

CaribbeanTales

FRANCES-ANNE SOLOMON BRINGS *A WINTER TALE* INTO FOCUS

First the play – now the film!

Art Imitates Life in a Timely and Gripping Toronto Story

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Toronto, ON February 22, 2005 – Shots ring out on a winter night. A stray bullet meant for a local street dealer kills a nine year-old boy. So begins *A Winter Tale*, a new independent feature-length film written and directed by Frances-Anne Solomon, and produced by Solomon's company Leda Serene Films. It will be shot on location in Toronto's Parkdale neighborhood, and released in 2006.

Solomon's latest project *A Winter Tale* is a shockingly timely Toronto story in which six men meet at Miss G's Caribbean Takeaway Restaurant, while grief, despair and suspicion cloud the air and stalk the cold dark streets outside. They tentatively agree to form a Black Men's Support Group in the hope that this might lead to their own salvation and to the redemption of their community under siege.

"This film looks with sensitivity and insight at the issues surrounding the escalating gun violence on our streets," says Solomon. "In developing the characters and stories for *A Winter Tale*, each of us brought his or her own life experiences to the story. That gives it authenticity and immediacy, and grounds it in the reality of Toronto life."

A Winter Tale stars Peter Williams, Leonie Forbes, Michael Miller, Peter Bailey, Dennis "Sprangalang" Hall, R.O. Glasgow, P. Barrington, Ryan Ishmael, Lucky Ejim, Mike G. Yohannes, Shakura S'aida, Valerie Buhagiar, and young Sabio Emerencia-Collins. The Director of Photography is Kim Derko, and the Editor is Michelle Francis.

Solomon's other work includes *Lord Have Mercy* – Canada's first multicultural sitcom, and Literature Alive!, an innovative series of point-of-view docs profiling Caribbean Canadian Authors. The script for a Winter Tale was developed through a collaborative workshop process over two years, and recently had an amazingly successful run as a theatre play at Toronto's Alchemy Theatre and Parkdale's Mazaryk Cowan Community Center. Toronto Sun's Sherri

Woods had this to say, “A *Winter Tale* takes a raw, brave approach ... filled with crime and confusion, desperation and gunshots--and the brutal truth.”

The film is funded by CHUM Television and the Telefilm Low Budget Feature Film Fund.

Please see press kit for more information and photos, or visit www.ledaserene.com for more information.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Filmmaker, producer and writer Frances-Anne Solomon studied Theatre Arts at the University of Toronto before moving to Great Britain where she launched her company, Leda Serene Films, so that she could develop and direct her own films. In 1999 she returned to Toronto where she continues to create direct and produce film /TV projects. Most recently, she created *Literature Alive*, a unique multimedia project, that explores Caribbean Canadian fiction through an innovative series of documentaries, audio books, radio programmes, and an educational website. In 2003, she was responsible for the groundbreaking sitcom *Lord Have Mercy!* that was broadcast on four Canadian networks and nominated for two Gemini's. In 2002, she established Caribbean Tales, an multimedia company that celebrates the rich tradition of Caribbean-heritage storytelling. Frances-Anne's other directing credits include *Peggy Su!* (BBC Films 1997), *What My Mother Told Me* (Channel 4 1995), *Bideshi* (British Film Institute 1994), and *Valentine's Night* (BBC 1993) as well as documentaries *Reunion* (BBC, 1993), and *I Is A Long Memored Woman* (Arts Council of England 1991). While in the UK she also worked with BBC Single Drama & Films as a Script Editor, Producer and Executive Producer and was responsible for several films and TV movies, including the Black Screen strand (for black writers, producers and directors) and Screen on the Tube (for new feature directors). Here, her productions included *Speak Like A Child*, director John Akomfrah; *Love Is The Devil*, director John Maybury; *The Sixth Happiness*, director Waris Hossein; *Flight*, director Alex Pillai; and *Siren Spirits*, directors Ngozi Onwurah, Pratibha Parmar and Dani Williamson. Before this she worked at BBC Radio as a Drama Producer/Director, responsible for some 35 productions.

ABOUT LEDA SERENE FILMS

Leda Serene Films is a film, television and new media production company based in Toronto, Canada. The Company produces an impressive range of award-winning programs—from high quality dramas and documentaries to more innovative multi-media projects—and is dedicated to placing people of colour in front of, as well as behind, the camera and to celebrating the diversity of strong personal stories from different cultural perspectives in the global diaspora.

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