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Antonio Gaudi
(JAPANESE/SPANISH-DOCU-COLOR)

VARIETY
9/16/85

Toronto, Sept. 8.

Produced by Teshigahara Prods. Produced by Hiroshi Teshigahara, Noriko Nomura. Directed by Teshigahara. Camera (color), Hunichi Segawa, Yoshikazu Yanagida, Ryu Segawa; edited by Teshigahara; sound, Koji Asari; music, Toru Takemitsu, Kurodo Mori, Shinji Horii. Reviewed at Toronto Festival of Festivals (Varsity), Sept. 7, 1985. Running time: 82 MINS.

Known in the film world for the use Antonioni made of the organic and illusionary quality of his architecture in "The Passenger," Antonio Gaudi is the Catalan architect who was part of the late 19th-century revival of Catalan culture from the Middle Ages. This surprising tribute to him by the man whose photography and equally organic vision in "Woman Of The Dunes" shows off Gaudi's brilliance and au-

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daciousness without burdening it with any narration full of caveats and pre-digested interpretations.

Beginning with a brief outline of other Catalan creators, such as Picasso, Antoni Tapies, Joan Miro, as well as a wall bearing bullet marks from the Spanish Civil War, Teshigahara traces Catalan art from the Romanesque period of 1000 to 1300 A.D. and shows how the extraordinary architecture of Gaudi draws on that more ancient and pious tradition.

Teshigahara appreciates with the camera alone the fantasy, the molding of shapes and the eruption of mosaic-like surfaces in Gaudi's work, revealing their curvaceous, even erotic forms through the simplicity of his camera. He does not attempt to compete with Gaudi's sometimes erratic imagination, and includes the context with shots of the streets and the Sunday morning dance of the Sardana on the main square of Barcelona.

The undular walls and designs that remind one of marine life and little else in the history of architecture are accompanied by a score compiled of baroque harpsichord, organ pieces, and even a glass orchestra. The protean perfection of Gaudi's work on the houses for Guell, his faithful patron, is painstakingly illustrated, building up to show his wild dreams of a temple, as he called it, in Barcelona, that looks more like a Disney structure than a religious edifice.

But Teshigahara makes the overwrought designs and bejeweled fairy world quite accessible. — *Kaja*.