

Canada exports comedy and drama to Edinburgh Festival



B Movie - the Play

Two Canadian drama successes will be featured at this summer's Edinburgh International Festival. Both B Movie, the Play and The Rez Sisters have won many awards and roused interest wherever they have played in Canada.

Fast moving spoof for movie buffs

B Movie, the Play is a zany comedy by Edmonton-born Tom Wood, in which the playwright also plays a leading role. It takes a satirical look at the world of low-budget film-making where reality and fantasy become one.

The plot centres on a small-time movie director, Art Findell, who decides to make an updated version of *Oedipus Rex* - to be retitled *Joanne and Eddie*. He persuades a gorgeous American soap opera actress to play the lead, and in order to clinch the deal he engages a handsome male stripper to be her co-star.

Director Art Findell - a distraught Woody Allen type figure - is described by Wood as 'a total film

freak who was lonely in childhood and grew up watching films'. He is supported in his shoe-string venture by a weird brother and sister team: Stan Purdum is his side-kick with a flair for imitation; while downtrodden sister Lottie, who idolises Art, is typist, costumier, caterer and financier for the venture.

The play, directed by Bob Baker, is characterised by split-second timing and superb sound and lighting effects. It is a fast-moving piece which changes rapidly from fantasy to slapstick, mystery to melodrama. Movie buffs will be impressed by the attention to detail, which includes virtually every movie cliché in the book.

For the five actors involved, it is a tour de force. 'It's the most physical show I've ever done,' says Wood. 'I feel as if I have been hit by a truck when I get up in the morning.'

Wood has been an actor for 15 years, appearing all over Canada in both modern drama and the classics. He therefore has a strong appreciation of what makes good theatre, and this certainly comes over in *B Movie, the Play*, which is only the second work Wood has written.

It has played to packed houses across Canada, and its success has encouraged him to embark on other writing projects, including a thriller and a screen play of *B Movie*.

Whether he succeeds in his stated aim of making people 'think about how much the movies have warped our collective brains' may be open to question. What is clear, however, is that Wood's spoof will have Edinburgh Festival audiences rolling in the aisles this summer.



Photo courtesy of Edinburgh Festival Society

The Rez Sisters