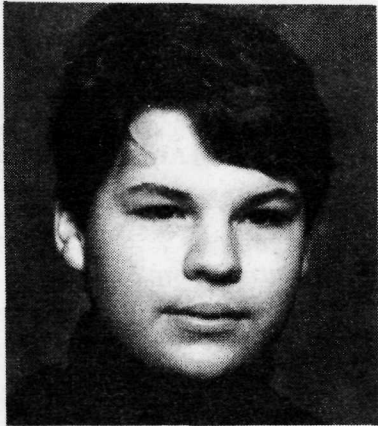


# Film-making provides "control" opportunities for teen

by EMILY ATKINSON

He is an actor, director and film writer and has recently begun the shooting of his latest film entitled *A Maggot Tango*.

He is not the big time Hollywood mogul that one might assume, at least not yet. Surprisingly, the person that fits this description is 17 year old Andrew Repasky McElhinney, a resident of Erdenheim and



Andrew Repasky McElhinney

a junior at Abington Friends School.

Andrew has already written, produced and directed two short films which have been well received. His current project, *A Maggot Tango*, in which he also acts, tells the very deep and complex story of a young woman who is experiencing both death and rebirth within the musical context of a tango.

Film has always been a love of Andrew's. But what really inspired him to make films of his own was seeing, first hand, the effect that they could have on an audience. He remembers being "wowed" by the silence and awe of the audience at the end of a presentation of a friend's project. He wanted to evoke this same kind of response on his own.

"Film making is the only medium where one can have total control." For him, it provides a "total experience," a realm where he can use everything that he loves, writing,

acting, directing, producing, even working with art and literature.

"Putting a film together is never easy," says Andrew. He goes through a "deliberate writing process" where his ideas and his writing are revised many times over before the arrival of the finished product.

"There comes a point where you have to know when to stop revising. One can always tinker with something, but you have to know when enough is enough." It is by "sticking with it," that Andrew feels that he can best achieve what he sets out to accomplish.

A large portion of the funding for the films comes out of Andrew's own

pocket. A sum of money he inherited from his grandmother has been very helpful to him. The rest comes from a variety of sources such as colleagues or friends. Usually, it is not very hard to find a way to fund the film he says, "I find people to be generally helpful."

The teenager is interested in starting a grant which would provide young film makers with the money to get their films off the ground.

Andrew is careful not to let his interest in film making interfere with his education, however. He views school and film making as being "two separate entities." During the school year, things such as

script writing and research for the film are done only when Andrew has free time. He devotes his summers to the actual shooting of the films, which takes up the majority of his time.

College is in the future of the young film maker. "College is necessary these days to go anywhere to do almost anything." He knows that he will go and he plans to do well.

Although not yet sure of the

particular college, Andrew wants to be in New York where he can be exposed to what is "such a rich environment of art." He plans to major in English.

Andrew's advice to others who share his interests is, "Just do it, don't talk about it, just start writing." He also stresses the importance of "immersing oneself completely in film," and watching as many films as possible.