



## The Memories of Angels

Director: Luc Bourdon, Canada, 2008, 80 minutes

The city is Montreal. The era is the '50s and '60s. And the film is Luc Bourdon's virtuoso assembly of clips from 120 National Film Board films shot in Montreal. *The Memories of Angels* will charm audiences of all ages. It's a journey in time, a visit to the street corners of Montreal, a tribute to the vitality of the city, and a wonderful cinematic adventure.

Without commentary or ostentation, the film is a history lesson of the last century: the red light district, the eloquent Jean Drapeau, the young Queen Elizabeth greeting the crowd, and Tex Lecor shouting "Aux armes Québécois!" There are kids dreaming of hockey glory, the Jacques-Cartier market bursting with fresh produce, and the department stores downtown teeming with Christmas shoppers.

You may recognize the films that provide these sights: the Jones brothers of *Golden Gloves* by Gilles Groulx, the church from *Les Montréalistes* by Denys Arcand. The superb colour shots of modern buildings are from *Albédo* by Jacques Leduc and Renée Roy. And the gorgeous images of actress Geneviève Bujold from *Le temps des amours* by Hubert Aquin.

Director Luc Bourdon and editor Michel Giroux have assembled fluid, clear sequences underlining the beauty of the black-and-white images contrasted with colour ones. *The Memories of Angels* showcases the singular beauty of Montreal, its architectural and human wealth, and the grandeur of its setting. Much of it is set to the music of Oscar Peterson, Charles Trenet, Raymond Lévesque, Dominique Michel, Paul Anka, and Willie Lamothe.

As the NFB prepares to celebrate its 70th birthday, *The Memories of Angels* recalls the talent of the filmmakers who trained their cameras and microphones on the world around them, as well as

the amazing ability of an artist to model new material from old. Like today's DJs and VJs who energize contemporary music and art, Luc Bourdon draws from the fertile source of great Quebec cinema and recycles the sights and sounds of the past.

*The Memories of Angels* is poetry, fiction, documentary, and essay rolled into one. It is also a joyous, touching experience and a collective history whose threads dance in one's mind long after the closing credits.

### DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Luc Bourdon is one of Canada's leading video artists. Over the last 25 years, he has made some fifty works ranging from documentary to drama and experimental pieces. All of his productions draw on the notions of history and memory, themes that also form the crux of *The Memory of Angels*, Bourdon's first work for the National Film Board of Canada. Throughout the 1980s, Bourdon gained recognition through singular works that underscored his originality and probing mind, like *Distance, Touei* (1985), and *The Story of Feniks and Abdullah* (1988). Throughout his multi-faceted career, Bourdon has established himself as a tireless experimenter, an artist who offers up immersive, impressionist worlds. A noteworthy presence in Quebec film and video, he has long been associated with artist-run centres and arts organizations, notably as a member of Vidéographe from 1982 to 1998 and of Les Films de l'autre from 1990 to 1996.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

