

KINOSMITH

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For Immediate Release:

MÉTIS FILMMAKER SHANE BELCOURT MAKES FEATURE FILM DEBUT WITH TKARONTO

**OPENING in OTTAWA at THE BYTOWNE on AUG. 8th and in
TORONTO at THE ROYAL on AUG. 15th.**

Interviews Available with Director and all Cast Members

(Toronto – July 22, 2008) KinoSmith is pleased to announce the release of writer-director Shane Belcourt's feature length film, TKARONTO. This stunning and poignant debut feature film will be opening in Ottawa on Aug 8th and in Toronto on August 15th, as a co-presentation with the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival.

The award-winning TKARONTO stars an all Aboriginal cast, lead by Duane Murray (*An American in Canada*) as the funny and self-deprecating Ray and Melanie McLaren (starred in 2007 Cannes film festival short film *The Gardner*) in a breakout performance as the conflicted Jolene. The cast also includes award-winning Lorne Cardinal (police officer 'Davis Quinton' in *Corner Gas*) as the discerning Elder Max Cardinal.

This truly independent film was self-funded and was shot in Toronto over 17 days with a crew of six people. It was made in just eight months from script to post-production. Belcourt served not only as writer and director, but also as cinematographer, producer and wrote and performed the beautifully haunting closing title song. Actor Duane Murray also wore the hat of producer and casting director and Jordan O'Connor was a producer, the editor, sound designer and composer. Toronto Eye Weekly film critic Jason Anderson named the film "one of the year's most appealing local indie features."

The film was a highlight of the 2007 imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, where over 100 people were turned away from the sold-out closing night gala screening. Kerry Swanson, the Executive Director of the festival, called it "the most successful closing night screening in the festival's eight year history."

TKARONTO is a provocative exploration of two Aboriginal thirty-something's caught in the urban crossroads.

Ray (Duane Murray) and Jolene (Melanie McLaren) discover an unexpected connection when their paths' cross in Tkaronto (the original Mohawk word for "Toronto").

Ray, a Métis writer, has come to Toronto to pitch his TV series, *Indian Jones*, which is promising to be the big break Ray needs, especially with a pregnant girlfriend back home. Jolene, a Los Angeles-based Anishnabe painter, is passing through Toronto to conduct an interview with a prominent Elder Max (played by *Corner Gas*'s Lorne Cardinal) and is suddenly taken aback when Max presents her with an eagle feather, an honour that she feels unworthy of.

As Ray faces his ambivalence about impending fatherhood and the prospect of selling his material to ignorant TV Execs, Jolene grapples with self-doubt and struggles to finish her interviews with Max. An attraction between them develops as both are drawn together by a mutual search for meaning in their urban existence.

For Ray and Jolene home feels very far away. But through their chance meeting they reveal their hopes, dreams, fears and failures and realize their common struggle: to stake claim to their urban aboriginal identity.

TKARONTO is a powerful cinematic experience for anyone who has wondered who they really are and where in the world they are going.

TKARONTO is a Breath Films production. The executive producer is Michael Corbière and the production designer is David Hannan. The film was made with the help of The ACTRA TIP Fund. For more information go to www.tkaronto.net

For ticket prices and times in Ottawa go to www.bytowne.ca
For Toronto go to www.myspace.com/theroyaltheatre

KinoSmith has recently released a collection of award-winning films including Yang Chang's UP THE YANGTZE, the British thriller LONDON TO BRIGHTON, Giuseppe Tornatore's THE UNKNOWN WOMAN and Chico Teixeira's ALICE'S HOUSE. KinoSmith also plans to release the Canadian comedy-horror hit JACK BROOKS: MONSTER SLAYER this summer as well as the fall releases: John Boorman's A TIGER'S TAIL, the Berlin Golden Bear award winning TUYA'S MARRIAGE, Peter Raymont's TRIAGE: DR.JAMES ORBINSKI'S HUMANITARIAN DILEMNA, the environmental festival fave by Mark Leiren-Young's THE GREEN CHAIN, Spencer Rice's comedy CONFESSIONS OF A PORN ADDICT and Pietra Brett Kelly's provocative and critically acclaimed documentary THE ART STAR AND THE SUDANESE TWINS.

The imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival is an international festival that celebrates the latest works by Indigenous peoples on the forefront of innovation in film, video, radio, new media and installation art. Each fall, the festival presents a selection of the most compelling and distinctive Indigenous works from around the globe. The festival's screenings, parties, panel discussions, and cultural events attract and connect filmmakers, media artists, programmers, buyers, and industry professionals. The works accepted reflect the diversity of the world's Indigenous nations and illustrate the vitality

and excellence of our art and culture in contemporary media. For more information, visit www.imaginenative.org

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To book an interview, receive a screener for review and for further information, please contact:

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DVD clips – on request basis only