

# Book Review

## Film News Index 1939-1981

Rohama Lee, Editor  
Highsmith Press, Fort Atkinson,  
Wis., 1992. Paper Cover, 740 pp.

Looking back over half a century at the history of 16mm films, also called nontheatrical, can be a treat for those who played an active role in this vital component of the information explosion. Students of cinema history can gain valuable insight into the role of nontheatrical film in the modernization of education.

This is possible now that Rohama Lee, long-time editor of *Film News*, has made her dream a reality through much perseverance. It is a fitting tribute to her to have this exceedingly valuable reference book make it into print.

What a gold mine! More publishers and editors should emulate Rohama Lee. Every serious periodical deserves as much attention to history as Lee has given to the 42 years of *Film News* life.

While 16mm film as a presentation system is yielding to newer technologies, recognition of this film medium's role in the information explosion is growing. *Film News Index 1939-1981* is a rich resource covering four decades at the core of the visual revolution. Nontheatrical

16mm films are the forerunner of today's love affair with television and its outgrowths of video, videotape, the computer, and the latest, multimedia II.\*

The huge volume summarizes more than 300 issues of *Film News* with reviews and articles that mirror life in the heart of the century. Primary are thumbnail reviews of some 5000 motion pictures — educational subjects, classic Hollywood films, television documentaries, and industrial and government-sponsored films, all used in the classroom.

That alone makes the volume a must for every serious library the world over. America's place in the world of cinema is undisputed. This index chronicles the important films produced over half a century of the Hollywood and film heyday.

Just as valuable are the descriptive sketches of more than 1100 articles that have appeared over four decades of publication. Collectively they depict a developing visual medium, especially important for the instruction process. Giving further value are index sections by author, producer, and subject.

Behind this index are years of effort on the part of many people. Helping Lee were co-editors Elizabeth D. Lloyd and Eileen Allen, Syracuse University graduate research associates. The critical job of summarizing the 5000 film reviews and

over 1000 articles was accomplished by 16 library school students. What a valuable experience. I envy them.

The three-page preface is, in effect, an autobiography of the editor, who witnessed the vital period of media growth as an instruction staple. Lee's acknowledgment also thanks a dozen individuals, two companies, and a film council for monetary support plus the work of six librarians and three friends. This underlines the importance of this volume in many people's minds.

For me, seeing dozens and dozens of familiar names through the book was a delight. It is a veritable *Who's Who* of persons who have made significant contributions to the world of educational media. It is recommended reading.

—Tom Hope

\* Multimedia II, incorporating two or more media with a computer, is the current system, but it cannot claim first use of the world. Multimedia I, often combining such media as the overhead transparency, audiocassette, and videocassette, plus printed material, has been an educational instruction tool for more than 35 years. The numerical I and II clarification has been offered by this reviewer in the editorial for the *Hope Reports 1993 AV Media Events Calendar*.

# New Products

The MAX-9000 Series, an expanding family of digital distribution and conversion modules, has been introduced by The Grass Valley Group, P.O. Box 1114, Grass Valley, CA 95945, (916) 478-3141. The company is now shipping two types of serial digital distribution amplifiers, the M9131 Serial Digital Fanout DA and the M9132 Serial Digital Reclocking DA. Both modules have been designed to handle either composite or component serial digital signals. They feature modular construction and can be used in the same frame along with other MAX-9000 digital or MAX-900 Series analog modules. The M9131 Fanout DA is designed for applications where cable runs are 30 m or less and where no processing of the serial digital signal is required. It may be configured as a single 1-input by 8-output amplifier or as a dual 1-input by 4-output amplifier. When operated in the latter mode, one

input may be composite and the other component. The M9132 Reclocking DA is designed for applications where cable runs are longer than 30 m and where jitter may be present on the input signal. The M9132 provides automatic cable equalization for up to 300 m of high-quality cable (Belden 8281 or equivalent). The module's reclocking feature reduces jitter on the input signal, which is important for multiple passes.

Circle Reader Service No. 101

A software application for users of the Chyron CODI™ character generator was introduced by Synesis, Inc., 174 Jerome Pl., Bloomfield, NJ 07003. CGTools™ provides highly flexible, full-featured control of CODI. The software application is an intuitive DOS-based user interface that insulates the user from CODI's built-in intelligent interface com-

mand language while providing easy-to-use keyboard and mouse control. The software features a built-in command and text file editor, which can be used to create text files or import text from most PC-compatible word processors. Complete control over text positioning, color, font, and transparency is provided. Text files created within the software may be used to create pages of text or messages with CODI. The product provides a rich set of tools for creating and updating tab fields or templates and supports the downloading of Chyron-supplied Bitstream™ fonts, multicolored logos, and PCX graphics files to the character generator.

Circle Reader Service No. 102

Media Composer Model 210 was announced by Avid Technology, Inc., One Park West, Tewksbury, MA 01876, (508) 640-6789; Fax: (508) 640-1366. The prod-

uct consists of software and board-level hardware that can be added to a Macintosh computer to create a professional, digital nonlinear, off-line editing system. The unit allows editors to quickly edit off-line versions of their video programs, complete with audio crossfades and video transitions, and output approval copies of the program directly to videotape.

**Circle Reader Service No. 103**



*Leitch Still File Special Edition*

**The Still File Special Edition (SE)** is available from Leitch Inc., 920 Corporate Lane, Chesapeake, VA 23320, (804) 548-2300; Fax: (804) 548-4088. Based on a standard 486 DX computer, the SE is equipped with a 300-Mbyte, high-performance, internal SCSI image storage drive. External expansion allows additional image storage for applications demanding greater on-line image capacity. The unit offers both analog NTSC and digital D-2 video. Stills may be cataloged with descriptive keywords, grouped by clients, dates, or programs, and can be sorted, printed, archived, or inserted into sequences.

**Circle Reader Service No. 104**

**The FA-510 Digital Time Base Corrector** now includes a unique color correction that controls red and blue white-and-black balance as well as the Y gamma characteristic, it was announced by For-A Corp., 313 Speen St., Natick, MA 01760, (508) 650-3902; Fax: (508) 651-8729. The addition further enhances the benefits of the product's motion-compensated, recursive noise reduction for luminance and chrominance. As a result, the FA-510 also achieves increased output signal-to-noise ratio up to 9 dB with no loss of resolution to produce the highest quality color pictures in processing offtape signals and in post-production, cable TV, and broadcast applications. The product's features include

adaptive comb filtering to provide 5.0 MHz bandwidth for composite VCR sources; and for Y/C inputs, the full-band channel and CCIR Rec. 601 4 2:2 processing for the highest possible resolution.

**Circle Reader Service No. 105**

**A 4:2:2 Frame Synchronizer** was unveiled by Vistek Americas, 1898 Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94303, (415) 424-8336; Fax: (415) 424-8304. The V4301 offers broadcast performance as well as the flexibility to interface with component and composite standards. When used with composite inputs, the output is independent of the input SC/H phase relationship. The single frame delay will minimize problems with audio timing, compared with 8-field composite synchronizers.

The product provides a stable output, even when the input signal is of marginal quality. The optional remote-control panel controls up to six synchronizers. The product is offered in two versions, the V4301 with component input and output, and V4301/P composite model with a PAL Varicomb decoder and a multistandard encoder PAL B,G,I, and N, and S-VHS format (Y/C). Both versions will accept a Y/C input. SECAM input/outputs are also available.

**Circle Reader Service No. 106**



*Alan Gordon Enterprises SLAM-CAM 35*

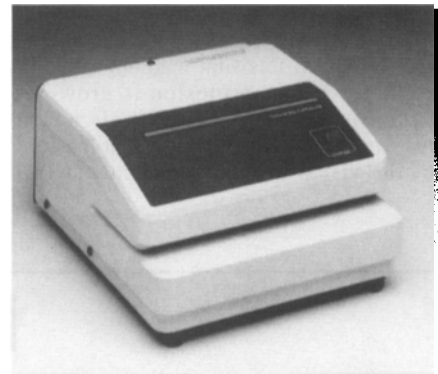
**The SLAM-CAM 35**, a 35mm motion-picture camera specially designed for point-of-view and crash-camera photography, was launched by Alan Gordon Enterprises, 1430 Cahuenga Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90028, (213) 466-3561; Fax: (213) 871-2193. The product is easy to use, incorporating the basic mechanical elements of the Bell & Howell Eyemo camera (mechanism plate, shutter, and shuttle assembly). The new features are a crystal-controlled motor, with infinitely variable speeds from 4 to 50 frames/sec in 1-frame increments, a digital footage counter, four extra mounting points (allowing the camera to be mounted in

tight or restricted areas), and remote-controlled triggering. The camera utilizes a 100-ft daylight-load spool. A variety of lens mounts are available, and the camera can be supplied with Arri PL, Arri B, Arri S, and Canon lens mounts. The unit is powered by a 12 to 160-V battery and uses 1.2 to 1.4 amps at 24 frames/sec. It has a 160° shutter, offering flicker free photography when used with HMI lighting at 6, 8, 12, 15, 24, 30, and 40 frames/sec.

**Circle Reader Service No. 107**

**COOLSCAN™**, a revolutionary 35mm film scanner, was introduced by Nikon Electronic Imaging, 1300 Walt Whitman Rd., Melville, NY 11747-3064, (516) 547-4200. The unit, which utilizes the company's patented scanning illumination technology, is available in internal (to the personal computer) and external versions for both the Macintosh and PC/compatibles. The product captures 24 bits/pixel in a single-pass RGB scan of both color and black-and-white 35mm negative or transparency material, to yield a maximum resolution of 2700 dots/in. Scan sharpness and color fidelity are unparalleled in the product category.

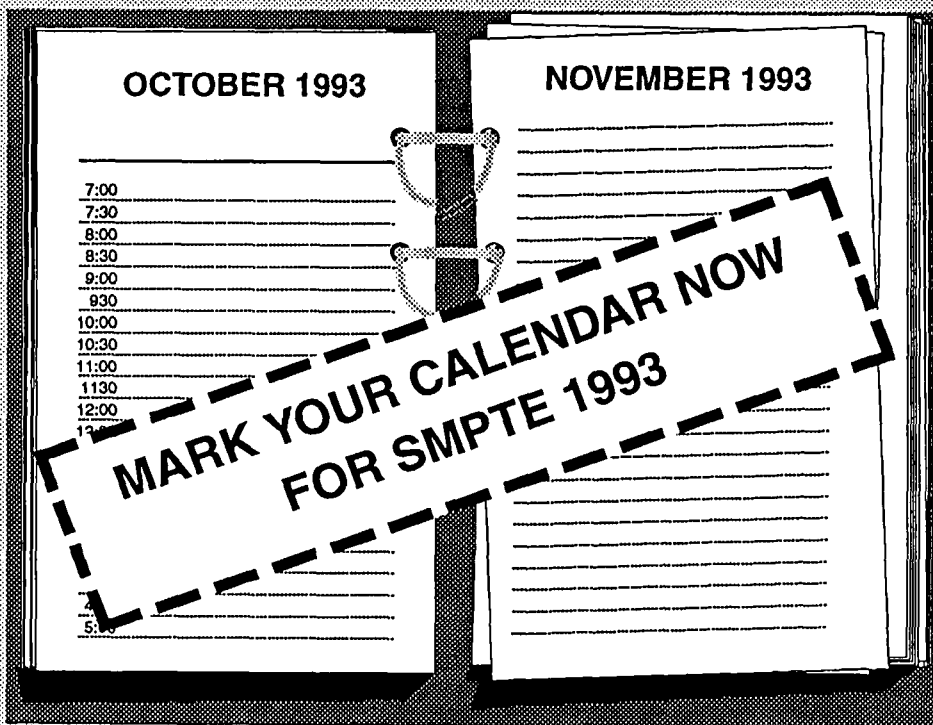
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*Allen Products electronic sensitometer*

**An electronic sensitometer for use with all black-and-white film** was debuted by The Allen Products Co., 180 Wampus Lane, Milford, CT 06460, (203) 878-7454. This highly precise instrument provides early detection of adverse changes in the development process and can save both time and material costs. Designed for use with single-sided film, the sensitometer uses a digital, controlled white light source to expose a 21-step gray scale wedge with .15 density increments. The unit incorporates an integrating control system to compensate for variations in light intensity. With a range of exposure times that can be selected from .1 to 3.2 sec, the product operates with the touch of a button and generates test exposures with a known, repeatable, electronically controlled light source.

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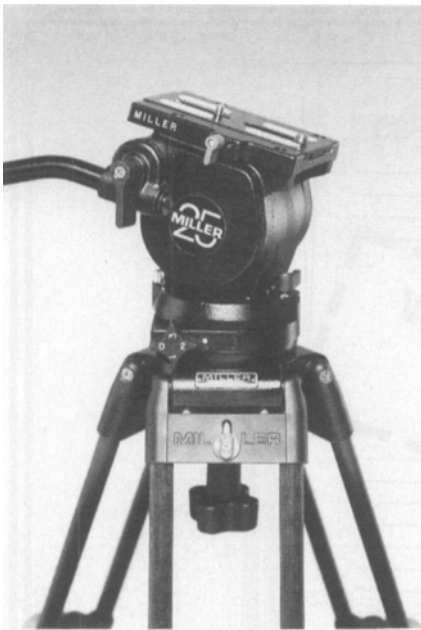
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Miller pan-and-tilt fluid head

Two products were announced by Miller Fluid Heads (USA) Inc., 410 Garibaldi Ave., Lodi, NJ 07644, (201) 473-9592; Fax: (201) 473-9693. The Miller 25 is a pan-and-tilt fluid head, designed to fulfill market demands for both a lighter, lower profile head for ENG operations with the latest generation camcorder broadcast cameras and to provide a larger capacity head for corporate/industrial video users when studio configured cameras are required. The product's features include a multistep fluid drag control system with light, medium, and heavy drag settings plus a "free wheel" position. This multistep system ensures distinct variance in fluid drag settings and smooth, controllable movements, particularly at the start or finish of a pan. The quick-release camera platform includes a sliding balance plate which, in conjunction with the counterbalance system, provides perfect balancing throughout the tilt range. Additional features include positive pan/tilt locks, safety camera release, dual handle carriers, bubble level, and integrated 100-mm ball leveling.

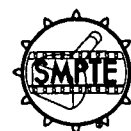
Carbon-fiber tripods available in single and two-stage models and in 100-mm and 75-mm ball tops accommodate all of the company's, and most other manufacturers', ball-leveling fluid heads in these sizes. Compared to an equivalent alloy tripod, a carbon-fiber unit is lighter by 25 times. It provides virtually no twisting or pan backlash, even when using heavy drag settings on a fluid head. It's extreme rigidity is a result of interlocking layers of fiber wound at  $\pm 15^\circ$  to the center axis. The resultant material is, pound for pound, both lighter than aluminum and stronger than steel.

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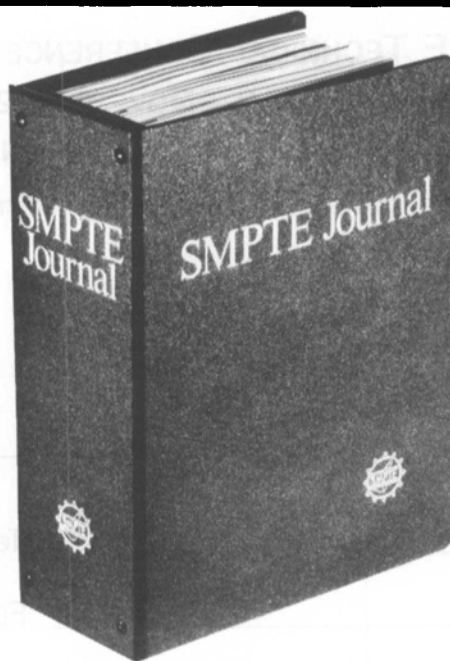
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