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Toronto

Atom Egoyan's *Felicia's Journey* opens the 24th annual Toronto International Film Festival while Jeremy Podeswa's second feature, *The Five Senses*, leads off this year's Perspective Canada program. Also included in the program are Léa Pool's *Emporte-moi*, Reginald Harkema's debut feature, *A Girl is a Girl*, Allan Moyle's first Canadian film in years, *New Waterford Girl*, John Paizs's much-anticipated *Top of the Food Chain*, and Mort Ransen's *Touched* (formerly known as *Shagella*).... Film and television production continues to keep the crews busy in Toronto despite the fact that Vancouver and Montreal have surpassed the city that the rest of Canada loves to hate in terms of volume of production. One of the more interesting projects is a live-action version of the very popular Marvel comic, *The X Men*, with Patrick Stewart (of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* fame) as the mysterious Dr. X who brings together a misfit band of superhero mutants to fight the evil Magneto, played by Oscar-nominated (*Gods and Monsters*) Ian McKellen. Bryan Singer (*The Usual Suspects*) directs.... With three of its own multiplexes in Toronto, one in Vancouver, and plans to expand to Ottawa, Edmonton and Victoria, Alliance Atlantis is slowly becoming the only Canadian-owned film producer/distributor with its own movie house chain.... As the World Wide Web becomes an integral part of the way many do business or research, several Canadian film organizations are now on the Web and provide valuable information in a sector that has been tremendously undeserved. It used to be that accurate information about the Canadian film industry was extremely difficult to find, available only to the few who knew where to look (the most reliable sources being the Cinémathèque Québécoise in Montreal and The Film Reference Library in Toronto). Now, all that has changed. The National Screen Institute has recently launched a very sophisticated and informative site (www.screentradecanada.ca) with all sorts of up-to-date stuff on the Canadian film industry; Telefilm Canada has had its own site (www.telefilm.gc.ca) for some time now; and *Take One* now has a site which, when finished, will have a complete archive of all its back articles in addition to the listings contained in its *Essential Guide to Films & Filmmakers in Canada*.

Paul Townend

Pierre Perrault

Winnipeg

Two important independent features by Ontario filmmakers were shot in Winnipeg recently. Colleen (Shoemaker) Murphy's *Desire*, is a coproduction between Elizabeth Yake (bp: *Pushing the Boundaries*), Winnipeg's Buffalo Gal Pictures (*The Genius of Lenny Breau*) and Bloskop Film of Germany (which helped produce the films of Margarethe von Trotta and Volker Schlöndorff's *The Tin Drum*). The film is a love story about a grade-three teacher who falls for a failed concert pianist and features German actress Katja Riemann (*The Pharmacist, Bandits*), Alberta Watson and Zachary Bennett. Also John (Lilies) Greyson's *Law of Enclosures*, written by Greyson and Dale Peck, features rising star Sarah Polley (*Go, The Sweet Hereafter*). Coproduced by Buffalo Gal Pictures and Damon D'Oliveira, the film is the story of a couple at the beginning of their relationship again, 40 years later.... Along with the increasing support for independents, the provincial film and television funding agency, Manitoba Film and Sound, is setting up a new fund for low-budget independent features budgeted at \$500,000 or less. Alexandra Raffé, producer and former CEO of the Ontario Film Development Corp., was brought in to advise and draft the guidelines for the program. Film and Sound CEO, Carole Vivier, says the program will be in place by September.... A \$7 million film and television production studio, The Prairie Production Centre, is being built on three acres of land in the west end of Winnipeg. The studio will house three sound stages and postproduction facilities and is scheduled for completion in September of 2000.... Someone to watch out for—Winnipeg filmmaker Darryl Kinaschuk. Using the stage name "Deco Dawson," this resourceful young artist has written several plays as well as shot some beautifully photographed b & w Super 8 films in a style heavily influenced by the silent cinema and German expressionism. Darryl recently won a Blizzard Award for his short film *Luster* and a Best Editing Award at the National Film and Video Festival in Regina. Guy Maddin has called him "the most promising artist I've encountered in Manitoba in the last 15 years." Another Winnipeg artist, Erika MacPherson, recently premiered her incredibly ambitious, lesbian-themed video *Disobedience* using a large film-style crew for technical support. Erika is currently writing a feature to be shot in 35mm in Iceland.

Dave Barber

photo courtesy of the National Film Board

