

The Murdoch Mysteries - It Never Snows in Toronto



Recently I've begun watching a CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) series called The Murdoch Mysteries. The program set in 1890's Toronto Canada features a young detective by the name of William Murdoch. Like Sherlock Holmes Murdoch is ahead of his time. He applies not only skill, but also new discoveries in science to his investigations. The mysteries are as good as any that have come out of the BBC and the show doesn't take itself too seriously. There is room for a little humor and bemusement in the stories. The lead is well played by Yannick Bisson as an upright, somewhat innocent and somewhat socially inhibited man who, while extremely intelligent, is unable to clearly express his emotions. The show also features regulars Inspector Brackenreid, Constable Crabtree and perhaps my favorite Doctor Julia Ogden. One reason she appeals to me is that she also is ahead of her time; a woman doctor who is willing to get her hands dirty and work with the men. There is also an unspoken and unacted-upon attraction between both the doctor and Detective Murdoch. The detective is unable to express his feelings and she, constrained by the norms of her time, is unwilling to express hers. This fact does surprise me a bit since she seems to have broken through the glass ceiling of the men's world of the time.

I will admit, I've only watched the first season and a half at this point, but I've found the writing and the acting strong. The show is not as fast moving as many American shows, but it keeps you thinking. The show also brings in many historical figures of the times: Tesla, Arthur Conan Doyle and Buffalo Bill Cody, to name a few. I thought this would bother me. It didn't. The figures are involved in the plot and you learn a little bit about their lives at the same time.

I do have a problem with the show, however. While I don't know if it continues this way through the rest of the series, at this point I have found one, or possibly two, interesting facts about Toronto Canada in the 1890's. It is this- either it never snowed in Toronto in the 1890's or else absolutely no crime occurred during the winter months. If you can keep this small discrepancy from bothering you and you like a good mystery mixed with a little humor and education then you should check out The Murdoch Mysteries. Personally, I'm glad I did.

Posted by Keith C. on May 9, 2013

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