

have heard Norma Bailey, producer of the National Film Board of Canada's award-winning *Daughters of the Country* talk about some aspects of the making of the series on numerous occasions in the past several weeks. A CBC national broadcast and a fistful of awards (including the Yorkton Film Festival, 4 Gemis, Best Drama at the American Film and Video Festival and a special award at the American Indian Film Festival) have helped bring this remarkable series to the attention of the Canadian public.

After watching two parts of the series I took the opportunity to chat with Wendy Lill, the writer of *Ikwe*, the first film of the series. Ms. Lill has recently moved to Halifax where she is continuing her thriving career as a writer and playwright. The film is set in 1792 on Georgian Bay and is largely in Ojibway. I was most interested to find out how Ms. Lill was able to put herself into the appropriate cultural and temporal 'space' to be able to create characters and write a film set in this time. She told me she had taken a leap of faith that the emotional makeup of people, and in particular that of an 18-year-old woman (one of the lead characters of the film), had not fundamentally changed over time and that we share many experiences across cultures. Given this, and her very extensive historical and cultural research, she was able to reconstruct the world of Canada in the late 18th century and proceed from there. The film has a very authentic feel to it because of the careful attention to historical detail that script, setting and performances deliver. I was excited in seeing the historic fabric of Canada animated so sensitively and evocatively. It makes me think that there is ample scope here for creative filmic explorations of our history.

In the last issue of *Cinema Canada* I reported on the impending move of Wormwoods Dog and Monkey Cinema to new quarters and I am happy to report that the relocation has been successful and the patient looks... well, thriving. The new premises are much more spacious and there is the welcome addition of popcorn and coffee. Next door, to complement the cinematic atmosphere, a 'classic' video store (featuring all the Bergman and Kurasawa you could ever want to see) will soon be opening its doors.

The upstairs, meanwhile, houses the equally recently arrived Atlantic Filmmaker's Co-op (AFCCOOP) which also travelled across town to find more stable premises. Despite the gigantic task of moving and setting everything up, the Co-op has started shooting a new film by AFCCOOP president Glenn Walton. It is called *The Room at the Back* and is a half-hour drama.

Picture Plant's *Life Classes* is, as I write these words, being screened as the Canadian entry to the Berlin Film Festival, much to the jubilation of the local film community. It is the first time that a film from this region has made it to this prestigious event. Along to wave the Canadian and Picture Plant flags (I'm reliably informed that they know semaphore) are director Bill MacGillivray, producer Stephen Reynolds and production manager Terry Greenlaw. Also keeping them company are Imagex's Chris Zimmer and Red Snapper Films' leading lady Lulu Keating, who are along to promote *Mindshadows*, their Canadian-Dutch co-production which premiered this year at the Atlantic Festival Atlantique. *Mindshadows* is entered in the noncompetitive Panorama section of the festival. Apparently the reception for both films has been very good. MacGillivray, interviewed by telephone from Berlin said:

"What we found interesting were the questions they asked which had more to do with the content than the production. Usually in North America people say, 'How did you raise the money?' These people wanted to know the meaning of the film."

Keating and Zimmer report German television is interested in buying the film and that they were flying to Munich after the festival for some discussions. Their second screening of *Mindshadows* at the festival was sold out.

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