

Russell's wacko world

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should rest on the seventh day, and Ken Russell's wacko contemporary version of Bram Stoker, with its dominatrix snake lady (Amanda Donohoe, who is terrific), Ed Woodish dialogue, and wonderfully tacky special effects, is a chance to do just that.

An archaeologist finds a weird skull in the English countryside, the evil snake lady from down the road steals it, and all hell breaks loose. Bagpipe fu, hand grenade fu, fang fu, mongoose fu, you name it, this picture has it all!

CROSSING THE RIVER D: Camelia Frieberg; **NEGUAQUAN — LAC LA CROIX** D: Judith Doyle; **THE DISPLACED VIEW** D: Midi Onodera. Canada. 6:30 pm ROM. Also Thursday, 4 pm, ROM.

Midi Onodera's **The Displaced View** is a cross-generational documentary that records her recovery of her Japanese-Canadian culture.



Joan Plowright, Joely Richardson and Juliet Stevenson play three women plotting to do away with the men in their lives in **Drowning By Numbers**, an offbeat film directed by Peter Greenaway.

Through family interviews, and Adam Swica's rich, painterly photography, Onodera creates a lyrical letter written to her grandmother, one she may never send, but whose value rests in the writing.

Crossing The River is the least successful of these three films. Camelia Frieberg (assistant director on *Family Viewing* and *Next of Kin*), makes her debut with a film about her relationship with a Salvadoran refugee, but never gets beneath the surface of her subject.

Judith Doyle's film (see inter-

view in this issue) is a documentary produced to help a remote Ojibway band in a legal battle with the Ontario government.

Introspection makes for a slow program, but this trio marks an important use of documentary strategies to write histories, personal or polemical. — CB

HARD TIMES, D: Joao Botelho. Portugal. CWC. 7 pm, Showcase. Also Friday, 4:30 pm, Showcase.

Addressing contemporary Portuguese life, this stark adaptation of Dickens lends a sparse, poetic air to

though, **Calling the Shots** deals with women filmmakers — more than 30 of them, ranging from Jeanne Moreau and Agnes Varda to Sandy Wilson and Lizzie Borden — a group of very smart, articulate and tough people. There is in some quarters an intense dislike of "talking heads" documentaries. But when the talk is this interesting, that is a specious argument.

A SHORT FILM ABOUT KILLING, D: Krzysztof Kielowski. Poland. NV. 9:30 pm, Uptown. Also, Thursday, 11 am, Uptown.

Made, incredibly, for a Polish