FROM FLORES

“Up at Flores Island, Captain Findlay Crabbe readied his fishboat the Effie Cee for the journey home and set out in good spirits while the weather was fair…”

Ethel Wilson’s haunting short story of a West Coast tragedy is movingly retold in this animated film. Finely rendered drawings, muted watercolour backgrounds and subtle sound images transport the viewer to the shores of Flores Island off the British Columbia coast. There, one is witness to a series of events which symbolize the fragility and pathos of human existence.

From Flores depicts a poignant fragment of Canadian history which continues to be re-enacted within the drama of West Coast life. Despite its period setting, the film raises timeless questions regarding human nature and our relationships with the earth. When the final haunting images recede, one is compelled to consider individual mortality and the basic need for spiritual dignity in the face of death.

Direction and Animation
Stephen McCallum

Producer
Svend-Erik Eriksen

Produced by
NFB Pacific Centre

Running Time 12 min. 15 sec.
Order Number
16 mm. 1 0190 049
Video 1 9190 049 (CC)
FROM FLORES

Audiences
General public; artists, writers, historians; intermediate, secondary and post-secondary students (Canadian literature, writing, history, art, values education, psychology, philosophy).

Response Activities
Before viewing. Discuss personal impressions of the West Coast of British Columbia. Using the quotation on the front of the video jacket as a starting point, predict what the story might be about.
After viewing. Express personal reactions through writing, music, art, drama. Discuss the animation techniques used and how they are used to create a mood and to support the storyline. Compare the film to Ethel Wilson's original text (see suggested readings). Compare the values and attitudes of 1948 to those of the present.

About the Author
Although seldom recognized by name as a significant Canadian author, Ethel Wilson (1888-1980) is considered to be one of British Columbia's most distinguished fiction writers. She is particularly noted for her elegant, highly visual style and sense of place. Her work has been an inspiration to many Canadian writers including Alice Munro, who said, "It was important to me that a Canadian writer was using so elegant a style...that a point of view so complex and ironic was possible in Canadian literature." Her writings include four books (Hetty Dorval, The Innocent Traveller, The Equations of Love, and Swamp Angel) as well as numerous short stories and essays.

Selected Readings
Wilson, E. Mrs. Golightly and Other Stories. Afterword by D. Stouck. Markham, Ont.: McClelland and Stewart, 1990.

About the Filmmaker
In From Flores, Stephen McCallum continues his exploration of film as a vehicle for artistic expression and a means of representing fundamental life themes. Building on the style of rendering and animation he developed in his first film, Debts, he has successfully transformed the power of fine literature into the medium of film. Stephen believes that effective storytelling is a significant aspect of the filmmaker's role, and that film can be an important extension of the oral tradition. He is committed to animation as a serious art form, and finds inspiration by combining ideas and insights from a variety of disciplines including art history, social history, science, philosophy and literature. With eight years of work in animation to build on, he looks forward to exploring new forms in future projects.

Direction & Animation
Stephen McCallum
Assistant Animators
Darren Brereton
Dorothy Kaminsky
Sound Design & Editing
John McCulloch
Voices
Narrator
Captain Crabbe
Ed the Crewman
Josie
Indian Mother
Indian Father
Radio Announcer
Producer
Svend-Erik Eriksen
Executive Producers
Barbara Janes
John Taylor

Animation Camera
Barry Newton
Jon Campfens
Music
John Forrest

Special Thanks
U.B.C. Library Special Collections
Nautical Chart courtesy of Canadian Hydrographic Service

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