

Canadian drama hits' primetime lineup

Entertainment

Bob Spence
Thomson News Service

CTV is adding two new Canadian drama series to its 1989-1990 primetime lineup.

Bordertown, a weekly western series, is set in the 1880s. U.S. Marshal Jack Craddock (Richard Comar), an ex-gunlinger, patrols the American side of the main street in a frontier town that spans the Canadian-U.S. border. Play-it-by-the-book Mountie Clive Bennett (John Brennan) watches over the Canadian side. Both vie for the affections of Dr. Marie Dumont (Sophie Barjac).

The action/adventure series is produced by Canada's Alliance Entertainment and France's Teleimages.

The second new primetime series is **E.N.G.**, a contemporary drama that follows the exploits of an aggressive TV news team. Sarah Botsford, Mark Humphrey and Art Hindle portray the key decision-makers and news-gathers at the station.

E.N.G. is produced by Alliance in association with CTV. Among CTV's new daytime shows will be **Shirley** - an hour-long afternoon talk show, with Shirley Solomon as host.

She is not the only host who will be doing a lot of talking. Adrienne Clarkson's Summer Festival returns to CBC-TV June 27 for a second season. The 12 new two-hour programs offer profiles of top Canadian and international artists.

The June 27 show spotlights Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa and Canadian ballerina Veronica Tennant.

They are fiddlin' around in Atlantic Canada, getting ready for the jamboree.

The 40th-annual Maritime Old-Time Fiddling Contest will be held July 7 and 8 in Dartmouth, N.S. The 12th Maritime Old-Time Jamboree follows on July 9.

A young Canadian lawyer has decided the best way to get a message across to street kids around the world is through a cartoon.

Peter Dalglish, who is based in Toronto, has helped put together a special project aimed at educating children in the Third World about AIDS.

Dalglish, who left the legal field in order to work with street kids, will be profiled in a July 2 segment of **W5**, CTV's current affairs program.

His latest venture is a cartoon, produced by the National Film Board, that warns children about AIDS. Dalglish and Derek Lamb of the NFB wrote the script and Kai Pendle did the artwork. The cartoon will be distributed worldwide next year.

Dead Poet Society comes alive

By DIAHANN NADEAU
Herald Special

Dead Poets Society takes us down that oft-trod path of the good teacher inspiring students to finer things. I say oft-trod and I mean it. Although there are many good things about this movie, there are major flaws in that it is terribly unoriginal and sinks into unnecessary melodrama. Yet it is often humorous and always well-acted. Given the movies we've seen here lately, **Dead Poets** is a pleasure to watch. But don't expect anything exceptional.

It is Vermont, 1959. Robin Williams plays the inventive English teacher, John Keating. Keating is an alumnus of Welton, the restrictive prep school where he is now teaching. He takes a class of down-to-earth, disciplined, serious seniors and takes them into a new world, a world of - are you ready? - poetry. Do you have any idea how subversive poems can be? That Shakespeare can destroy your relationship with your father? That a Latin phrase can be a call to revolution? Well, in 1969 Vermont this stuff was hot!

A group of seven boys take on the mantle of the **Dead Poets Society** (Keating's old underground club) and meet in a cave in the night somewhere near the school. They read poems; ones by Whitman, Thoreau, their own, each others. They smoke pipes. They play bongos. Man, this is how the sixties got started, right? Well, maybe not.

You see, they are all, except rebel Charlie (call me Nuanda),

cowed by parents and school alike. Keating leads them to a path of self-discovery but they can't follow it. They're too damn scared and obedient. (I had a lot of trouble with this obedience thing; I grew up in the sixties and never believed what anyone over 30 years old told me. Now the teenagers ignore me.)

And now comes our melodrama. Headmaster Norman Lloyd (St. Elsewhere) is really mean. He doesn't like Keating's methods. It all comes to a disastrous end when student Perry (Robert Sean Leonard), encouraged by Keating's ideas, wins the role of Puck, in that underground revolutionary classic, "A Midsummer Night's Dream." His father forbids him to participate but Perry goes ahead. It is not a happy move and tragedy strikes in the form of teen suicide. This ends Keating's career at the school.

I do not take teenage suicide lightly, but I'm afraid Tom Schulman, who wrote the screenplay, uses it in a

manipulative and unnecessary fashion. I found this profoundly disturbing.

Dead Poets Society is often funny and sometimes moving. As I said, there is nothing new, nothing that hasn't been done before and better. But for the less cynical among us this is certainly a worthwhile movie.

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