



'Lost' finds favor at USCAF *Picks up 4 Comedy Film Honors*

By Georg Szalai

ASPEN - "Lost in Translation," standup comic Al Madrigal and sketch performers Ethan Sandler and Adrian Wenner were among the big award winners at the HBO-sponsored *U.S. Comedy Arts Festival*, which wrapped with a 10th anniversary show Saturday night.

"Lost in Translation" nearly managed a sweep of *USCAF's* second annual Comedy Film Honors, winning best audience, best performance (Bill Murray), best first-time director (Sofia Coppola) and best screenplay.

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The best director honor went to Christopher Guest for "A Mighty Wind."

Madrigal went home with the USCAF jury award for best standup performer after entertaining audiences with stories about his Mexican background and how it affects his world view. Madrigal was just a few days ago cast in the David Schwimmer-directed NBC pilot "Home and Hardware."

Sandler and Wenner convinced festivalgoers with "Epitaph," a sketch performance about two men working out their issues at a woman's funeral.

Among other USCAF awards, Dave Gorman won for the second time in the best one-person show category with a tale about his real and online travels.

As part of USCAF's expanded Film Discovery Program, "Napoleon Dynamite," a loser makes-good comedy by Jared Hess, won the award for best feature, while "My Date With Drew," which co-stars Corey Feldman and follows a regular guy who is in love with Drew Barrymore, was recognized with the audience award. "Nobody Is Perfect," directed by and starring Hank Azaria, won the best short film accolade.

Other films that had festivalgoers buzzing included "Mail Order Bride" and Sundance sensation "Super Size Me," a documentary about how 30 days of a McDonald's diet affects a man's body, which is set to reach art houses in May.

Other performers who created strong buzz at USCAF were Adele Givens, Jack Black, Susie Essman, Lewis Black, Jeffrey Ross and Joe Rogan.

This year's API Star Award at USCAF went to Diane Keaton, who also received a standing ovation from a packed Aspen ballroom. Jim Abrahams and David and Jerry Zucker left Aspen with the API Filmmaker Award for putting the genre of spoof comedies on the map.

USCAF 2004 featured more than 80 performances at five main venues plus film screenings. Several comics also spent an afternoon performing at a local hospital during an event organized by the nonprofit group, Comedy Fights Cancer.