

TWOSISTERS

Viola writes novels in a darkened room. Marie, her sister and only companion, takes care of her every need. Together, they are an island unto themselves, quiet and complete in their isolation. And then, the abrupt arrival of a stranger throws their tenuous order into chaos.

This animated short was made by etching directly onto tinted 70 mm film.

Produced by the French Program Animation Studio of the National Film Board of Canada.

For information contact:
National Film Board of Canada
1251 Avenue of the Americas
16th Floor
New York, NY 10020-1173
(212) 586-5131
Fax: (212) 575-2382

Printed in Canada

Filmmaker: **Caroline Leaf**
Producers: **Robert Forget**
Yves Leduc

10 minutes 26 seconds

C 9190 090



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Closed captioned for the deaf and hard of hearing. A decoder is required.

TWOSISTERS

FROM THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

In the infinite ocean
are distant isles where people
sometimes seek refuge...

TWOSISTERS

A film by Caroline Leaf



VHS

113C

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National Film Board of Canada

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TWOSISTERS

"You are a monster," says Marie to Viola. Yet she also says, "You are my sister." ■ Cruelty mingles with an ineffable tenderness in this animated depiction of the relationship between two sisters. This story, etched directly onto tinted 70 mm film, takes us into their enclosed and self-contained world. ■ The etching technique – along with a melodic and quietly haunting soundtrack – suggests rather than shows the content and rhythm of lives made up of cups of coffee poured, household chores done, and not incidentally, novels tapped out on a computer keyboard. ■ Viola reveals her face, her hidden shame, to the stranger who irrupts into this insular and illusory calm. And through the events which follow, we see also the hidden faces of power, dependence, and fear. ■ This stirring film challenges us to face our own feelings when we are confronted with those who are different or somehow handicapped, as well as our ideas about personal beauty. Do we shield the handicapped from the outside world? Do we lock them away? Do we let them run the risk of getting hurt?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Discuss the pathological mix of power, dependence and control in the relationship between the two sisters.
- The title character in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* is often labelled "plain," and she even finds herself distinctly lacking: "I know that had I been a sanguine, brilliant, careless, exacting, handsome, romping child..." Discuss the notions of personal beauty that are the focus of **Two Sisters** in relation to *Jane Eyre*. How does Jane's sense of physical beauty shape her perceptions, experiences and the novel itself? Is Rochester more like the stranger or the sister Marie of **Two Sisters**?
- Choose a film, novel or short story which explores the relationship between two siblings. Compare and contrast that relationship to the one in **Two Sisters**.

For younger audiences:

- Read Hans Christian Andersen's *The Ugly Duckling*. Discuss the tale in relation to **Two Sisters**.
- Write a letter to the character of Viola. What would you say to her about her relationship with her sister Marie?
- Why do you think Viola insists that the door remain ajar at the end of the film? Where is the relationship between the two sisters headed?

C A R O L I N E L E A F



Caroline Leaf was born in Seattle on August 12, 1946. After earning a B.A. from Radcliffe College of Harvard University, she enrolled in a film workshop. There she discovered the joys of animation, and made her first film, *Sand or Peter and the Wolf* in 1969. She subsequently received a scholarship to Harvard which enabled her to make *Orfeo* in 1972. Arriving at the NFB the same year, she followed her previous successes with *The Owl Who Married a Goose: An Eskimo Legend* in 1974. *The Street* (1976) won sixteen prizes as well as a nomination for an Academy Award. She made *The Metamorphosis of Mr. Samsa* in 1977. In addition to her work in animation, she has directed a number of live-action films.

Script/Direction/Animation
Caroline Leaf

Scriptwriting Collaboration
Anne Dandurand
Frederick Ward
Bob Pot

Dialogues
Grant Heisler

Animation Camera
Pierre Landry

Editing
Camille Laperrière

Music
Judith Gruber-Stitzer

Sound Editing
Wojtek Klis

Recordings
Shelley Craig
Louis Hone

Re-recording
Jean-Pierre Joutel
Shelley Craig

Voices
Kathleen Fee
Jane Woods
Michael Rudder

English Version Production
Dagmar Teufel
Jacques Vallée

Producers
Robert Forget
Yves Leduc

Produced and distributed by
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Color
10 minutes 26 seconds

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C 0190 090 (film)



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