

## WIDC 2007 MENTOR DIRECTOR



Photo by Thomas Kognigsthal

### **LÉA POOL** **Montreal, QC**

Since 1978, Léa Pool has pursued a unique cinematographic path. In 1979, she wrote, shot, produced and directed a one-hour fiction film, *STRASS CAFÉ*, which won awards in four festivals, including Sceaux, in France, in 1981. From 1980 to 1983, she directed ten programs on cultural minorities, for Radio-Québec. In 1984, she wrote and directed her first feature film, *LA FEMME DE L'HÔTEL*, which was enthusiastically welcomed by critics and the public. It won seven awards, including the International Press Award at the

World Film Festival, the award for best actress, Louise Marleau, at the Genie in Toronto, and the Public's Award for fiction at the Women's Film Festival in Créteil, France. She then wrote and directed *ANNE TRISTER*, in 1986, the last volume in a trilogy on the complex issue of feminine identity. This film was invited to fifteen international festivals, including the Berlin Festival (official competition) and won, amongst others, the People's Choice Award at the Women's Film Festival in Créteil (France), the Critic's Award at the Troia Festival in Portugal, and the Genie Award for best cinematography in Toronto.

*À CORPS PERDU*, shot in 1988, an adaptation of Yves Navarre's novel Kurwenal, confirmed the importance of Léa Pool on the Canadian film scene. It garnered First Prize from *Première* magazine at the Festival of Namur and the Award of Excellence at the Atlantic Film Festival in Halifax; it was also chosen for official competition at the Venice Festival, the World Film Festival, and at the International Film Festival, in 1988. In 1990, Léa Pool shot her first documentary film, *HOTEL CHRONICLES*, part of the series of the National Film Board of Canada, *TALKING ABOUT AMERICA*. It won the Gold Medal in the documentary category, at Chicago's 26th International Film Festival, and participated in numerous international festivals. In 1991, Ms. Pool directed her fourth fiction film, *LA DEMOISELLE SAUVAGE*, co-written with Michel Langlois and Laurent Gagliardi. The film was presented in the official competition at the Montréal World Film Festival, where it won the Super Écran Award for best Canadian film and the award for best artistic contribution (photography). It also won the award for best direction at the French film festival in Saint-Martin (West Indies).

In 1992-1993, she wrote and directed her fifth fiction film, *MOUVEMENTS DU DÉsir*, nominated in eight categories at the Genie Awards, including Achievement in Direction and Original Screenplay. It was also presented at the Sundance Film Festival in California, in 1994. In October 1994, the Blois Festival (France) presented a retrospective of the cinematographic work of Léa Pool, and the "Ordre des Arts et des Lettres de France" awarded her the title of "Chevalier". In 1994-1995, she directed two documentaries for a six episode bilingual television series titled *WOMEN: A TRUE STORY*, on the emancipation of women, based on scenarios by Rina Fraticelli and Léa Pool, and hosted by Susan Sarandon. In 1996, she directed a short fiction film, *LETTRE À*

MA FILLE, for Le Musée de la civilisation (Québec). In 1997-1998, she directed a documentary film on the life of one of Canada's most important authors, Gabrielle Roy. In 1998-1999, she co-wrote with Nancy Huston and directed her sixth feature film entitled EMPORTE-MOI. This wildly acclaimed film was selected for the opening of Les Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois and won the Special Prize of the ecumenical jury of Berlin's 49<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival.

Since 1989, she received many honors around the world, from Switzerland, France, Japan (Tokyo), Belgium, Sweden, Canada (Toronto), and in the United States from Denver, Berkeley, Princeton, Chicago, Boston, New York (at the Museum of Modern Art) and Seattle, to name a few.

In 2000, she directed LOST AND DELIRIOUS, starring Piper Perabo, Jessica Paré, Mischa Barton and Graham Greene. It was a co-production between Québec and Ontario, written by Judith Thompson, based on the novel THE WIVES OF BATH by Susan Swan.

In 2002, she directed the feature film THE BLUE BUTTERFLY, starring William Hurt and Pascale Bussière, a co-production between Québec and England, written by Peter McCormack, based on the life of George Brossard.

More recently, she wrote RISPONDETEMI, one of the sketches of the movie MONTRÉAL VU PAR..., co-directed by Patricia Rozema, Denys Arcand, Michel Brault, Atom Egoyan, and Jacques Leduc. She is presently working on the cinematographic adaptation of PILGRIM by Timothy Findley.