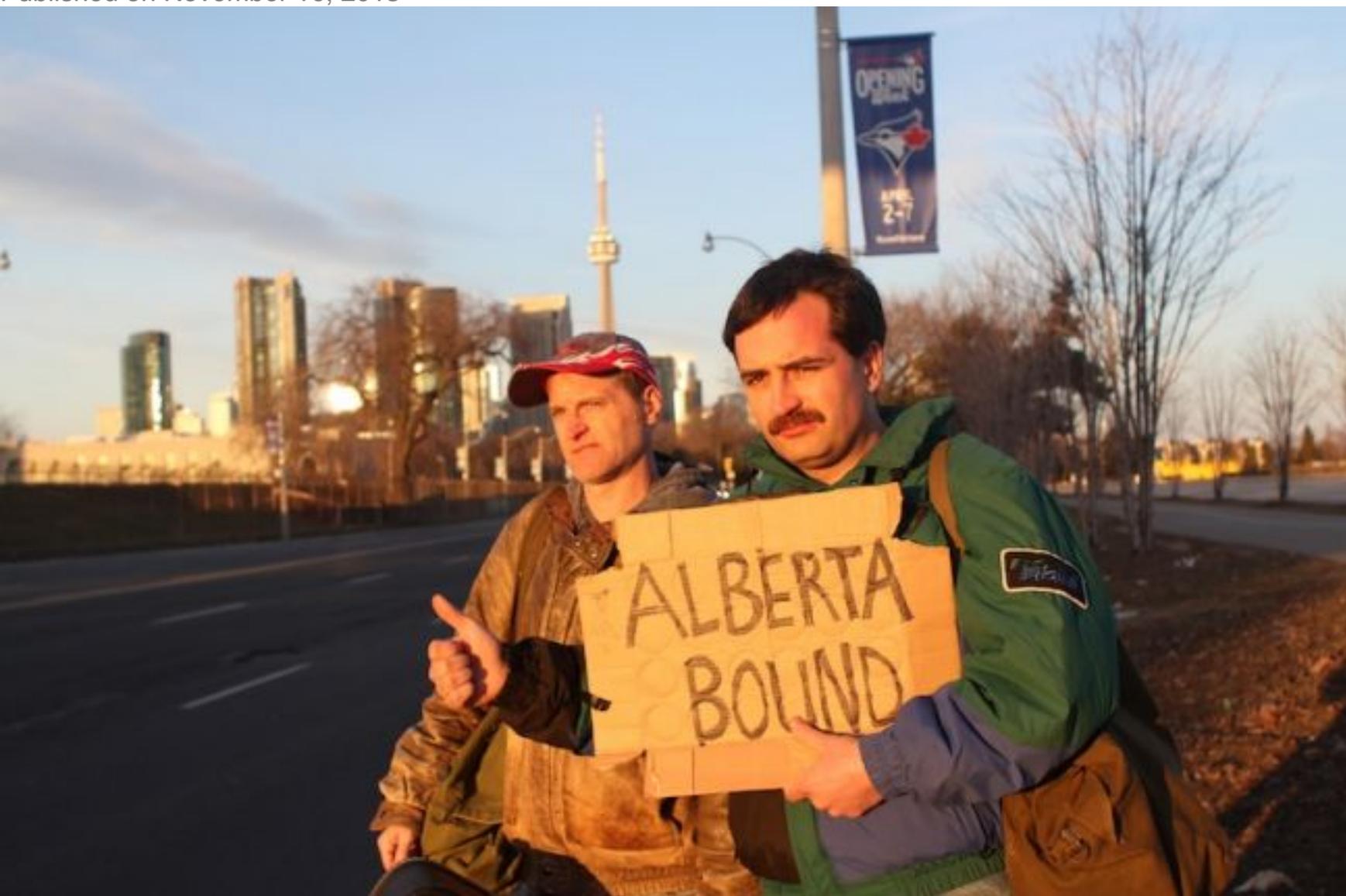


P.E.I.'s Just Passing Through takes viewers on raunchy, comical ride

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© Submitted photo It's like a hybrid mix of the 1982 Canadian/American sex comedy movie

The first episode, Alberta Bound, features the side-tracked journey westward and the arrival of the quirky over-the-top P.E.I. Gallant cousins, Terry and Parnell, played by Dennis Trainor, left, and Robbie Moses, on the apartment doorstep of their somewhat stuffy and totally unprepared-for-company cousin, Owen Stephens, played by Tyler Seguin.

Porky's and The Trailer Park Boys, with a little Three's Company slapstick flair tossed in for

good comedy measure.

And if you pass the well-deserved explicit content warnings and your delicate senses aren't the type to be blown away by loads of coarse language and implied sex scenes, then get ready for the raunchy comic ride of *Just Passing Through*.

This freshly launched web series, which includes seven full 22-minute episodes, follows the hilarious adventures of two Prince Edward Island cousins, Terry and Parnell Gallant, who become stranded with their stuffy and totally-unprepared-for-company Toronto cousin Owen Stephens on their way to making their fortune in Alberta.

"To my knowledge it's the biggest budgeted, complex homegrown comedic dramatic series ever shot on P.E.I.," says Jeremy Larter, who with his brother Jason Larter and high school chum Geoff Read created *Just Passing Through*, which stars Dennis Trainor, Robbie Moses, Tyler Seguin, Bridget Tobin and Sydney Dunitz.

The idea for *Just Passing Through* started in Toronto when Jeremy and Read were talking about the iconic film *Goin' Down the Road*, which is a 1970's movie about two Maritimers who move to Toronto in order to find a better life.

"That's one of my favourite Canadian films and in that movie there's a scene where the two Maritimers land at their Ontario aunt and uncle's house. They're banging on the door because they have no place to stay in Toronto and the aunt and uncle are kind of hiding in the background," Jeremy says.

"So I thought that it would be an interesting place to start for a show; what if the aunt and uncle actually let the two guys in? Then it would be like a sitcom. You could take the idea of *Goin' Down the Road*, except it would be about two guys going to Alberta because nobody really goes to Toronto looking for jobs the way they used to. So their car breaks down just outside of Toronto and they go to stay with their Toronto cousin who they haven't seen in 15 years."

And so the Larter brothers, Read and Moses brainstormed to come up with the comic scripts that would tell the travelling tale of the kooky P.E.I. cousins.

"It was kind of taking that old-fashioned idea (of *Goin' Down the Road*) and using a '70s or '80s-style sitcom, like *Three's Company* or *Perfect Strangers*, and then updating it with more 21st century humour," says Jeremy, who was involved with the hit web series *Profile P.E.I.*, *Ponderings*, the feature film *Jiggers* and numerous other film projects.

However, this web series is the largest production he has ever produced.

"People are willing to watch TV shows on the Internet so we thought why not push ourselves further into making something that's a little bit more complicated and a little bit more complex and still try to make it funny," he says.

From there, he and Read applied and received \$50,000 from the Independent Production Fund, which funds web series in Canada.

The project also received a \$100,000 grant from Innovation P.E.I., one of the requirements of which was that a significant proportion of the project be filmed in the province.

“But I always wanted to bring a series back to Charlottetown to try to show that we could actually make a full series here with Islanders. I’d say 90 per cent of the cast and crew were from P.E.I. and almost all the locations that we used were within a five-block radius of downtown Charlottetown,” Jeremy says.

Filming started in February of this year, with film friend Adam Perry onboard as a second camera operator at the last minute to help out. The crew shot four weeks worth of scenes in Charlottetown and a weeklong shoot in Toronto.

“We’re faking Toronto in Charlottetown, so all the interiors in Charlottetown are supposed to be in Toronto,” Jeremy says.

“And then we shot for a week in Toronto in April. So that’s for all Toronto exteriors.”

Extremely discerning eyes may be able to pinpoint where the local shooting locales were, such as The Globe, The Sportman’s Club and the Old Dublin Pub.

“It’s not as recognizable as you think,” Jeremy says.

This being P.E.I., calls for extras were as simple as putting out notices on Facebook.

Their partnership with Alpine beer for product placement was a helpful enticement as were the generous offerings from snack-providing partner Pizza and Poutine Company in Charlottetown.

“We had good crowds of people come out. We had a church scene. We had a lot of people come out for The Factory scene,” Jason says.

“The Sportsman (shoot) was in the middle of a big blizzard in February. . . . The entire city was shut down, but we were still able to get 15 or 20 people to come out. They were all into it.”

Some extras were even enlisted as stuntmen on the fly, as was the case in a fight scene in an Alberta bar, a.k.a. The Factory in Charlottetown.

“That scene kind of evolved as the day went because we didn’t know exactly who was going to show up. We had these two

Company’s guys in the bar fighting the main characters — Terry and Parnell — but luckily we were able to get Kowboy Mike Hughes to come down. Mike is a professional wrestler and he’s quite huge. So we’ve got Mike in the scene and we didn’t plan that (initially),” Jason says.

“So (Robbie’s character Parnell) got to be in a fight with Kowboy Mike Hughes. So you basically have a professional stuntman more or less, who is six foot-5 inches, 260 pounds and we then we picked another extra who was skinny and small. So we had the contrast of these two guys in the bar.

“And we had Kowboy Mike picking Robbie up over his head, spinning him around, fake punching and kicking him.”

In one take, the action was not so fake.

“One of the first takes he kicked me right in the face with a big giant boot on,” Moses says.

“He knew what he was doing. I think I just put my face into it when he was faking it.”

Just Passing Through viewers will also catch snippets of supplementary content as well.

“In the show, Terry and Parnell watch their favourite TV shows on a big old TV that they brought into Owen’s apartment. So we’ll see little clips of those in the show,” Jeremy says.

“One is called Pogey Beach. It’s like a beach show set in P.E.I. and it’s supposed to be a real TV show that they watch. So we’ll actually have a supplementary series with a couple of episodes of Pogey Beach (which was shot at Tracadie Beach) that will be on the website as well.”

The hope is that the series will be sold to a distributor like Netflix Canada that might pick it up for broadcast or to possibly make a second season of it if funding is available.

“We kind of left it in a certain way in case we did have a second season coming,” Jason says.

The reaction to the series, which was posted earlier this week, let loose a series of binge watching, racking up 20,000 YouTube views in its first two days

“The response has been great. It seems like the East Coasters especially are proud to actually see Islanders in a show. The recognition of seeing two Islanders who are the main focus of a show I think just keeps getting people’s attention. If a broadcaster made it they would probably never cast two guys from P.E.I. in a show like this,” Jeremy says.

“It’s definitely not a show for everyone. It seems like there are people who genuinely love it . . . so that’s encouraging, because if you don’t have any hardcore fans that are really passionate about it, it probably won’t go far. But if you have people who really love it, it will probably do well.”

AT A GLANCE

Just the facts

u Just Passing Through, created by Jeremy Larter, Geoff Read and Jason Larter, is a comedy web series that revolves around the relationship of Owen Stephens and Terry and Parnell Gallant; rough and tumble cousins from Prince Edward Island who arrive unannounced on their cousin Stephen's Toronto doorstep.

u They swear they're "just passing through" Toronto to sweet jobs in Alberta. But like every family reunion, this one turns out to be more than Stephen's bargained for.

u This series, which was funded by the Independent Production Fund and Innovation P.E.I., was shot almost entirely on the Island during February 2013 with a cast and crew comprised mainly of Islanders. Exterior scenes shot in Toronto, April 2013.