

'Motion' a labour of love

By **GEORGE WILLIAMS**

As rare as it may seem, cooperation between a university department and a student organization recently bore fruit when the Audio-Visual Department (SGW Campus) was presented with a copy of the film *Meditation in Motion* by Irene Angelico, the film's thirty-one-year old director. Angelico, an adept of the Oriental discipline of Tai-Chi since 1974, approached CUTV in 1976 with the idea for a short film on that subject.

A videotape ensued, after which Angelico approached the National Film Board with her project, using the videotape to back up her proposal. The film was subsequently funded by the NFB and premiered a couple of months ago.

CLOSE CO-OPERATION

The CUTV-AVD connection came into play during the videotape stage when both organizations cooperated in its

development. Basil Vasiliou, former station-manager of CUTV, worked closely with both Angelico and Iris Robbins of AVD in bringing the project to term. Says he, "The whole exercise was a beautiful example of people pulling together to get something done. And it wasn't an easy tape to get together. Tai-Chi, though very visual, is not easily transcribed to film. The idea of conjuring up images that will be both visual and communicable is important."

Adds Angelico, winking at Vasiliou, "We were helped by a minimum of bureaucratic hassle and by people's energy. One of the things that was so important on the set was to maintain the calmness which is so much a part of Tai-Chi itself."

The AVD invested studio time and tape in the effort and Robbins feels that it was well worth it. "Just to have this film in our library makes the

exercise worth it, not to mention the learning experience involved with putting together a ten-minute film."

FOOTAGE SUBLIME

The film, *Meditation in Motion*, uses footage shot in China by the CBC and incorporates it with footage shot on Mount-Royal of a "dancer", Leslie Orr, doing the Tai-Chi exercises. The footage in China is sublime, expressing fully the intense yet gentle concentration of ordinary people doing their morning Tai-Chi exercises. The Mount-Royal footage is more rustic but no less expressive. "Leslie had all the necessary qualities," says Angelico. "She has the awareness of what is calm, of concentration in discipline; she can demonstrate the martial arts aspect of Tai-Chi while remaining completely graceful."

REAL CHALLENGE

"It was a real challenge to re-create visually and aurally an experience that's quite internal. We also had to reduce an exercise that normally takes thirty-five minutes to perform into a ten-minute format. But the positive energy and cooperation we received from CUTV, the AVD, the NFB, and the CBC allowed the production to coalesce. I just hope that what was going on behind the camera transpired into what was being filmed. I hope viewers will get the feeling that we had making it."

It is obvious from the way the principals talk of the film that it was a labour of love. The product, *Meditation in Motion*, is available from AVD for booking, call Maureen at 879-5974 or drop by Room H341 between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.



Irene Angelico (left) presents a copy of the film she directed - *Meditation in Motion* - to Iris Robbins, head of the VMR AudioVisual Department at Sir George campus. The National Film Board production was presented in appreciation of the aid offered by members of the audio-visual department and Concordia University Television. The film is available for viewing.