



Rick Mercer, The Borgias earn Geminis

The best actress in a drama award went to Michelle Thrush of *Blackstone*. The APTN series about chief trying to make a difference on a troubled reserve won two Geminis.

Thrush dedicated her award to Gordon Tootoosis, the aboriginal actor who died earlier this year. She said Tootoosis had encouraged her to act while she was just a teen and was scheduled to appear on *Blackstone* at the time of his death.

She also spoke of the “dark journey” she took in the first season playing an alcoholic character who hits bottom.

“When I got the scripts I was in tears - I didn’t know if I could go to that kind of darkness and the shame it took to relive something I’ve seen my own friends go through,” Thrush said.



A delighted Michelle Thrush, who as a role in *Blackstone*, holds her Gemini for best actress in a drama. Chris Young/Canadian Press

‘Honest, real stories’

But the show has hit a chord with native viewers, she said. “It’s honest and real stories from our own people. It’s about time we tell our stories from our own point of view.”