

MOVIES

Shorts shaping up big

By INGRID RANDOJA

What makes a good short film? Well, a good short gets its message across quickly but without rushing, it takes narrative shortcuts without being confusing and, if it's really great, it provides an emotional jolt you weren't expecting.

Since its inception 25 years ago, the Toronto International Film Festival has been committed to Canadian shorts. It's an important undertaking because these films never get the red-carpet treatment and rarely receive critical notice, which is a shame since they deserve attention.



FILM

WHEN • WHERE

THE 25TH ANNUAL TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, September 7 to 16 at various theatres across downtown Toronto. 968-3456. www.bell.ca/filmfest

Janis Cole has been making documentaries for almost 25 years, a remarkable achievement in this country. Her feminist films are rarely showy — it's all about the subject matter — but she's changed the way we see women in prison, prostitutes and female directors.

With Bowie: One In A Million (September 9, 3:30 pm, ROM; September 10, 6:30 pm, Varsity), she takes on male violence against women. Cathy Bowie was Cole's friend, a lively woman murdered by her husband. It's not a new story, but by using a meat-and-potatoes approach including newspaper clippings and excerpts from radio newscasts, a subdued yet still angry Cole shows how common spousal violence is and how lightly society treats it.

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