

Rookie filmmaker sold shares in Stouffville movie

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When Mr. Keenan graduated from Ryerson's radio and television arts program more than 20 years ago, he knew he wanted to make feature films, but just didn't know how.

While figuring out how to make movies, Mr. Keenan fell into writing and producing radio and television advertisements.

In 1991, Mr. Keenan got a small taste of filmmaking when he wrote, directed and produced the short film *The Homework Bureau*.

Paying commercial gigs and having a family slowed the production of a feature film down a bit.

But in 2003, Mr. Keenan got serious about fulfilling his dream and while staring out his back window, which looks onto the Don Valley, hoping for inspiration to hit, it did.

"Write what you know," he said.

MAKES COMMERCIALS

Mr. Keenan worked on the script every morning from 5:30 to eight for two years so he could spend the rest of the day continuing to make commercials to pay the bills.

Taking a page from the Coen brothers' filmmaking handbook, Mr. Keenan decided to fund the movie by selling shares in it to family and friends and anyone else

who was interested.

"We had to figure out what we thought we could do it for and we raised that amount of money," he said.

Because Mr. Keenan, who executive produced the film with his wife, Tracy, had such a small budget, his filming locations were limited.

"We had to be far enough outside Toronto so we didn't hear all the noise from the planes.

"But we had a deal with ACTRA that enabled us to not pay these incredible actors so much. So we couldn't go far," he said.

The Robinson and Clark portions of the York Region Forest, along with the Whitchurch Conservation

Area, all near Ballantrae, filled in nicely.

Eating Buccaneers has been making the film festival circuit since its release last year and has earned official selection nods from the Cinefest Sudbury International Film Festival, Newport Beach Film Festival and Victoria Film Festival.

Eating Buccaneers has also earned an honourable mention by the Just For Laughs festival in Chicago.

FILM FEST CIRCUIT

Prior to making its big screen debut in Toronto this summer, a special screening, presented by the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library, will take place

Wednesday, May 27, at the Lebovic Centre for Arts and Entertainment - Nineteen on the Park.

Eating Buccaneers starts at 7 p.m. and Mr. Keenan will be on hand for a Q & A afterwards. Tickets are \$5 at the door.

For more on the movie, including its trailer, go to: eatingbuccaneers.com



EATING BUCCANEERS PHOTO

Eating Buccaneers, described as *The Office* meets *Lord Of The Flies*, stars Jeff White (Little Mosque on the Prairie), Shannon Beckner (Billable Hours), Steven McCarthy (Dead Mary), Neil Crone (Little Mosque), Peter Keleghan (Seinfeld) and Leah Pinsent, with a cameo from her legendary dad, Gordon Pinsent. Filming included scene above at the Whitchurch Conservation Area. The movie will be screened in Stouffville Wednesday.

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