

Contributors

Cynthia Amsden is a freelance writer for *Shift*, *Toronto Life*, *The Globe and Mail* and has a column in *The Ottawa Citizen*.

Dave Barber is the program director of the Winnipeg Film Group Cinematheque.

Paul Eichhorn is a Toronto-based writer and editor who has written for *The Toronto Star* and *The Globe and Mail*. He's currently working on video and multimedia projects.

Marc Glassman is a Toronto writer, broadcaster, editor of several books on Canadian film, proprietor of Pages bookstore, and is a contributing editor to *Take One*.

Peter Goddard is a writer with *The Toronto Star*. He was the newspaper's movie critic in the late 1980s and writes frequently about film for the *Star*. Goddard has written more than 15 books and produced television specials and series.

Barbara Goslawski is the experimental film officer at the Canadian Filmmaker's Distribution Centre and co-host/producer of "Frameline," CKLN-Toronto.

Fran Humphreys is an Alberta-based publicist. Her clients include the National Screen Institute and the Banff Television Festival.

Ron Foley Macdonald is the senior programmer for the Atlantic Film Festival and a freelance critic.

Tom McSorley is executive director of the Canadian Film Institute in Ottawa. He is also a sessional lecturer in Film Studies at Carleton University, a freelance theatre critic for CBC *Radio One* and a programmer at the World Film Festival in Montreal. He is a contributing editor to *Take One*.

Paul Townend is a Toronto-based freelance writer.

Claire Valade is a freelance journalist and filmmaker in Montreal. She is currently working on her first feature.

Jack Verme is a Vancouver film writer/programmer who works with The Ridge, Pacific Cinematheque and the Vancouver International Film Festival.

Gene Walz teaches film at the University of Manitoba and is the author of *Cartoon Charlie: The Life and Art of Animation Pioneer Charles Thorson*.

Wyndham Wise is the editor-in-chief of *Take One* and editor of *Canadian Screenwriter*.

In this issue Marc Glassman writes about François Girard's *The Red Violin*, a film about a cursed but perfect violin which travels through centuries and across the globe. It's a rare film, a Canadian epic made in big-budget European style, with lavish attention to costumes, settings and period detail. In a change of form (and content) for *Take One*, we are running an article on French director Robert Bresson. Toronto author and journalist Peter Goddard (who shows that he holds no grudge against us even though his name was misspelled all over the last issue) travelled to the countryside where Bresson was born to explore the roots of one of cinema's most brilliant practitioners. In 1998, Cinematheque Ontario organized the most comprehensive retrospective of the aging French master, which was screened in Toronto and Vancouver and tours a dozen American cities through 1999. Cynthia Amsden writes about the trials and very dangerous tribulations of filming Rohinton Mistry's Governor General's Award-winning novel, *Such a Long Journey*, on location in Bombay, India. Paul Eichhorn profiles William Laurin and Glenn Davis, the two "show runners" behind English Canada's first prime-time hockey-drama series, *Power Play*, and Gene Walz reports on his travels in China with a very eclectic selection of Canadian films.

Also in this issue, *Take One* runs its annual year-end survey of Canadian features and feature documentaries released during the year in the Greater Toronto Area. Depressing as the numbers are—this year 33 Canadian films occupied only 1.7 per cent of the screen time in the third largest film-going market in North America—they do bring into stark relief just what is the fundamental and seemingly intractable problem with the Canadian film industry. We don't lack the talent and the financial infrastructure for making features has improved immeasurably over the past 10 years, what we do lack—and what we have always lacked—is access to movie screens in our own country. And nothing is being done about it. With all the talk about Sheila Copps's new feature-film initiative, announced with fanfare at the beginning of last year, there was no mention of improving the percentage of Canadian features on Canadian screens. It was all about more money for development, production, broadcast licence fees, etc. More money, not more screen time. Certainly, more money will strengthen the industry and please the producers, but it won't mean more people will be seeing more Canadian films. Not until something is done about this central problem.

When *Take One* first started its survey four years ago, it was generally assumed by those who were supposed to know something about such things (policy makers, media types, industry insiders) that Canadian films occupied more than four percent of Canadian screen time. In fact, exhibitors were touting a six per cent figure. For the sake of clarity and a sneaking suspicion that even at four per cent the figure seemed a tad high, *Take One* simply went to the listings of films in the GTA supplied by daily papers and started to keep count. The first year the survey was published in 1995, the result was 2.4 per cent, the next year 2.8, then 1.45 in 1997 and 1.7 in 1998. With the huge influx of multiscreen entertainment complexes sprouting like mushrooms, and the corresponding lack of space for Canadian features, I personally wouldn't be surprised if the figure dropped to one per cent in the new millennium. And as long as this situation persists, Canadian feature films will always be orphans—unseen and unloved in their own country.

W. F. Wise