

TORONTO '08 DISPATCH | “Paris,” “Valentino,” “Gigantic” and “Lymelife” Among Toronto Offerings

iW by Peter Knegt, Brian Brooks and Jenny Sung (September 11, 2008)

The 2008 **Toronto International Film Festival** is winding down. With just two days left before the Closing Night Gala and the announcement of the awards, many industry folk have begun to head out. But there remains much to discuss, as the last few days was obviously marked with a large amount of worthy events. *indieWIRE* looks over just a handful of them, including the premieres of **Adria Petty**'s “**Paris, Not France**,” **Matt Tyrnauer**'s “**Valentino: The Last Emperor**,” **Matt Aselton**'s “**Gigantic**,” and **Derick Martini**'s “**Lymelife**.”

Matt Aselton on his “Gigantic” Tale

“Gigantic” star Paul Dano (left) and director Matt Aselton at the Intercontinental Hotel in Toronto. Photo by Peter Knegt.

“It’s a film about the backstory of relationships,” explains director Matt Aselton of his film ‘Gigantic’ which had its world premiere on Monday night in Toronto. With an all star cast, the film follows the growing romance between mattress salesman Brian (**Paul Dano**) and quirky, naive rich girl Harriet/Happy (**Zoey Deschanel**).

Aselton explains that he and his co-writer and college friend **Adam Nagata** both come from a literary background and wanted to create a film that wasn’t expository, but rather something novelistic and surrealist. “Kirby (**Ed Asner**) [Brian’s father] is 80 and Brian is 28, how does that affect their relationship? Harriet walks around in her underwear all the time, how does that affect their relationship? Those little things that are often found



in literature but rarely in film are the things we wanted to show in ‘Gigantic’.”

The film’s title is a little surrealist, too. While nothing is literally “gigantic” in the film, Aselton contemplates on it, trying to describe that it is a term often used by young children when everything seems fantastic and great. “There’s an innocence about the title...I guess it’s a juxtaposition against Brian’s life changing decision to adopt a baby.”

As a first time feature filmmaker, Aselton views the current financial state of the industry as a great equalizer. “It makes for better and more responsible filmmaking,” he says, citing the **Coen Brothers** as a great example of successful films made on a modest budget, combined with talent and equality amongst cast and crew. Concerning his own film, Aselton has little to worry about, having had the film picked up for distribution in both France and Italy, and negotiations already under way for North America.

indieWIRE’s Steve Ramos [reviewed](#) the film and calls it, “pretty to watch, engaging from start to finish and funny in all the right places.” [Jenny Sung]