



The Fast Runner: Filming the Legend of Atanarjuat (Indigenous Films)

By Michael Robert Evans

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One of the most important Native films of all time, *Atanarjuat, the Fast Runner* tells a powerful and moving story about honor, betrayal, vengeance, and redemption. Set in the vast, visually stunning Arctic landscape, it was the first feature film written, directed, and acted entirely in Inuktitut, the language of Canada's Inuit people. Canada's top-grossing release of 2002, the film became an international phenomenon, receiving the prestigious Camera d'Or Award at the Cannes Film Festival and earning rave reviews from every quarter, including Margaret Atwood ("like Homer with a video camera"), Claude Lévi-Strauss, Jacques Chirac, and Roger Ebert.

“*The Fast Runner*”: *Filming the Legend of Atanarjuat* takes readers behind the cameras, introducing them to the culture, history, traditions, and people that made this movie extraordinary. Michael Robert Evans explores how the epic film, perhaps the most significant text ever produced by indigenous filmmakers, artfully married the latest in video technology with the traditional storytelling of the Inuit. Tracing *Atanarjuat* from inception through production to reception, Evans shows how the filmmakers managed this complex intercultural “marriage”; how Igloolik Isuma Productions, the world's premier indigenous film company, works; and how Inuit history and culture affected the film's production, release, and worldwide response. His book is a unique, enlightening introduction and analysis of a film that serves as a model of autonomous media production for the more than 350 million indigenous people around the world.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This book, the first in a series focusing on films made by indigenous peoples, gives the reader and filmgoer an intimate look behind the scenes of the film's genesis, the key players, and the financial and cultural challenges the producers faced. . . . This will be a welcome reference book for any serious student of film studies, regardless of genre."—Karl Kunkel, *ForeWord*

(Karl Kunkel *ForeWord*)

"Isuma filmmakers have not only given outsiders the content to rethink preconceived ideas about life in the Arctic, but they have also presented this content in a way that is natural to an Inuit. Evans helps us move more fully into that space."—Kristin G. Congdon, *Journal of American Folklore*

(Kristin G. Congdon *Journal of American Folklore*)

About the Author

Michael Robert Evans is an associate dean for undergraduate studies in the School of Journalism at Indiana University. He is the author of *Isuma: Inuit Video Art*, *68 Knots*, and *The Layers of Magazine Editing*.

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