

For Immediate Release – March 28, 2011

## **Breathtaking: a personal investigation into the present-day use of asbestos**

Directed by Kathleen Mullen

[www.kathleenmullen.com/breathtaking](http://www.kathleenmullen.com/breathtaking)

(Ottawa) A filmmaker loses her father to an asbestos-related cancer, Mesothelioma. Her grief and resolve lead her to examine a dangerous product so entwined in Canadian history and economy, we can't seem to stop mining it - or profiteering from it. The result is *Breathtaking*. Produced and directed by Kathleen Mullen, an Ontario filmmaker and Planet in Focus Director of Programming.

*Breathtaking* takes on the asbestos industry through a moving and personal investigation into the death of Kathleen's father from Mesothelioma, and the confounding present-day use of asbestos that continues to exact a human toll.

**WHERE:** Ottawa Public Library  
120 Metcalfe St.  
Ottawa Auditorium  
Room 1A/1B  
**Map:** <http://tinyurl.com/4akbjyr>

**WHEN:** Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 P.M.

Following the screening, there will be a panel discussion with Director Kathleen Mullen and Special Guests.

Valued since pre-history and commercially mined since the Industrial Revolution, asbestos was nicknamed the 'magic mineral' for its fabric-like properties and its capacity to protect against fire, and was used in everything from brake pads to oven mitts. After it was discovered to be carcinogenic, asbestos use was banned from use in many countries and limited in others. But Canada, along with Russia and several other countries, still mines asbestos and exports it for use in developing nations.

With moving clips of her dying father's legal testimony, family photos, and Super 8 home movies as a narrative springboard, Mullen takes the audience on an investigative journey from her family's home in British Columbia to Quebec, India and Detroit, painting a global, yet still personal picture of the many lives affected by the continued use of asbestos.

"As I began *Breathtaking*, everyone to whom I mentioned I was making the film responded with a personal story of their own," Mullen says. "I soon realized that this story was a lot bigger than just my own family's grief."

This special screening is co-presented by the Ottawa & District Labour Council (ODLC) and the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW) and supported by the Ottawa & District Labour Council (ODLC), Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), Canadian Building Trades, The Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE), Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), The Canadian Autoworkers (CAW), and Prevent Cancer Now (PCN).

The Premiere screening will include special guests and remarks, including from Paul Dewar, MP, who has been a tireless advocate to end Canadian production and use of asbestos. Immediately following the film screening there will be a panel with director and other special guests.

To request a screener copy of the film for review purposes; and/or set up an interview with Kathleen Mullen: call 416-826-5620 or email [breathtakingfilm@gmail.com](mailto:breathtakingfilm@gmail.com).