

# The Awakening a shallow soap opera movie

By CLYDE GILMOUR  
Star movie critic

The troubled romance of an ex-priest and an ex-nun is unfolded in *The Awakening*, the first movie I've ever seen that shows a reverend sister with false eyelashes. It's at the International Cinema.

This is a Canadian film, made in Quebec in 1970 by Denis Heroux under the title *L'Amour Humain*. The screenplay is by Roger Fournier, based on "an idea" that evidently occurred simultaneously to director Heroux and Andre Link.

Since then the production has been dubbed into English, presumably under the supervision of someone who learned the language from tourist brochures, or possibly from cornflakes packages. Hardly anybody in real life talks like the people in this soundtrack.

For example, when Sister Constance (Louise Marleau) tells Mother Superior that she is having problems, the older woman asks her gravely: "Have you anything with which to reproach yourself?"

Later, the pretty nun mentions that she may shift to nursing duties while still remaining in holy orders. An adviser murmurs: "Yes, I think you have the necessary generosity to practise this profession."

The priest in the story is played by Jacques Riberolles, a rugged French actor. He looks a bit like Jack Lord, the action star of television's *Hawaii Five-O*.

His role is that of Father Lambert, a clergyman who fumes with frustration every time he officiates at a wedding. In his fantasies, he is always the first to kiss the bride.

An athletic session in a bowling alley fails to cool the celibate's forbidden yearnings. He keeps wanting to make a different kind of strike.

The movie, however, is not anti-clergy. There is absolutely no hanky-panky between Father Lambert and Sister Constance until after they have renounced their vows. This, we gather, is a thing that can be done as quickly and easily these days as cancelling a reservation in a restaurant.

After a toboggan holiday in the snow,

the ex-priest and the ex-nun decide to get married. There is a photographer at the wedding, but nothing at all is shown to indicate the publicity and the prying curiosity that would inevitably follow such a union.

The marital partners are plagued by secret doubts about the wisdom of their decision. This beclouds their wedded bliss. Besides, erotic foreplay makes Constance throw up. It's a hazard not fully dealt with in most of the sex manuals.

In the most shallow and soap-operatic fashion, the movie deals with the efforts of this worried couple to achieve a lifestyle that will work for them as individuals without persistently lacerating their collective conscience.

Constance goes home to her mother. Her husband, who now calls himself Julian, works fretfully as a teacher and hangs moodily around a bar. Even there, fate hands him another twisted blow. The sexy singer he dates turns out to be a male transvestite with a wife—and the wife is a lesbian.

*The Awakening* finally offers a singularly abrupt and unconvincing

happy ending. Director Heroux's style is corny to the last, including a lyrically misty nude love scene photographed from the inside of a glowing fireplace. Alfred Hitchcock has been ridiculing such a shot in his interviews for many years, but there's always someone who is rash enough to tackle it again.



LOUISE MARLEAU  
A nun with false eyelashes

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