

Neighbours and Other Strangers

City dwellers are strangers with overlapping lives. They exchange glances in a restaurant. They bump into each other on a street corner, only to continue on, alone. This trio of award-winning films explores solitude and happenstance and the search for connections within the city. **Neighbours and Other Strangers** marks the video debut of the festival favourite **When the Day Breaks** (by Wendy Tilby and Amanda Forbis). This remarkable collection also features Wendy Tilby's **Strings**, the 1991 Academy Award™ Nominee for Best Animated Short, and **Tables of Content**, Wendy Tilby's acclaimed student film made at the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design.

When the Day Breaks (1999, 9:33) After witnessing the accidental death of a stranger, Ruby the Pig seeks affirmation in the city around her and finds it in surprising places. **When the Day Breaks** illuminates the links which connect our urban lives, while evoking the promise and fragility of a new day.

Directors: Wendy Tilby, Amanda Forbis
Producer: David Verrall



Strings (1991, 10:19) Two neighbours are intimately linked by the shared ceilings, floors and plumbing of their apartments. One day, fate – in the form of a leaking bath – contrives to bring them briefly into contact.

Director: Wendy Tilby **Producer: David Verrall**



Tables of Content (1986, 6:51) A solitary diner takes in the sights and sounds around him on a rainy night in a restaurant full of intriguing characters.

Director: Wendy Tilby **Producer: Wendy Tilby**
(Made at the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design)



Total screening time: 27 min 12 sec
Order no. C0199 218

TO ORDER NFB VIDEOS, CALL TODAY!

1-800-267-7710 (Canada)

1-800-542-2164 (USA)

www.nfb.ca

© 1999 A licence is required for any reproduction, television broadcast, sale, rental or public screening. Only educational institutions or non-profit organizations who have obtained this video directly from the NFB have the right to show this video free of charge to the public.

National Film Board of Canada
P.O. Box 6100, Station Centre-Ville
Montreal, Quebec H3C 3H5

Printed in Canada



Neighbours and Other Strangers

Palme d'Or for Best Short Film, 1999 Cannes International Film Festival

Neighbours and
Other Strangers



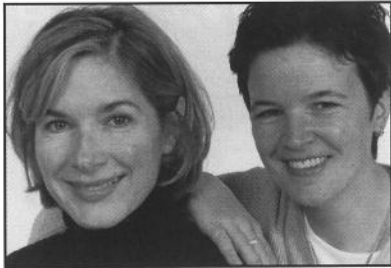
VHS

C0199 218

A National Film Board of Canada Production

Neighbours and Other Strangers

About the Filmmakers



Wendy (left) and Amanda (right)

Amanda Forbis was born in 1963 and raised on the banks of the Bow River in Calgary, Alberta. She went to school (University of Lethbridge) and then she went to school some more (Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design) and then she went to work. She was Animation Director on the NFB production **The Reluctant Deckhand** (1995) before co-directing **When the Day Breaks** with Wendy Tilby.

About the technique

To achieve the textured look suggestive of a lithograph or a flickering newsreel, the filmmakers used pencil and paint on photocopies in **When the Day Breaks**. **Tables of Content** and **Strings** were created using a process of painting on glass and stop-action filming.

Wendy Tilby's life, thus far, is a series of small events too numerous to list here. Highlights include her birth in 1960 in Edmonton, Alberta; schooling at the University of Victoria and the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design; and completion of **When the Day Breaks**, which she co-directed with Amanda Forbis. Previous work includes **Tables of Content** and the Oscar-®-nominated **Strings**.

When the Day Breaks

Direction, animation
Wendy Tilby
Amanda Forbis

Concept
Wendy Tilby

Additional animation
Martin Rose

Consulting editor
Haida Paul

Music
Judith Gruber-Stitzer

Arrangements
David Gossage,
Judith Gruber-Stitzer

Singers
Martha Wainwright,
Chaim Tannenbaum

Sound Editing
Marie-Claude Gagné

Foley
Andy Malcolm

Sound Recording
Geoffrey Mitchell,
Gaëtan Pilon

Re-recording
Shelley Craig,
Jean Paul Vialard

Visual Effects
Susan Gourley

Animation Assistance
Luigi Allemano

Producer
David Verrall

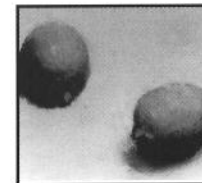
Executive Producers
Barrie Angus McLean,
David Verrall

27 min 12 sec
C0199 218



Discussion Questions for When the Day Breaks

1. Consider the filmmakers' use of ordinary household objects (for example, a toaster and an electric kettle, and their power cords) to symbolize our interconnectedness, especially in urban settings. Imagine similar morning routines occurring in different cities and countries, and how a sudden accident can change everything. Discuss, for example, the stories that might emerge from a city where an earthquake occurs in the middle of an otherwise ordinary day.
2. Using a newspaper, find a story of a break-in or an accident that appears to be distinctly far afield from the lives of the viewer(s). Then, step by step, imagine how the connections might be made to the lives of people in your community.
3. How did the animals resemble humans? List such things as clothing and human activities and environments, but also collect observations regarding their behaviour. Discuss too the extraordinary attention given to detail, the beak-shaped bites in the chicken's toast, his bird-style coffee-drinking, the shape of his hat. Talk about the delicate balance the artists maintained between animal and human details.
4. Discuss the images of the chicken's past and the pieces of his present (his groceries, his bones) that appear after the accident. Why is this a powerful way to depict an accidental death?
5. Discuss the music used in the film. Would the film have had the same power with no music or different music? While the first song is both lighthearted and jaunty, its use might be ironic. Discuss the second song's effect on the viewer at the end of the film. What do you think the songs might be saying about city life versus country life?



When the Day Breaks

Oh, when the day breaks in two
And the sun comes slippin' through
It's morning and I'm singing
Cause everything's beginning
And skies are blue...oooh!

Oh, when the day breaks
And the moon makes
His last goodbye

I rise and shine
The world is fine

I'm giddy
I'm pretty
The city
Is mine!

Prairie Blue

Where are you, Prairie Blue
Where's the home I once knew
Clouds on high, rolling by
Prairie Blue

Where the sweet grasses lie
'Neath the wide-open sky
I can see, endlessly
Prairie Blue

Why did I ever stray
So very far away
Y'know I'm coming back
Someday

Where are you, Prairie Blue
Are you missing me too
I'm at ease, on the breeze
Prairie Blue