Gilles Carle's
Jouer sa vie
(The Great Chess Movie)

Is it a sign of the times that two of Quebec’s finest directors recently returned to a third major Quebec director, the National Film Board, to make documentary features? Le confort et l’indifférence denounces Andrey Mordantanalyzing the referendum defeat, appeared last year with quite a splash, and now we have Gilles Carle’s Jouer sa vie, a modest and likeable feature on chess, sandwiched in Carle’s career between Les Plouffe and its imminent sequel.

At its premiere at the Montreal Festival in August, Jouer sa vie received the award for best documentary. For such a director, it’s a small but welcome recognition. It’s also a pleasant surprise, a pleasant little film that may turn out to be a box office hit for the National Film Board.

The film is about a chess tournament that takes place in the Canadian city of Montreal. The tournament is organized by the Canadian Chess Federation and is attended by some of the world’s best chess players, including world champion Anatoly Karpov. The film follows the players as they compete in the tournament, with the focus on the players’ strategies and techniques.

One of the film’s most intriguing aspects is its depiction of the players’ personalities. We see Karpov, a man of few words, but with a fierce competitive spirit, and Kasparov, a man of many words, but with a playful and humorous streak. The film also features interviews with the players, giving us a glimpse into their thoughts and strategies.

The chess scenes are well filmed, with the players’ movements and expressions captured in great detail. The film also includes footage of the players’ lives off the chess board, giving us a sense of who they are as people. We see them resting, eating, and socializing, as well as competing against each other.

Overall, Jouer sa vie is a well-made film, with a clear focus on the chess tournament and the players. It’s a film that will appeal to chess fans and film fans alike.
**Chris Windsor's Big Meat Eater**

Big Meat Eater's producer and director, Laurence Keane and Chris Windsor, wandered around this year's Festival of Festivals hyping their $350,000 horror/science-fiction, musical comedy as a bad movie — which is a fairly bright move, since the cult of the bad movie is growing like the pretty purple fungus I found on my front lawn when I was 11.

But 'bad movie' isn't strictly what Big Meat Eater is, though it's got its moments. The real bad movie is one that is enjoyable only because of the sheer enormity and mind-bogging unbelievable-ability of its ineptitude. Planet 9 From Outer Space, Horror, Hollywood Boulevard, Eternity Girls in Bondage, Private Parts, Eating Raoul (both from Paul Bartel), and, of course, Rocky Horror.

It's a class without a name. Let's give it one: 'Zoned Movies' — in honour of Dick Miller's classic line in the seminal 1981 film The Invaders in Death Never Rest: "I don't understand, my mind must be reazoned," and in honour of Forbidden Zone, the reeologic undisputed masterpiece of the '80s. It can be defined as a serious and bizarre sensibility applied to the materials of low culture — sex, rock 'n roll, gore, bad jokes and movie plotlines, and usually low budgets. It isn't camp. Camp is slumming: laugh at it, as opposed to, laugh with it.

**Big Meat Eater** is, to my knowledge, the first Canadian 'Zoned Movie'. It's set in Burguittam, B.C., a small town with a deep faith in appliances and a credo that "The Future Belongs To The Future." The story, for what's worth, begins when Abdullah, the singing psychopath, murders the mayor and stashes his body in Bob Sanderson's butcher shop.

Bob is a civic booster who wants the town to adopt its new universal language, Adanaco. The town is already monolingual. (But the mayor's body is counterfeit, the 'nigger stare' — a look that 'niggers' are counterproductive excesses of the past three years. It was conceived as a television program, and should play well there. Hopefully, it could also play theatrically, provided Hank Williams' publishers, Acuff Rose Music, about whom there are some sarcastic remarks in the film, give the okay.

J. Paul Costabile

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**HANK WILLIAMS: THE SHOW HE NEVER GAVE**

Big Meat Eater is a textbook example of the kind of original, low-budget filmmaking that the country needs now, after the largely counterproductive excesses of the past three years. It was conceived as a television program, and should play well there. Hopefully, it could also play theatrically, provided Hank Williams' publishers, Acuff-Rose Music, about whom there are some sarcastic remarks in the film, give the okay.

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**REVIEWS**

**Andrew Dowler**

**BIG MEAT EATER**


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**NEW STARS IN THE MAKING**

Bill Miller and George Dawson in *Big Meat Eater*