

MEDIA RELEASE

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MADE-IN-SASKATCHEWAN TELEVISION COMEDY SERIES **CORNER GAS** EARNS TOP RATINGS AND MEDIA ACCLAIM

- *Corner Gas premieres to 1.15 million viewers on CTV*
- *Corner Gas is the first television series to be filmed in the Canada/Saskatchewan Soundstage*
- *Series hailed as “sheer genius” by the Toronto Star and “a pleasure to watch” by the Globe and Mail*

February 5, 2003 (Regina, Saskatchewan) – The Saskatchewan Film and Video Development Corporation is pleased to announce that the made-in-Saskatchewan comedy series **Corner Gas** has struck a chord with audiences and television critics alike across Canada. The series is currently broadcasting on Wednesdays at 7pm CT and 8pm ET on CTV.

Filmed on location in Rouleau, Saskatchewan and the first television series to film in the new Canada/Saskatchewan soundstage in summer 2003, the 13 episode series premiered to **1.15 million viewers** across the country on Thursday, January 22 at on CTV and continued the trend the following week with **1.048 million** viewers. The series was ranked *second* in its timeslot to juggernaut *Friends*, and stands as the highest rated episode of any original Canadian series this year by any network. **Corner Gas** is a co-production of Saskatchewan’s Vérité Films and Vancouver-based 335 Productions.

“*Corner Gas*’ remarkable début is encouraging news for the Saskatchewan film and video industry,” remarked Valerie Creighton, SaskFilm C.E.O and Film Commissioner. “A production that showcases the talent, services and locations offered by our province will reinforce Saskatchewan’s ability to deliver a hit television series.”

Corner Gas has attracted unprecedented critical acclaim, from “sheer genius,” (Toronto Star) to “absolutely gut-wrenchingly, nose-streamingly funny” (Halifax Daily News) to “a smart, subtly subversive comedy that genuinely deserves to be compared to the best of the U.S. networks’ comedy crop” (Winnipeg Free Press) and “laughs by the litre” (Saskatoon Star Phoenix). The series website, www.cornergas.com, received so much traffic after the initial broadcast, it crashed.

Starring Gemini nominee Brent Butt, the weekly series follows the adventures of a bunch of nobodies who get up to a whole lot of nothing in the fictional prairie town of Dog River, Saskatchewan. Shot entirely in Saskatchewan, **Corner Gas** focuses on the life (or lack thereof) of Brent LeRoy, proprietor of a gas station that is the only stop for miles around and a hub of action on the Prairies. As LeRoy, Brent Butt returns to his native province to portray the life he would have led had he gotten a real job: pumping gas in a small prairie town. The town's many "distinguished" residents include Brent's parents Oscar and Emma (Saskatchewan natives Eric Peterson and Janet Wright), coffee shop owner Lacey Burrows (Gemini nominee Gabrielle Miller), his best friend Hank Yarbo (Fred Ewanuick), police officers Davis Quinton (Lorne Cardinal) and Karen Pelly (New Waterford Girl's Tara Spencer-Nairn) and retail assistant Wanda (Nancy Robertson).

Boasting an award winning creative team, *Corner Gas* is produced by Virginia Thompson (*Incredible Story Studio*, renegadepress.com) and David Storey. Executive Producers are Brent Butt, David Storey and Virginia Thompson.

SaskFilm is a non-profit funding agency whose mission is to enable the film, video and new media industry in Saskatchewan to continually enhance the quality, quantity and marketability of its products and resources. SaskFilm was established to stimulate and foster the development of an indigenous film, video and new media industry through the administration of the provincial Tax Credit Program; managing the new Canada/Saskatchewan Production Studios; and by providing financial assistance to qualified production companies for purposes of developing, producing and distributing film, video and new media products.

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