



March 29, 2007

Dear Friend of REEL CANADA,

The second REEL CANADA Festival has come to a close, and we are pleased to report that it has been a great success! We'd like to thank our many friends and sponsors for their encouragement and support.

From February 13 to March 9, we visited nine Toronto high schools in diverse neighbourhoods across the city. In each school, we presented a daylong festival of Canadian films, complete with special guests and workshops.

In total, we presented 54 individual screenings to over 5,000 students across the GTA. We showed 20 feature films and documentaries, ten short films and 14 animated pieces. All the films that we screened were chosen by the students themselves from our curated program, and each festival day was as unique as the school that hosted it. Popular choices included C.R.A.Z.Y., THE ROCKET, WATER, LAST NIGHT, THE RED VIOLIN, SIBLINGS and EMPz 4 LIFE.

Support from the filmmaking community was sensational. Many filmmakers and actors took the time to come out and present their work, some in as many as three or four different schools. Among the special guests this year were Atom Egoyan, Allan King, Peter Lynch, Don McKellar, Deepa Mehta, Peter Raymont, David Weaver, Paul Gross, Michael D'Ascenzo, Jill Frappier, Renuka Jeyapalan, Greg Klymkiw, Stephen McHattie, Tara Spencer-Nairn and animators from the Smiley Guy Studios. Directors Jean-Marc Vallée and Mina Shum joined us via live webcast from Montreal and Vancouver respectively.

In addition to film industry professionals, we were also happy to have speakers such as author Devyani Saltzman and the subjects of some of the documentaries in our program – including Brian Henry and the stars of Allan King's *EMPz 4 Life* and Claire Wihogora, who is featured in the powerful short *Yesterday in Rwanda*.

We would like to thank everyone who came out to see REEL CANADA in action, including Mayor David Miller, Ontario Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne, Toronto Film Commissioner Karen Thorne-Stone, and Ivan Fecan, as well as our many fantastic sponsors, without whom REEL CANADA would not have been possible.

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This year, REEL CANADA garnered a great deal of media attention. Print coverage included interviews and articles in the Toronto Star, the Globe and Mail, Metro, Playback, and several publications targeted distributed in high schools (Verve Girl, B-Zone, Fuel). We did feature radio interviews on CFRB Newstalk 1010 as well as three CBC programs – Here & Now, Freestyle, and CBC National News. On television, we (and many of our incredible filmmaker guests) were featured on MTV Live and MTV Live News, SUN TV, eTalk Daily, STAR!, Rogers “In Toronto”, OMNI News South Asian Edition, CBC’s “Living in Toronto”. We were covered by CTV News at Noon and News at Six, and appeared on ET Canada three times. Last but not least, several online publications took a keen interest in REEL CANADA, including Playback online, Workopolis (which featured the Globe and Mail article in their Education News), and Verve Girl Collective, a new youth-focused online community which will feature full interviews with Atom Egoyan and Deepa Mehta later this month.

The press we received gave REEL CANADA the beginnings of a national profile, as evidenced by letters of enquiry and support from cities and smaller communities across the country, and increased traffic on our website www.reelcanada.ca.

Now that our 2006/2007 season has drawn to a close, we’re focusing on wrapping up our work and addressing the many requests from educators outside of Toronto. We hope you will continue to show your support for and interest in this program. We will certainly keep you informed of our development and progress.

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack Blum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jack" being more prominent than the last name "Blum".

Jack Blum
Executive Director
REEL CANADA

REEL CANADA is made possible by the generous support of:

FOUNDING SPONSOR: Telefilm Canada

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