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Michael Giltz

Freelance writer and raconteur
Posted: September 9, 2010 12:07 AM

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Toronto Film Festival Preview

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I'll be covering the Toronto International Film Festival and contributing stories to Huffington Post throughout. Hundreds of movies and documentaries, from early in the morning till the Midnight Madness screenings run by Colin Geddes, not to mention interviews, networking, giving interviews to OTHER journalists so they can do their job, providing some coverage of gay flicks for AOL's blog Queersighted, and doing the work I do to pay the bills so I can do stuff like attend the Toronto. I'm ready to see as many movies as possible but here are some of the highlights I really don't want to miss.

LET ME IN -- The *Let The Right One In* English remake. Could it actually be good? The trailer certainly delivers.

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BLACK SWAN -- Darren Aronofsky's intriguing dance world melodrama that's either brilliant or bizarre or both but certainly not to be missed. Reviews out of Venice were mixed but fascinating. Nonetheless, I keep confusing it with [that business book about improbable events](#). That would make a cool Aronofsky project too.

CLIENT 9: THE RISE AND FALL OF ELLIOT SPITZER -- A new documentary by Oscar-winning director Alex Gibney that's unsparing about Spitzer's failings but posits a wide-ranging conspiracy of the enemies he made while fighting corruption. The film argues they exploited a personal failing that should not perhaps have come to light or resulted in his resignation from the position of Governor of New York. Spitzer blames only himself but it's a sobering reminder of the many abuses and excesses on Wall Street he was combating long before the (latest) financial meltdown caused by many of those very same practices. A solid companion piece to terrific documentary *Inside Job*.

RABBIT HOLE -- Director John Cameron Mitchell (*Hedwig and the Angry Inch*) directs the film adaptation of the Pulitzer Prize winning play about a married couple devastated by a car accident that kills their son. We're bummed Cynthia Nixon didn't get to repeat her Tony winning performance, but Nicole Kidman, Aaron Eckhart, Dianne Weist and Tammy Blanchard will do nicely.

TABLOID -- A new Errol Morris documentary. Need I say more? Okay, how about modern masterpieces like *The Thin Blue Line*; *Mr. Death*; *The Fog Of War*; *Gates Of Heaven*; *Vernon, Florida*; and more? Need more? How about this description: it's the story of a former Miss Wyoming beauty pageant contestant accused of kidnapping a Mormon Missionary. Okay, now you're interested.

THE ILLUSIONIST -- a new animated film from the director of *The Triplets of Belleville* and based on a screenplay by Jacques Tati. To top it off, the reviews in Europe have been virtually all positive. I'm excited.

127 HOURS -- James Franco teams with Danny Boyle on a film about the true story of a mountain climber who is stranded and must cut off his own arm in order to survive. How the heck will they make this watchable for the squeamish (ie. me)? The response at Telluride was very positive so it's gonna be fun to find out.

THE BANG BANG CLUB -- Ryan Philippe and Taylor Kitsch (*Friday Night Lights*) star as two members of a group of war photographers capturing the last days of apartheid in South Africa. It must have been nice for them to be on the other side of the camera for a change. Press interview prediction: one or both of them has taken up photography as a hobby.

13 ASSASSINS -- latest from Takashi Miike, samurai epic period piece with team of assassins working together to kill a warlord. Sure to be violent and bizarre and somewhere in there sentimental. Crazy fun

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TOP VIDEO PICKS

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Queen's Royal Wedding

fight scenes from what I hear.

MONSTERS -- Shot on a dime post-alien "invasion" movie (opening October 22 around the country) with a journalist dragooned into escorting a tourist through the infected zone of Mexico to the relative safety of the US, all taking place six years after a space probe disintegrated over Mexico and alien life forms began popping up. Reportedly shot for pennies with the two leads later getting married. Writing and directing by Gareth Edwards, Emmy nominee for visual effects work. It's District 9 with less lovable aliens.

CASINO JACK -- Kevin Spacey stars as Jack Abramoff, lobbyist extraordinaire. Juicy fun that could remind people of what a terrific film actor Spacey is.

BRIGHTON ROCK - A new adaptation of the Graham Greene novel with a stellar cast -- Helen Mirren, Andy Serkis and rising star Sam Riley (of *Control* and the upcoming *On the Road* film). Plus, it's written and directed by Rowan Joffe, an intriguing screenwriter who wrote *The American* and the gem *Last Resort*.

HOW I ENDED THIS SUMMER -- I know nothing about it except that **Film Movement** has picked it for its monthly series of DVDs and they have great taste. Two men manning a meteorological station at the Arctic Circle. An "existential thriller." Arthouse!

FUBAR II -- The Canadian answer to *Wayne's World* or *Beavis and Butthead* or *SCTV's Bob & Doug*. Oh wait, they're Canadian too.

THE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER -- A highly lauded Israeli film about the unlikely of

Rift

Kourtney K.'s Stunning
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Baby Bump

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Natalie
Portman



Television



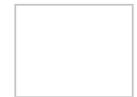
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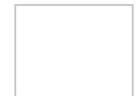
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Afghanistan

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heroes: the human resources manager of the largest bakery in Jerusalem. Naturally, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict intrudes. When an employee is killed by a suicide bomber, the harried manager seems too indifferent and the HR manager is called in to set things right, launching him on an unexpected journey to a post-Soviet satellite country. From director Eran Riklis, of *The Syrian Bride*.

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO ENDINGS -- Jonathan Sobol film about three brothers who discover they are doomed to die in a few days and decide to make the most of their remaining hours. Stars Scott Caan and Harvey Keitel but I'm most interested because the film was smart enough to cast Tricia Helfer of *Battlestar: Galactica* (Number Six), who is Canadian and criminally underutilized by Hollywood. Don't they realize she's a star?

HOME FOR CHRISTMAS -- The latest from the drolly amusing director behind *O'Horten* and *Factotum* and *Kitchen Stories*. This one tells interlocking tales on Christmas Eve. Bent Hamer is a genuine talent.

STAKE LAND -- Midnight Madness. Vampire spin on *Zombieland* with a much darker tone. The US is overrun by vampires, so teen Martin (Connor Paolo of *Gossip Girl*) is lucky to be mentored by a veteran vamp killer (Nick Domici). The bloodsuckers aren't the only trouble. Michael Cerveris is the leader of the Brethren, who believe that the vamps are the Lord's work, a curse for our evil ways. Director Jim Mickle follows his zombie rat epic *Mulberry Street* with a real shot at the big time. They've already sent me a promo knife for protection; I'll keep it with me in Canada...just in case.

MACHETE MAIDENS UNLEASHED -- Documentary film about the era when all sorts of B movies were shot in the Philippines, despite the country's miserable existence under the dictatorship of the Marcos family. Talking heads include Roger Corman, Joe Dante, John Landis, Eddie Romero, R. Lee Ermey and more. (The trailer continues brief nudity and mild profanity and lots and lots of violence. This ain't no Sunday picnic.) NSFW!

SUBMARINE -- Based on the dark coming of age novel by Joel Dunthorne, it follows 15 year old Oliver on his twin objectives: to lose his virginity and keep his mum from leaving his dad for another man. Overseen by Ben Stiller, it's the film directorial debut of actor Richard Ayoade of sitcom *The IT Crowd*.

THE WAY -- Emilio Estevez intrigues me. He's clearly a serious filmmaker. And if Bobby was earnest and overreached its grasp, at least it tried to overreach. Now he's written and directed a film starring his father Martin Sheen, a father who finds out his son has died in Spain while making a pilgrimage known as *The Way Of Saint James*. Sheen goes to retrieve the body but decides to finish the pilgrimage his son couldn't.

THE LAST CIRCUS -- 40 years of Spain under the thumb of Franco, as told via the love triangle between a "happy" clown and a "sad" clown and the woman they love. Sounds so hard to swallow, so Benigni-like, that it must be good.

ANOTHER YEAR -- Second chance to see this Mike Leigh film, one of my favorites at Cannes. A piercing and moving look at the year in a life of friends, especially a nice but awkwardly lonely divorced woman who suddenly looks around and sees even her friends' children are finding lovers and spouses and she wonders what exactly she's done wrong. Just marvelous with a great cast all around led by Jim

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Broadbent, Lesley Manville (Oscar worthy), the rock-solid Ruth Sheen and in a sensational but very brief turn by Imelda Staunton.

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](#).

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Aitch5 05:30 PM on 9/10/2010

31 Fans



Brother-in-Law just returned from his annual Telluride visit. THE TALK of the festival was "The King's Speech."
Hollywood Reporter completely backs him up SO
check it out Michael!

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HUFFPOST BLOGGER

Michael Giltz 01:35 AM on 9/11/2010
59 Fans



Will do my best, though I missed the first screening due to travel snafus.

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uglygnome 09:43 AM on 9/10/2010
253 Fans



Love Mike Leigh and can't wait to see that film.

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uglygnome 09:39 AM on 9/10/2010
253 Fans



Why remake "Let the Right One In"? The film was excellent and does not need an English retelling.

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HUFFPOST SUPER USER

Aitch5 05:28 PM on 9/10/2010
31 Fans



I agree with you but I agree with the filmwriter--the trailer looks amazingly surprisingly good.
It doesn't give too much away which always indicates to me that a film sucks.

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Michael Giltz 01:36 AM on 9/11/2010
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I'm with you. Have you read the book? I'm sorry I didn't get a chance yet.

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HUFFPOST SUPER USER

binq56 01:13 PM on 9/11/2010
55 Fans



There are way too many people who simply will not watch a subtitled film. Sadly, I know a lot of them. At least this remake seems from the trailer to be faithful to the original. So many wonderful foreign films have been totally ruined in their American remakes. I am fearful of what will happen to the Millennium Trilogy movies in their US incarnations.

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Melody Breyer-Grell 12:54 AM on 9/09/2010
59 Fans



Wow! are you going to all those films??

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HUFFPOST BLOGGER

Michael Giltz 01:17 AM on 9/09/2010
59 Fans



I certainly want to see them all. Plus more. I will probably see about 40 films during the festival's ten days. I always end up missing something I really want to see but it's a big jigsaw puzzle of screening times, interviews, grabbing a bite, sleeping (a little) and so on. I'll do my best!

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freddychef 11:22 PM on 9/09/2010
360 Fans



got any other links for ``MACHETE MAIDENS UNLEASHED``, the video has been pulled.

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3fingerbrown 12:41 PM on 9/10/2010
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hey, Michael--Sounds like a film freak's dream come true; hope you have a great time. But try to get out for some fresh air--Toronto's lovely this time of year.

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HUFFPOST BLOGGER
Melody Breyer-Grell 08:07 AM on 9/11/2010
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That is quite a feat:) I just saw one at the IFC here and it look a day for me to recover:)

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