
My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Nuno Gomes Loves Lyra - 24-06-2008 11:42

So, Guy Maddin's new film My Winnipeg is out next week and Guy's in London and Cambridge doing Q&As, interviews and live commentary events. This is partly a shameless plug as the film is being distributed by my husband but mostly a sincere thread, being as how Maddin is usually very good.

There's also a competition which might be of interest...

Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 24-06-2008 15:38

It's got pretty good reviews here. I'd be interested in what AG has to say (as he's a Portage and Main kid n'all.)

Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by nefertiti - 24-06-2008 22:45

Saw a trailer this evening and it looks pretty interesting. It was before Charles Burnett's Killer Of Sheep, which needs its own thread. Fa

Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 25-06-2008 15:03

I haven't seen it yet. Maybe next week. My brother saw it (and interviewed Maddin for the Globe) when it showed at the TIFF last fall and he really liked it.

Winnipeg is a hard place to get out of your system. I haven't lived there for 20 years, but if asked by a Canadian where I'm from, I will always answer "Winnipeg". I think that's true of most of my friends, too.

Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by WornOldMotorbike - 25-06-2008 17:28

I think that's true of most of my friends, too.

He's right. I say that and I've never even been to Winnipeg.

Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Squid Ink - 26-06-2008 16:45

I've seen this, it's great. I'm still not totally sure why Winnipeg is "a hard place to get out of your system," but clearly Maddin feels the same way. It looked fairly mundane to me. Someone should really make a proper version of the fictional TV show, Ledge Man, that features in the film.

Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 26-06-2008 19:44

I'm still not totally sure why Winnipeg is "a hard place to get out of your system,"

My wife doesn't get it either.

Look, I lived in Montreal for a much greater part of my adult life and by any even vaguely objective comparison, it's ten times the city Winnipeg is. But I don't miss it anywhere near how I miss Winnipeg.

In spring and summer, at least.

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 26-06-2008 22:08

A good friend of mine is a transplanted Winnepegonian. I've never heard him wax nostalgic about the place, but perhaps he's embarrassed by the tears he'd shed. I'll ask.

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 27-06-2008 01:05

"Winnipegger". We're called "winnipeggers".

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Amor de Cosmos - 27-06-2008 03:40

I know. I was teasing.

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 27-06-2008 12:13

I thought you might be. But I was worried you might be leading other poor souls astray.

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by WornOldMotorbike - 27-06-2008 14:30

In spring and summer, at least.

Isn't summer their 'get your ass chewed off by mosquitoes' season?

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 06-07-2008 01:47

I don't know why anyone who hasn't lived in Winnipeg would like the film - I imagine the self-referential stuff would come off a bit wanky, and you wouldn't know which bits of Winnipeg history are true and which are BS (most are true, believe it or not) - but I think it's an incredibly romantic film.

I loved it. Probably helped that he's from my hood, and most of the places and events he's talking about are places I used to see every day. I almost cried when he showed the Arena coming down.

My wife is incredulous that I found it romantic, but I did. Of course, there was a more traditionally romantic movie to be made there: Carol Shields' *The Republic of Love*, which is one of the greatest meditations on love of the 20th century. But then that bitch Deepa Mehta filmed it and turned it into a story about fucking Toronto.

People steal from Winnipeg all the time. The city's dying as a result. That's what Maddin's movie's about.

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Jimski - 19-07-2008 18:07

I thought it was ace and I've never been to Winnipeg (only place I've ever been in Canada is Vancouver). It started slowly, and for the first quarter of an hour I thought it might be just too artsy, but after a while it became utterly beguiling.

AG - was the horses heads thing true? A web search seems to suggest people think it was, but nowhere is there anything conclusive.

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 21-07-2008 10:51

I'd never heard that one and I seriously doubt it.

The other sequence that was nonsense was Happyland being destroyed by a buffalo stampede, not least of all because they were basically extinct at the time. Pretty much everything else was true, though.

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Jimski - 21-07-2008 19:08

I just mentioned the horses heads thing to my Dad on the phone to see if he'd ever heard of it, and curiously he mentioned a book called *Kaputt* by Curzio Malaparte, which also mentioned this incident (though in northern Europe, not Canada).

But this book apparently also was a curious blend of fact and fiction, which my dad claimed was very difficult to separate. He said he'd never been sure of the veracity of the horses heads story there either.

Maybe Maddin consciously referenced Malaparte, knowing that the work was of a similar style?

P.S. I've just done a search for this work, and found a discussion of it here. Search on 'horses' on that page, and you'll find the story.

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 22-07-2008 10:10

I think you've probably nailed it, Jimski. That sort of thing would appeal to Maddin's sensibilities for sure.

I just found his cinematography too beautiful for words. I'm not sure how he did it, but he captured the cold stillness of the city's night (and particularly, its alleyways) to an absolute T.

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Jimski - 22-07-2008 21:17

So, as a Maddin novice, what are the other ones that are most worth seeing? I remember someone I worked with raving about The Saddest Music in the World at the time, but I didn't catch it then.

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 23-07-2008 09:29

That's usually considered his best. His first, Tales from the Gimli Hospital, is often well thought of, but that also may be a Manitoba thing (it's the only other one I've seen). I think Archangel also got good reviews.

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Lyra - 23-07-2008 09:51

I think you perhaps should start with Saddest Music as it's pretty accessible; and then if you like his style, move on to some of the shorts, possibly, or Dracula Pages from a Virgin's Diary, oh or any of them really. But do look out for the shorts. He does good shorts.

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Re:My Winnipeg, Your Winnipeg

Posted by Antonio Gramsci - 24-07-2008 13:03

My mother reminded me last night that she shared an office with Maddin at the University of Manitoba for a few years, which I'd completely forgotten.

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