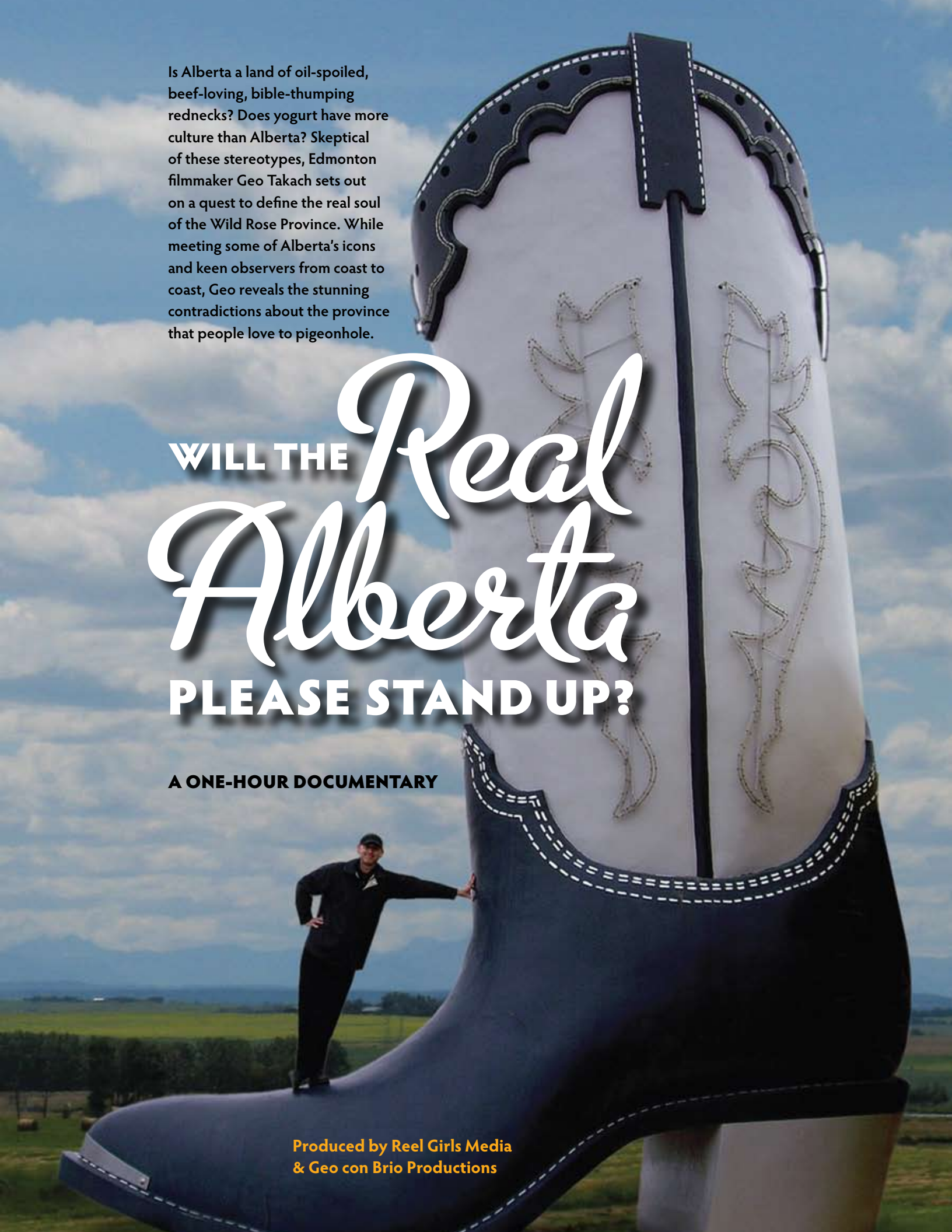


Is Alberta a land of oil-spoiled, beef-loving, bible-thumping rednecks? Does yogurt have more culture than Alberta? Skeptical of these stereotypes, Edmonton filmmaker Geo Takach sets out on a quest to define the real soul of the Wild Rose Province. While meeting some of Alberta's icons and keen observers from coast to coast, Geo reveals the stunning contradictions about the province that people love to pigeonhole.

WILL THE *Real* Alberta PLEASE STAND UP?

A ONE-HOUR DOCUMENTARY

Produced by Reel Girls Media
& Geo con Brio Productions



WILL THE *Real* Alberta PLEASE STAND UP?



WILL THE REAL ALBERTA PLEASE STAND UP?

WITH BILL BOURNE [LEFT]



WITH EMILY MURPHY [RIGHT]



WITH MARTHA KOSTUCH



WITH THE FERBEY FOUR



WITH THE HON. NORMAN KWONG



SYNOPSIS

Will the Real Alberta Please Stand Up? is a one-hour documentary that follows the travels of filmmaker Geo Takach as he discovers both the expected and the unexpected sides of Alberta. From off-the-cuff comments of passers-by on the street, to interviews with everyone from paleontologists, politicians and poets to farmers, environmentalists, journalists, and many more, Geo paints a fast-paced and funny portrait of Alberta.

Geo gets opinions from Albertans regardless of their politics or personalities, including such notables as publisher and philanthropist Jackie Flanagan, writer Aritha van Herk, former premier Ralph Klein, architect Douglas Cardinal, world-champion curlers the Ferbey Four, environmentalist Martha Kostuch, Reform Party founder Preston Manning, journalists Ted Byfield and Mark Lisac, actor Tantoo Cardinal, world-champion cowboy poet Doris Daley, comedians Mark Breslin and Don Burnstick, artist Jane Ash Poitras, musicians Corb Lund and Bill Bourne, and more—not to mention savvy Canucks from the wharf of Vancouver to the wilds of Newfoundland.

In trying to untangle some of the most enduring myths, Geo poses intriguing questions. Are Albertans mavericks or sheep? Rednecks or radicals? Down-to-earth or destroying it? Holy rollers or high rollers? The answers he gets reveal a province that manages to both embrace and reject its stereotypes.

Geo also uncovers the quirkier, larger-than-life side of Alberta when he visits a sampling of the province's monuments to magnitude. Alberta's Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Norman Kwong, agrees: "The only thing I find a little bit strange are such things like the big monuments we have: the giant Easter egg in Vegreville, or the dinosaurs in Calgary and Drumheller, and the landing pad for UFOs... I don't think they've made use of it yet."

The resulting boisterous bevy of opinions and attitudes ultimately exposes some common threads: a huge and even excessive appetite for life, a love of freedom and a fierce drive to succeed. Singer-songwriter Corb Lund gives a fitting summary: "There's enough freedom out here and the independent spirit that people are willing to take chances and follow their dreams."



QUOTES FROM THE FILM

Some Albertans are rednecks. It's a perception of Alberta that's largely defined by the leadership. Albertans seem to be very trusting people and they really seem to trust their leaders. I think in some cases, maybe too much.

BILL BOURNE, singer-songwriter

It's partly an image foisted on us and partly an image that some Albertans like to revel in. Really anything that you would call a redneck streak in Alberta, you can find in Ontario, New Brunswick, and Saskatchewan.

MARK LISAC, journalist

A lot of political revolutions even nationally have had their origin here in Alberta, and that's not widely known. You think of suffragette movements, even Medicare. Everyone credits Saskatchewan, but some of the very earliest examples of that were right here in Alberta.

BRUCE MCGILLIVRAY, executive director, Royal Alberta Museum

We've never had an effective opposition really in the province, so there's a seeming homogeneity to the political culture. It's almost like it's rude to disagree in Alberta.

JACKIE FLANAGAN, publisher, philanthropist

People in Alberta are like spoiled teenagers in the sense that they have it all, and they take it all for granted, and they expect it all to be there.

BRONCO BUDDY, pioneer non-rodeo cowboy clown

What makes me proud to be Albertan are the sense of community, the sense of wanting to get things done, the sense of helping one another, the sense of not asking a government to do everything for them.

RALPH KLEIN, Premier of Alberta, 1992 – 2006

We have probably more churches per square mile than any other province. We also have more porn outfits and this kind of thing than any other province.

TED BYFIELD, journalist

I've never seen so many video lottery terminals in my life, and in places you'd never think. On a bus. In the maternity ward. I visited a friend of mine. The woman was giving birth and playing the lottery terminal at the same time! And I thought, "That's so entrepreneurial. That's so Alberta."

MARK BRESLIN, founder, Yuk Yuk's

It's like a place right out of a tall tale. One of the strangest and probably biggest traps for Albertans is that they believe their own mythology. They start to step into the story that has been invented about them.

ARITHA VAN HERK, writer



BRONCO BUDDY



MARK BRESLIN



GEO TAKACH

WRITER / DIRECTOR / PRODUCER

Geo's career as a storyteller began in earnest (a sleepy neighbourhood in south Edmonton) when he wrote, directed and appeared in his first produced play at age 16. On opening night, eager audiences pounded on the theatre doors. So eagerly, in fact, that he had to let them out.

Turning to writing after a subsequent, lost decade trapped in a suit, he accumulated a cacophony of credits covering three books; hundreds of magazine articles, corporate publications and speeches; and industrial and public-service video, short film on the festival circuit, and dramatic and documentary television. Highlights on the screen side include the one-hour doc, **Radio Worth Fighting For** (Lorna Thomas Productions for Bravo: lead writer, assistant director), nominated for five Alberta Film & Television Awards, including best writing); a half-hour episode of the **Mentors** series (Family / Discovery Kids; writer), in which Emily Carr teaches the young protagonists that life, like art, is a work in progress; the 25th anniversary video of the Film and Video Arts Society-Alberta (FAVA); and a short, 16mm homage to Charlie Chaplin, **Accord**, which played Metro Cinema, the Alberta Literary Festival and the 14th Annual \$100 Film Festival.

Some of his other adventures on the writing side include multiple prizes for screenwriting; Edmonton's winning bid to host the 2001 World Championships in Athletics; and a National Magazine Award for humour for his essay, **Anatomy of an Albertan**, which puzzled him since he was sure that piece was serious.

To relieve writer's rump, he teaches three levels of screenwriting in the Professional Writing degree program at Grant MacEwan College and conducts writing workshops for groups like the Canadian Authors Association and for communications professionals and other victims. Now and then, he also stands up to do MC work and perform comedy (adequately) and music (poorly, but that's part of the comedy) at conferences and such.

He is an avid volunteer for arts organizations and events. This includes turns as president of the Writers Guild of Alberta, VP of FAVA, a juror for the Edmonton International Film Festival and a board member of the Edmonton Arts Council, where his presentation to city council helped earn a \$500,000 annual increase in local funding for the arts.

His main goal is to inspire discussion, debate and delight around questions of apparent consequence in the all-too-fleeting set that we get in the Vaudeville of life. He has suffered for his art, and now he'd like it to be **your** turn.





AVA KARVONEN

PRODUCER

Ava is a twenty-year veteran of the film and television industry and founder of Reel Girls Media of Edmonton. "Both sides of my family immigrated to Alberta and I was born and raised here. We have to be able to look at ourselves with a sense of humour—I know lots of Albertans who fit the stereotypes, but most of us don't." Ava has produced more than 40 hours of television programming and new media projects including websites, serious games, webisodes, videocasts and podcasts.

Her work has been recognized with more than 35 awards, including four awards for **Homefront**—Best Social Issues Documentary at Germany's World Media Festival, Best Foreign Short Film at Kentucky's Bluegrass Independent Film Festival, the Chris Award for War and Peace Documentary at the Columbus International Film and Video Festival and Best Documentary at the Alberta Film and TV Awards. In addition to producing, Ava also directed **Homefront**. This doc was broadcast on Global and tells the story of five soldiers and their families during a deployment to Afghanistan.

In addition to **Will the Real Alberta Please Stand Up?**, in 2008 Ava also produced **Capturing Cooperman: A Not So Private Investigation of Howard Engel** (one-hour doc) for CTV Bravo! Currently, Ava is in production on *The Lie Detective*, a 13 episode character-driven documentary series that follows the work of an independent polygraph examiner, for Court TV Canada.

Additional producer credits include **Booked**, a 13-episode half-hour TV series and multiplatform content including www.booked.tv, an online destination that explores forensic science and features podcasts with crime fiction writers and real CSIs; **Between the Stones and the Ocean** (one-hour doc) for CHUM TV; **Out of the West** (one-hour doc) for CHUM TV; **Return of the Peregrine** (one-hour doc) for CBC's **Nature of Things**; **How the Fiddle Flows** (one-hour doc) for APTN and CHUM TV. Ava also produced and acted in **Wildfiles**, a 13-part half-hour TV series and multiplatform content including www.wildfiles.tv for CHUM TV; **The Rock 'N' Fossil Road Show**; the kids' CD-ROM series, **Zoology Zone**; and seven award winning episodes for Karvonen Films' television series, **Treasures of the Wild**. Ava also produced and hosted two one-hour live events: **Up Close and Paleo** and **WildlifeWired** for webcast and TV broadcast.

Ava thrives on keeping busy, so when she's not multitasking you may find her breaking her own travel record of over 30 countries as she explores the globe. "I've spent time in many parts of the world, but Alberta is home."





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GEO TAKACH

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Musical performances:
"Always Keep an Edge on Your Knife" COMPOSED AND PERFORMED BY CORB LUND © 2006 CORB LUND MUSIC;
"Untitled" COMPOSED AND PERFORMED BY TOMMY BANKS © 2007 TOMMY BANKS MUSIC;
"Our Alberta" COMPOSED BY GEO TAKACH, PERFORMED BY FRANCES TAKACH © 2003 GEO CON BRIO PRODUCTIONS

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KAREN MANCINI

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