

Keepers of the Water

Directed by Ayelen Liberona

Produced by Joseph Johnson Cami

nominated for Best Emerging Filmmaker & the Public Award at TIFF 2010

TIFF Talent Lab, Emerging Filmmaker Award

Screening & Award Winners announced

September 16, 7:30pm

Bell Lightbox Filmmakers Lounge (134 Peter Street)

note* By invitation only

(Toronto -- August 31, 2010) In the Native town of Ft. Chipewyan, Alberta, an incredibly articulate and precocious group of 9 to 12 year-old children came together to protest the Alberta Tar Sands. And while most know very little about what experts estimate to be 13 trillion dollars in sought after profits, the native children of Ft. Chipecywan clearly have a lot to say.

"We should have a voice, our voice should be heard" - Robyn, 12 years old

Their stories come to us in the shape of the short documentary film, *Keepers of the Water* (2010), directed by Ayelen Liberona and produced by Joseph Johnson Cami. This combative filmmaking duo seem set on taking up environmental battles. Their feature-documentary, *A Grain of Sand* (2009), already helped save from privatization the famed Moyenne Island - worth 50 million dollars – which now enjoys a National Park status in the Seychelles. This time, they're armed with a 4-minute film that explores what drove these children from playground to protest.

"When I protest, everything evolves with each other and helps each other. It makes me feel happy and empowered." - Robyn, 12 years old

The Alberta Tar Sands have already caused irreparable damage to the Fort Chipewyan community and their 12,000 years of history in an environment they know all too well and that can no longer sustain their traditional way of life.

"I think the government is going along with it because he has a lot of money coming in and he really doesn't care about the planet or the earth." - Robyn, 12 years old

It is convenient for some to disregard and attack any dissent to the Tar Sands, but it is impossible to deny the humanity that a story told through the eyes and words of children can contain. One way or another, there will be a very large environmental price to pay for our addiction to oil and the disregard we are demonstrating to one of the most precious resources on the planet: water.

Φ Fort Chipewyan is directly downstream from the world's largest and most environmentally toxic industrial project, the Alberta Tar Sands.

Φ Native populations are experiencing increased respiratory diseases, rare cancers and cardiovascular problems, suspected to be caused by toxic substances that have leaked downstream from Tar Sands production.

Φ Industrial development of the scale of the Tar Sands could push the boreal ecosystem over its tipping point and lead to irreversible ecological damage and loss of biodiversity.

Φ About 90% of the water used to process the Tar Sands ends up in highly toxic tailing ponds that line the Athabasca River and threaten the health of the whole river basin, Canada's largest fresh water resource.

Φ Canada has no national water policy and one of the worst records of pollution enforcement of any industrial nation.

Keepers of the Water is a **Wandering Eye Production**

For more about the film and the Tar Sands issues visit www.KeepersOfTheWater.com

For more about the director Ayelen Liberona visit www.AyelenLiberona.com

Latest published study, released Aug 30, offers a comprehensive scientific study of toxic levels in the Athabasca River & its effects on Fort Chipewyan <http://thetyee.ca/News/2010/08/30/TarSandsStudy/>

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For more info, to set up an interview, to view film for review purposes, get GAT:

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Pictures available at www.gat.ca/media LOGIN

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