



Publicity
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michael Therriault Wins Top Prize at Seoul Drama Festival

(August 29, 2006) – Michael Therriault received top honours in the Best Actor category at the Seoul Drama Awards (SDA) 2006 in Seoul, Korea Tuesday for his role as celebrated former Saskatchewan Premier T.C. Douglas in *Prairie Giant: The Tommy Douglas Story*.

Selected from a pool of nominees around the world, Therriault received the Best Actor trophy and a \$10,000 USD award in Seoul Tuesday.

Therriault is one of the most respected young actors in the country. Recently, he played Leo Bloom in the Canadian production of Mel Brooks' *The Producers*. For that performance, he received the Dora Award for Best Actor in a Musical. In February 2006, the musical production of *The Lord of the Rings* opened in Toronto. Michael Therriault played Gollum opposite Brent Carver's Gandalf, a role for which he received his second Dora Award.

The award-winning Therriault is cast as Harry Vincent in *The Englishman's Boy* opposite Nicholas Campbell currently being filmed in Saskatchewan.

ABOUT THE SEOUL DRAMA AWARDS

The Seoul Drama Awards recognize excellence in dramatic productions around the globe. The inaugural awards were presented on Tuesday, August 29 in Seoul, Korea.

Prairie Giant: The Tommy Douglas Story, a two-part four-hour mini-series produced by Minds Eye Entertainment, was among the top nominees at the Seoul Drama Awards. The drama, which was one of more than 60 entries from over 30 countries, received six nominations, joining nominees such as the Emmy Award-winning *Desperate Housewives* and *Elizabeth I*.

The Korean Broadcasters Association hosted the three-day showcase and evening gala. More information is available at www.seouldrama.org.

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Prairie Giant was nominated in the following categories:

Category: SHORT DRAMA – Kevin DeWalt, Executive Producer

Category: PERFORMER (MALE) – Michael Therriault as Tommy Douglas

Category: DIRECTOR – John N. Smith

Category: ART DIRECTOR – Kathy McCoy

Category: MUSICAL DIRECTION – Rob Bryanton

Category: DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY – Pierre Letarte

The nominees are all currently involved in the TV mini-series production of *The Englishman's Boy*, Guy Vanderhaeghe's adaptation of his Governor General Award-winning novel, directed by John N. Smith and produced by Kevin DeWalt of Minds Eye Entertainment.

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BACKGROUND

List of Nominees – Seoul Drama Awards 2006

SHORT DRAMA

- Bride from Hanoi – SBS/KOREA
- Elizabeth I – All3Media Int'l/UK
- **Prairie Giant: The Tommy Douglas Story – Minds Eye Entertainment/CANADA**
- Short Wind – Intra Communications Inc./RUSSIA
- The Violin – Fuji Television Network Inc./JAPAN
- What Shall We Expect Tomorrow – Content Division/NETHERLANDS

MINI SERIES DRAMA

- Anna Pihl – TV2 World/DENMARK
- Crying Out Love, In the Centre of the World – Tokyo Broadcasting System Inc./JAPAN
- Melanoma My Love – Yezira Ivrit/ISRAEL
- My Lovely Sam-Soon – Munhwa Broadcasting Corp./KOREA
- The Penal Battalion – Family Screen Company/RUSSIA
- Watch for the Happiness – Dalian Wuzhou Film & TV Co Ltd/CHINA

SERIES AND FEATURE LENGTH DRAMA

- Desperate Housewives – Buena Vista Int'l Television/USA
- House of Qiao: Legend of Shanxi Merchant – Beijing HuaSheng TaiTong Media Investigation/CHINA
- Huff – Sony Pictures Television Int'l/USA
- Remember When: Family Portrait – GRUPO GANGA for TVE/SPAIN
- The Emperor of the Sea – KBS (Korean Broadcasting System)/KOREA
- Yositsune: The Legend of a Tragic Hero – NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corp.)/JAPAN

PERFORMER (MALE)

- **Prairie Giant: The Tommy Douglas Story – Minds Eye Entertainment/CANADA**
- Remember When: Family Portrait – GRUPO GANGA for TVE/SPAIN
- The Emperor of the Seas – KBS (Korean Broadcasting System)/KOREA
- The Violin – Fuji Television Network Inc./JAPAN

PERFORMER (FEMALE)

- Elizabeth I – All3Media Int'l/UK
- My Lovely Sam-Soon – Munhwa Broadcasting Corp./KOREA
- The Violin – Fuji Television Network Inc./JAPAN

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- Watch for the Happiness – Dalian Wuzhou Film & TV Co. Ltd./CHINA

DIRECTOR

- Crying Out Love, In the Center of the World – Tokyo Broadcasting System Inc./JAPAN
- My Lovely Sam-Soon – Munhwa Broadcasting Corp/KOREA
- **Prairie Giant: The Tommy Douglas Story – Minds Eye Entertainment/CANADA**
- Remember When: Family Portrait – GRUPO GANGA for TVE/SPAIN

WRITER

- Desperate Housewives – Buena Vista Int'l Television/USA
- Love in Paris – SBS/KOREA
- Remember When: Family Portrait – GRUPO GANGA for TVE/SPAIN
- Watch for the Happiness – Dalian Wuzhou Film & TV Co Ltd./CHINA

CINEMATOGRAPHER

- **Prairie Giant: The Tommy Douglas Story – Minds Eye Entertainment/CANADA**
- Remember When; Family Portrait – GRUPO GANGA for TVE/SPAIN
- The Emperor of the Sea – KBS (Korean Broadcasting System)/KOREA
- The Violin – Fuji Television Network Inc./JAPAN

MUSIC DIRECTOR

- **Prairie Giant: The Tommy Douglas Story – Minds Eye Entertainment/CANADA**
- The Emperor of the Sea – KBS (Korean Broadcasting System)/KOREA
- The Violin – Fuji Television Network Inc./KOREA
- Watch for the Happiness – Dalian Wuzhou Film & TV Co Ltd./CHINA

ART DIRECTOR

- **Prairie Giant: The Tommy Douglas Story – Minds Eye Entertainment/CANADA**
- Princess Hours – Munhwa Broadcasting Corp./KOREA
- The Penal Battalion – Family Screen Company/RUSSIA
- The Violin – Fuji Television Network Inc./JAPAN

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PERFORMER (MALE) – Michael Therriault

"This is the role of a lifetime. Tommy Douglas has touched the life of every Canadian," says Michael Therriault. "He was a hero, a valiant fighter. But he was also tender and funny. It's a tremendous privilege to explore the public and private life of the architect of so many of the social programs which are critical to Canada. But, it's also a tremendous responsibility."

Prairie Giant: The Tommy Douglas Story was Therriault's feature length screen debut.

"Film was a whole new world for me. Scenes shot out of chronological order, quick takes, short rehearsals, playing to the camera and not the back row - I had a lot to learn. I was lucky to be working with not only very talented but very patient people."

Prior to that, he spent seven seasons at the Stratford Festival of Canada. Therriault's Shakespearian classic roles include: Henry VI in both *Henry VI: Revenge in France* and *Henry VI: Revolt in England*; Silvius in *As You Like It*; Ariel in *The Tempest*; and Francis Flute in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

He has also been seen at Stratford in the modern classics *The Seagull*, *Oscar Remembered*, *Fiddler on the Roof*; and *Camelot*. With the Stratford Company, he toured to New York in *The Miser* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. Therriault was a member of the inaugural season of The Stratford Festival's Conservatory for Classical Theatre Training. He has also appeared in Ken Finkleman's *The Newsroom*.

As soon as he wrapped the role of Tommy Douglas, Therriault left Saskatchewan for New York and Broadway to play Motel in *Fiddler on the Roof*.

DIRECTOR – John N. Smith

John N. Smith is one of Canada's most recognized and sought after filmmakers.

For over 30 years, in documentaries, feature film and television, Smith has used his unique cinematic vision to tell seminal Canadian stories.

Prairie Giant: The Tommy Douglas Story is a perfect fit in Smith's repertoire.

"This is a story of a great, great man. He stood for genuine, decent ideals and he never wavered, he never sold out. He didn't just talk about how the world should

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be. He fought fear, vested interests and the power elite to make changes himself."

And he made those changes in Saskatchewan. Smith speaks of filming in the province, "I wanted to shoot this story in Saskatchewan because this is where Tommy made history. I wanted to be surrounded by people who know what Saskatchewan is, who Tommy Douglas was and what he did for the province and then for the country. People here feel very strongly about Tommy Douglas and they have a depth of knowledge and sensitivity to this story. That's a great advantage for filmmakers."

Smith may be best known for the touchstone miniseries *The Boys of St. Vincent*. Dealing with sexual abuse of boys by priests, the provocative miniseries won numerous international awards including a Peabody Award, seven Gemini Awards including Best Dramatic Miniseries and Best Director, two gold medals and two bronze medals at the New York Festival of Broadcasting as well as awards in Italy, France and Germany.

His other television credits include the miniseries *Dieppe* (1995 Gemini, Best Dramatic Miniseries and 10 other nominations), *Revenge of the Land* and *Random Passage* (2002 winner of two Gemini Awards and four other nominations).

His feature film credits include *Geraldine's Fortune* starring Jane Curtin and Mary Walsh, *Dangerous Minds* with Michelle Pfeiffer and *A Cool, Dry Place* starring Monica Potter and Vince Vaughn.

Smith is currently directing the Minds Eye Entertainment mini-series *The Englishman's Boy*.

ART DIRECTOR – Kathy McCoy

Kathy McCoy has worked as production designer on numerous television commercials, television series' and feature films. A freelance graphic designer for the corporate, commercial, government and film sectors for over 15 years, McCoy worked from 1991 to 1996 at CBC TV as a graphic designer, and has done set design and props for several local theatre productions.

She holds a Visual Communications degree from the Alberta College of Arts in Calgary. McCoy is the production designer for *The Englishman's Boy*, a four-hour mini-series currently in production.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR – Rob Bryanton

Talking Dog President Rob Bryanton made his first record at twelve, and was host of a CBC-TV music series at twenty. He has been nominated eight times in the past eight years for Canada's prestigious Gemini Awards, four times in the

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category Best Original Music Score for a Dramatic Series, and four times for Best Sound for a Dramatic Program.

In 1993 he received another Gemini nomination for music on the film *Eli's Lesson*, starring Jack Palance. Recent projects to which Rob has contributed his talents as a composer and sound mixer include the hugely popular CTV series *Corner Gas*, *Incredible Story Studio* (YTV/Discovery Kids/Disney), *2030 CE* (YTV/Showtime/Space), and *renegadepress.com* (APTN). As a composer, he is responsible for the theme and underscoring on the *Canadian Antiques Roadshow* (CBC).

Bryanton lives in Regina with his family and is currently involved with the production of Minds Eye Entertainment's mini-series *The Englishman's Boy*.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY – Pierre Letarte

Director of Photography Pierre Letarte's extensive resume includes some of the most provocative dramas and documentaries made in Canada.

His artistic collaboration with director John N. Smith includes the miniseries *Random Passage* (2002 Gemini, Best Photography), *Revenge of the Land, Dieppe* (1995 Gemini, Best Dramatic Miniseries) and *The Boys of St. Vincent* (1994 Gemini, Best Dramatic Miniseries) and the features *Dangerous Minds* starring Michelle Pfeiffer and *Geraldine's Fortune* starring Jane Curtin and Mary Walsh.

Letarte is a master of light and tone.

"Filming on location in Saskatchewan was critical to the integrity of this miniseries," he explains. "The light and colours we captured in towns like Gravelbourg, Claybank and Pense could not have been found elsewhere. The people of those communities who volunteered as background performers have wonderful, expressive faces in which the colours of the land are etched. They brought great richness to our images."

Other feature film credits include Jane Austen's *Mafia* with director Jim Abrahams, *L'Age de braise* for director Jacques Leduc, and Gilles Carle's *Pudding Chomeur*.

His television credits include *The Marilyn Bell Story* directed by Manon Briand and *First Do No Harm* directed by Jim Abrahams.

Letarte is currently the Director of Photography on the two-part four-hour mini-series adaptation of *The Englishman's Boy*.

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