

Film-maker casts Dwight Eisenhower eating fish

Every Friday Joyce Wieland makes Dwight Eisenhower a fish dinner and photographs him while he eats it. Dwight doesn't object. That's because he's Miss Wieland's pet cat and star of her latest 15-minute color film—a serious study of a cat eating a fish.

Miss Wieland arrived in Toronto this week with her husband, Michael Snow, to stage an evening of "expanded cinema" at the Art Gallery of Ontario. The show, complete

with an original film, flashing lights, candle-covered altar and nine musicians wearing floral wreaths on their heads, was held Wednesday.

Although Miss Wieland has staged three of these evenings, she insists "these things aren't my scene". What she's interested in, she says, is making films.

"I got into this total thing," she says, "when Cinecity asked me to do one for its festival in June. I don't know why it asked me. I'd never

done one before. But still, I was really excited over it."

For five weeks Miss Wieland carried camera equipment around New York making Bill's Hat, a 50-minute film for the show. The movie revolves around a raccoon hat. "It's the hat of brotherhood," says Miss Wieland. "Many people wear it. I got it six years ago at a Hadassah Bazaar for 50 cents.

"Since the first showing in June I've put on the cinema once more in New York for the Cinematheque and then for the third time at the art gallery. But it may be my last total cinema. I wouldn't mind doing one every year,

but it takes six months to prepare a good one and really they are too expensive."

One of her total evenings costs \$1,000 and requires the services of 15 persons. "To do it really well," Miss Wieland says, "I'd like \$50,000. Some of the groups I'd like to use charge \$2,000 for one evening alone. Right now I'm going to stick to films."

Miss Wieland has been "sticking to films" for 10 years. After graduating from Central Technical School in art she worked in advertising and then found herself doing animation for Graphic Films. Five years later she was off to New York. Since then she's

been working in and around movies.

Her latest films, Sailboat and 1933, are short, repetitive studies. Sailboat is a three-minute color film of several sailboats drifting past the camera, under the word "sailboat". In the background there is a constant oceanic roar.

1933 is a five-minute series of repeated pictures of people crossing a street in fast motion. "It was taken from our apartment window in Lower Manhattan and the scene always looked to me like an old movie anyway, so I just speeded up the action," she said.

"I think you can learn a lot from the repetition of a particular scene. There is a luxury of images in this particular scene."

Miss Wieland says she's going to make a huge feature film eventually. "I'm not going to do any more of these total cinemas unless I can get a marvellous budget."



Joyce Wieland: she got into expanded cinema by chance.