

## Kennedy Collects Awards in Rome

Rome, Italy July, 2007

In a gala presentation on the weekend, the **Roma Fiction Fest**, a major new international television festival, awarded prizes for **Best Writing** and for **Best Series** to CBC's new hit sitcom, *Little Mosque On the Prairie*.

**Michael Kennedy**, Director of the entire first season of *Little Mosque*, had been invited to the Festival and was on hand to accept the two awards on behalf of the producers, writers, and the rest of the talented team who find it a joy every day to help create the little show with the big heart. Upon accepting the Best Series award, Kennedy said "...this is really a tribute to people everywhere who believe that humour can heal the world."

*Little Mosque* was the only show to win two awards and did so against stiff competition that included big budget American shows such as *West Wing* and *Torchwood*. The Chair of the 30 member jury also reported that the Best Series award was a unanimous decision as *Little Mosque* won 30 out of 30 secret ballot votes.

*Little Mosque On The Prairie* is Executive-Produced by **Mary Darling** and **Clark Donnolly** of **West Wind Pictures**; the winning episodes were produced by **Michael Snook**, **Susan Alexander**, and **Colin Brunton**, and were written by **Al Rae**, **Rebecca Schecter**, **Zarqa Nawaz**, and **Susan Alexander**.

The Deputy Director of the Festival, Marco Spagnoli, introduced the show by saying, There was never a better time in this world for a show like *Little Mosque On The Prairie*, and no show did a better job of addressing some of our most pressing social concerns, yet with a sense of humour.

CBC is re-broadcasting the first season this summer. The 20 episode second season is in production and goes to air in October.

### Other notes:

Kennedy was nervous about how the show would go over because, I wondered how the jokes, many of them puns, would hold up with Italian subtitles, but the audience response was over-whelming. They laughed a great deal, they even broke into applause during the screenings, mid-scene sometimes, and they applauded long after the lights came up. At the Awards Gala, when *Little Mosque* was announced as winner of Best Series, a roar of approval went up from the huge crowd in the auditorium. Afterwards the jury members crowded around, anxious to finally be able to express how much they loved the show.

Terry O'Quinn, star of *Lost*, presented the first award to *Little Mosque*. Rosanna Arquette and Anthony Lapaglia were also presenters.

The Chair of the Jury for all Series competition was Alexander Siddig (24, *Syriana*, *Star Trek*). The 30 member jury was made up of people from all over Italy, in all walks of life. This peoples jury was a deliberate departure from the normal film expert jury seen at other festivals.

The Artistic Director of the Festival, Felice Laudadio, is the former Director of the Venice Film Festival, and ambitiously created this festival with the goal of being one of the great Festivals of Television in the world.

Festival

<http://www.romafictionfest.it/romafictionfest/index.php?lang=en>