

From Sea to

John Kozak in
Lorne Bailey's
Green Peril



Vancouver

Lotus Land's usual winter drizzle would appear to have no effect on local crews, as indigenous productions continued to wrap this winter. Among the features on which principal photography has been completed is *Barbecue: A Love Story*. This dark comedy, set in a trailer park, follows the life of Lucky Strike, an unlucky man whose insatiable desires for slow-cooked meats and sweet women always seems to end in heartburn. Written and directed by Stacy Kirk, and produced by Robert Millar, the film stars Babz Chula and Earl Pastko. Meanwhile, looking to strike while the iron is hot, Christine Haebler, co-producer of Bruce McDonald's *Hard Core Logo*, which has been invited to the Sundance Film Festival, has teamed up with Calgary-based director, Gary Burns (*The Suburbanators*) and producer John Hazlett on *Kitchen Party*, a new, hip suburban comedy now wrapping. Soon to commence principal photography are Mina Shum's *Drive, She Said*, a romantic comedy, and *Dirty*, the next film from Bruce Sweeney (*Live Bait*), produced by Linda Guns and John Dippong. *Canadian Blaze*, a NFB/Start Productions feature docudrama co-directed by Teresa Marshall and Craig Berggold, promises to be one of the more unusual road movies to complete production this winter. This award-winning team has been working together for seven years and is best known for its successful *Fresh Talk* documentary series. The film follows *Blaze*'s search for her missing grandmother, but she discovers that more than her grandmother is missing from the Columbia River valley—trees, plants, animals and people have been sacrificed to a nuclear age. This is a satiric look behind the idyllic postcard view of the once-mighty Columbia River, which exposes a river sterilized by runaway resource exploitation and contamination by radioactivity.

Ken Anderlini and John Dippong

The Prairies

While the indigenous Alberta film and television industry is reeling from the impact of Premier Ralph Klein's decision to get out of the biz, the crews are staying active, and with the help of Deputy Prime Minister, Sheila Copps, some shows like the very popular *North of 60* may just eke out another season. Despite deadly rumours that the show was facing its last year, it appears that it has found new life and season six is on its way, albeit this time with a different shooting schedule to accommodate the national treasury's "spend it or lose it" dictum. Production starts in January. While Calgary filmmakers John Hazlett and Gary Burns (*The Suburbanators*) turn to B.C. for funding for *Kitchen Party*, Hollywood still comes to Alberta for locations. Anthony Hopkins returned to the province (which was used as a backdrop for *Legends of the Fall*) with co-star Alex Baldwin for *Bookworm*. Shot primarily in Banff and Kananaskis parks, Sir Anthony had many adventures including a frosty dip when a plane "crashed" into an icy mountain lake. Saskatchewan also has been busy with major shoots, primarily co-productions put together with local producers. *Prairie Dove*, a U.K.-Canadian theatrical feature is a period Western starring Kelly McGillis (*Top Gun*) and Brenda Fricker (*My Left Foot, Swann*) put together by Shaftesbury Films of Toronto, Greenpoint in the U.K., and Heartland Motion Pictures of Regina. CFP will distribute in Canada. Saskfilm spokesperson Mark Prashun told *Take One*; "It's the first time we have been involved with a locally produced Western. We're really excited about this." He's also excited about the fact that Regina's new sound stage promises to stay busy, as 80 per cent of the projects shot in the province will require its services. Other Saskatchewan co-productions include *The Lost Daughter*, a Swiss-Canadian television mini-series starring Richard Chamberlain and directed by Quebec's Roger Cardinal. Regina's Minds Eye Films is completing the post in Edmonton's StudioPost for broadcast on WIC in February.

Fran Humphreys