



Charlyne Yi, left, and Jake Johnson, the filmmakers behind a pseudo-documentary called “Paper Hearts”, blur the lines on the big screen as fiction and reality gets harder to distinguish. CP photo

Fiction, reality mesh in new films

Cassandra Szklarski
The Canadian Press

TORONTO — Things are getting blurry on the big screen as the line between fiction and reality becomes harder to distinguish in films like “Paper Heart,” the pseudo-documentary starring Charlyne Yi and Michael Cera, and “Cold Souls,” in which Paul Giamatti portrays a disaffected actor named Paul Giamatti.

Both open this weekend on the heels of the Adam Sandler dramedy, “Funny People,” in which the comic-turned-movie-star plays a famous comic-turned-movie-star, albeit with a different name.

The tactic plays out to varying degrees in each film, with Yi’s “Paper Heart” apparently causing the most confusion among some filmgoers and gossip hounds eager to believe that she really is, or perhaps was, dating her Brampton, Ont., co-star, as their characters do in the movie.

Confusing things is the fact that both play characters bearing their real-life names and that much of the film consists of documentary footage of Yi interviewing average people about their thoughts on love.

“I think we’re very open about what’s real and what isn’t,” Yi insists in a recent interview at a Toronto hotel, her other co-star Jake Johnson seated next to her.

“You know, everything that has this guy in it (pointing to Johnson) and Michael is not real. We’re all playing fictional characters.... If people pay attention to the credits and they pay attention to things like that then they’ll know what’s real and what’s not.”

Things are a bit more obvious in the sombre sci-fi/comedy, “Cold Souls,” in which Giamatti’s depressed character has so much trouble embracing his role in a stage production of “Uncle Vanya” that he decides to literally remove his soul, and put it in cold storage.

“Obviously, it’s playing more a persona than actual fact me,” Giamatti says in a recent interview from New York.

“(Writer/director Sophie Barthes) went through a version of it where she did actually make it sort of me, with biographical facts attached to it. ‘That,’ I said, ‘I’m not interested in doing.’ I’m not interested in actually playing myself, I’m fine playing a character.”

Barthes’ original script went so far as to add in details about Giamatti’s personal life and family, and reference actual roles he performed in the past. Giamatti says he put his foot down when the concept strayed too far into reality.

“I wouldn’t know how to actually play myself, I don’t really know what that means,” he says.

The sci-fi aspects of “Cold Souls,” in which Giamatti’s soul is revealed to be the size and appearance of a chick pea, would seem to be enough to distinguish the film as firmly fiction, but Giamatti says he’s learned otherwise.

The acclaimed actor, who will play the ornery Barney Panofsky in an upcoming film adaptation of the Mordecai Richler book, “Barney’s Version,” says he was astounded to meet one viewer that asked him if he really was married to Emily Watson, who plays his character’s onscreen wife, in this case named Claire.

“I felt like I had to break it to this guy that’s is all just pretend,” Giamatti says, recreating the exasperated rant he unleashed on the gullible soul.

“It’s all pretend, man, it’s all pretend! None of it’s real! I wouldn’t actually be married to her. Just because it’s in a movie doesn’t mean I’m actually married to her.”

Like “Paper Heart,” Sandler’s “Funny People” practically demands audiences link its fictitious storyline to the life of its star by incorporating actual footage, this time of Sandler’s actual television appearances and old home movies.

Despite his rant earlier, Giamatti appears content to let audiences digest his genre-mashing film, its Hollywood references and the nature of one’s soul on their own terms.

“I just hope people are entertained basically,” he says simply. “I hope it’s amusing and thought-provoking.”

“Cold Souls” opens Friday in Toronto, with more cities to follow. “Paper Heart” opens Friday in Toronto and Montreal, with other cities to follow.

Theatre impresarios sentenced to jail time

The Canadian Press

TORONTO — Two theatre heavyweights who defrauded investors by systematically cooking the books for years at Livent Inc. were each sentenced to several years in prison Wednesday by an Ontario judge keen to denounce the dangers of corporate fraud.

Garth Drabinsky was sentenced to seven years in prison and his business partner Myron Gottlieb was sentenced to six years.

They were granted bail of \$350,000 each pending appeal and were free Wednesday afternoon. Drabinsky and Gottlieb must surrender their passports and not act as the director of any company.

The two moguls cooked the books of their company Livent, behind such Canadian and Broadway theatre hits as “The Phantom of the Opera,” over nine years until the firm went bankrupt in late 1998.

Ontario Superior Court Justice Mary Lou Benotto said the contributions Drabinsky and Gottlieb made to society must be taken into account.

“But no one is above the law,” she said. “No one gets to write his own rules.”

The pair presided over a company “whose corporate culture was one of dishonesty.”

Rapper’s murder trial set

The Associated Press

GRETNA, La. — Opening arguments are set to start in the Louisiana murder trial of rap artist Corey Miller, known as C-Murder.

Miller is charged with second-degree murder.

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THURSDAY’S WHAT TO WATCH

India Reborn
8 p.m. on (8)
India is hot ... and we’re not just talking about the climate. This two-part documentary takes an up-close and personal look at how India’s economic boom is changing every facet of life there. People from all walks of life share their stories, including wealthy capitalists and a middle class with more access to money and goods than ever before. In the countryside, though, prosperity is longer in coming.

30 Rock
8 p.m. on (8)
A dazzled Liz (Tina Fey) invites her idol, Rosemary Howard (guest star Carrie Fisher), to be a guest writer, but the radical sketch ideas Liz once admired are far too controversial for the show. Kenneth (Jack McBrayer) must compete in a “page-off” to keep his job after Jenna (Jane Krakowski) ruins his uniform jacket. Scott Adsit and Judah Friedlander also star in “Rosemary’s Baby.”



Rainn Wilson
The Office
9 p.m. on (8)
Dwight’s (Rainn Wilson) previously fanatical devotion to Michael (Steve Carell) is tested when he finds a new hero: Charles (guest star Idris Elba). Andy (Ed Helms) tries to fulfill Jim’s (John Krasinski) emotional needs. Jenna Fischer, B.J. Novak, Brian Baumgartner and Angela Kinsey co-star in “Heavy Competition.”

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Thursday, August 6, 2009

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH **TANNAH HIRSCH**
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HELPING WHO?

East-West vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ A J 8 3
♦ 8 7
♥ K 10 8 3 2
♣ A 7

WEST
♠ K 10
♦ 3 2
♥ Q J
♣ K Q 10 9 8 6 5

EAST
♠ Q 7 6 5 4 2
♦ 9 5
♥ A 9 7 6
♣ J

SOUTH
♠ 9
♦ A K Q J 10 6 4
♥ 5 4
♣ 4 3 2

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♦	Pass	1♥	3♣
Pass	Pass	4♥	Pass

Opening lead: King of ♣

Weak jump overcalls at best produced mixed results at the Trials to select the U.S. teams for the World Championships in Sao Paolo. That was particularly true where the opponents had already made an opening bid and a response. Here’s an exam-

ple where West ventured a weak jump overcall.

At the other table North opened the bidding with a weak no trump and South bounced into four hearts. West led the king of clubs, declarer won with dummy’s ace and returned a club to work toward a ruff for his fulfilling trick, but the contract failed when East overruffed dummy after West continued with a third club.

Here, West’s pre-empt warned South of the possible overruff. Sitting South was the former Polish internationalist Jacek Pszczola, now living in Chapel Hill, N.C. Instead, he elected to try for an endplay. After winning the first trick with the ace, he ran six trump tricks in case something good happened. When nothing did, he led the nine of spades, covered by the ten and jack and losing to the queen. But East was endplayed — whether he elected to return a diamond or a spade, he presented declarer with the fulfilling trick.

(Tannah Hirsch welcomes readers’ responses sent in care of this newspaper or to Tribune Media Services Inc., 2225 Kenmore Ave., Suite 114, Buffalo, NY, 14207. E-mail responses may be sent to gorenbridge@aol.com.)

UNIVERSAL Sudoku Puzzle
Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

8	3			4		9		6
					3	5		
	5			9		1		
					4			
9		8				7		1
			8					
		6		8			7	
		9	6					
7		5		1			6	4

00478278 **DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★☆**

Sudoku Puzzle Solution in Today's Prince George Citizen Classified Pages

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Week TEN Grand Prize:
\$6000 in Pine Centre Mall gift cards - \$500 for every month

