



makes you think

media release

THE ALLAN KING FILM FESTIVAL: TVO CELEBRATES A MASTER FILMMAKER

Sunday April 26 to Friday May 1 2009

A retrospective of acclaimed Canadian filmmaker Allan King's work and a five-minute documentary from the winner of the Allan King Film Festival Contest

"I've had the privilege of getting paid to make films about all the major questions of life – personal, social – that have perplexed me."

—Allan King

Toronto April 3, 2009 — From Sunday April 26 to Friday May 1, TVO presents a retrospective of the work of master filmmaker Allan King. King's renowned, often controversial films explore the complex and bittersweet psychological and sociological aspects of the human condition. They tackle challenging subjects such as emotionally disturbed children, marriage conflict, and the fear and dignity of dying. The opening night also features *Actuality: The Art and Life of Allan King*, a portrait of this great filmmaker commissioned by TVO. Allan King hosts the festival, introducing each of the films, with a discussion of their themes and anecdotes about the making of each film.

Viewers can watch the following Allan King films during the festival.

- *Skidrow*
- *Rickshaw*
- *Warrendale* – first aired on TVO
- *A Married Couple*
- *Who Has Seen the Wind*
- *Empz 4 Life* – commissioned by TVO
- *Dying at Grace* – commissioned by TVO

Broadcast dates, times and descriptions follow.

During the weeklong festival, viewers can go online to tvo.org/akfestival for additional behind-the-scenes features, such as an interview with *A Married Couple's* Antoinette some 40 years after the film was made, as well as additional insights from Allan King.

In addition to presenting King's films, TVO wanted aspiring filmmakers to demonstrate how they can work within the documentary form. So TVO created the Allan King Film Festival Contest, inviting filmmakers to create a five-minute film. The jury (which includes Allan King) has shortlisted three finalists from the 72 submissions, and now it's time for documentary fans, especially, and Allan King's fans, to have their say. Through Thursday April 9 at 12 noon they can go online to tvo.org/akfestival to view and vote on the films. The winning film will have its world broadcast premiere on TVO during the Allan King Festival, and the lucky filmmaker will receive an industry pass to Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, North America's largest documentary festival.

Schedule: The Allan King Film Festival on TVO

Sunday April 26: Opening night triple bill:

9 pm *Skidrow* (1956, 37 min., 16 mm, b&w)

Exploring the lives of several homeless men and revealing how their pasts explain some of the reasons why they've turned to booze and survival on the streets of Vancouver's Lower East Side.

9:40 pm *Rickshaw* (1960, 28 min., 16 mm, b&w)

In *Rickshaw*, we meet Ram, a 16-year-old who moves from a small village to pull a rickshaw in Calcutta, India. The film deals with the endless cycle of poverty as father teaches son the trade. Lighter moments include Ram's first sighting of the big the city and the silent yet loving bond between father and son.

Skidrow and *Rickshaw* are early examples of King's work, both employing "voice-of-God" narration.

10:30 pm *Actuality: The Art and Life of Allan King*

A definitive portrait of this great filmmaker. King's career spans 50 years, during which time he has challenged the conventions of the documentary art form. In the documentary we see King still at work, and still challenging the viewer. The film looks back at pivotal moments, seamlessly weaving together interviews with King, images and passages from his major works (1956–2006), and a cinéma-vérité look at his film *Memory for Max, Ida and Company*, a TVO co-production.

Monday April 27

10 pm *Warrendale* (1967, 101 min., 16 mm, b&w)

A controversial film about troubled kids. The staff at Warrendale use "holding" in an effort to have kids talk through their complex emotions. *Warrendale* is one of King's most renowned films. Even though it was produced for the CBC back in 1967, it was shelved due to disturbing content, and King released it theatrically. TVO was the first to broadcast the film, on *Human Edge* in 1997.

Tuesday April 28

9 pm *A Married Couple* (1970, 97 min., 16 mm, colour)

A raw exploration of a marriage in freefall. In an effort to salvage their marriage, a middle-class couple opens the door to their home to expose the complex dynamics inherent in coupledness.

Wednesday April 29

10 pm *Who Has Seen the Wind* (1977, 100 min., 35 mm, colour)

One of King's most personal dramas. The film chronicles a young boy's coming of age in a small Canadian prairie town during the Depression.

Thursday April 30

9 pm *Empz 4 Life* (2006, 112 min., colour)

Brian Henry has been to jail and reformed. Now he works with at-risk youth. Racial stereotyping and the threat of violence and jail block these kids at every turn.

Mathematician John Mighton helps them discover how brilliant they can be and gives them hope.

Friday May 1

9 pm *Dying at Grace* (2003, 148 min., video, colour)

A highly respectful, brave and emotional "actuality drama" about five patients dying in the palliative care unit of the Salvation Army Toronto Grace Health Centre. This film is difficult to watch yet reassuring in the loving way family and friends gather to witness the intimacy of dying.

For more information on the Allan King Film Festival, visit tvo.org/akfestival.

About TVO

TVO is Ontario's public educational media organization and a trusted source of interactive educational content that informs, inspires and stimulates curiosity and thought. TVO's vision is to empower people to be engaged citizens of Ontario through educational media. For more information, visit tvo.org.

Where to find TVO

Cable channel 2 (channel may vary in some areas), Bell TV channel 265, Star Choice channel 353.

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