



THE DON HAIG FUND

Press Release

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**GUYLAINE DIONNE WINS 2006 DON HAIG AWARD –  
SEAN GARRITY TAKES SPECIAL JURY PRIZE**

**TORONTO, ONTARIO, May 5, 2006** – Guylaine Dionne, a Montreal-based filmmaker whose work has included both documentaries and fiction films, has been selected as the winner of the 2006 Don Haig Award.

The \$10,000 cash prize for an emerging filmmaker whose work has bridged the documentary and fiction genres was presented at the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Hot Docs Festival in Toronto. This was the first year that the Don Haig Award has been presented in partnership with Hot Docs.

A Special Jury Prize of \$5,000, courtesy of Montreal distributor Films Transit, was awarded to Manitoba filmmaker Sean Garrity.

The Don Haig Award is the legacy of Don Haig. Though he described himself as “just a prairie boy”, he was affectionately known as the “godfather” of Canadian film. After an award-winning career as an editor on such landmark television shows as *This Hour Has Seven Days*, *Summer in Mississippi*, *Mills of the Gods*, and *The National Dream*, Haig began quietly helping young filmmakers. And he knew how to pick them: *I’ve Heard the Mermaids Singing*, directed by Patrica Rozema and produced by Alex Raffe; Oscar winner *Artie Shaw – Time Is All You’ve Got*, directed by Brigitte Berman; *The Twist* by Ron Mann; and *Dancing in the Dark*, directed by Leon Marr. There are many more.

As jury member Brigitte Berman recalled at the awards ceremony, “Don Haig’s loyalty and commitment knew no bounds. He was my most avid supporter, contributing his time, his tremendous talent, his editing facilities, and his wisdom and experience. I can say without hesitation that without him *Artie Shaw* would never have been made. I’m sure that many other Canadian filmmakers feel exactly the same way.”

Guylaine Dionne has directed a number of documentaries for television including the 2004 docu-drama *Mary Shelley*, which was awarded the “Lanterna Magica” Prize at L’Encre à l’écran Festival, held in Tours, France, and episodes of *Iles d’inspiration* (1998-99) and *Through Her Eyes* (2000). *Les rêves secrets des Tarahumaras* was a 1994 Géméaux nominee for Best Documentary Series. Her fiction work includes the multi-award-winning *Les frissons d’Agathe* (1989) and *Last Call* (1988). Her first feature *Les fantômes des trois Madeleine* (*The Three Madeleines*) had its world premiere in 2000 at the Directors’ Fortnight of the Cannes Film Festival and went on to win numerous prizes around the world including the Grand Prize at the Figueira da Foz International Film Festival in Portugal. She is currently working on *Serveuses demandées*, a feature-length drama slated for shooting in early 2007.

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Winnipeg-based filmmaker Sean Garrity's first feature *INerTia* was named Best First Feature at the 2001 Toronto International Film Festival and netted him the Best Director award at the 2001 FilmCan Festival. His second feature film *Lucid* played at the 2005 Toronto International Film Festival in the Contemporary World Cinema program. As well as feature films, Sean has directed a number of documentaries and shorts including the award-winning films *Middle* and *How Much for a Half Kilo?*

The Don Haig Award was established in 2002 by Don's life companion Bill Schultz, his family, colleagues, and the filmmakers he so vigorously supported. The Award is a unique opportunity for members of the Canadian film and television community to "give back" in his spirit. It is an annual no strings-attached cash prize for the filmmaker – to buy some creative time, to fill a financial gap in a production, to complete a film; whatever is needed.

The Don Haig Committee will continue to award up to \$10,000 annually. The Don Haig Fund accepts donations in memory of Don Haig. For more information on The Don Haig Fund and Award as well as a listing of this year's Jury and Nominators, please go to the website: [www.donhaig.org](http://www.donhaig.org)

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