

VICTORIA FILM FESTIVAL

Digital Guide

February 7 -16
2025



Vt **The Vic Theatre**
808 Douglas St, Victoria BC

C6 **Capitol 6**
805 Yates St, Victoria BC

Cc **Cinecenta**
3800 Finnerty Rd, Victoria, BC

Tr **Toaster Rocket Cinema**
794 Fort St, Victoria BC
We're cranking the wild at our pop-up cinema. Hold onto your pearls!

Ss **Star Sidney**
9840 Third St, Sidney, BC

It **Intrepid Theatre**
1609 Blanshard St, Victoria BC

Nd **Next Door** *(Box Office)*
1205 Blanshard St, Victoria BC

Gh **Alix Goolden Hall**
1907 Pandora Ave, Victoria, BC

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SPECIAL EVENTS

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129 SpringBoard.

FILM PROGRAM

Buzz+
These films come with cred – you've heard about them, can't wait to see them and goodness forbid you're feeling a smidge of FOMO – and maybe that's a good thing... or is it?

Coast
Pacific Rim centric - as far away as Singapore and as close as an Oak Bay tea party

Currents
So much is going on – current affairs wise that is – here's a collection of stories ripped – yes, you read rightly – RIPPED from the headlines. Sorry, didn't mean to shout.

First
Presenting contemporary Indigenous filmmaking.

Olio
Not just this and that but also some of the other. Okay so we wanted to use a more fun word than miscellaneous. Can you blame us, you try spelling that over and over.

Pulse
The intangible, the nuance of life and... oooh please don't make me say the L word... the heartbeat. What drives inspiration, ambition, and moments of craziness. It's the beating heart of life.

QuirkD
We love quirky films! A magical director and writer wave some sparkle dust, turn their heads 180 and baby your... quirkD. Think Storkevich's Kissed, Lynch's Eraserhead. It's something about a one- word title? – maybe... not. Hang onto your pearls!

Sketch
Who is worth getting to know a little better? Artists who create great beauty? Women who have stood up for themselves? Athletes who reach great heights? Or maybe it's just Liza Minnelli – because... well... what a life!

Short Bursts
Energetic programs of short films and new voices. Not on a boat.

THANK YOU Donors

The Victoria Film Festival is ecstatic to celebrate its 31st year as a not-for-profit charitable arts organization! Without the support of our donor's, we would never have the opportunity to showcase all the talented and unique independent filmmakers at the various venues in the heart of downtown Victoria. Our donors have enabled us to bring important and engaging cinema to Vancouver Island, and for that we express our deepest gratitude.

A very special thanks to the donors below.

Director

Lyndsay Green

Assistant Director

June Wing
Terry Vatrt
Anne Macnab
Yves Roberge
Bruce Gauld
Charles Isherwood

Art Director

Sara Hradecky
Wendy Moreton
Kathy Kay
Ted McLachlan
Cathy Auld

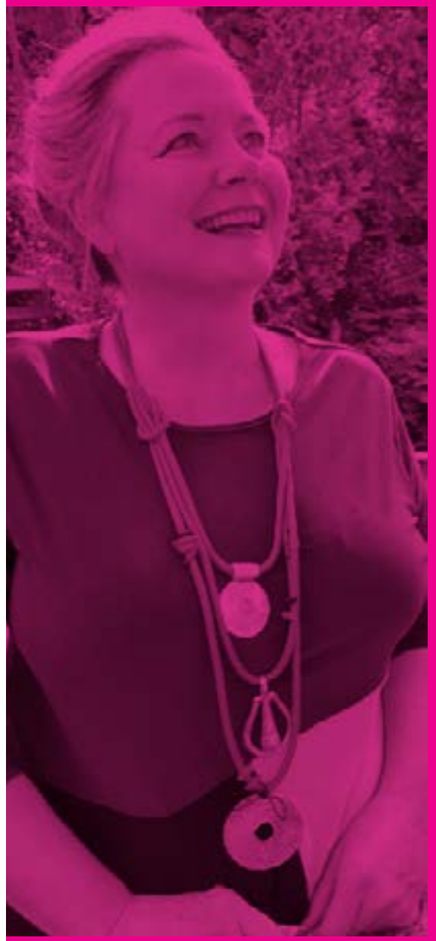
Set Dresser

Cris Forrest
Diana Scheffler
Christopher Hinton
Audrey McClellan

Gaffer

Margret Orme
Barbara Copley
Andrew Jackson
Nola Jackon





WELCOME

Can you believe it? Our 31st annual cinematic celebration! Thirty-one years of incredible films, unforgettable moments, and the occasional awkward encounter with a celebrity at the concession (we promise, no one will judge if you're starstruck by that director you totally Googled last night).

This year, people will tell me we've got a spectacular lineup. People say that every year but really... do you mean it? No, no, I mean do you really mean it? Okay, letting it go.

We're bringing you everything from thought-provoking documentaries to edge-of-your-seat thrillers – okay maybe not the very edge – plus a few probably-not-safe-for-work moments we're definitely not going to apologize for.

Whether you're a film buff, a popcorn enthusiast, or just here for the sheer FOMO, we're thrilled to have you. Sit back, chill, and let the magic of cinema do its thing—just try not to spill your drink on the person in front of you. We'll let you know if we ever figure out how to do that with style. A girl can dream.

Enjoy the Festival and remember: This is Canada—if you don't like a film, just apologize and say, "Well, that was interesting." It's basically a rule here.

Big kind thoughts to Gerald Hartwig, Rob Jawl, Paul Hadfield, Mike Murphy, you are all great spirited supporters of this community and we'd be lost without you.

It's showtime!

Kathy Kay,
Festival Director

Feature Film by Country

ARGENTINA

92 Most People Die on Sundays
24 The Penguin Lessons

AUSTRIA

86 What a Feeling

BELGIUM

62 Soundtrack to a Coup d'Etat
66 Young Hearts

CANADA

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44 Aberdeen
123 Ari's Theme
104 Arthur Erickson: Beauty Between the Lines
105 Between Pictures: The Lens of Tamio Wakayama
106 Blue Rodeo - Lost Together
33 Can I Get a Witness?
26 Fairy Creek
45 Forbidden Music
107 Ghosts of the Sea
36 Incandescence
108 It's All Gonna Break
37 Living Together
73 Miss Boots (Mlle Bottine)
46 Nanekawâsis
126 Night of the Zoopocalypse
22 Paying For it
40 Really Happy Someday
60 Sharp Corner
61 Shepherds (Bergers)
76 SKEET
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48 Sweet Summer Pow Wow
78 The Battle of Saint-Léonard (La bataille de Saint-Léonard)
29 The Chef & The Daruma
95 The Heirloom
80 The Mother and the Bear
49 The Stand
30 The Worlds Divide
83 This Too Shall Pass
97 To The Moon
98 Universal Language
99 Vampire Zombies... From Space!
84 Village Keeper
100 You are not alone (n'êtes pas seuls)
52 Black Dog

FRANCE

56 Holy Cow (Vingt Dieux)
20 Meet the Barbarians
42 Souleyman's Story
71 Little Jaffna
58 Misericordia
53 Bonjour Tristesse

GERMANY

113 Teaches of Peache
70 From Hilde, with Love
63 The Witness
72 Me, Maryam, the Children and26 Others

GREECE

57 Lesvia

China

55 Fly Me To the Moon

iceland

79 The Day Iceland Stood Still

iran

74 My Favourite Cake

ireland

54 Bring Them Dow
90 Four Mothers
82 There's Still Tomorrow

italy

85 Vittoria
64 Vermiglio

japan

88 A Samurai in Time
34 Dust to Dust

Nepal

75 Pooja, Sir

New Zeland

28 Red, White & Brass

Palestine

39 No Other Land



Portugal

101 Grand Tour

Spain

77 Sugar Island

Switzerland

69 Frieda's Case
19 Gloria!

Turkey

59 Rosinante
96 The House With No Address

UK

21 Midas Man
94 Sunlight
81 The Summer Book

United States

27 Moloka'i Bound
32 Adult Best Friends
68 African Giants
18 Bob Trevino Likes It
35 Homegrown
109 Liza: A Truly Terrific Absolutely True Story
91 Lone Wolves
38 My Dead Friend Zoe
110 Paul Anka: His Way
41 Rent Free
23 Riff Raff
112 Sono Lino
93 Stealing Pulp Fiction
114 The Diamond Couple

Film Index

FEATURE FILMS

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66 Young Hearts



Short Bursts

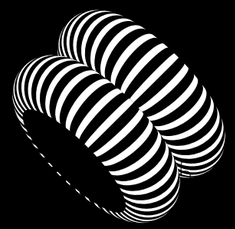
120 This Really Happened
Films: The Bird in my Backyard, Pacific Weave with Joan Carrigan, African Rifles, Pandora

117 And Now for Something Completely Different
Films: Poppy's Saturn, Moonbeaming, Stuffy, Hello Stranger, Camping, LOCA.

121 You Heard It Here F1RST
Forest Echoes, Shore to Shore, Inkwo for When the Starving Return, Uasheshkun, The Medzih Story: Restoring a Caribou Landscape

118 Bust a Gut
Films: Pique, Gatekeepers, Have We Met?, V.I.N.C.E. (Voice Intelligent Narrative Creation Engine), SUP, Back to Us, The Callback, Hairy Leg

119 Oh The Drama!
Films: Astronaut, OBSCURA / 옵스큐라, Day 3, Hatch, The Fast Runner



Film Schedule

VFF2025

VENUE	FRIDAY - FEBRUARY 7	SATURDAY - FEBRUARY 8	SUNDAY - FEBRUARY 9	MONDAY - FEBRUARY 10	TUESDAY - FEBRUARY 11
The Vic Theatre		12:15 pm There's Still Tomorrow	12:15 pm Nanekawâsis	12:15 pm Ababooned	12:15 pm Liza: A Truly Terrific Absolutely...
		2:45 pm In Conversation With...	2:45 pm Blue Rodeo: Lost Together	2:45 pm The Summer Book	2:30 pm Bonjour Tristesse
	6:30 pm Opening Gala Film: Bob Trevino Likes it!	4:30 pm Can I Get a Witness?	5:00 pm The House With No Address	5:00 pm Vermiglio	5:15 pm The Penguin Lessons
	8:30 pm Bring Them Down	7:45 pm My Dead Friend Zoe	7:45 pm Bob Trevino Likes It	7:45 pm Universal Language	7:45 pm Paying For it
Capitol 6		1:00 pm Between Pictures: The Lens of...	1:00 pm Arthur Erickson: Beauty...	1:00 pm The Battle of Saint-Leonard	1:00 pm Fly Me To the Moon
		4:00 pm Sugar Island	4:00 pm Young Hearts	4:00 pm Ghosts of the Sea	4:00 pm 7 Beats Per Minute
	6:30 pm The Witness	6:30 pm So Surreal: Behind the Masks	6:30 pm Aberdeen	6:30 pm The Day Iceland Stood Still	6:30 pm Holy Cow
	9:00 pm The Heirloom	9:00 pm Lone Wolves	9:00 pm Pooja, Sir	9:00 pm African Giants	9:00 pm What a Feeling
Cinecenta				2:30 pm The Penguin Lessons	2:30 pm Miss Boots
				5:00 pm Incandescence	5:00 pm The Stand
				7:30 pm Can I Get a Witness?	7:30 pm Really Happy Someday
Star Sidney		2:00 pm The Summer Book	2:00 pm Paul Anka: His Way		2:00 pm Sono Lino
	7:00 pm The Penguin Lessons	7:00 pm Arthur Erickson: Beauty...	7:00 pm Meet the Barbarians	7:00 pm Bonjour Tristesse	7:00 pm Four Mothers
Toaster Rocket Cinema		5:00 pm Living Together	5:00 pm Most People Die on Sundays	5:00 pm Lesvia	5:00 pm To The Moon
		7:30 pm Stealing Pulp Fiction	7:30 pm Moloka'i Bound	7:30 pm Adult Best Friends	7:30 pm You Are Not Alone

VENUE	WEDNESDAY - FEBRUARY 12	THURSDAY - FEBRUARY 13	FRIDAY - FEBRUARY 14	SATURDAY - FEBRUARY 15	SUNDAY - FEBRUARY 16
The Vic Theatre	12:00 pm From Hilde, with Love	12:15 pm Paul Anka: His Way	12:15 pm Four Mothers	12:00 pm Grand Tour	11:30 pm Jammies and Toons Night of...
	3:00 pm The Mother and the Bear	2:45 pm Vittoria	2:15 pm Soundtrack To A Coup D'etat	2:45 pm Shepherds	2:30 pm The Chef & the Daruma
	5:30 pm The Worlds Divide	5:00 pm This Too Shall Pass	5:15 pm Fairy Creek	5:30 pm Frieda's Case	5:00 pm Souleymane's Story
	7:45 pm Sharp Corner	7:45 pm Sunlight	7:45 pm It's All Gonna Break	8:00 pm Riff Raff	7:30 pm Meet the Barbarians
Capitol 6	1:00 pm Village Keeper	1:00 pm Rosinante			
	4:00 pm Dust to Dust	4:00 pm The Diamond Couple			
	6:30 pm Samia	6:30 pm Sono Lino			
	9:00 pm Little Jaffna	9:00 pm Me, Maryam, The Children...			
Cinecenta			2:30 pm Red, White & Brass	2:30 pm My Favourite Cake	2:30 pm Gloria!
	5:00 pm A Samurai in Time	5:00 pm No Other Land	5:00 pm Midas Man	5:00 pm Fairy Creek	5:00 pm Riff Raff
	7:30 pm Midas Man	7:30 pm Bring Them Down	7:30 pm Sweet Summer Pow Wow	7:30 pm Forbidden Music	7:30 pm CineVic Screening @ VFF 2025
Star Sidney	2:00 pm Miss Boots	2:00 pm The Diamond Couple			
	7:00 pm Liza: A Truly Terrific Absolutely...	7:00 pm Frieda's Case			
Toaster Rocket Cinema	5:00 pm We Strangers	5:00 pm Rent Free	5:00 pm Homegrown	2:30 pm Misericordia	
	7:30 pm Teaches of Peaches	7:30 pm Vampire Zombies...from Space!	7:30 pm SKEET	5:00 pm (S)KiDS	
				7:30 pm Black Dog	
Intrepid Theatre	5:30 pm Oh the Drama!	5:30 pm You Heard it Here F1RST	5:30 pm Bust a Gut	5:30 pm And Now for Something...	5:30 pm Bust a Gut
	7:30 pm This Really Happened	7:30 pm And Now for Something ...	7:30 pm Oh the Drama!	7:30 pm You Heard it Here F1RST	7:30 pm This Really Happened



OUR NATIVE LAND

with Tchadas Leo

CHEK is a proud sponsor of

SWEET SUMMER POWWOW

Join Tchadas at the showing,
February 14, 7:30pm
at Cinecenta

Saturdays 6:30

chek

chek+

DIRECTOR

PRINCE of WHALES
WHALE & MARINE WILDLIFE ADVENTURES

golf for kids

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An agency of the Province of British Columbia

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OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

HOSPITALITY

spinnakers
BREWPUB & GUESTHOUSES

10 ACRES

Dirty Laundry VINEYARD
Summerland, B.C.

Fairmont EMPRESS

milestones

Hey Happy

BARRELHOUSE BRINE

Sookjai THAI
Restaurant

CHOCOLATS FAVORIS

Friends & Family Bake

HIPPIE SNACKS

OSO

VARSHA
INDIAN KITCHEN

YALLA

The Old Farm Market

TERRA FOODS

Bagga Pasta

MEDIA

CBC

TIMES COLONIST

chek

YAM MAGAZINE

Monday MAGAZINE

SUPPORTING

University of Victoria | Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives

University of Victoria | Germanic & Slavic Studies

ONF NFB

CMPA
Canadian Media Producers Association
BC Producers Branch

TOURNÉE
QUÉBEC CINÉMA

Robbins

Monk Office

Pedersen's
EVENT RENTALS

FERNWOOD
COFFEE COMPANY
VICTORIA, BC, CANADA

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Consulate General of Switzerland in Vancouver

DGC
DIRECTORS GUILD OF CANADA
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Chateau Victoria
HOTEL & SUITES

HARBOUR AIR

HONG KONG
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Toronto)
We work across Canada

modo

VANCOUVER

Sidney Business Improvement Area Society

TURKISH AIRLINES

Freedom
RENT TO OWN

Festival info

We are not able to take phone orders.
Tickets are sold at the door 30 minutes before showtime and FilmFest pros know how quickly films sell out so purchase in advance at:
www.victoriafilmfestival.com
Advance tickets on sale online midnight January 9 – February 16.

IN PERSON BOX OFFICE:
1205 Blanshard St.
(corner of View and Blanshard)
Starting January 10 and ending on February 14
Tuesday – Friday, 11 – 4pm only.

TICKETS 2025

Buy TICKET HERE

VFF Membership	$ 2.00
Film Tickets	$ 14.29
Gold Pass *(guaranteed seating at regular film screenings)*	$350.00
5 Film Vouchers	$ 69.00
10 Film Vouchers	$129.00
Student Rush Ticket *(ages 19–30 with student ID On sale 10 minutes prior to screening)*	$ 8.00
Jammies and Toons	**$ 9.00**
Opening Gala Film & Party	**$ 89.00**
Film Trivia with Richard Crouse	**FREE**
Ari's Theme with Live Musical Accompaniment	**$20.00**

VFF Membership

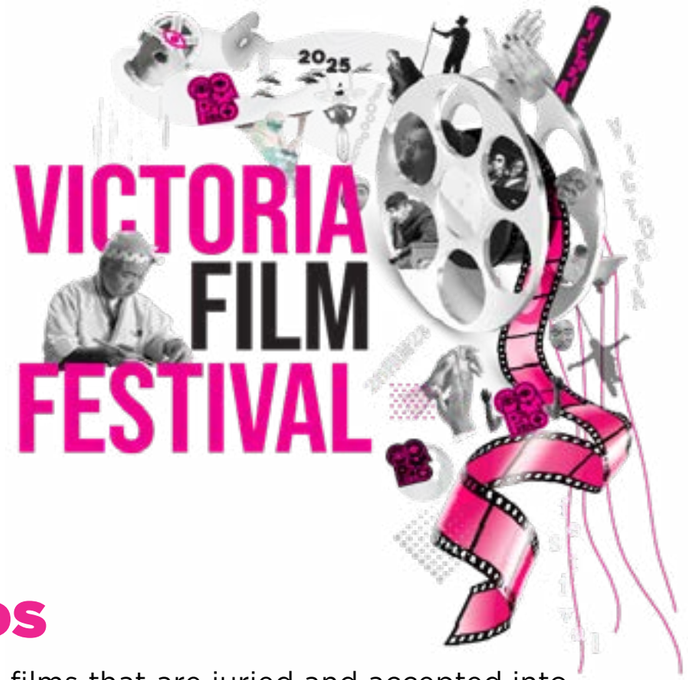
In British Columbia, the government requires that you be a member of a Society showing unclassified films and you must be over the age of 18. The Victoria Film Festival screens unclassified films. Membership is only $2.

Once you are a member you can see unclassified films at the Festival and The Vic Theatre until the end of July.

Buy your $2 ***Membership*** *here*

Tickets & passes are subject to GST – #883954026RT0001. No exchanges. No refunds. Program subject to change. Visa, Mastercard accepted.

These prices do not include taxes



AWARDS

Several of the films that are juried and accepted into the Festival are selected to receive an award. Watch for the announcement of the winners by February 17, 2025.

The categories please...

Best Feature Film
Best Canadian Feature
Best Canadian First Feature ($1000 cash prize)
Best Documentary
Best Short Film ($500 cash prize)
Audience Favourite Feature
Cultural Currents Award ($1000 cash prize)

The Team

Behind the Scenes

Festival Team

Festival Director: Kathy Kay
General Manager: Guillermo Rossi
Program Manager: Mark Hoyne
Operations Manager: David Allen
Development & Volunteer Coordinator: Nina Yang
Community Engagement: Alejandro Lema
Communications & Marketing Coordinator: Robin Wark
Vic Theatre Manager: Kiana Karimkhani
Seasonal Graphic Designer: Josh Franey

Board of Directors

President: Dan McDonagh
Vice President: Ruby Della Siega
Treasurer & Secretary: Joel Cave
Directors at Large: Rain Li, David Parfit, Barbara Todd Hager

Pre-Screening Committee

Tony Ruffolo, Maria Nunn, Jeremy Balliston, Sheena MacDonald, Christopher Cross, Alison Carge, VFF team

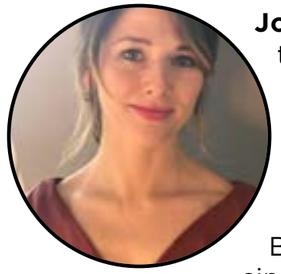
Advisory Committee

Richie Mehta – Canadian filmmaker known for Amal, Siddharth, India in a Day
Larry Weinstein – Canadian filmmaker known for Mozartballs, Hannah's Suitcase, Beethoven's Hair

The VFF Festival Director and Program Manager select the films along with:



Lexi Amoriello is a writer, editor, and content creator. You can find her on social media under the name Movie Recs By Lex, where she provides customized movie recommendations based on people's Letterboxd accounts. She also reviews new releases, does deep dives about classic films, and creates a variety of film-related content. Her focus is on recommending movies, not criticizing them. She's a member of the HCA, IFSC, OAFFC, and Film Independent.



Joanna Duncombe is based between the UK and France; Jo manages new talent and film programmes in the MENA region at British Council. She is passionate about championing underrepresented voices in world cinema. Jo was creative producer at Birds' Eye View, championing women's cinema, and launched their Reclaim the Frame programme. She has previously worked in curatorial roles with the Independent Cinema Office and London Short Film Festival. Jo is the UK programmer for Victoria Film Festival in Canada and curates films for CASA Festival of Latin American Arts. She has worked as an impact strategist on documentaries including A Syrian Love Story.



Bracken Hanuse Corlett is an interdisciplinary artist hailing from the Wuikinuxv and Klahoose Nations. He began working in theatre and performance in 2000 and eventually transitioned towards his current practice that fuses sculpture, painting and drawing with digital-media, audio-visual performance, animation and narrative. He is a graduate of the En'owkin Centre of Indigenous Art and went to Emily Carr University of Art and Design for Visual Arts. He is the Co-founder of the Vancouver Indigenous Media Arts Festival and recently sat on the VIFF Canadian Features Jury. He has studied Northwest Coast art, carving and design from acclaimed Heiltsuk artists Bradley Hunt and his sons Shawn Hunt and Dean Hunt. He was a recipient of the 2014 BC Creative Achievement Award for Aboriginal Art and has recently received public art commissions from Cities of Vancouver, Nanaimo and Victoria. He was y the 2020-21 Artist in Residence at Raycam Cooperative Centre as part of the Artists in Communities Program.



John Debono is a Toronto based documentary programmer and arts administrator. He was previously the programming manager for the JAYU Human Rights Film Festival and worked with the TIFF Docs team. He has also worked as an accessibility consultant with organizations like Hot Docs and Inside Out Toronto, helping to make film festivals a welcoming place for people

living with disabilities. In between, he is mentoring young film students at the University of Toronto and Humber Polytechnic College.



Ammar Keshodia is a filmmaker and curator based in Toronto, Canada. He has worked on the programming teams for festivals such as TIFF, SXSW, and Overlook. Ammar has written for publications like Bright Wall/Dark Room, NANG Magazine, and Peephole Journal. He is also the co-host of the Three Course Cinema Club, a podcast dedicated to constructing unorthodox triple bills of famous films and hidden gems. Ammar graduated from the University of Toronto with a degree in Political Science & Cinema Studies and his work has been supported by the Canada Council for the Arts.



Liam Lacey was a film critic for The Globe and Mail from 1995-2015, writing reviews and profiles, and covering the Cannes and Toronto and Sundance film festivals. He has contributed to Variety, Cinema Scope, Screen and Entertainment Weekly, CBC and National Public Radio and served on several film juries. He currently contributes to the film review site, Original-Cin.ca and writes for POV Magazine, a Canadian magazine focusing on documentary films.



Megan Leonard a creative producer, and festival programmer based in Seattle, WA. Her projects have premiered at top-tier festivals around the world, including Sundance, SXSW and Fantasia. Leonard started working for film festivals in 2010 and currently leads the New American Cinema and Shorts teams at the Seattle International Film Festival. She has also programmed for Indie Memphis and DOC NYC, served on juries at Fantastic Fest, Cleveland International Film Festival and Palm Springs ShortFest, and provided programming mentorship at SXSW and the Film Independent Forum.



Kathleen Mullen For the past 20+ years, Kathleen has contributed to the planning and execution of film and art festivals nationally and internationally as curator, programmer, and artistic director. Currently she programs with Seattle International Film Festival, Victoria Film Festival, Vancouver Latin American Film Festival, and Frameline. For 9 years, Kathleen was the Artistic Director leading the programming and operations Seattle Queer Film Festival (SQFF). Other festivals Kathleen works with include the Whistler Film Festival and Skoden Indigenous Film Festival at Simon Fraser University. Kathleen has also programmed for Toronto International Film Festival, Hot Docs, Vancouver Queer Film Festival, Inside Out Toronto LGBT Film Festival, Planet in Focus, Vancouver International Film Festival, and Boston Museum of Fine Arts.



Alex Rogalski is the senior Canadian programmer for Hot Docs. Past programming work includes the Toronto International Film Festival, Calgary International Film Festival, Gimme Some Truth, and the Human Rights Watch Film Festival. He is the former Executive Director of PAVED Arts and New Media, and currently a Program Consult with SK Arts in Saskatoon.



Dan Russek is Professor in Hispanic and Italian Studies at the University of Victoria. His fields of research are Latin American literature, film, visual arts, and aesthetics. He is the President of the Hispanic Film Society of Victoria and he coordinates the Annual Latin American and Spanish Film Week at Cinecenta, which will turn thirteen in 2023.



Kimber Sider is a documentary filmmaker and the Artistic Director/Lead Programmer for the Guelph Film Festival, one of the oldest documentary film festivals in the world. She holds a PhD in theatre and performance from the University of Guelph and is a lecturer in Communication Arts at the University of Waterloo.

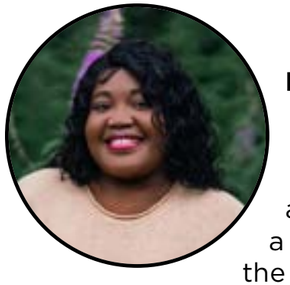




Maarten Stoltz is the Senior Programmer at Movies that Matter, Sales Manager at the Dutch film distributor Reveal Films, and a board member of the Alumni Circle Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. He holds a BA and MA in History, as well as a BA in Media and Culture. Active in the film industry since 2011, Maarten has participated in numerous international film festival juries, panels, workshops, and pitching sessions. Renowned for his expertise in providing guidance and feedback during rough-cut screenings, he is also a skilled host and moderator for Q&As and industry events.



Randy Waldie is a lifelong film aficionado. Randy's first job at age 15 was with Famous Players Theatres. He has worked in television and video production and has a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Drama. Randy brings his deep passion, love and commitment to quality cinema to the Victoria Film Festival.



Letay Williams is the creator and screenwriter of Traytown (2020), Creators of Colour's 2021 Big Pitch at TIFF Audience Choice award winner. She has served as a narrative shorts programmer for the Slamdance Film Festival, and on the CineSpark Pitch Competition jury. Letay is a University of Victoria MFA in Writing alum, 2022 BIPOC TV & Film Episodic Writers' Lab participant, and attended the 2023 European Film Market as an Emerging Producer in UNESCO's Transcultura Program and the EFM's Diversity Toolbox Program. Letay is intentional about telling stories that reflect her Jamaican heritage and the multicultural aspects of Canada.



Jacob Crepeault is a Toronto-based film programmer, writer, and creator of the film publication GLEANING. Since 2019, Jacob has programmed films at several Canadian film organizations such as TIFF Cinematheque, Inside Out 2SLGBTQ+ Film Festival, Pleasure Dome, and Victoria Film Festival. Jacob has programmed films by and about legendary artists like Charli XCX, William Basinski, and Kenneth Anger.

Greeting Messages

A MESSAGE FROM PREMIER DAVID EBY



As premier of British Columbia, I am pleased to welcome everyone to the 31st Victoria Film Festival (VFF).

VFF is Vancouver Island's oldest and largest film festival. It offers a diverse range of movies and shorts from local and international filmmakers, providing an important platform for underrepresented voices and emerging artists. Nationally recognized for its contributions to filmmaking, this event continues to be a highlight in Victoria's cultural calendar.

I would like to acknowledge the organizers, volunteers and sponsors for their hard work and dedication that brings this festival to life. Congratulations to the talented filmmakers and all those involved in the productions for their inclusion in this year's event.

Enjoy the films!

UN MESSAGE DU PREMIER MINISTRE DAVID EBY

À titre de premier ministre de la Colombie-Britannique, je suis ravi de souhaiter la bienvenue à toutes et à tous à la 31e édition du Festival du film de Victoria, le VFF.

Le VFF est le festival de cinéma le plus grand et le plus ancien de l'île de Vancouver. Présentant une diversité de films et de courts-métrages locaux et étrangers, il offre une tribune importante aux voix sous-représentées et aux nouveaux artistes. Reconnu à l'échelle nationale pour sa contribution au cinéma, ce rendez-vous reste un moment fort du calendrier culturel de Victoria.

Je tiens à remercier les organisateurs, les bénévoles et les commanditaires dont le travail dévoué permet au festival d'exister. Et toutes mes félicitations à l'ensemble des cinéastes de talent et autres personnes qui ont pris part à la production des oeuvres présentées cette année.

Bon cinéma!

HONOURABLE DAVID EBY, K.C., PREMIER OF BRITISH COLUMBIAL'HONORABLE DAVID EBY, K.C. PREMIER MINISTRE DE LA COLOMBIE-BRITANNIQUE

A MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE / L'HONORABLE PASCALE ST-ONGE MINISTER OF CANADIAN HERITAGE



Welcome to the 2025 Victoria Film Festival!

Much like its namesake city, the Victoria Film Festival is a true original, bringing together creative voices and diverse stories from Vancouver Island, across Canada and around the world.

Our government is the biggest supporter of the arts across Canada because we know they bring us together and help us build the open, inclusive Canada we all deserve. That's why we are supporting this year's landmark event.

As Minister of Canadian Heritage, I'd like to thank everyone at the festival for their hard work. Here's to many more years of cinema magic to come!

Enjoy the shows

Bienvenue au Festival du film de Victoria 2025.

Le Victoria Film Festival, qui porte le nom de la ville où il se déroule, se distingue par son originalité. Il réunit des voix créatives et regroupe des histoires diverses de l'île de Vancouver, du Canada et d'ailleurs.

Notre gouvernement est le plus grand bailleur de fonds des arts au Canada, car nous savons qu'ils nous rassemblent et nous aident à construire le Canada ouvert et inclusif que nous méritons. C'est pourquoi nous soutenons le rendez-vous historique de cette année.

À titre de ministre du Patrimoine canadien, je remercie toute l'équipe du festival de son travail acharné. Je vous souhaite de nombreuses autres années de magie cinématographique!

Bon cinéma!

THE HONOURABLE / L'HONORABLE PASCALE ST-ONGE





Message from the Honourable Spencer Chandra Herbert, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

On behalf of Premier David Eby and the Government of British Columbia, I'm thrilled to welcome you to the 31st annual Victoria Film Festival.

The Victoria Film Festival is more than just a gathering of movie lovers - it's a creative force that shapes B.C.'s film industry, showcases excellence, and inspires a new generation of filmmakers. As the largest and longest-running film festival on Vancouver Island, it provides a unique learning and networking experience, where bold ideas find their stage, and local talent gets its big break.

From local gems to global masterpieces, these films share perspectives from every corner of the world to the heart of our province. To the organizers, you don't just run a film festival, you build bridges for filmmakers, spark the imagination, and provide space for creativity to thrive. To the volunteers and donors, your behind-the-scenes magic is what keeps this show rolling. And to the filmmakers, your work reminds us why storytelling matters - you make us laugh, cry, and see the world through a new lens.

Your impact reaches far beyond the pink carpet. Thank you for making B.C. a brighter, bolder place for the arts.

Sincerely,

HON. SPENCER CHANDRA HERBERT,
MINISTER OF TOURISM, ARTS, CULTURE AND SPORT

A message from Marianne Alto



Greetings from Mayor Marianne Alto

On behalf of the City of Victoria, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 31st Annual Victoria Film Festival.

The festival features a distinctive lineup of events, including the Gala and Springboard, which bring together filmmakers and industry professionals. Audiences also have the chance to experience a selection of the finest Canadian and international films. This year, a highlight is Sweet *Summer Pow Wow*, a feature film shot on Vancouver Island and written and directed by BC actor and screenwriter Darrell Dennis of the Shuswap Nation.

Our festival reflects the creativity and innovation that showcases Victoria as an arts and culture capital. Congratulations and a big thank you to the committed organizers and volunteers for their work not just on the second largest film festival in the province, but for organizing year-round screenings events and workshops.

Thank you for supporting the Victoria Film Festival. Enjoy the Show!,

MARIANNE ALTO
VICTORIA MAYOR



Message from Julie Roy
Telefilm



Telefilm Canada is proud to promote and celebrate stories that reflect the diversity of voices and communities of our country. That is why we are happy to partner with the Victoria Film Festival!

Investing in films and reinforcing the importance of cinema is at the center of our mission. We do this at every stage of a film production's lifecycle: from pre-development to distribution and promotion. Festivals play an invaluable role in boosting the visibility of Canadian and Indigenous films while providing opportunities for networking, collaboration and the formation of new partnerships.

Thank you to the Victoria Film Festival for creating this space where creators can meet, connect and inspire each other. These moments are an engine of growth for our industry.

JULIE ROY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO, TELEFILM CANADA

VFF 2025

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Film program



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These films come with cred – you've heard about them, can't wait to see them and goodness forbid you're feeling a smidge of FOMO – and maybe that's a good thing... or is it?



Buy Ticket
Gala + Party (Feb 7)

Buzz+

BOB TREVINO LIKES IT

TRACIE LAYMON

USA | 2024 | 102 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 7 | 6:30 PM
FEB 9 | 7:45 PM

Winning audience and jury awards, this remarkable debut film from director Tracie Laymon also scored the Grand Jury Prize at SXSW for a film based on a true story.

Taking a lighthearted premise, Laymon's film is grounded in humor and pathos making it a moving celebration of kindness.

In an attempt to reconnect with her estranged father, Lily sends a Facebook friend request to a man with the same name. While not her father, Bob (played with heartfelt warmth by John Leguizamo) becomes an unexpected and transformative presence in her life. As their bond deepens, Bob steps into the fatherly role Lily has longed for, while Lily brings new light and vitality into Bob's world. This poignant film reminds us that positive, supportive male energy has a crucial place in society and challenges the tendency to broadly vilify it.

The ensemble cast is exceptional and the connection between characters is authentic. Barbie Ferreira as Lily expresses vulnerability and growing confidence as she trusts and learns from her 'new dad'. It's an important message to connect with and it couldn't have been delivered by a better hand. – KK

Gentle + Funny + Connection

SXSW Grand Jury Narrative + Audience Award

Buy Ticket
for Feb 9



GLORIA!

MARGHERITA VICARIO

Switzerland, Italy | 2024 | 105 min

Buzz+

CINECENTA
FEB 16 | 2:30 PM

It is the 1800s and Teresa is a servant at the Sant'Ignazio Music Institute for Orphaned Girls outside of Venice. Despite being non-verbal, she has a deep love for music and dreams of becoming one of the great classical composers. As the school and their main male conductor is preparing to perform a concert for Pope Pius VII, Teresa collaborates with a quartet of students to compose their own piece that captures the world by surprise.

This tribute to the lost female composers of this period is at the core of Gloria!, the directorial debut of Italian pop star Margherita Vicario. It is a film that takes the best parts of *Good Will Hunting*, then adds a sense of female empowerment and an incredible score composed by Vicario. With a charming, young ensemble cast, viewers will come out of this film motivated to make a difference.

Gloria! speaks to how talent can come from anywhere and the community's ability to empower you even in the darkest of times. - JD

Feminism + Music + Motivational

Grand Jury Prize Seattle Film Festival

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket **NOW**

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Consulate General of Switzerland in Vancouver



MEET THE BARBARIANS

JULIE DELPY

France | 2024 | 101 min

Buzz+

STAR CINEMA
FEB 9 | 7:00 PM
THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 16 | 7:30 PM

The people of Paimpont, Brittany, are almost too excited to welcome a group of Ukrainian refugees into their small town. The local council preps for their arrival, with everyone eager to show their enthusiasm, but there's just one small problem: It seems that displaced Ukrainians are very high in demand, and they'll have to settle for a Syrian family instead. So begins Julie Delpy's clever satire, taking a comic look at what happens when our self-image as upstanding global citizens comes face to face with the messy reality of creating a home for people who don't have one to return to.

The Fayad family tries their best to fit in among the many small-town squabbles bubbling around them, but not before they're forced to demonstrate proof of their trauma yet again to a sea of doubting faces. With thoughtful direction and a witty script, Delpy and her co-writers take a story that starts like a parody and suffuses it with incredible pathos, as filmgoers slowly become acquainted with the Fayads' daring dream of a beautiful future they could build in this new town.

For many, the Syrian War is no longer the conflict du jour, but Meet the Barbarians reminds us that every passing year produces only more disenfranchised people. It's now more important to roll up our sleeves, put aside petty problems, and begin the difficult work of care. – AK

Chucklesome + Political + Poignant

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket at ***The Vic Theatre***

Buy Ticket at ***Star Cinema***



MIDAS MAN

JOE STEPHENSON

United Kingdom | 2024 | 112 min

CINECENTA
FEB 12 | 7:30 PM
FEB 14 | 5:00 PM

In 1960s Liverpool, Brian Epstein is a young man looking to expand his family's record business and manage artists himself. One night he goes into a decrepit cellar to discover a popular underground band he believes has potential. That band is The Beatles and Epstein becomes the secret ingredient that changes pop music forever.

Epstein's underappreciated legacy is explored in Joe Stephenson's Midas Man, a charming and touching biopic about the influential "fifth" Beatle. Stephenson provides a detailed portrait of not only Epstein's rise to be one of the world's most powerful music managers, but also the struggles Epstein faced - whether professional, keeping the band together, or personal, as a closeted queer man in the 1960s. The film is like any great Beatles track, it finds ways to explore deeper truths, while never losing the sense of joy that music brings.

Brought to life by an ensemble cast that includes Jacob Fortune-Lloyd (*Queen's Gambit*), Eddie Marsan and Academy-award nominee Emily Watson, Midas Man hits all the right notes in giving Epstein his deserved moment in the sun - JD

Beatles + Nostalgic + LGBTQ

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



PAYING FOR IT

SOOK-YIN LEE

Canada | 2024 | 85 min

Buzz+

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 11 | 7:45 PM

Chester (Dan Beirne) is a cartoonist, who in the wake of his breakup with Sonny (Emily Lê), decides to hire sex workers rather than pursue romantic relationships. It makes sense to him as a practical choice but with it comes the complexities of sex as a transactional act, cultural conventions surrounding what love is supposed to be, and the nature of human connection. Rounding out the cast is Andrea Werhun as Yulissa, who meets Chester as a client, but eventually forms a deeper connection that blurs boundaries between what he thought he was paying for and what he's actually getting.

Adapting Chester Brown's autobiographical graphic novel, based on her relationship with the artist, director Sook-Yin Lee's personal understanding of this story gives her the tools to delve into uncomfortable conversations that are authentic, heartfelt and humorous. As the three central characters tackle taboos, Lee delivers an unforgettable film set in the late 90's that challenges conventions of what love looks like in our modern world. -AR

Sex + Adaptation + Relationships

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



RIFF RAFF

DITO MONTIEL

USA | 2024 | 103 min

Buzz+

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 15 | 8:00 PM
CINECENTA
FEB 16 | 5:00 PM

An all-star cast playing vibrant complex and engaging characters is the standout feature of this black comedy that explores the dysfunction that can permeate an impromptu family reunion.

Vincent (Ed Harris) is a reformed criminal who has put his criminal past behind him and is enthusiastically living on the straight and narrow. On a getaway to his holiday home with his new wife Sandy (Gabrielle Union) and his stepson, the peace is shattered by the arrival of his estranged son Rocco, Rocco's pregnant girlfriend and Vincent's drunk and horny first wife Ruth (Jennifer Coolidge) who are on the run from two gangsters Lefty (Bill Murray) and Lonnie (Pete Davidson).

The character work is exceptional. Coolidge's Ruth is jaw droppingly unfiltered and her ability to be cringe inducing is impressive. Bill Murray as Lefty is equally impressive playing a philosophical cold-blooded killer with a healthy dose of comedic charm.

Within this great cast Ed Harris stands out, equally believable as a man with a violent history and a truly reformed family man trying to stay on the right path.

Riff Raff examines our relationship with ourselves, our past and our bonds of friendship, obligation and family in a darkly comedic way. – RW

Funny + Dark + Appealing

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket at ***The Vic Theatre***

Buy Ticket at ***Cinecenta***



THE PENGUIN LESSONS

PETER CATTANEO

Argentina/Spain/USA | 2024 | 110 min

Buzz+

STAR CINEMA | FEB 7 | 7:00 PM
CINECENTA | FEB 10 | 2:30 PM
THE VIC THEATRE | FEB 11 | 5:15 PM

Based on a true story, Steve Coogan plays Tom Michell, an English professor who arrives in Buenos Aires to teach at a private school on the eve of the coup d'etat that plunged Argentina into turmoil in 1976. Tom is cynical, sarcastic and disillusioned and the circumstances of his employment and the situation around him do nothing to improve his attitude. Jonathan Pryce, as the admonishing headmaster advising all to keep out of the chaos, is on point.

During a brief escape to Uruguay, Tom rescues a penguin from an oil slick to impress a woman he has just met. Tom tries to convince the penguin to return to the ocean, but the penguin has other ideas and insists on staying close to his rescuer. And so begins the relationship between Tom and the charmingly named Juan Salvador.

Juan Salvador casts a spell on everyone who meets him, and he quickly becomes Tom's best friend and confidante.

Director Cattaneo (*Full Monty*) weaving comedy and drama together, tempers the dark backdrop of a turbulent time with the beguiling little penguin and a sense of reawakening personal and political responsibility. – RW

Charming + Heartwarming + Engaging

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket at ***Star Cinema***

Buy Ticket at ***Cinecenta***

Buy Ticket at ***The Vic Theatre***



Pacific Rim centric - as far away as Singapore and as close as an Oak Bay tea party.



FAIRY CREEK

JEN MURANETZ

Canada (BC) | 2024 | 85 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 14 | 5:15 PM
CINECENTA
FEB 15 | 5:00 PM

The blockades protesting the logging of the Fairy Creek watershed on Vancouver Island — one of the last remaining stands of old-growth timber in B.C. — marked the largest act of civil disobedience in Canadian history. Over a two-year period, director Muranetz offers an intimate look behind the scenes of the protest, capturing the relentless struggle of the activists who battled not only the logging company but also the RCMP, who were tasked with enforcing court orders granting the loggers access to the land.

Muranetz skillfully documents the inventive and resourceful tactics used by the protesters, the strong sense of community that formed within the blockade, and the intricate coordination that sustained their efforts. The film also doesn't shy away from the violence that erupted as police used force and tear gas to break through protest lines, underscoring the physical and emotional toll on both the protesters and the authorities.

At its core, Fairy Creek is a study of relationships. Muranetz captures the complex dynamics between protesters and the RCMP, whose interactions, shaped by two years of constant engagement, range from hostile to unexpectedly familiar. The film also explores the tensions within the Indigenous community itself, with some members supporting the protests and others opposing them, as well as the friction between Indigenous and settler factions within the movement.

While the Pacheedaht First Nation and Teal Jones Group declined to participate in the film, potentially leaving it open to accusations of bias, Muranetz wisely focuses on the people within the protest and the diversity of perspectives that shaped their collective action. This approach adds depth and nuance, making the film a poignant reflection of human values, conflict, and solidarity in the face of environmental and social struggle. - RW

Spirited + Engaging + Provocative

Buy Ticket at ***The Vic Theatre***

Buy Ticket at ***Cinecenta***

DGC
DIRECTORS GUILD OF CANADA
BRITISH COLUMBIA



MOLOKA'I BOUND

ALIKA TENGAN

USA | 2024 | 112 min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 9 | 7:30 PM

When Kainoa (Holden Mandrial-Santos), a headstrong Hawaiian man, returns home after a stint in prison, he dutifully commits to reconnecting with his son Jonathan. But with Jonathan entering puberty, and the years lost to time, the transition back to family life isn't as smooth as he hopes. With this second chance, Kainoa feels a responsibility to learn and pass down Kānaka Maoli traditions to provide his son a chance to see the richness of his cultural lineage. Old habits die hard for Kainoa, but he desperately yearns to show Jonathan something other than his tough exterior.

In this follow-up to his Sundance 2022 standout debut, *Every Day in Kaimuki*, writer/director Alika Tengan continues to showcase family dynamics and the impacts of colonization through a contemporary Native Hawaiian lens. Striking backdrops of O'ahu from cinematographer Chapin Hall will submerge you in the natural beauty of the islands, while Tengan's storytelling pulls at heartstrings in this oft unseen portrait of fatherhood.
-ML

Spirited + Engaging + Provocative

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



RED, WHITE & BRASS

DAMON FEPULEA'I

New Zealand | 2023 | 85 min

CINECENTA
FEB 14 | 2:30 PM

A delightful true story of a church group who tricked their way into the Rugby World Cup match by forming a Tongan brass band to provide showtime entertainment.

Maka (John-Paul Foliaki) and Veni (Dimitrius Schuster-Koloamatangi) fail to get tickets for the upcoming rugby match, disappointing both family and friends. They soon discover that the match is holding trials for showtime entertainment, and they resolve to form an all-Tongan marching band. Now it's not just tickets on the line but the reputation of the entire Tongan community. As these non-musicians squeak and squawk their way into forming a band, help comes in the form of a Tongan newcomer with experience.

Red, White & Brass is a joyful and heartwarming film, brimming with both humor and heartfelt moments. At its core is Maka, a charming but frustrating character who craves the spotlight without effort. As family and friends grow weary of his antics, Maka is finally forced to confront his shortcomings and step up to the challenge, leading to a satisfying and uplifting transformation.

Fepulea'i makes a refreshingly sweet debut. Most of the actors are non-professionals and this adds to the charm. There's a handmade feel that is genuinely appropriate for the story. – KK

Funny + Traditional + Exuberant

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



THE CHEF AND THE DARUMA

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 16 | 2:30 PM

MADS K. BAEKKEVOLD

Canada | 2024 | 90 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

When Hidekazu Tojo opened his eponymous restaurant in Vancouver in 1988, he triggered a transformation in North America's food culture, popularizing sushi with his infamous California roll. His hospitality blended culinary cultures that welcomed celebrities and locals alike. Still working and innovating in his 70's, Tojo reflects on his life and the pivotal moments from his childhood days in Kagoshima, Japan to Osaka's top restaurants and eventual immigration to Canada in 1971.

Brilliantly framing this biography around the Japanese daruma, director Mads Baekkevold uses the red doll's role as a talisman for perseverance and good luck as Tojo explains how it embodies the pursuit of one's goals. Moving between mouth-watering dishes and breathtaking landscapes, the chef's journey takes him back to his motherland and explores his relationship with two countries and the adversities Japanese Canadians have faced. With wisdom and grace, this loving tribute highlights a man who has brought worlds together through a shared love of food. -AR

Food + Culture + Philosophy

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***

DGC DIRECTORS GUILD OF CANADA BRITISH COLUMBIA



THE WORLDS DIVIDE

DENVER JACKSON

Canada (Victoria) | 2024 | 116 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 12 | 5:30 PM

Victoria-based filmmaker Denver Jackson brings a post-apocalyptic world to life in *The Worlds Divide*, a film that was animated solely by Jackson himself.

The film begins on a futuristic Earth that has been consumed by war and famine. Natomi tries to live a cautious life but when the dangers escalate, her father Terric makes a daring decision to put his children out of harm's way. He transports them to a magical world called Esluna. Natomi wakes up alone in a lush, thriving world that is the opposite of the crumbling world she left behind. However, her safety quickly becomes threatened by the tyrannical princess, Idena, who attempts to capture and kill her. As she escapes, Natomi discovers that her father is considered a god in Esluna and the people want him to bring back balance and peace. Natomi makes it her mission to get her father back to Esluna with the help of an unlikely group of new friends she meets along the way.

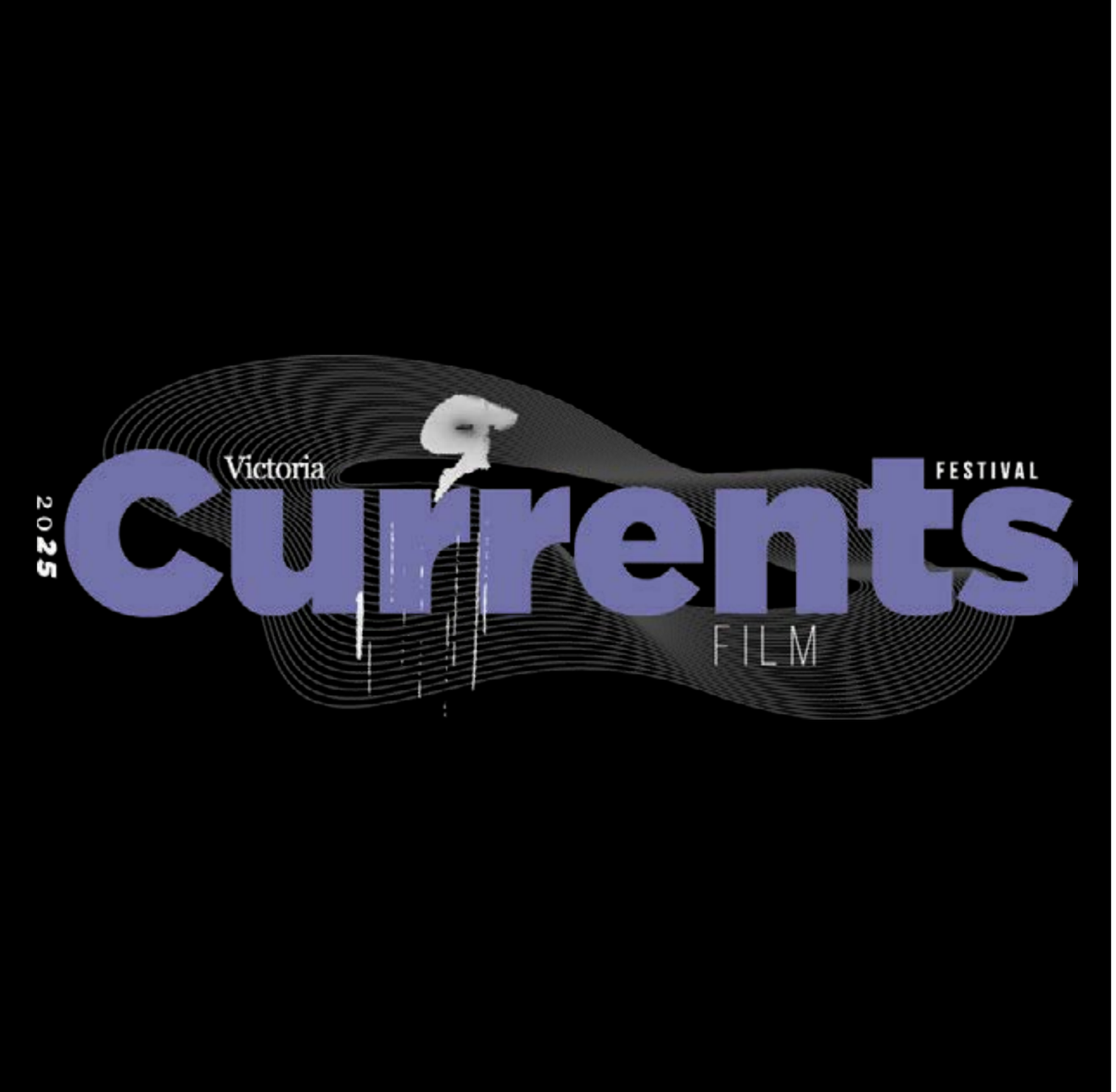
Featuring an array of dynamic characters, action-packed adventures, and unforgettable suspense, *The Worlds Divide* makes a bold leap forward in both the genres of animation and fantasy. - JC

Thrilling + Fantasy + Immersive

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***

DGC DIRECTORS GUILD OF CANADA BRITISH COLUMBIA



So much is going on – current affairs wise that is – here's a collection of stories ripped – yes, you read rightly – RIPPED from the headlines. Sorry, didn't mean to shout.



ADULT BEST FRIENDS

DELANEY BUFFETT

USA | 2024 | 90 min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 10 | 7:30 PM

They say never let a guy come between your friendship, but does that still hold true once you're engaged? When longtime best friends Delaney and Katie's bond is tested, their carefree vibe is rudely interrupted.

Best friends since childhood and now firmly in adulthood, free-spirited Delaney (played by writer/director/producer Delaney Buffett) still parties with abandon, while people-pleasing Katie (writer/executive producer Katie Corwin, also wearing multiple hats) has settled into a more conventional, normcore lifestyle with her attractive but perhaps boring boyfriend, John (*Mason Gooding, Booksmart, Scream*). Delaney isn't a fan of John and secretly hopes for a breakup. But when John proposes, Katie struggles to share the news of her engagement with her best friend, who clearly isn't thrilled.

As Delaney and Katie embark on their annual girls' trip, will Katie drop some hard truths, or are these two best friends headed for a painful breakup? In their feature debut, *Adult Best Friends*, Buffett and Corwin deliver a hilariously awkward and painfully relatable comedy that captures the ups and downs of friendship in adulthood. – ML

Cringe + Besties + Comedy

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



CAN I GET A WITNESS?

ANN MARIE FLEMING

Canada | 2024 | 110 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 8 | 4:30 PM
CINECENTA
FEB 10 | 7:30 PM

In a world that is both nostalgic and futuristic, extreme measures mitigate an environmental collapse as the government relies on analog technologies to preserve scarce resources. They are also enforcing an agreement that no one shall live beyond the age of 50. Ellie (Sandra Oh) is quickly approaching her 50th year as her teenage daughter Kiah (Keira Jang) starts a new job, using her artistic gifts as a documenter of personal dying ceremonies. Struggling with the emotional toll of her new duties, Kiah's more experienced co-worker Daniel (Joel Oulette) helps her understand the purpose of their work with bureaucratic detachment.

Director Anne Marie Fleming blends her signature animation seamlessly into the unfolding narratives of these characters' pre-determined lifespans. While Ellie quietly makes her final preparations, Kiah and Daniel explore existential questions about the choices we must make to sustain our species in this beautifully composed tale about sacrifice and love. -AR

Love + Future + Animation

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket at ***The Vic Theatre***

Buy Ticket at ***Cinecenta***



DUST TO DUST

KOSAI SEKINE

Japan | 2024 | 89 min

CAPITOL 6
FEB 12 | 4:00 PM

Where do old clothes go to die? For Yuima Nakazato, one of Japan's leading haute couture designers, the question is at the heart of the future of fashion and the health of the planet. In this eye-opening documentary, director Kosai Sekine follows the quiet-spoken designer in his late thirties, in his ponytail and halting English, as he gets on a plane, not to Milan or Paris, but Nairobi. Kenya is one of the African countries where much of the world's used clothing is dumped, most of it ending in landfills or open-air burn pits.

According to the UN, the clothing industry is second only to the oil industry in its ecological impact. We follow Nakazato as he wanders through the massive Gikomba Market where used clothes are sold by the hundreds of kilos, and northern Kenya, where former grazing pastures have turned to deserts. With eight weeks to go before presenting at the Paris Haute Couture show, the designer begins avidly looking for solutions, drawing on cutting edge new technology, including synthetic proteins inspired by spider webs, to solve the problems old technology has created.

As the clock ticks down toward the Paris show, Nakazato works to the point of exhaustion. We watch as he draws inspiration from both traditional Japanese and Kenyan clothing, creating outfits using squares of cloth suspended on strings. These designs evoke the intricate folds of origami, while the colors shimmer in a way reminiscent of a Monet painting. It's a gorgeous reimagining of high fashion as an inspiration for environmental sanity. -LL

Eco-conscious + Innovative + Mesmerizing

Movie TRAILER

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University of Victoria | Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives



HOMEGROWN

MICHAEL PREMO

USA | 2024 | 109 min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 14 | 5:00 PM

In the current polarized American political environment, both left and right seem to agree on one thing: the status quo is broken. Michael Premo, a Black American activist and filmmaker deeply involved in the Occupy Wall Street movement, decided to learn about people who didn't agree with him. To do so, he embedded himself with three far-right extremists of the Proud Boys. Using a mostly unobtrusive camera with a few direct-to-camera interviews, Premo lets us get to know these men, in many ways as they might want to be seen but without rationalizing their anger, bigotry, and misinformed views.

The three men include Randy, a military veteran, Chris, a New Jersey man married to a Chinese-born nurse, and Thad, a conservative Texan Latino who also supports Black Lives Matter. Rejecting the "white supremacist" label, they see themselves as "Western chauvinists", dedicated to saving capitalism and traditional family values from Antifa and liberals. At the same time, Premo's film shows how they put their family's welfare in jeopardy by flaunting COVID restrictions, spending household income on expensive military gear and travel, and risking long prison sentences. The culmination of their crusade is the assault on the Washington D.C. Capitol building on Jan. 6, 2021, shown with previously unseen footage from the middle of the angry throng. -LL

Politics + Extremism + Embedded

Movie TRAILER

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INCANDESCENCE

NOVA AMI AND VELCROW RIPPER

Canada | 2024 | 105 min

CINECENTA
FEB 10 | 5:00 PM

As wildfires transform landscapes with increasing ferocity and frequency, a reckoning has arrived between humans and our relationship with the planet. Whether due to man-made or natural causes, lush forests reduced to dry ashes are a reminder of how quickly vital habitats and resources can be destroyed. Tracing the cycles of the seasons, award-winning directors Velcrow Ripper and Nova Ami reveal the patterns of destruction, aftermath, and rebirth as they follow indigenous elders and first responders who help shape fire's destructive nature into a beneficial force of growth and renewal.

Soaring high above the smoke plumes that blend into the clouds, Incandescence takes a broad view of the impact these magnificent infernos have on all forms of life, including those that depend on scorched earth to survive and adapt in an ever-changing world. A powerful antidote to climate fatigue, this holistic exploration doesn't dismiss the consequences of our reckless environmental actions, but it does offer a path forward to work with nature rather than against it. - AR

Environment + Epic + Illuminating

Movie TRAILER

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NFB ONF



LIVING TOGETHER

HALIMA ELKHATABI

Canada | 2024 | 75 min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 8 | 5:00 PM

With the cost of living rising, more people are turning to cohabitation across generations. But when the “room for rent” sign goes up, that is only the start of the decisions. In a series of inquisitive encounters and captivating conversations, people looking for a roommate in Montreal explore the prospect of forging a genuine connection, trying to parse which match is “the one.” Through an intimate lens, *Living Together* paints a complex and engaging picture of how identity informs one’s place in the world and what one desires in a home. From the start, the questions and answers run the gamut, from quirky and unexpected to deeply personal, as each person seeks to define their individuality and suss out the red flags of incompatibility before the boxes are packed and shared space is occupied. – KS

Quirky + Housing + Relationships

Movie TRAILER

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ONF NFB



MY DEAD FRIEND ZOE

KYLE HAUSMANN-STOKES

USA | 2024 | 98 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 8 | 7:45 PM

*In My Dead Friend Zo*e, Merit, a recently discharged military veteran, strikes up an unusual friendship with her old army pal, Zoe. Most notably strange because… Zoe's dead. After receiving a call from her mom, Merit is tasked with checking up on her grandfather, Dale (Ed Harris), a Vietnam veteran who would rather be left alone.

Sonequa Martin-Green (*Star Trek: Discovery*) delivers a heartbreaking performance as the PTSD-ridden Merit, working through her trauma with the guidance of group therapy leader Dr. Cole (Morgan Freeman) and attempting to rebuild a relationship with her grandfather—all while being haunted by her snarky, unalive comrade. Unraveling through flashbacks, Merit and Zoe (Natalie Morales, *No Hard Feelings*) form an inseverable bond while on active duty, but Merit does everything she can to push away what really happened to Zoe.

Drawing from his own experience serving in the US Army, writer/director Kyle Hausmann-Stokes crafts a strikingly poignant narrative about the mental toll paid by veterans, even once they've returned home. – ML

Traumedy + Veterans + Honor

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket *NOW*



NO OTHER LAND

BASEL ADRA, HAMDAN BALLAL, YUVAL ABRAHAM, RACHEL SZOR

Palestine, Norway | 2024 | 92 min

CINECENTA
FEB 13 | 5:00 PM

One of the most urgent and important films of the year, *No Other Land,* is the directorial debut of Basel Adra, Hamdan Ballal, Yuval Abraham, and Rachel Szor. This Palestinian-Israeli collective came together to make No Other Land as an act of resistance. These courageous activists created a timely, one-of-a-kind documentary that offers an unrelenting look at the devastating, inhumane destruction of Massafer Yatta, in the West Bank, by Israeli authorities.

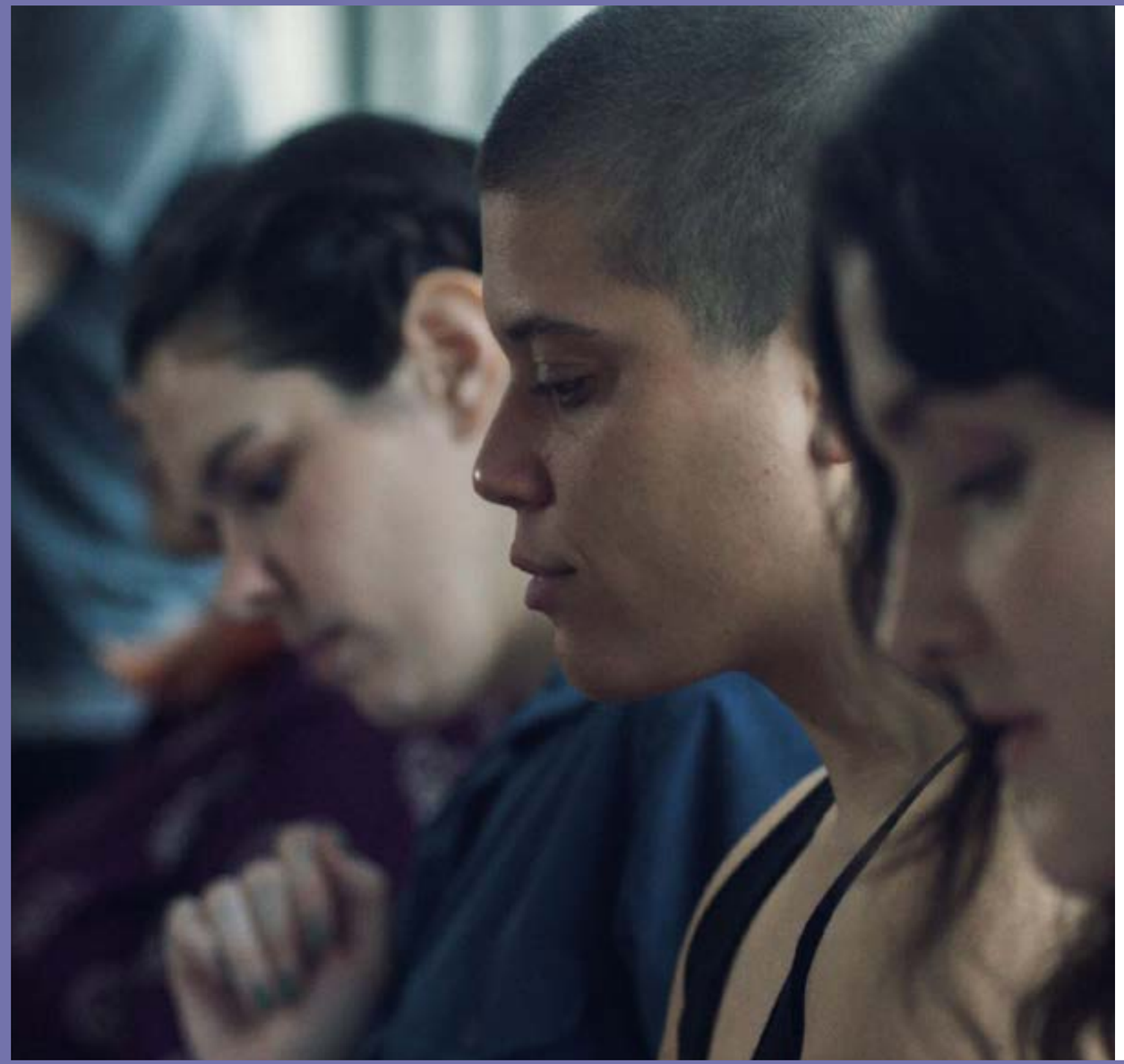
Basel Adra is a Palestinian activist who fearlessly records the destruction of his homeland and displacement of his people by Israeli soldiers. In the process, he befriends Israeli journalist Yuval Abraham. *No Other Land* chronicles this unlikely friendship while simultaneously capturing the horrors of the ongoing conflict in the region.

Not only does *No Other Land* document the harrowing atrocities happening to the Palestinian people, but it's also a poignant portrait of their perseverance and passion for their land. It's a gut-wrenching, powerful documentary, and while it certainly isn't an easy watch, it's a necessary one. *No Other Land* is an absolute must-see and should be deemed essential viewing. – LA

Urgent + Devastating + Essential

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket NOW



REALLY HAPPY SOMEDAY

J STEVENS

Canada | 2024 | 90 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

CINECENTA
FEB 11 | 7:30 PM

Winner of the Borsos Award for Best Canadian Feature at the Whistler Film Festival

For rising musical-theatre star Z (Breton Lalama), auditions are no longer the same. After transitioning to a trans-masculine identity, Z finds himself grappling with the loss of his once-phenomenal voice and vocal range. Singing has always been his greatest joy, but now he must navigate a new vocal register and find his way forward—not backward. His loving partner, Danelle (Khadijah Roberts-Abdullah), wants to support him, but she also dreams of moving to New York, complicating their journey together.

In the face of uncertainty, Z takes a job as a barback, where he forms an unexpected and supportive friendship with Santi (Xavier Lopez), who manages the bar. Determined not to give up on his musical dreams, Z begins training with a gifted vocal coach—a decision that brings new challenges and emotional hard work.

Through it all, director J. Stevens, with a personal lens, captures Z's conflicted journey with humor, depth, and, ultimately, joy. As Z transitions into a voice that reflects who he is now, the story becomes a celebration of resilience, self-discovery, and newfound identity. – KM

Transformative + Passionate + Captivating

Buy Ticket
NOW



RENT FREE

FERNANDO ANDRÉS

USA | 2024 | 93 min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 13 | 5:00 PM

In the early nineties, filmmaker Richard Linklater created a new kind of American independent cinema with his films, *Slackers* plus *Dazed and Confused*, a pair of films about the odd, the puzzled and the young living in his hometown of Austin, Texas. Fernando Andrés' wry topical comedy, Rent Free updates that social milieu for a new generation who are negotiating the challenges of queer friendships, app-driven social interactions and the daunting cost of housing for the irregularly employed.

Brash, impulsive Ben (Jacob Roberts) and passive Jordan (David Treviño) have been friends since childhood. When Ben gets kicked out of his New York apartment for an inappropriate indiscretion, they return together to Austin. After wearing out their welcome at Jordan's girlfriend's place, they hatch a not-so-brilliant plan: They will save money by couch-surfing with friends for a full year and then Ben will return to New York. Soon Ben and Jordan learn that freeloading is hard work, as they burn through a succession of temporary hosts. Each time Ben and Jordan move to each new abode, the film shows a title card lists its amenities and monthly cost of the place, a recurrent reminder that it is impossible to pursue your dreams when you don't know where you are going to lay your head at night. - LL

Young+ Unhoused+LGBTQ

Movie TRAILER

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SOULEYMANE'S STORY

BORIS LOJKINE

France | 2024 | 93 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 16 | 5:00 PM

Souleymane works a precarious job as a bike courier in Paris while preparing for his asylum hearing. With only two days left to memorize the story he thinks will help grant him the ability to stay and work in France, he comes up against one obstacle after another, endangering his ability to attend the interview. All throughout, Souleymane maintains an increasingly fragile connection with his mother and girlfriend back home in Guinea, through nothing but the tiny screen of his cellphone, and it becomes more and more difficult to remember why he made this journey in the first place.

Set in a tight timeframe, Souleymane's Story recalls films from the Dardenne Brothers, as we become desperate for him to make his hearing. First-time actor Abou Sangare draws from his own personal story to give an arresting performance, for which he won the Un Certain Regard Best Actor prize at Cannes.

It's an empathetic window into one immigrant's journey, but it also gives us structural insight. Before dawn each day, the homeless shelter lights up with everyone's alarms going off in unison, so that they be the first to reserve a bed elsewhere for the next night. It's just one example of the mechanics that the many unhoused and undocumented men and women of our cities must contend with - the people of whom we demand so much yet try so hard to render invisible. -AK

Engrossing + Insightful + Empathetic

Movie TRAILER

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Presenting contemporary Indigenous filmmaking.



ABERDEEN

RYAN COOPER & EVA THOMAS

Canada | 2024 | 83 min

First

CAPITOL 6
FEB 9 | 6:30 PM

The title character, Aberdeen, portrayed in a dynamic performance by Gail Maurice (*Bones of Crows*), faces displacement from her home community of Peguis and becomes unhoused in Winnipeg. She struggles with alcohol addiction and estrangement from her daughter and grandchildren. Her journey is marked by continuous confrontations and loss after loss.

In a failed attempt to run from the law, Aberdeen loses her Status Card and ID. While she is locked up, she calls on her trusty brother, Boyd (played by Ryan Black, *Dance Me Outside*), to help get her out. Boyd has recently placed Aberdeen's three grandchildren into the foster care system due to his cancer diagnosis, and he urges her to get healthy and return home to care for them.

Aberdeen isn't ready for that responsibility, but after hitching a ride back to Peguis to get a new Status Card, she comes face-to-face with her past family traumas and reconnects with her community. As she tries to piece her life back together, she faces more systemic strife and immense personal loss. However, her spirit and love for her family grows stronger.

Aberdeen marks the directorial debut of both Ryan Cooper and Eva Thomas, who deftly tell a raw story marked by grief, anger, and heartbreak, while also weaving in moments of laughter, relief, and family tenderness. – BC

Resilience + Reconnection + Home

Movie TRAILER

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FORBIDDEN MUSIC

BARBARA HAGER

Canada | 2024 | 70 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

CINECENTA
FEB 15 | 7:30 PM

Forbidden Music is a powerful documentary exploring the extraordinary partnership between Kwakwaka'wakw Chief Mungo Martin and Jewish ethno-musicologist Dr. Ida Halpern. Nearly 75 years ago, they preserved hundreds of Indigenous songs at risk of being lost to cultural genocide. Both had endured devastating cultural suppression: Dr. Halpern fled Nazi-occupied Austria, where her parents were killed, while Chief Martin faced Canada's Potlatch Ban and the enduring trauma of residential schools.

Defying laws prohibiting First Nations cultural practices, Dr. Halpern immigrated to Canada to document Indigenous music. She gained the trust of singers from the Kwakwaka'wakw, Haida, Nuu-chah-nulth, and Coast Salish communities, and in 1951, she joined forces with Chief Martin to record 124 traditional songs, preserving his rich musical heritage.

Directed by Barbara Todd Hager, this world premiere follows the journey of these recordings from their origins to archival collections and back to Fort Rupert. It highlights how Chief Martin's legacy continues to inspire the revitalization of Kwak'wala songs and language today. – MH

Resilience + Heritage + Revitalization

Movie TRAILER

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DGC DIRECTORS GUILD OF CANADA BRITISH COLUMBIA



NANEKAWÂSIS

CONOR MCNALLY

Canada | 2024 | 80 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

First

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 9 | 12:15 PM

What drives an artist to create work for 40+ years with no signs of slowing down? In Nanekawâsis, director Conor McNally (*The Gift of Being Different*) skillfully weaves archival footage from renowned nêhiyaw artist George Littlechild's career alongside recent interviews with the artist and his partner, John Powell. We witness the beginning of his creative process and explore what is propelling him forward into the future.

With a deep connection to his culture, the land, and the spiritual world, Littlechild uses color as a healing tool to spread "joy to the planet," while also choosing not to ignore the problems embedded within both history and the present day. At 65 years old, Littlechild has lived through many of the traumatic experiences common to 60s Scoop survivors. He also acknowledges the encouragement he received from his foster family to pursue his artistic vision at a young age. Much of his earlier work was groundbreaking in its exploration of subject matter drawn from his personal experience as a displaced Indigenous person, as well as the challenges facing his family and community.

As the film notes, "to live is to tell a story" in the nêhiyaw way of being. From his humble beginnings in Edmonton to the glitzy art shows of the '80s and '90s, George Littlechild broke through doors for Indigenous artists and continues to hold them open, while maintaining a contemplative, contemporary, and colorful artistic path. – BC

Painter + Retrospect + Colour

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***NOW***



SO SURREAL: BEHIND THE MASKS

NEIL DIAMOND & JOANNE ROBERTSON

Canada | 2024 | 88 min

First

CAPITOL 6
FEB 8 | 6:30 PM

In the art market, ceremonial Indigenous masks have always been seen as relics and commodities—bought, sold, and collected by any means in order to profit from them further. To the Yup'ik, Kwakwaka'wakw, and other Indigenous peoples, these masks act as vessels to the spirit world and translators of the supernatural, existing beyond our reality.

In *So Surreal: Behind the Masks*, we follow co-director Neil Diamond (*Reel Injun*) as he uncovers the mystery and history behind the collecting of these so-called art pieces.

At the outset of the film, while in New York, Diamond reads about a 100+-year-old Yup'ik mask up for sale at the TEFAF Art Fair. Struck by the image of the mask and its place in the contemporary market, he sets out to find it. Once at the exhibition, he learns that the mask was once owned by Surrealist artist Enrico Donati. This serves as the catalyst for him to learn more about the relationship these masks have with the art world, their collectors (including the Surrealists), and how they were acquired—often under the guise of the Potlatch ban and the myth of the "vanishing Indian."

Through his inquiries and research, Diamond discovers that many of these masks ended up in France after World War II, as many of the Surrealists took them back there after living in exile in the United States. What follows are tense conversations around repatriation and where these masks truly belong. Questions about value, ownership, and the purpose of these sacred objects persist. While some have had their spirits sung back into their home, others remain locked away in collections, known and unknown. - BC

Surrealism + Art + History

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***NOW***



SWEET SUMMER POW WOW

DARRELL DENNIS

Canada | 2025 | 92 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

First

CINECENTA
FEB 14 | 7:30 PM

In *Sweet Summer Pow Wow*, Darrell Dennis offers a deeply personal exploration of love, identity, and tradition.

Jinny lives on the Shuswap Reserve. Her diabetic mother Cara is the Chief and expects her daughter to get a law degree, return home. and follow in her footsteps. Jinny agrees to spend her last summer on the Pow Wow circuit with her mother. But Jinny loves contemporary dancing, not Native fancy dancing. On another nearby Reserve, lives Riley. His single dad is a drunk. Luckily for Riley, his Uncle Luke invites him to join his drum group on the Pow Wow circuit before Riley goes to live with him in Vancouver. This world premiere at the Victoria Film Festival follows this young Indigenous couple as they get a break from their troubled lives when they find each other through a summer of love on the Pow-Wow circuit.

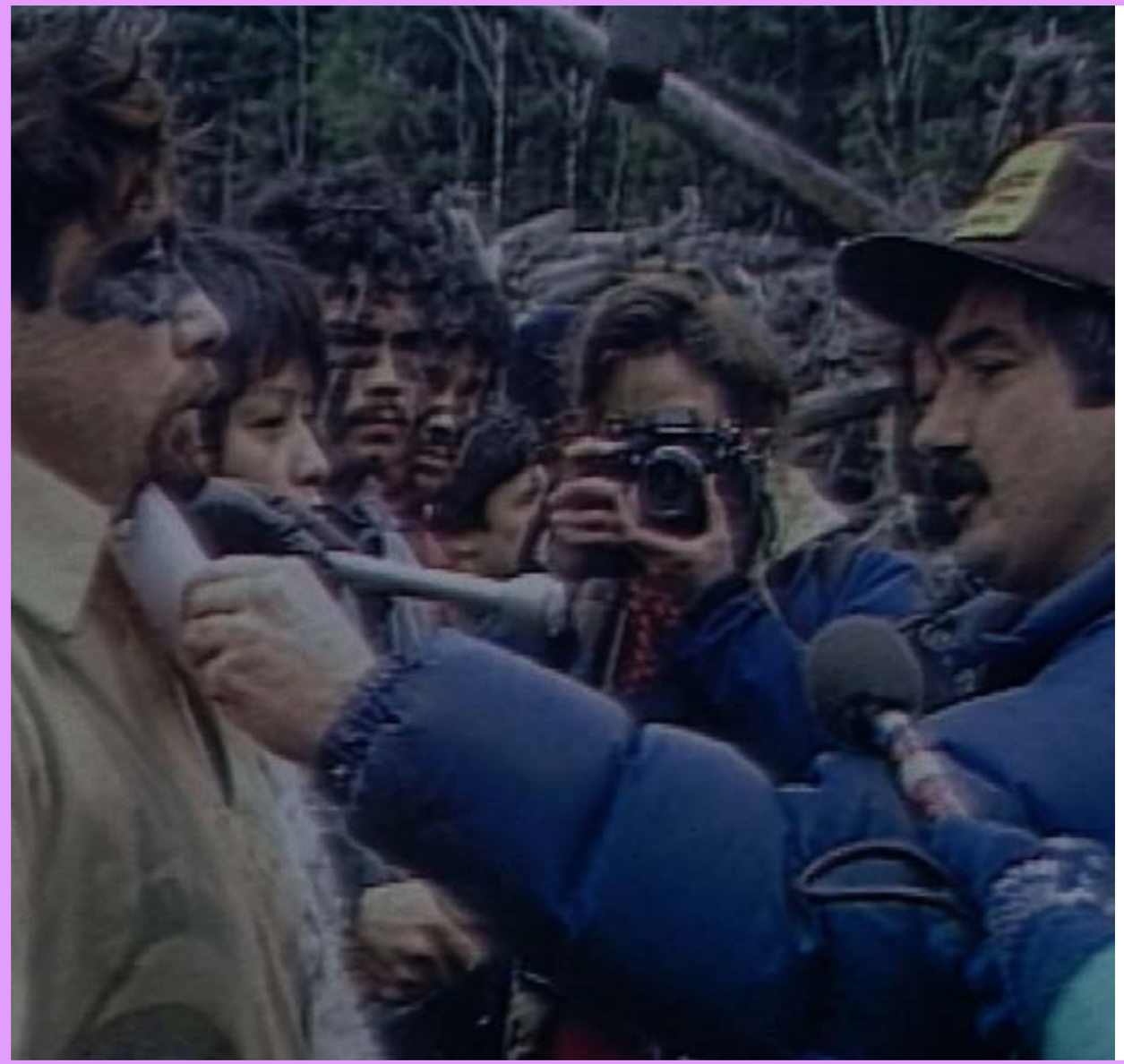
Director Dennis (The Great Salish Heist, 2024), known for his insightful storytelling that highlights Indigenous identity and culture, brings a unique blend of tenderness and tension to this narrative. His direction navigates the delicate balance between personal desires and the collective responsibilities of family and community. The film beautifully captures the intersection of tradition and modernity, illustrating how both can shape and challenge our most intimate relationships. –MH

Love + Identity + Tradition

Movie TRAILER

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DGC DIRECTORS GUILD OF CANADA BRITISH COLUMBIA



THE STAND

CHRIS AUCHTER

Canada | 2024 | 94 min

First

CINECENTA
FEB 11 | 5:00 PM

In his documentary feature film debut, Haida director/animator Christopher Auchter (*Now is the Time*) shines a light on the 1985 conflict between the Haida Nation and colonial governments, as well as their logging interests on Lyell Island in Haida Gwaii. The logging practices at the time destroyed salmon runs and took large swaths of old-growth forests without any consent or consultation with the Haida Nation. The Haida have been stewards of the land since time immemorial. What follows is a series of tense standoffs, negotiations, disagreements, and subsequent arrests of the Haida by the RCMP, acting as representatives of the government and the logging company.

Auchter makes a conscious choice to use footage exclusively from the time period. This decision immerses the viewer in the reality of the struggle, free from the distraction or foretelling that can accompany retrospection. He uses archival footage gifted by Susan Underwood, who was embedded with the Haida Blockade at the time, alongside archival news sources, including fiery exchanges between bombastic newscaster Jack Webster and the poised responses of Indigenous leaders Myles Richardson (Haida) and James Gosnell (Nisga'a). The juxtaposition and interweaving of these audiovisual sources drive the film, underscoring its urgency and the stark dichotomy between the sides involved.

The health of the land and waters coincides with the health of humanity as a whole, and this film captures an encounter that resonates in the present and well into the future, as the Haida Nation and all Indigenous nations fight to maintain the well-being of our lands and waters. – BC

Old Growth + Blockade + Haida Gwaii

Movie TRAILER

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ONF NFB



Not just this and that but also some of the other. Okay so we wanted to use a more fun word than miscellaneous. Can you blame us, you try spelling that over and over.



(S)KIDS

LESLIE SOLIS, LOUIS SOLIS

Canada | 2024 | 86 min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 15 | 5:00 PM

You have never seen a punk rock opera quite like this. *(S)KiDS* centres on a group of rebellious teens in 1993 as they navigate their last year of high school questioning the authority of the adults in their lives.

Scotty, a teenage punk poet, reluctantly moves to the City of Champions in the Canadian midwest with his parents. His defiant attitude and general dismissal of everyone gets him into trouble on both sides of the law. The oppressive school principal tries to shake Scotty's spirituous antics while the school's drug dealer, Sammy, eyes Scotty as his latest target to bully. Amid the early troubles, Scotty finds sanctuary in Billy and Craig, two outcasts known as "skids". The three become entwined through their love of music, shared experiences of neglect and abuse, and surging desire to expose the hypocrisy of the authority figures in their lives.

Featuring all new songs by Vancouver-based band Rare Americans, *(S)KiDS* is an original and emotional film that captures the fleeting energy of teens trying to find their place in the world without conceding to the demands of those in power.

Emotional + Rebellious + Musical

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***NOW***



BLACK DOG

GUAN HU

China | 2024 | 116\ min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 15 | 7:30 PM

Winner of the Un Certain Regard prize at the 2024 Cannes Film Festival, Guan Hu's *Black Dog* might just be the best film about a man and his dog since Vittorio de Sica's 1952 film *Umberto D*. This stunning, poetic film follows Lang (Eddie Peng), who was once a local celebrity, as he returns to his hometown after being released from prison for manslaughter. Lang's hometown on the outskirts of the Gobi Desert is overrun with stray dogs. He begins working with a local dog patrol team as they aim to reduce the stray animal population in the area ahead of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. But Lang develops an unexpected connection with one dog in particular.

The gorgeous, sweeping cinematography captures the breadth of the desert landscape adorned with hundreds of dogs. The film features minimal dialogue, but the combination of Eddie Peng's subtle expressions and the haunting music of Pink Floyd work together to pack an emotional punch. Black Dog is a comforting and cathartic film about loneliness, identity, forgiveness, and redemption. It's a perfect film for dog lovers and anyone who's ever felt like an outsider or needed a second chance. – LA

Poetic + Cathartic + Compassionate

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***NOW***



BONJOUR TRISTESSE

DURGA CHEW-BOSE

France, UK, Canada, USA | 2024 | 110 min

STAR CINEMA | FEB 10 | 7:00PM
THE VIC THEATRE | FEB 11 | 2:30 PM

Picture summer in the south of France: the shimmering blue of the bay, bowls heaping with fresh strawberries, and warm evening breezes that sweep over you like a lover's touch, while wine stains your lips a rich red. It's a scene straight out of a dream—one of those rare, picturesque places on Earth where time seems to slow. That is, unless you're one of the wealthy, entitled characters in the latest adaptation of Françoise Sagan's *Bonjour Tristesse.*

In Bonjour Tristesse, up-and-coming filmmaker (and *Variety's* Top 10 Directors to Watch) Durga Chew-Bose crafts a beautifully intimate exploration of self-discovery, love, and the complexities of modern relationships. Cécile (Lily McInerny) and her widowed father, Raymond (Claes Bang, *The Square*), are spending the summer in the south of France with his new girlfriend, Elsa (Nailia Harzoune). Their peaceful routine is shaken when Anne (Chloë Sevigny, in a charismatic performance), a longtime friend of Cécile's parents, arrives unexpectedly.

Anne soon becomes the dominant character, causing tension with Elsa by suddenly taking on a motherly role, pushing schoolwork on Cécile, and putting an end to her time with a local man.

The film's gentle pacing and lush cinematography reflect Chew-Bose's nuanced, artful direction, showcasing her ability to capture the quiet, often-overlooked moments that shape our lives. – MH

Languid + Twisted + Tense

Buy Ticket at ***Star Cinema***

Buy Ticket at ***The Vic Theatre***



BRING THEM DOWN

CHRISTOPHER ANDREWS

Ireland, UK, Belgium | 2024 | 105 min

THE VIC THEATRE | FEB 7 | 8:30 PM
CINECENTA | FEB 13 | 7:30PM

Christopher Abbott and Barry Keoghan star in Christopher Andrews' brutally impressive, low-budget debut about two feuding farming families in rural Ireland. *Bring Them Down*, which had its world premiere at this year's Toronto International Film Festival, tells the story of two young men, trapped in a historical cycle of violence and inherited rage. Set in a bleak and remote west Ireland, Michael (Abbott) raises sheep on the family farm where he lives with his aging father Ray (played deftly by Colm Meaney). The father and son duo live together in relative solitude, in the aftermath of a gruesome accident, which saw Michael's mother killed and his girlfriend with permanent facial scars. Michael's girlfriend has since moved on, remarrying into a rival farming family. Her wily son, Jack (Keoghan) is determined to reap revenge on the source of his mother's pain.

Much of the sadness that pervades the lives of our two central characters is left unspoken, escaping only through blackly comic violent acts (the sheep really don't come out well!) and icy aggressions. Both Keoghan and Abbot carry this turmoil - of the modern young man unable to unravel stunted emotions - with profound and acute accuracy. Accompanied by an off-kilter and pounding score, Andrews takes his audience on an intense exploration of human behaviour, and the tragedies of modern masculinity, that is at once painfully tragic and grimly funny. - JD

Dramatic + Gripping + Tragic

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket at ***The Vic Theatre***

Buy Ticket at ***Cinecenta***



FLY ME TO THE MOON

SASHA CHUK

Palestine, Hong Kong | 2023 | 113 min

Olio

CAPITOL 6
FEB 11 | 1:00 PM

Fly Me to the Moon is the award-winning, masterful debut from Sasha Chuk who serves as the film's writer, director, lead actress, and dialect coach in a semi-autobiographical story inspired by her experience immigrating to Hong Kong as a child. It's a delicate and sincere work of art about identity, family, poverty, discrimination, and addiction.

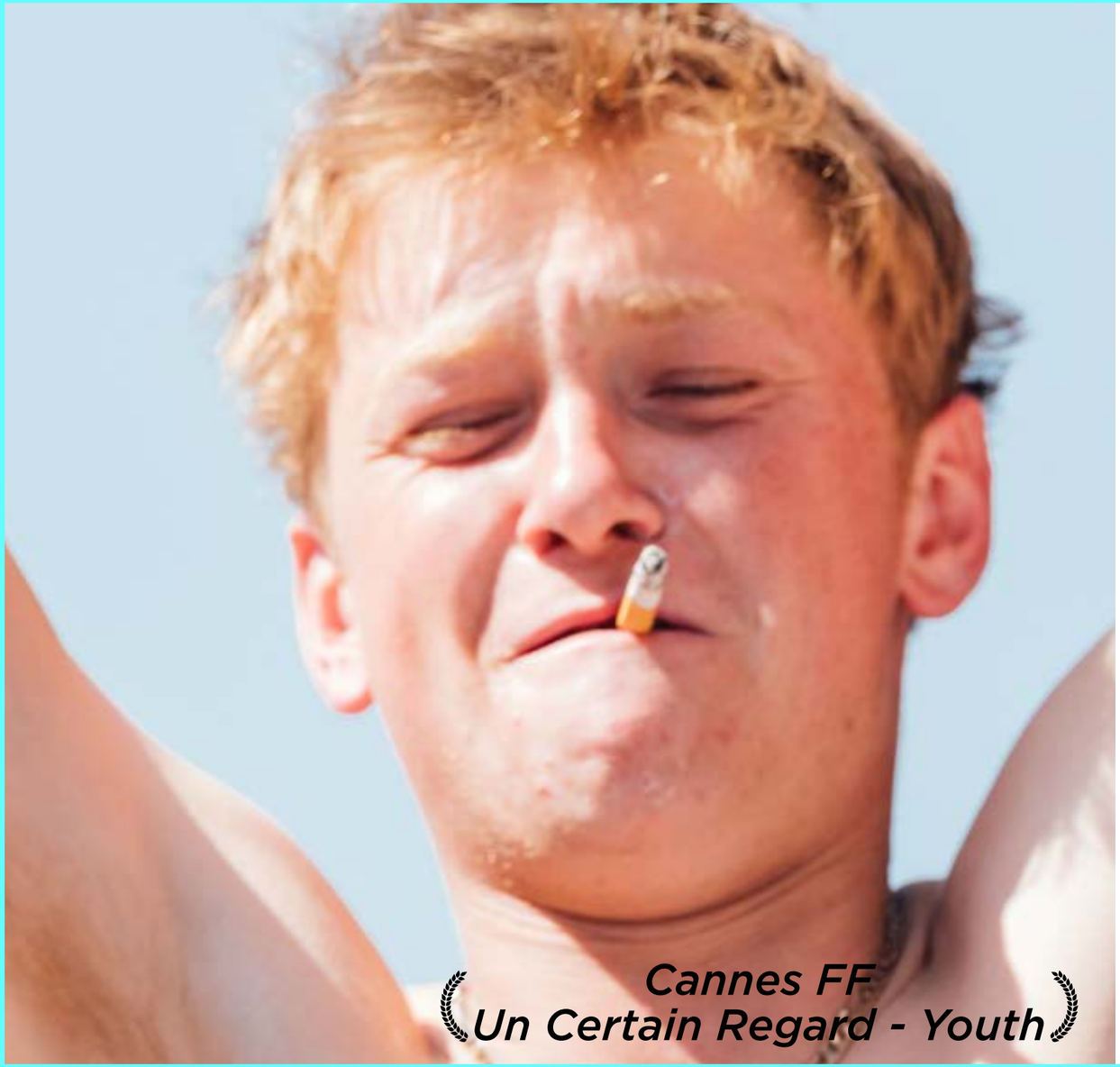
This intimate, sentimental story is told in three parts over the course of 20 years as two sisters come of age. Yuen (Chuk) and her younger sister Kuet (Angela Yuen) immigrate from Hunan to Hong Kong as children. Their father, Kok Man (Wu Kang-ren) is a drug addict and thief who spends their childhood in and out of prison. Kang-ren's tender and mesmerizing performance offers one of the most realistic depictions of drug addiction, especially that of a drug-addicted parent. As the sisters gradually develop vastly different relationships with their father, the film ponders whether it's possible to break the cycle of generational trauma. Fly Me to the Moon is a quietly moving meditation on family bonds. - LA

Delicate + Moving + Personal

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***

HONG KONG
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Toronto)
We work across Canada



HOLY COW

LOUISE COURVOISIER

France | 2024 | 90 min

Olio

CAPITOL 6
FEB 11 | 6:30 PM

Life on a farm and a youthful viewpoint stoke the story in the feature debut of director Courvoisier, a compassionate take on a young rascal, Totone (Clément Faveau) who's suddenly handed a lot of responsibility. Having never helped much at home, he is suddenly solely in charge of his little sister and the farm. After failed attempts at working to support the two of them, he comes upon a cheese competition with a 30,000 Euro prize for the best round of Comté. With the confidence of youth, Totone thinks: how hard can it be? Soon enough Totone is getting advice, stealing milk from a local farm, and falling for a local farmer's daughter (Maïwène Barthelemy).

For a first-time director, it's remarkable how well balanced the characters come across, walking the great tightrope of moving to adulthood from youth and finding a role with a purpose. The camera's eye augments the themes with the way it wanders in and out of frame and the natural light provides the right backdrop for a vulnerable young man filled with bravado. – KK

Family + Friendship + Love

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



LESVIA

TZELI HADJIDIMITRIOU

Greece | 2024 | 78 min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 10 | 5:00 PM

"Someone, I tell you, in another time will remember us." — Sappho

The Greek Island of Lesbos, the birthplace of Sappho, became a pilgrimage for lesbians all over the world. For decades, director Tzeli Hadjidimitriou, a native of Lesbos and lesbian, captured the lives of the locals who live and work on the island and the lesbians who have gathered every year to play and find community on the beaches of Eressos. Through archival film, photos, and personal diaries, Tzeli explores the struggles, connections, and tensions that have developed and eased over time between the local Greek community and the women's community.

Lesvia interweaves the poetry of Sappho and her legacy with the unique culture of this island that has become a home to a diverse group of people who all believe they have a claim to Lesbos. This fascinating exploration of a place that everyone wants to belong to doesn't shy away from the conflicts, community politics, and history of place that is found in this seaside paradise. - KM

Community + Paradise + Poetic

Movie TRAILER

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MISERICORDIA

ALAIN GUIRAUDIE

France, Spain, Portugal | 2024 | 103 min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 15 | 2:30 PM

When Jérémie learns that his old boss has passed away, he returns to his hometown to pay his respects. Martine, the late man's wife, can sense he has unresolved feelings towards his late boss and insists that he stay with her for a day or two.

Jérémie's presence isn't entirely welcome though as Martine's son, Vincent, suspects him of taking advantage of the situation. A raw tension brews between the two men as they wrestle with each other, eventually leading Jérémie to an awkward encounter. Soon, he's forced to start lying to Martine about her son, along with the rest of the townsfolk, who increasingly tighten their gaze on this polite and unassuming man who seems almost out of place in this unvarnished village.

Best known for *Stranger by the Lake*, director Alain Guiraudie continues his incisive examination of desire, sexuality, and the entanglements that occur in any small community. Misericordia bubbles with absurdism as it lays out a curious mystery - one that pulls you in not because it withholds the truth from you, but because it asks the why of how humans operate and of our many quiet vulnerabilitie. - AK

Intriguing + Dark + Amusing

Movie TRAILER

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Olio

ROSINANTE

BARAN GUNDUZALP

Turkey | 2023 | 103 min

CAPITOL 6
FEB 13 | 1:00 PM

An Istanbul couple, Salih and Ayse, are caught in a spiral of downward mobility in this tender first feature from Turkish director, Baran Gunduzalp. When Salih is laid off from his white-collar job and their rental home is faced with demolition, the couple travel about Istanbul on their motorized scooter, named after Rocinante the rickety old horse in Miguel de Cervantes's novel, *Don Quixote.*

When Ayse also loses her call centre job, the couple bicker, struggle, and improvise. Salih has discovered he can use his scooter as a taxi service, and when he is asleep, Ayse takes on the same job using his license, hiding her face and hair under her helmet and like her mute son, never speaking to customers. Working in alternative shifts, the two carry businesspeople, students, and late-night drunks travelling about the city, providing viewers with a visual and social tour of the chaotic beauty of Turkey's capital city. But when Rosinante is stolen, their very survival as a family is in jeopardy. Along with its allusion to the hero of impossible quests, D*on Quixote, Rosinante* pays homage to a cinema classic, Vitoria De Sica's 1948 *Bicycle Thieves*, with its plea for compassion in a world of harsh economic precarity. – LL

Visually Stunning + Heartfelt + Gripping

Buy Ticket
Now!



Olio

SHARP CORNER

JASON BUXTON

Canada | 2023 | 110 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 12 | 7:45 PM

Immediately after moving into their new home, family man Josh (Ben Foster) and his wife Rachel (Cobie Smulders) see their idyllic suburban life come to a screeching halt when they witness a deadly car accident in front of their property. Rachel suggests burying the traumatic memory and resuming their domestic bliss, but it triggers something in Josh he just can't ignore. As this psychological thriller unfolds, he finds a purpose in his obsession with traffic collisions that draws him deeper into an unhealthy relationship with the carnage he seeks, distracting him from the mundanity of his middle-class existence.

Halifax-based director Jason Buxton adapts Russell Wangersky's short story from his Giller Prize nominated collection '*Whirl Away*', cleverly building tension through the common familiarity of the subject matter. As Josh seeks a form of virtuous validation that his job and social circle can't provide, he is led into dangerous territory, possibly losing everything. - AR

Accidents + Obsession + Suspense

Buy Ticket
Now!



Olio

SHEPHERDS

SOPHIE DERASPE

Canada | 2024 | 113 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 15 | 2:45 PM

A striking and introspective film about transformation and self-discovery. It follows a young Montreal advertising executive Mathyas who, after embracing the life of a Provençal shepherd, finds himself entangled in a series of misadventures with a civil servant who has quit her job on a whim. Together, they embark on a journey that questions their roles in the world and their search for meaning.

The film's setting in the vast wilderness of the French Alps is more than just backdrop—it reflects the emotional terrain the characters navigate. Deraspe's direction is patient, allowing the natural landscape to mirror the internal shifts of the characters. The cinematography is stunning, balancing the harshness of nature with the vulnerability of human experience.

The lead performance is quietly compelling, capturing the complexity of a man caught between old and new lives. The chemistry between the leads adds depth to their relationship, turning their odd partnership into a poignant and sometimes playful exploration of identity and reinvention.

Shepherds is a film about how we adapt to change, the tensions between tradition and reinvention, and the sometimes messy process of finding one's place in the world. Deraspe crafts a rich, thoughtful narrative, free of cliché, that resonates long after the story ends. – RW

Personal + Evolution + Immersive

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



SOUNDTRACK TO A COUP D'ETAT

JOHAN GRIMONPREZ

Belguim, France, Netherlands | 2024 | 150 min

Olio

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 14 | 2:15 PM

In 1960, as decolonization sweeps across Africa, America's top jazz musicians embark on a tour to promote Western culture, unaware that they're also masking the CIA's covert efforts to overthrow the charismatic Congolese Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba. Amid the rising threat of communism, the U.S. seeks to maintain global influence, but at what cost?

In *Soundtrack to a Coup d'État*, director Johan Grimonprez delves into the provocative intersection of music and politics. Using gripping archival footage, he reveals the hidden story of how the U.S. worked to sabotage the African independence movement. With powerful testimonies from African activists like Andréé Blouin and iconic musicians like Nina Simone and Louis Armstrong, Grimonprez exposes a painful chapter in history—one that both captivates and challenges audiences.

The film doesn't just examine the complex role of Black musicians promoting a country that still sees them as second-class citizens—it also explores the lasting effects of colonialism on both Africa and America today. - JD

Provocative + Challenging + Jazz

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



Olio

THE WITNESS

NADER SAEIVAR

Iran, Germany, Austria | 2024 | 100 min

CAPITOL 6
FEB 7 | 6:30 PM

The Witness, a fiction feature film by Iranian filmmaker Nader Saeivar, is a stirring tribute to the Woman, Life, Freedom movement and the resilience of women in Iran.

The story centers on Mrs. Ghorbani, a respected elderly history teacher, union member, and social activist, known for her tireless support of women in need. Among them is Zara, a young woman trapped in an abusive marriage to Solat. Mrs. Ghorbani steps in as a mediator, striving to keep Zara safe by offering refuge whenever her husband's abuse escalates. At the heart of their conflict is Zara's passion for teaching dance—a pursuit Solat once accepted but now opposes due to his career ties to the government. When Mrs. Ghorbani witnesses an event that shakes her to the core, she faces a moral crossroads. While others urge her to remain silent, she makes the courageous decision to take a stand against an oppressive power far greater than herself.

This stirring and deeply human film explores the many forms of resistance—whether through bold acts of defiance or quiet, unwavering bravery. A heartfelt homage to the women of the Woman, Life, Freedom movement, *The Witness* honors those who risked everything for the right to live, dance, and dream freely, often at an unthinkable cost. - MS

Life + Resistance + Justice

Movie TRAILER

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VERMIGLIO

MAURA DELPERO

Italy, France, Belgium | 2024 | 119 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 10 | 5:00 PM

An enchanting Italian film that beautifully blends humour, heart, and personal transformation. Set in a charming Italian village, the film follows several storylines while offering a captivating, intimate portrayal of life in a small Italian village during the end of World War II.

The film focuses on the Graziadei family. Cesare (Orietta Notari) is a headmaster with ten children, loves classical music, and is a task master. One day their son returns from the war bringing with him a Sicilian soldier. The heart of the story lies in the relationship between daughter Lucia (Martina Scrinzi) and Pietro (Giuseppe De Domenico), the soldier. Pietro, a shy and illiterate man, forms a tender connection with Lucia, whose quiet, introspective nature makes her a perfect match for him. Their blossoming romance is beautifully understated, grounded in simple, intimate moments, and eventually leads to marriage. Lucia's emotional journey, from initial hope to deep sorrow, is portrayed with remarkable sensitivity by Scrinzi.

Vermiglio is a celebration of second chances, the ties that bind us, and the enduring power of family and community. It's a film that effortlessly blends personal redemption with universal themes of love and connection. Warm, uplifting, and beautifully crafted, *Vermiglio* is a cinematic gem that will leave you with a smile and a renewed sense of hope.

Scenic + Familial + Tranquil

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



WE STRANGERS

ANU VALIA

USA | 2024 | 80 min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 12 | 5:00 PM

India-born, Indiana-raised, director Anu Valia won a Sundance jury award in 2017 for her short film, *Lucia: Before and After*, about a young woman waiting for an abortion in Texas. She followed that with work on prestige series such as *The Afterparty* and *Awkwafina is Nora* from Queens.

Her debut feature, *We Strangers*, shot in her hometown of Gary, Indiana. It's a character study of Rayelle, young African American office cleaner, played by the English actress Kirby Howell-Baptiste, with a deeply observant presence. As the film opens, Rayelle is persuaded to clean a dentist's personal home, and, almost immediately after, to clean his neighbours' home as well. Compulsively unable to say no, Rayelle soon finds herself at two different families' command which leads to stress to her domestic life, parenting the two kids she has with her partner, Mari.

Then there's the psychological burden, as Rayelle soon finds herself privy to her employers' marital intrigues and habitual oversharing. When one client expresses her fascination with TV psychics, Rayelle, on an impulse, pretends that she, too, has clairvoyant powers. That claim confirms her employers' view of her "Otherness" and makes her an object of their fascination, which works to her advantage until it doesn't anymore.

Director Varia avoids a simple didactic approach to race and class tensions, channeling Spanish master Luis Buñuel in a biting critique of bourgeois morality, with moments of absurd humour, and an aesthetic contrast between the dreamy warmth of her domestic space and the chilly, suburban homes she works in. – LL

Racism + Clairvoyant + Deception

Buy Ticket
Now!



Olio

YOUNG HEARTS

ANTHONY SCHATTEMAN

Belgium, Netherlands | 2024 | 97 min

CAPITOL 6
FEB 9 | 4:00 PM

Young hearts break free in an idyllic countryside town in Belgium where the teenagers swim playfully in the local waters, cycle around town, and hang out at the local fair. When Alex moves in next door, Elias, a popular 14-year-old with a fun-loving family, is excited about the new kid in town. They soon become fast friends hanging out together constantly, even making a trip into the city to meet some of Alex's family who run the local drag club.

When Alex comes out as having dated boys before, Elias realizes that he likes him more than as just a friend, throwing him into an identity crisis. Elias must decide if he can be as free and strong as Alex is in his own sexuality and desires. Director Anthony Schatteman's award-winning first feature is a giddy ode to teenagerhood with its winsome, idyllic, and warm-hearted exploration of fierce young love. - KM

Inspiring + Fun + Young Love

Movie TRAILER

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The intangible, the nuance of life and... oooh please don't make me say the L word... the heartbeat. What drives inspiration, ambition, and moments of craziness. It's the beating heart of life.



AFRICAN GIANTS

OMAR S. KAMARA

USA | 2024 | 106 min

Pulse

CAPITOL 6
FEB 10 | 9:00 PM

At the start of writer/director Omar S. Kamara's debut feature *African Giants*, Sheku poeticizes a credo from his father: that people will come and go, but you only have one brother. There's nothing like time with family to remind you of your core identity.

Reunited for a weekend in Los Angeles, two Sierra Leone-American brothers discover the people they've become in their time apart. Alhaji (Dillon Daniel Mutyaba), the charming older brother living in L.A. with his acting career on the verge of taking off, and Sheku (Omete Anassi), the whip smart student on the path to a law degree, clash over ideologies and celebrate each other's wins. But when Sheku reveals his interest in pursuing acting, the cracks in Alhaji's facade begin to show. Despite resenting the intense pressure of his father's tough love approach to raising them, Alhaji finds himself falling into the same role. He risks pushing Sheku away and isolating himself even further.

Mixing direct-to-camera interludes into the more traditional narrative, Kamara crafts a delightful two-hander full of tough conversations embedded in the banter of two brothers remembering where and who they come from. – ML

Brotherhood + First-Generation + Sincerity

Movie TRAILER

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FRIEDA'S CASE

MARIA BRENDLE

Switzerland, Germany | 2024 | 107 min

Pulse

STAR CINEMA
FEB 13 | 7:00 PM
THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 15 | 5:30 PM

In 1904, sewist Frieda Keller was put on trial in Switzerland for the murder of her young son. As the court determines Keller's innocence, deeper questions emerge about what could inspire this unthinkable act and what part societal structures play in this tragedy. These are the questions Academy award nominated filmmaker Maria Brendle asks with grace and urgency in Frieda's Case. Based on a true story, this beautifully shot courtroom drama emphasizes the complicated, but identifiably human elements of Keller and asks audiences what they would do in her circumstances. With the support of a star-making turn by Julia Buchmann, Brendle not only provides an in-depth look into Keller's life, but into the complex case that shaped the conversation around women's rights and the justice system in Switzerland for decades after.

As tragically relevant now as it was over a hundred years ago, Maria Brendle's *Frieda's Case* is a riveting and compassionate film that will inspire debates for days to come. - JD

Feminism + Trial + Riveting

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Consulate General of Switzerland in Vancouver

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket at ***Star Cinema***

Buy Ticket at ***The Vic Theatre***



FROM HILDE, WITH LOVE

ANDREAS DRESEN

Germany | 2024| 125 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 12 | 12:00 PM

From Hilde, with Love, a fiction feature film by Andreas Dresen, is a heartfelt story of love and resistance within Nazi Germany during World War II. Based on true events, it brings to life the bravery of those who dared to resist within the country.

The film opens with the arrest of Hilde Coppi and a small group of allies, accused of treason for transmitting coded messages to Moscow as part of the communist resistance. Though she initially denies the charges, the damning evidence soon forces her to face the harsh reality of her situation. From this gripping beginning, the story unfolds along two timelines: one following Hilde's time in prison, and the other working backward from the present, gradually revealing how she fell in love with Hans and joined the resistance.

The film's classic storytelling is elevated by its bold and engaging editing. Moments of newfound love and defiant rebellion from Hilde's earlier life are skillfully interwoven with her resilience during imprisonment, showing the hardships she faces and the unexpected acts of humanity from her prison guards. *From Hilde, with Love*, reminds us that even in the darkest times, love and defiance can coexist, challenging the forces that aim to suppress them. - MS

World War II + Love + Resistance

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



LITTLE JAFFNA

LAWRENCE VALIN

France | 2024 | 100 min

CAPITOL 6
FEB 12 | 9:00 PM

In Paris, an eager young police officer named Michael is tasked with infiltrating a local Tamil gang that's funneling money to the freedom fighters back home in Sri Lanka. Undercover, he finds a community in the raucous friendships of the group and a mentor in the form of Aya, an aging veteran who leads the operation. But the closer Michael gets to unravelling their plan, the closer he becomes to all these people, getting a clear look at just what he may be threatening to destroy.

Little Jaffna is a tour de force debuting at the Venice Film Festival and announcing an astonishing talent in Lawrence Valin, who not only directs this gripping story as his first feature, but also playing its protagonist. It's one of the most dynamic, vibrant, and powerful films you'll see at the Festival this year, breathing new life into the double agent genre - a trope that has become commonplace in so many crime dramas - by making it a metaphor for diaspora identity. Michael doesn't just come to second guess the mission handed to him by the French police for what it will mean for his homeland, he also realizes that his success will only further cement his place in a country that treats him like a stranger. – AK

Riveting + Powerful + Accomplished

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



ME, MARYAM, THE CHILDREN AND 26 OTHERS

CAPITOL 6
FEB 13 | 9:00 PM

FARSHAD HASHEMI

Germany, Iran, Czech Republic | 2024 | 101 min

Me, Maryam, the Children and 26 Others is a feature fiction film by Iranian filmmaker Farshad Hashemi that offers an intimate, female-centered reflection on everyday life and loneliness in post-COVID Iran.

The story follows Mahboube, who decides to rent out her house to a film crew. The extra income is a welcome relief, and having some company around seems like a good idea. However, things don't go as smoothly as she hoped. The large crew quickly turns her home upside down and she struggles to cope with the intrusion. Mahboube voices her frustrations to the director, who reassures her that everything will be put back in place. Yet, she begins to realize that the chaos in her home isn't the real issue.

The COVID years have left Mahboube feeling disconnected, from herself and from others. As she watches the crew film a short story about a crumbling marriage, she begins to reflect on her own life and what has been missing.

This quietly powerful film takes audiences on a profound journey of self-discovery, exploring themes of love, loneliness, friendship, and the lingering impact of isolation. Ultimately, it reminds us that healing and connection can only be found together. – MS

Riveting + Powerful + Accomplished

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



MISS BOOTS / MLLE BOTTINE

YAN LANOUETTE TURGEON

Canada (Québec) | 2024 | 111 min

CINENCENTA
FEB 11 | 2:30 PM
STAR CINEMA
FEB 12 | 2:00 PM

Philippe, an opera composer in search of inspiration, is forced to take in Simone, his rebellious, eccentric niece whose best friend is a skunk. Despite their diametrically opposed personalities, Philippe and Simone quickly discover that they may need each other more than they first thought.

Philippe, un compositeur d'opéra en panne d'inspiration, se voit forcé d'héberger sa nièce Simone, une orpheline rebelle et excentrique dont la meilleure amie est une mouffette. Malgré leurs personnalités diamétralement opposées, Philippe et Simone découvrent rapidement qu'ils pourraient avoir besoin l'un de l'autre plus qu'ils ne l'auraient initialement cru.

Family + Animals + Parenting

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket at *Cinecenta*

Buy Ticket at *Star Cinema*

TOURNÉE QUÉBEC CINÉMA



MY FAVOURITE CAKE

MARYAM MOGHADDAM AND BEHTASH SANAEEHA

Iran, France, Sweden, Germany | 2024 | 97 min

CINECENTA
FEB 15 | 2:30 PM

70-year-old Mahin is a lonely widow living in Tehran. With her children living abroad and the restrictive nature of women's rights in Iran, she has resigned herself to a life of solitude. That is, until she meets Faramarz, and for the first time since her husband's death, Mahin experiences a spark of excitement and possibility.

My Favourite Cake, directed by Behtash Sanaeeha and Maryam Moghaddam, offers an intimate and poignant glimpse into contemporary Iran through the lens of a deceptively feminist romance. As filmmakers who have famously had their passports confiscated, Sanaeeha and Moghaddam have crafted a bold, unapologetic film that dares to explore the life of a modern woman seeking joy and love in a society that often silences her.

Despite its nuanced political backdrop, *My Favourite* Cake never loses sight of its deeply human core. The tender chemistry between leads Esmail Mehrabi and Lily Farhadpour, paired with Mohammad Haddadi's lush cinematography, elevates the film into a cinematic experience that is both intimate and universally resonant.

With the romantic tenderness of *Before Sunrise* and the quiet subversiveness of Jafar Panahi's work, *My Favourite Cake* blends these elements into something truly unique—an exploration of desire, aging, and defiance in a conservative society. – JD

Romantic + Heartbreaking + Subversive

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



POOJA, SIR

DEEPAK RAUNIYAR

Nepal, USA, Norway | 2024 | 115 min

CAPITOL 6
FEB 9 | 9:00 PM

Detective Inspector Pooja lives in Kathmandu with her wife and aging father. When two young boys are kidnapped in Nepal, she's called to investigate. But what begins as a straightforward case quickly spirals into something far more complex. As Pooja navigates violent protests, political unrest, and entrenched discrimination against the Madhesi people—who make up one-third of Nepal's population—she finds herself up against forces she didn't expect.

Teaming up with Mamata, a local Madhesi policewoman, Pooja faces challenges not only in solving the case but also in confronting the deep-rooted misogyny and systemic bias that pervade their society. For Pooja, the stakes are even higher as she contends with homophobia and gender discrimination, both on the job and within her personal life.

Pooja, Sir is a tense and thought-provoking procedural inspired by real events. It delves into the intersections of gender, race, and sexuality, set against the turbulent backdrop of the 2015 race protests in Nepal. – KM

Gripping + Thought-provoking + Entertaining

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



SKEET

NIK SEXTON

Canada | 2024 | 104 min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 14 | 7:30 PM

After a three-year stint in prison, Billy Skinner (Sean Dalton) returns to his hometown, but it's not the familiar one he left behind as refugees do their best to get a foothold in his troubled low-income neighbourhood. Looking for a fresh start and hoping to rebuild a relationship with his son while trying to avoid the drugs and violence that surround him, Billy finds he has more in common with his new neighbour Mohamed (portrayed by Syrian film and TV star Jay Abdo) than he first realized.

As Billy risks falling into old habits, he learns from his new friend that starting over is a challenge, but leaving the past behind can be harder. Director Nik Sexton set out to make a noir film in his native Newfoundland but discovered a richer story in the similar struggles and aspirations of newcomers and those who have called this place home for generations. - AR

Newcomers + Crime + Friendship

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



SUGAR ISLAND

JOHANNÉ GÓMEZ TERRERO

Dominican Republic, Spain | 2024 | 91 min

CAPITOL 6
FEB 8 | 4:00 PM

Mayenka is a teenager living on a sugar plantation, or batey, with her mother and grandfather. After a night out, she becomes pregnant. To this personal crisis, the family adds another: the company for which her grandfather has worked for forty years plans to expel him from his modest house while paying him a laughable pension.

The directorial debut of Johanné Gómez Terrero takes us to the countryside of the Dominican Republic, where issues of colonial power, labor exploitation, racism, migration, and marginalization are still prevalent.

The film blends different genres: social realism, theatrical performance, documentary, and dream-like scenes that evoke a spiritual world, which forms the basis of local beliefs and practices. Keeping the focus on Mayenka, the story weaves together the personal and the collective. In the words of the director: “By juxtaposing past uprisings against the horrors of slavery with present-day struggles, the film emphasizes the enduring role of spirituality in liberation movements. Mayenka’s journey into teenage motherhood serves as a window into systemic issues, intertwining social consciousness with ancestral wisdom.”

Sugar Island is a sensitive film hailing from a country where few films are produced, and it’s a welcome addition to the international film festival circuit. - DR

Resilience + Labor Rights + Social Justice

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***



THE BATTLE OF SAINT-LÉONARD
LA BATAILLE DE SAINT-LÉONARD

Pulse

CAPITOL 6
FEB 10 | 1:00 PM

FÉLIX ROSE

Canada (Québec) | 2024 | 108 min

An unprecedented language crisis unfolded in the heart of the town of Saint-Léonard between 1968–1969. French-speaking parents demanded French-only schools, while members of the Italian community sought to preserve bilingual schools. The conflict spread throughout Québec, creating enormous tensions that escalated into violence and culminated in a bloody riot. The Battle of Saint-Léonard tells the story of Raymond Lemieux and Mario Barone, two remarkable yet forgotten men of modest origins, who each fought with strength and conviction, despite the heavy consequences for themselves, their families, and their professional lives. Their struggle changed the destiny of Québec and led to the adoption of the Charter of the French Language (Bill 101).

Une crise linguistique sans précédent se déroule au coeur de la ville de Saint-Léonard en 1968-1969. Des parents francophones revendiquent des écoles uniquement en français alors que des membres de la communauté italienne souhaitent préserver des écoles bilingues. Le conflit s'étend à la grandeur du Québec et crée d'énormes tensions qui dégénèrent en violence et culminent par une émeute sanglante. La bataille de Saint-Léonard raconte l'histoire de Raymond Lemieux et de Mario Barone, deux remarquables oubliés aux origines modestes, qui se sont opposés avec force et conviction, malgré les lourdes conséquences sur leur vie familiale et professionnelle. Leur combat changera la destinée du Québec et mènera à l'adoption de la Charte de la langue française (loi 101).

Linguistic Crisis + Demands + Quebec History

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***

TOURNÉE QUÉBEC CINÉMA



THE DAY ICELAND STOOD STILL

PAMELA HOGAN

Iceland, USA | 2024 | 70 min

Pulse

CAPITOL 6
FEB 10 | 6:30 PM

On October 24, 1975, 90% of the women in Iceland just took the day off. Cheering can commence now. Men had to manage jobs, children, and households. The butchers ran out of hot dogs. It was a momentous day and long overdue.

Activist director Pamela Hogan achieves the right balance of archival footage and insights from an animated group of women in their 70s and 80s (former members of a feminist collective called the Red Stockings) who drove the one day 'strike'. Their beef? Simple parity: access to education, employment, and pay.

Imagine a time when you were told you don't need a raise because your pay is for make-up and clothes. Imagine training a man for a job and then he gets the promotion. Imagine women who didn't want to call it a strike because that's too aggressive. These statements take the film from being a fun look back to something inspiring. So much so that later other countries held their own Day Off.

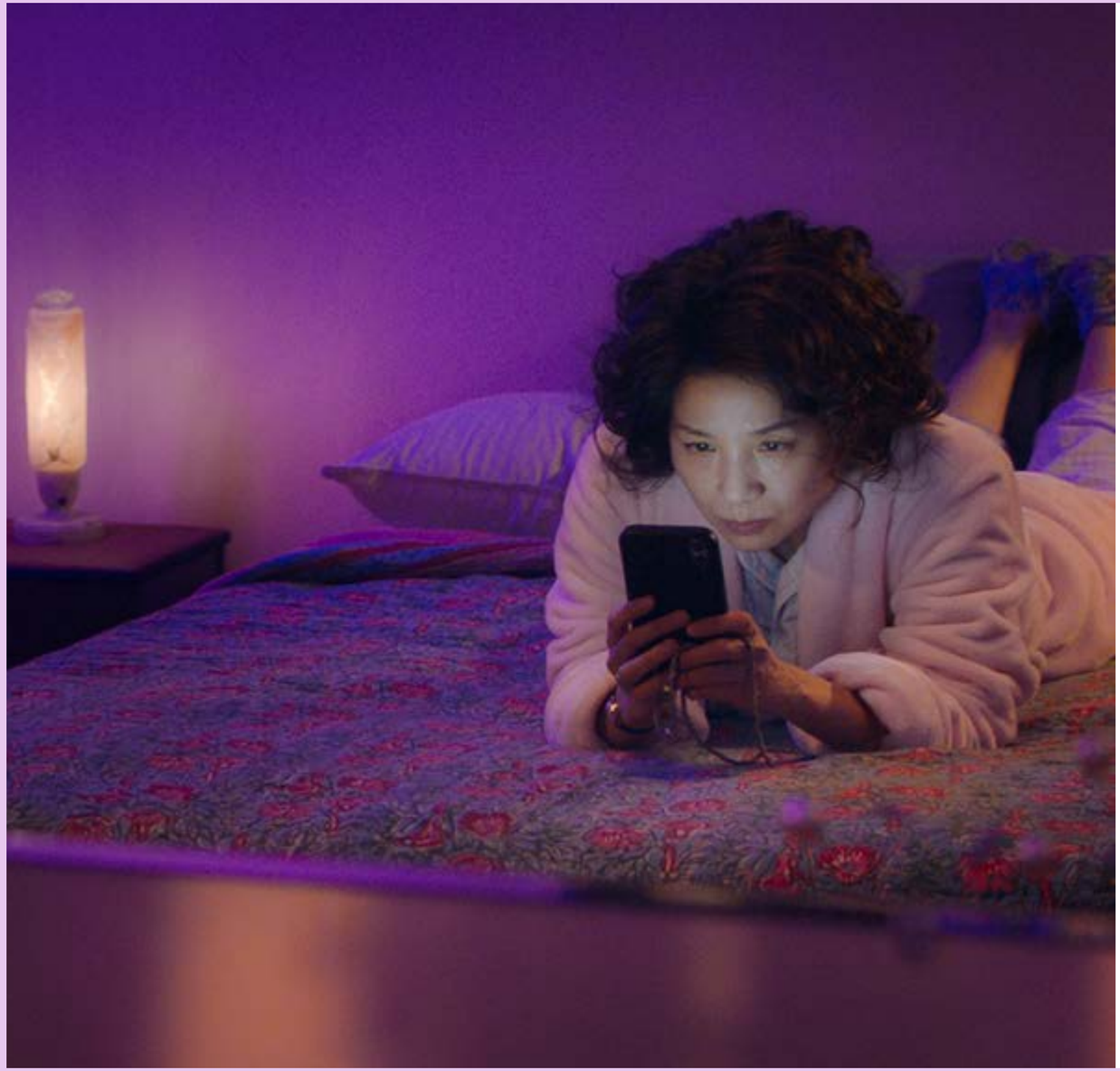
The film's producer, Hrafnhildur Gunnarsdóttir, at 11 years old was in that square with her mother and the energy and unexpected power was palpable. Five years after the Day Off, Icelanders voted in the world's first democratically elected female president and currently women hold 48 percent of the seats in parliament. – KK

Gleeful + Radical + Timely

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now!***

University of Victoria | Germanic & Slavic Studies



THE MOTHER AND THE BEAR

JOHNNY MA

Canada | 2024 | 100 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 12 | 3:00 PM

Sara (Kim Ho-jung) flies to Winnipeg from Seoul when her daughter Sumi (Leere Park) is hospitalized in a medically induced coma after a nasty fall on some ice. Upon arriving, Sara finds herself in a strange and unfamiliar world as she learns that she doesn't know her single daughter as well as she thought. With a snow-covered suburban landscape serving as backdrop to a story of mistaken identities and cultural dislocation, Sara attempts to intervene in her daughter's life, including awkward attempts to be her matchmaker.

After setting up an online dating profile, she identifies Min (Jonathan Kim) as a suitable suitor and begins catfishing a relationship for when her daughter awakes. Things get more complicated when she meets Sumi's co-worker Amaya (Amara Pedroso) and realizes her good intentions are getting in the way of her daughter's happiness. Playing to its comedic strengths, this emotionally honest drama explores the hazards of adult parenting in a global village. – AR

Cultures + Catfishing + Parenting

Buy Ticket
Now!



THE SUMMER BOOK

CHARLIE MCDOWELL

UK | 2023 | 90 min

STAR CINEMA
FEB 8 | 2:00 PM
THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 10 | 2:45 PM

It has taken a long while for Tove Jansson's novel, *The Summer Book*, to be adapted to screen. The memoir, from Finland's famous writer of the classic Moomins books for children, offers a deeply personal account of an elderly artist and her six-year-old granddaughter who spend a summer together on a tiny island in the Gulf of Finland. As the two learn to adjust to each other's fears, idiosyncrasies, and desires, a fierce but understated love emerges, that becomes more expansive than the island itself. The memoir is layered with subtextual emotions and sadness, and written with a sparse anti-sentimentalism that perhaps explains why the wait for a screen adaptation has been so long. Thankfully, Charlie McDowell's film adaptation, starring a vibrant Glenn Close, approaches the source material with profound delicacy, and the film is imbued with Jansson's characteristic lightness of touch, managing somehow to evoke deep emotion.

In the wake of her mother's death, Sophia (played by impressive newcomer Emily Matthews), her grandmother (Close), and father (Anders Danielsen Lie) spend a summer on an island off the Gulf of Finland. Many of the narrative's key dramatic events have happened outside the frame of the film. Instead, the audience is gently invited into the peace of personal processes - grief, growth, patience - amidst the life-giving embrace of a beautiful natural environment. In this sense, the film is without high drama or tension. Instead, McDowell offers a near meditative reflection on family bonds, growing up, and understanding deeply, which is warmly faithful to Tove Jansson's delicately beautiful approach to storytelling. - JD

Comforting + Delicate + Nostalgic

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket at ***Star Cinema***

Buy Ticket ***The Vic Theatre***



THERE'S STILL TOMORROW

PAOLA CORTELLESI

Italy | 2023 | 118 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 8 | 12:15 PM

Set in post-war Rome in 1946, *There's Still Tomorrow* tells the story of Delia, a woman trapped in an abusive marriage to Ivano, while caring for her children and ailing father-in-law. Amid the poverty and political unrest of the time, Delia finds solace and support from two loyal friends: Nino, a mechanic who secretly loves her, and William, an African American soldier eager to help.

Delia's life is turned upside down when her daughter, Marcella, becomes engaged to Giulio Moretti, a wealthy young man from an affluent ice cream parlor family. While Marcella's marriage promises financial security, Delia sees in it the same abusive patterns she has endured. In a bold act of defiance, she sabotages the Moretti family business with William's help, hoping to prevent the marriage and protect her daughter from the same fate.

As Italy's first post-war election approaches, Delia, empowered by her newly won right to vote, finds the strength to confront her controlling husband and fight for her freedom. In her directorial debut, Cortellesi (Best Debut Director and Actress, Academy of Italian Cinema) explores themes of empowerment, self-determination, and the struggle for personal freedom, as Delia fights to secure a better future for herself and her daughter. - MH

Empowering + Defiant + Resilient

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



THIS TOO SHALL PASS

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 13 | 5:00 PM

ROB GRANT

Canada | 2023 | 105 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

When Simon's (Maxwell Jenkins) overbearing religious parents push him to his limits of conformity, the cautiously rebellious 16-year-old escapes with his friends across the border from Syracuse, NY to spend an unsupervised weekend in Ottawa. Hoping to make a grand romantic gesture to impress his crush who's spending the summer in Canada with her grandparents, Simon's impulsively planned trip quickly falls apart.

After encountering some unfriendly locals and losing their limited funds, the guys need to hustle to find a way home. Along the way, they indulge their teenage fantasies and find out the hard way that real life isn't what they've seen in the movies. The ensemble cast's natural chemistry captures the spirit of youth, at a time when payphones and the mall have yet to be replaced by smartphones and Snapchat. Relishing in its late 80's setting, director Rob Grant pays homage to John Hughes' iconic teen films and cleverly flips the script in this coming-of-age update on a classic genre. - AR

Youth + Rebellion + Romance

Buy Ticket
Now



VILLAGE KEEPER

KAREN CHAPMAN

Canada | 2024 | 83 min

CAPITOL 6
FEB 12 | 1:00 PM

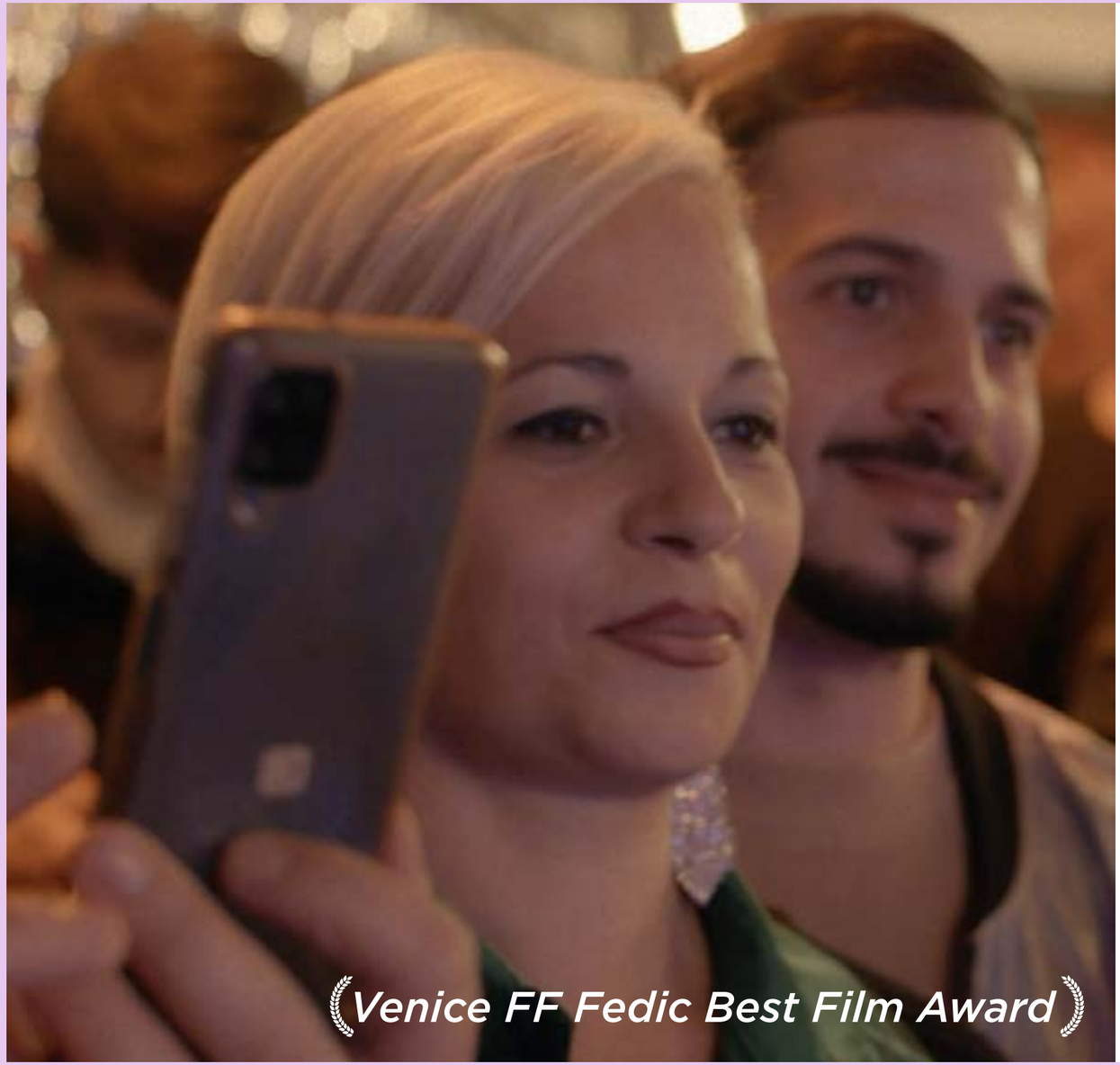
Jean's entire world as a single mother revolves around trying to support and provide for her two maturing teenage children. As they move toward their independence while struggling with anxiety, Jean desperately tries to protect them from the violence immediately outside their high-rise apartment doors. Working as a caretaker on the verge of eviction, she literally tries to clean up the neighbourhood but comes to realize that in order to care for others, she must learn to take care of herself.

Recent traumatic events trigger Jean's difficult memories from her past as she fights to break the cycle of intergenerational trauma and ensure that her kids' lives are free from the pain she's endured. Writer-director Karen Chapman's impressive debut feature, based upon her award-winning short film *Measure*, thrives in its authentic depiction of a community that is both dangerous and beautiful, brought to life by another outstanding performance by actress Olunike Adeliyi. -AR

Adversity + Cultures + Community

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



VITTORIA

ALESSANDRO CASSIGOLI, CASEY KAUFFMAN

Italy | 2024 | 89 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 13 | 2:45 PM

Vittoria follows Jasmine, a mother of three sons working as a hairdresser in Naples. She has a loving family but often faces a barrier of communication when dealing with her boys. Having always wanted a daughter, and after her father's passing, she begins to re-examine the dynamics of her family before setting out to adopt a girl. The true complexities of the process quickly begin to reveal themselves, while her husband, Rino, is confounded by the decision. Their relationship begins to strain, and soon both must come face-to-face with the reality that there are no easy paths or certain guarantees when it comes to the immense responsibility of opening their family up to a new person.

Vittoria is an intimate story about family connection and communication, which becomes even more powerful with the knowledge that the two people in the lead roles are a real-life couple. Jasmine and Rino are played by partners who went through a similar adoption process themselves, and together they bring stunning tension and intimacy to the screen. Much like they opened themselves up to adoption, they open their family history to us, in a touching reminder of the catharsis found within art and cinema. – AK

Compassionate + Unique + Touching

Buy Ticket
Now



WHAT A FEELING

KAT ROHRER

Austria | 2024 | 110 min

CAPITOL 6
FEB 11 | 9:00 PM

A chance encounter at a lesbian bar brings two women leading strikingly different lives together in this winning romantic comedy. Free-spirited, unattached Fa (Proschat Madani, *Cuckoo*), whose charm and popularity with women are well-established, runs her own carpentry business and cares for her aging Iranian mother, who doesn't know Fa is a lesbian. Marie Theres (Caroline Peters, *Walk on Water*) is a successful but slightly uptight doctor whose conventional life is upended when her husband of 20 years abruptly asks for a divorce. The two women could not be more different...or more attracted to each other. Marie Theres and Fa's encounter at Bigi's bar changes both their lives forever.

"You can dance right through your life" from Irene Cara's iconic anthem from *Flashdance* is the mantra of Kat Rohrer's stunning fiction feature debut, capturing the nuances of relationships, and the thrill and endless possibilities of new love while exploring migration, class, and identity in Austria. -KM

Heartfelt + Funny + Relatable

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



We love quirky films. A magical director waves some sparkles and fairy dust over a film, turns their head sideways and on a 180° angle and baby you've got quirkd. Think Stopkewich's Kissed, Liman's Go, Lynch's Eraserhead – hmmm do you think there's something about a one-word title? Maybe not. Hang onto your pearls.



A SAMURAI IN TIME

JUN'ICHI YASUDA

Japan | 2023 | 131 min

CINECENTA
FEB 12 | 5:00 PM

In late Edo-period Japan, two samurai engage in a fierce duel. When a bolt of lightning strikes, it hurls Kosaka (Makiya Yamaguchi) through time, waking him in present-day Japan. Disoriented, he finds himself on the set of a modern jidaigeki (period film) TV series, surrounded by people in both period costumes and contemporary attire, armed with modern gadgets. Mistaken for an extra by Yuko (Yuno Sakura), a driven assistant director, Kosaka's exceptional swordsmanship leads to an unexpected role as kirareyaku—the actor hired to dramatically die on screen.

A Samurai in Time blends humor with heart, presenting an ironically hilarious premise: a noble samurai, centuries removed from his time, flourishing as a stuntman in a world he can barely comprehend. But beyond the laughs, the film poignantly explores themes of change, adaptation, and the passage of time.

Kosaka's journey isn't just about mastering stunt choreography; it's about reconciling the rigid code of the samurai with the fluidity of modern life. As the samurai era fades, Kosaka must navigate a world that no longer has a place for him, ultimately finding hope and redemption in the evolving Japan around him.

Charming + Thoughtful + Funny

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



QuirkD

ABABOONED / ABABOUINÉ

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 10 | 12:15 PM

ANDRE FORCIER

Canada | 2024 | 94 min

Michel Paquette, 12, suffers from polio and misses Sunday mass to read poetry for St-Amour et fille. His old companion, Archange St-Amour, who suffers from Parkinson's, needs Michel's help to type Vive le Québec Laïque, an anti-clerical pamphlet in the Quebec of the Great Darkness. The pamphlet scandalizes the clergy, but the Church's vengeance pales in comparison to that of Michel and his friends. These young people go to great lengths to defy the clerical order, risking everything in their quest for a secular, egalitarian Quebec.

Michel Paquette, 12 ans, atteint de polio foxe la messe du dimanche pour lire de la poésie aux éditions St-Amour et fille. Son vieux compagnon, Archange St-Amour, souffrant de parkinson a besoin de Michel pour l'aider à typographier Vive le Québec Laïque, un pamphlet anticlérical dans le Québec de la grande noirceur. Le pamphlet scandalise le clergé. La vengeance de l'Église n'est rien comparée à celle qui bouillonne chez Michel et ses amis. Les jeunes font les 400 coups en défiant l'ordre clérical et risquent le tout pour le tout pour leur quête d'un Québec laïque et égalitaire.

Secularism + Satire + Poetry

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***

La Société francophone de Victoria

TOURNÉE QUÉBEC CINÉMA



QuirkD

FOUR MOTHERS

DARREN THORNTON

Ireland, UK | 2024 | 89 min

STAR CINEMA
FEB 11 | 7:00 PM
THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 14 | 12:15 PM

Four Mothers marks a return for Irish writer-director Thornton, whose 2016 debut *A Date for Mad Mary* charmed festival audiences around the world. *Four Mothers*, his second feature, is a reinterpretation of Gianni Di Gregorio's 2008 film *Mid-August Lunch*, a Chekhovian drama about an Italian mother and son, facing the realities of older age.

In *Four Mothers*, the sundrenched streets of Rome are replaced with grey suburban Ireland, but all the colour you could ever need is provided by co-writer Colin Thorton's witty dialogue, which is infused with an astute and perceptive grasp of queer belonging and friendship.

Edward is in his mid-thirties. He's a single gay man, writing young adult novels about queer romance, though his own romantic escapades on the local dating scene leave much to be desired. Played brilliantly by relative newcomer James McArdle, (a Scotsman best known for his work on stage and TV, here adopting a convincing Irish accent with all the required charm for the silver screen!) Edward cares dutifully for his mother, Alma, who at 81, occupies much of his time after being restricted to a wheelchair following a severe stroke. Of course, Edward's love for Alma is not without frustration - especially as he tries to juggle the commitments of an impending US Book tour. Edward finds solidarity and comic relief in his community of gay friends—Colm (Gearoid Farrelly), Billy (Gordon Hickey), and his closeted, recently-divorced therapist Dermot (Rory O'Neill)—all of whom are also stuck in suffocating relationships with their mothers. However, when they plan a Pride Holiday to reclaim their freedom, Edward is unexpectedly left to care for all four mothers at once.

Four Mothers is a profoundly touching portrait of family love and commitment, and all the complexities that can entangle us in situations of caregiving that stretch beyond our control. Thornton beautifully weaves a narrative of friendship, community, and humour into this web of familial duty, underlining them as a vital lifeline that in turn keeps the carer feeling alive. – JD

Tender + Funny + Charming

Buy Ticket at ***Star Cinema***

Buy Ticket ***The Vic Theatre***



CAPITOL 6
FEB 8 | 9:00 PM

LONE WOLVES

RYAN CUNNINGHAM

USA | 2024 | 95 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

Two high school friends reunite after almost 20 years when forty-something Fran, determined to have a child and build a family on her terms, reaches out to the kind, eclectic Ben for a highly organized weekend to optimize do-it-yourself semen donations. What could go wrong when you reconnect with the socially awkward man you didn't go to prom with? Fran's impeccable plan begins to fall apart after some mental and physical obstacles keep Ben from delivering on time. Improvising to salvage the weekend, the two friends step out of their motel entrapped fertility mission and start to reconnect about life and loss. With the revival of their teen antics, and some unexpected dance breaks, Fran begins to drop her guard while Ben reveals his struggle with mental health and his late in life diagnosis as autistic, resulting in personal discovery and restoration for both. *Lone Wolves* offers a hilarious and aching perspective into the life-affirming and altering issues that only get discussed in the privacy of a somewhat affordable motel room. – KS

Comedy + Connection + Quirky

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



QuirkD

MOST PEOPLE DIE ON SUNDAYS

IAIR SAID

Argentina, Italy, Switzerland | 2024 | 73 min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 9 | 5:00 PM

Most People Die on Sundays is a quirky, emotionally rich film that blends humor and drama to explore themes of family, identity, and love.

David (played by director Iair Said), a slightly overweight, Jewish, thirty-something gay man, returns to Buenos Aires from Italy after his uncle's death. However, his homecoming is complicated by his mother's decision to unplug his comatose father, forcing David to confront unresolved family tensions.

Charming yet awkward, David navigates the emotional minefield of his father's impending death, strained relationships, and his own insecurities about belonging. His journey is filled with moments of humour, vulnerability, and self-discovery as he seeks connection in a world that often feels isolating.

Set within a contemporary Jewish Argentine family, the film offers a nuanced portrayal of the complexities of being queer in a traditional, close-knit community. The mix of deadpan humor and poignant drama creates a unique tone that will resonate with anyone who has ever struggled to find their place in the world.

Whether you're drawn to sharp, dry humor or tender family dramas, *Most People Die on Sundays* is a must-watch. It's a heartfelt, unforgettable story about love, family, and the search for connection in an increasingly disconnected world. – DR

Argentine Jews + Dysfunctional Family + LGBTQ

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



QuirkD

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 8 | 7:30 PM

STEALING PULP FICTION

DANNY TURKIEWICZ

USA | 2024 | 78 min

Stealing Pulp Fiction is a thrilling, meta-cinematic caper that blends crime, comedy, and homage. Directed by Danny Turkiewicz, the film follows a group of bumbling criminals who, after a botched practice heist of their therapist (Jason Alexander), team up to steal one of Quentin Tarantino's personal 35mm prints of Pulp Fiction. In true Tarantino fashion, these misfit crooks, desperate for fame and fortune, navigate a series of absurd and tension-filled moments, showcasing how far people will go in pursuit of their dreams—and how easily they can self-destruct in the process.

The film playfully riffs on and deconstructs classic Tarantino tropes, blurring the line between fiction and reality. With nods to Tarantino himself and his iconic New Beverly Cinema, *Stealing Pulp Fiction* becomes a high-energy love letter to his cinematic world—a chaotic yet heartfelt tribute to crime, storytelling, and the relentless pursuit of ambition. - MH

Homage + Absurd + Metafictional

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



SUNLIGHT

NINA CONTI

UK | 2024 | 96 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 13 | 7:45 PM

British comedian and ventriloquist Nina Conti's directorial debut, *Sunlight*, premiered at the Edinburgh Film Festival in 2024, a fitting place for a performer who has delighted festival audiences for years. *Sunlight* is quite unlike anything you will have seen before - a completely original, dark and comic take on road movies. It's about a monkey, a radio host who narrowly escapes the clutches of death, and a dead man's watch.

This most unusual romantic comedy-drama stars Shenoah Allen as Roy, a suicidal radio journalist who is contemplating the end of his life in a tragic motel room somewhere in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Waking up in his Airstream, Roy discovers he has been rescued by a stranger wearing a full monkey suit. He learns that the Monkey is Jane (Conti), who has decided that "Jane" doesn't exist, and Monkey is the one who'll be making all the decisions now. As they set off on an unlikely road-trip, Monkey – who never takes the suit off, even in the heat of the American desert highways – and Roy strike up an unlikely romance.

In this bizarre road movie narrative that has traces of Lenny Abrahamson's *Frank* (2014), two seemingly incongruous worlds (one enclosed in a monkey suit!) collide together in an offbeat and unconventional love story that provokes belly-laughs and sadness in equal measure.

This screening will be the film's Canadian premiere. It will leave you wanting to catch Nina Conti's stand-up show on tour! - JD

Homage + Absurd + Metafictional

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



CAPITOL 6
FEB 7 | 9:00 PM

THE HEIRLOOM

BEN PETRIE

Canada | 2024 | 85 min

During a long winter and frustrated by writer's block, filmmaker Eric reluctantly agrees to his partner Allie's desire to adopt a dog. Through intense research and a lot of back and forth, they finally settle upon Milly, a rescue whippet from the sunny Dominican Republic who suddenly finds herself in a grey and cold Toronto with newbie owners, who until this point never had to care about anything but themselves. Relying upon the internet and a judgmental veterinarian, they try their best to domesticate Milly.

As their expanded family tests their relationship, Eric's doubts about his creative abilities find their way into his connection with his canine, while Allie questions whether their pandemic puppy has revealed deeper commitment and trust issues with someone, she thought she knew. Actors Ben Petrie and Grace Glowicki draw from their real-life relationship to craft a truly funny but honest look at modern relationships where fur babies have replaced human ones. – AR

Funny + Relationships + Pets

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket
Now



THE HOUSE WITH NO ADDRESS

HATICE AŞKIN

Turkey | 2024 | 96 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 9 | 5:00 PM

What if remembering was illegal? Alper is a young and upcoming prosecutor in a world where anyone found guilty of one of the seven deadly sins is erased from society. Not only can you no longer mention their name, but every artefact that could evoke their memory is disappeared. The world is wiped of their colour, and they are faded from existence. But when Alper's warm and caring mother is convicted of gluttony, for an extreme act of jam, he begins to question the rules he once fought to uphold. His father continues prosecuting crimes without acknowledging the new void in their existence, as Alper unravels in the face of his loss. Alper's emotions are shunned; he must toughen up and conform with forgetting before his career is ruined, or worse. But do those who forget truly heal? Or is memory a radical act of connection that makes us who we are?

Director Aşkın creates a film rich in inventive, often understated wit. She expertly controls the pacing, balancing humour with the film's darker themes of coercion, suppression, and cancel culture, ensuring the levity never undercuts the gravity of its dystopian world. Askin's debut feature deftly blends humour with seriousness, warmth with despair, creating a delicate tension that sustains the film's tonal integrity seamlessly holding the narrative together. – KS

Memory+ Quirky + Dystopia

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***

TURKISH AIRLINES

VANCOUVER



TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 11 | 5:00 PM

TO THE MOON

KEVIN HARTFORD

Canada | 2024 | 85 min

With a charming ensemble cast, *To the Moon* delivers a delightful blend of quirky comedy and heartwarming coming-of-age moments, exploring the idea that personal growth can happen at any stage in life. The story follows Sam (Jacob Sampson), a late-30s closeted single parent on the brink of becoming an empty nester, who finds himself smitten with the handsome man who frequents his local restaurant. Meanwhile, Sam's teenage daughter, Ella (Phoebe Rex), is navigating the ups and downs of high school while also trying to keep her well-meaning but clueless father grounded. Enter their new neighbor, Claire (Amy Groenig), a former corporate worker who has recently quit her job to pursue a career as a writer. Claire, eager to find inspiration for her novel, befriends the father-daughter dancing duo (you'll find out), setting the stage for unexpected connections and personal revelations for all.

To the Moon, produced by prolific Halifax-based filmmaker Thom Fitzgerald (*The Hanging Garden, Cloudburst*), and directed by Kevin Hartford, is a winsome film with some surprising revelations. – KM

Winsome + Humorous + Engaging

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

MATTHEW RANKIN

Canada | 2024 | 89 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 10 | 7:45 PM

Matthew Rankin's *Universal Language* is a surreal, playful exploration of language, culture, and identity. Set in a bilingual Canada that speaks Persian and French instead of English, the film's absurdity is immediately striking, offering a whimsical take on communication's complexities.

The narrative weaves together various stories: children attempting to dig a frozen bill from the snow, Rankin himself playing a character who leaves his office job in Montreal to reconnect with his mother in Winnipeg, and a tour guide (played by screenwriter, Pirouz Nemati) leading an exasperated group of tourists through snowy, abandoned malls. These disconnected threads combine absurd humor with deeper reflections on belonging and personal identity.

Rankin's inventive visual style stands out, blending bold, striking imagery with fast-paced editing. Through colour, animation, and dreamlike sequences, he brings abstract ideas of language and culture to life in a way that is both playful and profound. The result is a film that feels vibrant, chaotic, and continually evolving, much like the very nature of language itself.

The cast embraces the film's quirky tone with charm, bringing warmth and intellectual curiosity to their roles, even as they navigate the film's oddball premise. *Universal Language* is a genre-defying, thought-provoking work that invites audiences to laugh, reflect, and reconsider the limits of communication. With its bold visuals and layered themes, it's a striking cinematic puzzle that lingers long after the credits roll. -- KK

Witty + Nostalgia + Absurdism

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 13 | 7:30 PM

VAMPIRE ZOMBIES...FROM SPACE!

MICHAEL STASKO

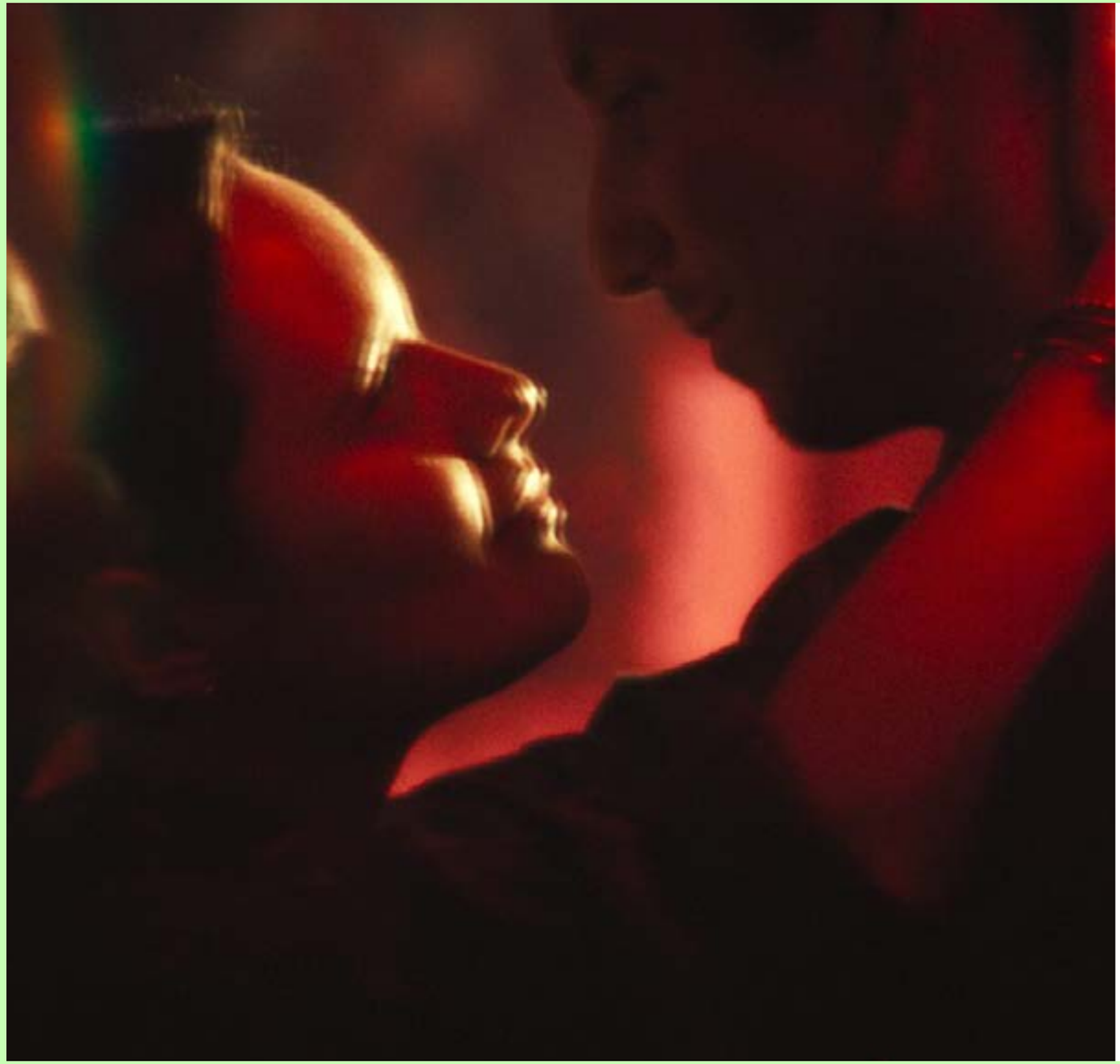
Canada | 2024 | 98 min

When Mary loses her mother at a young age to a freak accident in the tobacco fields, Mary's father is blamed. But is this really a case of rogue farmer killing his wife, or is there something more unexpected going on? Sure, there have been some weird encounters and unexpected sightings in the sky...but surely that is normal for small town America. Or is it?!!! From the depths of space, Dracula has devised his most dastardly plan yet— turning the residents of one small American town into his personal army of vampire zombies! Now Mary is all grown up, and they are back, immune to the powers that chased them away years ago, and ready to unleash their evil plan on the somewhat unsuspecting, and somewhat we-always-knew-there-was-more-going-on town folk. A motley crew consisting of a grizzled detective, a skeptical rookie cop, a chain-smoking greaser, and Mary band together to save the world! Packed with gruesome special effects, b-movie miniatures, and gut-busting laughs, *Vampire Zombies...from Space!* is a bloody comedy full of camp and quirk that will cast you back to the black and white 1950s and make you question everything you thought you knew about vampires, zombies, and space.

Quirky + Horror + Camp

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



QuirkD

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 11 | 7:30 PM

YOU ARE NOT ALONE
VOUS N'ÊTES PAS SEULS

PHILIPPE LUPIEN + MARIE-HÉLÈNE VIENS

Canad (Québec) | 2024 | 105 min

Leo, a lonely, anxious pizza delivery guy, stumbles upon John, a mysterious taxi driver seeking lonesome souls. This unusual encounter throws Leo into a dizzying delirium, disrupting his blossoming romance with Rita. As the leaves start falling from the trees, the days grow shorter, and the cold begins to settle in... Luckily, the first flames of love warm Leo's heart. But beware: if you play with fire, you might get burned.

Léo, un livreur de pizza solitaire et anxieux, tombe sur John, un mystérieux chauffeur de taxi à la recherche d'âmes esseulées. Cette rencontre insolite plonge le jeune homme dans un délire vertigineux, bouleversant l'éclosion de sa romance avec Rita. Alors que l'automne tire à sa fin et que les jours raccourcissent, le froid s'installe... Par chance, les premières flammes de l'amour réchauffent le cœur de Léo. Mais, attention : le feu, c'est dangereux.

Romance + Extraterrestrial + Loneliness

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***

La Société francophone de Victoria

TOURNÉE QUÉBEC CINÉMA



QuirkD

GRAND TOUR

MIGUEL GOMES

Portugal, Italy, France, Germany, Japan, China | 2024 | 128 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 15 | 12:00 PM

In *Grand Tour*, Miguel Gomes, who won the Best Director award at the 77th Cannes Film Festival in 2024, delivers a visually stunning and emotionally resonant journey across Asia. The story begins in 1917 in Burma, as Edward, a British civil servant, dramatically flees his fiancée Molly on their wedding day to Singapore. His quest for freedom unfolds into an epic journey, transforming into a “grand tour” across the vibrant landscapes of Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines, Japan, and China.

The unfolding journey explores themes of freedom, separation, and self-discovery, with each location reflecting a deeper connection to the characters’ emotional landscapes. The intimate interactions between the characters and the striking settings create a powerful contrast between movement and stillness, capturing the complexities of relationships and the passage of time. As Edward travels, Molly embarks on a parallel journey, chasing him across these varied locations, creating a dramatic tension. *Grand Tour* is an evocative and thought-provoking film, where travel is not just a literal experience, but a process of personal transformation. -MH

Adventurous + Visually Captivating + Introspective

Buy Ticket
Now



Who is worth getting to know a little better? Artists who create great beauty? Women who have stood up for themselves? Athletes who reach great heights? Or maybe it's just Liza Minnelli – because... well... what a life!



CAPITOL 6
FEB 11 | 4:00 PM

7 BEATS PER MINUTE

YUQI KANG

Canada | 2024 | 100 min

Jessea Lu holds several national records in freediving, holding her breath in the depths of the ocean from the Bahamas to Antarctica. In 2018, she attempted to set a world record. She achieved her desired depth of 93 metres, but suffered an underwater blackout while surfacing, requiring a rescue from her safety crew and falling short of the record. She was lifeless for four minutes. This near-death experience was a rebirth for Lu as she didn't abandon the sport but challenged herself to face her fears and continue to chase new depths.

What are the limits of our bodies and our hearts? In *7 Beats per Minute*, director Yuqi Kang forms a profound connection with Jessea, accompanying her through rigorous training and into the ocean as they explore their shared vulnerabilities. As they confront past traumas and seek new beginnings, they discover that the journey of self-trust—and learning to trust others—is both complex and essential to healing. - AR

Daring + Sports + Women

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket *Now*



ARTHUR ERICKSON: BEAUTY BETWEEN THE LINES

STAR CINEMA
FEB 8 | 7:00 PM
CAPITOL 6
FEB 9 | 1:00 PM

DANNY BERISH, RYAN MAH

Canada | 2024 | 80 min

Beauty Between the Lines intricately weaves together the complexities of Erickson's life, his visionary business, and his iconic buildings, offering a profoundly personal portrait of one of the most influential and celebrated architects of our time.

While there are many films about Erickson's building – the end, so to speak – the focus *in Beauty Between the Lines* is on the means. How was this man shaped, who took up space in his life, who did he need to become to create his buildings?

Erickson managed chaos, bankruptcy, the world stage and, at times, a heart-rending personal life. Directors Mah and Berish don't fall into gossip but instead balance true insight with a clear-eyed look at Erickson. Using never seen footage and interviews with cultural heavyweights like Dougals Coupland and Phyllis Lambert the documentary also digs in to find and interview the people who were there in the office working alongside the man.

Luckily the filmmakers don't forget the buildings and just when you begin to shake your head about Erickson then they show you the enormity of his talent and it brings a stillness and a warm pleasure to see such remarkable work. – KK

Fresh + Reveling + Mesmerizing

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket at ***Star Cinema***

Buy Ticket at ***Capitol 6***



BETWEEN PICTURES: THE LENS OF TAMIO WAKAYAMA

Sketch

CAPITOL 6
FEB 8 | 1:00 PM

CINDY MOCHIZUKI

Canada | 2024 | 71 min **Filmmaker expected to attend**

Cindy Mochizuki's film paints a riveting portrait of the Japanese-Canadian photographer's life through an eclectic blend of archival footage, animation, illustrations, voice-overs, and interviews. The film deftly showcases how Wakayama, fueled by his burgeoning passion for activism, traded Canada's calm for the tumultuous American South in the 1960s to join the fight for equality.

As a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Wakayama witnessed history unfold, from protests to pivotal victories. Amidst this cauldron of change, he discovered an unlikely passion – photography.

Mastering the dark art of developing images, Wakayama's lens became a tool for self-discovery, and his experience in the American South challenged his perceptions, forcing him to confront the complexities of his own heritage. Returning to Canada's west coast, Wakayama made a conscious decision to turn his camera inward, focusing on the untold stories of his community.

The film showcases how Wakayama preserved the legacy of the Powell Street Festival and Vancouver's forgotten Japanese neighborhoods through his photographs, revealing the resilience and spirit of a people displaced by war and time. His work serves as a testament to the power of art to heal, educate, and inspire, and the film leaves an indelible mark on the audience's understanding of community and belonging. -LW

Activism + Photography + Identity

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket *Now*

DGC DIRECTORS GUILD OF CANADA BRITISH COLUMBIA



THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 9 | 2:45 PM

BLUE RODEO: LOST TOGETHER

DALE HESLIP

Canada | 2024 | 88 min

McCartney and Lennon, Bono and the Edge, Cummings and Bachman, rock history is filled with dynamic duos whose careers are defined by creative bonds that have filled the airwaves with unforgettable music and lyrics. Add to that list, Jim Cuddy and Greg Keelor's fortuitous high school meeting that led to a lifelong brotherhood and Blue Rodeo's emergence over the past four decades as one of this country's most beloved bands. As Rolling Stone said upon the release of Try in 1987, "the best new American band of the year may very well be Canadian."

From their early days in Toronto's clubs and popularity of their live shows to the legendary recording of *Five Days in July*, the band reconvenes for an intimate jam session that shows how their immense talent has only grown through the highs and lows over the years. Incredible archival footage elevates the stories behind the classic songs that have become the soundtrack to so many lives. -AR

Music + Friendship + Legends

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***

spinnakers
BREWPUB & GUESTHOUSES



CAPITOL 6
FEB 10 | 4:00 PM

GHOSTS OF THE SEA

VIRGINIA TANGVALD

Canada | 2024 | 98 min

Peter Tangvald was a fearless Norwegian seafarer whose adventurous exploits, free from societal expectations, came to a sudden and tragic end as his boat sank off the West Indies coast. Left behind were former lovers and children including his daughter Virginia. Only five years old when her father died, in the decades that have passed she's worked to piece together his story and in turn, her own. A remarkable archive of family photos and videos blends with current day interviews, constructing a portrait of a complicated and fiercely independent man.

Reconnecting with siblings, she probes the mystery of her father's life and through the emotional process grieves those who can no longer share their story, including her brother Thomas, who also disappeared at sea on his own ship. An intimate family story, Virginia transcends personal trauma to deliver a heartfelt film that breaks cycles of harm and bares difficult truths through a moving exploration of loss and resilience. -AR

Family+ Mystery + Sailing

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket *Now*

ONF NFB



IT'S ALL GONNA BREAK

STEPHEN CHUNG

Canada, USA | 2024 | 94 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 14 | 7:45 PM

Stephen Chung's feature directorial debut, *It's All Gonna Break*, offers an intimate look at the genesis of Broken Social Scene, a collective of talented friends who inadvertently sparked a musical revolution. Through rare archival footage, Chung recounts his experience capturing the group's early days, culminating in their seminal 2002 album, *You Forgot It in People*. This critically acclaimed record catapulted Toronto onto the global music scene, shedding light on the city's vibrant indie landscape.

Chung's ever-present lens quietly chronicles the collective's organic formation, comprised of artists, musicians, and friends navigating creative passions, personal relationships, and professional growth. Broken Social Scene's success spawned a wave of cutting-edge bands, solo projects, and collaborations, cementing their influence on contemporary indie rock.

As a cinematographer, Chung's footage, spanning the group's formative years, humanizes Broken Social Scene's journey from local favorites to international sensation. The film deftly employs the use of archival footage interwoven with present-day interviews that underscore the band's connection to Chung, who's hailed for always watching in the shadows, and credited as a major part of the glue that's kept the band together for over two decades.

It's All Gonna Break delves into the complexities of friendship and success, offering a poignant testament to the power of creative collaboration, and the enduring legacy of Broken Social Scene. – LW

Indie music + Friendship + Biography

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket *Now*



LIZA: A TRULY TERRIFIC ABSOLUTELY TRUE STORY

BRUCE DAVID KLEIN

USA | 2024 | 104 min

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 11 | 12:15 PM
STAR CINEMA
FEB 12 | 7:00 PM

No one ever had to tell Liza Minnelli, a performer of trembling vulnerability and commanding stage presence, to “go big” but many helped her along the way as we learn from Bruce David Klein’s eye-opening and affectionate biographical film. Launched as a teen star in the shadow of her legendary, tragic mother, Judy Garland, the now 77-year-old performer created her own persona, a living cartoon of pop-eyed, ball of energy in sequined gowns with the thrilling voice, mascara eyes and sky-punching dance moves. But how did she get to be Liza with a Z?

Bolstered by interviews with fellow performers Mia Farrow, Ben Vereen, Chita Rivera, and Joel Grey, the archival and contemporary interviews, explore the influence of her godmother, Kay Thompson, the actress, Minelli’s director father, Vincent Minnelli, the choreographer and director Bob Fosse, the French star, Charles Aznavour who showed her how to tell a story in a song, Cabaret lyricist Fred Ebb and designer Halston, each of whom was catalyzed by her presence and ambition. -LL

Liza + Cabaret + Biography

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket at ***The Vic Theatre***

Buy Ticket at ***Star Cinema***



PAUL ANKA: HIS WAY

JOHN MAGGIO

USA | 2024 | 100 min

STAR CINEMA
FEB 9 | 2:00 PM
THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 13 | 12:15 PM

On his podcast, *Smartless*, actor Jason Bateman summarized the professional accomplishments of his secret guest, also his father-in-law, the singer-songwriter Paul Anka: 900 songs to his credit, 130 albums, more than 90 million album and singles sales, and the only artist in history to have songs on the Billboard Top 100 in seven decades. In a musical form where most artist's careers have the durability of a popsicle stick, Anka is an entertainment industry freak.

John Maggio's documentary mixes a candid interview with the now 83-year-old performer as he swaps stories of hanging with the Rat Pack and working for The Mob, interspersed with footage of Anka belting it out to cheering crowds on stages from New York to Tokyo on his 2023 world tour.

Using a trove of archival video and film, including clips from the 1962 acclaimed National Film Board cinema verité documentary, *Lonely Boy*, John Maggio's film reveals Anka as a driven creator who has reinvented himself repeatedly to satisfy his ambition and feed the "needle in the arm" reward of audience adulation. The son of Lebanese Syrian restauranteurs in Ottawa, Anka hit the big time in the late fifties a pudgy teen idol with a pompadour and a mellow tenor and, uniquely, a string of self-penned hits, including *Diana* and *Puppy Love.*

When The Beatles swept the teen idol era into history, Anka went to Europe to record in Italian and French, returned to establish himself as a night club performer, and later became a fixture of 70s easy-listening radio. Through the film, viewers are reminded of his irrefutable genius for making hits: *You Are My Destiny* written for his mother, Buddy Holly's posthumous hit *I Guess It Doesn't Matter Any More, The Tonight Show* theme, Frank Sinatra's signature tune *My Way*, Tom Jones' *She's A Lady*, as well as collaborations with Michael Jackson (*This Is It*) and fellow Canadian, Drake. Whatever decade you prefer, there's a good chance you will leave the theatre with one of his earworms spinning in your head. -LL

Idol + Legend + Entertainer

Buy Ticket at ***The Vic Theatre***

Buy Ticket at ***Star Cinema***



SAMIA

YASEMIN ŞAMDERELI & DEKA MOHAMED

Italy, Germany, Belgium | 2024 | 102 min

CAPITOL 6
FEB 12 | 6:30 PM

Samia is a masterful film, helmed by Yasemin Şamdereli, about the eponymous, strong-willed, Somalian young woman whose gift of speed transforms her life.

From a young age, it was clear that Samia was destined to sprint her way to greatness. As civil unrest amplifies in her hometown Mogadishu, Samia's ability to train becomes hampered by local militias staunchly opposed to women engaging in sports. When Samia's father and biggest champion suddenly dies, her mother defies their society's conservative values and rallies her family in support of Samia's dream to race and honour her father's memory.

Samia's discipline and determination take her all the way to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, which sparks a fire inside her to make the 2012 London Olympics a reality. Her return to Africa amidst the ongoing civil war confirms her suspicions – if representing Somalia at the next Olympics is in her future, she needs to leave. As Samia's journey unfolds, she becomes a powerful testament to the human spirit, showcasing the resilience, courage, and determination that define a champion.

Inspired by true events, and with a stellar performance from newcomer Ilham Mohamed Osman, Samia offers an inspirational, thought-provoking look at a gifted athlete's pursuit of greatness that demands a high price. -LW

Inspirational + Olympic dream + Biography

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket *Now*



SONO LINO

JACOB PATRICK

USA | 2024 | 76 min

STAR CINEMA
FEB 11 | 2:00 PM
CAPITOL 6
FEB 13 | 6:30 PM

Sono Lino gives us an inspiring glimpse into the journey of Lino Tagliapietra, the legendary maestro of glass, who stands at the pinnacle of his craft after seven decades of unparalleled glassblowing artistry. Born on the storied island of Murano, Italy in 1934, Lino's affinity for glass was ignited at just 11 when he first stepped into the fiery workshops, and years of dedication honed his skills - earning him global acclaim.

In a poignant swan song, it is a privilege to witness Lino reunite with his original team for an unforgettable, four-hour marathon in the scorching hot shop in a performance that defies age and physical limitations. Jacob Patrick skilfully captures the intense focus and synchronized movement of Lino's team, accompanied by the symphony of sounds from the glassblowing shop – the hiss of fire, the crackle of glass, and the gentle hum of collaboration.

Through this rich tapestry of sights, sounds, and reflections, the documentary masterfully explores the complexities of creativity, identity, and legacy. As Lino grapples with the notion of retirement and a life beyond glassblowing, the film poses a bold question: Can an artist ever truly separate themselves from their art? -LW

Artisanal + Inspiring + Community

Buy Ticket at ***Star Cinema***

Buy Ticket at ***Capitol 6***



TEACHES OF PEACHES

PHILIPP FUSSENEGGER, JUDY LANDKAMMER

Germany | 2024 | 102 min

TOASTER ROCKET CINEMA
FEB 12 | 7:30 PM

Teaches of Peaches, a feature-length documentary by Philipp Fussenegger and Judy Landkammer, offers an electrifying deep dive into the life and legacy of Canadian singer, performer, and feminist queer icon Peaches.

The film explores the incredible journey of Merrill Nisker, better known as Peaches, from her early days as a kindergarten teacher serenading children to her transformation into the unapologetic "Grandmother of Electropunk." Celebrating the 20th anniversary of her groundbreaking album *The Teaches of Peaches*, the documentary highlights her bold message of sexual freedom through hits like "*Fuck the Pain Away*" and "*Cum Undun*." Packed with never-before-seen footage, unfiltered interviews, and raw concert moments from her anniversary tour, viewers are invited into Peaches' world—her art, her band and crew, and her (former) lovers.

Vibrant and fearless, the documentary not only embraces Peaches' provocative performances but also celebrates aging, sexuality, and self-expression. With a mix of humour and heart, it offers a genuine portrait of what it means to be a trailblazer for gender and sexual liberation. Winner of the prestigious Teddy Award for Best Documentary at the Berlinale 2024, *Teaches of Peaches* is a joyous, defiant celebration of individuality that will leave you dancing—and reflecting—long after the credits roll. - MS

Sexuality + Empowerment + Aging

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket ***Now***



STAR CINEMA
FEB 13 | 2:00 PM
CAPITOL 6
FEB 13 | 4:00 PM

THE DIAMOND COUPLE

SONJA BERTUCCI

USA | 2024 | 80 min

Filmmaker expected to attend

There's a distinct sense of privilege in getting to know Betty and Morrie Maroff, the charming elderly Jewish couple who are the stars of Sonja Bertucci's deeply intimate documentary. The Maroffs aren't just elderly, they're centenarians, with their memories, curiosity, love of the arts, and concern with the state of the world still intact. Shot over eight years, the film begins in 2022, three years after Betty's death, as Morrie, then 107, talks about missing being able to share the memories they made together. Bertucci's film takes us back to a few years earlier when Betty was alive, as the couple tell stories and argue around their kitchen table, augmented by excerpts from her detailed travel journals and his copious, artistically sophisticated photographs. Most moving is the portrait of the give and take of their marriage, shaped both by the conventions of their upbringing and personal wounds. Under Bertucci's gentle probing, the self-deprecating Betty opens up about both her admiration and frustrations with her irrepressibly confident husband who, for all his talents, "had a lot to learn about emotions." -LL

Memory + Marriage + Aging

Movie TRAILER

Buy Ticket at ***Star cinema***

Buy Ticket at ***Capitol 6***

CINEVIC

SOCIETY OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS

CINEVIC SCREENING @ VFF 2025

CineVic is an artist-run society supporting independent filmmakers and media artists with accessible programming, affordable equipment, professional development resources, and cinematic exhibition opportunities since 1991. We are thrilled to once again return to the Victoria Film Festival with our annual screening of local films, showcasing the diversity of work created by our amazing members.

Cinecenta | Feb 16 | 7:30 pm

Buy Ticket
Now



Energetic programs of short films and new voices. Not on a boat.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

INTREPID THEATRE
FEB 13 | 7:30 PM & FEB 15 | 5:30 PM

IF YOU'VE COME LOOKING FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT YOU ARE IN THE RIGHT SPOT. YOU WON'T FIND A BETTER COLLECTION WHERE TWO AREN'T THE SAME, BUT SOMETHING DIFFERENT MAKES THEM SIMILAR.

79 min



Poppy's Saturn | Nicole Tegelaar | 14 mins
When nightclub singer Poppy is confronted by a black-eyed man she is overcome by fear. The event triggers a buried sexual trauma that she has to overcome in a kaleidoscopic world of glitter, music and blood**.**

Moonbeaming | Charlie Gudgeon & Tavish Gudgeon | 18 mins
After the death of his fiancée, a man attempts to navigate his grief. His would-be brother-in-law struggles to connect with him.

Stuffy | Dan Nicholls | 18 mins
A young couple sets off in the middle of the night to bury their kid's stuffed bunny because one of them is convinced that the stuffy is cursed.

Hello Stranger| Amélie Hardy | 16 mins
Between loads of laundry at the corner laundromat, Cooper shares the tumultuous story of her gender reassignment journey.

Camping | Sacha Kai Michaud & Alyssa Ashmore & Nicole Calfchild | 7 mins
Camping is a stop-motion short, that follows the story of Shawna, a young woman living in an urban encampment as she attempts to find housing. This was a community project, written by people with the lived experience of being unhoused.

LOCA | Véronique Paquette | 5 mins

A woman loses herself in an exhilarating tango that transforms her.

Buy Ticket
Now

BUST A GUT

INTREPID THEATRE
FEB 14 | 5:30 PM & FEB 16 | 5:30 PM

YOUR SIDE WILL BE IN STITCHES AFTER WATCHING THESE COMEDIES. FROM OFFBEAT AI TO ELEVATOR PITCHES, THESE FILMS WILL HAVE YOU HURTING FOR ALL THE RIGHT REASONS.

74 min



Pique | Spencer Zimmerman | 5 mins

A man seeks revenge on his high achieving wife.

Gatekeepers | Jason Speir & Ben Speir | 6 mins

After signing up for a literal elevator pitch, a screenwriter grapples with the conflicting advice from three very different producers.

Have We Met? | Megan Robinson | 10 mins

An actress is struggling to make a crowdfunding video to bolster her flailing career. When a passerby unintentionally disrupts her shoot, he becomes the catalyst for her downward spiral.

V.I.N.C.E. (Voice Intelligent Narrative Creation Engine) | Adam Greydon Reid | 10 mins

VINCE is a semi-nonfictional short film about an AI program that takes complete creative control of an ill-fated audio session. It's a dark, funny and timely tale that just might be the very first "Pro Human PSA" about the creative industry, in these strange and conversive times.

SUP | Greg Stewart | 9 mins

A woman goes out on a paddleboard. Hijinks ensue.

Back to Us | Jack Cox | 4 mins

A couple struggling to stay intimate imagines a series of worlds where they share a truly bizarre sex life.

The Callback | Kara Herold | 13 mins

A comedy about following a dream into a waking nightmare.

Hairy Legs | Andrea Dorfman | 13 mins

Questioning why she "has to" shave her hairy legs launches one 13-year-old girl on a journey of self-discovery.

Buy Ticket ***Now***

OH THE DRAMA!

INTREPID THEATRE
FEB 12 | 5:30 PM & FEB 14 | 7:30 PM

OH SO MUCH DRAMA UNDER ONE ROOF. IF YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE DRAMA STAY AWAY FROM THE SCREEN.

79 min



Astronaut | Kevin Cheng | 12 mins

A young Chinese-Canadian boy is visited by his absent father who builds him a spaceship out of cardboard and launches him on a fantastical mission to connect with the neighbourhood kids

OBSCURA | Arnold Lim | 21 mins

Sang-Ook, a Hikikomori (shut in) whose locked himself in his room for a year, builds a camera obscura from his room as a conduit to the outside world.

Day 3 | Emanuel Foucault | 20 mins

We follow Samantha Low, a down-and-out 21-year-old folksinger, as she navigates her first year as a tree-planter. But on the last day of the contract, when the truck gets stuck, her crew finds themselves in the grip of a terrible realization: the land is bringing something out of them. Something haunts them... hunts them.

Hatch | Alireza Kazemipour, Panta Mosleh | 11 mins

An Afghan refugee boy hides with his mother inside a moving water tanker trying to cross the border to safety. Losing his mother in the process, Naaji forever tries to find a way to relive his last memory of her.

The Fast Runner | David Bercovici-Artieda | 15 mins

At the dawn of World War II, a young Jewish girl, Frida, is confused and challenged by the selfless examples of compassion shown by the Rabbi of her community.

Buy Ticket
Now

THIS REALLY HAPPENED

INTREPID THEATRE
FEB 12 | 7:30 PM & FEB 16 | 7:30 PM

REEL STORIES OF REAL PEOPLE. FROM OUR OWN STREETS TO YOUR OWN BACKYARD. YOU WON'T FIND IT ON THE NEWS, BUT THIS WILL BE AN EXTRA EXTRA, SEE ALL ABOUT IT, HEADLINE.

108 min



The Bird in my Backyard | Ryan Wilkes | 20 mins

In an urban backyard on Canada's West Coast, a window salesman has created a living laboratory for investigating hummingbird behaviour. The Bird in My Backyard follows citizen scientist, Eric Pittman, as he documents the journeys of two female Anna's hummingbirds as they attempt to raise their young in his urban garden.

Pacific Weave with Joan Carrigan | Robin Féran | 21 mins

Joan Carrigan is a basket maker and basketry teacher who has lived on Salt Spring Island in British Columbia for over 29 years.

African Rifles | Mia Golden | 36 mins

The story of the first Black pioneers to leave the U.S., racism, and slavery behind to immigrate to Canada's Vancouver Island and form BC's first official military corps. They arrived in this new land with a renewed purpose, filling the region with a sense of community and diversity. That was the dream, that was the goal. This is the story.

Pandora | Jayme Cowley | 35 mins

Teresa is a recovered drug user who now works tirelessly as an outreach worker helping to bring hope, however she can, to the most vulnerable on the street.

Buy Ticket ***Now***

YOU HEARD IT HERE F1RST

INTREPID THEATRE
FEB 13 | 5:30 PM & FEB 15 | 7:30 PM

MESMERIZING STORIES BY INDIGENOUS ARTISTS AND TALES THAT NEED TO BE TOLD. YOU HEARD IT HERE F1RST, AND IT WON'T BE THE LAST YOU HEAR FROM THESE ARTISTS.

99 min



Forest Echoes | Eva Grant | 17 mins

A love story set against the backdrop of the climate crisis and the opioid epidemic, Forest Echoes follows Echo and Wild, two urban Indigenous land defenders. On the one-year anniversary of their arrest on the front lines, a death in their community opens old wounds but also offers them a chance to heal.

Shore to Shore | Peter Campbell | 35 mins

Master Coast Salish carver Luke Marston creates a monumental bronze sculpture which graces Stanley Park in Vancouver at the site of the village of his great-great grandfather. The film traces the genesis of the story back to the Azores in Portugal, through the creation of the sacred Bentwood Box for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to the carving of a dugout canoe with First Nations foster children. It is a story of creativity, love and reconciliation.

Inkwo for When the Starving Return | Amanda Strong | 18 mins

Dove, a gender-shifting warrior, uses their Indigenous medicine (Inkwo) to protect their community from an unburied swarm of terrifying creatures.

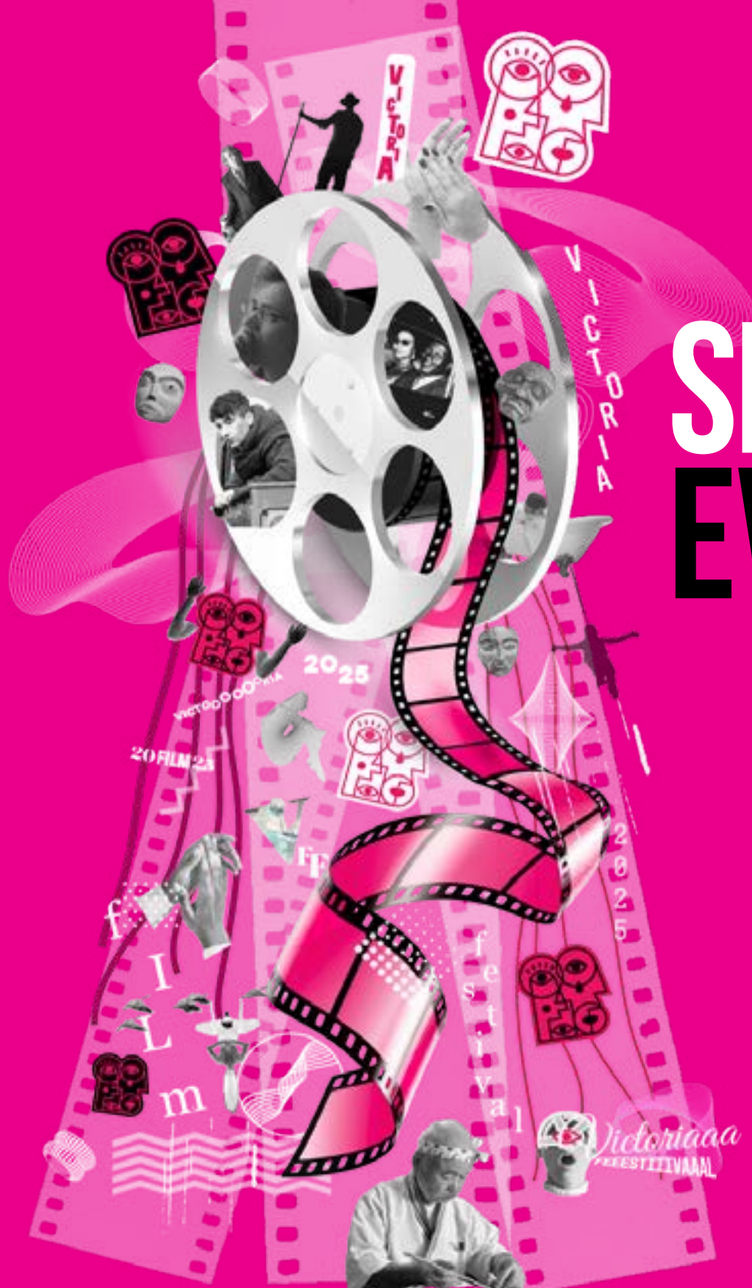
Uasheshkun | Normand Junior Thirnish-Pilot | 9 mins

A father tries to save the soul of his daughter, lost in darkness.

The Medzih Story: Restoring a Caribou Landscape | Trevor Dixon Bennett & Ryan Dickie | 20 mins

An indigenous community is working to help restore decades of industrial impacts on the land base to help stabilize boreal caribou populations. Located in Treaty 8 Territory in present day northeast British Columbia, the Fort Nelson First Nation find themselves at the 'tip of the spear' when it comes to repairing linear disturbances in caribou habitat.

Buy Ticket ***Now***



SPECIAL EVENTS

- Ari’s Theme @ Alix Goolden
- CineKids: Film Can
- Film Trivia with Richard Crouse
- Jammies & Toons
- Opening Gala Film & Party
- SpringBoard – the Industry event



ARI'S THEME @ ALIX GOOLDEN HALL

DIRECTOR: NATHAN DRILLOT, JEFF PETRAY | CANADA (VICTORIA) 2024 | 99 MIN

FEB 16 | 5:00 PM | 900 JOHNSON ST.

Ari's Theme highlights the remarkable journey of Ari Kinarthy, who discovered his creative voice through the uniquely innovative and supportive care provided by his music therapist, Allan Slade at the Victoria Conservatory of Music. Born with spinal muscular atrophy, Ari has worked with the Conservatory's faculty member Allan Slade for over 17 years, freeing up his musical talent through therapeutic interventions that included allowing Ari to transform his movements into captivating compositions using advanced technology like the Soundbeam. A large portion of the film was shot at the Conservatory, including the iconic Alix Goolden Performance Hall.

The screening will feature a live performance of the original score composed by Ari himself, performed by Victoria Conservatory of Music students and faculty, some of whom also appear in the film, adding a unique and moving dimension to the event. Attendees can also look forward to a special surprise announcement during the evening, making this a truly memorable celebration of Ari's inspiring story and the transformative power of music.

Buy TICKET HERE

Watch Trailer



FILMCAN

What is FilmCan? What is FilmCan? I was just asking myself that. An online Video Competition for Students. Youth interested in content creation make short films and upload them to the VFF Vimeo channel.

What happens to the films?
The winning films, based on a combination of likes and juror input, will screen at the 31th Annual Victoria Film Festival in front of the feature film, Night of the Zoopocalypse playing at Jammies and Toons.

THE WINNING ENTRIES RECEIVE:

Senior Category (Grade 9-12):
GoPro HERO8 Black Bundle – Courtesy of Prince of Whales Whale Watching
An opportunity to go out filming on a whale watching trip

Junior Category (Grade 8 and under):
MOZA Nano SE Foldable Extendable Selfie Stick Stabilizer
Prize Pack

Entries are open every October – mid-December

Watch FilmCan submissions

PRINCE of WHALES
WHALE & MARINE WILDLIFE ADVENTURES

golf for kids

CineKids

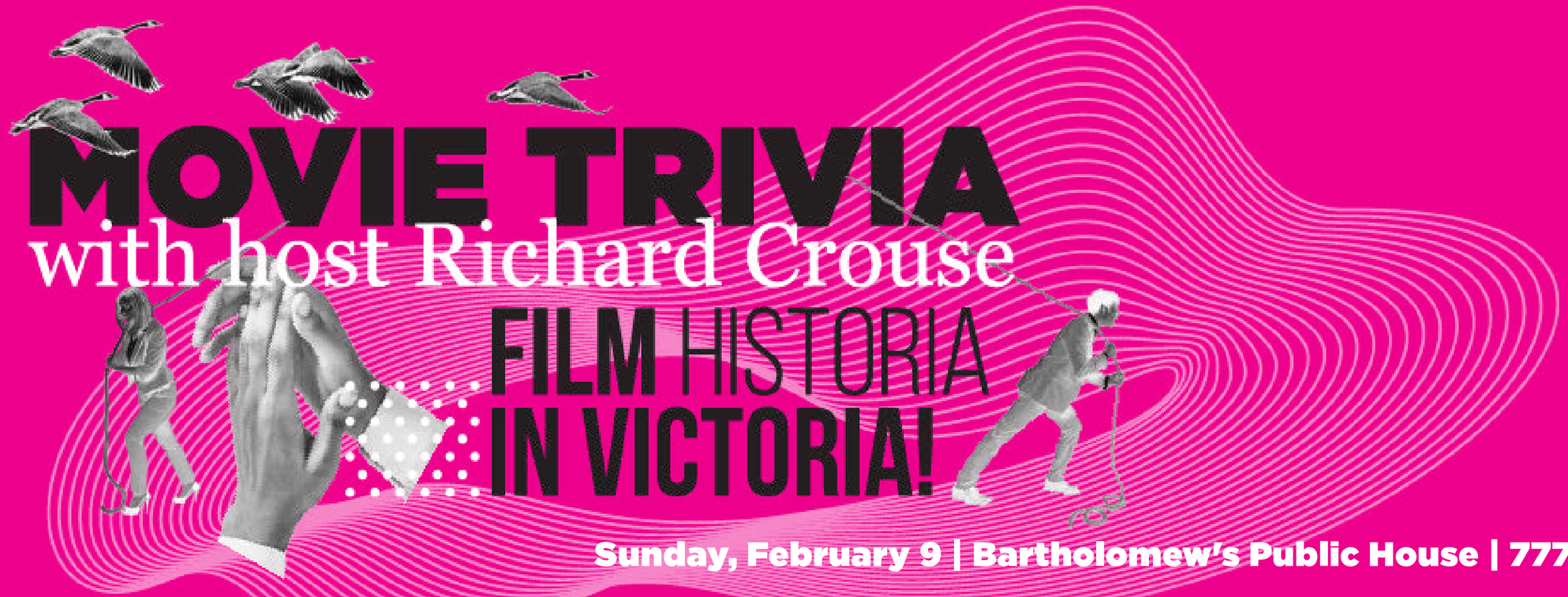
VFF WORKING WITH YOUTH

Filmmakers into Schools
Guests of the Victoria Film Festival, including writers, directors, composers, producers and musicians who attend the festival, visit local classrooms to talk about their art, offering advice about careers in the film industry and inspiring a new generation of filmmakers.

School Screenings
Year-round at The Vic Theatre, and during the Victoria Film Festival, the VFF offers special screenings of great independent films and documentaries for local schools, inviting filmmakers and actors involved in these films for interactive Q&As.

Snapshots
Bite size sessions with a classroom of students. A local filmmaker spends the hour on a specific filmmaking topic: Creating a Story Arc, Editing, Lighting.

To book sessions for your class please reach out to festival@victoriafilmfestival.com



MOVIE TRIVIA

with host Richard Crouse

FILM HISTORIA IN VICTORIA!

Sunday, February 9 | Bartholomew's Public House | 777 Douglas St.

In The Matrix, does Neo take the blue pill or the red pill? Who played Juror Number 8 in 12 Angry Men? What instrument was the theme from The Third Man performed on? If you know the answers to those questions, OR even if you don't, join us for a night of movie trivia at Bartholomew's Public House (777 Douglas St.) on Sunday, February 9. (BTW, red pill, Henry Fonda and zither!).

FREE EVENT | 7:30 PM



Jammies & Toons

THE VIC THEATRE
FEB 16| 11:30 AM

Stay in your pajamas for a fun time at The Vic! There is cereal for the kids and coffee for the adults. Or is it the other way around?

NIGHT OF THE ZOOPOCALYPSE

RICARDO CURTIS & RODRIGO PEREZ-CASTRO

Canada | 2024 | 91 min

Night of the Zoopocalypse is a dazzling comedy that's fun for the whole family.

When a strange meteor crashes down at Colepepper Zoo, an alien virus begins infecting the wildlife, turning adorable critters into ravenous, slobbering zombies. The remaining zoo inhabitants must band together to survive the growing zombie hoard, learning a thing or two from each other and looking beyond their spot on the food chain. Leading the pack is Gracie, the rambunctious wolf who has never quite fit in with her own kind, and Dan, the irritable mountain lion who has recently been captured from the wild. Together, they ward off incoming zombie animals with the help of a lemur, an ostrich, a capybara, a scene-stealing pygmy hippo, and more.

Night of the Zoopocalypse has all the trademarks of the zombie genre with expertly-crafted animation, vibrant action sequences, and plenty of hidden references for horror fans in the audience.

Animals + Zombies + Funny

Movie TRAILER

Buy TICKET HERE

golf for kids

Opening Gala

Buy TICKET HERE

FEBRUARY 07

FILM AT 6:30 | PARTY 9:30 PM

Where oh where are we taking you to this time?

When you've been to Tiffany's, Central Park and Andy Warhol's Factory all in one night where else can you go?!?!?

ROMA! of course.

We're taking you back to ancient Rome, medieval Rome and Pucci, Pucci, Pucci – 60s Rome.

Wander around the Colosseum, play bocci, be the Da Vinci and avoid the medieval doctor – goodness only knows what's in those medicinal vials – and be fed grapes for a totally surreal photobooth.

Starting at 9:00 PM it's food, drinks, music and visuals to stimulate more than the appetite. Buona Notte Baby!

spinnakers · 10 Acres · Arbutus House Brine · Dirty Laundry Vineyard · Pedersen's Event Rentals · Jawl Properties Ltd. · The Old Farm Market · Island Motorcycle Co.

Opening Film

BOB TREVINO LIKES IT | 6:30 PM | THE VIC THEATRE

Looking to find and reconnect with her poor excuse for a father, Lily sends a Facebook friend request to a man with the same name. Barbie Ferreira and John Leguizamo bring life to the film based on a true story.





SPRINGBOARD

APTN SESSION

ONE ON ONE MEETINGS

INDUSTRY PANELS

MASTERCLASS NAME

FEBRUARY 7, 8, 9

SPRINGBOARD — INDUSTRY EVENT

FEB 7, 8, 9

A three-day industry event with a focus on taking your work to the next level.

INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE (ISO) WORKSHOP — FEB 7

2:00 – 3:00 PM | THE VIC | FREE

Everything you need to know to work with and submit projects to the ISO

ONE ON ONE MEETINGS — FEB 8 | 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | THE UNION CLUB

Opportunities to pitch to decision makers and advisors and get your project moving ahead.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Participants and industry guests will be matched based on the decision makers requested scope of work. Please submit a one page project description when sending in meeting requests. Three meetings guaranteed.

INDUSTRY PANELS (45 MIN EACH) — FEB 8 | 12:30 PM – 4:15 PM | THE UNION CLUB

Moderated by Kevin Eastwood

SCREENWRITING ESSENTIALS | 12:30 – 1:15 PM

Screenwriters explore key guidelines and strategies for crafting compelling scripts. Discover what to do, what to avoid, and how to assess whether your story is truly working.

EYES ON YOUR PRIZE | 1:30 – 2:15 PM

An in-depth conversation about how Marketing and Public Relations work together to give a film its best chance to find its audience.

THE STATE OF THE MARKET | 2:30 – 3:15 PM

Distribution companies, sales agents, PR and producers discussing the current state of the market.

INSIDE THE CASTING ROOM | 3:30 – 4:15 PM

Join us for this insightful panel discussion about the dynamics between casting, directing, and acting when finding the right person for the role.

MASTERCLASS — FEB 9 | 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM | THE UNION CLUB

INDEPENDENT FEATURE FILM FINANCING

KIM ROBERTS – SEPIA FILMS CO-CEO/PRODUCER

Moderated by Kevin Eastwood

This masterclass will be of interest to producers who have questions about film financing & contracts. Participants will gain insights into creating financial plans, organizing interim financing and drafting recoupment structures. The class will also cover negotiations with sales agents, distribution companies & broadcasters.

PITCH-A-THON — FEB 9 | 2:30 PM – 4:00 PM | THE UNION CLUB

With Leslie Dixon (FREAKY FRIDAY, MRS. DOUBTFIRE, OVERBOARD, THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR, HAIRSPRAY, LIMITLESS...)

Leslie Dixon will listen to your idea for a movie (participants must condense it to no more than 3 minutes, and the punchier, the better!). She will respond the way a studio executive would -- well, maybe a little nicer -- she won't be scrolling her phone while you're talking. She will also help you tune up your idea. Obviously this is kind of like speed dating, but you'll get a glimpse of how a professional will react to your work.

PRICES

Full SpringBoard Pass — $325.00

Panels, Masterclass, Industry Lounge access Feb 8th and 9th, three one-on-one meetings, Opening Gala Film & Party, five regular film tickets, Networking Prince of Whales Brunch Feb 9.

Full-day Pass — $150.00

Three one-on-one meetings + panels + Industry Lounge access Feb 8th.

All Panels Pass — $85.00

Panels + Industry Lounge access Feb 8th.

Masterclass — $49.00

Masterclass + Industry Lounge access Feb 9th.

Pitch-a-thon Victoria — $45.00

Event access + Industry Lounge access Feb 9th.

Student All Panels Pass — $20.00

Panels + Industry Lounge access Feb 8th.

*CineVic and CMPA-BC Members have a
10% discount on the Full SpringBoard Pass, Full-day Pass and All Panels Pass
Please contact CineVic and CMPA-BC for discount codes

TELEFILM CANADA PARTNER OF CHOICE

CREATIVE BC

BRITISH COLUMBIA

CMPA
Canadian Media Producers Association
BC Producers Branch

DGC
DIRECTORS GUILD OF CANADA
BRITISH COLUMBIA

UBCP/ACTRA

THE UNION CLUB
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

FERNWOOD
COFFEE COMPANY
VICTORIA, BC, CANADA

PRINCE of WHALES
WHALE & MARINE WILDLIFE ADVENTURES

INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE (ISO) WORKSHOP – FEB 7

2:00 – 3:00 PM | THE VIC | FREE

Everything you need to know to work with and submit projects to the ISO

ONE ON ONE MEETINGS – FEB 8 | 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | THE UNION CLUB

Opportunities to pitch to decision makers and advisors and get your project moving ahead.

Georgia Shearman - Director, Scripted Development, LIONSGATE CANADA
Samantha De France - Senior Production Executive, Amazon MGM Studios
Kim Ball - Chief Content & Communications Officer, SuperChannel
Lauren MacKinlay - Development Executive, Scripted, Original Programming, Bell Media
Sarah Quan - Executive in Charge of Development – Comedy, CBC
Adam Garnet Jones - Director of TV Content and Special Events, APTN
Kay Rondonneau - Senior Marketing Advisor, International Market and Theatrical Release, National Film Board of Canada
Patrice Ramsay - Senior Manager, Independent Production, Knowledge
Kristy Assu, Director - Funding Programs, Indigenous Screen Office
Mathew Parry - Manager, Creative Industry Programs, Creative BC
Kelly Fox - Sr. Marketing Manager, TELUS Originals
Deborah Patz - Investment Analyst, Business Affairs – English Market, Telefilm Canada
Michael Boyuk – Head of Distribution - Films We like
Cecilia A. Brush - Sales Manager, Raven Banner Entertainment
Jhod Cardinal - President and Founder of Upstream Flix
Michele Wilson - International Sales & Festivals Coordinator, Epic Pictures Group
Kevin Eastwood – Producer, Optive Nerve Films
Nicola Pender - Founder, Pender PR
Angie Power - Route 504 PR
Tina Marie McCulloch - Tina Marie Casting

One-on-One Meetings notes:
Participants and industry guests will be matched based on the decision makers requested scope of work. Please submit a one page project description when sending in meeting requests.
Three meetings are guaranteed. If there are extra slots after everyone is booked, then we can offer more meeting opportunities on a last-minute basis.
Once you purchase a pass you will receive an email directing you where to send an email with up to 5 names of people you would like to pitch – in order of preference.



Georgia Shearman | Director, Scripted Development.
LIONSGATE CANADA

As Director, Scripted Development at Lionsgate Canada, Georgia Shearman sources and develops original scripted television series and is also involved in current programming. Georgia previously served as a development executive for Bell Media's Original Programming department. There, she worked with industry writers and partners on the development of new scripted projects for Bell Media's Original Programming slate. Prior to joining Bell Media, Shearman was the lead development and production executive for the award-winning production company, Circle Blue Entertainment.



Samantha De France | Senior Production Executive.
AMAZON MGM STUDIOS

Samantha De France is a seasoned Production Executive with over two decades of experience in the entertainment industry. She currently serves as Senior Production Executive at Amazon MGM Studios in Toronto, where she plays a pivotal role in overseeing the production and successful delivery of scripted series, unscripted programs, and feature films for Prime Video, Canada. Throughout her career, De France has held key roles across North America, including COO at Our House Media and Director of Programming & Development at Cineflix Productions. Her expertise in production management, talent development, and content creation has been instrumental in the success of numerous acclaimed television shows and films. Beyond her work at Amazon MGM Studios, De France is actively engaged in the industry as a member of the Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television, the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, and Women in Film and Television Toronto (WIFT).



Kim Ball | Chief Content & Communications Officer

SUPERCHANNEL

Kim joined Super Channel in 2012 and currently serves as the company's Chief Content & Communications Officer. In this role, Kim leads the programming strategy for the company's suite of four channels (Fuse, Heart & Home, Vault, Quest) including pre-licensing of Canadian productions and acquisition of foreign content. Her portfolio also includes oversight of media relations, programming publicity, corporate communications and industry outreach.

Prior to joining Super Channel, Kim was Director of Marketing, Publicity & Promotion at 20th Century Fox / Incendo Television Distribution for over a decade. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce Degree from McMaster University and a post-grad certificate in PR from Humber College. She is also a graduate of the WIFT-T Media Leadership Program and Vice-Chair of the Foundation for WIFT-T Board.



Lauren MacKinlay | Development Executive, Scripted, Original Programming

BELL MEDIA

As a Development Executive for Bell Media, Lauren works with independent production partners, writers, and creatives on the development of new scripted projects for Bell Media's Original Programming slate. Prior to joining Bell Media, Lauren's career as an award-winning producer included tenures at Neshama Entertainment and Sphere Media, with producing credits on *THE WAY HOME* (Hallmark), *TRANSPLANT* (CTV/NBC), *BAD BLOOD* (Netflix), 19-2 (CTV/Acorn) and more. She was a co-founder of the non-profit organization, Women On Screen, and in September 2022, she was named one of ten women on the Canadian Power List of Women in Film.



Sarah Quan | Executive in Charge of Development - Comedy

CBC

As Executive in Charge of Development for CBC Comedy, Sarah is responsible for developing high quality, impactful original scripted comedy series for the network's development slate. Prior to joining CBC, she served as Creative Executive at Northwood Entertainment (*Anne With An E, The Grizzlies*) where she managed their slate of television and feature film projects in development and production. Sarah started her career as a coordinator for independent film and digital series (*How to Buy a Baby, Detention Adventure, We are Savvy*). She also volunteers on a number of initiatives including co-facilitating AccessCBC, an initiative for creators with disabilities and as an advocate for the Academy Executive Residency Program. As an award-winning producer and creative executive, Sarah is dedicated to discovering and nurturing underrepresented voices with fresh perspectives and producing work that changes culture and explores stories that have yet to be told.



Adam Garnet Jones | Director of TV Content and Special Events

APTN

Adam Garnet Jones is Cree-Métis from Amiskwacîwâskahikan (Edmonton, AB.) For 14 years, Adam worked as a writer/director/producer of feature films and TV. In 2018, he shifted toward content development and advocacy for Indigenous creators founding the role of Indigenous Initiatives Lead at Telefilm Canada and the Canada Media Fund (CMF.) In that role, Adam helped Telefilm and the CMF implement Indigenous Pathways and Protocols into their funding systems, and guided the creation and implementation of a historic new fund for Indigenous feature filmmakers.

Now, Adam is delighted to lead his team as Director of TV Content and Special Events at APTN. In his role, Adam is responsible for setting the direction of the network's programming, and helping to nurture Indigenous TV series and feature films. Recently, he has been particularly proud of his work on *Little Bird, Bones of Crows* and the live National broadcast commemorating the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Adam is also a novelist and beadworker.



Kay Rondonneau | Senior Marketing Advisor, International Market and Theatrical Release

NFB OF CANADA

Kay Rondonneau (she/her) is currently a Senior Marketing Advisor, International Market and Theatrical Release, at the National Film Board of Canada, overseeing the release of documentaries such as 7 Beats Per Minute *(Intuitive Pictures/NFB, 2024), WaaPaKe: Tomorrow (NFB, 2023), Anything For Fame (North of Now/NFB, 2023), Kimmapiiyipitssini: The Meaning of Empathy (Seen Through Woman/NFB, 2021), and Because We Are Girls (NFB, 2019), among others.* Kay is based in Vancouver, BC and has worked in documentary marketing and distribution for over 15 years.



Patrice Ramsay | Senior Manager, Independent Production,

KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

Patrice Ramsay is the Senior Manager of Independent Production at British Columbia's Knowledge Network. Patrice leads Knowledge's independent production team and oversees the pre-licensing of 1st and 2nd window documentary productions. Recent Knowledge Originals include *Wildfire, Search and Rescue North Shore (Season I & II), Transplant Stories, Forbidden Music, Inay, Arthur Erickson: Beauty Between the Lines, Society Page, and Subterranean.*



Kristy Assu | Director - Funding Programs

INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE

Kristy Assu has gained experience in the Indigenous film and television industry, specializing in the areas of Project Management, Program development, Producing and Production Financing. As a producer she has championed the creation of content that celebrates Indigenous Arts, Culture, and Language. She is an advocate for Indigenous rights and equality and is dedicated to ensuring the representation and inclusion of Indigenous people both on and off screen.

In her previous role at Telus Storyhive and Originals, she led her team to pursue education on cultural safety in the workplace and is also a Chloe Award recipient for Community Champion, which recognizes her efforts in putting Indigenous communities first throughout all her work. Her most notable work includes her roles as Line Producer and Production supervisor on the first ever Haida Language film, SGaawaay K'uuna Edge of the Knife that has been seen on screens across the globe.

Kristy is Haida and Ligwilda'x w from the We Wai Kai community of Quinsam on Northern Vancouver Island where she continues her efforts to retain and uphold her Indigenous language and culture.



Mathew Parry | Manager, Creative Industry Programs

CREATIVE BC

Mathew's primary responsibilities lie within the Development Team where he oversees a number of programs including the Project Development Fund, and other partnership programs with external organizations supporting film and TV development. Mathew has a Master's degree in history, and is also a graduate of the Documentary Film Production program at Langara College.



Deborah Patz | Investment Analyst, Business Affairs – English Market

TELEFILM CANADA

(She/her) is an Investment Analyst for feature film on the Business Affairs team at Telefilm Canada. Her 24 years of experience at Telefilm in all sectors (feature film, TV, digital media), and prior experience in production since the mid-80s gives her a depth of knowledge on finance and production at all budget levels. She is a keen behind-the-scenes supporter of Canadian storytellers telling their stories for Canada and the world. She works out of the Vancouver office and respectfully on the unceded lands of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the Kwantlen and Katzie peoples.



Michael Boyuk | Head of Distribution

FILMS WE LIKE

While working as researcher on Ron Mann's film *Go Further*, Ron had a wild idea to start a distribution company. As Michael was sitting 3 feet away from Ron when he came up with this idea, Michael appeared to be the best, and only candidate (within a 3-foot radius) to do the job. The rest as they say, is distribution history. Michael has worked on all Films We Like releases which total over 500 titles, since its inception in 2003.



Jhod Cardinal | President and Founder

UPSTREAM FLIX

As President and Founder of Upstream Flix, as well as being the VP of Distribution & Acquisitions at dotstudioPro, Jhod specializes in releasing a variety of content from premium documentaries to world renowned TV Series including *Kim's Convenience.* Jhod represents a large catalog of content while maintaining relationships with the largest players in North America including a successful digital distribution strategy for catalog content.



Cecilia A. Brush | Sales Manager

RAVEN BANNER ENTERTAINMENT

Cecilia Brush is a dynamic and accomplished executive in the Film Sales Industry, renowned for her exceptional leadership skills, multilingual proficiency, and outstanding achievements within the realm of independent film sales & production.

Brush previously held the role of Head of Acquisitions for OneTwoThree Media, where her visionary directorship elevated the company to new heights. Her keen negotiation skills and unwavering dedication to her craft allowed the company to secure a vast array of promising projects, fostering lasting partnerships and bringing unique, thought-provoking content to audiences worldwide.

Subsequently, Cecilia took on the role of Head of Sales for Raven Banner Entertainment, where she leads the charge in expanding the company's market presence and enhancing its reputation as a major player in the global film sales arena."



Michele Wilson | International Sales & Festivals Coordinator

EPIC PICTURES GROUP

Originally from the Canadian prairies, Michele moved to Montreal to study Costume Design for Film and Television. Her love of film drew her to North America's largest genre festival, Fantasia International Film Festival where she worked for five years. As the Director of Hospitality, she had the opportunity to meet many film industry professionals which is where she was first introduced to the Epic Pictures team. After moving across Canada to Vancouver and she joined Epic Pictures Group as an International Sales Agent. Michele focused on sales in Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe and traveled to film markets around the world. Since the pandemic, she has settled into Victoria with her family and her primary focus has shifted from sales and travel to festival submissions and acquisitions. Michele has an eye for original, stirring content, and enjoys being a part of a team who shares her love of cinema, and the challenges of the ever-changing market.

Epic Pictures is an independent producer, financer and distributor of genre films, including *EXTRA ORDINARY, SEA FEVER, DARK NATURE, BEEZEL* and *LUCKY.*



Kelly Fox | Sr. Marketing Manager

TELUS ORIGINALS

After nearly two decades with the National Film Board of Canada, Kelly brings her passion for connecting audiences with documentary film to her role as Senior Marketing Manager for TELUS originals. Collaborating closely with filmmakers and communities, she is committed to maximizing each project's potential to drive audience engagement, spark meaningful dialogue and inspire positive social change. Kelly resides in Edmonton and is thrilled that the TELUS original films Ari's Theme, Between Pictures: The Lens of Tamio Wakayama and The Chef and the Daruma will screen at the Victoria Film Festival this year.



Kevin Eastwood | Producer

OPTIVE NERVE FILMS

Kevin is an award-winning writer, director and producer. Most recently he wrote, directed and produced The Society Page, for which he won a 2024 Leo Award for Best Direction. Other credits include being the series director on two critically-acclaimed, award-winning documentary series, *British Columbia: An Untold History and Emergency Room: Life + Death At VGH, as well as writing and directing the CBC documentaries, Humboldt: The New Season and After The Sirens (both nominated for Best Documentary Program at the Canadian Screen Awards). His credits as a producer include the documentaries Part of the Pack (VFF 2022), Haida Modern (VFF 2020), and Eco-Pirate: The Story of Paul Watson, the feature films Preggoland, Fido, and The Delicate Art of Parking (VFF 2005), and the CBC series The Romeo Section.* Kevin is currently the showrunner on Wildfire, a documentary series for Knowledge Network, and serves on the board for DOC Northwest and the Vancouver International Film Festival.



Nicola Pender | Founder

PENDER PR

Nicola is a public relations professional with two decades of experience in communications, marketing, writing and publicity. As the director and founder of Pender PR, Nicola and her team have helped launch television series, web series, short and feature films and have worked for companies, festivals, brands, programs and talent. Nicola loves film and is passionate about working alongside filmmakers to launch their work into the world.

At Pender PR, Nicola's team is committed to elevating the voices of creatives, promoting important stories and art, and creating meaningful connections with clients, audiences and the media. She prides herself on the great relationships she has fostered across many industries and is dedicated to promoting projects and people she believes in through her work.

Select career highlights include working on the festival and theatrical releases of *Sugarcane, Riceboy Sleeps, Mongrels, Ari's Theme, Seagrass, In Flames, Kim's Convenience, Blade Runner 2049, High Rise* and so many more.



Angie Power | Partner

ROUTE 504 PR

Angie Power is a publicity and promotions professional with over 25 years of experience in the film industry. Her career has made her one of the leading names in Canadian film distribution. Power began in the industry with Lions Gate Films, which became Maple Pictures in Canada and was subsequently acquired by Alliance in 2011. At this time, she formed her own communications company, which she operated between positions at Allied Integrated Marketing and D Films Corp. In 2019, she partnered with publicist Ally LaMere-Shedden at Route 504 PR, a full-service boutique agency focusing on entertainment PR.



Tina Marie McCulloch | Casting Director

TINA MARIE CASTING

Tina Marie McCulloch is a respected and resourceful Casting Director based in Vancouver and Calgary, and a proud member of the Casting Director Society of Canada (CDC). Known for her groundbreaking work on the Award-Nominated Series, *NARCOLEAP* (KGP Films), Tina Marie transitioned from a decade-long acting career, including time at NYC's, Lee Strasberg Theatre & Film Institute, into a dynamic casting role.

Her resume is a testament to her industry impact. Tina Marie has cast for standout Feature Films such as, *ONE MUST WASH EYES* (Starring Pegah Ghafoori), and the eagerly anticipated Feature Film, *CAN I GET A WITNESS*, (Directed by Ann Marie Fleming and Starring Sandra Oh) which had its World Wide Premiere at TIFF 2024. She's also made her mark with the Critically Acclaimed Horror Film, LOWLIFES (Starring Richard Harmon), now streaming on *TUBI & CRAVE*, and the upcoming Thriller, *BROTHER* (Directed by Sam Fichtner and Starring Chad Rook) which is slated to be released in late 2025.

INDUSTRY PANELS (45 MIN EACH) – FEB 8

| 2:30 PM – 4:15 PM | THE UNION CLUB

Moderated by Kevin Eastwood

SCREENWRITING ESSENTIALS

Screenwriters explore key guidelines and strategies for crafting compelling scripts. Discover what to do, what to avoid, and how to assess whether your story is truly working



Leslie Dixon | Screenwriter
(FREAKY FRIDAY, MRS. DOUBTFIRE, OVERBOARD, THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR, HAIRSPRAY, LIMITLESS...)

Leslie Dixon has had a 35 year career in Hollywood. She wrote Overboard, Mrs. Doubtfire, The Thomas Crown Affair, Freaky Friday, Hairspray, and Limitless, among others. She is a non-college educated bohemian, grateful that Hollywood doesn't care where you went to school, as long as you can write! She is the granddaughter of photographer Dorothea Lange and painter Maynard Dixon, though was too intimidated to pursue the fine arts as a career. Perhaps better to just entertain the masses? Leslie and her husband now live in Berkeley, CA, having wisely foreseen that much of L.A. could burn up.



Denver Jackson | Director, Writer and Producer

Denver Jackson, originally from South Africa and now based in Victoria, BC, is a self-taught animator celebrated for his solo work in writing, directing, and animating films. He is the creator of Esluna, a fantastical storyworld showcased in his most recent projects. He began with the web series Esluna: The First Monolith, followed by two feature films: Esluna: The Crown of Babylon (2021) and Esluna: The Worlds Divide (2024), that premiered at the Annecy International Film Festival. His earlier works include the Vimeo Staff Pick Cloudrise (2013) and The Wishing Jar (2016), which won Best Animated Film at San Diego Comic-Con and Heartland Film Festival. Through his solo efforts, Denver pushes the boundaries of animation, bringing fantastical worlds to life with emotional depth and technical innovation.



Barbara Todd Hager | Producer, Director and Writer

Barbara Todd Hager (Métis/Cree) is a documentary producer, director and writer. She is the writer and director of five Indigenous-focused feature documentaries, and four television series: 1491: The Untold Story of the Americas Before Columbus, Down2Earth, All Our Relations II and the New Canoe representing more than 150 episodes. Her documentaries include Truth Dance & Reconciliation, Motown High, Forbidden Music and Leaving Beringia. Barbara is a long-time mentor for TELUS STORYHIVE and the Whistler Film Festival's Indigenous Film Fellowship program. She has served on the board of directors for the Whistler Film Festival, Victoria Film Festival, DOC Canada, BC Museums Association, and the Alliance of Aboriginal Media Professionals.

EYES ON YOUR PRIZE

An in-depth conversation about how Marketing and Public Relations work together to give a film its best chance to find its audience.



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NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

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THE STATE OF THE MARKET

Distribution companies, sales agents, PR and producers discussing the current state of the market.



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FILMS WE LIKE

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Cecilia A. Brush | Sales Manager

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Subsequently, Cecilia took on the role of Head of Sales for Raven Banner Entertainment, where she leads the charge in expanding the company's market presence and enhancing its reputation as a major player in the global film sales arena."

INSIDE THE CASTING ROOM

Join us for this insightful panel discussion about the dynamics between casting, directing, and acting when finding the right person for the role.



Tina Marie McCulloch | Casting Director

TINA MARIE CASTING

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Andy Mikita | Director and Producer

Andy Mikita is a BC-based Director and Producer with over 150 hours of television and film credits including *FAMILY LAW, VIRGIN RIVER, UNSPEAKABLE, TRAVELERS, BLINDSPOT, MOTIVE, X COMPANY, KILLJOYS, STRANGE EMPIRE, REIGN, BITTEN, LOST GIRL, DARK MATTER, and STARGATE UNIVERSE/ATLANTIS/SG-1.*



Keira Jang | Actress (Can I Get a Whitness?, Batwoman, Riverdale...)

Keira Jang is a mixed Chinese/Caucasian triple threat performer based in Vancouver BC, who identifies as a member of the LGBTQ+ community. She made her feature film debut as the lead role in CAN I GET A WITNESS?, starring opposite Sandra Oh. Her other credits include BATWOMAN, RIVERDALE and THE KILLING, as well as appearing in several short films.She began singing at a young age, following in the footsteps of her great grandmother who was a Chinese opera singer. Keira is also an accomplished dancer with more than 15 years of training, as well as 10 years of vocal training.

A graduate of the Capilano University Music Theatre program, her most notable stage credits include the leading role of Sophie in the TUTS production of MAMMA MIA, Cassie Ferguson in A CHORUS LINE (CapU Theatre), Elle Woods in LEGALLY BLONDE (Schools Out Productions), and Annelle Dupuy in STEEL MAGNOLIAS (Boone Dog Productions).

MASTERCLASS – FEB 9 | 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM | THE UNION CLUB

INDEPENDENT FEATURE FILM FINANCING

KIM ROBERTS – SEPIA FILMS CO-CEO/PRODUCER

This masterclass will be of interest to producers who have questions about film financing & contracts . Participants will gain insights into creating financial plans, organizing interim financing and drafting recoupment structures. The class will also cover negotiations with sales agents, distribution companies & broadcasters.



Kim Roberts | Co-CEO/Producer

SEPIA FILMS

Kim brings over two decades of experience as an entertainment lawyer to Sepia Films. As a partner at the boutique law firm of Roberts & Stahl, Kim provided legal advice on a wide range of film and television projects and now oversees all of Sepia's development contracts, co-production deals, project financing and production legal. But it was the creative side of producing that made Kim want to give up his law practice and join Tina Pehme to work with artists who have a similar passion for telling great stories. Kim is also the company's resident mixologist.

PITCH-A-THON – FEB 9 | 2:30 PM – 4:00 PM | THE UNION CLUB

With Leslie Dixon (FREAKY FRIDAY, MRS. DOUBTFIRE, OVERBOARD, THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR, HAIRSPRAY, LIMITLESS...)

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The winner gets lunch with Leslie and project and career advice.
Max Capacity: 16



Leslie Dixon | Screenwriter
(FREAKY FRIDAY, MRS. DOUBTFIRE, OVERBOARD, THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR, HAIRSPRAY,

Leslie Dixon has had a 35 year career in Hollywood. She wrote Overboard, Mrs. Doubtfire, The Thomas Crown Affair, Freaky Friday, Hairspray, and Limitless, among others. She is a non-college educated bohemian, grateful that Hollywood doesn't care where you went to school, as long as you can write! She is the granddaughter of photographer Dorothea Lange and painter Maynard Dixon, though was too intimidated to pursue the fine arts as a career. Perhaps better to just entertain the masses? Leslie and her husband now live in Berkeley, CA, having wisely foreseen that much of L.A. could burn up.

VICTORIA
FILM
FESTIVAL

Thank you!