

# EVERYONE'S A CRITIC

[a] 2009 Hall of Fame (Talent) inductee Christopher Plummer; [b] NFB commissioner and chair Tom Perlmutter (who accepted the Hall of Fame Pioneer award for the late Norman McLaren) and wife Chris Wright; [c] Leonard George accepted the Pioneer award on behalf of his father, Chief Dan George; [d] *Cairo Time* writer/director Ruba Nadda on the red carpet; [e] Suzan Ayscough, *Playback* special reports editor and a driving force behind the Hall of Fame, gets ready to induct Denys Arcand; [f] CFC executive director Slawko Klymkiw with sons Illya and Adam; [g] son Chris Coombs (wearing his father's favorite costume) and daughter Cathie Mackinnon accept the Hall of Fame Pioneer award on behalf of father Ernie Coombs (*Mr. Dressup*)

All photos: linda dawn hammond, IndyFoto

## PLAUDITS FOR EGOYAN, NADDA

**Chloe:** Atom Egoyan's latest, which recently unspooled at the Toronto International Film Festival as a gala, garnered much attention (and most of it good) ahead of a Christmas release through E1 Entertainment. The Julianne Moore and Liam Neeson-starring drama is certain to come with commercial success, predicts *The Hollywood Reporter*, calling it "compelling." *The Toronto Star* agrees, labelling *Chloe* a "sleek film" that should "restore Egoyan's luster at the box office." A slightly less enthused review in *Screen Daily* notes that the characters "feel as if they are puppets being manipulated by unseen hands, rather than believable human beings."

**Defendor:** Vancouver actor-turned-director Peter Stebbings' oddball superhero story with Woody Harrelson in the title role is "modest but likable," says *Variety*, though it reckons that *Defendor*, about a delusional man who thinks he's a superhero, is destined for "eyeblink theatrical play." The film – fresh off a premiere in the special presentation program at TIFF – works because of "Harrelson's weird, wistful performance," writes *Eye Weekly*, while the *Los Angeles Times* notes that the eclectic outlook of the "doggedly determined indie" may keep it from achieving a wide audience. Not if Sony has anything to say about it. The distributor recently acquired the rights to *Defendor*.

**Cairo Time:** Critics are gushing over director Ruba Nadda's second feature, set for release Oct. 9 through Mongrel Media, after a successful bow at TIFF. The Cairo-shot romantic drama – starring Patricia Clarkson as a fortysomething woman who enters a brief love affair with an Arab man (Alexander Siddig) – is "beautifully acted and photographed," says *The Toronto Star*, while *Eye Weekly* observes that Nadda "knows how to make the quiet moments between her leads speak volumes." *Exclaim!* praises Clarkson's performance as "imminently watchable," though the magazine complains that the film "doesn't wrap up its narrative in a neat package." ~ Marise Strauss

