

Script: Léa Pool, Laurent Gagliardi  
Camera: Georges Dufaux  
Editing: Alain Belhumeur

Sound: Richard Besse  
Music: Robert M. Lepage  
Production: National Film Board

Léa Pool

# HOTEL CHRONICLES



1990 | 16mm | colour | 75' | Original title: Hotel Chronicles

"In America the train does not have the symbolic value it represents in Europe. Nevertheless I wanted to film a train in Arizona. After all, it's being followed by a man on a motorcycle! That's the first image I had of North America, when I saw 'Easy Rider'." Léa Pool

Following the breakup of a love affair, a woman crosses the United States. We see archive footage showing immigrants disembarking at the foot of the Statue of Liberty, a feminist demonstration in Washington, ghost towns in Nevada, men and women running after the American Dream, travelling endless highways to unseen horizons: multiple images and sporadic encounters that attach themselves to the wandering woman's heels, haunting her, inhabiting her and, as she goes from hotel to motel, from the asphalt of Manhattan to the desert of Arizona, orchestrating this long journey to her inner self.

Made fifteen years after Léa Pool's arrival in Quebec, *Hotel Chronicles* takes a twofold look at this land of America: one, of a woman who has constructed her adult life there, and the other of a stranger in pursuit of reality, well hidden behind the mirage of a carefully cultivated myth. The enterprise is not to destroy this, but to put it into perspective; and this superposition of two visions gives a salutary tension to this freewheeling film, showing well that every journey is an inner one.

Script: Léa Pool, Micheline Cadieux  
Camera: Georges Dufaux  
Narration: Léa Pool, Ellen David  
Editing: Annie Jean  
Sound: Normand Dugas

Art direction: Suzanne Cloutier, Kim Forest  
Cast: Sylvie Malo  
Production: Les Productions de l'im-patiente, Buffalo Gal Film

Léa Pool

## GABRIELLE ROY



1998 | 35mm | colour | 75' | Original title: Gabrielle Roy

"In the documentary there is an opening-up toward people and things, an availability and a generosity that have brought me a lot. When I returned to fiction, I had served this apprenticeship in listening to others. I loved this freedom very much, and I've kept this kind of lightness." Léa Pool

With its autobiographical aspect, *Hotel Chronicles* was more of an essay disguised as a documentary. With *Gabrielle Roy*, Léa Pool plunges into the more traditional documentary, producing a sober and sensitive film about a major figure in French Canadian literature. With François Ricard, the writer's biographer, as her guide, the film-maker shows the life of Gabrielle Roy from 1909 to 1983, from the plains of Manitoba to the banks of the St. Lawrence, from her numerous journeys to her intimate wanderings, from the success of *Bonheur d'occasion* to her rejection of the media circus, and from a sacrificed personal life to the need to write.

Throughout time and beyond the continents, parallels are drawn between the universes of the film-maker and of the novelist. They are two dissimilar worlds, but both are marked by the rupture from the mother, the appeal of the wider world, the virtually tyrannical importance of one's creative work, inner exile, a sensuality tainted with mysticism and the constant need to explore the Other, this bottomless mystery.

A turning point in Léa Pool's work, *Gabrielle Roy* is a film imprinted with a new serenity. Even as she ploughs the same furrow, the film-maker directs a more detached and more generous look at her favourite themes, taking the writer's life and work as her enlighteners.