

**2003-04 STATUS REPORT
NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA**

National Film Board of Canada
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Mission: The NFB's mission is to produce and distribute distinctive, culturally diverse, challenging and relevant audiovisual works that provide Canada and the world with a unique Canadian perspective.

Minister responsible: The Honourable H el ene Chalifour-Scherrer, Minister of Canadian Heritage
Government Film Commissioner and Chairperson of the NFB: Jacques Bensimon
Director General, Communications and Outreach Development: Laurie Jones

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A) Activities for Francophones in official-language minority communities

Distribution

General public

Publications/Information

On June 17, 2003 the NFB French Program's Ontario and West Studio celebrated its reopening in Toronto, which brought the French and English Programs back together, along with the NFB Mediatheque, at 150 John Street. "We are once again at the meeting place for Canadian communications and media arts in downtown Toronto, a crossroads for the entire country, so that we can easily reach the Francophone communities of Ontario and the western provinces and territories," said Claudette Jaiko, Ontario and West Studio producer.

Focus, a bilingual monthly magazine, enables subscribers to keep informed of NFB films playing on television and in theatres, and provides information on new releases, NFB productions showing at festivals in Canada and abroad, television listings, and more. Over 11,000 Canadians across the country receive this magazine.

The NFB website is updated on a daily basis, making it possible for all Canadians to keep abreast of NFB activities and search the vast 10,000-title film collection in the official language of their choice.

The French-language productions of the NFB French Program are available across Canada through our French online store and catalogue, our toll-free number, and independent distributors in Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia and New Brunswick.

The NFB French Program provides support for the production of French-language films from all parts of Canada through the Aide au cinéma indépendant (ACIC) program, which celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in 2003. Since 1973, 775 films have been made by 550 filmmakers with assistance from this program. Many emerging filmmakers who received ACIC support in the '70s, '80s and '90s have developed into well-known directors. In 2003, ACIC provided assistance for six projects made by filmmakers from outside of Quebec – two in Acadia and four from Toronto and the west.

Canada's linguistic duality is a value championed by the NFB. During the month of March, advertising posters in bus shelters in the cities of Moncton, Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Vancouver invited members of the public to log on to the NFB website <nfb.ca> to find out about different projects developed under the Canada Memory Fund. The campaign targeted young adults aged 18 to 24 years, whom we would like to become members of the NFB Film Club. One of the slogans used was: *On n'a pas les deux langues dans notre poche/Outspoken in both official languages.*

On March 2 to 4, 2004, the Government Film Commissioner and Chairperson of the NFB took part in a Symposium on Official Languages organized by the Official Languages Commission in co-operation with Canadian Heritage, Intergovernmental Affairs, and Canadian Parents for French. The symposium, entitled *Vision and Challenges for the 21st Century*, brought together participants from various sectors of Canadian society, in order to discuss the issues and propose solutions that would make it possible to accomplish the objectives set out in the Government of Canada's *Action Plan for Official Languages*. The aim is to double, by 2013, the number of young Canadians with knowledge of their second official language. The NFB Film Commissioner, Jacques Bensimon, gave a speech at the event in which he put forward concrete solutions for accomplishing the goal of a bilingual Canada.

The NFB continues to participate in the Working Group on Media Arts, and recently contributed to the update of the Study on the Positioning of the Canadian Francophonie in Major Federal Institutions, led by the Fédération culturelle canadienne-française (FCCF).

Festivals

Three French Program films, *Durelle*, *Kacho Komplo* and *Mémoires de la terre* were on the bill at the 17th edition of the Festival international du cinéma francophone en Acadie (FICFA), which took place in Moncton from September 19 to 25, 2003. In addition to presenting some of our most recent French-language productions and co-productions, the NFB welcomed to its Moncton offices Francophone film production professionals attending the Marché du cinéma et de la télévision acadienne et francophone hors Québec (film and television market for French-language productions from outside of Quebec).

On the last day of FICFA and the first day of the Forum national sur le développement de la culture, the NFB's Acadia Studio and Ontario and West Studio organized a gathering of Francophone filmmakers from outside of Quebec to discuss setting up an association. Among those who attended the gathering were two filmmakers from Toronto, two from Ottawa, two from Winnipeg, two from Vancouver, and six from Acadia. An association came into being, provisionally named the Fédération des réalisateurs indépendants du Canada (Canadian federation of independent filmmakers).

On March 23, the National Film Board of Canada announced that it would be participating again this year, both as a sponsor and a producer, in the 11th Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois et francophone in Vancouver, to be held from May 20 to 25, 2004. The documentary *L'appétit d'Ève* was featured on the opening night of the event, as well as the animated short *Nuit d'orage/Stormy Night*.

Two workshops were organized as part of the Cinémental festival with a view to starting a Kino cell in Winnipeg. On November 7 and 8, 2003, workshops led by a Kino filmmaker and Julie Huguet of *Silence, on court!* were given for emerging filmmakers and students at Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface. Recognized as a dynamic short-film forum and meeting place on the Internet, **SilenceOnCourt.tv** provides a medium for the distribution of shorts produced in Canada and showcases the talent of emerging filmmakers from all over the French-speaking world.

On September 18 at the Cinéfest festival in Sudbury, Claudette Jaiko, executive producer of the Ontario and West Studio, presented a master class in French on how to direct or co-produce a documentary with the NFB. *Among the topics covered were: how to make a documentary with the NFB French Program; the approach to take; the type of documentary sought by the NFB and the steps to follow; as well as partnerships, co-productions and point-of-view documentaries.*

Access to NFB Films

The NFB has a network of partner libraries that provide access to its productions in cities and towns across Canada. The NFB continues to make its bilingual collections available through partner libraries in official-language minority communities, such as the St. Boniface Library; the St. Jean Library, which serves Francophones and Francophiles at the University of Alberta; and the Francophone Cultural Centre in Vancouver. The NFB currently has 49 partnerships in place, and its collections are available through the following organizations:

- 10 educational institutions
- 7 provincial education departments
- 1 cultural organization, and
- 31 public libraries (and about 265 branches).

On October 27, 2003, the NFB Mediatheque in Toronto launched the Ciné-Jeudi program in partnership with the following organizations in Toronto: Alliance Française, the Bureau du Québec, Cinéfranco, and the Consulate General of France. Ciné-Jeudi is a series of French-language screenings presented on the first Thursday of every month. The program is immensely popular and the films have been playing to full houses since November 2003.

An excellent choice of French-language titles is also available for on-demand screening at the NFB Mediatheque in Toronto, as well as new titles offered for sale or rent.

The NFB's Toronto Mediatheque and the CineRobotheque in Montreal are currently offering animation workshops for students. Creative, interactive and fun, the workshops impress students and teachers alike. Each workshop explores animation history and techniques, with the help of professional tools and NFB animation films that are both entertaining and instructive. The workshops can be given in French or English in both Montreal and Toronto.

Recently, the NFB announced the Internet launch of the public version of CineRoute, an online film library offering free, on-demand screening of 250 NFB films (125 in French and 125 in English). The films available on CineRoute reflect the quality and diversity of NFB productions. All films are streamed instantly in MPEG-4 format. For the moment, access to CineRoute on the Internet is a pilot project, with distribution limited to 2,000 members of the NFB Film Club. Research and production of CineRoute on the Internet has been made possible through the support of the Department of Canadian Heritage's Canadian Memory Fund. The goal of the fund is to connect Canadians with their heritage through digital access to archives held in cultural institutions.

Support and Training

The following is an overview of workshops and internships that have taken place over the past year.

The NFB Ontario and West Studio, in partnership with the Media Arts Centre in Vancouver, offered *FormAction 2004*, a series of free training workshops in documentary screenwriting and direction for emerging French-speaking filmmakers in British Columbia, Alberta and the Yukon. In creating activities such as this, the Studio wished to offer support to up-and-coming filmmakers and to forge links with new Francophone filmmakers from these parts of the country. Given by seasoned film and television professionals, the workshops took place over four consecutive days in Vancouver, at the Educacentre and the NFB office, on February 20 to 23, 2004.

The number of applications to attend these workshops exceeded all expectations. Of the over sixty emerging filmmakers who applied, 28 were selected to attend the four days of training (21 from British Columbia, 5 from Alberta and 2 from the Yukon).

FormAction 2004 workshops were also organized in Winnipeg in partnership with Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface. They were attended by 23 Francophone participants (14 from Manitoba, 7 from Saskatchewan and 2 from the Northwest Territories).

We also set up an intensive training workshop called Momentum. After an intense week of training, five of the people who completed it (including one Francophone) were each invited to make a 10-minute film and these films were then distributed. The reaction of filmmakers to the first bilingual Momentum program in Toronto, including that of 22 Ontario Francophones, was extremely enthusiastic.

André Gagnon, head of sound post-production at NFB Montreal, travelled to Moncton on January 22 to give a day of professional development training in sound editing and mixing to Chris Goguen, sound editor and owner of the RévoluSon sound editing studio. The studio will be used for the sound editing and mixing of three short documentary films produced under the Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official Language Communities (IPOLC).

In November 2003, two film editing workshops on the Final Cut Pro system were given in the region, one for professionals and the other for beginners. In all, a dozen participants received training given by Marc-André Fergusson, a professional film editor and certified instructor. The Final Cut Pro system was purchased with IPOLC funds in 2002-03 to be used for Kino films made in the region. The system is also used to edit documentary shorts made under the IPOLC program.

B) Activities for Anglophones in official-language minority communities

Distribution

General public

Publications/Information

The NFB website provides a full range of information in both official languages.

All publications issued by the NFB concerning its Montreal CineRobotheque, as well as those related to the Mediatheque in Toronto (including the cinema programs), are available in both English and French, even when films are screened in the original French.

The Reel Diversity program, designed to attract to the NFB new visible minority filmmakers from Quebec and the rest of the country, launched its competition by distributing posters at all universities in Quebec that offer courses in English, as well as at CEGEPs, multicultural associations, artistic forums, film co-operatives and other organizations. The competition was also announced on university and community radio stations.

Located in the cultural heart of Montreal, the NFB CineRobotheque is part of a high-tech centre featuring a videodisc-handling robot and 21 individual or double viewing units enabling users to browse the NFB's extensive catalogue. Other amenities available at NFB Montreal include a Videoclub and a CineBoutique with personalized service, where one can find NFB titles in English and French, together with a variety of other items.

The English-language productions of the NFB English Program are available across Canada through our English online catalogue and store <www.nfb.ca/nfbstore> and our toll-free number.

Screenings

The following films were shown in Quebec cinemas:

Sentenced to Life was shown January 9-15, 2004 at Cinéma Parallèle, Ex-Centris.

El Contrato, *The Fifth Province*, *Totem*, *Solo*, *Open Secrets*, and *Apples and Oranges* were presented as part of the *Rencontres internationales du documentaire de Montréal*.

Point of Order, *Showa Shinzan* and *Fair Phyllis* were shown at the *Carrousel international du film de Rimouski*.

The NFB Cinema on St. Denis Street got into the spirit of the Just for Laughs Festival by featuring humorous films and offering free guided tours of the CineRobotheque.

The films presented were: *Frank the Wrabbit*, *Canada Vignettes: Instant French*, *My Grandmother Ironed the King's Shirts*, *Christopher*, *Please Clean Up Your Room!*, *How*

Dinosaurs Learned to Fly, Glasses, Bob's Birthday, Village of Idiots, George and Rosemary and No Problem.

Support and Training

The Filmmaker Assistance Program is open to all English-language filmmakers in Canada. In 2003-04, the program supported 65 projects put forward by filmmakers working in English in Quebec.

In January 2004, the Quebec Centre launched the *Youth and Social Change* project, in co-operation with the Montreal Black Community Resource Centre. The project involved selecting ten young Anglophones who were very interested in video and helping them to make a documentary painting a positive picture of their community. Since they had no experience in directing either a film or a video, the participants first attended workshops on all aspects of video production (research, writing, interview techniques and pre-production).

In making *Revolutionary Underground*, the participants not only broadened their knowledge of video and increased their respect for it, but also acquired useful experience in a variety of areas: communication, time management, goal-setting, brainstorming, problem-solving, co-operation and teamwork.

In addition to the workshops, the NFB provided technical support for the project by lending a camera as well as sound and editing equipment. The NFB also hired two mentors to work closely with the young participants.

The launch of *Revolutionary Underground* is planned for the end of May and the video will be distributed both locally and internationally. The project was born of a need to foster discussion among youth.

Doc Shop is a Quebec Centre project for Anglophone college and university students enrolled in film, video or communications programs in Montreal. In co-operation with the CBC and selected educational institutions, we invited students to present proposals for a five-minute video on the theme of "positive experiences in our community." Twenty-four proposals were selected by the jury. Each team received \$500, three digital videocassettes, technical support and equipment, as well as a weekend's training on techniques for making a professional quality video. Each video also has a chance of being aired on CBC.

This project meets two objectives. It encourages co-operation among the NFB, the CBC and educational institutions in the region, as well as the discovery of new talent. But above all, it gives students considering a career in film the opportunity to gain hands-on experience directing and distributing a documentary.

Judging from the proposals received and the reactions of the teams who took part in the weekend workshop given on March 20 and 21, *Doc Shop* is a stimulating and extremely motivating experience. Students had an opportunity to discuss their ideas with film professionals, who held their interest with personal anecdotes, knowledge, methods, tips and practical equipment-handling techniques.

The 24 rough cuts will be screened by the CBC, as well as by the NFB and the participating CEGEPs and universities. The CBC will select the videos that it intends to air, and the NFB will be responsible for the final cut.

The Animation Hothouse is another example of the NFB's unwavering commitment to emerging filmmakers. This intensive in-studio training provides participants with tools, resources, support and mentoring. It offers faster, more flexible ways to create animation, while maintaining creative and technical excellence. Through initiatives such as the Animation Hothouse, the NFB contributes to furthering the academic training of young filmmakers. The NFB also shows its support for up-and-coming filmmakers by allocating 35% of its production to the work of new talent. This year, two of the six directors selected were Anglophones from Montreal.