

# Festival In a Van ☺ Junior High Program 7-9

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**2009 ViewFinders Movie. Animation. Green Screen Challenge Highlights:** These films are current and past ViewFinders Challenge finalists. Each short film has been created, filmed and edited by students in Atlantic Canada and is a commentary on issues relevant to young people today such as racism, bullying, the environment and growing up. We hope they inspire your class to create their own entry for this year's Challenge competition.

**2009 ViewFinders Productions Highlights:** We are proud to showcase videos produced this past year during ViewFinders Master Class workshops and our summer video academies. The writing, shooting and directing of the videos were collaborative efforts by all involved.

## **The Scavengers (10:57) Canada**

Choreographer, voice over artist, and actor Cory Bowles enters the filmmaking world with this poignant short about three boys who discover what just might be a dead mermaid in a remote cove. Blending humour and the cruel curiosity of youth, we get a complex and captivating film from a startling new talent on the Atlantic Canadian film scene.

## **We Who Stayed Behind (25:00) Denmark**

Danish w/ English subtitles

In the metaphorical world of this Danish short hopelessness has spread all across the land like a disease. All of the grown-ups have abandoned the cities and left only a small band of children to try and make sense of this alarming situation. Previously immune to the hopelessness, the youth of the city now begin to experience the only outward symptom of the disease: grey blood. It is be up to one young man named Adam to try and save his friend Ida, and restore hope to the world.

## **The Danish Poet (14:00) Canada**

Can we trace the chain of events that leads to our own birth? We follow Kasper, a poet whose creative well has run dry, on a holiday to Norway to meet the famous writer Sigrid Undset. As Kasper's quest for inspiration unfolds, it appears that bad weather, an angry dog, a careless postman and hungry goats might play a part in the big scheme of things after all. Nominated for Best Short Film (Animated) at this 2007 Academy Awards, The Danish Poet is one not to miss!

## **The Life and Death of Gus the Hamster:**

### **A Dead Pet Story (7:00) Canada**

A true-to-life testimonial of a mother and son's experience with a furry rodent who loved macaroni and cheese but just didn't live long enough to enjoy it.

## **Four Feet Up (46:15) Canada**

Eight-year-old Isaiah is a very intelligent, and caring boy who lives with his family in rural Nova Scotia. Along with his family, he is part of a struggling segment of society dealing with tough economic realities despite living in one of the richest nations on earth. Local award-winning photographer and documentary filmmaker Nance Ackerman takes us on a very personal journey with Isaiah's family.

## **Wabanaki People of the Dawn: Dreamcatchers (60:00) Canada**

Aboriginal youth are currently one of the fastest growing segments of Canada's population yet they often face great difficulties in their formative years – poverty, drug abuse, discrimination, low self-esteem. Four young Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq are helping to change this notion by overcoming adversity and sharing their stories with us. Chad Denny was drafted by the Atlanta Thrashers of the National Hockey League; Jesse Benjamin became a veterinarian while raising two children; Bridget Stevens did a 180 from abusing drugs and alcohol after getting inspired by martial arts. Bridget is now a boxer and spreads her message of sobriety to a younger generation; and then there's Troy Julien who followed in his great grandfather's footsteps to become an officer with the RCMP. Four young people. Four positive messages. A million possibilities. Endless inspiration.

## **Club Native (78:10) Canada**

Falling in love with the wrong person can have devastating repercussions for Mohawks on the Kahnawake Reserve in Quebec. Award-winning director Tracey Deer (Mohawk Girls) takes a courageous look at her home community, raising questions about identity, history and tradition through the lives of four inspiring Mohawk women. With warmth, depth and humour, stories about the heartbreaking costs of "marrying outside" of their Mohawk Nation unfold. The challenges faced by kids of mixed backgrounds, and the conflict between love and preserving the fabric of their community are examined including how having children with the men they love can mean forfeiting their off-spring's legal native status - including the right to live with their families on the reserve. This film doesn't flinch from exposing racist and sexist elements of history and Canada's government policy, including the brutality of the Oka Crisis in 1990. Warning: Use of "N" word, childbirth scene.

## **Roadsworth: Crossing the Line (72:00) Canada**

Peter Gibson is better known as Roadsworth. An infamous street artist who became a hero to the art world, and the bane of Montreal public officials as for years he turned the city streets into his own personal canvas. Using stencils and spray paint he turned the ordinary into the sublime as giant boot prints, zippers, and vines transformed the previously mundane cityscape. With each of the equally hated and celebrated pieces he created he was also begging the question of just who owns public space? After being arrested and charged with multiple acts of vandalism, Roadsworth is finally brought out of the dark, and into the public spotlight as he is forced to define himself and defend his art. The debate over public space, and the limits to freedom of expression rages on in this provocative documentary film from director Alan Kohl.



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