

From Sea to Sea

Winnipeg

Paris, France, will host a major retrospective of Western Canadian independent filmmakers with a strong focus on the work of the Winnipeg Film Group, this year celebrating its 25th anniversary. The Museum of Contemporary Art (Galerie Nationale Jeu de Palme) in Paris together with the Canadian Cultural Services, is curating a major screening of films in December and January. Cultural attaché Simone Suchet travelled across Western Canada in October with visits to the Vancouver International Film Festival, Calgary, Regina and Winnipeg. Western Canadian filmmakers highlighted include John Paizs, Guy Maddin, Gary Burns, Richard Kerr and Donna Brunsdale. Telefilm is assisting with subtitling some of the works.... Guy Maddin recently completed a short, three-minute film for the New York Film Festival. Called *Hospital Fragment*, the short black-and-white film looks like a missing outtake from *Tales From the Gimli Hospital* with newly filmed scenes with *Gimli* stars Angela Heck and Mike Gottli.... It has been an extremely good fall for Winnipeg's Buffalo Gal Pictures, coproducing Colleen Murphy's new film *Desire*, which will likely be released in late spring by Remstar, and John Greyson's *Law of Enclosures*. Greyson remarked what a positive experience it was working with crews in Winnipeg. The producers staged a kiss-a-thon in front of Winnipeg's City Hall on a cool Monday morning in October. An estimated 200 to 300 couples gathered to smooch and recreate an actual event that occurred in Sarnia, Ont., in 1991, which won them a Guinness world record for largest simultaneous kiss. Next up for Buffalo Gal is a film based on the novel by Gabrielle Roy called *Children of My Heart* to be directed by Keith Leckie.... Manitoba producers and craftspeople scored big in the 14th annual Gemini Awards with a combined 19 nominations. Marble Island Pictures's *Milgaard* won in six categories and Buffalo Gal Pictures picked up two nominations for *The Genius of Lenny Breau* and its Gabrielle Roy documentary.... Marble Island Pictures' *Heater* received an excellent response at the Vancouver International Film Festival. Director/writer Terrance Odette received two awards—Best Screenplay and Best Emerging Director. Stars Gary Farmer and Stephen Ouimette were singled out by the jury for their excellent performances.... Noam Gonick (*Guy Maddin: Waiting For Twilight*) finished shooting his subversive love pic *Hey Happy!* in 16mm, experimenting with anamorphic lenses and various filters. Gonick staged an outdoor rave on a former garbage landfill called Garbage Hill, which was visible from some distance. Word has it that the rushes look superb.

Dave Barber

Toronto

The long-awaited new funding for the feature-film sector promised last winter (actually, make that the winter of 1998) saw the tentative light of day this past fall with the announcement that the feds are finally making good on that promise. Delivered by newly appointed Governor General Adrienne Clarkson, the Liberal government stated that over the second half of its term it would boost support "for the production of Canadian stories and images in print, theatre, film music and video...and particular the use of new media." We shall see. There are a lot of people with hands out waiting.... Kodak Canada, in partnership with the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television, presented its annual Kodak Spectrum Award in a ceremony preceding the Gemini Awards. In the category of Best Photography for Dramatic Program or Series winners included Steve Danykuk for *Emily of New Moon*, Laszlo George for Bruce McDonald's *Scandalous Me: The Jacqueline Susann Story*, Michael McMurray for the sci-fi series *Gene Roddenbury's Earth: Final Conflict*, Robert Saad for the MOW *Sleeping Dogs Lie* and Derick Underschultz for *Total Recall 2070*.... Of the many MOWs and series being shot in the



Peter Benchley's Amazon

city, one of the most ambitious is *Peter Benchley's Amazon*, produced by Benchley (of *Jaws* fame) and by the ever busy Alliance Atlantis, television division. It is being broadcast on WIC-TV in Canada and in syndication in the United States. Set in the heart of the Amazon jungle but shot in the heart of Toronto's rapidly expanding hodge-podge of east-end studio complexes, the series stars C. Thomas Howell, Carol Alt and Chris Martin, with guest appearances by John Neville and Margot Kidder.... John Fawcett, whose first feature was *The Boy's Club* with Chris Penn (released in 1997), has just wrapped his second feature, *Ginger Snaps*. Written by Karen Walton, the werewolf horror tale stars Katherine Isabelle, Emily Jean Perkins and Mimi Rogers.... To help celebrate its 60th anniversary, the NFB got some attention from the Museum of Modern Art in New York, which held a retrospective of classic animation and documentaries, and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Los Angeles, which honoured the Board with a gala event at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater featuring clips from its many Oscar winners and nominees. The NFB also copped a technical Oscar this year for the development of the DigiSync Film Keycode Reader.

Paul Townend