

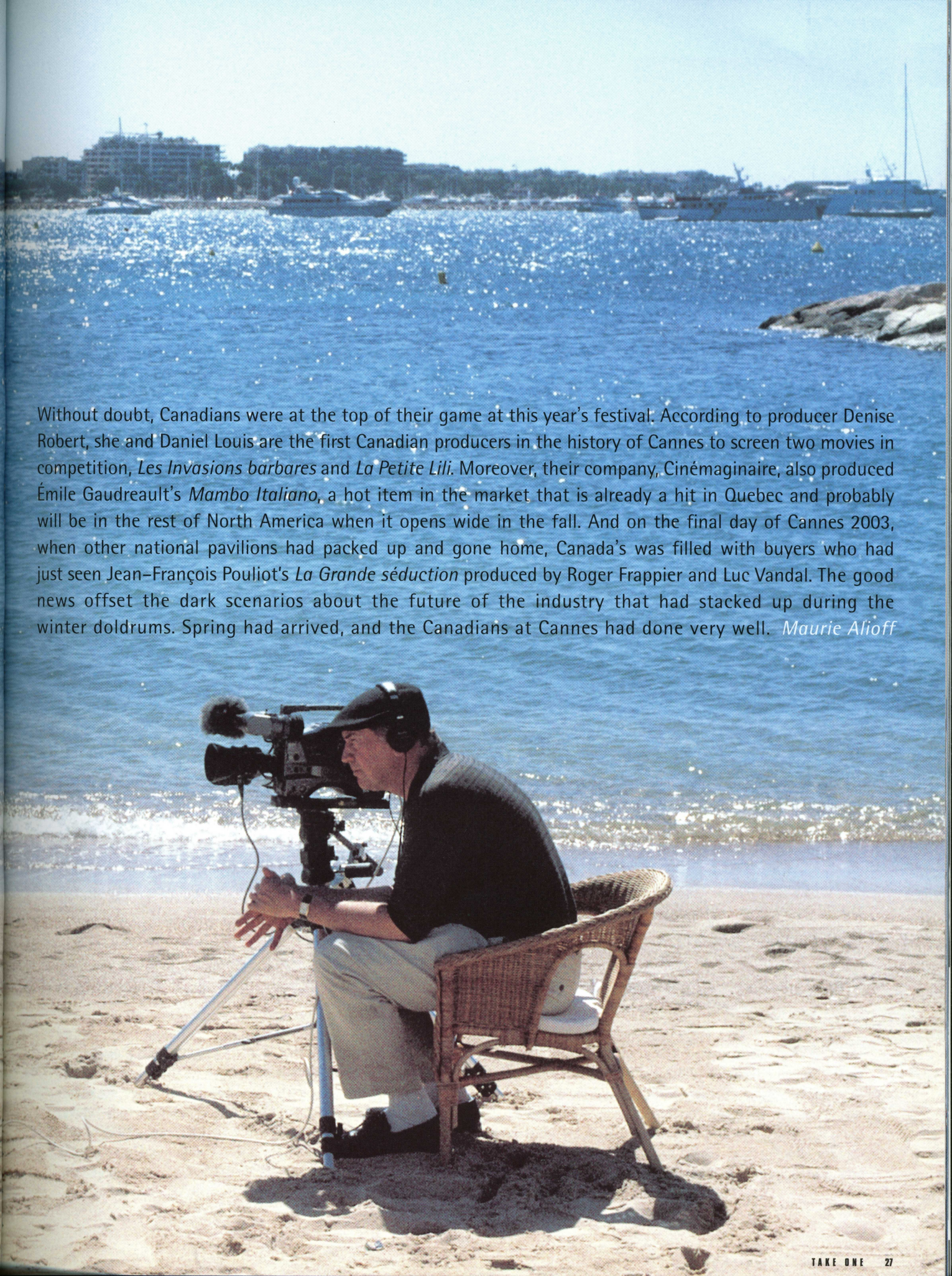
A man with glasses, wearing a dark jacket and trousers, is sitting on a wicker chair on a sandy beach. He is gesturing with his hands as if in conversation. The background shows the blue sea with white waves crashing onto the shore, and a city skyline with buildings and a crane in the distance under a clear sky.

# at *Canadians* Cannes

Canada had one of its best showings ever at the 56th edition of the Cannes Film Festival. One could argue it was really Quebec's year, since all of the Canadian features in the Official Selection were Québécois productions or co-productions; however, the movies emanate from a thriving Canadian film culture with Telefilm Canada at its hub. All the Canucks on the Côte d'Azur, whether French- or English-speaking, got a shot in the arm when Denys Arcand's *Les Invasions barbares* received a 22-minute ovation, won Best Screenplay and Best Actress awards, and sold to Miramax for a hefty price.

Telefilm Canada's executive director Richard Stursberg being interviewed on the beach by veteran Canadian filmmaker Peter Rowe.

Photo credit: Maurie Alioff

A man wearing a dark cap and headphones is seated in a wicker chair on a sandy beach. He is operating a professional video camera mounted on a tripod. The camera is pointed towards the ocean. In the background, the blue water of the sea meets the shore with gentle waves. Further back, a harbor area is visible with several boats and buildings under a clear sky. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

Without doubt, Canadians were at the top of their game at this year's festival. According to producer Denise Robert, she and Daniel Louis are the first Canadian producers in the history of Cannes to screen two movies in competition, *Les Invasions barbares* and *La Petite Lili*. Moreover, their company, Cinémaginaire, also produced Émile Gaudreault's *Mambo Italiano*, a hot item in the market that is already a hit in Quebec and probably will be in the rest of North America when it opens wide in the fall. And on the final day of Cannes 2003, when other national pavilions had packed up and gone home, Canada's was filled with buyers who had just seen Jean-François Pouliot's *La Grande séduction* produced by Roger Frappier and Luc Vandal. The good news offset the dark scenarios about the future of the industry that had stacked up during the winter doldrums. Spring had arrived, and the Canadians at Cannes had done very well. *Maurie Alioff*