



KINGDOM COUNTY PRODUCTIONS HISTORY

Kingdom County Productions was established in May 1991 by filmmaker/impresario Jay Craven and theater and film producer Bess O'Brien—who set out to fulfill their dream of making films rooted in northern New England. After a year and a half of intensive organizing and fundraising, this dream came to fruition in October 1992 when production began on ***Where the Rivers Flow North*** (starring Rip Torn, Tantoo Cardinal, Bill Raymond, and Michael J. Fox). Based on the novel by Howard Frank Mosher, ***Rivers*** tells the story of an aging logger (Torn) and his Native American mate (Cardinal) who face the extinction of their way of life when a the construction of a new power dam threatens to flood them off their land.

Since the completion and distribution of ***Rivers***, KCP has supported the production and release of two more of Jay Craven's "frontier films" based on Mosher novels: ***A Stranger in the Kingdom*** (1998—starring Ernie Hudson, David Lansbury, and Martin Sheen) and ***Disappearances*** (2007—starring Kris Kristofferson, Charlie McDermott, and Genevieve Bujold). Bess O'Brien has also made three documentaries at KCP: ***Journey into Courage*** (1997—telling the stories of survivors of domestic violence), ***Where is Stephanie?*** (1999—exploring the family impact of the murder of Rutland teen, Stephanie Sady), and ***Here Today*** (2003—showing the effect of heroin abuse on Northeast Kingdom families).

Now in production the documentary film ***Ask Us Who We Are***, based on the lives of foster care youth.

KCP's educational program has included the establishment of ***Fledgling Films*** (1998-2005) a summer film institute that produced more than 50 short narrative and documentary films by emerging teen filmmakers. Also, Bess O'Brien's ***Voices Project***, a touring musical theater production based on writing and performance workshops with 1,000 Vermont teens—that was also adapted into O'Brien's award-winning teen film, ***Shout It Out***. Craven has also directed 1) the teen-written comedy ***In Jest*** (1998), starring local teen and professional actors, 2) the 2006 documentary, ***After the Fog***, featuring 11 combat veterans of WWII, Vietnam, and Iraq, 3) ***The Year That Trembled*** (2002—with Jonathan Brandis, Marin Hinkle, Martin Mull), a 1970 coming-of-age story based on the novel by Scott Lax, 4) ***Windy Acres*** (2004), an Emmy-winning 7-episode comedy series for public television, and 5) ***The Queen City Radio Hour***, an hour-long comedy and music revue for public radio.

Special screenings have included The American Film Institute, Lincoln Center, The Smithsonian, the Art Institute of Chicago, Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, Anthology Film Archives, Harvard Film Archives, George Eastman House, Jerusalem Cinematheque, Cinemateca Nacional de Venezuela, Beijing Normal University, and the UNESCO headquarters in Paris. KCP films have prompted accolades from Jack Lemmon, Gregory Peck, Emma Thompson, former U.S. Supreme Court Justice William Brennan, and many others. Writing in the Seattle Post Intelligencer, critic William Arnold noted how KCP's work "ends up being a strong argument for regional cinema: the idea that an area of the country is best interpreted on film by those who know and love it."

Kingdom County Productions has also staged educational programs for emerging teen writers, theater artists, and filmmakers. These programs have won widespread recognition from The National Endowment for the Arts, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The Search Institute, The National Education Association, and The Annie E. Casey Foundation—and have prompted feature stories appearing in the New York Times, Boston Globe, and others.