

# ABORIGINAL FILMMAKERS

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an Aboriginal-owned and -operated film and television company. For a half-hour drama called *Moccasin Flats*, Big Soul trained 50 Aboriginal youth in Regina, Saskatchewan, in all aspects of filmmaking both behind and in front of the camera.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade supports the work of many of Canada's Aboriginal filmmakers. Among them:

- Alanis Obomsawin has been chronicling Aboriginal struggles since 1967. In November 2002 she

presented a cycle of four major films in Argentina, with support from the Canadian Embassy in Buenos Aires. Her latest film — *Is the Crown at War With Us?* — was featured at Sundance. It examines the conflict over fishing rights involving the Esgenoopetitj Mi'gmaq First Nation of Burnt Church, New Brunswick.

- In 2003, the Sundance Festival screened Darlene Naponse's first feature, *Cradlesong*, described as a "musically inspired stroll through



photo: National Film Board of Canada

Canada's foremost Aboriginal filmmaker, Alanis Obomsawin, director of the NFB production *Is the Crown at War With Us?*

the Whitefish Lake Ojibway First Nation" in northern Ontario. A travel grant from the Department's Arts and Cultural Industries Promotion Division enabled producer Bill Huffman to attend Sundance. 🍁

# CREATING AN IMAGE OF CANADA

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early 1900s to the 1930s, who helped shape Canadian art in those years: Franklin Brownell, James W. Morrice, David Milne, Group of Seven members A.Y. Jackson and Alfred Casson, and Anne Savage and Mabel May (members of the Beaver Hall Hill Group of Montreal women painters). Most of the holdings, however, span the last 50 years. They include works by artists of the 1950s and 1960s who were instrumental in bringing abstraction to Canada: Jack Bush, Paul-Émile Borduas, Kenneth Lochhead, Charles Gagnon, Yves Gaucher, Harold Town, Jacques Hurtubise and Jean-Paul Riopelle. Featured as well are well-known names in Canadian art from the

1970s to the present: Vera Frenkel, Michael Snow, Betty Goodwin, Bill Reid, Takao Tanabe, Mary Pratt, Kim Ondaatje, Guido Molinari, William Kurelek, Jean Paul Lemieux, and printmakers J.C. Heywood and Otis Tamasauskas.

Some of the works were commissioned for a particular site. An example is Kenneth Lochhead's 1970 mural for the Canadian Embassy in Warsaw. It has been re-installed in the newly rebuilt Embassy building, which opened in 2001.

Other pieces are more portable, including an outstanding collection of Inuit sculpture.

As Canada gradually gained recognition on the international



photo: courtesy Valued Assets Management Program, DFAIT

Among works displayed at the Canadian Embassy in Warsaw, Poland, as part of the permanent Warsaw Embassy Collection: *Hill* (2001) (acrylic on canvas), by Greg Hardy; and *Braiding Through the Trench* (1986) (acrylic on canvas), by David Alexander

stage, Canadian artists explored and expressed our country's unique identity. The DFAIT collection presents their discoveries and graphically conveys our country's place in the world. 🍁