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Film news of interest to Catholics

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NCR Today

Monday morning brought two news stories from the world of cinema of interest to Catholics.

The first: "Henry Herx, Film Critic for Catholic Publications, Dies at 79."



Henry Herx oversaw the transformation of the national office of

the Legion of Decency after Vatican II into the USCCB Office for Film and Television. This office has since been closed and reviews are now published under the purview of the Catholic News Service. Herx wrote more than 10,000 reviews in his lifetime. Many of these are archived and available, as well as other reviews before 2012, on the USCCB website.

Second, over the weekend, the Catholic jury at the 69th Venice International Film Festival, organized by SIGNIS, gave its main prize to Terence Malick's new film "To the Wonder," describing it thus:

"Technically rich and poetic in storytelling, To the Wonder is a stand-alone film which celebrates the mysteries of beauty, truth and love. It is a story of individuals who move through life with intense passion. At times, their passion gives way to desolation, making them acutely aware of their

own weaknesses and limitations. Their experiences shed insight about the universal meaning of the joys and struggles of life. The film's rich composition, textured direction, and its use of light bring together elements of divinity and humanity ultimately creating a sacramental experience which reveals God's gift of unconditional love."



The Catholic jury had five international members, including Jesuit

Fr. Edward Siebert, president of Loyola Productions in Los Angeles.

The jury noted that the film's reception was mixed, as it was to Malick's 2011 film "The Tree of Life," but saw this new film as a companion piece to it.

The jury also decided to give a special commendation to the Israeli film "Fill the Void" by Rama Burshtein.

See the full story.

The Catholic jury at the film festival included Gustavo Andújar of Cuba, president; Massimo Giraldi of Italy, secretary; Arianna Prevedello of Italy; Jesuit Fr. Edward Siebert of the United States; and Mario Tapia of Ecuador.

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