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There's a moment of theatrical magic that millions of people have succumbed to: the showbiz moment when Peter Pan asks us if we believe in fairies. Tinker Bell has been badly hurt, and like a dying firefly, her light is ebbing away. Desperate to save her, Peter grabs at a long shot. He tells us, the audience, that if we believe in fairies, we should clap our hands.

Like audiences who believe that Tinker Bell will come back to life if they clap loud enough, Canadian entertainment writers and other like-minded unin-

formed souls have taken to wishing for the impossible: that Nia Vardalos's *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* (*MBFGW*) be a Canadian film. John McKay, writing for the *Canadian Press* in a piece critical of the Byzantine system that qualifies a film for the Genies states: "*My Big Fat Greek Wedding* [is] not considered Canadian, even though it was filmed in Toronto, the screenplay...was written by Winnipeg native Nia Vardalos, who also starred, and there were lots of Canadians in the cast and crew. Even in Hollywood they're calling it a Canadian film." Then there is the CBC's official Web site—put up in time for the Oscars—that claims *MBFGW* to be Canadian, as did a *Playback* editorial.

The fact is, *MBFGW* is not and was never intended to be a Canadian film. Vardalos staged her one-woman show in Chicago, where she was living with her actor husband, then moved it to Los Angeles where it was famously seen by Rita Wilson, Tom Hanks's wife, and the rest is, as they say, history, or at least muddled history. Of course, it would have made a much better story if Vardalos had shopped her play around to Canadian producers who didn't have the foresight to see its potential. It then would have followed a familiar Canadian arc of being rejected on home turf, only to be discovered down south. But that was not the case, and the fact that it was shot in Toronto doesn't make it Canadian. A lot of American films are now shot either in Toronto, Vancouver or Montreal for reasons that are strictly financial. As far as Hollywood is concerned, *MBFGW* is simply just another runaway production.

What is interesting about this whole affair is not only what it says about our poorly informed entertainment writers, but also how Canadians wish to see themselves on the big screen. In McKay's piece, he compares *MBFGW* to *The Art of War*, the 2000 Golden Reel Award winner starring Wesley Snipes. "*The Art of War*...which was filmed in Montreal but with little discernible Canadian content otherwise, did qualify for the Genies, because it was partially produced by Canadians." Well, *The Art of War* was *wholly* produced—and directed—by Canadians, and apart from the American lead, its supporting cast of Canadian actors was much larger than *MBFGW*'s. But it is a genre flick, the type of film we, as Canadians, aren't supposed to do well, and if we do them at all, then they are dismissed as being "American." *MBFGW*, on the other hand, is a feel-good, ethnically chic type of film, more in tune with Canadian sensibilities.

As an ardent admirer of our much-maligned national cinema, I too wish that *MBFGW* was Canadian, or at least had a bit of Canadian money in it; then we would finally get the embarrassing *Porky's* monkey off our back—*Porky's* being the highest-grossing Canadian film to date. But wishing it so—no matter how hard we clap—won't make it so. Sadly, *MBFGW* will just have to be the one that might have been.