telefilm and Quebec's so-called "small" film festivals takes a new turn in the coming months. Last May, **FRANÇOIS MACEROLA** announced that Telefilm would gradually be cutting all funding to "smaller" film festivals across the country. This will save a ridiculously low portion of its budget (0.68 per cent). Seven Quebec festivals (including some of Canada's most respected and vitally important festivals such as Montreal's New Festival of Cinema, Video and New Technology and the Festival in Abitibi-Témiscamingue) formed a coalition to oppose this decision, in the hopes that they might add some weight to their individual pleas. Collectively, these festivals (with their emphasis on independent and international cinema) represent one of the last alternatives

to the ever-changing landscape of film distribution in this country and a viable alternative to the increasingly overwhelming presence of American movies. So far, Macerola has promised to examine each case separately, but only the next few months will tell us if a solution is found.

On a brighter note, despite all these cutbacks to our industry, film production in Quebec hasn't slowed down. Among others, veteran filmmaker **GILLES CARLE** is shooting *Pounding chomeur* in Montreal, **JOHN GREYSON** is directing a bilingual cast in *Lilies*, a film adaptation of Quebec's cult play *Les feluettes*, and **ROGER FRAPPIER**'s Max Films is wrapping up *Sous-sol*, a first feature by promising young filmmaker **PIERRE GANG**. All this while we wait for the next film by **DENYS ARCAND**, *Beautiful*, to be produced by **DENISE ROBERT** (*Le confessionnal*), and currently in development with Alliance Releasing.

HALIFAX

The 15th Annual Atlantic Film Festival

ELA

closed on a high note with a 40 per cent increase in attendance. Big winners included New Brunswick-born, Halifax-based director **MONIQUE LEBLANC**, who collected three awards—sound, cinematography and direction—for her National Film Board-produced feature documentary, *The Acadian Connection*. The NFB managed to pick up two additional awards (writing and art direction) for P.E.I.-based animator **JODEE SAMUELSON**'s children's environmental short, despite the fact that staff cuts have reduced NFB presence in the region by half.

FRANK SPINNEY, a carpenter by trade from the Annapolis Valley, won the Margaret Perry Award for best Nova Scotia film for his home-grown, 16mm feature *Nashville Sound*. A true independent, Spinney wrote, directed, produced, starred in, and most incredibly, financed the project completely from his own pocket. It's a charmingly naive buddy movie about four fortyish guys who reform their country band for a disastrous trip to Music City, U.S.A. *Nashville Sound* has best been described as "folk art filmmaking." Spinney, whose previous video feature *Is the King Really Dead?* sold almost 1,000 copies via local television advertising, is vowing to continue his grassroots movie revolution by touring *Nashville Sound* through rural areas while preparing a script for a third feature.

Newfoundland-born **WILLIAM D. MACGILLIVRAY** has returned to his home province to write and direct six half-hour comedies for national CBC broadcast early in 1996. *Gullages* is the series handle, short for Gullivers' Cabs, better known as "the killer cabs of St. John's." MacGillivray also has a feature documentary, *Face/The Landscape*, in the research stage and is developing an extraordinary script by the self-styled "Africadian" (African-Canadian from Acadia) poet **GEORGE ELIOTT CLARKE**.

Contributors: ALISON VERMEE in Vancouver, PATRICK LOWE in Winnipeg, ANGELA BALDASSARRE in Toronto, CLAIRE VALADE in Montreal and RON MACDONALD in Halifax.