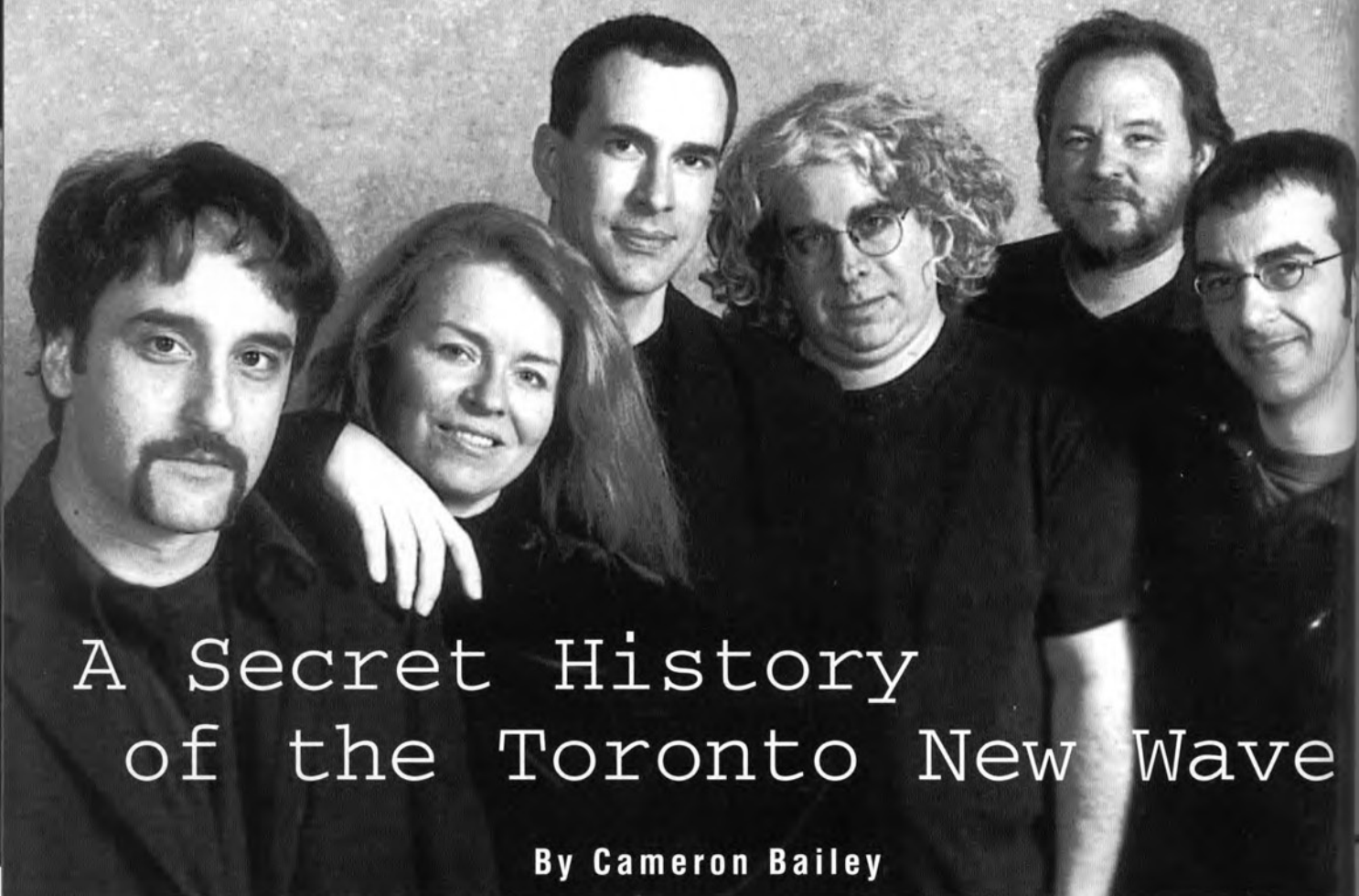


# STANDING IN THE KITCHEN ALL NIGHT



## A Secret History of the Toronto New Wave

By Cameron Bailey

All photos (except Peter Mettler) by Anne Levenston.

"Independents stand alone. Other terms like underground, avant-garde, low budget or new wave leave a bad taste in everyone's mouth. Being an outlaw is more fun. It's cool. It's dangerous."

### It didn't last.

When Bruce McDonald dropped his manifesto on the world in *Cinema Canada's* 1988 "Outlaw Edition," he gave the new style a name. The films had been brewing for most of a

decade already: *Peep Show*, *Scissère*, *Let Me See...*, *Passion: A Letter in 16mm*. Then the features: *Next of Kin*, *Listen to the City*, *Family Viewing*, *I've Heard the Mermaids Singing*. By the fall of 1988, when the "Outlaw Edition" hit the streets, Toronto had produced enough solid work to back up the boasts.

"We are paving the ground for the creation of the new Canadian Feature Film," McDonald claimed. "This new cinema needs new freedoms. Freedom from the customary conventions of the trade. Freedom from the influence of commercial partners. Freedom from the tutelage of vested interests."

He always talked a great line.

OK, so that particular revolution never happened. Sooner or later, they all worked for television. Or Alliance. Or both. But between, say, 1984 and 1995, something new did develop in Toronto. Filmmakers shook off the dead skin of tax-shelter movies, the white hump of conventional documentaries and struck out on their own. Outlaws? Not exactly. But maybe we can risk a word with even more freight. Maybe what happened in that decade-plus-one—the risks taken, the ambitions named, the successes won and especially the friendships made—can claim some of the same passion tapped by those old farts who once wrote for *Cahiers*. Maybe what we had was a “Toronto new wave.”

Don't laugh. Forget the knee-jerk urge to knock Hogtown off its perch. Think about what actually happened. There was *Nobody Waved Good-bye*, then nothing. Alright, *Goin' Down the Road*. There was *Shivers* and *Rabid*. But people tried to ignore Cronenberg. Then there were the backlot movies: *The Silent Partner* and *Meatballs* and *Porky's* and all those Susan Anspach flicks that weren't even bad enough to be kitsch.

Compare Atom Egoyan's early short films or Peter Mettler's experimental narrative *Scissère* to what went before it and it's clear there was a quantum leap. This new generation didn't just oppose phony American-style genre movies with flag-waving, Canadian grit. Don Owen, Don Shebib and Allan King had already been there. Instead, they opposed commercial cinema with personal cinema. They never tried to tell Canada's story. Or even Toronto's. They tried to put their own dark bits on screen. This was a radical move. So new wave it is.

## The Kitchen Party

If the Toronto new wave was a kitchen party, Atom Egoyan, Bruce McDonald, Peter Mettler and Don McKellar would take the prime spot between the sink and the fridge. Patricia Rozema would be there, too, but a little apart from the boys. Ron Mann would tell stories over by the stove. Clement Virgo and Jeremy Podeswa would take a spot in the foyer, John Greyson in the bedroom. Srinivas Krishna would be out on the porch, smoking. David Cronenberg would show up early, and leave early, too. Even though it was his kitchen.

It's ridiculous, of course. To concoct a Toronto new wave means choosing some and not others. It means Peter Mettler over Philip Hoffman, Bruce McDonald over Alan Zweig. It means feature films, not shorts; fiction not documentary. It means there is no easy place for one of the city's most important filmmakers through the 1980s and '90s: fringe fabulist Mike Hoolboom.

So be it. We stay in the kitchen. Even though the party ain't a party without Camelia Frieberg, Colin Brunton, Mychael Danna, Phillip Barker, Martin Heath, Joyce Wieland, Piers Handling, Bruce Elder, Kay Armatage, Kevin McMahon, Bruce LaBruce, Paul Sarossy, Steve Sanguedolce, Niv Fichman and Gary Popovich, Bill House and Midi Onodera, Geoff Pever and Jay Scott, Robert Lantos and André Bennett. They were all there.

And if I missed you, consider yourself name-checked in spirit.

The question remains: What exactly was this new wave? And what wasn't it? First, it wasn't about reality. The will to document reality that had ruled Canadian cinema since its birth was over. This was Canada's first generation of feature filmmakers to make virtually no contact with the documentary tradition. Not one of them ever worked in or for the National Film Board. And when they did make docs, like Mettler's *Picture of Light* or Kevin McMahon's *The Falls*, they told stories from the inside out. Ron Mann's work poses a problem, then. His films during this era—*Imagine the Sound*, *Poetry in Motion*, *Comic Book Confidential*, *Twist*—are not primarily personal revelations; they operate more as canvasses of alternative landscapes. They're a fan's attempt to recentre the culture along more radical lines. His one fiction feature, *Listen to the City*, failed on arrival. If anything, Mann is the Henri Langlois of this new wave. He blazed a path.

Second, this movement wasn't about commerce, at least not at first. Each filmmaker reacted against the local film industry,



Bruce McDonald: Director/editor

dominated as it was by dentist/producers with their tax-shelter scripts. None chose, as Cronenberg did and as American directors usually do, to put a personal stamp on a commercial genre. Some did earn money in the industry, though. McDonald, Colin Brunton and others did time at celluloid sweatshop SC Communications. McDonald once described the SC formula as: “gotta have sex in it, gotta have a bit of violence, gotta have a washed-up American star in it that you can get for book price, and if you keep it under a \$1 million you're guaranteed to make your money back.” But SC was just the day job, and not even most days.

No, these films were made with the help of friends, with newly available government money and with what looks like a complete lack of faith in the existing industry. Most of the new features found a home at Cinéphile, a true art-house distributor with a walk-up Queen St. West address. For years, Cinéphile's André Bennett, who distributed *Family Viewing*, *Speaking Parts*, *I've Heard the Mermaids Singing*, *Roadkill*, *The Top of His Head* and *Masala*, was the one businessman who showed the nerve and



Don McKellar: Writer/actor/director

the understanding to bring these films to market.

And if Toronto's new filmmakers were suspicious of the industry, the feeling was mutual. It wasn't until 1994 that one of their films made a mark on the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television. Egoyan's *Exotica* swept the Genie Awards, 10 years and four films after his first feature. The Don McKellar-scripted, François Girard-directed *Thirty-two Short Films About Glenn Gould* had won best picture in 1993, but that was more of a bicultural co-production.

### So they shunned the Film Board and turned their backs on the old industry. What did these damn kids want?

They wanted control. When McDonald helped form the Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT) in 1980, it gave a home to an artisanal method of making films that had no place at the NFB or under any tax shelter. LIFT became a church for the gospel of do-it-yourself. Edit it yourself. Learn to run the Arri and shoot it yourself. Better yet, get a Bolex. McDonald's early shorts *Knock, Knock* and *Let Me See...* motor along on DIY bravado. Interestingly enough, so does his best film, *Hard Core Logo*. It was through LIFT that young wannabes could become complete filmmakers. They could gain control.

They also wanted art. They wanted a touch of the Funnel, Toronto's experimental film zone of the early 1980s. They wanted a taste of the celluloid spirit Ross McLaren conjured at the Ontario College of Art or the self-questioning Jeff Paul and Rick Hancox nurtured at Sheridan College. Whether it was a direct influence or not, this new wave breathed the air of the

John Greyson: Director



# STANDING IN

underground. It flowed from the city's little art factories, from the monumental challenge posed by Bruce Elder, from the way Bart Testa and Kay Armatage taught high-octane cinema studies at the University of Toronto and still kept their classrooms tapped in to work bubbling up in the city.

Most of it filtered through Ryerson. Ryerson Polytechnic was where Mettler and McDonald met. It was downtown. It felt democratic. It offered hands-on film training in a way that U of T didn't. Mettler made *Scissère* his graduating student film at Ryerson in 1982. It took its place in the city beside other personal narratives that were springing up all over town, from Philip Hoffman's *On the Pond* through Steve Sanguedolce's *Woodbridge*. These films crossed the stream between documentary and memoir. That made them, alchemically, fiction.

## Margins Upon Margins

But not accepted fiction. For years, the films of Toronto's new wave languished on the margins of respectability. Some came to embrace those margins. Some became outlaws. This is still one of the most fascinating wrinkles in this history. Why? Because in Canada, underdog discourse rules and comforts us. Everybody's on the margins. This is a marginal country, we say. Even though we live richer than all but a very few. We're marginal, we keep telling ourselves, because we've been colonized to death. Us and Angola, man. And within Canada, no place is more marginal than Toronto. Even though it's the biggest, richest, most media-powerful city in the country. Toronto is marginal, it keeps telling itself, because it is the victim of national spite. Even worse, it's marginal because it is a city.

In the early 1980s, Canada's transition from a rural to an urban culture still wasn't complete. It may still not be. The stories that rang truest then took place in small towns or in the country. No city, with the possible exception of Montreal, could hold the attention of the Canadian psyche. Atom Egoyan changed that. With Denys Arcand and Cronenberg, he made Canadian cinema urban. But Cronenberg's Toronto was recognizable only, albeit powerfully, on a metaphorical level: bland order on top, viral chaos underneath. Egoyan's films form the spine of what became a new, urban body of work: *Next of Kin*, *Listen to the City*, *Family Viewing*, *Mermaids*, *Dead Ringers*, *Milk and Honey*, *Speaking Parts*, *Masala*, *Sam & Me*, *The Adjuster*, *Thirty-two Short Films About Glenn Gould*, *Exotica*, *Rude*, *Soul Survivor*, *Curtis's Charm*, *Eclipse*. To date, no film better builds on that foundation than Don McKellar's *Last Night*.

But if Egoyan led the move inward, McDonald kept hitting the road. *Roadkill*, *Highway 61* and *Dance Me Outside* all play the supposed smugness and corruption of urban culture against the purported freedom of elsewhere. Mettler's *The Top of His Head* also pushed outwards and away from the city; in fact, this film may be the new wave's most complete statement on the crisis that urban life produces. Its use of rural Ontario to echo and amplify interior states makes traditional contemporaries like *Termini Station*, *South of Wawa* and *Cleartcut* look positively small-town by comparison.

But even within the city, filmmakers found another gulf to straddle: alienation versus integration. The story of a young man's alienation from his family, his society or both remains a constant in Canadian cinema. It's what links *Family Viewing* and *The Top of His Head* to films made 20 years earlier, like Don Owen's *Nobody Waved Good-bye* and David Secter's *Winter Kept Us Warm*. In that one sense, there's a strong continuity between the Toronto new wave and the earlier films. But another trend rose up in the 1980s and '90s. Filmmakers began to try to find community in alienation. It was as if the growing dissonance that living in Toronto produced—how many languages can you hear riding the subway between Yonge and Ossington?—led to stories that brought people together. These weren't just stories of happy diversity, although they sometimes were that, too. No, these films are marked by ensemble casts, dispersed storylines and a classically comic move toward integration rather than isolation. Carlo Liconti's *Brown Bread Sandwiches*, Deepa Mehta's *Sam & Me* and Rebecca Yates and Glen Salzman's *Milk and Honey* work most earnestly at integration. Jeremy Podeswa's *Eclipse* and Clement Virgo's *Rude* take subtler routes. Srinivas Krishna's *Masala* plies both alienation and integration. It stills stands as Toronto's most syncretic film.

## The Tweed Curtain Lifts

What's often left unsaid in discussions of Toronto's new wave is how relatively fresh off the boat they were. Mettler was born in Toronto to Swiss parents. Rozema grew up Dutch Calvinist. Egoyan is Armenian by way of Cairo and Victoria. Clement Virgo and Stephen Williams are famously Jamaican, Krishna famously and cantankerously Indian. The only true old-school types were Bruce McDonald and Don McKellar, who both carry the authentic Canadian badge of a Scottish last name.

So what, you ask. Well, in 1988, at the height of the new wave, *Toronto Life* magazine heralded the death of the WASP. Contrasting Robertson Davies with Michael Ondaatje, John Bassett with Garth Drabinsky, it declared the end of the Tweed Curtain. *Toronto Life* always had a substantial investment in WASPs, so when it declared them out of fashion, one was convinced. The films give evidence, too. Rozema named her *Mermaids*' heroine via a Dutch play on words: Polly Vandersma. *Scissère* was shot at a heroin rehab centre in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. *Next of Kin* and *Family Viewing* were shot through with immigrant angst. Canadian filmmakers had always looked elsewhere for stories; that was part of the documentary tradition. But now, instead of middle-class filmmakers making films about working-class characters, Toronto's new filmmakers began to look to what they grew up with. They helped to form the city's new ethnicities in these films. And eventually, they found a commercial home at Alliance Entertainment, perhaps partly because the principals at Alliance were also immigrants. As such, they held no romance for WASP traditions in Canadian storytelling. They had no soft spot for rural Canadian stories. Their view was international, their sensibility European and their stance outsider.

And yet, these films never connected the new Toronto they put on screen with any kind of political change. That was left to film and videomakers like Claire Prieto, Midi Onodera, Ali Kazimi and others. In fact, politics is one of the areas where the Toronto new wave and the French New Wave truly diverge. There is no *La Chinoise* here. No *Letter From Siberia*. No *Night and Fog*. McDonald named it in *Cinema Canada's* "Outlaw Edition": "It is definitely not a political cinema or a cinema of urban realism," he wrote. "Many of the films are attempting to open portals into surrealism and stepping through stitches in time, as seen in Peter Mettler's upcoming feature, *The Top of His Head*, or in Polly's fantasies in *Mermaids*."



Patricia Rozema: Director/producer/writer

If anything, the films subsumed cultural difference into stories of urban alienation. So an aboriginal character might pop up in *The Adjuster* without any comment needed. A black woman seduces a white woman in Rozema's *When Night is Falling* without either blackness or whiteness ever becoming an issue. But cultural difference, when it did show up in these films, never hovered far from sexual desire. Check Paule Baillargeon's hot Québécoise in *Mermaids*. Or the way whole nations are eroticized in Darrell Wasyk's *Mustard Bath* and the collaborative *A Winter Tan*. Egoyan was the first to make this cocktail of sex and difference explicit, and hilarious, in *Calendar*.

Egoyan, with Cronenberg before him, also led the field in drawing queer *drives* into straight movies. Cronenberg had always wilfully confused tops and bottoms, but it wasn't until *M. Butterfly*, and eventually *Crash*, that he went beyond *Videodrome's* coy male vagina to man-on-man sex. Egoyan's flirtations with gay characters in *The Adjuster* and *Exotica* also serve, with the films' many other forms of difference, to complicate and urbanize the landscape. Ditto *Rude's* gay boxers. John Greyson's work is another story. Emerging from video, from political activism and from the burgeoning queer



Atom Egoyan: Director/producer/writer

nation, his *Urinal* and *Zero Patience* stand so far outside the rest of the new wave that they fit mostly by virtue of chronology. Another history might place him beside Laurie Lynd (*House*) and against Bruce LaBruce (*No Skin Off My Ass*, *Super 8 1/2*).

## Affinities

So this is our new wave. Urban, intimate, underdog, migrant. Educated and art-fueled. Not political. Not commercial. And not literary. In fact, not a single member of this group began as a writer. There's no Left Bank school here. Not even a film critic. Michael Ondaatje has dabbled in film and developed a working relationship with McDonald, but that's as far as it goes. This movement was always more conceptual and visual than it was verbal.

And yet, there are two men who, more than anybody, knit this group together. One is an eye; the other a voice.

Don McKellar is not only the sole member of the group to write or co-write scripts he didn't direct (*Roadkill*, *Highway 61*, *Dance Me Outside*, *Glenn Gould*), he is also the sole actor. McDonald, Egoyan and Mettler (*Listen to the City*) have all appeared in films, but McKellar acts. Between his scripts and his performances, McKellar maintains the ironic voice of WASP Canada. His is the comedy of skepticism. And his reach has been the broadest. As a writer, actor or director, he has worked with McDonald, Egoyan (*The Adjuster*, *Exotica*), Rozema (*When Night is Falling*) and Cronenberg (*Blue*, *Last Night*, *eXistenZ*). He even drew François Girard into the Toronto orbit with *Thirty-two Short Films About Glenn Gould* and *The Red Violin*.

Standing on the other side of this particular gulf is Peter Mettler—visual where McKellar is verbal, sincere where

McKellar is ironic. In fact, if film is purely a visual medium, then Mettler is the purest filmmaker in the bunch. He is the one who works, speaks and acts most like an artist, responding intuitively to the world, searching for and finding spiritual connection through his chosen medium.

At least in the early years, one gets the sense that the new Toronto filmmakers all harboured some yearning for the qualities they found in each other but not in themselves: McDonald's raw daring, Egoyan's absolute focus, Mettler's soul. Listen to his peers talk in Peter Mettler: *Making the Invisible Visible*: Egoyan says: "As I heard Peter talk about the personality of the lens and power of the camera to record the nuances and intricacies of human observation, I remember feeling very excited and moved. I had found an artistic soul mate and a great friend." Rozema: "I've often joked that Peter Mettler is actually Jesus Christ. His beatific presence on the set of my first film (*Passion: A Letter in 16mm*), his constantly evidenced generosity and his ethereal and profoundly affecting films make me joke like this." And McDonald: "The girls I liked would all fall in love with Pete the moment they met him, but I forgave them and him 'cause in a way I was in love with him too. Pete had that effect on most people."

Though McDonald may have brought the group together through passion and hard work, though Egoyan has led in consistent skill and international success, though Rozema may make the most beautiful films, it's Mettler and McKellar who remain the most important to this group as a group. Ironically, these two have worked with everyone else in the core group, except each other.

In the end, the Toronto new wave, like any movement, is about affinities. Affinities of ideas, of class, of politics and, most importantly, of friendship: the ebb and flow of attraction and disenchantment that linked Egoyan and McDonald, McDonald and Colin Brunton, Don McKellar and just about everyone. What these filmmakers made over that decade reflected their

Ron Mann: Director/producer/archivist





Peter Mettler: Cinematographer/director

own particular tastes, both complementary and competing: Mettler's visual poetry against Egoyan's analytical precision, McDonald's and Mann's pop sensibilities against Rozema's eye for transcendence.

They don't work together anymore, with the exception of McDonald and McKellar on CBC TV's *Twitch City*. And if they're like most 40-year-olds (sorry, Don), they don't have much time to see each other. No doubt they don't always like each others films. But for a few years, they showed us how it could be done. How artists with separate ambitions could work collaboratively. How a handful of people, with a whole lot of help, could change Canada's film culture.

In the end, perhaps the greatest thing a filmmaker can have is a filmmaking friend: someone who understands the fear, the acrid, yawning insecurity, the rush, the need, the craven ambi-

tion and the voice inside that just laughs. Someone who knows the critical difference that pushing the film two stops and shooting one hour later can make. Someone who knows.

Many thanks to Wyndham Wise for the background and insight he provided in the writing of this article. \*

## The Toronto New Wave: A Sidelong Timeline

**1980-83:** Prehistory. Bruce McDonald helps form the Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto. Mary Brown begins censorship glasnost in 1981. Peter Mettler makes *Scissère* at Ryerson Polytechnical in 1982. In 1983, *Videodrome* debuts to grind-house "oohs" and critical awe. It is now officially safe to like David Cronenberg.

**1984:** Ground Zero. Toronto's Festival of Festivals launches its Perspective Canada program, giving the city a Sundance, in the same year Sundance starts up. Atom Egoyan screens his first feature, *Next of Kin*, in Perspective Canada. Ontario responds to a Supreme Court decision and relaxes censorship laws. The former Board of Censors is now the Film Review Board.

**1985:** One Hundred Flowers. David Peterson's Liberals end 43 years of Tory rule in Ontario. Bob Rae's NDP joins the Grits in coalition government. Ontario now boasts two artsy new First Ladies, Shelley Peterson and Arlene Perly Rae. Both encourage government patronage of the arts. Both go on to write books. Meanwhile, Alliance Entertainment is born.

**1986:** Art With Money. Wayne Clarkson brings his spirit of indie entrepreneurship from heading the Festival of Festivals to the newly born Ontario Film Development Corp. Telefilm Canada launches its Feature Film Fund. And Philip Hoffman's *?O Zoo!* (*The Making of a Fiction Film*) opens a door to reflections on creation and death. It will find echoes in *Speaking Parts* and *White Room*.

**1987:** The Watershed. Atom Egoyan makes *Family Viewing*, collaborating with Peter Mettler behind the camera and Bruce McDonald on the Steenbeck. Patricia Rozema wins Cannes's Prix de la Jeunesse for *I've Heard the Mermaids Singing*. Jackie Burroughs, Louise Clark, John Frizzell, John Walker, Aeryn Weissman go beyond making films collaboratively and make a collaborative film, *A Winter Tan*. Jay Scott loves it. Don Shebib releases *The Climb*. Nobody notices.

**1988:** Rebel Rebel. Bruce McDonald edits the "Outlaw Edition" of *Cinema Canada*. "Toronto filmmakers are creating the Cinema of Escape," he

writes. "Not escapist cinema by any means...but a way out of our home turf as we know it." Norman Jewison opens The Canadian Film Centre. John Greyson scandalizes, but gently, with *Urinal*. But the year belongs to *Dead Ringers*. Huffy walkouts at its Festival gala screening mark the beginning of a long, slow climb to masterpiece status.

**1989:** Culture Wars. The Black Film and Video Network is born. The Racial Equity Fund, born out of the OFDC and LIFT, gives Clement Virgo his very first grant. Izidore Mussalam's *Foreign Nights* and Carlo Liconti's *Brown Bread Sandwiches* play Perspective Canada. Even *Roadkill* finds the high contrast between College Street Catholicism and Northern Ontario rockism. *Roadkill* wins top Canadian prize at the Festival of Festivals. McDonald promises to use the \$25,000 prize money to buy "a big chunk of hash and a '63 Chrysler LeBaron." The car never materialized. Meanwhile, Colin Brunton wins a Genie for *The Mysterious Moon Men of Canada*. Atom Egoyan's *Speaking Parts* does nothing for his high-chilly reputation. Allan King's *Termini Station* proves there's still some snarl in the old school.

**1990:** Bob Rae's NDP wins a majority government on the opening night of the Toronto International Film Festival. Gold patrons cry in their champers. Film outlaws whoop it up. Darrell Wasyk starts his 15 minutes of fame when *H* wins the Perspective Canada top prize and is lauded by *The Globe and Mail's* Jay Scott.

**1991:** The Establishment. McDonald's *Highway 61* takes the new wave mainstream, winning fans all across Canada. Egoyan's *The Adjuster* returns from Cannes to win Best Canadian Feature at Toronto. He makes like Wim Wenders and re-gifts his \$25,000 prize to John Pozer, for *The Grocer's Wife*. The beginning of the Vancouver new wave? The same-year release of Srinivas Krishna's *Masala* and Deepa Mehta's *Sam & Me* causes media confusion. John Greyson's *The Making of "Monsters"* and Laurie Lynd's *R.S.V.P.* continue queering the new wave. Bill Robertson makes *The Events Leading Up to My Death*, a criminally underrated domestic comedy starring Mary Margaret O'Hara. Then he drops off the radar.

**1992:** Things fall apart. Ron Mann's *Twist* fails to live up to commercial expectations. *Giant Steps* and *Hurt Penguins* are dead on arrival. The year's most daring films come from Winnipeg (Guy Maddin's *Careful*) and Montreal (Jean-Claude Lauzon's *Léolo*). Even Peter Mettler's effort, *Tectonic Plates*, interprets a Robert Lepage play. For the first time in four years, a non-Toronto film, Robert Morin's *Requiem pour un beau sans coeur*, wins the Perspective Canada prize. But Don McKellar makes the juiciest film of the year, casting David Cronenberg in the porn-powered short, *Blue*.

**1993:** McKellar continues his run, co-scripting and acting in François Girard's Genie-winning *Thirty-two Short Films About Glenn Gould*. The low-budget *Calendar* becomes the Atom Egoyan film for people who don't really like Atom Egoyan films. John Greyson's *Zero Patience* buzzes with ideas, pathos and production numbers. David Wellington's *I Love a Man in Uniform* plays like a genre film, pre-new wave, but post-Egoyan. Darrell Wasyk's long-delayed sophomore film, *Mustard Bath*, bombs.

**1994:** Bumper Crop. Egoyan's *Exotica* raises hopes at Cannes, but wins the Critics' Prize, not the Palme. Wuz he robbed? McDonald kicks off his rez period with *Dance Me Outside*. Mettler finally finishes *Picture of Light*, and the wait was worth it. Jeremy Podeswa's makes his feature debut with *Eclipse*, joining left-field surprises like Bruce LaBruce's *Super 8 1/2* and Kal Ng's *Stories of Chide The Wind*. Old-school news flash: Don Shebib secures a Toronto gala premiere for *The Ascent*. The film dies a quick death. New-school news flash: Peter Lynch directs McKellar in the Toronto-ironic *Arrowhead*.

**1995:** Bigfoot. Mike Harris comes to town. The Tories slash funding to the OFDC and the Ontario Arts Council. Stephen Williams's *Soul Survivor* and Clement Virgo's *Rude* go to Cannes this year, and Rozema's *When Night is Falling* to Berlin, but the writing is all over the wall. The party's over. \*