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Xcalibur

This is *Take One's* third animation special in 10 years, which points out that if there is one thing Canadians do well, and are widely respected for, it is animation. From the animation studios at the NFB to the computer wiz kids plying their trade at C.O.R.E. Digital Pictures, Toybox, Industrial Light & Magic, Sony or Disney, Canadians have come to dominate this highly specialized field of image-making. Scratch any big-budget Hollywood animated or CGI blockbuster and you'll find a Canadian connection. Not only do Canadians represent the very best in animated talent; home-grown companies such as Alias/Wavefront, SideEffects and Softimage have led the way in developing software to make all this CGI magic possible.

It is easy to trace the roots of this excellence back to the NFB and the genius of Norman McLaren (1914-87). McLaren's creative influence looms large with his uncanny ability to attract the best and brightest animation talents from around the world who, in turn, inspired subsequent generations. Acknowledging this fact, this special summer issue of *Take One* features insightful articles on three NFB animators whose collective work represents some of the best the Board has to offer: Paul Driessen (*The End of the World in Four Seasons* and *The Boy Who Saw the Iceberg*) by Marc Glassman, former contributing editor of *Take One* who is currently working on a book about the Oscar-nominated Dutch-Canadian animator; Michèle Cournoyer, director of *Le Chapeau*, by Chris J. Robinson, who is the artistic director of the Ottawa International Animation Festival and self-confessed *enfant terrible* in the world of Canadian animation; and the veteran Pierre Hébert (*La Plante humaine*) by Chris Gehman, who is the artistic director of the Images Festival of Independent Film and Video.

This issue also brings into focus Mainframe Entertainment, the Vancouver-based company that produces the popular *ReBoot* series; Cinar from Montreal which, despite its recent financial and management scandals, still produces some of the best children's programming in the world; the artist-run, Calgary-based Quickdraw Animation Society; and *Xcalibur*, a Canada/France co-production from TVA International, which uses the very latest in motion-capture technology, due for broadcast on YTV in the fall. Our dynamic cover image comes from this CGI series.

In addition, *Take One* is honoured to publish a review of *CyberWorld* in IMAX 3-D by veteran filmmaker – and talented animator in his own right – Colin Low. Mr. Low directed *Transitions* in 1986, the first film shot in the revolutionary IMAX 3-D process, and has been responsible for some of the most celebrated films at the NFB, including *The Romance of Transportation in Canada* (1953), *Corral* (1954), *City of Gold* (1957), *Universe* (1960) and of course the *Labyrinth* installation at Expo 67. And finally, we offer reviews of current Canadian cinema and festival wraps from Hot Docs: the Canadian International Documentary Festival, the Yorkton Short Film and Video Festival, the Canadian Film Centre's Worldwide Short Film Festival, and a report from the Cannes Film Festival by *Toronto Star* film critic Peter Howell.

So enjoy, and good summer reading.

W. P. Wise