If the Great Canadian Novel has yet to be written, then the Great Canadian Film has yet to be made. But our filmmakers gave it a good try this year, and they’ve come up with a number of heavyweight contenders for the title.

The plush carpeted corridors of Ontario Place were filled with exuberant cinephiles for the 24th Annual Presentations of the Canadian Film Awards. The Cinesphere wore its gala cloak of glittering lights, and even the chilly wind blowing in from Lake Ontario couldn’t dampen the enthusiasm of the cheerful and expectant crowd. The best artists and craftsmen working in the medium of film in Canada were assembled in the world’s most unique movie theatre to hear the results of the judging.

The ceremonies were far from superlative, but then maybe we should stop mimicking the Oscars. M.C. Jacques Fautaux kept things moving at a breakneck speed to clock the proceedings under the hour allotted for it on television. (Ontario’s educational channel covered it, but where was the CBC?) It was truly a bilingual and bi-cultural affair, one of the few ever held in Toronto. The Quebec contingent was there in full force, for the first time in the history of the Awards.

The international jury (consisting of some very intelligent people) managed to split the awards between the most outstanding English and French language films in such a way, as to not bruise too many egos. Although Bill Fruet’s Wedding in White won Best Feature and two other awards, Gilles Carle’s La Vraie Nature de Bernadette (The True Nature of Bernadette) was the big winner with a total of five Etrogs, reminding us of Mon Oncle Antoine’s getting eight last year.

Jutra and Mon Oncle Antoine played an important role in this year’s affair, somewhat indirectly. Antoine’s success at the box-office after winning all those Etrogs, caused Quebec producers this year to enter most of their best recently-made films, and also to flock to Toronto in person. Jutra himself brought everything back home when he chided the Quebec, contingent with, ”Where the hell were you last year?”, but also expressed his pleasure at being at this “international festival”. That’s how most of the québécois related to coming to Toronto: for them, it was like going to a foreign country; but next year the Awards are moving to Montreal, and they seem quite happy about that.

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### CLASS CATEGORIES

- **Wedding in White** by William Fruet (Dermet Productions)
- **Selling Out** by Tadeusz Jaworski (Unit Productions)
- **Child Behaviour Equals You** by Peter Cock (Crawley Films)
- **Dans La Vie** by Pierre Veilleux (Office national du film)

### NON-FEATURE CRAFT AWARDS

- **Andre Brassard** Best Direction
- **Francoise Durocher, Waitress** Best Editing
- **James N. Williams** Best Prologue to Power
- **Georges Dufaux** Best Cinematography
- **Michel Tremblay** Best Screenplay
- **Francoise Durocher, Waitress** Best Non-Dramatic Script
- **A Journey Forward: Chester Ronning in China** Best Sound Editing
- **Patricia Collins** Best Sound Re-Recording
- **Le Prix Grierson décerné à un cinéaste à partir de 1932.**
salutes

Gordon Pinsent, chosen best Canadian Actor for 1972 (Rowdyman).

A brilliant first feature by Francis Mankiewicz, Le Temps d'Une Chasse, managed to get three awards — the Special Jury Prize to its director, Best Cinematography for Michel Brault, and Best Sound Recording for Claude Hazanavicius. An equally impressive first effort by director Mireille Dansereau La Vie Revee won the Wendy Michener Award for high artistic achievement, and also received the Best Editing prize for Danielle Gagne. La Vie Revee becomes even more exciting, when one finds out that it was a cooperative effort with some of the people sacrificing most of their salaries to get it completed. And it's a young film made by young people!

Françoise Jaubert, Montréal Executive Director of the Awards, who along with Claude Godbout, Montréal Co-Chairman, should get most of the credit for the extensive Québec participation this year, presented the special Grierson Award to Colin Low of the National Film Board in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Canadian cinema in the spirit of the late John Grierson.

Doris Petrie won a well-deserved award for her supporting role in Wedding in White, as did Daniel Pilon for his in Bernadette. Gilles Carle got Best Direction and Best Screenplay for Bernadette, which also won the award for Best Musical Score for Pierre F. Brault. Wedding in White won an award for its Art Director, Karen Bromley, as well as the Best Film and Best Supporting Actress Etrogs. A special International Jury Award went to Un Petit Canard Pas Commes Les Autres, a beautiful National Film Board short.

The members of the International Jury presented some of the awards at Cinesphere. The judges, who managed to split the awards so wisely between English and French Canada, were Satyajit Ray, Indian master of the cinema (The Apu Trilogy); Dusan Makavejev, Yugoslavian post-Godard auteur (W. R. Mysteries of the Organism); Jay Leyda, Russian-born noted film historian (Kino: History of Soviet Cinema); Maurice Blackburn, Montreal composer of numerous film scores; Jean-Pierre Tadros, film critic for Le Devoir and editor of Cinema Quebec; Les Wedman, film critic for the Vancouver Sun; and the Chairman of the Jury, Gerald Pratley, Canada's best known critic and Director of the Ontario Film Institute.

It was Pratley who presided over the jury during the grueling Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to midnight schedule of...
swallow in one gulp, but to do it for five days in a row can smoothly. Fifteen hours of film is a big enough load to screenings, and made sure that everything was running physically and mentally draining to the point of exhaustion. Gerald Pratley made sure that each jury member had enough of a break during Out-of-Competition screenings, and that everyone got to their various screenings and interviews on time.

The schedule was grueling also for those few Torontonians who wanted to see as many of the films as possible. By the time Wedding in White was shown Friday night, the cumulative effects of exhaustion and too much visual input were beginning to make themselves manifest. But the house was packed, and the screening had all the excitement and expectation of an opening night. Bill Frueet did not let us down. Wedding just about took our breaths away. Some of us went to a bar afterwards, and we all had an afterglow, a good feeling, and a certain pride about being involved with Canadian films at this stage of their development.

By then, it was evident that Wedding and Bernadette were the major works at this year’s Awards, but we couldn’t figure out how to choose between the two, how even to compare them? Both films are in the same class as Mon Oncle Antoine which has become in the short space of a year, the standard yardstick for Canadian cinema. Goin’ Down the Road must not be forgotten, but Shebib’s first feature was made for something like eighty-two thousand, and it’s rough. An impressive first effort and (already!) a classic, but somehow Antoine, Wedding, and Bernadette seem to be one more rung up the ladder. And who knows where the ladder might lead?

Some of us really loved La Vie Revee and were knocked out by Le Temps d’Une Chasse. Dansereau’s film is something very, very special. She managed to capture honestly and seemingly without effort, the developing friendship between two human beings, who happen to be women. It is a non-verbal film — at least one is able to absorb it on a non-linear, non-verbal level, thus the lack of subtitles didn’t greatly hinder my appreciation and understanding of the film. Mankiewicz focuses on men as buddies, not really friends, and he does it well. The Weekend of the Hunt, its rough English title, is the story of just that, and no more. But it is replete with subtle touches and insights into the main characters, who are portrayed by seasoned actors. The little boy’s role is reminiscent of the boy in Bergman’s Silence. Francis and Mireille both gave us films to study, and be proud of.

Carle’s Bernadette (See Cinema Canada #2) deserves another mention here, since it so obviously captured the hearts of most who saw it. The story of a Quebecoise, who wants things her way, the film works on many different levels, some of which are allegorical. Sharing love is shown as desirable, but foolish in the long run. Micheline Lancôtö makes it work, since she’s the perfect embodiment of the character Carle dreamed up. Her name is biblical, or at least Catholic, and so is that of her neighbor, Thomas. She makes people happy, and her prostitute/saint ambivalence makes her an ideal stand-in for the quebécio people. But she winds up with a gun, so if the analogy stands...

The only Quebe film which dealt with armed English/French confrontation was Quelques Arpents de Neige (A Few Acres of Snow) a comparatively high-budget spectacular about the events of 1837. It has been called a quebécio Doctor Zhivago and the comparison is more than apt. It has all the trappings of Zhivago, but without the genius of a Pasternak to hold it all together. A syrupy love story permeates the film, which has great battle scenes, fantastic super-wide-screen-color scenery/cinematography, and very hard-to-believe chases and manufactured escapes. It is due to open in Quebec by Christmas, and should be seen by ‘les maudits anglais’, if only to witness the scenes of brutality their ancestors perpetrated on the French.

La Conquete and Les Colombes, focus on well-to-do, middle-class people and the problems in their lives, but without showing a single blemish, pimply or stray hair — even during lovemaking. Colombes is doing well in Montréal, but that’s probably because all the people who hang out in super-bourgeois Place Ville Marie or Place Bonaventure really get off on seeing their lives reflected. It is also, incidentally, a suspense film (at least toward the end) so that might explain the popularity. Jean Duceppe plays the uncle, and he’s quite good. But the young couple is sickeningly sweet, clean, pretty/handsome, bright dentures and all. Cinematography (Claude Larue) is professional. Directed by Jean-Claude Lord.

La Conquete has Jean-Claude Labrecque’s camerawork going for it, and the superb tourist sights of Quebec City. Other than that, it's about a young professional couple as one beds down the other or vice versa. Too long, wordy, and slow. Perhaps with subtitles, it would have been bearable. But this way, one would really have to appreciate it as a theatrical dialogue piece, but not as a film. Directed by Jacques Gagné.

Pascal Gelinas’ Montreal Blues captures the pulse of the young quebécio in that city accurately, as far as is possible. Not being able to follow their raps because of the language gap, I had to be satisfied by the visual action and the non-verbal communication between characters. If there is enough on that level to keep my interest, and there is, then I believe it is a valid film. Montreal Blues kept my attention, mainly because the participants’ honesty comes across on film. The members of Le Grand Cirque Ordinaire, particularly

Gerald Pratley
Claude Jutra
André Brassard
Raymond Cloutier, are likeable and real people. Their changing relationships form the basis of the film.

Peut-être Maurice Richard, a whole string of interviews in French and English about the famous Rocket, and Québec: Duplessis et Après Denys Arcand’s definitive political statement on film about where Québec is at right now in relation to Maurice ‘The Chief’ Duplessis, should not have been in the same category as the other feature-length films. A ninety-minute, black and white documentary which consists mainly of speeches or interviews should never be compared to a same length dramatic film in color. Obviously films like these were designed to serve a different purpose, and they should be judged differently. Arcand refused to enter his dramatic feature La Maidoute Gallette, yet Duplessis was entered. This might have been a political act, then again it might have involved commercial considerations (though I can’t figure out what those could have been). Obviously, Duplessis et Après failed to win an award, because no category existed for it. Already, a Québec journalist has used this as a rally point — “We’ll bring it back to Montréal and give it the well-deserved accolades.” What better way to illustrate English callousness than to point out that Arcand’s documentary failed to get a single award. But had he entered Gallette, then the contest would have been a lot more valuable and indicative.

The last remaining French-language feature film (I missed Jean-Claude Labrecque’s Les Smattes because it somehow got scheduled for the same time slot as the presentation of the non-feature-film Craft Awards.) was Ixe-13 by Jacques Godbout. An interview with Godbout is scheduled to appear in the next issue of this magazine, and perhaps it will help to explain this film to non-Quebeckers. Overtly imitative of Umbrellas of Cherbourg in its musical style, the story centres around the comic-book hero spy figure — Agent Ixe-13 (not I-X-E thirteen, but eex-e-treize!) made popular in Québec in the fifties by a whole series of pulp paper-backs. He fights the Queen of the Red Chinese and romances a Montréal cab driver (who happens to be a woman!) with equal aplomb and gracelessness. Played by André Dubois, our hero changes his tie to match the vivid color-scheme of each new painted backdrop. (Godbout must have used every prop left over from the fifties in the NFB’s basement.) This musical is strongly anti-clerical and anti-anglais in sentiments. However, the nuances of the dialogue and the tongue-in-cheek jokes are impossible to catch for those not fluent in québécois culture and language.

English-language feature films fared considerably worse than their French counterparts. Aside from Wedding (see Cinema Canada issue #3) The Rowdyman (C.C. issue #2) and Journey (C.C. issue #4) no-one seemed to take them seriously, unfortunately for good reason. Cry of the Wild, although a competent NFB documentary by Bill Mason, is the story of wolves raised in captivity and the attempt to return them to their wild habitat. What chance does a nature film like this have against Wedding in White? Again, let’s re-examine what categories we arbitrarily put films into. Why not make up a new one for feature-length documentaries?

Ever After All is reviewed by Bob Fothergill elsewhere in these pages. In my opinion, it was one of the worst films shown at the Awards, although Roger Moride’s cinematography was pleasing to look at. Face-Off was mercifully shown at a private screening for the judges. It managed to get an award for Film House in the Sound Re-recording category. I managed to miss Proxihawks, but someone I trust assured me that I didn’t miss much. (It didn’t get a single award). The Merry Wives of Tobias Rouke had a lot of venom directed against it by Toronto columnist Sid Adilman, but it never had a chance. It was shown right after La Vie Revée and Bernadette, and no one felt like seeing a comedy after those films. On top of that, an answer print was shown, that was marked NG by the laboratory. Having seen a screening of the rough cut of that film previously, I was astounded by the poor quality of the print shown at St. Lawrence Centre.

There are other faults with Tobias. A hastily written, shot, and edited $100,000 feature directed by John Board, it is a film on which a lot of hopes were (and still are) riding. It was made on a deferred salary/percentage basis, and those who would like to see this sort of thing succeed, are still keeping their fingers crossed. Paul Bradley stars with Judy Gault and Henry Beckman, and there are a lot of brilliant moments in the film. George Mendeluk and David Slabotsky’s script is outlandishly funny at times in a non-linear, absurdist way. But comedy is such a difficult thing to bring off successfully on film, and I feel that not enough time and care went into the cutting. All the elements are there, except they should be re-shuffled. Cutting for laughs involves special, comedy-timing, an art which took Hollywood several decades to perfect. One shouldn’t expect this to gel miraculously on a first feature. So I hope they go back and take the whole thing apart and keep putting it back together again until all the parts fit as tightly and hilariously as possible, to live up to the full potential of Tobias Rouke.

The only other English-language feature-length film shown at the Film Awards had a funny French title: Voulez-Vous Couchez Avec God? A Québec journalist called it a ‘schoolboy farce’, but then he never lived on the Lower East Side of New York and has never met Tuli Kupferberg, formerly of the Fugs, presently just of the universe. The film was made by Michael Hirsh and Jack Christie, and it was shown at the Awards as a fluke. It was shot in 1968 for the most part, but was only finished this year. Some of the insane on-camera craziness took place in New York, some in a Toronto bathtub, and the excellent and rollicking plasticine-animation sequences...
were all done recently. The narrator is a little guy in black-face wearing a fez, and he's fond of extolling the virtues of Hashish Seventh Heaven. Tuli plays God, and he likes to sit in a bathtub. He has plenty of interesting visitors, including some topless groupies, so liberated women might not get off on the film too much. But how can anyone not like Tuli? He even turns to the camera at one point and says, "Well, now that we've had this sexist shit, we should move on to some racist scenes." And the film does, but always in a hip, tongue-in-cheek manner. (Don't ask which cheek). Dylan's Highway 61 is utilized and literally played out by a phony-bearded Abraham, his equally phony wife, and their little black son. "God said to Abraham - Kill me a son; Abe said - God you must be putting me on..."

Yes, Vouslez-Vous Couchez Avec God is a put-on, and I can't even imagine how a print of it got past the Awards pre-selection committee, unless someone had a weird sense of humor. Obviously not regular-category fare, the film's strength lies in Kuperberg's hilarious improvised monologues, and its weakness in a vein of nihilistic cruelty which mars an otherwise funny film. But then it was made in 1968 and was originally entitled ASSASSINATION GENERATION (remember King and Kennedy that year?), so there are valid reasons for that streak of pessimism.

Michael Hirsh had another film at the Awards—a serious, on-the-level documentary he made for CBC Telescope called The Great Canadian Comic Books. It is based on the book he wrote of the same name with Patrick Loubert. Presently, they are getting more mileage out of the topic with a traveling art show that was recently exhibited at the National Gallery in Ottawa. It is a nostalgic look at Johnny Canuck and the other. Canadian comic heroes that sprang up during the war-years, when there was a ban on importing American comic books. The ban was lifted soon after the war, and the great Canadian comic book industry died in its infancy. Hirsh and Loubert are doing contemporary art history a service by recording this ephemeral piece of Canadiana.

François Durocher, Waitress is about a more lasting part of Montréal culture: those thousands of nameless/faceless servants — waitresses. It's about time a film like this was made, and André Brassard from the NFB should get credit. The film won three Etrots: Best TV Drama, Best Director (non-feature) and Best Screenplay (non-feature). It should definitely be subtitled or dubbed into English because this phenomena is not restricted to Montréal or Québec. All across Canada, women named Françoise Durocher or Mary Jones are watching their lives go down the drain with their smeared make-up at night, and with the zillions of orders for hot dog, Coke, hamburger, french fries, regular coffee-no sugar, BLT on toast-hold the onions, hold the ketchup, throw in the relish, etc. that they have to memorize like robots. The choral recitation of equally meaningless orders like these accents the film and runs through it to show the dehumanization of these women by their monotonous occupation.

Other memorable and award-winning shorts included Albert Kish's This Is a Photograph which every immigrant to this country will automatically identify with, but which also affords native-born Canadians a fresh look at their way of life. The immigrants' story is told through family-style still photos: our first Television set, reads one page in the family album, which is filled with shots of the prized possession. The narrator goes on to explain in his heavy accent how in Canada you don't need a car to pose for a picture to send home, you just go on the street and stand in front of any car - the relatives won't know the difference!

Citizen Harold is an NFB/Challenge for Change cartoon. The gist of it is that you can't fight City Hall. But the message is serious. Selling Out is a CBC film about the acute and urgent problem of Canada being parcelled off to American land-buyers and speculators. Prince Edward Island will be more than fifty percent sold-off this way if this trend remains unchecked. The film should be shown on TV every day until we get so tired of seeing it that we actually go out and do something about the problem. Dan Gibson's Nature Family is a loving record of three young geese who adopted Gibson's real family and thus grew up in civilization. Dan's two boys helped to raise them, and when the geese grew to be full-size they even had to teach them how to fly. Then the old question: how to go about returning them to the wild? It was worth seeing for its unassuming warmth and Gibson's obvious affinity to nature.

Muntu by Josée Lecours, an experimental study of Afircan masks - with a male dancer rhythmically acting out feelings and universal truths expressed by the masks - and Evolu by John Leach, are two examples of the inadequacy of the present category system. Muntu was classified as a theatrical short and was compared with such totally different films as Journey to Power and This Is a Photograph (which later won the award). Evolu an animated study of changes - a human face undergoing rapid and meaningful metamorphosis in shapes, images, colors, etc. - on the other hand ran against Citizen Harold and Dans La Vie, a surreal study in alienation and dehumanization, which later won the Etrog in the over-all animation class.

The point is that both Muntu and Evolu are experimental films, which might have had a greater chance of winning a trophy had that category been open to them. That a number of films, notably Sons of Captain Poetry, Mirror, Mirror, and Skin Deep were shown out of competition because the experimental category did not exist - is inexcusable. If the
The Canadian Film Awards strives to be truly representative, it should not only take into account geographical boundaries and cater to the cultures divided by them, but also the lines differentiating a film sponsored by Imperial Oil and a film that comes from the heart and soul of an experimental artist.

In closing, Eric Till's A Fan's Notes should have been entered, letters of protest should go to Warner Brothers. La Maudite Gallette (thought by some Quebec critics to be the best film made there this year) should have been entered as well, letters of protest should go to Denys Arcand at CINAK in Montreal. Patricia Collins should have gotten an award for her performance in A Fan's Notes, but got one anyway for The Golden Handshake — a CBC drama. Les Hommes Qui Viennent du Ciel should not have been totally overlooked, nor should have been A Country Doctor.

Organisationally, there are many things to iron out: the marathon screenings must be scheduled with some thought given to the human body's endurance limit (at one point Friday, five feature-length films were shown almost consecutively . . . a bit too much!) If they must be spaced out longer than a week, then so be it. (I suspect next year the screenings will take at least two weeks, given the rate at which Canada is producing feature films right now!) Some attention must also be paid to the other needs of the body, such as the need for nourishment. St. Lawrence Centre does not have so many blocks away. And when there are only ten to twenty minutes for a meal-break between showings, you can't go too far. Why not have sandwiches and coffee sold on a regular basis? (The coffee machine was set up for the last two days, but why so late? And still no food.)

A more important and serious problem is the one that faces all the films after the Awards. Aside from the few big winners, the other Canadian films have a hell of a time trying to get distribution. What good is showing these films once, and forgetting about the majority of them. A lot of films mentioned above are destined never to be seen by the general public. Some of them stand a better chance of being seen elsewhere, but not in their own country. Not to mention how many of the Quebec films never make it to Ontario, or Manitoba, or British Columbia. I realize that this problem cannot be solved by the Awards organizers and that they are doing their part in at least letting people know that these films exist, but it is still very frustrating to sit through a solid week of films and then not hear about most of them ever again.

Next year, the Film Awards are moving to Montreal, and hopefully, Cinema Canada will be there to cover them. This year we were proud to share a table with Cinéma/Québec in the lobby at the screenings. We were also happy to see all the Montréal journalists covering the event on a daily basis, even though their reports distorted a few things (Toronto really isn't that somber and deceptive). They also claimed that public attendance was low at all the screenings, which is not true. There were full houses for Almond's Journey on Thursday afternoon, for Bernadette that evening, as for La Vie Révée and Wedding in White. Most of the other evening features were well attended, in spite of the $2.00 admission charge imposed for the first time this year. The afternoon showings, like all the daytime screenings, obviously had a limited audience as did most of the long, non-theatrical French-language films, for the simple reason that people work in the day-time and many Torontonians, it is true, do not speak French.

That brings up another point, why not make subtitling compulsory, or why doesn't the federal government offer to pick up the tab? (If they believe in bi-culturalism, here's a chance to prove it!) Obviously, the deal should go both ways, Québec films into English, and English films should be subtitled into French. Of course, this is an idealistic, naive dream, because why should producers or the government spend money they don't have to spend by law?

The Toronto press too, should have covered the awards on a daily basis, and the organizers should have enough money next year to advertise the event through posters, radio spots, or even TV spots, so as many people as possible could find out about it. One of the reasons for low attendance in the daytime was total lack of publicity. And more advance information would also help. A week before the showings this year, programme notes were still not available.

But in spite of the grueling schedule and the sensory overload, it was a joy to participate in the 24th Annual Canadian Film Awards as a journalist/spectator. Regardless of the soggy sandwiches hastily consumed in the darkened theatre, there was enough nourishment for the soul on the screen to make the vigil worthwhile. And all throughout, there flowed the undercurrent of excitement and pleasure of being a witness to the coming of age of Canadian cinema. Satyajit Ray expressed it well, when he spoke at the Cinesphere ceremonies: "May I say how very impressed I was with my first encounter with Canadian feature films. I was especially impressed with the directors' personal approach to the subject of their films. There was very little which I would call run-of-the-mill."

Overall, it was a success. So take a bow, Canadian Film Awards 1972, especially Bob Crone and Claude Godbout, Co-Chairmen; Francis Jaubert and Joanne Kates, Co-Directors, and Gerald Pratley, International Jury Chairman! Looking forward to next year, we applaud you!
The National Film Board
of Canada
proudly salutes
its film-makers for winning 13 Etrogs
and the first Grierson Award
at the 24th Canadian Film Awards 1972

Grierson Award
Colin Low

Le temps d’une chasse
Special Jury Award: Francis Mankiewicz, director
Best Cinematography in Feature: Michel Brault
Best Sound Recording in Feature: Claude Hazanavicius

Best Animated Film
Dans la vie
Pierre Veilleux, director. René Jodoin, producer

Best TV Drama
Françoise Durocher, waitress
André Brassard, director
Jean-Marc Garand and Pierre Duceppe, producers

Best TV Information — Public Affairs
Je chante à cheval . . . avec Willie Lamothe
Pierre Bernier, Jacques Leduc, Lucien Ménard, directors
Paul Larose, producer

Best Theatrical Short
This Is a Photograph
Albert Kish, director. Tom Daly, producer

Best Director
(non-feature)
André Brassard  François Durocher, waitress

Best Screenplay
Original or adaptation (non-feature)
Michel Tremblay, André Brassard
François Durocher, waitress

Best Sound Recording
(non-feature)
Claude Delorme  Wet Earth, Warm People

Best Cinematography
(non-feature)
Georges Dufaux  A cris perdus

Best Sound Editing
(non-feature)
Les Halman  Wet Earth, Warm People

Best Sound Re-recording
(non-feature)
Michel Descombes  This Is a Photograph