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TORONTO'S FREE EVENING NEWSPAPER



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IGNATIEFF RIPS INTO TORIES' FISCAL MANAGEMENT

OTTAWA



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is walking with the wounded

NORTHERN EXPOSURE

...the special edition ...
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DEAF FILMMAKER IS OPENING DOORS

FESTIVAL DIRECTOR SAYS FILMS TELL STORIES WE CAN ALL RELATE TO



LAST WORD
JILL ANDREW

For some, being told "no" is their signal to give up, find a safe job and complain endlessly about what could, should or would have been.

Filmmaker Catherine MacKinnon was tired of being told no, so she decided to create her own path and help open doors

for other artists like her.

Today, MacKinnon is an award-winning deaf filmmaker, co-producer of the film *Hamill* - based on the true story of deaf UFC fighter Matt Hamill - and the director of the bi-annual Toronto International Deaf Film and Arts Festival (TIDFAF).

Recently, *t.o.night* caught up with MacKinnon to get her last word and to learn more about her festival.

t.o.night: How is TIDFAF changing the film festival scene?

MacKinnon: Deaf film-

makers and actors are generally invisible, underrepresented or misrepresented in hearing films, and this sends the message that we aren't out there and that our narratives are not relevant enough to or simply cannot draw all types of audiences. TIDFAF directly challenges this by showing films that tell our stories the ways they should be told, and in fact, our films draw both hearing and deaf audiences because in many cases our films tell universal stories we can all relate to

on some level.

t.o.night: You've shared candidly your experiences with being told no in your profession on many occasions. What's been the hidden blessing from all of this?

MacKinnon: Each time you are told no regarding your dreams, it forces you to be that more creative with your next audition, grant proposal, interview - you name it. It also helped me sharpen my confidence in wanting to create my own destiny because I knew if I didn't do it, I'd be at the mercy of

some others holding their pre-judgments about what I could or couldn't achieve.

The Toronto International Deaf Film and Arts Festival runs May 12-15.

On Thursday, TIDFAF is hosting a kick-off party at the Deaf Culture Centre in the Distillery Historic District. For more information, go to <http://www.tidfaf.ca>

Share your thoughts on Last Word

at jill@tonightnewspaper.com

Jill Andrew, PhD (c.), speaks regularly on women's issues, media awareness and equity education.

GET FIT FOR SPRING WITH MODERN BELLY DANCE

By JOHN GILSON

With a spring in the air, it's time to get back into the gym, says a fitness instructor who's been teaching belly dance for over 20 years. "It's a great way to get fit and have fun at the same time," she says.

Modern belly dance is a fusion of traditional belly dance and contemporary dance. It's a great way to get fit and have fun at the same time. "It's a great way to get fit and have fun at the same time," she says.

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