

Festival of Festivals features Canadian films

Toronto's ninth annual Festival of Festivals held in September this year, featured an unprecedented survey of Canadian films. Of some 400 films offered at the ten-day festival, more than 200 constituted the largest Canadian film retrospective ever mounted.



Xavier Norman Peterman (left) and Francis Reddy in Jean Beaudin's *Mario*. The film premiered in Toronto at the festival.

Twenty-six countries participated in the Festival of Festivals which opened with the world premiere of Canadian writer-director Daniel Petrie's, *The Bay Boy*. With international star Liv Ullman and two promising young Canadian actors, Kiefer Sutherland and Leah Pinsent, Mr. Petrie used his Nova Scotia boyhood background to tell the story of a boy who witnessed a murder.

In all 12 films were premiered amid



Jacques Gagnon (left) and Jean Duceppe in Claude Jutra's *Mon Oncle Antoine*. The feature film was selected the best Canadian film ever made.

the glitter and international celebrities who attended the festival.

Called *Northern Lights*, the Canadian retrospective included feature films ranging from rarely-seen classics like *A Married Couple* and *Nobody Waved Good-bye*, to a number receiving their Toronto premieres like Jean Beaudin's *Mario*, John Smith's *The Masculine Mystique* and Micheline Lanctôt's *Sonatine*, the winner of the Silver Lion at the Venice Film Festival in August.

Documentaries ranged from the different approaches to Canadian artists by Judi Stevenson and Dan Curtis in *Alex Colville: The Splendour of Order* and by Robert Shoub in *Snowscreen: The Art of Michael Snow* to the very controversial new National Film Board (NFB) production of Gail Singer's *Abortion: Stories from North and South* and Paul Cowan's *Democracy on Trial: The Morgentaler Affair*.

Northern Lights was divided into a number of programs including *Eyes Write*, in which Canadian authors like Margaret Atwood, Mordecai Richler and Brian Moore talked about how their work has been treated by the cinema; *Border Crossings*, which featured films by Canadians who have also worked in the US like Ted Kotcheff, Sidney Furie and Donald Sutherland; *Experiments*, a look at experimental and avant garde Canadian movies; *Buried Treasures*, a regular festival event, this year featuring lesser known Canadian films from the archives, such as Don Shebib's *Between Friends* and André Forcier's *Bar Salon*; and *Late Nights, Great Nights*, a selection of Canadian films that are not categorized such as *Outrageous*;



A scene from Léa Pool's *La femme de l'hôtel*, the winner of the new festival award, the Toronto City Award for Excellence in Canadian production.

and Gilles Carle's rustic musical *Fantastica*.

The largest Canadian retrospective was also marked by a survey to compile the first list of Canada's best films. Both Canadian and international critics who would regularly see and review Canadian films, academics, filmmakers and others who are involved in the Canadian film industry were polled and the *Ten Best* program was included.

Canada's ten best

Mon Oncle Antoine, Canada's most famous and celebrated chronicle of a young orphan growing up in a Quebec mining town in the 1940s, was the grand prize winner of the ten-best list.

Goin' Down The Road, the second film on the list, has been on other ten-best lists and has played in 30 countries. It tells the story of two young men from the Maritimes who head for Toronto and the good life, only to discover disillusionment.

The best Foreign Film Oscar nominee and winner of eight Genie awards in 1981, *Les Bons Débaras*, was third. This moving film directed by Francis Mankiewicz relates the tale of a precocious young girl who monopolizes her mother's love with fatal consequences. It is scheduled to open in 100 theatres in France next year.

The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz, Ted Kotcheff's 1974 film based on the Mordecai Richler novel about an 18 year old Montreal Jew, was fourth. It has won six major awards at international film festivals.

Fifth was *Les Ordres*, a film in which Michel Brault follows the disruption to the lives of five people arbitrarily arrested during the War Measures Act of 1970. Cannes had awarded Mr. Brault the best director prize, and the film, has been shown at 13 international festivals.

The Grey Fox, the sixth film on the list, was released in 1982. It has also won many awards including eight Genies and had