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CALGARY HERALD

WIN THE BOOK AND THE MOVIE...

We're giving away three books and the BookShort films they inspired. For your chance to win Susan Swan's *What Casanova Told Me* and the film of the same name; Paul Quarrington's *The Ravine* and the short *Pavane*; and Jame's McCreath's novel *Renaldo* and the film *A Life's Passion*, send us the title of your favourite film adapted from a Canadian novel. Contest closes at noon on Friday, October 17. **E-mail:** swervecontests@theherald.canwest.com

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READING IN THE DARK

Moving Stories brings 15 short films based on books to WordFest and answers the eternal question: what do bookworms do when the lights go out? **by BRUCE WEIR**

In 2004 Judith Keenan founded BookShorts, a company dedicated to making short films based on books, and soon learned that not everyone could see her logic. "To be honest, festivals didn't really get what we were trying to do," she says over the phone from her Toronto office. "It took three years."

To be fair, using films to promote literacy does seem a little counterintuitive, but Keenan was convinced of her mission. Luckily for her, WordFest director Anne Green also saw the potential. "We only had one movie," Keenan recalls, "and Anne, sweetheart that she is, let me bring it." That film—*What Casanova Told Me* (based on Susan Swan's novel)—played on touch-screen kiosks at WordFest in 2004. From these humble, if high-tech, roots, BookShorts' presence at WordFest has grown into the Moving Stories Film Festival, 15 short films that will screen Wednesday, Oct. 15 at the Vertigo Theatre Centre. (It is also playing five other literary festivals this fall.)

The gala evening includes a post-screening reception with Keenan and her fellow curators Anne Collins, Paul Quarrington and Nino Ricci. You'll also find local filmmaker Corey Lee, whose five-minute film, *The Perfection of the Moment*, is part of the festival. The short is based on a story from John Gould's *Kilter: 55 Fictions*, which Lee began reading shortly after wrapping his feature film *Defining Edward* in 2003. As he began reading Gould's stories (the majority run three or four pages), Lee "visualized them almost instantaneously." And that meant he had a problem. "After this wonderful experience of making a feature film, I was broke," he says with a laugh, "but trying everything to find a way to direct again."

His first move was to contact Gould, who was open to the idea of Lee adapting some of his work. The financial help came from Bravo!FACT, a foundation whose mandate includes encouraging "the creation of new ways of presenting the arts on television." Gould admits to being a little worried about letting his stories be filmed—"you're releasing your work to someone else"—but he was thrilled with the result. "It was kind of startling and really quite delightful," he says. "It was like meeting my work again in a genuinely different incarnation."

That reaction is at the heart of what BookShorts and its festival are all about. "I'm not sure the appetite for reading is decreasing," Keenan says, "but we have to think about how words are presented. Moving Stories might bring that forward as a talking point, and I think that would be great."

The Moving Stories Film Gala runs Wednesday, Oct. 15 at 5:30 p.m. at the Vertigo Theatre Centre. Tickets are \$20 and include a post-screening reception. The festival also runs