

# Great cinema... Twice monthly!

News ... May 2010

## The True North strong and filmed

By Scott Whalen

O Canada...  
We see great films from thee...  
O Canada...  
we see...  
great films...  
from...  
thee!

OK, OK.

So maybe changing the words to our beloved O Canada isn't such a great idea after all. In the federal government's last Throne Speech, the idea of replacing the line "all thy sons command" in the anthem with a more gender-neutral phrase was proposed. Response from Canadians was swift and clear – tamper with the beloved O Canada at your peril – so the idea of new lyrics was quickly dropped.

Still, you could easily write a new anthem celebrating Canadian filmmaking.

And the Quinte Film Alternative could easily be named proud national flag-wavers when you consider that year in and year out, and film season after film season, the screen offerings always celebrate this country's creative talent at the movies. This season alone, the QFA is showing seven Canadian films or co-productions with other countries.

Despite that, the statistics about Canadian film remain grim – Canadian cinema has less than five per cent of the domestic theatrical box office; Hollywood has approximately 85 per cent and the rest of the world has 10 per cent.

According to Telefilm Canada, "the Canadian movie industry suffers in comparison to other cultural sectors. For example, in 2008 Canadian music artists captured 21 per cent of market share in Canada. The last official data, which dates back to 1997, shows that Canadian publishers occupied 45 per cent of the market. While we know that figure has declined somewhat, it is likely still between 30 and 40 per cent on a yearly basis."

But it's well known that Canadian soil is a fertile place for others to make movies. That has meant a booming movie industry, even if all the films aren't completely Canadian in origin or theme. In fact, film and television production in Canada is big business worth approximately \$4.5 billion to our economy and generating approximately 120,000 jobs.

And just consider that some of the world's best movies, actors, directors and film artists are Canucks that we can call our own and celebrate as much as a medal win at the Winter Olympics.

Some of the powerful movies that have won best Canadian feature film honours at the Genies over the last three decades include: *Goin' Down the Road*, *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, *The Changeling*, *The Terry Fox Story*, *My American Cousin*, *The Decline of the American Empire*, *Naked Lunch*, *Thirty-Two Short Films About Glenn Gould*, *Exotica*, *Le Confessionnal*, *The Red Violin*, *Sunshine*, *The Triplets of Belleville*, *C.R.A.Z.Y.*, *Bon Cop*, *Bad Cop*, *Away From Her*, *The Barbarian Invasions* and *Passchendaele*. Many of those films were shown in previous Quinte Film Alternative seasons.

As for actors and actresses, we count these fine folks among our special northern breed: Mary Pickford, Christopher Plummer, Sarah Polley, Jim Carrey, Keanu Reeves, Kim Cattrall, Paul Gross, Colleen Dewhurst, Dan Aykroyd, Donald and Kiefer Sutherland, Hayden Christiansen, Michael J. Fox, Ryan Gosling and many, many more.\

Our directing talent might not be as numerous as those well-known performers, but they still make up an impressive club, including: David Cronenberg, Norman Jewison, Deepa Mehta, Sarah Polley, Atom Egoyan, Paul Haggis, James Cameron, Patricia Rozema, Guy Maddin, Claude Jutra and Ivan and Jason Reitman.

Who knows what other talents are growing up or developing in the “True North strong and free”?

One thing is for certain – keeping your eyes on the screen during the Quinte Film Alternative's impressive season is a sure way to appreciate our unique Canadian movie arts.

Upcoming films set for May and June are all Canadian and all come highly acclaimed.

Wednesday, May 12, 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

*A Shine of Rainbows* (PG) – (Canada/Ireland, 2009; 100 minutes) – Tomas, a frail, shy eight-year-old boy, has been living a solitary life in a drab orphanage – sad, friendless and alone. Then a joyous burst of colour comes into his life: Maire O'Donnell introduces Tomas to the wonders of his world. A story about the transformational power of love – about finding acceptance, discovering magic and about realizing that rainbows are all around you – and within you.

Wednesday, May 26, 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

*Cole* (NR) – (Canada, 2008; 95 minutes) – Welcome to Lytton, population 350, “Home of the World- Famous Gold Rush Days” – and not much else. Twenty-two-year-old Cole feels trapped by his rigid life, unable to fulfill his writing dreams. When opportunity knocks, he jumps at the chance to escape his broken family. Feeling guilty for his

abandonment, he returns home, followed by a girl from school – with an unexpected impact on the town.

Wednesday, June 9, 7:30 p.m. only – QFA Members' Year-end Film & Party  
*La donation (The Legacy)* (PG) – (Canada, 2009; 96 minutes) Winner of multiple film festival awards, including the 2009 Best Canadian Feature Film at TIFF, *La donation* follows a troubled emergency-room doctor from Montreal who seeks solace by filling in for an aging physician in a small northern Quebec town. Directed by the legendary Bernard Émond (*The Necessities of Life*, QFA 2009), it soon becomes clear that this could be more than a temporary position but the young doctor questions her ability to deal with life in this remote village.

All screenings at The Empire Theatre in downtown Belleville. Single tickets are \$10 general admission, \$8 for matinees and \$5 for students.  
Tickets for the June 9<sup>th</sup> Year-end Film & Party can be purchased by non-members for \$20 each. All new memberships for 2010 - 2011 purchased in May include a ticket for the June 9<sup>th</sup> event.

For more information, please visit [www.quintefilmalternative.ca](http://www.quintefilmalternative.ca)