

WATERLIFE

Press Kit



A feature-length documentary following the water of the Great Lakes on its beautiful and tragic journey to the sea



WATERLIFE - SYNOPSIS

WATERLIFE tells the epic story of the Great Lakes by following the cascade of its water from northern Lake Superior to the Atlantic Ocean, through the lives of some of the 35 million people who rely on the lakes for survival.

Providing Earth with 20 per cent of its surface fresh water and its third largest industrial economy, the Great Lakes are a unique and precious resource under assault by toxins, sewage, invasive species, evaporating water and profound apathy. They are also one of the planet's great preserves of extraordinary wilderness beauty and a bounty of unique species.

WATERLIFE blends these realities with a dreamlike fluidity as it pours through the lives of some amazing characters. We meet an Anishinabe medicine woman who walked 17,000 kms around the lakes to sympathize with them; the last of the great Michigan fishing families; a man whose lakefront home now borders a field thanks to sewer overflows; the people of a village where mysterious toxins ensure that most new babies are girls; and the residents of Love Canal, a notorious Niagara Falls neighborhood abandoned in the 1970s and now, dubiously, refurbished.

Along the way, WATERLIFE shows viewers the Great Lakes as they might appear to a seagull, a fish or a water molecule... and from a myriad of other, amazing perspectives. Filmed over a full year with a battery of specialty cameras and techniques, WATERLIFE provides an unprecedented view of an incredible ecosystem rarely seen by the city dwellers who form most of its population. From the ornate fountains of Chicago to the sewers of Windsor, viewers are carried through marsh and pipe, across pounding waves and through thunder clouds on a journey which, as the film says, has no "ending or beginning, that shapes every body it passes through and unites them all across space and time."

WATERLIFE's director Kevin McMahon is one of Canada's most innovative documentary filmmakers, and its producers include Mark Achbar, creator of the controversial hit *The Corporation*. Gord Downie, leader of *The Tragically Hip* and a Lake Ontario Waterkeeper, narrates WATERLIFE. Topping off this epic cinematic poem is a fabulous sound track featuring Sam Roberts, *The Allman Brothers*, *Dropkick Murphys*, *Sufjan Stevens*, *Sigur Ros*, *Robbie Robertson*, *Daniel Lanois*, *Phillip Glass*, *Brian Eno* and a new song by *The Tragically Hip*.

DIRECTORS NOTES BY KEVIN McMAHON

WATERLIFE is a film I have been working toward throughout my 30-year career as a writer and documentary filmmaker.

My journalistic engagement with the Great Lakes began at my university newspaper (in St. Catharines, Ontario) where I covered the then-emerging disaster at the Love Canal in Niagara Falls, N.Y. A dozen years later, the abandoned neighborhood provided one of the most poignant scenes in *The Falls* (1990), the first documentary feature that I directed. In 2007, we returned to the area for WATERLIFE to see the Love Canal reborn.

Humanity's relationship to the natural environment is a theme in most of my work – the Arctic in *IN THE REIGN OF TWILIGHT*, the Pacific northwest in *STOLEN SPIRITS OF HAIDA GWAIL*, the north Atlantic in *COD: THE FISH THAT CHANGED THE WORLD*. And I have often used water imagery in films (as in the Edgar Allan Poe story that threads through *MCLUHAN'S WAKE*). With WATERLIFE I have tried to push these thematic and cinematic interests further by looking specifically at water, because it provides a very visceral way of exploring anew the old idea that “we are all a product of our environment”. To see water pouring through plants, fish, people, factories, sewage systems and back around again – endlessly -- is to understand what that cliché really means.

To be framed coherently, this idea needed a specific canvass and there is none dearer to me than the Great Lakes. My personal connection is that I have lived on, traveled across, swum, bathed in, drunk and admired the lakes my entire life. And, equally important, I have imagined them in their length and breadth – or at least have tried to with all my might. I was inspired in this by my childhood readings of *Paddle To The Sea*, by Holling Clancy Holling. The book tells the story of an aboriginal canoe carved by a little boy that makes its way from north of Lake Superior to the Atlantic Ocean. Making WATERLIFE, I thought often of famed director Bill Mason's film of the tale, which remains one of the most popular films ever created at the National Film Board of Canada.

Over the years, I've developed what the geographer Yi Fu Tuan calls a “topophilic” relationship to the lakes – a true love of a landscape or, in this case, waterscape. I am far from alone. As we traveled the lakes filming WATERLIFE we met many people who have a life-long engagement with the lakes and who are as passionate about their beauty as they are worried about their fate. Protheus Goodchild, an Anishinabe elder who lives on the north shore of Superior, put it succinctly: “the world is like a human body, the water is our blood. Everybody knows what happens when you put poison in your blood.”

Everybody knows, but the 35 million or so people whose blood is (literally) made up of Great Lakes water have an astonishing ability to forget that, especially if they live in big cities. While people who live on Lake Superior will still drink straight from the lake, the majority of people who live on Lakes Erie and Ontario are afraid to even swim in them. We assume that the water is polluted, so we shrug, buy water in plastic bottles and take the kids to a spray park -- forgetting about all the ways lake water still seeps into our lives. Thus do we spiral toward an utterly preventable disaster from which we may not be able to recover, despite water's nearly magic ability to renew itself.

In December 2005, 60 of the top scientists involved in Great Lakes research, issued an unprecedented statement which argued that the Great Lakes' ecosystem – its ability to generate fish and clean its water – is enduring so many stresses that it may be nearing “irreversible collapse”. They said that this collapse will probably come in a non-linear way – not a continued slow decline but a sudden crash.

So, my journalistic hope for WATERLIFE is that it will alert Americans and Canadians to the extreme threats facing the great body of water they share; which, indeed, some would say they hold “in trust”, since it comprises 20 per cent of all the surface fresh water on Earth.

My hope for WATERLIFE, as a filmmaker, is the same as it is for every film: to take viewers to a familiar place and help them see it anew, as if for the first time.

KEVIN MCMAHON

WRITER/DIRECTOR/PRODUCER

Kevin McMahon began his career as a newspaper journalist at the St. Catharines Standard, where he received various awards, including a top prize from the Canadian Centre for Investigative Journalism and a nomination for a Governor General's Award for public service journalism. After five years dedicated to print, he shifted his focus to documentary film and eventually gained a reputation as one of the country's most innovative directors. In the last 20 years, Kevin has won a variety of major awards, worked with broadcasters from all over the world and become a mentor to younger directors. In 2006 he served as Official Mentor of the Hot Docs festival in Toronto, North America's premier documentary showcase. In 2007 Hot Docs mounted a selected retrospective of Kevin's films.

As a producer, Kevin recently oversaw the 50-episode series THINGS THAT MOVE, about the history and science of motion, and WORKING OVER TIME, a four-hour telling of Canada's history as seen through manual labour. As a story editor, Kevin helped shape the feature documentaries I, CURMUDGEON, A PERFECT FAKE and FOUR WINGS AND A PRAYER. As a writer, he authored the book ARCTIC TWILIGHT and contributes essays to various publications, including POV Magazine, The Toronto Star and CBC Radio's Ideas. He holds degrees from Brock and Carleton universities and the University of Bristol in England. Kevin is a partner in Primitive Entertainment, a Toronto production company specializing in high quality documentary. He lives in Toronto with his three teenaged children.

DIRECTING FILMOGRAPHY

WATERLIFE

35mm: 107 min; co-produced by Primitive Entertainment and the National Film Board, 2009
Following the epic cascade of the water of the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean.

THE FACE OF VICTORY

High Definition: 72 min; co-produced by Primitive and Barna-Alper Productions, 2005.
The aftermath of World War II, seen entirely through photographs from the autumn of 1945.

STOLEN SPIRITS OF HAIDA GWAI

Digital Video: 70 min; produced by Primitive Entertainment, 2004.
The journey of the Haida to repatriate ancestral remains locked in a Chicago museum.

AN IDEA OF CANADA

Digital Video: 90 min; co-produced by Rhombus Media and the National Film Board, 2003
On official tour with Canada's Governor General to aboriginal villages on three coasts.

MCLUHAN'S WAKE

Digital Video: 90 min; co-produced by Primitive Entertainment and the NFB, 2002.
A poetic journey through the ideas ("the medium is the message") of Marshall McLuhan.

THE DESCENT INTO THE MAELSTROM

Animation, mixed media; 5 minutes; produced by Primitive Entertainment, 2002.
Co-directed by Justin Stephenson.
Poe meets McLuhan; starring McLuhan's grandson, Andrew

GOONEY TUNES

Reprocessed Television; 4 minutes; produced by the Blah, Blah, Blah Collective, 2002.
Co-directed by Chris Donaldson.
On viewing the G7 Summit of the Americas in Quebec City

COD: THE FISH THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

Digital Video; 3 hours; co-produced by Primitive Entertainment and Salter Street Films, 2000.
How a 1,000 year fishing spree came to a tragic end; hosted by comic Mary Walsh.

LIFTING THE SHADOW

Digital Video; 47 min; produced by Primitive Entertainment, 2000.
Why the generals who built the nuclear weapons system want it torn down.

TRUTH MERCHANTS

16mm; 52 min; produced by Primitive Features, 1999.
Backstage with the public relations pros who feed journalists the "news".

DIRECTING FILMOGRAPHY

(Continued)

YO-YO MA: INSPIRED BY BACH: THE MUSIC GARDEN

16mm; 52 min; produced by Rhombus Media, 1998

Following the master cellist's two-year odyssey to build a public garden in Toronto.

INTELLIGENCE

Super 16mm; 75 min; co-produced by Primitive Features and the NFB, 1998.

A consideration of contemporary society's most over-rated trait.

IN THE REIGN OF TWILIGHT

Super 16mm; 90 min; produced by Primitive Features in association with TVOntario, 1995.

How the Cold War blasted the Inuit from the Stone Age into the Space Age.

THE FALLS

Super 16mm; 90 min; produced by Primitive Features, 1990.

The wonders and horrors of Niagara; natural phenomenon, tourist mecca, toxic dump.

THE CHANCE

16mm; 29 min; produced by the British Broadcasting Corporation, 1987.

Teens from inner-city Manchester compete at an upper class adventure camp.

THE ZOO

16mm; 29 min; produced by Bristol University and BBC, 1986.

An exploration of life and death in the Bristol Zoo.

THE CRITICS ON FILMS DIRECTED BY KEVIN MCMAHON

Lewis Lapham, *Harper's Magazine*, on **MCLUHAN'S WAKE**:

MCLUHAN'S WAKE extends and elaborates (McLuhan's) project by recruiting the techniques of film to the defence of the civilization founded on the keel of print... McMahon deploys the stagecraft of a sophisticated electronic sensibility... to quarrel with its own nature and question its own existence. The result is as artful a documentary as I can remember ever having seen.

John Haslett Cuff, *The Globe and Mail*, on **IN THE REIGN OF TWILIGHT**:

Visually stunning and brilliantly conceived. Simply put, *IN THE REIGN OF TWILIGHT* is the most informed and thoughtful film about the history and development of the Canadian Arctic that I have ever seen. But it is also one of the most technically imaginative and artistically accomplished documentaries to be shown on television... This film achieves the sort of collaborative perfection that is perhaps always sought, but too rarely achieved by filmmakers.

Jay Scott, *The Globe and Mail*, on **THE FALLS**:

Visually beautiful... this film has it all... *The Falls* communicates the grandeur of the tumbling tonnes of water by bathing the eyeballs in soaking, wide-screen splendour... The film intermarries the naturally sacred and the unnaturally profane with breathtaking dexterity... *THE FALLS* has brilliantly framed Niagara Falls as the picture of a civilization.

Marc Glassman, *Take One Magazine*, on Kevin McMahon's films:

It is ironic to offer too much praise for any one person as a creator these days. We are told to believe in the text, not the teller. But just as Donald Brittain embodied the possibility that one could be hip and care in his documentaries of the 1960s and 1970s, so McMahon does now... Kevin McMahon's films are coherent, poetic and ironic. They deal with important topics and never shirk the difficulties inherent in complex issues.

GORD DOWNIE NARRATOR

While the occupation that Gord Downie lists on his passport is “musician”, he could just as easily have cited “songwriter”, “poet”, “video director”, or even, existentially speaking, “restless spirit”. “I enjoy the process of writing to a fault,” he admits. “I love doing the work. I love solving the puzzle.”

Gord Downie is perhaps best known as the lead vocalist and lyricist of Canada’s most beloved band, THE TRAGICALLY HIP, who have thrilled audiences around the world with their live performances for over two decades. In this, Gord has achieved the enviable status of a musician that enjoys both mass popularity with over 8 million albums sold worldwide, as well as peer recognition with 31 Juno Award Nominations and 11 wins.

On the screen, Gord appears most recently in Michael McGowan’s film, ONE WEEK, as a pot smoking philosopher starring fellow Canadian Joshua Jackson. Downie also has cameo appearances in MEN WITH BROOMS, the TRAILER PARK BOYS’ movie THE BIG DIRTY, and on television in the series finale of TRAILER PARK BOYS, “Say Goodnight To The Bad Guys”, and CORNER GAS “Rock On!”. He also starred in the short film AT THE QUINTE HOTEL, featuring Canadian poet Al Purdy’s poem of the same name.

Gord has released two solo albums, COKE MACHINE GLOW (2001) and BATTLE OF THE NUDES (2003). The Tragically Hip will release their 12th studio album, WE ARE THE SAME in April, 2009.

He is a Trustee of Lake Ontario through his support of the WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE.

JOHN MINH TRAN CINEMATOGRAPHER

With an extensive background in still photography, John brings a true film aesthetic to all the work he does. Recently he has worked a documentary by Astra Taylor EXAMINED LIFE (Sphinx). He received a CSC and Yorkton Golden Sheaf nomination for Larry Weinstein's Mozartballs (Rhombus) and a Gemini nomination for Eric Geringas's CHEATING DEATH (NFB). Other feature documentaries include Kevin McMahon's STOLEN SPIRITS OF HAIDA GWAII (Primitive Entertainment), AN IDEA OF CANADA (Primitive Entertainment/Rhombus) and MCLUHAN'S WAKE (Primitive Entertainment), and Bruno Monsiegeon's GLENN GOULD HEREAFTER (Idéale-Audience/Rhombus).

John is also well-versed in drama, lensing Trisha Fish's feature, DRAGONWHEEL (IMX) and the Gemini award winning puppet series NANALAN' (Grog/CBC). His award winning short films include Paul Quarrington's A Man's Life and Adam Reid's THE BEST GIRL. John recently finished a kids series BIG & SMALL (BBC).

CHRISTOPHER DONALDSON EDITOR

Christopher Donaldson's work as an editor spans an extensive variety of both dramatic and documentary features and television. His credits include Kevin McMahon's MCLUHAN'S WAKE, Alan Zweig's LOVABLE, Peter Wellington's LUCK, THE BORDER for the CBC, SLINGS & ARROWS for TMN, and RENT-A-GOALIE for Showcase. Christopher received a Gemini Award for his work on THE BORDER.

MICHAEL McMAHON

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER / PRODUCER

Michael McMahon has spent the last nineteen years producing some of Canada's most daring and critically acclaimed documentary features and television series. Michael's feature documentary credits include THE FALLS (Genie Nomination); IN THE REIGN OF TWILIGHT (Best Documentary Feature Nomination – Hot Docs); INTELLIGENCE (Best Documentary Feature Nominations – Hot Docs and Gemini Awards) MCLUHAN'S WAKE (John Culkin Award for Outstanding Media Praxis - The Media Ecology Association; Chris Award - Columbus International Film and Video Festival) and I, CURMUDGEON (Silver Hugo - Chicago International Film Festival);

Recent feature documentaries include FOUR WINGS AND A PRAYER (Best Wildlife and Natural History Program – Banff World Television Festival; Grand Prize - Pariscience Film Festival); STOLEN SPIRITS OF HAIDA GWAII (Best History Documentary and Best Direction in a Documentary - Gemini Awards; Canadian Association of Broadcasters Gold Ribbon Award - Aboriginal Programming; Grand Prix Rigoberta Menchu - Montreal First People's Festival) LOVABLE and THE FACE OF VICTORY (Two Special Jury Awards – WorldFest Houston International Film Festival).

In 2008, programs produced by Michael were nominated for seven Gemini awards and two Independent Spirit Awards.

Michael's other producing credits include THINGS THAT MOVE, a fifty part documentary series for History Television starring Jeff Douglas; THE TEAM, an eight part documentary series on a college level basketball team. A PERFECT FAKE (The Silver Plaque - Chicago International Film Festival) DANGEROUS OBSESSIONS: THE STALKING EPIDEMIC; THE TROUBLE WITH BOYS; DEAR JULIET; and COD: THE FISH THAT CHANGED THE WORLD (Best Writing in a Documentary Series - Gemini Awards)

Currently, Michael is completing production on two feature documentaries: WATERLIFE, by director Kevin McMahon and A HARD NAME, by director Alan Zweig. Also in production is Season IV of ANCESTORS IN THE ATTIC (49 x 30 min).

Michael serves as Co-Chair of the Board of Directors of Hot Docs, and sits on the Industry Advisory Committee of the Toronto International Film Festival Group. He is the Co-Chair of the Toronto Executive of the Documentary Organization of Canada.

Michael is married and the father of twin boys. He lives in Toronto, Canada.

KRISTINA McLAUGHLIN PRODUCER

As a producer and partner in Primitive Entertainment, Kristina has worked on some of the most critically acclaimed Canadian documentaries of the last decade.

Her most recent producing credits include the feature documentaries LOVABLE, by Alan Zweig; the four part series WORKING OVER TIME for History Television; and the feature film FOUR WINGS AND A PRAYER, winner of the Best Wildlife and Natural History Program at the 2008 Banff World Television Festival;

Her other producing credits include THE FACE OF VICTORY and STOLEN SPIRITS OF HAIDA GWAII (2005 Gemini Award winner for Best History Documentary and Best Direction in a Documentary Program, both by Kevin McMahon; THE TROUBLE WITH BOYS, a one-hour documentary for Discovery Health Canada, US and UK; MCLUHAN'S WAKE, a feature length documentary by Kevin McMahon that opened the Canadian Spectrum program of Hot Docs (2002) and was invited to the prestigious Joris Ivens competition at the International Documentary Festival of Amsterdam; A PERFECT FAKE for The Documentary Channel and CBC Newsworld; I, CURMUDGEON for TVOntario and The Independent Film Channel; and the three-hour series for the Discovery Channel COD: THE FISH THAT CHANGED THE WORLD (2001 Gemini for Best Writing in a Documentary Program or Series), based on the best selling book.

She is currently producing Kevin McMahon's new documentary feature WATERLIFE; Season IV of the History Television series ANCESTORS IN THE ATTIC; and A HARD NAME, a new film by Alan Zweig.

Kristina is Head of Business Affairs at Primitive Entertainment.

GERRY FLAHIVE PRODUCER FOR THE NFB

In his 28 years with the NFB, Senior Producer Gerry Flahive has worked on some of its most successful documentaries, including Genie Award winners JUST WATCH ME by Catherine Annau and Jennifer Baichwal's MANUFACTURED LANDSCAPES. Current and recent projects include Katerina Cizek's groundbreaking Filmmaker-in-Residence project at Toronto's St. Michael's Hospital; Steven Silver's animated history of the Great Depression, THE DARK YEARS; Paul Cowan's PARIS 1919, inspired by Margaret MacMillan's best-seller; and five films for the 2008 Governor-General's Performing Arts Awards. Projects in development include I WAS A CHILD OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS and A SHORT HISTORY OF PROGRESS. A contributor to the Globe and Mail, Gerry has also been published in Time, the New York Times and Playback.

MARK ACHBAR EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Whether following Noam Chomsky around the world, chronicling a sex change, or interviewing Fortune 500 CEOs, for three decades Mark Achbar's filmmaking passion has been with the players and the politics in the struggle for human rights and social change. His penchant for quirky visuals and intelligent humour combine to make complex ideas compelling and entertaining. Achbar is one of a new wave of non-fiction feature filmmakers reaching large international audiences through mainstream theatres, TV, DVD, and the internet.

Earning a BFA from Syracuse University's Fine Arts Film Program, Achbar interned in Hollywood on the kid's show BILL DAILY'S HOCUS POCUS GANG, followed by a three year stint in Toronto with Sunrise Films on their documentary series SPREAD YOUR WINGS and the CBC/Disney series DANGER BAY. He then teamed up with director Robert Boyd, and received a Gemini (Canada's Emmy) nomination for Best Writer on THE CANADIAN CONSPIRACY, a cultural/political satire for CBC and HBO's Comedy Experiments chronicling Canada's secret takeover of the USA. It won a Gemini for Best Entertainment Special and was nominated for an International Emmy.

Achbar moved into independent media, working in many capacities on films, videos and books on issues ranging from nuclear lunacy, poverty, and East Timor, to the media, U.S. hegemony and corporate power.

With Peter Wintonick, Achbar co-directed and co-produced **MANUFACTURING CONSENT: NOAM CHOMSKY AND THE MEDIA** (1992), which was, until the release of **THE CORPORATION**, Canada's all-time, top-grossing feature documentary and winner of 22 awards and honours. Achbar's companion book to the film hit the national best-seller list in Canada.

Achbar collaborated with editor Jennifer Abbott to create **TWO BRIDES AND A SCALPEL: DIARY OF A LESBIAN MARRIAGE** (1999), a low-budget video diary by the couple known as Canada's first legally married lesbians. This true story of "boy meets girl, boy marries girl, boy becomes girl" received festival invitations from around the globe and was broadcast in Canada. It won Best Documentary in the Milan International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

In 1997, Achbar initiated a project titled **THE CORPORATION** with author and University of British Columbia law professor Joel Bakan. Bakan wrote the film and book, while Achbar directed, produced and executive-produced the film. Jennifer Abbott joined the team as editor and co-director in 2000.

THE CORPORATION won 26 awards, 10 of them audience awards, including Sundance. It was released theatrically in more than 20 countries, grossed over six million dollars at the box office, and sold over 150,000 DVDs. More than a million people have downloaded the film via Youtube, bittorrent, and other P2P networks. It is used in thousands of high school and university courses, by community and activist groups, and by corporations such as Philip Morris Company.

Due to the Canadian box office success of *The Corporation*, Achbar's company, Big Picture Media Corporation received "performance envelopes" in 2006 and 2007 totaling \$2.4 million dollars from Telefilm Canada, a Canadian government film funding agency. Set aside for the exclusive use of the company, this was the first such award in Canada for the box office performance of a documentary. With these funds, the company has helped finance ten feature documentaries. At its premiere in the 2008 Vancouver International Film Festival, Velcrow Ripper's **FIERCE LIGHT: WHEN SPIRIT MEETS ACTION**, won the NFB Most Popular Canadian Documentary Award, and a Special Mention from the Documentary Jury. Two more films will be released in 2009: Kevin McMahon's **WATERLIFE** (the relationship between humans, water, and the Great Lakes); and Denis Delestrac's **PAX AMERICANA AND THE WEAPONIZATION OF SPACE**. Mathieu Roy's **A SHORT HISTORY OF PROGRESS** (the escalating price of progress) based on Ronald Wright's bestseller of the same name, will be completed and released in 2010. Half a dozen other films are in development.

With Si Litvinoff (A CLOCKWORK ORANGE, THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH), Achbar is also Executive Producer on Sam Bozzo's BLUE GOLD: WORLD WATER WARS based on the book by Maude Barlow and Tony Clarke, BLUE GOLD: THE BATTLE AGAINST CORPORATE THEFT OF THE WORLD'S WATER. The film premiered at the 2008 Vancouver International Film Festival, won the Audience Award for Most Popular Environmental Film, and was first runner-up for the Audience Award for Most Popular Documentary of the festival which screened a total of 100 documentaries.

BETSY CARSON EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Betsy is a producer/production manager/ director with 19 years experience in documentary film and television. Among her producing credits are several feature docs including Nettie Wild's FIX: THE STORY OF AN ADDICTED CITY (2004 Genie Award), A PLACE CALLED CHIAPAS (1998 Genie Award) and Blockade, Gary Marcuse's NUCLEAR DYNAMITE, and THE MIND OF A CHILD (both Gemini winners), Linda Ohama's Obaachan's Garden and Arlene Ami's Say I Do (Executive Producer). One-hour documentaries she has worked on include TIME IMMEMORIAL, DECONSTRUCTING SUPPER, THE LYNCHING OF LOUIE SAM AND ARKTIKA :THE RUSSIAN DREAM THAT FAILED. She also is a consultant for many of Vancouver's documentary filmmakers in the area of budgeting and financing. In 2006. she produced (with Dan Schlanger) and directed a documentary on ballerina Evelyn Hart for CBC's LIFE AND TIMES.

Recently completed projects include Bevel Up, an educational DVD directed by Nettie Wild for the Street Nurse Program of the BC Centre for Disease Control. The DVD contains a 45-min documentary and 3 ½ hours of additional teaching material. Betsy is currently executive producing with Mark Achbar (The Corporation) four theatrical feature documentaries: FIERCE LIGHT, PAX AMERICANA, WATERLIFE and A SHORT HISTORY OF PROGRESS. Also in development with Mark Achbar are five feature docs. Betsy Carson has been member of the Documentary Organization of Canada since 1996 and currently holds the position of Co-Vice Chair.

SILVA BASMAJIAN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Since 1976, Silva Basmajian's more than 65 NFB films have garnered numerous awards, screening at more than 200 international festivals including Berlin, Toronto and Sundance. As Executive Producer of the NFB's Ontario Centre, Ms. Basmajian oversees English-language production in the province, fostering partnerships among broadcasters and other industry leaders. Since her appointment in 2004, she has explored innovative ways to tell Canadian and international stories, and championed innovative projects like the groundbreaking NFB Filmmaker-in-Residence at St. Michael's Hospital, the award winning ART OF SEDUCTION shorts for cellphones, co-produced with marbledmedia and BravoFACT!, and North America's first interactive dramatic feature film, LATE FRAGMENT, co-produced with the Canadian Film Centre. Recently, Ms. Basmajian co-produced the critically acclaimed TRIAGE: DR. JAMES ORBINSKI'S HUMANITARIAN DILEMMA, and is executive producer for FLICKER, TIGER SPIRIT and the 2007 Hot Docs award-winning BODY-BUILDER AND I.

PRIMITIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Primitive Entertainment is a Toronto based production company specializing in high-quality non-fiction films and television. Over the past 19 years, Primitive has produced some of Canada's most daring and successful feature documentary films and documentary series. Working with a diverse range of international and domestic broadcasters, programs from Primitive Entertainment are recognized for their high quality and integrity.

Currently in production is the fourth season of ANCESTORS IN THE ATTIC - a series exploring the genealogy of average Canadians for History Television; A HARD NAME, a new feature documentary by Alan Zweig; and WATERLIFE, a new feature documentary by Kevin McMahon narrated by Gord Downie of The Tragically Hip.

Recent feature length documentary films include: FOUR WINGS AND A PRAYER (Rockie Award for Best Wildlife and Natural History Program, Banff World Television Festival; Jules Verne Nature Award, Jules Verne Film Festival; Special Jury Award, WorldFest Houston); LOVABLE, the final installment in Alan Zweig's Mirror Trilogy; THE FACE OF VICTORY, a feature-length documentary marking the 60th anniversary of the end of WWII (Winner, 2 Special Jury Awards, Worldfest Houston); STOLEN SPIRITS OF HAIDA GWAII by Kevin McMahon, (Winner, Best History Documentary and Best Direction in a Documentary Program, 2005 Gemini Awards; Canadian Association of Broadcasters Gold Ribbon Award - Aboriginal Programming, 2006); I, CURMUDGEON by Alan Zweig (winner of the Silver Hugo at the Chicago International Television Festival); and MCLUHAN'S WAKE, narrated by Laurie Anderson.

Recent one-hour productions include WORKING OVER TIME, a four part series on lousy jobs in Canadian History; A PERFECT FAKE (winner of the Silver Plaque at the Chicago International Television Festival); and THE DIGITAL DIVIDE.

Other works include DEAR JULIET, DANGEROUS OBSESSIONS, THE TROUBLE WITH BOYS, THE TEAM, COD: THE FISH THAT CHANGED THE WORLD, COLLECTION, LIFTING THE SHADOW, TRUTH MERCHANTS, INTELLIGENCE, IN THE REIGN OF TWILIGHT, THE FALLS, and the fifty episode television series THINGS THAT MOVE starring Jeff Douglas.

Primitive Entertainment's founding partner, Writer and Director Kevin McMahon, was honoured at Hot Docs 2007 in the Focus On retrospective program.

CREDITS

MONGREL MEDIA
presents

WATERLIFE

Dedicated to the many people working to bring
the Great Law back to the Great Lakes.

Learn, share and join them at: ourwaterlife.com

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY
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NARRATED BY
Gord Downie

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Anthem-Part 3

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