



Keira Knightley stars in a remake of Jane Austen's classic novel *Pride and Prejudice*. The movie co-stars Canadian Donald Sutherland.

OH, THE IRONY OF IT ALL

*Period film-hater Joe Wright defies himself and directs *Pride & Prejudice*, a period film*

First-time English filmmaker Joe Wright hates period films. And he had never read the classic English novel *Pride and Prejudice*.

On top of that, he thought Keira Knightley (*Bend It Like Beckham*) was too beautiful to be cast in the lead role of Eliza Bennet.

And yet, Mr. Wright's *Pride & Prejudice* (yes, the theatrical version is spelled with an ampersand), starring Keira Knightley, which he set in 1793, is in theatres this week.

While period films always seem stiff to him, he relished the chance to make Jane Austen's microscopic examination of human nature come alive on the screen, he told



Anne Brodie

On Movies

the York Region Newspaper Group.

He says the novel has "honesty, truth and energetic vibrancy" which he tried to express in new ways.

He started with hiring actors of the proper age. Young 20-somethings Ms Knightley, Rosamund Pike and Jenna Malone play their ages because Ms Austen's characters were those ages.

Mr. Wright wanted them to experience young emotions for the first time, no "adults prancing around trying to be girls" as usually happened in early versions of *Pride and Prejudice*.

Incidentally, Eliza Bennet is reluctant to reveal her age, which is 20, because 20 was over the hill for landing a suitable (rich) husband. Says Mr. Wright "Well, it's not 17 or 18 any more, is it?"

He just didn't see gorgeous Ms

Director Joe Wright (middle) and star Keira Knightley try to stay warm during shooting.



Knightley as plain Eliza until he met her in a Montreal bar. He found her to be "unconventional, a scruffy tomboy, therefore perfect" for the role.

While he didn't dress down her beauty, she wore no makeup — none of the actors did — for authenticity. Makeup, in those days, was worn only by prostitutes, or "painted ladies".

All five Bennet daughters are hunting for rich husbands, aided and abetted by their frantic moth-

er. Does that make them gold diggers? Not necessarily. Mr. Wright noted if impoverished women like the Bennets didn't marry into money, they would be destitute; women could not inherit in those days.

The inheritance laws were repealed in the mid-1800s when it became clear that women's lives were being economically devastated.

See SUTHERLAND, page 20.

BRITISH 'GIRL OF THE MOMENT' CAN'T BE STOPPED

Pride & Prejudice

Starring Keira Knightley, Dame Judi Dench, Donald Sutherland and Rosamund Pike.

Directed by Joe Wright

Keira Knightly stars as Elizabeth Bennet in this, at least the ninth film adaptation of Jane

Austen's popular 1813 novel.

But first-time director Joe Wright didn't want Ms Knightley in the key role because he considered her too beautiful to play the 20-something, social-climbing spinster.

But Ms Knightly can't be stopped (except in the dreadful *Domino*) — she's Hollywood's Eng-

lish Girl of the Moment, and there is no reason why Gwyneth Paltrow should play all the period English flowers.

Much to Mr. Wright's relief, Ms Knightley is an admirable Elizabeth.

She's frumped up a little,

See WRIGHT'S, page 20.

Sell locally? **advertise locally!**

Get local exposure for your business by advertising in *York Region Business Times*

Call our sales department for information: 905/513-1717

- Our business readership includes owners, managers and other key decision makers, as well as Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade members.
- Affordable advertising campaigns tailored to small and large businesses
- Ad rates start at \$70 per month and include professional copywriting and design
- Targeted distribution of 16,000 monthly copies