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**John Tremblay is Julian and Mike Smith is Bubbles in Trailer Park Boys: Countdown To Liquor Day. Photo © 2009 Alliance Films.**

**MOVIES TRAILER PARK BOYS**

**Trailer Park Boys: Countdown To Liquor Day – A Classic**

Submitted by Ron Foley Macdonald on 09.27.09 at 12:58pm.

Trailer Park Boys: Countdown To Liquor Day is supposed to be the swansong of the popular and influential Showcase TV series set right here on the East Coast.

Half an hour in and the film seems like a shrug, with everyone involved having their minds on something else, but then something very strange happens. Director Mike Clattenburg virtually hands the film over to the classically trained powerhouse actor John Dunsworth, who as the Trailer Park Supervisor, Mr. Leahy, spends most of his time severely soused and clad only in his skivvies.

It's then that you start to realize that Trailer Park Boys: Countdown To Liquor Day is actually the final coda to Canada's answer to the great British director Mike Leigh. Leigh's improvised examinations of contemporary working-class life in films such as *Secrets And Lies*, *Naked*, and *Meantime* have made him one of the dominant forces in modern-day cinema.

Comparing TPB to Leigh might seem a stretch but I attest that there is no other example in Canadian film or television – or the North American Media, for that matter – that has so frankly and funnily examined the aspirations of the permanent margins of New World society.

TPB's mix of machine-gun profanity, Keystone-Cops style comedy and sweet loyalty to one's own community – no matter how forsaken – is one of the great achievements of Canadian film and television. Consistently fresh in its vision, hilarious in its execution, and relentless in imagination, the series now stands as the most important comedy/drama ever made in Canada, period.


That's a strong claim, but it's one I'm prepared to defend. The latest installment – which may or may not be the last, considering an emerging American Network is still deciding whether it will make TPB its signature series over the next year or so – returns the residents of Sunnyvale Trailer Park back to its roots.

The faux-documentary style is apparent, with lots of direct address to the camera, and camera crews getting caught in the action. The look has retreated from the first big-screen film version's hardened gloss and kinetic action sequences. It's back to wobbly, low-rez cams and the show's original shoot-and-run aesthetic.

The result seems delightfully slapdash and immediate. With John Dunsworth giving-pushing his Mr. Leahy towards a manic King Lear type performance, the film achieves an unexpected, wacky lyricism that helps bring the show full circle.

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Now I want to go back and see the whole cycle again, from the full seven Showcase series to the two TV specials to the Ivan Reitman-produced first feature from 2006.

Trailer Park Boys: Countdown To Liquor Day rates a 10 out of 10.

Trailer Park Boys: Countdown To Liquor Day directed by Mike Clattenburg. Alliance Films, Canada, 108 minutes, 2009.

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