

# Death of Canadian films exaggerated

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124  
The Canadian movie industry is in much better shape this year than anyone expected.

Producers, stockbrokers and **Canadian Film Development Corporation** officials had gloomily predicted since April that 1980 production would fall by as much as half of last year's record \$150 million in 55 pictures.

But budgets of all movies before cameras this year totalled \$170 million, 13 per cent higher than last year.

The \$170 million was spread over 53 pictures, 38 of them English-language, 11 French-language, and four official co-productions with France. The total would have been \$8 million to \$8.5 million higher if **Pure Escape**, the **James Garner** comedy caper had not collapsed last week after five weeks filming in Lethbridge, Alta.

## 'Typically Canadian'

"Everybody's surprised that there's an increase," says **David Perlmutter**, president of the **Canadian Association Of Motion Picture Producers**. "It is typically Canadian to be negative without having the cold facts about a situation," says **Andre Lamy**, the corporation's new executive director.

This year's movie budgets ranged from \$42,827 for the Quebecois feature **Une Saison A Lots Renverses** to \$10.5 million for **The Amateur**, an espionage tale scheduled to start shooting in early December. Most were in the \$4 million to \$6 million range.

As usual, many of them had star headliners; **Jack Lemmon**, **Lee Remick**, **Robby Benson** in **Tribute**, **Bruce Dern** in **The Last Desperado**, **Richard Chamberlain** in **Bells**, **Robert Hays** in **Utilities**, **Glenn**



**SID ADILMAN**

**Eye on Entertainment**

**Ford** in **Happy Birthday To Me**, **John Cassavetes** in **Incubus**, **Wayne Rogers**, **Samantha Eggar** and **Melvyn Douglas** in **The Hot Touch**, and **John Savage** and **Marthe Keller** in **The Amateur**.

But fewer pictures this year than last headlined major international stars, Perlmutter notes. Some stars hired last year proved to be no guarantee of box office success in North America or of much interest around the world. More Canadian actors had larger roles in big-budget movies and were starred with unknown international talent. Examples: **Misdeal**, **Ticket To Heaven**, **If You Could See What I Hear**, **Touch The Wind**, **Quest For Fire**.

"It indicates to me," Perlmutter says, "that there is much more confidence on the part of the brokerage industry and the banking community than we had previously anticipated, or that they even had indicated. And that they have done a good job in selling these films (to investors)."

Both Perlmutter and Lamy point to much scare talk in the movie industry, following generally downbeat reviews by Canadian critics for Canadian pictures shown at the **Cannes Film Festival**. And Perlmutter notes that fewer movies this year were associated with American co-producers. "Canadians," he says, "are much more responsible for our films and our own destinies. The only picture that

collapsed while filming had American executive producers."

Two of the year's feature-length movies were made by the **National Film Board** and investors in all the others will qualify for a 100 per cent tax deferment allowed by Ottawa.

Another boost for the movie scene is newly compiled information showing that a record 23 Canadian pictures made over the last 18 months have secured all-important distribution in the United States. So far, two of the 1980 crop have landed guarantees of U.S. release, **Tribute** and **Happy Birthday To Me**. And several more are expected to land in that column.

## Murray No. 1

**Anne Murray's** song **Could I Have This Dance** scored the number one spot on country charts this week in all three key record trade papers, **Billboard**, **Cashbox** and **Music World**. She sang the **The Urban Cowboy** wedding theme on the movie's soundtrack and it's another million copy seller for her.

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**Chris Makepeace**, star of **My Bodyguard** and **Meatballs**, doesn't act much in the fall and winter; he attends **Jarvis Collegiate**. But this week he's doing a guest filming stint on CTV's **The Littlest Hobo**.

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Veteran American actor **Richard Farnsworth**, headlining **The Grey Fox** movie in Vancouver, had two reasons to cheer **Ronald Reagan's** victory. Farnsworth did stunt work for Reagan in the 1948 **Stallion Road** and voted for him for president. But Farnsworth hedges on whether he would be available for the stunt work should Reagan need it in the White House.