

INDIAN SUMMER – THE OKA CRISIS ON SCREEN

Montreal, September 19th. Claudio Luca from Cine Tele Action (*The Boys of St-Vincent, The Last Chapter, René Lévesque*) is presently on production of *Indian Summer : The Oka Crisis* a Four Hour, Television Drama, Mini-series with the collaboration of CBC.

The shooting started in the neighbourhood of Montreal in St-Lazare and later the set will be located at Kahnésatake, the very place where the events took place. The producer has had a full collaboration from the representative of the Mohawk community who approved the script and development of this project. A petition has been signed by a large number of members of the community under the leadership of Steven Bonspille to cooperate with the production team.

Written and directed by Gil Cardinal this mini series is based on actual events. Filmmaker **Gil Cardinal (Métis)** has directed over thirty documentaries and television dramas with Native themes. His documentary *Totem: The Return of the G'psgolox Pole* won the Alanis Obomsawin Best Documentary Award in 2003 at the ImagineNATIVE Film Festival in Toronto. Cardinal's awards include Best Story/Script at the 1998 American Indian Film Festival (*Big Bear*); Best of the Festival at the 1997 Dreamspeakers Festival (*David with F.A.S.*); Best of the Festival at the 1994 Alberta Film Awards (*Our Home and Native Land*); Best Direction, Information or Documentary Program or Series at the 1988 Gemini Awards (*Foster Child*). He lives and writes in Edmonton, Alberta.

Indian Summer, the Oka Crisis tells in fictional form the story of a small group of Mohawks who establish a barricade to protest the development of land they claim in Oka, Quebec. When the police try and fail to remove them by force, other Mohawks join the protest and block a major bridge into Montreal. The minor protest turns into a major crisis. Negotiations break down as both Government and Mohawk demands escalate. The Government calls in the Canadian Army to restore order and after a long standoff the Mohawks eventually walk out of their Treatment Centre stronghold.

The leading Mohawk roles are played by native people : Alex Rice (Ellen Gabriel), Billy Merasty (John Croe), Gary Farmer (Joe Deom), and Tantoo Cardinal (Iba Beauvais). Non aboriginal characters are interpreted by Tony Nardi (John Ciaccia), Pierre Brassard (Robert Bourassa), Bruce Ramsay (John Parisella), Tony Calabretta (Sam Elkas), Aubert Pallascio (Claude Ryan) and Marcel Jeannin is playing CPL Lemay who was killed during those days. Many images will be used from available Stock Shot of this period and more than 700 extras will also be directed by Gill Cardinal.

Georges Archambault is the DOP, the Art Director is Donna Noonan, Anne Duceppe is the Costume Designer, and Claude Hazanavicius is the Sound Recordist.

The shooting will last 35 days and it will be primarily aired on CBC in 2006 and then on Radio-Canada network.

Produced by Claudio Luca for Cine Tele Action in collaboration with CBC and the Canadian Fund for Television