to a pity Neil Armstrong wasn't there. The guy who uttered the immortal mantra: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." "Boy, that's the truth!"

The events at Toronto's Royal Alexandria Theatre on March 3rd were not only inauspicious, as many Genie Awards have been, but inauspiciously familiar. The $8 million Garth Drabinsky-Gilles Carle production, The Changeling, a short 12 months later, with many of last year's stars. But actually witnessing an entire category of movies, "little" pictures; those that stayed about 60 percent of whom live in Toronto, the best actors and actresses do not always make films Out There, although a brief and fairly small number of people even make films Out There. Sometimes, very good films. About Canada, of all places.

Well, before you could say the Academy, of Canadian Cinema, Marie Tifo and Germaine Couture had presaged the market on the best actress and best supporting actor awards. The director of Les bons debarras, Francis Mankiewicz, had pilfered one of Eric Borg's stunts, too. Air India's startled discovery of its own coastline on March 12, not only in the bastion of Canuck, but in the USA, too. If ever a film had received wide distribution prior to the awards: Tribute. The $8 million Garth Drabinsky-Joel B. Michaels production received 11 nominations in all — the same as Les bons debarras. Yet, the film's irresistible star, Jack Lemmon — who won as best foreign actor — was the only one to salvage a bit of hardware for Drabinsky/Michaels. A team that won eight Genies a year ago for their 1978 production, The Changeling.

Obviously, the aesthetic proclivities of the Academy's 600 voting members — about 60 percent of whom live in Toronto — have altered somewhat from that knock-kneed first awards night of a year ago. Not only did The Changeling and Murder by Decree — two products of the Canadian, huh? school of filmmaking — dominate the proceedings on that occasion (sharing 13 of a possible 17 awards between them), but French-language films and stars were all but ignored by the voters, with costume designer Louise Jobin (Corridors) the sole exception.

A short 12 months later, with many of the bloated productions from that first boom year played out or shuffled off to oblivion, Academy voters deemed most of their praise on 'little' pictures; those low-budget ones that tell a simple story, and tell it well.

Not all has changed, however. As was the case in 1980, few Canadians had actually seen the nominated films. Aside from Tribute, which enjoyed a high-powered Christmas break in hundreds of North American theatres, none of the best picture nominees have enjoyed nationwide exposure.

The language barrier, it is unlikely that even Les bons debarras, despite its critical acclaim and the post-awards publicity, will ever venture beyond the largest cities and into the hinterlands. A ruffled Peacocke put it best, stating, as he accepted his award: "I had an opportunity to portray a great Canadian hero. But you know what's really sad about it? I'm playing a hero and no one's seen the movie. That says a great deal about our industry and our country." (A security guard at the post-awards dinner unwittingly drove the point home when he failed to recognize the award-winner and refused him admission.) Nevertheless, Peacocke's film did have a commercial run out west, albeit a brief and insipid one; Les bons debarras, unlike The Changeling, was playing in theatres on Genie Awards night.

In short, distribution prospects for Canadian films, French and English, are improving — partly owing to the publicity generated by a nationally-televisioned annual awards show.

Interestingly enough, the most entertaining part of the awards show itself revolved not around elaborate choreography or Brian Linehan's clever words, but around the film clips. And that's as it should be. The fact that Michelle Lauchert's L'homme a tout faire didn't win any awards is perhaps the best evidence that there were no weak entries among the contenders, unlike last year, the industry had every reason to show off its best.

Though Trudeau with actress Kim Catrall in tow, and Atlantic City stars Burt Lancaster and Sarandon provided a taste of last year's bevy of superheroes, the 1981 parade of certifiable celebs was noticeably shorter. There were no outpourings of gratitude to former Canadian ambassador Ken Taylor and his courageous countrymen from The Six Million Dollar Man, and no words of encouragement from One Who Has Been There (i.e. Jack Lemmon) — though Catrall assured all that the Tribute star would have made a "wonderful" speech had he been there. (Lemmon was in California shooting a Billy Wilder film.) One intrepid reporter even found himself squeezing his way around the anatomy of Louise Fletcher in the theatre lobby — the actress soaking up the attention that bypassed her during the show itself.

Nope, the 1981 awards didn't need to import its stars. Like the industry, it had grown a little. •

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**Proof Positive**

by Gary Lamphier

The results of the recent Genie Awards hint that the demise of Hollywood North may be at hand; for this year's best films come in small packages marked "Genuine Canadian Product."

work on Gilles Carle's much-maligned Fantastica. That single award equaled the total number of awards garnered by the only film that had received wide distribution prior to the awards: Tribute. The $8 million Garth Drabinsky-Joel B. Michaels production received 11 nominations in all — the same as Les bons debarras. Yet, the film's irresistible star, Jack Lemmon — who won as best foreign actor — was the only one to salvage a bit of hardware for Drabinsky/Michaels. A team that won eight Genies a year ago for their 1978 production, The Changeling.

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The language barrier, it is unlikely that even Les bons debarras, despite its critical acclaim and the post-awards publicity, will ever venture beyond the largest cities and into the hinterlands. A ruffled Peacocke put it best, stating, as he accepted his award: "I had an opportunity to portray a great Canadian hero. But you know what's really sad about it? I'm playing a hero and no one's seen the movie. That says a great deal about our industry and our country." (A security guard at the post-awards dinner unwittingly drove the point home when he failed to recognize the award-winner and refused him admission.) Nevertheless, Peacocke's film did have a commercial run out west, albeit a brief and insipid one; Les bons debarras, unlike The Changeling, was playing in theatres on Genie Awards night.

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**1981 GENIE AWARDS**

**Gordon Pinsent lends an ear as performers Marcia Couelle and Claude Godbout accept their award for Best Picture**
A fitting finish: Brian Linehan, Larry Dane and Gale Garnett toasting the Genies.

Toller Cranston - keeping his balance for a swooning admirer.

Winston Recket - the price he pays for stardom.

Susan Sarandon stands back (after stockpiling Genies for Anne Pritchard) to give Claude Godbout a turn.

Love me, love my coat! Yorkville hair stylist Mummy Cooper.

Sneaky Waters sacking it to there with "Jambulaya".

Dressed to kill — the Beautiful People taking Hog Town by storm.