Xavier Dolanâ??s Itâ??s Only the End of the World to be Canadaâ??s Oscar foreign-language film submission

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

By Jessica Wong, CBC News

3rd time 27-year-old filmmaker tapped as Canadaâ??s Oscars pick

Canada is pinning Oscar hopes on Xavier Dolanâ??s latest film, *Itâ??s Only the End of the World*.

The drama, about a terminally ill man returning home to his estranged family, will be Canadaâ??s official submission to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences â?? the group behind the Oscars â?? for consideration in the best foreign-language film category at the upcoming awards.

The announcement was made Friday in Montreal, with 27-year-old Dolan chosen by a 23-member Telefilm Canada committee comprising government and film industry representatives from across the country.

â??The film has already been a very rich experience,â?• Dolan told media gathered in Montreal. â??Itâ??s a gift.â?•

This is the third time Dolan has been tapped as Canadaâ??s Oscar pick: he was earlier selected as the foreign-language film submission in 2009 for his startling debut *I Killed My Mother* and again in 2014 for *Mommy*.

â??Back when *Mommy* was selected two years ago, we had the opportunity to talk about the film in many places and communities. It was such a journey and weâ??re ready to embark on that again,â?•

Dolan said.

â??Thereâ??s no doubt [this film] will move members of the academy as it has engaged thousands of movie-lovers to date,â?• Telefilm executive director Carolle Brabant said in a statement.

Marion Cotillard and Vincent Cassel play a marreied couple in Xavier Dolanâ??s *Itâ??s Only The End of the World (Photo credit: eOne)*

Known in French as *Juste la fin du monde*, Dolanâ??s drama is based on a play of the same name by the late French writer Jean-Luc Lagarce and features a star-studded cast of French actors, including Gaspard Ulliel, LÃ©a Seydoux, Vincent Cassel, Nathalie Baye and Marion Cotillard.

The selection of Dolan is further vindication for the young filmmaker and the movie, which was panned by a host of American critics upon its debut at the Cannes Film Festival in May.

However, *Itâ??s the End of the World* closed Cannes by winning two awards â?? the prestigious Grand Prix and a prize from Cannes Ecumenical Jury â?? and earned a spot at the Toronto International Film Festival earlier this month.

â??I donâ??t think today is an appropriate day to cry over spilled milk,â?• Dolan said Friday about past criticism.

â??This is about what is next. Not what is gone already.â?•

Canadaâ??s tradition of Francophone picks

Oscar organizers limit the foreign-language film category to non-American productions that primarily feature dialogue in languages other than English.

Hence, Canadaâ??s choices have overwhelmingly been French, although weâ??ve also submitted Kim Nguyenâ??s French- and Lingala-language child-solder tale *War Witch*, Deepa Mehtaâ??s Hindi-language romantic tragedy *Water* as well as *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* and *The Necessities of Life*,

both starring main characters speaking Inuktituk.

Canadian directors whose movies have been Canadaâ??s official picks for Oscar best foreign-language film consideration include, from left, Denis Villeneuve, Xavier Dolan, Deepa Mehta, Zacharias Kunuk and im Nguyen (Canadian Press)

Canadaâ??s past three submissions for Oscar consideration were:

- *FÃ©lix et Meira*, Maxime Girouxâ??s French and Yiddish-language drama about an unlikely romance
- *Mommy*, Dolanâ??s celebrated French-language mother-son drama
- *Gabrielle*, Louise Archambaultâ??s French-language coming-of-age tale about a developmentally challenged woman.

Over the years, Canada has made the foreign-language film Oscar short list seven times, most recently in 2013 for Nguyenâ??s *War Witch*. Past contenders have also included *Monsieur Lazhar* (directed by Philippe Falardeau), *Incendies* (directed by Denis Villeneuve) and Mehtaâ??s *Water*.

Quebec filmmaker Denys Arcand is Canadaâ??s lone foreign-language film Oscar-winner. He picked up the prize in 2004 for his film *The Barbarian Invasions*, which was his third movie nominated in the category. (Photo from Getty Images

The countryâ??s lone foreign-language Oscar winner, however, is Denys Arcand, who triumphed with 2003â??s *The Barbarian Invasions* after having previously been a contender for his films *The Decline of the American Empire* and *Jesus of Montreal*.

Nominations for the 89th Academy Awards will be announced Jan. 24, 2017, with the awards gala to follow on Feb. 26.

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2. Cannes
3. Toronto International Film Festival

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