

The Army Of Crime \*\*

Michael Giltz: Cannes 2009 Wrapup: Quick Movie Rundown and Sights & Sounds Of The Fest

Jaffa \*\* I Love You, Philip Morris \*\* The Imaginarium Of Dr. Parnassus \*\* Precious \*\* Thirst \*\* Enter The Void \* 1/2 Kinatay \* 1/2 Irene \* 1/2 Vincere \* 1/2 Les Herbes Folles \* 1/2 The White Ribbon \* 1/2 Montparnasse \* 1/2 Coco Chanel and Igor Stravinsky \* 1/2 The Father Of My Children \* Anti-Christ \* The Silent Army \* To Die Like A Man\* Map Of The Sounds Of Tokyo -- no stars

## MOVIES I REGRET MISSING

Dogtooth, Farewell Gary, Agora, Drag Me To Hell, Petition, No One Knows About Persian Cats, Tales From The Golden Age, The Wind Journeys, the restored Senso, Tetro, Humpday, Eastern Plays, Les Beaux Gosses, Polytechnique, La Pivellina, The Family Wolberg, Ajami

#### **BEST QUOTE PROMOTING YOUR OWN FILM**

For *The French Kissers* aka *Les Beaux Gosses*, director Riad Sattouf declares loudly in an ad that ran in the trades: "I love masturbation! What a great subject. Bring it on, I can talk about it for hours."

## FUNNIEST MOMENT ON THE BEACH

Three young women gasp with delight and literally stop in their tracks when they spot a giant billboard promoting Peter Jackson's upcoming movie *The Lovely Bones*.

First girl, excitedly: "*The Lovely Bones!* Oh my God!" Second girl, informatively: "That was a book." Third girl, dimly: "I read part of it but I never finished. They turned it into a movie?"

## **BEST POSTERS FOR UPCOMING MOVIES ROUNDUP #1**

#### Hitler Goes Kaput!

#### Rosencrantz And Guildenstern Are Undead

*High Kick Girl!* is from the producers of *Shaolin Girl* (I spot a trend) and features a Buffy-like young Asian woman in a school girl skirt delivering a powerful kick sky high. Tagline: "She is more than just a cute high school girl. She is a master of Karate!"

## MOST HUMANIZING MOMENT

Lars Von Trier spent half his press conference responding to indignant questions about his new film *Anti-Christ.* (Saying you were outraged by a Lars Von Trier film is like saying you went to a John Waters film and found it in poor taste. What the hell did you expect?) He (sort of) joked that he was the best film director in the world. It was said wryly, but he later made clear that this is the sort of self-confidence and ego you need in order to make a movie and he was sure that other directors felt the same way. When Willem Dafoe later referred to Von Trier as "a great director," Von Trier interrupted him and said, "the greatest" to much laughter. Amid all the hullabaloo, people often forgot that Von Trier discussed having a nervous breakdown and believing for a while that he'd never make a movie again. And almost no one mentioned that during the entire press conference, you could see his hands trembling. He may be a provocateur, but he's also human.

## THE FRENCH APPROACH TO BUSINESS

I love grabbing a freshly baked croissant on my way to the first screening of the day, which usually takes place at the ungodly hour of 8:30 am. For various reasons, that wasn't happening this year so I went looking for a croissant AFTER the first or second screening of the day, anywhere from 11 am

Presidents: Who Was Believable? (PHOTOS, POLL) Whether playing a fictional head of state or a real-life US president,	
John Lundberg Sarah Palin, The Anti-Poet Watching Sarah Palin resign the other week, I remembered how frustrating it is to listen to her speak.	
Shannyn Moore It's Not Sarah's FaultJust Ask Her When it comes to taking responsibility for her failures, Sarah Palin is	
Therese Borchard 4 Ways To Get Past Cold Feet (Or Any Kind Of Anxiety) Fresh Living blogger Holly Lebowitz Rossi recently wrote	
Governor X: Call Girl Says She Worked With Another Married Pol An escort who was hired by Eliot Spitzer claims to have worked with another	
Brian Kilmeade Apologizes For Racist "Pure Species" Comment Brian Kilmeade apologized Monday for controversial comments he made on the July	
Obama Family Returns From Camp David On Sunday In Mid-Summer Style (PHOTOS) The first family spent the weekend at Camp David, and when	
Sarah Jessica Parker And Matthew Broderick's Night Out After Babies (PHOTOS) New parents Sarah Jessica Parker and Matthew	
Colbert Mocks Conservative Pundits For Claims Of Reverse Racism; Calls Buchanan A 'Reverse Civil Rights Leader' (VIDEO) Stephen	
Iran Uprising Blogging: Latest Updates I'm liveblogging the latest Iran election fallout. Email me with any news or thoughts, or follow me	
Tiny Drizzle Wreaks Havoc In Desert City SANTIAGO, Chile — In one of the driest regions on earth, even a drizzle	

to 1 p.m. One bakery -- and there's a boulangerie every few blocks -- was especially appealing. It had a cute sign, a warm wood interior and a terrific quiche I purchased one afternoon. Every time I walked towards the place -- literally, every single time -- the only person on staff would be sitting at a chair and table outside, smoking and chatting and drinking with friends. I would wander up, walk in and they would reluctantly get out of their seats and follow me inside. And every time I went there -- yes, every single time -- they would be completely out of croissants, be it 1 p.m. or 11:30 am and almost always out of virtually everything else. Now, an American bakery that sold out of croissants by 11 am and had customers coming in to buy more (I wasn't the only one) would immediately say, "Ha! I need to make more croissants. I'll make more money!" But the French say, "Voila! My work is done and I can spend more time sitting and chatting with friends." I was frustrated about not getting that croissant but couldn't help appreciating their approach to life. On the other hand, my last two favorite bakeries in Cannes have since gone out of business.

#### CRAZIEST PRESS CONFERENCE MOMENT

At the press conference for Ang Lee's *Taking Woodstock*, a Brazilian journalist gave a soccer jersey of the great player Ronaldo to Emile Hirsch for no apparent reason. He didn't ask Hirsch a question, Hirsch doesn't play soccer in the movie and it wasn't clear if the journalist was doing this himself or for Ronaldo. Then he talked about Ang Lee's many movies with homosexual themes and asked, "Would you ever realize another kind of *Hulk* with *Brokeback* elements, something like this guy?" and then held up a Hulk action figure he had painted all pink. Once everyone stopped laughing, Lee actually gave an interesting answer. "Inside everybody is very complicated," said Lee. "We're all kinds of Hulks with many different elements. I'm fascinated by some great stories and they happen to revolve around homosexuality. It just fascinates me. I don't go inside and examine what exactly is -- I just portray them. I hope people will respond in a very complex way to it. This movie [*Taking Woodstock*] will have that too [the lead character is gay]. But it's not an essential core problem or issue as in *Brokeback Mountain*." Then he laughs and adds, "If you examine *Hulk*, I'm sure there's some homo problem there too."

## **BEST POSTERS FOR UPCOMING MOVIES ROUNDUP #2**

**Gladiators Versus Werewolves** 

Just Peck, with the tagline: "In suburbia, no one can hear you scream"

*Gangster Exchange*, which pictures two tough guys walking down an alley with one of them splattered in blood and carrying...a toilet. The tagline: "Guns, thugs, and toilets made of drugs." That explains that.

Lesbian Vampire Killers, which asks, reasonably enough, "What more could you possibly want?"

#### THE HOLLYWOOD/BOLLYWOOD CROSSOVER CONTINUES

*The Italian Job* is getting remade for the Indian market. Which means there has been a British version, the original *Italian Job*; an American remake starring Mark Wahlberg and now a Hindi version. But, as of yet, still no Italian version of *The Italian Job*.

Another Hindi film announced at Cannes is *Kambakkht Ishq*, a big budget Bollywood musical featuring big US stars in the story of an Indian stuntman who takes Hollywood by storm but still can't leap, dive or dodge his way into a woman's heart. Among the US actors set to appear are Denise Richards, Brandon Routh (I guess that next Superman movie has been delayed) and...wait for it, Sylvester Stallone. If they get him to sing and dance, I'm in.

# THE BOOKS I READ TO PREPARE FOR CANNES OR WHILE STANDING IN LINE FOR A MOVIE

We Wish To Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories From Rwanda by Philip Gourevitch \*\*\*\* Push [aka Precious] by Sapphire \*\* 1/2 Mussolini by Denis Mack Smith \*\*\* (out of four) Taking Woodstock by Eliot Tiber \*\* (but fun) Keats by Andrew Motion \*\*\* 1/2 The Complete Poems Of John Keats \*\*\*



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A cabin of one's own: New England's MacDowell Colony celebrates 100 years of artistic utopia. And the gay and lesbian artists who prospered there celebrate ... (The national gay & lesbian newsmagazine) by Michael Giltz *Hypatia Of Alexandria* by Maria Dzielska \*\* 1/2 *Seven Rivers West* by Edward Hoagland \*\*\* *My Family and Other Animals* by Gerald Durrell \*\*\*\* (Ok, to be honest I haven't quite finished yet, but I'm loving it)

## MOST MISUNDERSTOOD FILM

Lars Von Trier's *Anti-Christ* is not only NOT misogynist, it's very clearly pro-woman and against the patriarchal societies that have tortured and killed women throughout history. This is made explicitly clear throughout the film and -- if you still didn't get it -- is pounded into your head with the dramatic images at the finale. That final scene is inexplicable if you believe the film is somehow violating women. Mind you, that doesn't mean the film is actually good. It's not. But it is a film, with a boldly theatrical approach to telling its dark fairy tale and revealing its very Grimm heart. I've loved earlier work of his like *Dogville* and *Breaking The Waves* and would gladly see this movie ten times over rather than sit through Gasper Noe's vapid *Enter The Void* even twice.

## MOST DRAMATIC MOMENT OFF SCREEN

Walking along the Rue d'Antibes (a main drag always filled with locals, tourists and fest-goers), I saw two Japanese people standing about ten feet apart, a young man and a young woman who were clearly together but arguing. The young woman was facing in one direction but looking backwards at the man. He was turning in the other direction and looking back at her. She sort of made a move to go and then stared back at him again, as if to say, "Really? You're going to go in that direction? You're not coming with me?" He stared at her blankly, not giving away his intentions in the least. She feinted again and then finally, angrily started walking away. He sighed, put on his earplugs and then started walking in the opposite direction. I was going his way and two blocks later he suddenly stopped, turned around completely and stared back the way he came. Hadn't she turned around to follow him? I couldn't resist stopping to see. Nope, she hadn't. He hesitated, sighed and then -- defeated -- started to walk back after her. If I'd had a movie camera with me, it would have made a perfect short film.

## MOST UNEXPECTED SOURCE OF SUSPENSE

The dictionary that takes center stage in the gripping 15+ minute scene that ends the brilliant *Police, Adjective.* 

#### THE MOVIE MOMENT I CAN'T SHAKE

It happened during the very first screening, which was the world premiere of the latest Pixar film Up. In it, an old man is living on his own after his beloved wife died. They were each other's world and had no children, so he has literally no one, just a small home slowly being surrounded by skyscrapers and some personal belongings, like the mailbox in their front yard they decorated together. When a construction worker accidentally knocks the mailbox over, the old man -impotent with age, hard of hearing, and grumpy by nature -- loses it. The worker apologizes and tries to fix it, but the old man is furious that the guy is even touching something so important to him. They get in an unintentional tug of war and the old man momentarily lashes out, hitting the worker with his walking cane and drawing blood. People rush to help the worker and the old man is frightened and scared; he knows he's messed up and something as simple as a small accident like this can leave him powerless and in the hands of the authorities who will undoubtedly decide he needs to be placed in a nursing home. It's a quiet, powerful scene that takes place early in the film and it captures with heartbreaking precision the vulnerability and fear that can overtake you when you're old. After years of success and control, you become like a little child again and strangers insist on telling you what to do. Few movies have ever captured the minefield that is old age as adroitly as Up, which is one more reason why the first film of the fest will surely be one of the best films of the year.

### MY SHORT FILM, A SURE-FIRE WINNER AT NEXT YEAR'S CANNES

Here's the short film I shot at Cannes that's certain to be a winner at next year's festival. I wrote, directed, edited and star in it, a la Orson Welles. It's a little more action-packed than most movies that play here, but it's certainly in the same vein as the other films at Cannes. Since I can't sneak you into screenings of the films in Competition, this is as close as you can get at the moment. Enjoy, thanks for reading and au revoir!

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Normalcy It remains a quiet fest in the market and late at night but definitely exciting and vibrant

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Lendall I'm a Fan of Lendall permalink

> Thanks for your roundup. It would be helpful if you could provide links in the list to your individual reviews.

p.s. I attended Cannes every year for (?) twenty years. First I was in sales for a B-movie outfit that was well-known at the time, then I worked my way up to being in charge of the U.S. operation for a successful (commercially and critically) indie company which has now vanished. For the most part it's not what people expect. There's the Festival, its several confusing sidebars, the Fortnight, and then the Market, with its own screenings of films up for sale to foreign distributors. That explains why there is such a wide range of "product" there. The glamor is all staged for the benefit of the press and the foreign buyers. Getting tickets to films you want to see can be a nightmare. (Oh: Even earlier in my career I worked for the organization that processed accreditation for Americans who wanted to attend the Festival -- press, producers, sales people, etc. etc. So once upon a time, I was the guy who decided how important each person was and, ultimately, what tickets they received. And I didn't know much of anything, at the time.) Many years it rains all the time. And when it doesn't, the mistral blows the pollen down the hills and gives people migraine headaches. In summary, it's an odd experience. Not what one expects.

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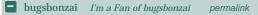
Hi, if you click on my name at the top of the piece, it takes you to every post I've done for Huffington, in reverse chronological order (the most recent at the top). Each day at the fest I filed reviews, so you can go Cannes 2009 Day One and Day Two and so on and read all my individual reviews as they ran. Thanks for commenting.

🎔 Favorite 🥝 Flag as abusive 🛛 Posted 08:24 AM on 05/27/2009

discourse jockey I'm a Fan of discourse jockey permalink

"Up" on #2 ?? Ok, so that's how much I can trust your taste. Good to know.

♥ Favorite Ø Flag as abusive Posted 12:01 PM on 05/25/2009



Why must movie snobs have such an overt anti-animation bias? I haven't seen the film myself, but sometimes the best films of the year are animated. After the author's vivid description, I'll give him the benefit of the doubt. It's versatile and complicated format to do consistently and well. Most countries in the world beyond America see animation as an ADULT format. Maybe you grew up expecting all animated films to have singing bunny rabbits and bad plots. Sorry, things have changed. The best of the best animation films are amazing works of art. If you don't open yourself to that, you're doing a disservice to yourself.

#### Favorite Ø Flag as abusive Posted 03:51 PM on 05/25/2009

📃 discourse jockey I'm a Fan of discourse jockey 💿 permalink

Nonsense. I love animation. That's precisely why most American animation in general and "Up" in particular is in my book of atrocious. Not a snob here at all, just someone who firmly believes that there can --at times-- be such a thing as right and wrong even when it comes to personal taste. Liking "Up" is ok. Touting it as an "important" film, not so much.

♥ Favorite ⊘ Flag as abusive Posted 08:19 PM on 05/25/2009

Michael Giltz - Huffpost Blogger I'm a Fan of Michael Giltz permalink



Well, you can't always agree with any critic, (not even yourself, since I've sometimes wildly reappraised a film I loved/hated on first view). But hopefully they can write entertainingly about movies even when you DON'T agree with them. Surely the other films I covered and liked weren't all dreck? And I'm far from the only one to praise Up, it

was easily one of the best reviewed films there. The Hollywood reporter said, "Winsome, touching and arguably the funniest Pixar effort ever, the gorgeously rendered, high-flying adventure is a tidy 90-minute distillation of all the signature touches that came before it." Variety says, ""Up" is an exceptionally refined picture; unlike so many animated films, it's not all about sensory bombardment and volume" and also says, "a captivating odd-couple adventure that becomes funnier and more exciting as it flies along. Could easily have been cloying, but instead proves disarming in its deep reserves of narrative imagination and surprise, as well as its poignant thematic balance of dreams deferred and dreams fulfilled." Go to any other outlet and you'll find much the same.

Favorite 🖉 Flag as abusive Posted 03:56 PM on 05/25/2009

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The article was very much ok otherwise, that's why that one bit stands out like a sore tooth for me.

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