



## The Toronto retrospective

# The courage & the glory

by Gail Henley

The Retrospective – that is how it quickly became nicknamed – just as quickly became the only real event of the 9th Annual Festival of Festivals in Toronto: a giant celebration, whose purpose, value and success proved all the cynics wrong.

It was the largest attempt at Canadian cinema, anytime, anywhere. There were over 200 Canadian films (111 features and 148 shorts) screened in 10 days; every day the film audience had a choice of over 12 Canadian programs somewhere in Festival village. With traditionally only 2% of total screen time in the cinemas across the country screening Canadian movies, the Retrospective gave audiences the rare opportunity to go to a cinema to see their own "foreign" movies. For them, the Retrospective was an enjoyable overall look at Canadian cinema from the very beginning to 1984. For filmmakers, the 9th Annual Festival of Festivals was a time not only to look at the history and tradition of Canadian films but to assess where they stand in relation to that tradition. It was the first time in Canadian film history that the film community collectively could pause to reflect on what has shaped the landscape. For some, it was jubilation at being found again; for others a dialectic on where we've been and where we're going; for most, a renewed sense of hope and op-

timism. The legacy of the Retrospective could be that it clarified the past to make the future more perceptible.

First of all, what became abundantly clear right from the beginning is that Canadian film is as diverse as the country itself, and therein lies probably the kernel of a new realization of film in Canada. For too long there has been an attempt to find a homogeneous entity that would define our films and perhaps ourselves. However, the sheer mass of styles available within our tradition defies the concept of a single homogenous centre, of *the* definitive Canadian film. As a result, programmers Piers Handling, coordinator of the Retrospective, and programmers Peter Harcourt, Kay Armatage, and Bruce Elder chose to put together different programs that presented the range of strengths of Canadian film.

Despite this diversity, the programmers wanted to highlight the major accomplishments of Canadian cinema and thus the focal point of the Retrospective became a pantheon of the best films ever made in Canada. Selected in poll of over 300 film critics, national and international, teachers and industry professionals, the Ten Best, in order, were: *Mon Oncle Antoine*; *Goin' Down the Road*; *Les Bons Debarras*; *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*; *The Grey Fox*; *Les Ordres*; *J.A. Martin photographe*; *Pour la Suite du monde*; *Nobody Waved Good-bye*; and *La Vraie Nature de Bernadette*. One of the obvious conclusions from the Ten Best (excepting the documentary, *Pour la Suite du monde* and the high-budget *Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*) is that eight of the 10 films are low-budget,

personal films. This high ratio justifies the low-budget personal film as the glory of Canadian cinema. A related conclusion, drawn from the top 25 films, reveals that the "major player" behind each of these films was none other than a filmmaker; and so it was that *auteurs* such as Claude Jutra, Gilles Carle, Don Owen, Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Denys Arcand, Francis Mankiewicz, Michel Brault, Jean Beaudin, Pierre Perrault, Don Shebib, Phillip Borsos, and Michael Snow were the real stars of the Festival.

The filmmakers were feted; their films, in re-structured prints, were shown to full houses; and a tour, sponsored by Labatt's, will take both filmmakers and films to all the major centres across Canada from October through December. Afterwards, an international tour will take the Ten Best to major centres in the U.S. and Europe.

Filmmakers introducing their films has become standard Festival of Festivals format, a special practice that has personalized the Festival and delights the audiences. In introducing *La Vraie Nature de Bernadette*, Gilles Carle (besides *Bernadette* in the Ten Best, his films included in the Retrospective were *Red* and *La Tete de Normande St-Onge*), spoke intensely on the film business past and present. "*La Vraie Nature de Bernadette* was made 15 years ago. We had such freedom working outside the regulations. I'm hoping this freedom will come back. That would be the greatest thing."

For Gilles Carle, the Retrospective reignited the passionate argument over the future orientation of Canadian cinema that has long been on-going between filmmakers and government

funding bodies. "The politics of Telefilm Canada are no good," says Carle. "They favour producers. There will be \$235 million in the next four years for producing films and only one million of that will go to script-writing. But writing and authorship is where it all starts."

Carle feels particularly well-placed to re-open the discussion since his feature films were among the first to reflect contemporary Canadian cinema. "We started something, (referring to the Quebecois features on the '60s) and that was cut short by the tax-sheltering policy. We started something again in the '70s, and that is now being cut short by the new policy of big movies made for television. They think that television will save the cinema, I believe the contrary: television will put censorship into film."

Paul Almond, filmmaker, (his films included in the Retrospective were *Isabel* and *Act of the Heart*) believes the Retrospective contributed in a very important way to the discussion.

"The Retrospective let us see very clearly what a distinctive voice was speaking out through motion pictures in the late '60s, early '70s. Our films were as good as Australian cinema, as any European cinema; they offered a wide, rich experience for the film-going public. Those were the 'good years' everybody talks about. Then there was the change at the CFDC – the men who could get the most money could hire the best directors and best actors and make the most commercial movies; ironically they made the worst dogs. At that time a film that was made with any reference to Canada was the kiss of death. There

Gail Henley is a screenwriter living in Toronto and author of the best-selling novel *Where The Cherries End Up*.

was a long period of five to six years where everyone was trying to make American films.

"The Retrospective, however, has helped us rediscover that powerful voice of our film culture. Now we are at the point of a clash of visions - out of this, in the future, will come a good synthesis. The clash occurs between the avowed intent to provide television fare for Canadians, and the intention of the Broadcast strategy which wanted to provide a more substantial Canadian voice, to Canadians and to the rest of the world. And therein lies the clash of ideologies. In the Retrospective, we've been witnessing one hundred distinctive Canadian features; we're looking at a cultural Canadian monument. But what is to happening to the Canadian distributor or the Canadian filmmaker today? They are being dictated to by network programmers wanting to put all their money to prime-time television."

Rene Malo, independent film distributor, and executive producer of *Sonatine* (which was screened in the Perspective Canada program) and a guest panelist at the Trade Forum on the subject of Canadian distribution, added fuel to the discussion with his remarks from the podium. He stands squarely in sympathy with the low-budget personal filmmaker. "No great films have come out of series television, no matter how what country in the world. It's the independent filmmaker who makes the films that make the culture. Truffaut - that's who you remember."

"An immense and powerful ideological battle is being waged," says Paul Almond. "And it is the struggle for the cultural life of motion pictures in this country. Peter Pearson, (director of Programs for Telefilm Canada and overseer of the multi-million dollar Broadcast Fund; and filmmaker - his films included in the Retrospective were *Snowbirds* and *Paperback Hero*) is the key man who is responsible for how this will be resolved. Will the discussion be resolved in the birth of a new era - or will this simply mark a nice industrial boom and nothing of any meaning will spring from it?"

Yet Almond, as virtually all the filmmakers buoyed by the success of the Retrospective, feels optimistic: "The one single overriding view of our cinema is that most of the cheap hustlers have disappeared. Filmmakers will re-surface because there will be no one to make the films. And I think that people like Peter Pearson are genuinely wrestling with this point. The Retrospective is bound to have had some impact on the Broadcast Fund."

There is considerable international precedent for the situation to be resolved positively. "All of the more important films in Italy have come out of Italian television funding, even Fellini," says Almond. "How could Fellini spend \$5 million on a film that everyone knows will lose \$3 million if it wasn't for Italian television? And yet Italy, the nation, still comes out ahead - the world's perspective of Italy is altered by its filmmakers. Likewise, the German New Wave was brought about by the participation of German television. Television does not necessarily hamper the independent filmmaker - it doesn't have to - it's just that it does right here in Canada, right now. It's always the same answer from the CBC, 'We'd love to show your picture, but we don't have the money.' It's the same answer for any motion picture, and yet they'll tie up vast amounts of



● A selection from Canada's Ten Best. Monique Mercure in *Mais oué Antoine*



● *Go in' Down The Road*: Paul Bradley, Jayne Eastwood and Doug McGrath; Monique Mercure and Marcel Sabourin in *J.A. Martin photographe*

money in a mini-series. At the film festival there were wonderful films from Italy, France, England, or Germany funded by their television. But in Canada, it hasn't happened."

Larry Kent, filmmaker, (his films included in the Retrospective were *The Bitter Ash*, *When Tomorrow Dies*, *High* and *Sweet Substitute*) is one of the filmmakers who have been labelled part of the lost generation from the '60s which resurfaced with the Retrospective. "Telefilm does not want to make feature films, that's not what it wants to do," says Kent. "The message I got from the Trade Forum is it wants to do North American material. They're not interested in the filmmakers: they moved immediately to the producers and now have moved to the broadcasters. It was deliberate. They're not interested in us. If you compare it to the theatre, what counts to them is the theatrical company, i.e., the people who run the theatres, not the playwrights."

For Kent, the Retrospective was a wonderful event, not only because of its size but because of the regenerative enthusiasm and hunger of the audiences to rediscover or discover Canadian films. "Audiences came in large numbers to see the films," says Kent, "to see films about themselves and they were delighted. It gave them a fresh awareness and nationalistic pride in our own culture. Only the government and Telefilm seem to be the ones not interested in Canadian films."

Don Owen, filmmaker, (besides *Nobody Waved Good-bye*, one of the Ten Best, his recent film *Unfinished Business* was in the Perspective Canada program) is equally troubled by the television emphasis in current film production. "Telefilm is only one third of the money, the other third is CBC. CBC has to accept the proposal. Now all the scripts have to go through the drama department and that is problematic. Independent production should be completely different from the sensibility of the drama department. One is aware, if you're selling to CBC, that you're getting a certain sensibility of how the script will be judged. It's a little bit like having Colonel Sanders safeguarding the chickens."

Says Carle: "Television will cut off 80% of the subjects one as a filmmaker would like to explore. To make film you have to be more violent, more sexual, you need more depth, you have to go with marginal people - TV does not allow you to go with marginal film. TV chooses the subjects for you. We'll all end up making Walt Disney-type movies, because if you want the right to say something dangerous, it's this right that will be cut off. It is the system I'm against - it kills authorship, kills theatrical movies, kills independent distribution. Now it will be decided in Parliament how films are to be made in Canada."

As if to underscore this serious situation, the Festival screened two recent National Film Board films, *Democracy on Trial: the Morgentaler Affair* and *Abortion: Stories from North and South* in the Perspective Canada program. *Democracy on Trial: the Morgentaler Affair* was made as a pilot for the CBC in a series of films dealing with landmark court battles. The CBC was wildly excited by the series initially and invested \$50,000 to get it off the ground. But when *The Morgentaler Affair* was completed, the CBC withdrew its support and cancelled the series. They saw the film as too controversial and exer-

cised their right to kill it. Gail Singer, filmmaker, made *Abortion: Stories from North and South* with Studio D of the National Film Board. Her film received the same reception from CBC when she approached the network. Their position, according to Singer, was, "We can't show this film because it takes an advocacy position." There is no rule in the Broadcast Act that disavows film made from a woman's perspective and yet decisions are made by individuals at the CBC that veto controversial subjects. "That's censorship," says Gail Singer, "and we have it."

The planners of the Festival were keenly aware of the uneasy tensions in the Canadian film industry. The Retrospective would not only confirm that there was indeed a rich and long tradition of good Canadian films, but also offered a means of intervening in the debates between the film community and the government. Peter Harcourt, consultant to the Retrospective, believes that, as a result of the Retrospective, the discussion is much more clearly focussed now. "For the first time in my life, I'm a tiny bit hopeful. The CFDC was mucking about for 16 years but not seeing they had to put money in the whole package. At least they put in place an industrial strategy, but there was nothing in their mandate that guaranteed a cultural strategy. With Peter Pearson in charge, I'm hoping that the industrial strategy will serve the needs of independent and imaginative filmmakers as much as they serve the needs of Harold Greenberg and Denis Heroux. As long as they allow the imaginative product to be produced we will have, for the first time, some continuity of product. A filmmaker won't have to wait another three years to make the next film, which can be inhibiting to culture. Bureaucrats will have to have the courage to support the imaginative product with a small commercial return and large cultural impact."

Even the Tribute paid tribute to what was being enshrined in the 9th Annual Festival of Festivals as Warren Beatty used that platform to expostulate on the state of cinema in America. The most positive thing he said was to underline the need for film festivals to be centres for discussion, where a variety of films are shown and explored, where filmmakers can come and learn. If not, he feared there would soon be only one kind of film made - the film that fits demographics - and he strongly warned against the dangers of making that kind of film.

A poignant lament for the lack of momentum in the Canadian film industry came from author Morley Callaghan (*The film Now that April's Here* (1958), based on four short stories of his, was screened in the Retrospective in the Eyes Write program, sponsored by publisher McClelland & Stewart, and featuring Canadian films made from Canadian novels.) "The boys who made that picture never got the credit they deserved," said Callaghan. "How astonishingly daring it was and what a remarkable job they did. These were stories of mood and human relationships, of delicate balance and nuances. These boys (producers William Davidson, Norman Klenman, with Davidson directing) took the stories and tried to do an honest job. Bergman got a great name for stories like these - of emotions. If the money was there and they would have kept their heart and mind in it, it's astonishing what might have become of them. I hope someday when the film

business gets started, and when the country looks back, they'll see how good these film directors were and that they'll take their place in Canadian film history."

The question could also be rephrased: Had these filmmakers been French-Canadian, would they have fared any better than the English Canadians? No one can avoid noticing that, of the Ten Best, six are French-language films, and that seven of the top ten films were shot in Quebec. "One reason there are so many indigenous Quebec movies is because of the Societe generale du cinema," says Don Owen. "That is not the same with Ontario and this begs immediate attention. One-third of the population of this country is in Ontario and all the Ontario Government Film Office does is make a big pitch to bring American films to shoot in Ontario. The Ontario Government must get in and have a film fund that equates the Societe's aid-plan. Set up an Ontario Film Fund for films that reflect indigenous filmmaking. Ontario films help give a strong sense of what this part of Canada is. There is a unique culture here. Internationally people have a real sense of a place called Quebec, but not Ontario. In *Nobody Waved Good-bye* (shot regionally in Ontario) you could feel the difference. We need more impetus and support in that direction. Jean-Pierre Lefebvre's films all had money from the Societe and could not have been made without that support. In Ontario, the producers have the power, and they want the big bucks and deals in Hollywood, and they have the script re-written and tell you how to make the film, and who the director should be. Filmmakers are not a power in Ontario."

"Telefilm has a lot of contempt for its artists," says Gilles Carle. "First thing they want you to do is join forces with foreigners - because they love Americans. What about the girl from Killaloe who has an idea? Writers and artists are forgotten people in this field. Sitting at the Trade Forum is like sitting for four hours in the bank. I'm ashamed. I'm disgusted. So many people, supposedly so brilliant, always talking about money. And government people talking money with them too. The government's job is to create culture. Artists are the blood of a society. There are so many good ideas that should be made into films. So many movies made that never should have been made - and you wonder why there was no filter. And on top of that, these neo-evangelists of neo-capitalism are not telling the truth. They want to steal the money. But who has seen a return on their money here? They just want you to feel guilty. *Leopold Z* was broadcast 32 times and they tell me my films don't make money. No return here. Everybody lies. Distributors lie. Producers lie. Nobody tells the truth."

"It stinks here and you can't smell it." Perhaps it is fitting that this was a filmic comment. In a cameo satire on commercial filmmaking in the avant-garde film *Illuminated Texts* by Bruce Elder, a fat producer sits in a chair, holding a hammer and a set-square, and with a deadpan expression answers questions about his upcoming film. The part is played sumptuously by James D. Smith, (also a filmmaker whose film included in the Retrospective was *Thirty-six short films* in the Experimental program). He explains that he uses rats in his film, and when questioned why, responds, "Because they're available." When asked what the story is based upon he responds: "On a very good



● Richard Drouin and Joe Siew in *The Apprenticeship of Ruddy Kravitz*, Michel Lanctot in *La vraie nature de Bernadette*; and Jackie Burroughs and Richard Farnsworth in *The Grey Fox*

idea, but I don't like to give the idea away." His greatest ambition is to keep the film moving, and he says he will make every attempt to keep it mobile. He goes on to confirm his film will be suitable to be dubbed, and that if the story isn't satisfactory he'll have it rewritten. A very funny scene and cutting to the point.

However, except for this extant piece, experimental filmmakers do not engage the discussion on this level. Their debate with Canadian cinema goes on just as energetically but proceeds on a much more theoretical plane. Whereas the low-budget feature filmmakers argue that realist cinema is important in itself, the avant-gardists argue that it is never aesthetically significant because of its realism. A work of art is interesting for its formal intricacy and complexity.

Forty percent of the Retrospective was made up of the Experimental program which screened 100 films (all of varying lengths), giving audiences 45 hours of Canadian avant-garde cinema. The sheer mass of films in this program overwhelmed any notion that this is an insignificant aspect of Canadian cinema. These were tough, esoteric films which the audiences had to wrestle with, films that demanded attention, and have won international acclaim. Canadian avant-garde film has a considerable reputation outside the borders of this country and Michael Snow is its leading international celebrity. David Rimmer, Joyce Wieland, Bruce Elder, Chris Gallagher and Rick Hancox have been written about and had screenings in Germany, France, England, the U.S., and Japan. Bruce Elder, programmer for the Experimental program and filmmaker (his films in the Retrospective were *1857 (Fool's Gold)* and *Illuminated Texts*) argues that the best-known Canadian filmmakers on an international level are the masters of the Canadian avant-garde. "For instance, in (Richard) Roud's *Dictionary of Filmmakers*, the only English-Canadian filmmaker that is mentioned is Michael Snow," he says.

The Retrospective would not have been complete without the Experimental program. Underlying this statement is the precept that if we view ourselves as a cultured audience, it behooves us to know the films and recognize the names of those who have created masterpieces in this genre of Canadian cinema. Michael Snow, the Canadian master filmmaker of avant-garde cinema, muses about recognition in his own country so long in coming: "I've had people who visited in past years from Europe, while the Festival was on, who asked me, 'Why don't they show your films, don't you live here?'" Not to put too fine a point on it, someone who thinks he has rudiments of a film culture and has never seen a Michael Snow film is equivalent to someone boasting about literature and having never heard of James Joyce. Michael Snow is celebrated internationally for his films and has been working as a filmmaker for 20 years. He is as important a figure in Canadian film history as one could hope for. The Festival for the first time screened his most celebrated films, *Wavelength; La Region centrale*; and *One Second In Montreal* in the Retrospective's Experimental program. "I don't like the term experimental film because it makes it sound as if these are 'tries' and the others are achieved. I'm making the kind of film I like to see made or just like to see," says Snow.

Screenings the works in the Experi-

mental program mattered not merely for the recognition of the filmmakers but because of the importance of the works themselves. In the survey of the best films ever made in Canada, *Wavelength* was one of the top 25. Snow's *La Region centrale* has been hailed as one of the few indisputably innovative films of the decade. *Artforum*, the New York critical magazine, stated that this film is as radically different from other contemporary films as Eisenstein's films were. "The first films developed into experimental films," says Snow. "They had to be made with a creative spirit, the way the things happen in them, mostly without any connection with narrative but using the magic possibilities of the camera." In *La Region centrale* the camera spins gyroscopically in a way the human head can not, like a disembodied eye, seeing visions that only people without gravity (like men on the moon) could see. *Artforum* described Snow's unique camera movements as original as the crane shots in Griffith's *Intolerance* or Ozu's use of camera angles: "It is the use of these original camera movements which gave Snow the power to produce a film which could sustain the viewer's interest for three hours. Snow has made an enormously complicated, varied, and beautiful film."

"One of the reasons people may have difficulty with experimental film (is that) they're so used to the states of mind that prepare them for narrative fiction film which stands or falls on the suspension of disbelief - they can't handle a state of mind that doesn't fall into that. One of the problems is overcoming the reactions built on habit," says Snow.

In *Illuminated Texts* Bruce Elder elucidates the argument for avant-garde cinema versus the traditional, dominant illusionist cinema. It is a highly accomplished film which Michael Snow says is vitally interesting for its polyphonic aspect. "In a narrative movie your attention is controlled," explains Elder. "As soon as you ask yourself what's going to happen next, the film answers, so you almost feel in control, but you're not. In *Illuminated Texts*, paradoxically you don't feel in control, you're always aware there's more than you can grasp, you're in exile from the film's wholeness, but you are in control because you can make up a movie for yourself. The different channels of information let you make your own movie out of it - you can listen to the sound-effects and music, you can listen to the narrative, you can watch the images, you can read the titles. You can do a couple of them at once but not all of them, so every time you go back to the movie you see a new movie. That allows viewers a freedom they never get in a narrative movie."

Joyce Wieland, filmmaker, her films included in the Retrospective were *A and B in Ontario* and *Sailboat*; *Rat Life and Diet in North America*; *Reason Over Passion* and *The Far Shore* is one of the most nationalist of all filmmakers, whose films have also been highly praised internationally as important avant-garde works. *The Far Shore*, a 1976 feature film, was her first attempt to crossover into mainstream Canadian cinema. The experience was so traumatic and she was so devastated at being unable to distribute her film that she subsequently gave up filmmaking. She was persuaded to come to the Festival for the screening of *The Far Shore*, but was still too devastated to speak and refused to stand up and comment on the

film or the film business or in any way introduce the film before the screening. She did, however, stay to watch her film. At the end of the film the applause was extremely hearty, and, for one brief exhilarating moment, the Festival helped her forget that she was a minority-in-a-minority in a minority cinema.

And yet isolated work continues in this country, and filmmakers work against one, two or three opponents. The low-budget, indigenous Canadian feature film is in the same minority situation against the dominant Hollywood illusionists as is the Canadian avant-garde cinema - only the latter are less passive towards the Hollywood orthodoxy. The avant-garde exists to extend the boundaries or change what exists. This is what will keep film practice exciting and real.

"There isn't anything wrong with having a small audience. I have an audience but I know a lot of people who are good and can't be seen. My own view is that there are real masterpieces and it's too bad more people don't see it. And it has to do with money: a commercial film has an industry built up for it," says Snow.

However, there is a strong avant-garde cinema in Canada, and the Canada Council is doing a good job of promoting

tival. The Festival planners, under the unfailing direction of Wayne Clarkson, have anticipated this and the new program created this year, Perspective Canada, will become a continuing program in the Festival.

In succeeding years, the Perspective Canada program will be the device used to show more Canadian material. It will feature the diversity and the quality of the films made in the 12-month period before the Festival and from which will be highlighted the best in Canada. To add prestige to this important program the 9th Annual Festival marked the establishment of a new award, the Toronto-City Award, for the film which most demonstrates the excellence of Canadian cinematographic production. The first recipient of that award was *La Femme de l'hotel* by filmmaker Lea Pool. The jury - which included filmmaker Allan King (his films in the Retrospective were *A Married Couple* and *Running Away Backwards*) - was unanimous in its choice for the Toronto-City Award, selecting Pool's film because it stood out for its distinguished cinematography, its superbly coordinated design, its deeply moving performances and its extraordinary coherence of vision and theme. Pool recalls that for years juries which read



Artist and astronomer Michael Snow and gyroscopic camera in *La région centrale*

avant-garde Canadian cinema. Although occasionally threatening, the future is fairly predictable: as long as there's a Canada Council, there'll be a Canadian avant-garde. Toronto is particularly fortunate to have The Funnel (a 100-seat theatre on King Street East that has been in existence since 1972) that shows these films. (There are only three other such formal small theatres which screen avant-garde cinema in Canada.) Some avant-garde filmmakers hope that chains like Cineplex will start exhibiting avant-garde movies to a larger public. Certainly, what the film festival did was clarify that there is an audience for this kind of film - and that the audience is growing.

Ultimately that's why the Retrospective was embraced so enthusiastically by so many people. It showed that this is not a one-genre film country. It showed that the past is open and varied, and if the past was that way, so too can the future be. It vindicated the cultural lobbyists, and those (small) groups of people who have argued that if there were more access to Canadian films, there would be the audience.

However what is significant is that as Festival audiences become more used to seeing Canadian films, they will have to be satisfied in each succeeding Fes-

the script while she was seeking financing told her, "This is not a film." But filmmakers never give up and juries change. Eventually there was a jury (at the Societe generale du cinema) that liked the script and Lea Pool was on her way.

My point of view is that there was a large public for this film," says Pool. "but what is ironic is that distributors and producers don't want to know there is a large public for this kind of film. We can prepare this public the way we did for violence or we can prepare this public for poetic films that express emotion and beauty. If everyone has violence in them, so too they must have love in them, and we have to find the public."

The Retrospective reminded us of our rich heritage in film," says Wayne Clarkson, "and now it is an obligation and duty of the Festival to continue that appreciation and awareness of our nation's productions. Perspective Canada grew out of the Retrospective - we could not have a Retrospective and then allow it to disappear - the effort and values inherent in the Retrospective must be acknowledged on a continuing basis. And choosing the best Canadian film from the Perspective Canada program is the new beginning of a long and rich tradition of winners."