

**Postmodern Productions** presents

## “Outcasts -- A Love Story”



If she would have gone with Tibor she couldn't live with herself. 'How would I be able to save myself and not the rest of my family?' And that would have been hanging in between them forever.

Yitzhak Livnat



In those days, doing what he was doing, it could have got him a bullet. Very easily. Not one, but maybe half a dozen.

Bill Aykler

# **“Outcasts -- A Love Story”**

**Documentary film premiere on OMNI 1,  
November 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 p.m. EST**

Produced with the participation of **OMNI Television**  
Based on the book by **Susan Papp**  
**published by Dundurn Press in May 2009**

Produced and Directed by **Susan Papp**  
Director of Photography **Michael Grippo**  
Assistant Director of Photography **Larry Carey**  
Edited by **Oliver Manton**  
Written by **Allen Abel**

For more than seventy years, the histories of two proud families have been entwined in a bittersweet tango that has taken them through war and peace -- from Europe to Canada -- amid happiness and heartbreak.

Central to their saga is the true tale of a man and a woman who chose the worst possible moment to fall in love -- and their surviving brothers' lifelong search for understanding and forgiveness.

Filmed on location in early spring in the rolling riversides and evocative towns of Central Europe, where Hungary, Ukraine and Slovakia converge, the 60-minute film features dramatic re-enactments of the star-crossed wartime love affair, and a nostalgic, tearful pilgrimage by two aging friends from Canada and Israel to a storm-tossed home town called Nagyszőllos -- the City of Wine.



Produced and directed by Susan Papp and written by Allen Abel, “Outcasts – A Love Story” is a sensitive and compelling human story, but it also is, in many ways, the story of all of Canada’s immigrants, and the lives and loves they left behind.



### Our Story:

Once, it was a place of tolerance, where families of many creeds pursued their lives in harmony. But by 1944, Central Europe has been shattered by three years of war, and the vineyards of the Carpathian foothills are under the Nazi shadow. It is at this perilous environment that a young businessman named Tibor Schroeder and a stunning

beauty named Hedy Weisz fall in love, and pledge to marry. She works as the office manager for his company.

Tibor and Hedy's love for each other blossoms at the worst possible time. Tibor is a Christian, Hedy a Jew -- their relationship is a violation of Hungarian Law. What is more, Tibor is the son of the head of the press corps for the Hungarian army.

Tibor is a reservist in the Hungarian army. His unit receives its orders to leave by train. Hedy's fate is much more ominous. She and her family are herded into the Nagyszőlös ghetto.

Tibor resolves to try to save her. His plan is to hide her in a railway baggage car on his troop train and take her to safety -- wherever that may be. He constructs a secret compartment out of ammunition boxes, and stocks it with food, blankets and tokens of his love. He promises that he will desert and they will journey together to a new life.

But Tibor's plan collapses. After one night in the compartment, Hedy tells him that she cannot abandon her family. She returns to the ghetto, awaiting transport to Auschwitz, and almost certain death.



Tibor and his younger brother Bill find themselves on the losing side when the war ends. They are sent to an American prisoner of war

camp, where they nearly starve, before being accepted as refugees in Canada.

The lovers -- and the brothers -- all become outcasts.

Sixty-five years later, two men return to Nagyszőlös to try to understand what happened to their town, their families, and their dreams. Yitzhak Livnat is a successful Israeli businessman -- and Hedy Weisz's younger brother. Bill Aykler of Toronto is Tibor Schroeder's younger brother. The story they tell along their journey -- and the pilgrimage they join together seeking redemption and hope -- unfolds their own sagas as outcasts and exiles, and the love affair of Tibor and Hedy that might have ended happily, but for the whims of fate and time.

As Bill walks through the crumbled ruins of their ancestral family mansion, and Yitzhak searches the Nagyszőlös marketplace for a flicker of his childhood, we learn how both Tibor and Hedy survived the war, and how both of them came -- unknown to each other -- to Canada. Tibor's post-war letters, in search of his lost love, add a haunting backdrop to the story.

**Since you were taken away, I've felt like a blind man in a dark room. I haven't stopped thinking about you and loving you since the moment at the train station when we were pulled away from each other. Nothing matters, except seeing you again, being with you again . . .**

In the film's poignant climax, we join Tibor in Canada's Centennial year of 1967, aboard a train from Toronto to Montreal, bound for a reunion with his beloved Hedy and what, he dreams, will be a renewal of a love stronger than hate and war . . .

## The Filmmakers:



Susan Papp, Matyas Szabo (as Tibor Schroeder),  
Allen Abel, Larry Carey

## Susan Papp --Director/Producer

**Susan M. Papp** earned a Master of Arts in North American Social History at York University in Toronto in 1985. Ms. Papp began her career in journalism at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Radio Drama department in 1981 as a historical researcher. In 1985, she worked in the national newsroom as researcher and program organizer.

In 1988, Ms. Papp became a current affairs producer in the regional news department at the CBC. One of the televised documentaries she produced was entitled ***The Half Million Dollar Man***. It told the story of one Canadian addict who went to the United States and manipulated his way in and out of seven addiction treatment centres in a matter of twenty months. The story brought about the resignation of the Minister of Health, and within months, caused the Government of Ontario to change its out-of-country payment policies for addiction treatment. It won two of the most prestigious awards in Canada: The Michener Award and The Best Investigative Award of the Canadian Journalists Association.

Susan Papp developed a profile and reputation as an on-camera current affairs reporter specializing in social issues for CBC TV. In 1991, she was chosen to work as field producer for *The Journal*, and its subsequent retitled version *Prime*

*Time News*. In 1993, while on leave of absence from the CBC, Ms. Papp founded her own television production company, Postmodern Productions. Her first independently produced film entitled *Debris of War* is an hour long documentary on the trauma of the war in the former Yugoslavia. Its Canadian premiere was February 1994. In 1998, *Debris of War* was awarded the Canadian Ethnic Journalists and Writers Award for Best Documentary. The documentary is being distributed internationally by Great North Releasing. In June 1995, Susan Papp left her position at the CBC and has devoted all her energies to independent television production.

Postmodern Productions has developed strategic alliances with respected entertainment companies in Los Angeles, Winnipeg, and Budapest, Hungary. In 1998, Ms. Papp produced and directed *Hundred Something -- The World of the Oldest Old*, a one-hour documentary for Discovery Channel. In 1999, she produced and directed *Monuments in Miniature*, an arts documentary for Bravo! . Susan Papp recently completed a documentary on the life of George L. Mackay, entitled: *The Black Bearded Barbarian of Taiwan*. This documentary premiered in the fall of 2006 on OMNI Television. In 2007, she produced and directed a documentary *Young Rebels* about the story of the arrival of 37,565 refugees who came to Canada following the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. She has served on many film festival juries, including the International Emmy Awards.

Susan Papp teaches in the School of Journalism at Ryerson University. She is Adjunct Scholar at the Multicultural History Society of Ontario.

**Allen Abel** has worked on an extraordinary number and variety of television and cinematic documentary and current-affairs productions over the past 35 years. He has served as host, narrator, writer, producer and/or field director of at least 400 separate films, ranging from feature-length documentaries for the National Film Board, Discovery Channel, History Channel and National Geographic Television to shorter items for Hockey Night In Canada, Reader's Digest Television, CBC News and CBC Sports.

In addition to his television work, Allen has reported from more than 100 countries and written more than 4,000 articles as a columnist for the *National Post* and *Saturday Night Magazine*, the Beijing bureau chief of the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, and a regular contributor to *Sports Illustrated*, *Maclean's*, *Canadian Geographic*, and *En Route*. He has written four non-fiction books, including *Flatbush Odyssey -- A Journey Through the Heart of Brooklyn*, which the *Washington Post* called "one of the best travelogues about anywhere, ever."

Currently based in Washington, DC, Allen is the writer of a weekly political column for the *National Post* and other Canadian newspapers entitled "The U. S. of Abel."

Among Allen's most prominent recent television writing credits are: "The Great Warming," a 3 x 60-minute documentary series on climate change for The

Discovery Channel; "Freemasonry Revealed, 3 x 60-minute series for Discovery International, "Tribes of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," a 3 x 60-minute series for Discovery Civilization, "Buried At Sea," a feature-length documentary on the millions of chemical weapons dumped in the world's oceans, and "Liberty, USA," a feature-length documentary directed by Oscar winner John Zaritsky that explores the landscape of American ideals via a half-dozen towns and villages named "Liberty."

From 1986 to 1995, Abel was the on-air presenter, writer, co-director and producer or co-producer of approximately 150 documentaries for *The Journal* and *Prime Time News* at CBC-TV. These ranged from spot news coverage of the Romanian Revolution and Tian'anmen Square demonstrations to full-hour documentaries on crime and punishment in the Soviet Union, the burning of the Amazon rain forest, the history of photography, and the 300th anniversary of Newton's Law of Gravity.

As a print journalist, Abel's work has been featured in *Best American Sports Writing* and numerous textbooks and anthologies. He began his journalistic career in Troy, NY in 1972, after graduating from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with a degree in physics and astronomy. In 2002 and 2003, Allen served as a National Park Ranger at Lake Powell in the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Arizona/Utah.