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Coverage from
the Toronto International Film Festival

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TIFF becomes 'Hunk-A-Mania'

John Powell - Cineplex Entertainment

The Toronto International Film Festival was overcome by 'Hunk-A-Mania' Saturday as George Clooney and Brad Pitt made appearances to hype their latest films.

Appearing in separate, back-to-back press conferences as they wound their way through the festival circuit, the stars had plenty to say...even about each other.

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ever met him in person but he is really very tiny," joked Clooney when he was asked if there was any friendly rivalry between himself and Pitt. "Naw, there is never any competition with my friends ever."

"I could never do the things Brad does ever so there is no competition at all," he continued. "I have some fierce competition with Matt Damon though. I'd like to kick his ass," Clooney ribbed.

All kidding aside, Clooney predicted that Pitt could very well steal the spotlight away from him in 'Burn After Reading'. Both Pitt and Clooney star in the Cohen Brothers feature opposite Frances McDormand.

Getting back to the film he produced and starred in - 'Michael Clayton' - Clooney explained that the story of an unscrupulous in-house "fixer" at one of the largest corporate law firms in New York will resonate with filmgoers because as they have learned, corporate America cannot always be trusted to keep the public's best interest in mind.

"We do suspect corporate America. They have done some shady things," said Clooney.

'Jesse James' star Brad Pitt. For sophomore director and veteran screenwriter Tony Gilroy, 'Michael Clayton' was a liberating experience from start to finish.

"As a writer, I have been sitting in a room for 20 years. You have nobody to help you. I really enjoyed getting out of my room," he said thankfully.

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"I have never been sued so I don't know these people," she said.

At his presser, Pitt was beaming with the news that he had won the best actor award at the Venice Film Festival for his portrayal of the outlaw Jesse James in 'The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford'.

"I was surprised. I didn't expect it," said Pitt, explaining that winning awards is always the furthest thing from his mind when he decides which roles he is going to take on. "It is never the focus but to have this kind of acknowledgement is a real honour."

The award put a nice finish on a festival which had its ups and downs for Pitt. As was reported while he was in Venice, Pitt was none too pleased when a female fan got past security and tried to hug him on the red carpet. Despite the alarming moment, Pitt told the Toronto press that unlike the character of Jesse James in the film, he will not be dominated by paranoia or fear.

"I know the deal and the trade off," said Pitt of the fame that comes with being a movie star hounded by the media. "The only time it becomes unmanageable is when it becomes a full frontal attack on my kids. There is no line it seems when it comes to family."

Like Pitt's 1994 hit 'Legends of the Fall', 'Jesse James' was partially filmed in Canada. Calgary to be exact. Pitt said of the experience that he was pleased to be back and visiting Canada.

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7 captures Andrew Dominik as he fondly remembered the shoot. "Canada Great place to
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