

The **22nd Reelworld Film Festival** unveils its full festival line-up with 34 films and free industry panels, continuing its mission to feature 100% Canadian filmmakers who are Black, Indigenous, Asian South Asian, and People of Colour.

The festival returns in-person and online this **October 12th – 18th** with the opening night film at **The Royal Theatre**, an exciting program of Industry Panels and an Awards Ceremony honouring some of the country's most notable talent

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The **22nd Reelworld Film Festival** officially unveils its full festival line-up with 34 films and free industry panels, continuing its mission to feature 100% Canadian filmmakers who are Black, Indigenous, Asian, South Asian and People of Colour. Running from **October 12th – 18th**, the festival makes its return in-person and online with screenings and industry events taking place at various iconic Toronto locations **The Royal Theatre (608 College St)**, **The Paradise (1006c Bloor St W)** , and **The ROM (100 Queens Park)**.

Passes are now available for purchase at www.reelworld.ca/festival.

The **Reelworld Film Festival** showcases a wide variety of genres in narrative and documentary features and shorts. As a filmgoer, whether in person or online, you will enjoy the dramatic storytelling, hard-hitting documentaries, witty comedies and thoughtful abstractions that the **22nd Reelworld Film Festival** selections will offer. Online screenings are geo-blocked to Ontario.

Reelworld is excited to announce this year's stellar lineup of feature films programed by Aisha Evelynna, Marina Hanna, Reza Sameni, Safia Abdigir, and Pahull Bains, which includes:

***GOLDEN DELICIOUS* by Jason Karman (Opening night film)**

When basketball-obsessed Aleks moves in across the street, Asian-Canadian teen Jake finds himself trying out for the basketball team to get his attention in this classic coming-of-age drama set in the digital age.

***THE MYTH OF THE BLACK WOMAN* by Ayana O'Shun**

The Myth of the Black Woman is a feature-length documentary that investigates the images of Black women in Western societies, from the hypersexual Jezebel to the lovable Nurse to the sassy "Bitch." The film works to break down The Myth by featuring a diverse group of women and a wealth of realities rarely seen on screen and supported by engrossing archival footage from the 1800s to the present day.

***BITE OF A MANGO* by Ron Dias**

After a casual hook up between Jayne and Tray in the early stages of lockdown, Jayne, a strikingly independent half-Nigerian half-Jamaican woman, is left feeling alone in dealing with an unplanned pregnancy. In Jayne's absence, Tray seeks the friendship of an old flame only to realize how he truly feels about Jayne.

***DEAR JACKIE* by Henri Pardo**

Dear Jackie is a cinematic letter to Jackie Robinson, the first Black man to play in Major League Baseball, after a stint with the minor-league Montreal Royals, and a key contributor to the civil rights movement in the United States. The film addresses Robinson directly and recounts the current situation of the Black community in Little Burgundy, once known as the "Harlem of the North," drawing interesting parallels between the two eras. Through eloquent interviews, testimonies, and powerful verité moments in black and white, Dear Jackie paints a portrait of racism and racial inequality in Montreal and Quebec as a whole.

***KITE ZO A* by Kaveh Nabatian**

Kite Zo A (Leave the Bones) is a sensorial film about rituals in Haiti, from ancient to modern, made in collaboration with poets, dancers, musicians, fishermen, daredevil rollerbladers, and Vodou priests, set to poetry by Haitian author Wood-Jerry Gabriel.

***EXEGESIS: LOVECRAFT* by Qais Pasha**

A cathartic journey that Qais Pasha, a Pakistani-Canadian filmmaker embarks on as he traces the life of cult author H.P. Lovecraft, from woodland cemeteries in Rhode Island, to the docks of New York and on to the cobbled stone streets of Quebec City. A head first dive into the division at the heart of weird fiction, wherein Qais encounters everything from Lovecraft's ghost to the various writers, artists and researchers battling over the soul of Lovecraft's legacy.

***TZOUHALEM* by Harold C. Joe and Leslie D. Bland**

This documentary examines the near-mythic figure of Cowichan Chief Tzouhalem, the account of his life from both historians and First Nations Elders, the folkloric tales concerning him, his impact on the modern relationship between the Crown and First Nations, and how his legend remains alive to this day, examining critically how his story has been told and passed down to us.

***PATTERN* by Ivan Madeira**

It is five months after the death of Curtis' partner Mia due to post-birth complications. As the initial fog of grief starts to lift, he is at a crossroads of how he wants to raise their daughter Salom.

***RESET* by Min Bae**

South Korea's worst maritime disaster traumatized a nation while simultaneously sinking the country's emotional spirit, resulting in the death of 304 passengers.

***SUMMER WITH HOPE* by Sadaf Foroughi**

Young swimmer, Omid (whose name means "hope" in Persian), along with his mother, Leili, and uncle, Saadi, have each placed their individual fates on one vital upcoming swimming competition. In the days and hours before the meet, however, the consequences of failure become clear for each – all of which falls heavily on Omid's shoulders as a responsibility he refuses to bear. As their community's jealousy steadily erodes the family's façade, layer by layer, to find whatever weakness they can, the family itself also begins to crumble like sand under the weight of the encroaching tide.

This year's short films have been curated into four different programs:

IDENTITY - programmed by Safia Abdigir

Identity formation is always in struggle when the validity of that formation is denied by those around you. From queer exploration in youth to defying the odds of being an older athlete, the filmmakers in this program focus on the internal rumination of understanding rejection in relation to environments, families and careers and what that means for an individual navigating even the mundanity of life. Films included: *Better at Texting* directed by Mary Galloway, *More Than Hair* directed by Fitch Jean, *Glass Doll* directed by Omorose Osagie, *Blue Honey* directed by Valeriya Khan, *Imran & Alykhan* directed by Shakil Jessa, *Blue Garden* directed by Natalie Murao, and *The Last Shot* directed by Roble Issa.

HOME - programmed by Reza Sameni

Each year filmmakers from across Canada bring fresh perspectives to the festival's long-running "Home" Program and add a new layer of nuance to the definition of "home." Pushing it beyond the familiar portrayal of a four-wall construction to a thought-provoking artwork stemming from each filmmaker's unique life experience in search of a comfort zone. Films included: *I Live Here* directed by Tyler Evans, *Saturday Night Fuego* directed by Anita Abbasi, *The Interview* directed by Magdi Omar, *I Remember the Footprints* directed by Cahhmere Downey, *Viper* directed by Raine Stephen LeMay, and *Ahu* directed by Mahsa Razavi.

CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES - programmed by Marina Hanna

As in life, a choice made in a story can seal a character's fate—whether they realize it or not. Minds may change and choices do face challenges, but choices set wheels in motion. For writers and directors plotting the course of a story, choices are also used to reveal character. The films in this category maximize tension by placing their protagonists in high-stake scenarios. Their choices are informed not only by their character but by their culture. Films included: *There Are No Children Here* directed by Shehrezade Mian, *Unspoken Agreements* directed by Marianna Phung, *Split Ends* directed by Alireza Kazemipour, *Call me AWOL* directed by Georgie Trifa, *Everything Will Be Alright* directed by Farhad Pakdel.

ALTERNATE WORLDS - programmed by Aisha Evelyn

With a pandemic still not entirely in the rearview, it's sometimes easy to wonder if we ourselves are living in an alternate world. Thankfully, these filmmakers dare to take us to new places on screen. This program of films is grounded in the present but are also fiercely optimistic, innovative, and imaginative. Films included: *PB & J* directed by Richard Lee, *Mom vs Machine* directed by Tesh Guttikonda, *Vitamin* directed by Natalia Aranguren & Yeimy Daza, *Out of this World* directed by Jerry Wolf, *Peace Pipeline* directed by Gitz Crazyboy & Tito Ybarra, and *OMI* directed by Kelly Fyffe-Marshall.

Reelworld prioritizes its programming to support and amplify underrepresented Canadian voices. The Festival's Industry Panels, Workshops and Networking events are consciously designed to enhance opportunities for racialized Canadian talent in the entertainment industry. This year, the festival will be featuring **free** in-person panels on **October 14th** at Rogers Communications Inc. (333 Bloor St E) including ***Producing Live Unscripted Shows*** by **Canada Media Fund** and ***Responsible Storytelling*** by **Directors Guild of Canada (DGC) National**. Additionally, virtual panels will also be held on **October 17th** including ***Talent to Watch: Creating a Strong Application*** by **Telefilm Canada**, ***There's a Song for Every Scene: Tips for Finding the Right Music for Every Production*** by **Music Publishers Canada** and ***Creating a Successful Team*** by the **Independent Producer Fund**.

The festival wraps up with the 22nd annual Film Festival Awards Show on **October 18th** which will be streamed on YouTube. This year, **Reelworld Film Festival** is proud to present two cash awards: **\$25,000** for ***Outstanding Feature Film*** and **\$10,000** for ***Outstanding Short Film***. This year's award sponsors include **DGC National, WIFT-Toronto, Entertainment Partners Canada, Chargefield, AstroLab Studios, Lenz Rental** and **Asian Television Network**. Feature and Short award categories this year include ***Outstanding Actress, Outstanding Actor, Outstanding Director, Outstanding Writer, Outstanding Cinematographer, Outstanding Producer, and Outstanding Film***. Audience members are also encouraged to participate and rate the films they watch and contribute to the selection of the **Reelworld Audience Choice Award**.

In addition to the film awards, the Festival recognizes Industry leaders at all levels through the **Trailblazer Award, Visionary Award, and Award of Excellence**. This year's winners are: **Trailblazer Award: Barbara Ka Yee Lee, Joel Oulette, Jorge Ousmane, Kelly Fyffe-Marshall, Shant Joshi, and Sonya Carey; Visionary Award: Nicholas Davis**, and the Award of Excellence recipient **Jennifer Podemski**. The Reelspeak Festival Edition will stream on the Reelworld Screen Institute Youtube channel On October 18th following the 22nd annual Film Festival Awards Show.

With a focus on diverse works by diverse people, the **Reelworld Film Festival** showcases and supports Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour producers, directors, screenwriters, actors and all on and off-screen talent. They connect with agents, casting directors, broadcasters and distributors, invite them to the festival, and help them find new Canadian talent. The **Reelworld Film Festival** programming reflects the strong and authentic voices from across Canada and features 100% Canadian Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour talent. As the country's largest socially impactful film festival, Reelworld has reached a diverse audience of over 350,000 engaged individuals to date.

About Reelworld

Reelworld was founded in 2000 by award-winning actress and producer **Tonya Williams** to advance opportunities for Canadians who are Black, Indigenous, Asian, South Asian, and People of Colour in the screen industries by providing

professional development and advocating for racial equity in Canadian content and production.

Reelworld Screen Institute, a non-profit, provides training programs and presents the acclaimed **Reelworld Film Festival**, which celebrates stories by racialized Canadians. Providing access to opportunities is core to **Reelworld**, and **Access Reelworld** is Canada's leading hiring platform for racialized crews and talent. **Reelworld Foundation**, a registered charity, is transforming the industry by creating mechanisms that hold systems accountable for greater equity.

Reelworld Film Festival would like to thank all the sponsors, partners and funders who share our vision and values: **TD Bank Group (Opening Night sponsor), Telefilm, CBC (Shorts Program sponsor), Canada Media Fund, Canada Council for the Arts, Govt of Ontario, Ontario Arts Council, Ontario Creates, Toronto Arts Council, City of Toronto, Creative BC, Music Publishers Canada, Blue Ant Media, Shaftesbury, DGC National, Rogers Group of Funds, Canadian Media Producers Association, Independent Production Fund, AFBS, Hollywood Suite, ACTRA National, ACTRA Toronto, Writers Guild of Canada** and **FEVA TV**.

This year's media and community partners are **Bell Media, Rogers Sports & Media, Playback, Mogul Productions, SuperChannel, Afroglobal Television, CHCH, Black Screen Office, Racial Equity Media Collective, Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television, Women in the Director's Chair, Women in Film and Television Toronto, the Black Academy, AstroLab Studios, Asian Television Network, Lenz Rental, Entertainment Partners Canada** and **Chargefield**.

Reelworld Screen Institute would also like to thank our 2022 year-round sponsors and funders: **CMF, Telefilm, Govt of Canada, RBC, WarnerBros Discovery Access, Bell Media, TVO, Bell Fund, Ontario Creates, Rogers Group of Funds, Ontario Arts Council, NABET 700-M UNIFOR, Meridian Artists Agency, Miziwe Biik** and **DGC Ontario**.

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