



FRONT PAGE	POLITICS	BUSINESS	MEDIA	ENTERTAINMENT	COMEDY	SPORTS	STYLE	WORLD	GREEN	FOOD	TRAVEL	TECH	
LIVING	HEALTH	DIVORCE	ARTS	BOOKS	RELIGION	IMPACT	EDUCATION	COLLEGE	NY	LA	CHICAGO	DENVER	BLOGS



**Michael Giltz**

Freelance writer and raconteur  
Posted: September 14, 2010 01:32 AM

- BIO
- Get Email Alerts
- Become a Fan
- Bloggers' Index

# Toronto Film Fest Day 5: Ozon Saves a Dour Day

What's Your Reaction:



- Inspiring Funny Hot Scary Outrageous Amazing Weird Crazy

Read More: [Australia](#), [Catherine Deneuve](#), [Crime](#), [Francois Ozon](#), [Movies](#), [Toronto Film Festival](#), [Entertainment News](#)

SHARE THIS STORY

0	0 views	0	3

Get Entertainment Alerts

Email Comments 3

Am I still annoyed by being cut off from *127 Hours* when I was just five people from the front of the line? Or am I just rather brilliantly managing to avoid all the best films at Toronto? Here are some of the well-reviewed flicks I haven't seen yet: *127 Hours*, *The King's Speech*, *Super (all of it)*, *The Conspirators*, *The Trip*, *I'm Not There*, and more. Ah well. The nice thing about seeing the less touted movies is you get to make the discovery and share it with everyone else. Unfortunately, that only works if you actually find a decent movie. Here we go.

**Potiche** \*\* 1/2 out of \*\*\*\*

Director Francois Ozon saves the day by starting me off with this silly trifle. He knows it's a trifle because it begins with the great Catherine Deneuve in the yard of her mansion, communing with nature to an absurd degree (deer wander by, squirrels wink at her, she responds with over the top delight) -- it lets us know immediately this film is not going to tax our brains. Deneuve is a trophy wife whose tiresome husband is running his factory into the ground by screwing over the workers and forcing them to strike. When illness sidelines him, Deneuve proves adept at running the company profitably and smartly, reuniting with Communist old love Gerard Depardieu, the town mayor who still loves her. You've also got a gay son who needs to come out (designing umbrellas helps) and a shrewish daughter who is daddy's girl. The film is a remake of an apparently well-known French comedy from the 70s and remains set in that era. The tone is charming from the title sequence beginning to the finale where Deneuve simply breaks into song. Why not? Only the tiniest lack of complexity or forward momentum in the plot keeps this from being a three star film, but it's certainly diverting and yet another intriguing entry in Ozon's formidable resume.

**Monsters** \*\* 1/2

I was really looking forward to this horror/sci-fi flick about a freelance photographer and the wealthy

ADVERTISEMENT

MOST POPULAR ON HUFFPOST

- Elizabeth Edwards' Will Revealed**  
Comments (599)
- Camille Grammer's Porn Past Comes Back To Haunt Her**  
Comments (973)
- GOP Congresswoman Caught In Sexually Suggestive Photos**  
Comments (1,346)
- Intestinal Parasites May Be Causing Your Energy Slump**  
Comments (177)
- Should The Leader Of The Free World Dress Like THIS?**  
Comments (553)
- What Not To Say When Your Loved One Is Upset**  
Comments (274)
- Thousands Of Birds Found Dead In Italy**  
Comments (3,250)
- John Edwards Spokesman Denies Rumored Proposal To Rielle Hunter**  
Comments (2,607)
- Betty White: 'I'm Going Away For A While'**  
Comments (607)

daughter of his publisher who must trek through the "infected zone" of Mexico -- infected by aliens from outer space, which came to earth via a crashed probe we sent out to collect samples. Now scary gigantic creatures are wrecking havoc and the US has built a really big wall to keep them out. Yes, the parallels are obvious to illegal immigration, but aren't pounded home. The movie is mostly a smart calling card for writer-director Gareth Edwards, who creates tension and believable creatures on a tiny budget. Some eye-rolling moments abound, starting with the idea that the daughter of a publishing magnate and a savvy photo-journalist would ever CHOOSE to go into a zone infected with gigantic alien creatures in the first place. (Couldn't they have been stranded there or misled into going there? Any sane person would wait the six months they were going to be trapped or, I don't know, hire a plane? (If there was a reference to plane travel being unsafe, I missed it.) Even worse is a scene where our heroes are stripping soldiers of gas masks but leaving the weapons. I'm pretty sure a Quaker would be packing a gun if they were headed through alien monster territory. Then there's the scene where they're in a boat in the infected zone and some giant thing of some sort is knocking around a crashed jet plane, tentacles pulling it under the swampy water and then tossing it out again. And what do our heroes say? They say, repeatedly, "What IS that?" Uh, I'm gonna go out on a limb and guess it's one of the alien creatures that made this zone infected. What do you think? Generally, the movie is smarter than that by simply avoiding facts and keeping the focus on the budding friendship between the two. Action buffs will be sorely disappointed by a film that has very little action in it. *Cloverfield* isn't such a bad comparison after all, though *Monsters* is smarter. But while the monsters are mostly off camera a genuine if raw talent is visible.

**Stake Land \*\***

I'm sure *Stake Land* was conceived long before *Zombieland* but it's just gonna have to suck it up and realize that everyone is going to compare these road movies with a stern vampire/zombie killing mentor and a young eager acolyte. *Zombieland* happens to be loads of fun whereas *Stake Land* is deadly serious. You know what to expect: kid and older man of few words team up to survive as they head for New Eden, a perhaps mythical place somewhat free of the vampires that rule the night. They'll meet a few companions along the way, including a young comely gal for out teen hero Connor Paolo of *Gossip Girl* (who's pretty darn comely himself). And it won't be long before Bible thumpers prove just as much a threat as the vamps. Kelly McGillis is a welcome face as a nun. But her faith is more solid than this movie's. What exactly is its purpose? *Zombieland's* reason for being was a goofy, satirical sense of humor built around a how-to way of tackling zombies. This movie has no story, really. The kid becomes skilled at killing, but he doesn't have to learn to respect the ruthless older man Mister, nor does he have to reject the guy, either. The kid Martin is an eager student at the beginning and at the end, albeit covered in more blood. They never have a falling out, they never uncover a secret or face a new danger (not really), they never clash, they never really do much of anything except survive. That's what they need to do to stay alive: just focus on killing and character development be damned.

**Submarine \*\* 1/2**

As is my wont, when I hear about the movies scheduled to open at Toronto or Cannes, I pick the most intriguing adaptations and read the source novel. In this case it's the precocious novel by teen author Joe Dunthorne. (I hate him already.) His book created a distinctive central character in Oliver but was pretty over-excited about using every trick in the world to tell his tale, from lists to dictionary definitions to you name it. Oliver (Craig Roberts) lives in Wales, lusting after the right girl and hyperactively role-playing a conversation with the girl or whisking her away or at least trying to. There's certainly an epidemic of knowingness (I'm looking at you, *Juno*) throughout pop culture. Happily, this movie downplays that with clever production design schemes and a plan to walk out the door and show this film on the side of a building if necessary. Oliver is self-critical and quite funny, callously taking part in the bullying of a heavy girl in school to curry favor with Jordana. As the calculating, manipulative but really just playful and fun Jordana, actress Yasmin Paige scores a real triumph. Roberts has the more difficult role of trying to make simple chores seem distinctive and new. Though the film has more tricks than *GoodFellas*, the movie is quite faithful to the book while avoiding the more arch moments for genuine emotion. It ends in a lovely manner and would have been even better if it wasn't so clear when characters were being "eccentric."

**Three \*\***

Director Tom Tykwer made the kinetic *Run Lola Run* and we've been waiting for him to seize the international stage again. *Three* may not be the way to theatrical success, though it certainly has a high concept. Like so many films these days, it begins with a surfeit of incident. A couple has been together for 20 years but things are rocky. His mother gets pancreatic cancer, tries to off herself, is saved and then finally is allowed to die with the sisters taking the body away at the end. Turns out the guy also has cancer, this time of the testicles. His business is failing, the wife will soon freeze up on camera and I haven't even reached the crime scene yet. Everything clicks into place when the guy and gal separately

DON'T MISS HUFFPOST BLOGGERS ◀ 1 of 5 ▶

 **Dylan Ratigan**  
[Free Market Fraud](#)

 **Sen. Jon Tester**  
[Tester Pushes to Reform Senate Rules With Greater Transparency, Efficiency](#)

HOT TRENDS

camille grammer jersey  
shore natalie portman  
pregnant raven  
symone weight  
loss robin kassner

People.com

 **Michelle Williams: My Age Finally Matches My Life**  
[READ MORE ▶](#)

 **Ginnifer Goodwin Reacts to Uproar over Her Weight Watchers History**  
[READ MORE ▶](#)

 **History Channel Won't Show Katie Holmes Miniseries The Kennedys**  
[READ MORE ▶](#)

[More Celebrity News at People.com](#)

PopEater.com

 **Marlon Wayans Joins Made-Up Organization**

 **Kardashian Sisters (and Mom) Sued for \$75 Million**

 **Katie Holmes 'Kennedys' Miniseries: Canceled!**

[More Celebrity News at Popeater.com](#)

TOP VIDEO PICKS ◀ 1 of 9 ▶

Queen's Royal Wedding

meet another man and begin dating him. The man they fall for is sort of a bisexual superman who does everything...and I do mean everything. He plays soccer on the weekends, has a high paying job in genetic engineering and the such, sings in a choir, captains a sail boat, and masters martial arts. No wonder they both fall hard. It takes far too long to get to the heart of the matter. But once they're all jumping in and out of bed, this quite serious film learns to loosen up a bit.

**Blame\***

I like a good-looking cast of young people taking revenge on an evil schoolteacher as much as the next guy. But cheekbones can't rescue an absurd scenario where the guys and gals storm the home of this teacher to set him on a faked suicide. Why? Because he slept with their best friend when she was sixteen and now she's killed herself and SOMEONE has to pay. Though their victim is agile and strong, they repeatedly leave him alone or assign just one person to care for him. Then he gets away and they truss him up again. The stupidity of these characters trying to clean the place up is staggering. Only Ashley Zukerman as Anthony manages both good looks and acting chops. Robberies or kidnappings or murders gone awry are always fun to watch. Or almost always, I should say.

Thanks for reading. Michael Giltz is the cohost of *Showbiz Sandbox*, a weekly pop culture podcast that reveals the industry take on entertainment news of the day and features top journalists and opinion makers as guests. It's [available free on iTunes](#). Visit [Michael Giltz at his website](#) and his [daily blog](#). Download his podcast of celebrity interviews and his radio show, also called [Popsurfing and also available for free on iTunes](#).

Follow Michael Giltz on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/michaelgiltz](http://www.twitter.com/michaelgiltz)

More in Entertainment...

Director: 'Ghostbusters 3' Script Is Ready

Camille Grammer's Porn Past Comes Back To...

Andy Samberg, Johnny Knoxville To Star In...

Olivia Wilde Dons See-Through Bikini (PHOTOS)

**Comments**

3

Pending Comments

0

[View FAQ](#)

Comments are closed for this entry

View All

Recency | Popularity

HUFFPOST SUPER USER

**PoliticalJunkie65** 12:43 PM on 9/14/2010  
70 Fans



Love TIFF but hate having to find parking downtown when TIFF is going on.

[Permalink](#) | [Share it](#)

HUFFPOST BLOGGER

**Michael Giltz** 02:21 AM on 9/15/2010  
59 Fans



Well don't blame me :) I parked my car in the driveway of the home I'm staying at and haven't moved it since. It's been streetcars or feet for me the entire fest.

[Permalink](#) | [Share it](#)

HUFFPOST SUPER USER



Rift

Kourtney K.'s Stunning Bikini Bod

Jane Krakowski Reveals Baby Bump

**MOST DISCUSSED RIGHT NOW**



**One And Done: 'Sarah Palin's Alaska' NOT Renewed: Report**

216 Comments



**The History Channel Says No to JFK Doc**

168 Comments

**HOT ON FACEBOOK**



**Camille Grammer's Porn Past Comes Back To Haunt Her**

973 Comments



**PHOTO: Adam Levine Goes Nude**

225 Comments

**HOT ON TWITTER**



**PHOTOS: Salma Hayek, Demi Moore In Exotic Island Bikinis**

9 Comments



**Kardashians SUED Over For \$75 Million Over Debit Card Debacle: Report**

13 Comments

**HUFFPOST'S BIG NEWS PAGES**



Natalie Portman



Pakistan



New York Restaurants



The Kardashians



Jersey Shore



Sarah Palin



Nutrition



Health Care



Authors

[MORE BIG NEWS PAGES »](#)

**PoliticalJunkie65** 03:04 PM on 9/15/2010  
70 Fans



Many thank yous from a grateful Torontonian. :-)

[Permalink](#) | [Share it](#)

FOLLOW HUFFINGTON POST



SEARCH

FRONT PAGE	POLITICS	BUSINESS	MEDIA	ENTERTAINMENT	COMEDY	SPORTS	STYLE	WORLD	GREEN	FOOD	TRAVEL	TECH	
LIVING	HEALTH	DIVORCE	ARTS	BOOKS	RELIGION	IMPACT	EDUCATION	COLLEGE	NY	LA	CHICAGO	DENVER	BLOGS

[Advertise](#) | [Log In](#) | [Make HuffPost your Home Page](#) | [RSS](#) | [Careers](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Contact Us](#)

[User Agreement](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Comment Policy](#) | [About Us](#) | [Powered by Movable Type](#)

Copyright © 2011 TheHuffingtonPost.com, Inc. | "The Huffington Post" is a registered trademark of TheHuffingtonPost.com, Inc. All rights reserved.