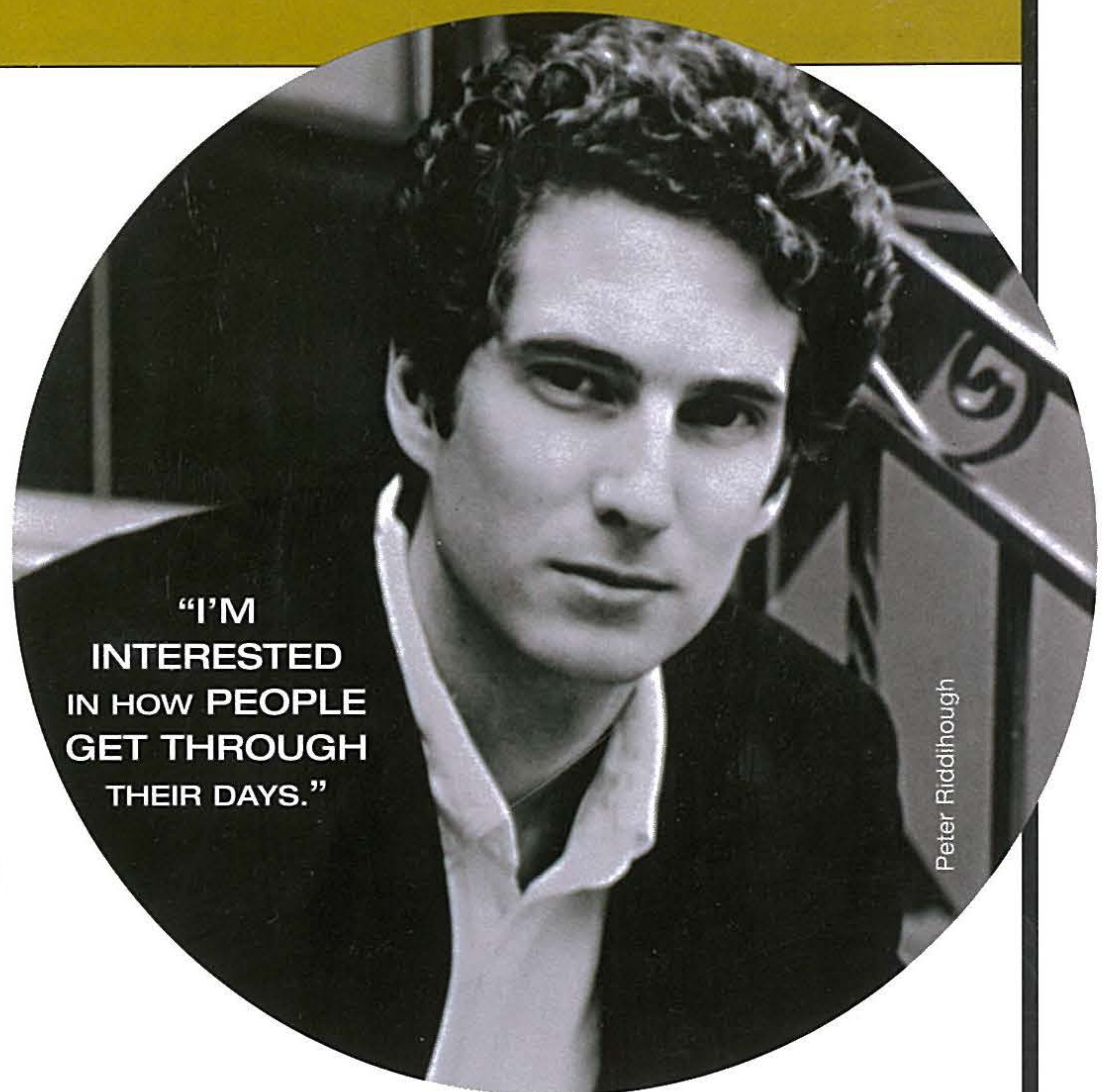


by Timber Masterson

Devil May Care

Known for his work primarily as a children's/young adult author, award-winning Canadian writer Kenneth Oppel has penned some 16 books since the tender age of 14. His newest work, *The Devil's Cure* (Hyperion), is his very first in the adult arena, and it's already being hailed by some critics as a first-rate thriller, fascinating and original, and highly cinematic—though, oddly enough, it was already optioned by a movie studio and wasn't picked up.



“**T**his book actually started as a screenplay,” muses Oppel from his Toronto home. “All my books have been driven primarily by what I think essentially is a good idea. The idea for the book—about bio prospecting, searching for rare DNA makeups that acted as some form of miracle cure—really got me.”

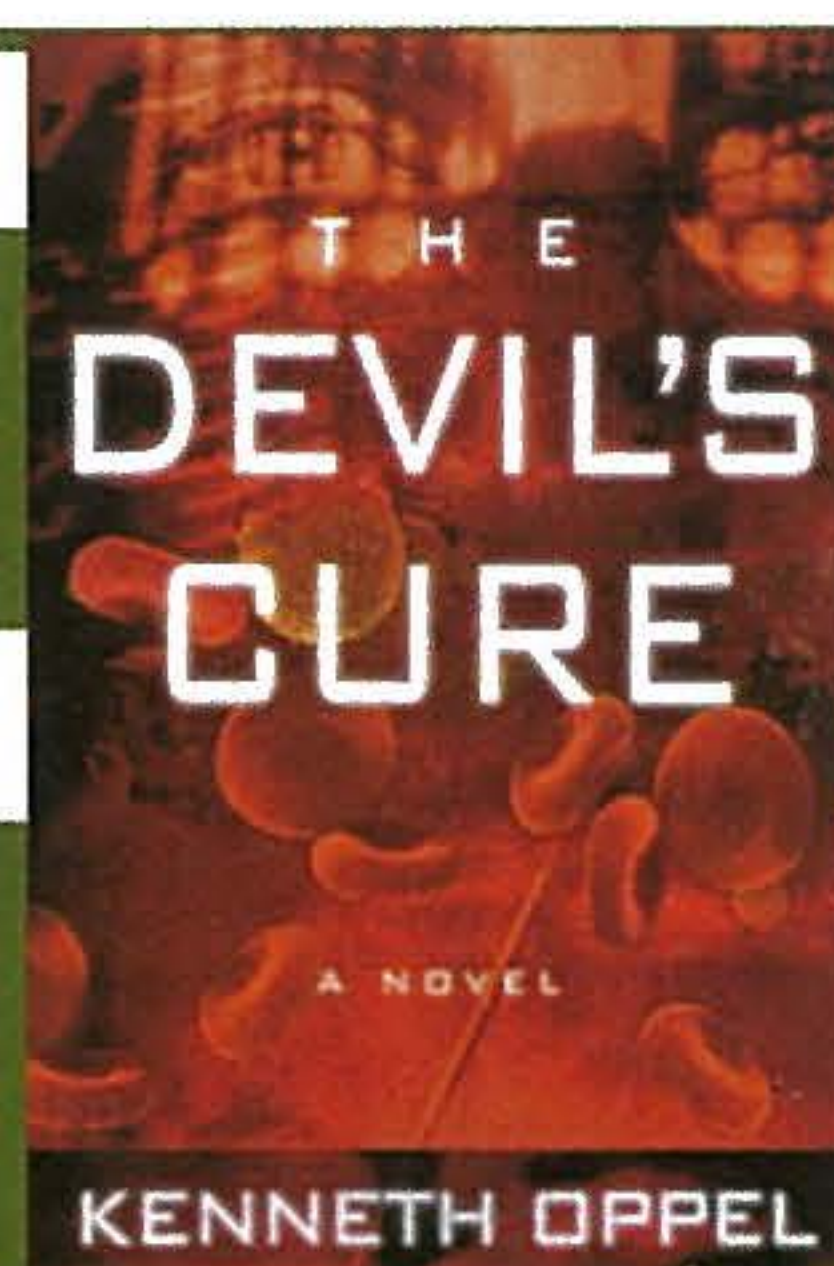
Oppel grew up in Victoria, B.C., and Halifax, Nova Scotia, in a family that surrounded itself with books. His literary career began with that of imaginative, sci-fi-like fantasy works, modeled after noted addictions to *Star Wars* and futuristic video games. His first novel, *Colin's Fantastic Video Adventure*, was published just as he was graduating from high school in 1985. “Growing up in Canada, your diet tended to be that of English prose primarily [and American secondarily] and the *Anne of Green Gables* stuff, L.M. Montgomery and the *Emily of New Moon* books. A lot of authors that I tended to respect and relate to were English-bred writers. Certainly,

What's New:

The Devil's Cure
(available June 1)

Bibliography:

A Bad Case of Dinosaurs
A Bad Case of Ghosts
A Bad Case of Magic
A Bad Case of Robots
A Bad Case of Super Goo
Colin's Fantastic Video Adventure
Cosimo Cat
Dead Water Zone
Emma's Emu
Follow That Star
Peg and the Whale
Silverwing
Sunwing
The Live-Forever Machine



Roald Dahl was one of my mentors, not really the likes of Margaret Atwood, Farley Mowat, or W.O. Mitchell.”

Studying at the University of Toronto opened up a whole new realm of interest for Oppel, such as writing film and book criticisms for the student newspaper. After discovering his passion for films, he decided to study them and even write them.

Which has now led to *The Devil's Cure*. In it, the characters are all searching for something, mixing the concept of faith with both science and religion. “I’m interested in how people get through their days,” Oppel notes. “The doctor, Laura Donaldson, and the psychopath, David Haines, are not that dissimilar; they’re both very disciplined. Haines is serving God. I like to explore that: for instance, what is reasonable to do for your beliefs, that line between rational and irrational. I hope people don’t see my main protagonist just as a criminally minded radical. He’s disciplined and strong in his beliefs, and just because he has taken a different path does not make him at all stupid.” **P**

Timber Masterson is a freelance writer in Los Angeles, California.