



Tracking the Evolution of the Urban Cougar: A provocative documentary

Calgary filmmakers on the prowl for international recognition at CIFF world premiere.

(Sept.19, 2007 - Calgary, AB.) On September 26, 2007, *Cat Call*, a no-holds barred examination of the controversial term “cougar”, will premiere at the Calgary International Film Festival (CIFF).

Jennifer Ryan and Kerrie Penney, *Cat Call* producers, are thrilled the documentary will be seen for the first time in their hometown. “Cat Call began as a question...what do we mean when we call a woman a cougar? It has been over two years in the making, and has taken us across Canada. We’re thrilled the film will be screened in Calgary,” Ryan says.

Penney believes the timing of the film’s world premiere couldn’t be better. “The cougar phenomenon is bigger than we originally thought,” she explains. “When we started filming two years ago, we knew the term had its anecdotal roots in Western Canada. What we discovered was it’s now a part of popular culture across North America. It’s everywhere. And the label means different things to different people.”

In fact, the term “cougar” has even been made into a fictional film. The movie, *Cougar Club* is screening at the CIFF this year as well.

Cat Call, which was shot in Calgary, Edmonton and Toronto, will be seen for the first time on Wednesday, September 26, 2007 at 6:45 pm at the Uptown Theatre (612 8th Avenue SW). A question and answer will follow with the Cat Call team.

The producers will be available for interviews immediately following the screening at Opus on 8th (628 8th Avenue SW).

To view the film's trailer, log onto: www.catcall.ca.

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For more information, or to schedule an interview, contact:

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Backgrounder:

- The term has its anecdotal roots in Western Canada. The *Utne Reader* defines the term cougar as Canadian slang for an older woman who seduces younger male “prey.”
- According to *Bust Magazine* (October/November 2005), the cougar label is a positive label.
- This quirky Canadian wildlife vernacular has quickly made its way across the border, evolving into a social phenomenon. “Cougar” has been referenced on popular US based TV shows including *How I Met Your Mother*, *CSI Miami*, *The O.C.* and *The Age of Love*. It is also the premise behind a US major release dramatic film, *Cougar Club*.
- Many cougar hunting websites, such as www.cougarhunter.ca, have surfaced in recent years. They are how-to guides for young men looking to “trap” older women.
- Cougar driven websites including www.urbancougars.com flaunt the older female point of view.
- Cougar speed-dating events and cougar cruises invite people to live the cougar lifestyle.
- The online urban dictionary (www.urbandictionary.com) has over 42 definitions of the term cougar including:
 - “An older woman trying way too hard to look young. Usually heavy makeup and way too tan, sometimes orange. Generally has leathery, smoking damaged skin, short skirt, and may have obvious breast implants.”
 - “have been party girl/s who are now angry they are not married and prey on younger men; common traits include leathery skin from frequent tanning sessions...and a large collection of massagers.”
 - “A woman in her sexual prime who prefers to hunt rather than be hunted. A cougar's victims are usually under 25, as cougars prefer to mate with men who still have hair.”



THE TEAM:

Jennifer Ryan thinks big. After graduating Mount Royal College's broadcasting program in 1998 she headed to Vancouver where she produced multiple projects while completing the Foundation Film program at The Vancouver Film School. After a West Coast experience that included various film and television projects, Jennifer returned to Calgary, where she established herself as a key producer in the Event Management Industry. An aspiring documentary maker and entrepreneur she is the principal of Aspiring Productions Inc. and Charmed Life Inc. Jennifer recently produced her own wedding, and is exploring the benefits of partnership with her husband and best friend Brian.

At 44, **Kerrie Penney** is the senior member of the Cat Call team. (Oddly, she thinks of herself as perpetually 36). During production of the film, many people she interviewed assumed *she* was a cougar. This proved to be an eye opener, for while Kerrie has a number of labels she readily peppers herself with (mother, daughter, friend, entrepreneur, artist), cougar was NOT one of them. Exploring what is implicit and explicit when people "Cat Call" was maddening, perplexing and ultimately, freeing. When she is not mentoring a den of strong, beautiful filmmakers, she is a partner in the Calgary based communications company Brainstorm CGP Inc. She is also a writer, host, closet accordion player and neophyte gardener. Kerrie lives in a house with a white picket fence, with her incredible daughter Annabelle Grace.

Lisa Fryklund woke up one morning with the stunning realization that, seemingly overnight, she had become a cougar. There was nothing else to do but accept a date from a man fifteen years her junior, who took her to a well-known Cougar watering hole for a cocktail. To her utter surprise, these handsome young men preferred the company of experienced women! With her new insight, she discovered the courtship between older women and younger men is an archetypal rite of passage for both parties. When Cat Call called, Lisa pounced. She brings 23 years of experience in documentary and reality TV to the project. Lisa is the director of photography for productions on the networks of National Geographic, PBS, CBC, National Film Board, History TV, TLC and Discovery Channel. Lisa hopes Cat Call releases the inner hunter or prey in you.

Nina Sudra's sparkle makes her a magnet for kids and good karma. She is a Canadian filmmaker with 10 years of experience under her (slim) belt including several independent films, educational and corporate video, documentary and narrative projects. She is a recipient of the National Screen Institute's Drama Prize. Currently Nina is writing a feature documentary for the National Film Board of Canada and producing a two part educational documentary, Growing Up Among Strangers. Nina's first film, "Me, Masi and Mr. Clean" will screen worldwide. Nina lives in Calgary with her extensive Hello Kitty collection and the love of her life.