



makes you think

media release

IN MEMORY OF MASTER FILMMAKER ALLAN KING, TVO AIRS A RETROSPECTIVE OF HIS WORK

Seven groundbreaking Allan King documentaries air Sunday July 5 to Friday July 10 2009

You can only judge what is true or not true based on your own experience of life. Documentary filmmaking is not about telling the truth, it is about exploring reality. All that you can expect is that which you experience, and that the film corresponds with your sense of actuality.

Allan King

Toronto, June 19, 2009 — From Sunday July 5 to Friday July 10, TVO broadcasts a retrospective of the work of legendary Canadian filmmaker Allan King, who died on June 15 2009. King's renowned, often controversial films explore the complex and bittersweet psychological and sociological aspects of people's lives. They tackle challenging subjects such as emotionally disturbed children, marriage conflict, racism, the mythology of dementia, 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.

TVO first aired this retrospective from April 26 to May 1 2009 as the Allan King Film Festival, hosted by Allan King himself. The director introduced each of his films, with a discussion of their themes and anecdotes about the making of each film. Added to this upcoming retrospective lineup is *Memory for Max, Claire, Ida and company* (replacing the film drama *Who Has Seen the Wind*).

Viewers can watch seven Allan King documentaries during TVO's July 5–10 retrospective.

- *Skidrow*
- *Rickshaw*
- *Warrendale* – first aired on TVO
- *A Married Couple*
- *Memory for Max, Claire, Ida and company* – commissioned by TVO
- *Empz 4 Life* – commissioned by TVO
- *Dying at Grace* – commissioned by TVO

Broadcast dates, times and descriptions follow.

Viewers can also go online to tvo.org/akfestival for additional behind-the-scenes features, such as interviews that TVO conducted with Allan King about the making of some of his landmark films. The site also includes an interview with *A Married Couple's* Antoinette some 40 years after the film was made.

Schedule: The Allan King Film Retrospective on TVO: July 5–10 2009

Sunday July 5: Opening night triple bill:

9 pm *Skidrow* (1956, 37 minutes)

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 minutes)

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* (2006, 52 minutes)

Allan King's career spans 50 years, during which time he has challenged the conventions of the documentary art form. In this definitive portrait, 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 commission.

Monday July 6

10 pm *Warrendale* (1967, 101 minutes)

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, in 1997.

Tuesday July 7

10 pm *A Married Couple* (1970, 97 minutes)

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

Wednesday July 8

10 pm *Memory for Max, Claire, Ida and company* (2005, 112 minutes)

Over a four-month period, this film follows the daily lives of Max, Claire, Ida, and five other residents at an elder care facility in Toronto. Allan King, in collaboration with Baycrest's Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged in Toronto, has created a powerful and compassionate film that deconstructs the mythology of dementia.

Thursday July 9

10 pm *Empz 4 Life* (2006, 112 minutes)

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 July 10

10 pm *Dying at Grace* (2003, 148 minutes)

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 retrospective on TVO, 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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