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A rallying cry to restore our Lost Rivers

New doc *Lost Rivers* reveals the once-great flows that have been buried and neglected by cities from Toronto to Seoul.

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Lost Rivers follows "drainers" who explore grand old sewers.

By: JASON ANDERSON Special to the Star, Published on Thu Feb 28 2013

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LOST RIVERS: A new documentary by Montreal's Caroline Bâcle that plays the [Bloor Hot Docs Cinema](#) this week, *Lost Rivers* will make viewers acutely aware of the waters that may be literally running under their feet. Indeed, Toronto's long-buried [Garrison Creek](#) is one of several maltreated waterways discussed in Bâcle's film about the sometimes fraught relationships between modern urban infrastructures and the ancient river systems that have been disrupted as our cities grow ever

larger. It's a seldom-discussed issue that will become increasingly urgent in coming years given the effects of climate change on weather patterns and water levels. Sure enough, *Lost Rivers* provides plenty of reasons to fret, though there's some hope to be found in the efforts to restore long-neglected flows in places like Yonkers, N.Y., and Seoul. What's more, the subject of old sewers proves to be surprisingly enthralling, at least when it comes to the intrepid explorers — or “drainers,” as they call themselves — who reveal the subterranean wonders lying underneath cities such as Brescia, Italy. Weekend screenings of *Lost Rivers* will feature Q&A with an impressive variety of guests. The opening showing on March 1 at 6:30 p.m. will be followed by a discussion with Bâcle, producer Katarina Soukup, and James Brown and Kim Storey, two local architects with some exciting ideas about putting the Garrison to better use. Other attendees include Lost Rivers Toronto founder Helen Mills (March 2 at 9 p.m. and March 3 at 6 p.m.) and Ontario Waterkeeper executive director Krystyn Tully (March 3 at 1 p.m.), as well as a few bona-fide drainers.

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