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Kazik Radwanski (Ryerson '08) explores the idea of independence in his debut feature film, "Tower."

Ryerson alum, Kazik Radwanski's, film "Tower" premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) last Tuesday. After studying film at Ryerson and finding success with his short films (his award-winning short was shown in TIFF's student film showcase), Radwanski took his talents to feature film length.

His debut feature film is about 34-year-old man named Derek who

still lives with his parents and dreams of being a graphic animator. He works for his uncle's construction company and makes no effort to pursue his dream career.

"[Derek] is struggling to find a place. He doesn't fit in and he doesn't want to fit in," said leading man, Derek Bogart, of his character.

"Exactly," director Radwanski adds, "he's struggling against some-

thing, but he doesn't know what it is." Derek manages to keep everyone he has relationships with at an arm's length. "Lots of people try to help him but his problems are his own. He's content doing things his way, even if his way doesn't work," said Bogart.

Radwanski hopes some moments can mirror the viewers' lives -- but he isn't looking for a clean-cut moral at the end. Instead, he's hoping the film will act as a starting point for discussion. "He's a bit of a mystery. I don't even fully understand him," Radwanski says of Derek. Bogart added, "He's almost agnostic. Maybe it's something that can't be understood."

Radwanski's productions are unique because the actors never get to read a script. Each character doesn't know what the other will do or say. Through exploring the characters with the actors, Radwanski said the scene becomes more truthful and open to interpretation.

Radwanski's advice for aspiring filmmakers: "Watch movies. Watch as much as you can. Get a sense of what you like and live an interesting life."

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