

Entertainment

Canadians hope for film splash

CANNES, France (CP) — The rain seemed more suited to the Newfoundland coast than the Cote d'Azur as the Cannes film festival opened Thursday and Canadian directors prepared for their chance to wow the world's movie media.

Among the most eagerly anticipated offerings are Truth or Dare, a documentary about music superstar Madonna, and Guilty By Suspicion, Robert De Niro's latest movie.

But six less flashy films from Canada have also been selected for the 11-day cinematic extravaganza, an odd blend of Hollywood-style hoopla and some of the year's most creative movies.

Unlike other recent years at Cannes, no Canadian movie has been chosen for the official competition and a chance at the coveted Palme d'or.

But it's still one of Canada's strongest showings at the world's biggest and most respected film festival, said Jean Lefebvre, a member of Telefilm Canada's large contingent here.

The Crown corporation has rented a sprawling suite of offices in the Martinez, one of Cannes's swankiest hotels, and will spend an average of \$60,000 to support each of the Canadian entries.

"This is helping promote the entire Canadian film industry at the same time," said Lefebvre, whose yacht-club good looks seem natural in this high-gloss resort town.

"These films are our race horses. They're wearing our colors. We're in the biggest puddle in the world and we have to make a big splash."

Many expect the biggest Canadian splash will be made by The Adjuster, the newest feature by Toronto director Atom Egoyan, whose surrealistic Speaking Parts was warmly received at Cannes two years ago.

Egoyan has the rare chance to choose between two sections of the festival, one of which is called Un Certain regard, considered second in prestige to the competitive section and often first in quality.

But Egoyan decided to give The Adjuster its world premiere in Directors Fortnight — the section that opened the door to Cannes for the film-maker in 1989. He wanted to show his loyalty to the section's organizers.

The Adjuster traces the intersecting lives of an insurance adjuster, his film-censor wife and an ex-



The jury to decide the merits of the various films at the Cannes festival include Whoopi Goldberg.

football player with bizarre sexual fantasies.

It is joined in Director's Fortnight by Une Histoire inventee (An Invented Story), by Quebec's Marc-Andre Forcier.

Forcier's film has been shown in the Toronto and Montreal film festivals, which would normally disqualify it from Cannes. But Lefebvre said Pierre Henri Deleau, head of the Director's Fortnight series, liked the film so much he was willing to bend the rules.

The third Canadian feature is Deepa Mehta's Sam and Me, which recounts the relationship between an elderly Jewish man and a young East Indian immigrant in Toronto.

Lefebvre admits Sam and Me is the wild card in the pack — the first work by a largely unknown film-maker. Mehta, who has a PhD in philosophy, will be the only Canadian eligible for the Camera d'or — awarded to a director making his or her debut at the festival.

treel's Marc Saint-Pierre and Nathalie Saint-Gelais, is in the short-film competition. The shorts Petit drame dans la vie d'une femme (A Brief Drama in a Woman's Life), by actor-director Andre Pelletier, and A Harbor Symphony, by Barbara Doran, are in the Critic's Week series.

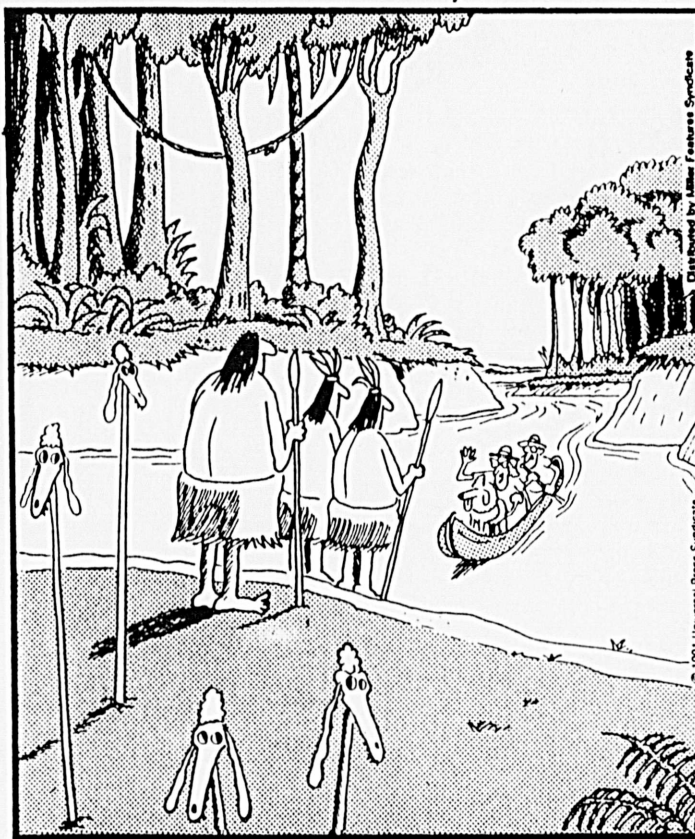
The more than 3,000 media representatives at the festival make it a unique forum for publicizing the type of small artistic film that is hard to sell otherwise.

"For our money we are going to get the kind of promotion we could never hope to buy," said Lefebvre.

"Cannes is the biggest film market in the world, the best promotional tool in the world."

The animated short Mal de blocs (slang for Headaches), by Mon-

THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON



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