

23rd Annual Reelworld Film Festival + Summit

November

1-7 2023



* This segment of a camera lens represents those in Canada who are Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. AMPLIFY THEIR STORIES.

www.reelworld.ca

CANADIAN FILMS HAVE IT ALL.

BIG HITS
BIG HITS
BIG HITS
BIG TALENTS

BIG TALENTS
BIG TALENTS
BIG TALENTS



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Land Acknowledgement

The land on which Reelworld operates is the traditional territory of numerous Nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinaabe, and the Chippewa. Our offices are located in Toronto, which falls under Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit. These Sovereign Nations have inhabited, protected, and preserved this land. We humbly acknowledge this enduring truth.

Reelworld recognizes that many people living in (what we call) Canada today have been unjustly dispossessed of their ancestral lands. European colonialism has obscured and continues to erase their histories. Reelworld represents those who are from the many scattered lands around the world and stand united with Indigenous peoples. Reelworld observes the injustices, the suffering, and the oppression and acknowledges Indigenous peoples right to their lands.

As settlers, immigrants or children of immigrants, we and our ancestors adopted settler laws and we continue to occupy and settle stolen Indigenous land. We must learn and foster understanding and trust with Indigenous people to dissolve the White supremacy and settler colonialism that pervades our cultural, social, political, and economic spheres.

Welcome Letter



In December 2018, we held a Reelworld Symposium, where we gathered 100 Canadian women, who were Black, Indigenous, Asian and People of Colour, for a full day of discussions on the topic of Racialized Sexual Harassment in our industry, including the content that perpetrates it. Following the event, it was evident to me that there was a real need to expand Reelworld and provide more opportunities for Indigenous people and People of Colour in the screen industry to convene. Initially, we scheduled our first Summit to coincide with our 20th anniversary in 2020, but COVID-19 had other plans for us. Finally, in 2023, we are realizing our dream of expanding the Reelworld Film Festival to include a Summit. This is a momentous achievement. The Summit is an opportunity for us to create deeper dialogue with industry professionals, advance our collective progress, and hear from key government funding agencies regarding the initiatives aimed at enhancing opportunities within the industry.

As the Canadian screen industry evolves, so must Reelworld. Our goals are to continue preparing creators, talent and production teams for the industry to come. Embracing cutting edge technology, whether we do so willingly or not, is essential.

None of Reelworld's growth and expansions would be possible without the support of our 60+ partners, funders and supporters. Some, like Telefilm Canada and TD Bank Group, have stood by us for over two decades, and I am incredibly grateful for their enduring support.

I would also like to thank all our filmmakers and speakers who make Reelworld the must-attend event for those seeking to discover and learn more about racially diverse Canadians in our industry

Tonya Williams
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/FOUNDER
REELWORLD SCREEN INSTITUTE

Little Bird

Detention
Adventure

**YOUR STORY.
YOUR TRUTH.
OUR SUPPORT.**

À propos d'Antoine

Push

The Canada Media Fund is here to support bold, courageous voices across the audiovisual industry—from television and web series to documentaries, video games, IDM and immersive projects. Wherever there's a vision and a desire to shine a light, we're there to light the spark.



CANADA
MEDIA FUND FONDS DES MÉDIAS
DU CANADA

cmf-fmc.ca

What is 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+Summit

Celebrating its 23rd year, Reelworld is Canada's longest-running film festival and institute committed to advancing opportunities for Black, Indigenous, Asian, South Asian, and People of Colour in the Canadian screen industries by reducing barriers and fostering authentic stories. We are excited to announce that we have expanded the film festival to include a summit taking place on November 1 and 2.

The Reelworld Film Festival+Summit will feature seven days of screenings, keynote speeches, industry discussions, fireside chats, pitch opportunities, awards presentations, and breakfast/luncheon networking. These collective elements enhance the experience for our attendees, providing an opportunity for Canadian creatives, professionals and government leaders to engage in meaningful dialogue about the state of our industry today.

The opening night film for the Reelworld Film Festival will be shown at The Royal Theatre on November 1, at 7:30 PM ET, at 608 College St in Toronto, ON M6G 1B4. The Feature and Short films will be screened at The Paradise Theatre at 1006c Bloor St W in Toronto, ON M6H 1M2. Additionally, the first-ever summit will occur at the Courtyard by Marriott, located at 475 Yonge St. in Toronto, ON M4Y 1X7



THE GOVERNOR GENERAL · LA GOUVERNEURE GÉNÉRALE

Message from the Governor General on the occasion of the 23rd Annual Reelworld Film Festival

Artists of all genres—whether visual, performance, written or film—reflect who we are as a society. They shine a light on issues that impact our communities every day. They show us the wonderful, the mythical and the mundane, the challenges and the beauty of life.

For 23 years, the Reelworld Film Festival has exclusively showcased Canadian films by Black, Indigenous, Asian, South Asian, Middle Eastern, North African, and Latin American Canadian artists. Through their medium of choice, they tell their stories, speak their truths and shape how others perceive the world. They spark conversations on matters of fairness, equality, justice and humanity.

Congratulations to all of this year's participants. I wish everyone a wonderful festival.

Mary Simon



PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE

November 1–7, 2023

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to everyone attending the 2023 Reelworld Film Festival.

Since 2001, this festival has provided a platform for Canadian storytellers and media artists who identify as Black, Indigenous, Asian, South Asian, Middle Eastern, North African and Latin American to showcase their talent and share their stories and perspectives. I am certain that everyone in attendance will be entertained and engaged by the diverse selection of works being screened this year.

I would like to commend the Reelworld Screen Institute for its hard work and dedication in planning its year's edition of the festival, which once again includes both virtual and in-person programming. You can take pride in your commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion in the Canadian screen industry.

Please accept my best wishes for a memorable and enjoyable experience.

Sincerely,

The Rt. Hon. Justin P. J. Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada



**ACCESS
REELWORLD**

Reelworld advances opportunities for Black, Indigenous, Asian, South Asian and People of Colour in the Canadian screen industries by reducing barriers and fostering authentic stories.

Search us at

**Access
Reelworld.ca**

Vinuja Shanthasoruban
Actress and Producer



Mitchell Saddleback
Actor, Director and Screenwriter



Francine Buchner
Casting Director



**Over 100
Screen
Industry
Professions**

Welcome Messages



THE HONOURABLE PASCALE ST-ONGE | MINISTER OF CANADIAN HERITAGE

“Thank you to everyone who helped bring this year’s Reelworld Film Festival to life. I hope you all enjoy watching the films and celebrating diverse Canadian voices and stories!”



THE HONOURABLE KAMAL KHERA | MINISTER OF DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

“Reelworld is a wonderful platform for showcasing our country’s diversity through the work of talented Canadian filmmakers and impactful stories. Thanks to Reelworld for strengthening inclusion and enhancing representation!”



THE HONOURABLE MARCI IEN | MINISTER OF WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY AND YOUTH OF CANADA

“I want to offer my most sincere congratulations to everyone who is participating in the year’s Reelworld Film Festival! Your creativity and dedication to your craft is so inspiring.”



THE HONOURABLE MARY NG | MINISTER OF EXPORT PROMOTION, INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

“Reelworld is at the forefront of empowering diverse Canadian artists on screen, and I applaud its leadership as a key Black Entrepreneurship Ecosystem partner. Truly, you have to see it to be it.”

Welcome Messages



**THE HONOURABLE ELIZABETH DOWDESWELL |
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF ONTARIO**

"I am delighted to welcome you to the 23rd annual Reelworld Film Festival! For more than two decades, Reelworld has remained committed to fostering access and inclusion for diverse talent, both on and off the screen. It has offered invaluable opportunities for Black, Indigenous, Asian, and People of Colour to play important roles in transforming the Canadian film industry. Amid the challenge and change of our current era, this festival's legacy is more important than ever. Its efforts to dismantle stereotypes of all kinds, and to expose Canadians to the humanity of varied cultural groups, advance and deepen our understanding of what it means to be a Canadian in this complex and interconnected world. As His Majesty The King's representative in Ontario, I send my heartfelt thanks for your work in furthering arts and culture in Ontario and send you my best wishes for an enjoyable festival."



PREMIER DOUG FORD | PREMIER OF ONTARIO

"Congratulations to the Reelworld Film Festival on 23 incredible years. I hope you enjoy this fantastic showcase of diverse talent, both on screen and behind the scenes."



**THE HONOURABLE NEIL LUMSDEN | ONTARIO
MINISTER OF TOURISM, CULTURE AND SPORT**

"Welcome to the 23rd Reelworld Film Festival. Reelworld showcases Ontario's diverse and dynamic film sector, reinforcing our province's reputation as a powerhouse in the film industry."



OLIVIA CHOW | MAYOR OF TORONTO

"Welcome to the 23rd annual Reelworld Film Festival, showcasing independent films by Canadian filmmakers who identify as Black, Indigenous, Asian, and People of Colour."

Welcome Messages



**JULIE ROY | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO,
TELEFILM CANADA**

"Showcasing and celebrating the works of Canadian creators is at the heart of what we do at Telefilm. That is why we are proud to partner with the 23rd annual Reelworld Film Festival to further boost our support for Canadian creatives at home and around the world. In this ever-evolving cultural landscape, festivals continue to play an important role in the screen-based industry, growing the talent pool, as well as allowing audiences to celebrate and connect with distinctive Canadian films and the talent behind them. We encourage you to keep supporting Canadian talent in theatres and on digital platforms!"



**VALERIE CREIGHTON | PRESIDENT AND CEO,
CANADA MEDIA FUND**

"The Canada Media Fund is thrilled to partner with Reelworld Film Festival for its 23rd edition. We support the organization's mission to showcase Canadian creators who identify as Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour, and are delighted to help bring their stories to audiences both domestic and international. Happy festival!"



**MARGUERITE PIGOTT | FILM COMMISSIONER AND
DIRECTOR OF ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRIES FOR THE
CITY OF TORONTO**

"Toronto is so proud to be the city Reelworld Film Festival calls home. For over two decades, Reelworld has been centering and celebrating diverse artists, and the momentum and visibility this produced is paying off for creators, industry, and audiences alike. The creative leaders Reelworld has supported over the years reads like a who's who of those who are driving artistic excellence in the best screen content being produced today. All that was needed was opportunity, and Reelworld was and is that critical creative accelerator. Congratulations, Reelworld, and here's to another amazing year."

Welcome Messages



**KAREN THORNE-STONE | PRESIDENT AND CEO,
ONTARIO CREATES**

"Ontario Creates is proud to support the Reelworld Film Festival and its year-round programming that elevates diverse content and creators. We celebrate your successes and congratulate you on 23 years of inclusivity through film!"



**CATHERINE TAIT | PRESIDENT AND CEO,
CBC/RADIO-CANADA**

"Great Canadian entertainment reflects the diversity of Canadians themselves. That's why CBC/Radio-Canada is proud to be a longtime partner of Reelworld, which has so effectively promoted and advanced diverse perspectives in Canada's screen industries for more than two decades. This festival's dedication to exclusively presenting films by Black, Indigenous, Asian and other racialized storytellers brings much-deserved attention to talented filmmakers from across the country. Congratulations on yet another fantastic festival!"



**MICHELLE CHAWLA | DIRECTOR AND CEO,
CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS**

"The arts are a vital part of our society: they inspire us to reflect, bring us joy, nourish our sense of belonging, and strengthen our connections to one another and the wider world. We need the arts now more than ever. A strong support for a resilient, inclusive, and accessible arts sector benefits society in all its diversity. The Canada Council for the Arts is a proud supporter of the Reelworld Film Festival and its creative contributions that bring the arts to life."



RITA DAVIES | CHAIR, ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL

"For more than two decades, the Reelworld Film Festival has remained committed to elevating the voices and talent of racialized media creators, both in front and behind the camera. Congratulations to the festival and featured creators on another outstanding lineup of films."

Welcome Messages



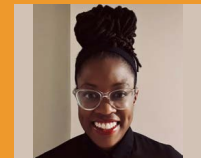
PREM GILL | CEO, CREATIVE BC

"Creative BC is pleased to support Reelworld Film Festival, a champion of diverse storytellers and filmmakers. We are delighted to congratulate them on their 23rd year of programming and commitment to representation!"



CELIA SMITH | CHAIR, TORONTO ARTS COUNCIL

"Congratulations to Reelworld on 23 years of harnessing the power of film to promote understanding, create access and champion racially diverse Canadian storytellers and media artists. TAC is proud to support this vital festival."



**ALICIA ROSE | SENIOR MANAGER,
STRATEGY & SOCIAL IMPACT, TD BANK GROUP**

"TD is proud to be a long-standing supporter of Reelworld Film Festival, which creates space to amplify diverse voices in the Canadian film industry and fosters storytelling that authentically reflects the richness of lived experiences of media artists from equity-deserving communities."



**KAREN HORNE | SVP DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND
INCLUSION, WARNER BROS. DISCOVERY**

"Warner Bros. Discovery is proud to support Reelworld in its mission to advance opportunities for Canadians in the screen industries, while championing diversity, equity and inclusion. Congratulations on this year's edition!"



**CARLYN KLEBUC | GENERAL MANAGER,
ORIGINAL PROGRAMMING, BELL MEDIA**

"Bell Media is proud to return as a partner for the 23rd edition of the Reelworld Film Festival. Reelworld's commitment to championing diverse storytelling continues to play a vital role in creating positive and impactful change in the Canadian film and television industry. Congratulations!"

Welcome Messages



NANCY CHAPPELLE | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BELL FUND
“Reelworld is an important partner of the Bell Fund with our shared goals of supporting racially diverse Producer/Creators. The professional development training and mentorship that the Emerging 20 Program provides has resulted in successful outcomes to the Bell Fund programs for some of these participants.”



MARGARET MCGUFFIN | CEO, MUSIC PUBLISHERS CANADA
“Congratulations on 23 exciting years of the Reelworld Film Festival. We are proud to partner with you to support diverse Canadian storytellers and strengthen the connections between music and film. There is a song for every scene.”



JEFFREY L. ORRIDGE, | CEO, TVO MEDIA EDUCATION GROUP
“As an organization committed to sharing the diverse voices and perspectives of citizens across Ontario, TVO Media Education Group is once again proud to partner with the Reelworld Film Festival. By supporting your efforts to amplify and celebrate racially diverse Canadian storytellers, filmmakers, actors and artists who are uniquely positioned to tell their own stories, we can create, connect and catalyze a more inclusive Canada. Congratulations to Tonya Williams and the entire team at Reelworld for 23 incredible years.”



WARREN P. SONODA | PRESIDENT, DGC NATIONAL
“The Directors Guild of Canada is thrilled to be supporting the 23rd annual Reelworld Film Festival and its ongoing mission to elevate BIPOC Canadian artists. For more than two decades they have been leaders in our industry, advanced inclusion and belonging, and inspired our filmmakers to tell their unique stories to the world.”

Welcome Messages



ELEANOR NOBLE | PRESIDENT, ACTRA NATIONAL
“ACTRA continues to be a proud sponsor of the Reelworld Film Festival and extends its congratulations on another fantastic year of sharing boundary-pushing, stereotype-shattering Canadian stories.”



DAVID GALE | PRESIDENT, ACTRA TORONTO
“ACTRA Toronto is proud to continue our partnership with Reelworld, shining spotlights on Canadian Black, Indigenous and People of Colour filmmakers who are pushing boundaries and making a social impact by bringing diverse stories to our screens.”



VICTORIA SHEN | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WGC
“Congratulations to Reelworld on 23 outstanding years of developing and supporting racially diverse Canadian talent! The WGC looks forward to working together to build a more accessible, inclusive and vibrant industry for writers.”



TAMMY FRICK | CEO, ACADEMY OF CANADIAN CINEMA & TELEVISION
“The Canadian Academy is proud to support the Reelworld Film Festival and its ongoing commitment to showcasing and supporting racially diverse Canadian talent both in front of and behind the camera.”!



Dear filmmakers and fellow film enthusiasts,

Welcome to the 23rd edition of the Reelworld Film Festival! What a year it has been since our last gathering! Here are the highlights:

Bad news: our already precarious industry entered a new phase of precarity as the fight for fair compensation resulted in halts of all kinds across filming industries worldwide.

Good news: Film festivals like Reelworld have become a prevailing force in keeping the hope, community, and heartbeat of cinema alive throughout it all.

It is an honour to be able to bring this year's compelling, breathtaking, and visually groundbreaking slate of features, shorts, and in-conversations to our Reelworld audience. Filmmakers across the nation need to know now more than ever that there is a place and way forward for their ambitious creative pursuits and we're proud to provide that for the last 23 years and it is our goal to continue to provide that space for many years to come.

As Tahir Shah once said "stories are a communal currency of humanity" and as the world evolves so rapidly around us it is Reelworld's privilege to bring you stories from across the BIPOC diasporas as tools of guidance and comfort. We are excited to have you join us at Toronto's historic and iconic Royal and Paradise Cinemas for a week long celebration of the work of some of Canada's brightest, most daring, creative minds. See you there!

SASHA LEIGH HENRY
REELWORLD SCREEN INSTITUTE CHAIR



SASHA LEIGH HENRY, CHAIR
Writer, Director



CHERYL HUDSON, VICE CHAIR
Founder & CEO, Dove Philanthropy Advisors



BLAKE TOHANA, TREASURER
CFO, 9 Story Media Group



TERRY E. MARKUS, SECRETARY
Entertainment Lawyer, Professor, Producer



TANYA BRUNEL,
Producer,
White Bear Films



GINA BOWEN
Fractional CMO,
Strategist



DEANNA CADETTE
MPPA Entertainment
Executive



TY HYLAND
Production Planning
Executive and
Comedy & Digital,
CBC Scripted Content



FLOYD KANE
Creator, Writer,
Producer, Search it
Up Productions Inc.



PETER-JOHN KERR
Creative Director,
Director Producer,
Shift



SRINIVAS KRISHNA
President,
DivaniFilms Inc.



PATRICIA BEBIA MAWA
Executive Vice
President, Silvertrust
Media & Afroglobal TV



LISA MEECHES
President,
Eagle Vision Inc



APRIL MULLINGS
Director, Finance,
and Business Affairs,
HLP + Partners



ROMEN PODZYHUN
CEO/ Chairman,
Channel Zero



ERICA SHAW
Media Production
Manager, Shaw
Communications &
Professor, Sheridan



Greetings and welcome to the heart of Reelworld!

With an unwavering commitment to igniting change, Reelworld envisions a world where diverse voices shine on and off-screen, telling their stories and creating a tapestry of narratives that reflect our vibrant country Canada. A catalyst for transformation, Reelworld aims to break barriers, amplify the voices of Black, Indigenous, Asian, South Asian, and People of Colour, and to cultivate an environment where authenticity flourishes.

Through meaningful partnerships with organizations Prime Time, Women in the Director's Chair (WIDC, East by Northwest (EXNW) and others, we forge pathways for innovation and excellence. Our influence extends beyond borders – from panels at the Banff World Media Festival to discussions at Prime Time Ottawa – where the focus was on the value and importance of the authentic depiction of diverse women on screen.

Programs like the Black Entrepreneurs Program, Producer Program, and the Emerging 20 (E20) Program cultivate the creative minds that will shape the future of Canada's artistic landscape. Reelworld has sent delegates to Cannes Film Festival, Prime Time Ottawa, and BANFF creating an opportunity for talents to network and showcase their creativity and work.

Our Founder and Executive Director, Tonya Williams, shines as a beacon of inspiration. We congratulate her for receiving the EXNW Global Connector Award. Her visionary leadership exemplifies her commitment to propelling creativity across borders. To my passionate fellow board members, who breathe life into the vision, and to our diligent team, who have organised this year's festival with limitless dedication and excellence – your efforts form the backbone of Reelworld's success.

As we gather for the 2023 Reelworld Film Festival, I extend my warmest welcome. Embrace the journey ahead, be enriched by the diverse narratives we share, and let us continue to weave a more vibrant, inclusive, and united screen industry. Together, we illuminate the world.

With gratitude and determination,

PATRICIA BEBIA MAWA
CHAIR, REELWORLD FOUNDATION BOARD



**PATRICIA BEBIA MAWA,
CHAIR**
Executive Vice President,
Silvertrust Media &
Afroglobal TV



**CHERYL HUDSON,
VICE-CHAIR**
Founder and CEO,
Dove Philanthropy
Advisors



**APRIL MULLINGS,
TREASURER**
Director, Finance, and
Business Affairs, HLP +
Partners



**ANYA MCKENZIE,
SECRETARY**
Production Planning Executive
and Comedy & Digital, CBC
Business and Rights, CBC
Scripted Content



TY HYLAND
Producer/Programmer/
Business and Rights, CBC
Scripted Content



ERICA SHAW
Media Production
Manager, Shaw
Communications
Professor, Sheridan



Reelworld Screen Institute Staff



TONYA WILLIAMS
Founder, Executive
Director



**EMILY-JANE
WILLIAMS**
Development
Director



SAFIA ABDIGIR
Senior Program
Manager



PAHULL BAINS
Outreach and
Marketing Manager



NATALIE NADEEN
Communications and
Public Engagement
Manager



ZAARIN BUSHRA
E20 Program
Manager



JULISA MARCEL
Programs Coordinator



AISHA EVELYNA
Programmer



MARINA HANNA
Programmer



REZA SAMENI
Programmer



AHLAM HASSAN
Programmer



AMADEUS WHEESK
Programming Coordinator
Trainee



BAL NJOVANA
Finance Manager



**JORDAN
SMITH-ST. KITTS**
Digital Operations
Coordinator



ANDREW CHUNG
Program Specialist



JEN PERSAUD
Executive Assistant



CELINA LIU
Programming
Coordinator



KENYA MATHLIN
Arts Administrative
Trainee

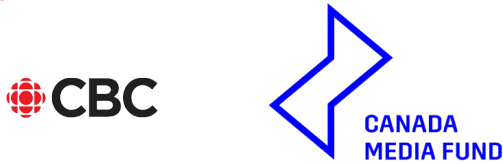


2023 Reelworld Film Festival+Summit Partners and Funders

PLATINUM PARTNERS



PREMIUM PARTNERS



GOVERNMENT FUNDERS



INDUSTRY PARTNERS



ASSOCIATE PARTNERS



MEDIA PARTNERS



COMMUNITY PARTNERS





2023 Reelworld Screen Institute Partners and Funders

REELWORLD SCREEN INSTITUTE



REELWORLD BLACK ENTREPRENEURS PROGRAM



REELWORLD PROTOCOL GUIDELINE



REELWORLD EMERGING 20 PROGRAM



REELWORLD FACE2FACE PROGRAM



REELWORLD TRAINING LAB PRESENTED BY AMAZON MGM STUDIOS

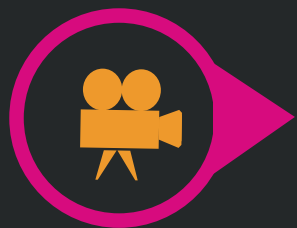


REELWORLD MARKET READY



REELWORLD PRODUCER PROGRAM





How To Festival November 1-7, 2023

Once you've purchased a Pass or Ticket on the **Reelworld website**, you will receive a confirmation email.

- If you purchased the Opening Night Film Ticket or a single In-Person Ticket, your Ticket will be provided with the confirmation email.
- If you purchased a Pass, please follow the instructions provided in the confirmation email sent to you after purchase. Having a super pass or in-person pass alone does not guarantee access to in-person screenings. To secure your tickets for In-Person Screenings, you must follow the instructions in the email.

Bring your Film Ticket with a QR code to the cinema. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis.



2023 FESTIVAL PRICES

TICKETS

Individual film tickets	Opening Night tickets
\$12 (+HST)	\$15 (+HST)

PASS OPTIONS

- **Reelworld Film Festival Online Pass: \$60 (+HST)**
This pass grants you online access to the films screened during this year's festival via the Cinesend digital platform.
**Geographic Restriction: Digital screenings are available for viewers in Ontario only to support our filmmakers.*
- **Reelworld Summit Pass: \$275 (+HST)**
This pass grants access to all summit events on November 1 and 2, excluding film screenings.
- **Reelworld Film Festival+Summit Super Pass: \$400 (+HST)**
This pass provides access to online and in-person festival screenings, as well as all summit events.

We believe that when people participate in their community, good things can happen.

TD is proud to support the Reelworld Film Festival.

As part of our goal to help people feel a sense of belonging in their communities, TD supports arts and culture events, initiatives and organizations across North America that amplify diverse voices.

Learn more at
td.com/artsandculture



Wed. Nov. 1
7:00 PM @ The Royal

With Love and a Major Organ

KIM ALBRIGHT

PRESENTED BY



**TD READY
COMMITMENT**



Kim Albright is an award winning Canadian-British, half-Filipina director. She featured on the British Film Institute's (BFI) Upshot Program, showcasing 'the most exciting emerging UK filmmaking talent.' This is Kim's first feature film

PROGRAMMING NOTES

In a world where people's hearts are made of inanimate objects and emotions are pragmatically dealt with rather than experienced, Anabel sticks out. She still feels big feelings and is determined to do things "the normal way."

One winter afternoon she meets an intriguing but reticent stranger named George, and begins to fall in love. But after a series of emotional blows (including rejection by George), Anabel decides she can't handle a life with such a surfeit of pain. She rips her heart out and delivers it to George, unlocking something in him he's never experienced before.

Kim Albright's quirky feature debut follows Anabel and George as they begin to understand the power of being in tune with one's emotions and the joys of human connection. Featuring heartfelt (no pun intended) lead performances by Anna Maguire and Hamza Haq, ***With Love and a Major Organ*** offers a fresh take on romance in an increasingly disconnected world.

- PAHULL BAINS

PRODUCER(S): Madeleine Davis

WRITER(S): Julia Lederer

CAST: Anna Maguire, Hamza Haq, Veena Sood, Donna Benedicto

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: ONTARIO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 92 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English

**TD READY
COMMITMENT**

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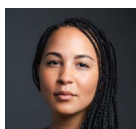




SAT. NOV. 4
11:00 AM
@PARADISE
THEATRE

Union Street

DIRECTED BY JAMILA POMEROY



Jamila Pomeroy is a Kenyan-Canadian WGC screenwriter and TWUC internationally-published writer with experience spanning print, new media and film. Her work often champions historically underrepresented people and narratives, while generating both accessible, intellectually-charged and comedic storylines. She has created scripted and factual work for networks and publications like CBC, BBC, Telus Originals, Network Entertainment, Quibi, Showtime, Meta4films, Snap Animation, Red Bull Media, and Hypebeast. *Union Street* is her first feature-length documentary as a director.

PROGRAMMING NOTES

The pulse of a community is defined by the health of each of its neighbours." Those are the words, spoken in Swahili, that open the documentary *Union Street*.

We're taken on a journey tracing how the cultural erasure and displacement of African-Canadians in the 1960s has created a new generation of Black Vancouverites eager to rebuild and cultivate a future of belonging and safety for the collective community to thrive in.

The camera slowly moves towards, away from, and alongside both the documentary's interview subjects and the local landscape, never quite reaching a final destination but continuing to search onwards. This push-and-pull motif expertly matches the subjects' difficulty trying to exist in impermanent and rapidly gentrifying spaces that once held places of worship, recreational activities, speakeasies, family businesses and refuge in many other forms.

Union Street makes clear the nuanced experiences of African-Canadians in their own words and documents their efforts to make the city of their dreams a concrete reality.

- AHLAM HASSAN

PRODUCER(S): Mack Stannard
WRITER(S): Jamila Pomeroy
CAST: N/A
COUNTRY: Canada

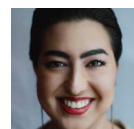
PREMIERE STATUS: ONTARIO PREMIERE
RUN TIME: 80 Minutes
LANGUAGE: English



SAT. NOV. 4
1:00 PM
@PARADISE
THEATRE

À toi Jeddi

DIRECTED BY SARA BEN-SAUD



Sara's artistic curiosity feeds on her Quebec-Libyan-Tunisian origins. Her thirst for meeting her roots and different cultures inspires her in her productions. She wants to change the audiovisual landscape on the issue of diversity.

PROGRAMMING NOTES

Filled with love, vibrant colours, joyful adventures, and mouthwatering Mediterranean cuisine, *À toi Jeddi* is an unorthodox but intimate conversation between the multi-racial Quebecois filmmaker Sara Ben-Saud and her late freedom-fighter Libyan grandfather, Jeddi. The discovery of his memoir inspires Sara to travel to her fatherland to find the missing piece in her identity puzzle, a part of her identity that the dominant Canadian culture didn't welcome until a few decades ago.

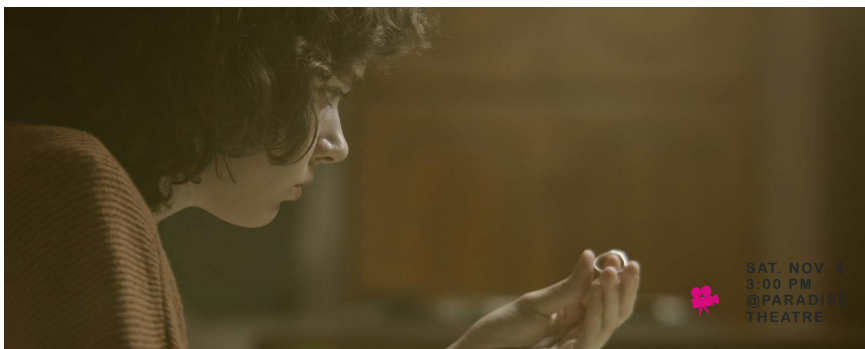
By bringing together the past and present, reality and fantasy, the freezing cold of Canada and the scorching sands of Tunisia, the rubble of war-torn Tripoli and the joyous all-night-long family parties, into one frame, Ben-Saud masterfully defines how all these contrasts shape her unique Canadian-Libyan-Tunisian character and how this diversity contributes to Canada's strength as a multicultural country.

À toi Jeddi is a heartwarming documentary that takes us on a journey to the rich and welcoming Mediterranean culture, where its vibe will remain with us for a long time after the closing credits!

-REZA SAMENI

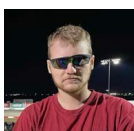
PRODUCER(S): Jacynthe Turcotte
WRITER(S): Sara Ben-Saud
CAST: Sara Ben-Saud, Reda Guerinik

COUNTRY: Canada
PREMIERE STATUS: WORLD PREMIERE
RUN TIME: 61 Minutes
LANGUAGE: French, English and Arabic



A Storm Blows Over

DIRECTED BY GAVIN BAIRD



Gavin Baird is a Métis artist based in Saskatoon, SK. His previous works include the films *The Big Gust!*, *BEGONIA*, and *The Caring Only Cry at Night*.

PROGRAMMING NOTES

Gavin Baird's innovative, dreamy, and at times eerie film *A Storm Blows Over* uses a simple premise, and builds, bringing us to places that we least expect. After a woman's boyfriend of years goes missing, she goes on a quest to find him. As Baird dances gracefully between genres, his protagonist's journey takes us to understated yet bold cinematic worlds. Whether moving through the bowels of a dark monstrous creature, or the soft sunlit backdrop of a couple falling in love, or a strange rural farmhouse frozen in an unfamiliar time, Baird's intentional use of film language and silence speaks to a skilled artist who reveres cinema.

A Storm Blows Over is careful and delicate. The story moves from the present, to memory, to dream, to alternate reality effortlessly, all the while pulling at our heartstrings and grounding us in the lived experience of confusion and grief. Though sad, this film hurts us in a good way – reminding us that to feel is to be alive. Gavin Baird is a distinct and unique Canadian voice from Saskatchewan, and this film solidifies him as a true talent on the rise.

- AISHA EVELYNA

PRODUCER(S): Gavin Baird, Kyle Zurevinski, Sophie Kokott
WRITER(S): Gavin Baird
CAST: Maggie Robertson, Kurt Wolfe

COUNTRY: Canada
PREMIERE STATUS: WORLD PREMIERE
RUN TIME: 74 Minutes
LANGUAGE: English



Height Markers

DIRECTED BY PRANAY NOEL



Pranay Noel is a Canadian narrative filmmaker with a BFA and MFA in Film Production from York University. His works are social realist character-driven drama/comedies often centered around coming of age stories. Born in Mumbai, raised in Mississauga, identity, legacy and environment are key themes in his work.

PROGRAMMING NOTES

Visualizing the quiet ruminations of life marks the work of Pranay Noel. Inspired by directors such as Kenneth Lonergan, Mike Leigh, Edward Yang and Kelly Reichardt to name a few, Noel's stirring feature debut *Height Markers* follows a young man as he drifts about his city over the course of two days. Before leaving the home he shares with his mother, Aaron (Gabe Meacher, *Firecrackers*) is stewing with restless energy. Between his love life and the haunting space left by his father's (Jesse LaVercombe, *Violation*) passing, Aaron struggles to communicate with a mother (Maev Beaty, *Mouthpiece*) enveloped in her own grief. She is stilled in time; he is troubled by stillness.

Using beautiful long master shots, Noel understands space simultaneously as its own character and as a stand-in for those no longer present, whether off screen or through death. Woven throughout the film is camcorder footage of the father, atmospheric frames of the city, and Aaron as he is trying to find his own footing. The city breathes and the grass rustles as the living moves forward.

- SAFIA ABDIGIR

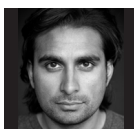
PRODUCER(S): Arya Taleghani, Pranay Noel
WRITER(S): Pranay Noel
CAST: Gabe Meacher, Maev Beaty, Jesse LaVercombe, Alexandra

Floras-Matic
COUNTRY: Canada
PREMIERE STATUS: WORLD PREMIERE
RUN TIME: 74 Minutes
LANGUAGE: English



Strangers in a Room

DIRECTED BY ANDRE REHAL



Andre Rehal is a freelance director based out of Toronto whose work features range in various digital mediums, shooting styles, and genres.

PROGRAMMING NOTES

When a confrontation between an actor and a casting agent goes viral after an audition, the actor in question, Jae, spirals into an existential crisis. What sends him there is a moment in the audition—he is asked to do something that unnerves him. Will he eventually comply?

Andre Rehal writes and directs this psychological drama that unfolds from Jae's POV. What's real is intertwined with what's happening in Jae's mind, the full view of which is unveiled in pieces. Han is the "underlying stylistic influence" of the film. As Rehal describes, it is a word that has no English equivalent and "creates an interesting cultural dimension that can only really be applied to a Korean lead." Jonathan Kim gives a remarkable performance as Jae, relating the toll the turn of events has upon him in a realistic way, even in the fantastical moments.

Inspired by Rehal's time as a session director in commercial casting and conversations about the racial politics of the industry, *Strangers In A Room* is a study on the personal toll of experiencing recurring systematized and subtle acts of prejudice.

- MARINA HANNA

PRODUCER(S): Matthew Campagna, Melissa D'Agostino, Matthew Schichter, Andre Rehal

WRITER(S): Andre Rehal, Foad HP

CAST: Jonathan Kim, Shreya Patel, Andy McQueen, Foad HP

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: TBD

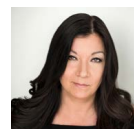
RUN TIME: 84 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English, Korean



Lay Down Your Heart

DIRECTED BY MARIE CLEMENTS



A renowned writer, director and producer whose decorated career has spanned film, TV, radio and live performance, Marie Clements is a Métis Dene filmmaker and the founder of MCM, a production company specializing in the development, creation and production of innovative works of media that ignite an Indigenous and intercultural reality. Her multi-award-winning films have screened internationally at Cannes, TIFF, MOMA, VIFF, the Whistler Film Festival, the American Indian Film Festival and the imagineNATIVE Film Festival. is a freelance director based out of Toronto whose work features range in various digital mediums, shooting styles, and genres.

PROGRAMMING NOTES

Niall McNeil embodies many different roles both on and off the stage. He is an artist. An actor. A poet. A father. An ex-husband. A Shakespearean hero. A soldier. An improviser.

In this colourful and tactile documentary by Métis Dene filmmaker Marie Clements, Niall introduces the audience to the people that make up his chosen family, as well as the people that make up the worlds that he writes, paints, dreams and feels as an actor affiliated with Caravan Farm Theatre in British Columbia.

Lay Down Your Heart activates our hearts and minds with humor and a celebration of the power and knowledge of what our imaginations have to offer. Led by Niall's example and experiences as an individual with Down Syndrome, the film subverts rigid traditional definitions of family, prompting us to deeply consider who we are to one another in our actions and bonds above all.

- AHLAM HASSAN

PRODUCER(S): Shirley Verduyse

WRITER(S): Marie Clements, Niall McNeil

CAST: N/A

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: WORLD PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 70 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English



DOUBLE BILL
SCREENING
SUN. NOV. 5
1:30 PM
@PARADISE
THEATRE

My Body Is a Poem/The World Makes With Me

DIRECTED BY BRANDON WINT



Brandon Wint is an Ontario-born poet, spoken word artist, and multi-disciplinary collaborator who uses poetry to attend to the joys, challenges and miracles of being alive. His work has been published in national anthologies, including *The Great Black North: Contemporary African-Canadian Poetry* (2013) and *Black Writers Matter* (2019). This is his debut short documentary.

PRODUCER(S): Brandon Wint

CAST: Brandon Wint

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: ONTARIO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 27 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English

PROGRAMMING NOTES

As a double bill, Brandon Wint's poetic documentary *My Body is a Poem/The World Makes With Me* pairs perfectly with Alex Eskandarkhah's hard-hitting sports documentary *Coaching While Black*. Both short films offer distinct commentaries on Blackness and its prairie intersection, complementing each other seamlessly.

Wint's smooth poetry—along with a kaleidoscopic pastiche of animation, archival maps, family photos, and documentary-esque footage of himself—immerses us in his life as a Black disabled man with Cerebral Palsy in Edmonton.

Eskandarkhah's film works in contrast, outlining how divisive a thriving Black college basketball team was for rural Albertan communities in the late aughts and early 2010s, through archival game footage and interviews with former team members and the team's former coach, Donald "Tex" Phillips.

Both films prompt us to reconsider our bodies' significance in relation to space and challenge our politicization of bodies.

- AISHA EVELYNA



Coaching While Black

DIRECTED BY ALEX ESKANDARKHAH



Alex Eskandarkhah is a Canadian-Iranian filmmaker, founder and actor born and raised in Toronto, Ontario. He is a co-founder of the

Collective for Black Iranians and a co-creator of The Gifted Gab. He is also the founder and executive producer at Gamble Ave Filmworks, a multimedia production house specializing in film, tv and podcasts.

PRODUCER(S): Warin Era, Simon Morgan

CAST: Don "Tex" Phillips, Bol Kong

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: ONTARIO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 43 Minutes

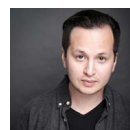
LANGUAGE: English



SUN. NOV. 5
4:00 PM
@PARADISE
THEATRE

One Act About Toilet Paper

DIRECTED BY PAUL AIHOSHI



Paul Aihoshi is a half-Japanese Canadian filmmaker. His short films have premiered at various festivals, such as Toronto After Dark, Toronto Independent Film Festival, and the Toronto Sketch Comedy Festival. Paul performs improv and sketch comedy in Toronto and can be seen in season 2 of *Chucky*, and the last season of *Workin' Moms*.

PROGRAMMING NOTES

Is there a right way to hang a toilet paper roll? Yes, there is! So when Sue and Michael arrive home from dinner, only for Sue to discover the toilet paper hanging in the wrong direction, a battle begins. Naturally, Sue accuses Michael of the misdeed. But Michael steadfastly claims it wasn't him. If neither of them changed the last roll, then who did?

Written and directed by Paul Aihoshi, *One Act About Toilet Paper* is a relatable comedy with a low-stakes mystery at its core. As Sue (Alexandra Hurley) and Michael (Colin Sharpe) try to solve the puzzle, they invite their friends Beck (Lance Byrd) and Robby (Noemi Salamon) over for drinks; their friend Amanda (Amanda Parker) tags along. And not to be forgotten is the neighbour, Jacob (Callum Wratten). All are suspects.

This feature debut cost \$1850 and took four years to complete. Shot in black and white, Aihoshi uses light and shadows to the story's advantage. Most scenes occur in the living room (and bathroom), which ratchets up the pressure and interplay between the characters, and we begin to understand what makes them tick. Game on!

- MARINA HANNA

PRODUCER(S): Paul Aihoshi

WRITER(S): Paul Aihoshi

CAST: Colin Sharpe, Alexandra Hurley, Lance Byrd, Noemi Salamon

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: WORLD PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 73 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English



Orah

DIRECTED BY LONZO NZEKWE



Lonzo Nzekwe (*Anchor Baby*, 2010; *Meet the Parents*, 2016) is a Nigerian/Canadian acclaimed film director, writer and producer based in Toronto, Canada. He is the CEO of IronFlix Inc., a film production company with a special focus on movies connected to Africa and the diaspora.

PROGRAMMING NOTES

The impetus for revenge is in part to seek relief from grief. Actress Oyin Oladejo embodies Orah, an undocumented taxi driver in Canada who is desperate to bring her son from Nigeria through her boss. The catch — the ticket requires her son to be a money mule. When the ploy goes terribly wrong, Orah finds herself playing an international game of cat-and-mouse to find the answers she desperately seeks.

Nigerian-Canadian writer director Lonzo Nzekwe creates works that examine the precarity of undocumented Nigerians as they navigate western bureaucracy. His debut feature, *Anchor Baby*, winner of the best film at the 2010 Harlem International Film, also follows a Nigerian family's quest to seek documentation for their child. Nzekwe weaves this reality with a social story. His latest film gives a fresh take on the thriller by centering those who are directly exploited by a criminal enterprise. *Orah* beautifully depicts the cumulative consequences of a life denied stability and the complex choices one makes when survival dictates all decisions. What does it take for someone to break?

- SAFIA ABDIGIR

PRODUCER(S): Floyd Kane,
Amos Adetuyi

CAST: Oyin Oladejo,
Lucky Ejim, Agape Mngomezulu,
Morgan Bedard

WRITER: Lonzo Nzekwe

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: TORONTO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 96 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English

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for 23 years of showcasing
and advancing diverse perspectives
in Canada's screen industries.



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Shorts Programs

 FRI. NOV 3
12:00 PM

Hope is In The Air

No matter how distinct our cultural backgrounds or geographic locations may be, when it comes to experiencing injustice and inequality, we all share the same feelings of pain, and our ultimate goal is to create a better world.

All armed with hope, a group of hardworking Black men in **Pendulum**, a family fleeing war-torn Vietnam in **Boat People**, an ambitious female chef in **High End Dying**, a rebellious teenage girl in **Zip**, and four generations of libertarian women in **Hope is the Thing with Feathers**, sacrifice themselves for a brighter future and greater equality.

Hope is in the Air showcases five female-driven stories by talented filmmakers who all advocate for justice on the screen.

- REZA SAMENI

 FRI. NOV 3
2:30 PM

It's All Relative

Family. Whether we like it or not, our lives are bound to them. We love them. We make concessions big and small for them—to nurture, appease...or even survive them. And so these relationships are enduring in our lives.

Family can be tricky, but these filmmakers show us that understanding family helps us better understand ourselves. It may not always be an enjoyable experience but for the audience, it's a lot of fun to watch!

- AISHA EVELYNA


 FRI. NOV 3
6:00 PM

Altered Realities

From a psychedelic beach fever dream in **Introduction** by Bruna Arbex, to the current housing landscape in Montreal with Eli Jean Tahchi's **Neighbors in my Backyard**, this program plays with form and pacing, creating new worlds to delve into the old human struggles for connection.

Futuristic/parallel worlds are used as a story engine to understand human isolation for **Charter** directed by Asif Limbada & Alireza Shojaei, **The Future Above Us**

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directed by Vanessa Magic, and **Mindslip** directed by Swaroop Elamon. The western thriller by A.W. Hopkins is given a new lease through a residential school revenge quest in *Cloud Striker* and the seen and unseen is explored in **Lê** directed by Solara Thanh-Binh Đặng. Connecting all these projects are deeply curious filmmakers using all the filmic language at their disposal for audiences to experience worlds outside of their purview, and possibly shift their perspective.

— SAFIA ABDIGIR



Theory of Soul

Revealing the inner life of a character without exposition takes great care. When it works, an unfolding story grips the viewer's conscience, leaving them to question their POV.

In **Silkworm**, a split-second decision by one brother unlocks a moral dilemma for the other. In **Desync**, a daughter overwrites a painful memory with an idyllic narrative. **You Ask Too Much** portrays the unsettling inner life of a 94-year-old grandmother. **Oversight** leaves the viewer to wonder what happened between two characters at a laundromat late one night. In **The Body of My Name** dance unlocks something in the performers, previously lost.

— MARINA HANNA



Boat People

DIRECTED BY THAO LAM, KJELL BOERSMA



Thao Lam is a critically acclaimed Vietnamese-Canadian children's book author and illustrator. Her books include **THAO**, **Wallpaper**, **Skunk on a String**, and **Paper Boat**. She arrived in Canada with her parents at the age of three as a refugee from Vietnam. Learning English was difficult, and it was picture books that helped her understand this new world and ignited her passion for visual storytelling.



Kjell Boersma is a writer, director and animator from Toronto. Kjell's work includes short films, animation for feature documentaries, music videos and experimental works. His projects combine traditional and digital animation techniques in novel ways. He directed the short film **Monster Slayer** (2015) and co-founded the arts council Gallup Arts. He was also commissioned by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and TIFF Kids to write and direct **DAM! The Story of Kit the Beaver** (2017)

SYNOPSIS As a child in Vietnam, Thao's mother often rescued ants from bowls of sugar water. Years later they would return the favour. **Boat People** is an animated documentary that uses a striking metaphor to trace one family's flight across the turbulent waters of history.

PRODUCER(S): Lorna Kidjo

CAST: N/A

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: TORONTO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 10 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English



High End Dying

DIRECTED BY HELEN LIU



Helen Liu is a Vancouver-based, Chinese-Canadian Writer/Director and Script Supervisor. Helen graduated from Emily Carr with a BFA and received a screenwriting degree from InFocus Film School. She is known for her short film **Braised Pork Belly**, which she wrote and directed, and played at multiple film festivals.

SYNOPSIS When elite level chef Eloise Vaughn receives a scathing review from famed critic Alistair Brown, she invites him back for a private dinner service aimed at redeeming her name. Alistair accepts, and as the service commences, the pairs shared history is revealed, as are the extreme lengths Eloise is willing to go to impress him.

PRODUCER(S): Nancy Kamar, Melanie Germain, Moheb Jindran

CAST: Nhi Do, Stuart James

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: TORONTO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 12 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English



Hope is the Thing With Feathers

DIRECTED BY SUNNY MOHAJER



Discovering her love of stories and art at a young age led **Sunny** to pursue film in university, receiving a Bachelor's Degree at Capilano University in Vancouver and a Master's Degree in International Studies in Media, Power, and Diversity. She has directed six short films to date that have screened at various festivals internationally. Her short film *The Yellow Wallpaper* was the recipient of the Experimental Visions Audience Award at NFFTY. Her short films *Ataraxia* and *Millie Did It* are both broadcasting on CBC Reflections. Her short film *Hope is the Thing with Feathers*, which received funding from BC Arts Council, is starting its festival circuit. She is currently developing a feature.

SYNOPSIS Four women connected through time and space come together to save a girl from a tragic end.

PRODUCER(S): Jesse Copeland, Sunny

Mohajer, Marnie Mahannah

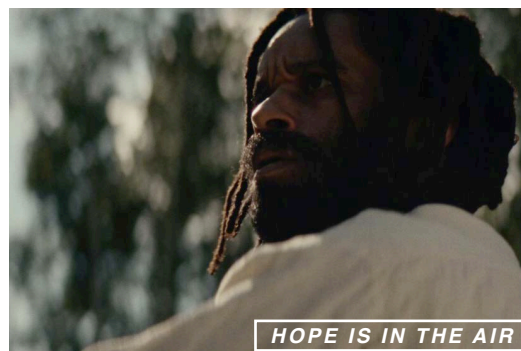
CAST: Rainbow Wedell

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: CANADIAN PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 12 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English



Pendulum

DIRECTED BY MANUEL MATHIEU



Manuel Mathieu is a multidisciplinary artist exploring historical violence, erasure, and spiritual heritage. His work merges diverse influences, creating meaning through a spiritual and asemic approach. With a formal artistic education, culminating in a MFA from Goldsmiths, he creates new lexicons, defining cinema as a language that connects us to each other through empathy and universal temporality.

SYNOPSIS A woman carries on her shoulders her most precious heritage: the liberation of our souls. This liberation comes with a spiritual choreography that underlines the complexities of our humanity.

PRODUCER(S): Afrodynamicfilms - Kimberley

Ann Surin, Matenmidiswa- Manuel Mathieu

CAST: Mireille Métellus, Philippe Racine,

Maxime Momproousse, Lyndz Dantiste,

François Guy

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: ONTARIO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 11:16

LANGUAGE: N/A



Zip

DIRECTED BY AVA MARIA SAFAI



Ava Maria Safai is a Canadian-Iranian artist hailing from Vancouver, Canada. She is the artistic director of The Harlequin Theatre Society, and is also an accomplished musician and singer-songwriter. She is the recipient of many awards, including the Don S. Williams Grant and the Evelyn Jasiulko Harden Scholarship in Theatre

SYNOPSIS Meet Melody; at 15, she is outspoken, intelligent and creative, and dreams of performing in her school talent show. The problem? Her strict father, a traditionalist who shakes Melody's world overnight after sewing a zipper onto her mouth on her 16th birthday.

This film was created in honour of Iranian people still fighting for their freedom, with a special focus on the censorship of music and women's voices in Iran

PRODUCER(S): Nicco Graham, Ava Maria

Safai, Christopher Alexander Cook, Mandana

Mehrghorbani, Caylee Watrin, Jonathan Gogoi

CAST: Gelareh Ghodrati, Ashkan Nejati

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: ONTARIO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 15 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English, Farsi



100 Days

DIRECTED BY DEREK KWAN



Derek Kwan is a Chinese-Canadian filmmaker based in Vancouver, BC. Naturally gravitating towards stories surrounding food and culture, he strives to bring narratives to screen through flavors audiences have yet to experience. Derek was a 2021 Reelworld E20, Netflix-Banff Diversity of Voices 2022, and part of the Bell Media / BIPOC TV & Film Unscripted Producers Lab 2023.

SYNOPSIS A tradition in Asian cultures when a newborn baby turns 100 days old, family and friends celebrate over a banquet style dinner welcoming the baby into the world. An unexpected guest arrives and a bowl of red bean dessert soup causes tensions to boil over in this modern day family dramedy.

PRODUCER(S): Maddy Chang,

Adriana Marchand

CAST: Phoebe Miu, Doris Lum, Olivia Poon,

Vincent Cheng

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: WORLD PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 13 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English, Cantonese



Dating Indian

DIRECTED BY LEN MORISSETTE



Len Morissette is a proud Mistawasis (Saskatchewan) band member that grew up urban Indigenous. In 2011 Len founded C.I.A Solutions, a majority Indigenous owned film and advertising company. Len and his team have filmed and produced over 200 commercials and films, as well as music videos and documentaries.

SYNOPSIS Tara is under pressure from her parents to have Native kids so the race doesn't die out; which is a lot of pressure to put on someone. She thinks she finds a Native boyfriend in Chris but at dinner before meeting her parents, he points out that he's not Native. It's not that he's pretending to be Native, it's that he's got dark skin and high cheekbones so her wishful thinking filled in the blanks. Worried about her parents, Tara tries to convince Chris to pretend to be Indian, which goes against his beliefs.

PRODUCER(S): Tanis Parenteau
CAST: Tanis Parenteau, Sheldon Elter
COUNTRY: Canada
PREMIERE STATUS: CANADIAN PREMIERE
RUN TIME: 9 Minutes
LANGUAGE: English



Meeting Amy

DIRECTED BY RICHARD CHEN



Richard Chen is a filmmaker and photographer with a Chinese-Canadian background. He's currently focusing on independent film directing and street photography. Richard's work explores the complexities of cross-generational trauma and intercultural issues and initiates important conversations that foster a greater sense of empathy and understanding across generations and cultures.

SYNOPSIS Meeting Amy is a story about two half-siblings who meet for the first time. Ray and Amy, both children from two separate failed marriages, share the same enigmatic father who's an absent figure in both of their lives.

PRODUCER(S): Rachel Cheung, Yasmin Madrigal
CAST: Serena Lu, Alvin Hooi
COUNTRY: United States
PREMIERE STATUS: ONTARIO PREMIERE
RUN TIME: 14:28
LANGUAGE: English



Mixed Feelings

DIRECTED BY BENJAMIN FREEMANTLE



Benjamin Freemantle is a Canadian-born, New York-based documentary and narrative filmmaker. Most recently, he was the Associate Producer for the Emmy-winning and Oscar-shortlisted feature documentary, *The First Wave*. As a new director and biracial person, he is excited to share *Mixed Feelings*, a surreal satire inspired by his own experiences

SYNOPSIS Tracey is biracial. While celebrating his graduation, both sides of his family fight so hard for his attention that they split him into two ... literally. Unable to undo the split, the family tries to decide which Tracey deserves to remain, the one with black or white skin.

PRODUCER(S): Tajayona Harris, Kariza Reyes (Line Producer), Christina Vislocky (Associate Producer)
CAST: Devin Mojica, Michael Bonini, Queen Esther, Dan Dobransky
COUNTRY: Canada
PREMIERE STATUS: CANADA PREMIERE
RUN TIME: 11 Minutes
LANGUAGE: English



The Mother's Seat

DIRECTED BY KAIA SINGH



Kaia Singh is biracial writer and director based in Montreal, Canada. In her work she features biracial stories and experiences, utilizing filmic language to explore and depict the subjects of intersectional identity, cultural identity, and human connection.

SYNOPSIS Believing that she has received a sign from her deceased mother, Veera tries to bring her family back together by cooking the mother's dhal for her younger sister and withdrawn father. As she cooks, Veera is overwhelmed both by her discomfort in the kitchen as well as the memories of her elegant mother

PRODUCER(S): Alex Beausejour
CAST: Alia Bhimji, Zena Hajibik, Kalyani Iyer, Kreg Weiss
COUNTRY: Canada
PREMIERE STATUS: TORONTO SCREENING
RUN TIME: 10 Minutes
LANGUAGE: English



ALTERED REALITIES

Charter

DIRECTED BY ALIREZA SHOJAEI, ASIF LIMBADA

Alireza Shojaei is a Toronto based actor & Filmmaker. He has appeared on shows such as Star Trek: Discovery, Nikita, Dark Matter and The Lottery. He is the founder of EGT Films, and has written, produced and directed short films such as: Itchy (2019) & Charter (2021).



Asif Limbada is a seasoned DOP, renowned for his mastery of the language of cinematography but also dabbles in directing. His illustrious career spans diverse genres and global markets, with a distinctive flair for crafting visually captivating narratives that resonate on a profound level.

SYNOPSIS The year is 2030, inflation is at an all time high and wars are raging all over the world forcing the majority of populations into poverty. The world's governments have decided to capitalize on all forms of renewable energy in efforts to distribute it to those who can afford it, leaving many without electricity. Feller, who works for a solar farm, illegally captures solar energy and trades electric pods for goods and services

PRODUCER(S): Alireza Shojaei, Asif Limbada, Emeka Menakaya

CAST: Alireza Shojaei, Emeka Menakaya, Alanna LeVierge

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: CANADIAN

RUN TIME: 17 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English



ALTERED REALITIES

Cloud Striker

DIRECTED BY A.W. HOPKINS

A.W. Hopkins is Interior Salish and a member of N'Quatqua First Nation. His first feature film, *Indian Road Trip*, won Best BC Director at the 2020 Whistler Film Festival. He also won an Honorable Mention for Best Screenplay in the Borsos Film Competition. He has directed two short films, *Shin Chi's Canoe* and *FlyPaper*. After winning the DGC Greenlight Pitch competition, his new film, *Cloud Striker* is on its way to the festival circuit. In 2021, A.W. attended the Canadian Film Center Directors Lab. He also has a Master of Fine Arts Degree (MFA) in Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia where he focused on writing for screen.

SYNOPSIS Elijah Cloud Striker was stolen. His father rides for weeks, visiting every residential school within hundreds of miles to find him. On the morning the Chief finds the right school, what he walks in on is more than any father can endure. Revenge is the only course of action.

PRODUCER(S): Abubakar Khan, Kent Donguines

CAST: Kymo van Oers, Jonathan Fraser-Monroe, Jennifer Lines, Neil Charlesworth

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: ONTARIO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 13 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English



ALTERED REALITIES

Introduction

DIRECTED BY BRUNA ARBEX

Acclaimed Brazilian director and writer **Bruna Arbex** is known for surrealist storytelling. Her portfolio includes award-winning short films, documentaries, and music videos, notably *This is a Period Piece*. A 2023 Women in the Director's Chair recipient, WIDC's distinction highlights her remarkable talent and commitment to empowering women in film.

SYNOPSIS What Molly had assumed would be a relaxing day at a deserted beach turns into a completely surreal experience. She is in her 40's and has the looks and conceptions of the typical "middle-aged white woman from the suburbs". Once strange, seemingly out of place characters show up at the beach and start interacting with her, Molly panics. She confronts them, questioning their right to be at the beach with her. What she doesn't know is that yet another character is going to join and show her in the most unexpected way who really is out of place. This final encounter will change her perspective and ability to reach acceptance in her heart as well as teach her the concept of unconditional tolerance.

PRODUCER(S): Emma Power

CAST: Gabriella Klein, Nixon James

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: WORLD PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 11 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English



ALTERED REALITIES

Lê

DIRECTED BY SOLARA THANH-BINH ĐẶNG

Solar Thanh-Binh (She/They) is a Vietnamese-Chinese Writer, Director & Artist currently creating and residing in Vancouver, Canada ad a guest on unceded Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh territory. Solara expresses herself through film, video, dance, and writing. She enjoys conversing with others in English, Vietnamese, Mandarin Chinese, Japanese and tender smiles.

SYNOPSIS A young Vietnamese woman reclaims her name and ponders a violent revenge on her controlling in-law family.

PRODUCER(S): Nic Altobelli

CAST: Solara Thanh-Binh Đặng

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: TORONTO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 1 Minute

LANGUAGE: Vietnamese



ALTERED REALITIES

Mindslip

DIRECTED BY SWAROOP ELAMON



ALTERED REALITIES

Neighbors in my Backyard

DIRECTED BY ELI JEAN TAHCHI



Swaroop Elamon is a writer/director with over 10 years' experience in visual storytelling, creating short/feature films, web series, music videos, commercials, documentaries and various digital content..

SYNOPSIS A young man wakes up in a train in Toronto without any recollection of how he got to Canada from India. The search for his memories leads him to a chance encounter with a fellow Indian who might have the solution to the predicament.

PRODUCER(S): Swaroop Elamon

CAST: Swaroop Elamon, Vipin Jose

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: WORLD PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 5 Minutes

LANGUAGE: Malayalam, English



Eli Jean Tahchi is a graduate of the mixed program funded by Netflix at the National Institute of Image and Sound (INIS) in Montreal. He is a director, screenwriter and actor. In Beirut, he studied cinema at the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts. In 2011, he moved to Montreal and studied cinema at the University of Montreal, and finally, at INIS in directing. His cinema is sharp, human and metaphorically charged, in which the notion of identity is regularly tackled. In 2020, he was selected by the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) to direct his film *Sometimes I wish I was on a desert island*, aimed at amplifying the voices of Arabic-speaking LGBTQ2+ individuals affected by COVID-19. Recently, he was elected laureate of the Regard sur Montréal residency, during which he produced his new documentary entitled *Neighbors in my Backyard*.

SYNOPSIS Between Parc-Extension and the town of Mont-Royal, a scar in space creates a strange dichotomy between two neighborhoods.

PRODUCER(S): Eli Jean Tahchi

CAST: N/A

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: TORONTO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 15 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English



ALTERED REALITIES

The Future Above Us

DIRECTED BY VANESSA MAGIC



Vanessa Magic is a filmmaker whose work centers on loneliness and grief, viewed through an Afrofuturist and Afrosurrealist lens. She is an alumna of the Warner Media Discovery Access x Canadian Academy Writers Program '22 and Women In the Director's Chair '23. Vanessa has created short films like *Oneironautic*, showcased at Victoria Film Festival '21, Florence Short Film Festival '21, and Reelworld Film Festival, where she received a Standout Writer and Director nomination. Her latest short, *The Future Above Us*, was screened at the Festival de Cannes Short Film Corner from Telefilm's NO SHORT ON TALENT program. Inspired by her dreams, Vanessa aims to create magical worlds with Black female protagonists. She eagerly embraces the opportunity to craft unique narratives that connect her to the cosmic realm.

SYNOPSIS After a cosmic disaster leaves Earth virtually empty, a hopeful yet sombre woman experiencing pareidolia who yearns to find connection must decide what lengths she will go to for companionship.

PRODUCER(S): Shonna Foster

CAST: Hannan Younis, Adrian Walters

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: CANADIAN PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 16:54

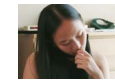
LANGUAGE: English



THEORY OF SOUL

Desync

DIRECTED BY MINERVA NAVASCA



Minerva Navasca is a Filipina filmmaker, immigrating from the Philippines at 9 years old. She focuses on narratives intimately reflecting her experiences with cultural dysphoria and girlhood. Navasca uses filmmaking as an outlet to confront internalized shame and anger, and hopes to stir self-compassion by sharing these narratives openly.

SYNOPSIS Ana, a young Filipina filmmaker, shoots a re-enactment of a fight she once had with her mother. Embodying cultural pressure from her mother to work beyond her limits for the sake of perfection, Ana rewrites every painful exchange into a perfect one.

PRODUCER(S): Asa Kazerani

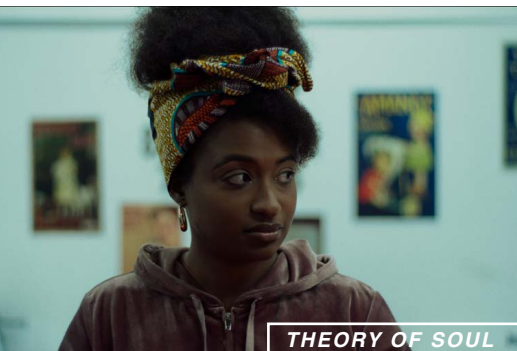
CAST: Jady Nataso, Jennifer Villaverde, Angelica Alejandro, Tatiana Ashton

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: WORLD PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 12 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English and Tagalog



THEORY OF SOUL

Oversight

DIRECTED BY LORNA KIDJO



Lorna Kidjo is a writer/director/actress focusing on narrative efforts.

SYNOPSIS Erin, a white woman, and Farah a young woman of colour, cross paths in a laundromat. Erin realizes Farah had a questionable encounter in the bathroom of the laundromat earlier that night. She shares her wisdom with the young woman, only to later realize she is also linked to the bathroom events.

PRODUCER(S): Lorna Kidjo

CAST: Briana James, Suzanna Lenir

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: CANADIAN PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 15 Minutes

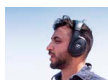
LANGUAGE: English, French



THEORY OF SOUL

Silkworm

DIRECTED BY AMIR HONARMAND



Amir Honarmand is a Canadian-Iranian writer, director, and producer who has made contributions to various short films, TV shows, and feature films. His own work has premiered at the prestigious São Paulo International Short Film Festival and the Chicago International Children's Film Festival, among others. Apart from his personal projects, Honarmand also works as a Technical Director, most recently at Sony Pictures Imageworks, where he contributed to the making of films such as the *Hotel Transylvania* franchise, *The Mitchells vs. the Machines*, *Mulan*, and *The Sea Beast*.

SYNOPSIS A used smartphone sends a boy in rural Iran on an unexpected journey of reconnecting an estranged couple.

PRODUCER(S): Amir Honarmand

CAST: Mohammad Amin Mohammadi, Mohammad Rashno, Khayyam Vaqar Kashani

COUNTRY: Iran, Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: CANADIAN PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 30:00

LANGUAGE: Farsi



THEORY OF SOUL

The Body Of My Name 名自字体

DIRECTED BY ROSIE CHOO PIDCOCK



Rosie is a biracial Chinese Canadian writer, director and actor from Vancouver, BC focused on stories of grief and hyphenated identities with a queer feminist lens. Her films have screened at CAAMFest and St. John's International Women in Film Festival, and received distribution on Air Canada. She is in development on a series adaptation of her award-winning short film *Esther & Sai* with the support of TIFF, Reelworld and the Canada Media Fund.

SYNOPSIS Five Chinese Canadians return to their elementary school to reclaim their names through dance.

PRODUCER(S): Jasmine Wanzheng Lyu

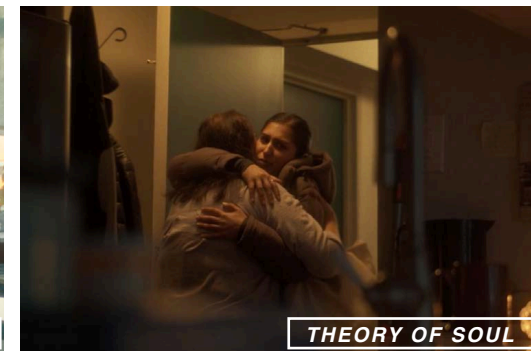
CAST: Jennifer Tong, Kallie Hu, Johnny Wu, Alger Liang, Katrina Teitz

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: ONTARIO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 4 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English, Mandarin, Cantonese



THEORY OF SOUL

You Ask Too Much

DIRECTED BY AJAY RAKHRAJ



Ajay Rakhraj is a 28-year-old Burmese-Indian filmmaker from Toronto, Ontario, Canada. *You Ask Too Much* is the culmination of his focus on subjective storytelling through the use of Point-of-View in his early short films *An Exercise in Distraction* and *Tell Me A Story*.

SYNOPSIS In *You Ask Too Much*, a near-deaf 94-year-old Sikh woman seeking comfort in her final days is unexpectedly moved from her son's home to her daughter's, causing her to confront the distance her care creates within the family. Only after she falls one night does the family come back together.

PRODUCER(S): Peter Widdrington, Ajay Rakhraj

CAST: Harminder Grewal, RT Sangani, Samara Rakhraj

COUNTRY: Canada

PREMIERE STATUS: TORONTO PREMIERE

RUN TIME: 9 Minutes

LANGUAGE: English

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DIRECTORS



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PODCASTS



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DISCOVER
EVENTS

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ENRICHING CREATIVE LIVES

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2023 Reelworld Jurors

Reelworld takes pride in our unwavering commitment to celebrating the accomplishments of outstanding Canadian films and filmmakers. Annually, we present festival awards chosen by an independent jury of filmmakers and industry leaders. Our profound gratitude goes out to our distinguished 2023 jurors for dedicating their time and expertise in handpicking this year's deserving honourees.



KULBINDER SARAN CALDWELL
CEO, REALLIFE Pictures Inc.



VICKIE CHAU
Filmmaker & Artist



JORDAN HAYLES
Television & Film Editor



MARITZA LOUIS
Visual Development Modeler



RADHEYAN SIMONPILLAI
Film Critic



ALEXIS MCLAREN
Production Executive,
Original Programming,
Bell Media

Reelworld Festival Awards

Reelworld Film Festival is proud to present two cash awards: \$25,000 for Outstanding Feature Film and \$10,000 for Outstanding Short Film.

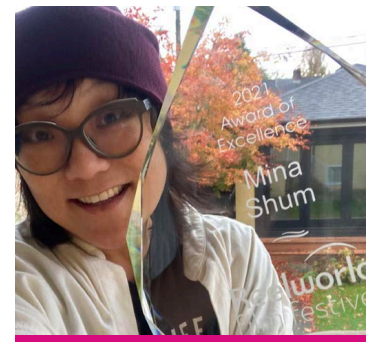
The 2023 Reelworld Film Festival Awards Show is sponsored by Shaftesbury. We would also like to thank DGC National, WIFT-Toronto, Entertainment Partners Canada, Chargefield, AstroLab Studios and Lenz Rental for their generous contributions towards the cash and in-kind prizes. Last but not least, we appreciate all the audience members who rate the films they watch and contribute to the selection of the Reelworld Audience Choice Award.



**AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD
FOR FEATURE FILM**

FEATURE FILMS

Outstanding Actress
Outstanding Actor
Outstanding Director
Outstanding Writer
Outstanding Cinematographer
Outstanding Producer
Outstanding Feature Film



SHORT FILMS

Outstanding Actress
Outstanding Actor
Outstanding Director
Outstanding Writer
Outstanding Cinematographer
Outstanding Producer
Outstanding Short Film

Reelworld Summit

DAY 1

 **ROGERS**TM
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SUMMIT WELCOME BREAKFAST
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2023 /
9:00AM - 9:55AM

SPONSORED BY

 **ROGERS**
Group of Funds

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Wednesday, November 1, 2023 / 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

**CANADIAN RACIAL SCREEN LEADERSHIP COLLECTIVE
ROUNDTABLE [Invite Only]**
Wednesday, November 1, 2023 / 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

CBC NETWORKING EVENT (Invite Only)
Wednesday, November 1, 2023 / 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

**BRIA MACK GETS A LIFE -
A MUSICAL JOURNEY EXPERIENCE.**
Wednesday, November 1, 2023 / 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM

SPONSORED BY

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SECRETS TO PRIVATE FUNDING IN FILM!
Wednesday, November 1, 2023 / 12:00 PM - 12:45 PM

**CANADIAN RACIAL SCREEN LEADERSHIP COLLECTIVE
ROUNDTABLE [Invite Only]**
Wednesday, November 1, 2023 / 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

NATIONAL FILM BOARD PRESENTATION
Wednesday, November 1, 2023 / 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM

**FIRESIDE CHAT WITH 2023 REELWORLD AWARD OF
EXCELLENCE RECIPIENT TRACI MELCHOR**
Wednesday, November 1, 2023 / 1:15 PM - 2:00 PM

KEEPING YOUR PRODUCTION COMPANY ALIVE AND THRIVING

Wednesday, November 1, 2023 / 2:15 PM - 3:00 PM

SPONSORED BY



REELWORLD PROTOCOL GUIDELINE PRESENTATION

Wednesday, November 1, 2023 / 2:30 PM - 3:00 PM

DAY 2

BREAKFAST

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2023 / 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM

KEYNOTE SPEECH: JENNIFER HOLNESS

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 9:00AM - 9:30AM

FACE2FACE - INVITE ONLY

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM

INSIDE THE STATUE WARS: ASSEMBLING A CREATIVE TEAM

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 9:30 AM - 10:15 AM

PRESENTED BY



DATA COLLECTION AND BENCHMARKING FOR RACIAL EQUITY

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 10:35 AM - 11:25 AM

SPONSORED BY



CMF COFFEE CHATS - INVITE ONLY

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 10:45 AM - 11:30 AM

FACE2FACE - INVITE ONLY

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 11:15 AM - 1:00 PM

ACHIEVING RESPECT AND RECIPROCITY IN INDIGENOUS CO-PRODUCTIONS

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 11:30 AM - 12:15 PM

SPONSORED BY



WOMEN IN VIEW RESEARCH REPORT

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 11:45 AM - 12:15 PM

SPONSORED BY



WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT OUR INDUSTRY AS A RESULT OF THE US STRIKES

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 12:15 PM - 1:00 PM

FUNDED BY



THE CREATIVE PRODUCERS THINK TANK REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A REIMAGINED DOC PRODUCTION LANDSCAPE

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM

SPONSORED BY



FIRESIDE CHAT WITH 2023 REELWORLD VISIONARY AWARD RECIPIENT ANITA LEE

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 1:30 PM - 2:15 PM

CAVCO & THE CRA - DEMYSTIFYING TAX CREDITS

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 2:15 PM - 3:15 PM

VIRTUAL PRODUCTION WITH DEBORAH CHOW

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 2:30 PM - 3:15 PM

DGC NETWORKING EVENT - INVITE ONLY

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM

SPONSORED BY



FESTIVAL STRATEGY

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 3:30 PM - 4:10 PM

MAKING THE FIRST FEATURE

Thursday, November 2, 2023 / 4:15 PM - 5:00 PM

CLOSING RECEPTION

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM



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ACTRA PROUDLY SUPPORTS REELWORLD IN THEIR 23RD YEAR



2023 Reelworld Trailblazers

Each year the Trailblazer Awards recognize outstanding achievements by racially diverse professionals in the Canadian media and entertainment industry. These 6 remarkable individuals inspire others and blaze a trail of excellence through their constant efforts to improve and diversify our vibrant film and television industry.



WINNIFRED JONG | DIRECTOR & FILMMAKER

Winnifred Jong is an award-winning Toronto-based filmmaker. Known for her cinematic style and authentic storytelling, Winnifred is adept at directing comedy, drama and action. She created and directed the comedic short-form series, **Tokens**, nominated for 8 Canadian Screen Awards (winning Best Direction 2020/2023, and Best Supporting Performance 2023) and was recognized with the 2020 ACTRA Sandi Ross Award.



MARIE KA | PRODUCER & CO-FUNDER OF INARU FILMS

Marie Ka started her producing career in Senegal before relocating to Canada. She co-founded Inaru Films to work with underrepresented creators and voices. Passionate about stories and storytelling, she believes that Africa and its diaspora hold the future of content creation and that world screens are urgently lacking Afro talent



FAWZIA MIRZA | DIRECTOR & WRITER

Raised in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Fawzia Mirza is a filmmaker and writer dedicated to amplifying marginalized voices in North America's Muslim, LGBTQIA+, and people of colour communities since 2012. A member of SAG, WGA, and DGC, she's recognized as a White House Champion of Change in Asian storytelling. Her directorial debut, **The Queen Of My Dreams**, premiered at TIFF 2023 and the BFI London Film Festival, earning nominations for the Director's Guild of Canada's Jean-Marc Vallée Discovery Award and the BFI's Sutherland First Feature Award. She co-wrote and starred in **Signature Move**, a 2017 rom-com that received 15 awards, including the US Grand Jury Prize at Outfest. Her work on **The Red Line**, a CBS series, made history with the first queer, Muslim romance on network TV. Fawzia co-founded **Baby Daal Productions** with her wife, Andria Wilson Mirza, and serves as an executive producer on several impactful projects.



ANDREW PHUNG | ACTOR, WRITER & PRODUCER

Andrew Phung is an actor, improviser, writer, host, and comedian originally from Calgary, Alberta. He's best known for his portrayal of Kimchee Han on the hit comedy series **Kim's Convenience**. Currently, Andrew is the creator and star of the comedy series **Run the Burbs** on the CBC and CW.



AMANDA STRONG | FILMMAKER & MEDIA ARTISTS AND STOP MOTION DIRECTOR

Amanda Strong is a Michif (Metis) interdisciplinary artist with a focus on filmmaking, stop motion animations and media art. She is currently based on unceded Coast Salish territories also known as Vancouver, BC, Canada. With a cross-discipline focus, common themes of her work are reclamation of Indigenous histories, lineage, language and culture. Strong is the Owner/Director/Producer of Spotted Fawn Productions Inc. (SFP). Under her direction, SFP utilizes a multi-layered approach and unconventional methods that are centered in collaboration on all aspects of their work.

Her films have screened across the globe, most notably at Cannes, TIFF, VIFF, and Ottawa International Animation Festival.



FARID YAZDANI | ACTOR, PRODUCER & WRITER

Farid Yazdani is a Hamilton born Canadian actor, producer and writer, best known for his role as Oscar Finley-Cullen on the CBC/CW series, **Moonshine**.

Farid has also appeared on **Suits, Titans, The Boys, Shadowhunters** and more. He has won Best Short at The Canadian Comedy Awards for his original pilot, **Day Players**, of which he is the creator and series lead. Farid is a proud graduate of the School of Creative and Performing Arts in Toronto and a proud alumnus of the Reelworld Emerging 20 Program.

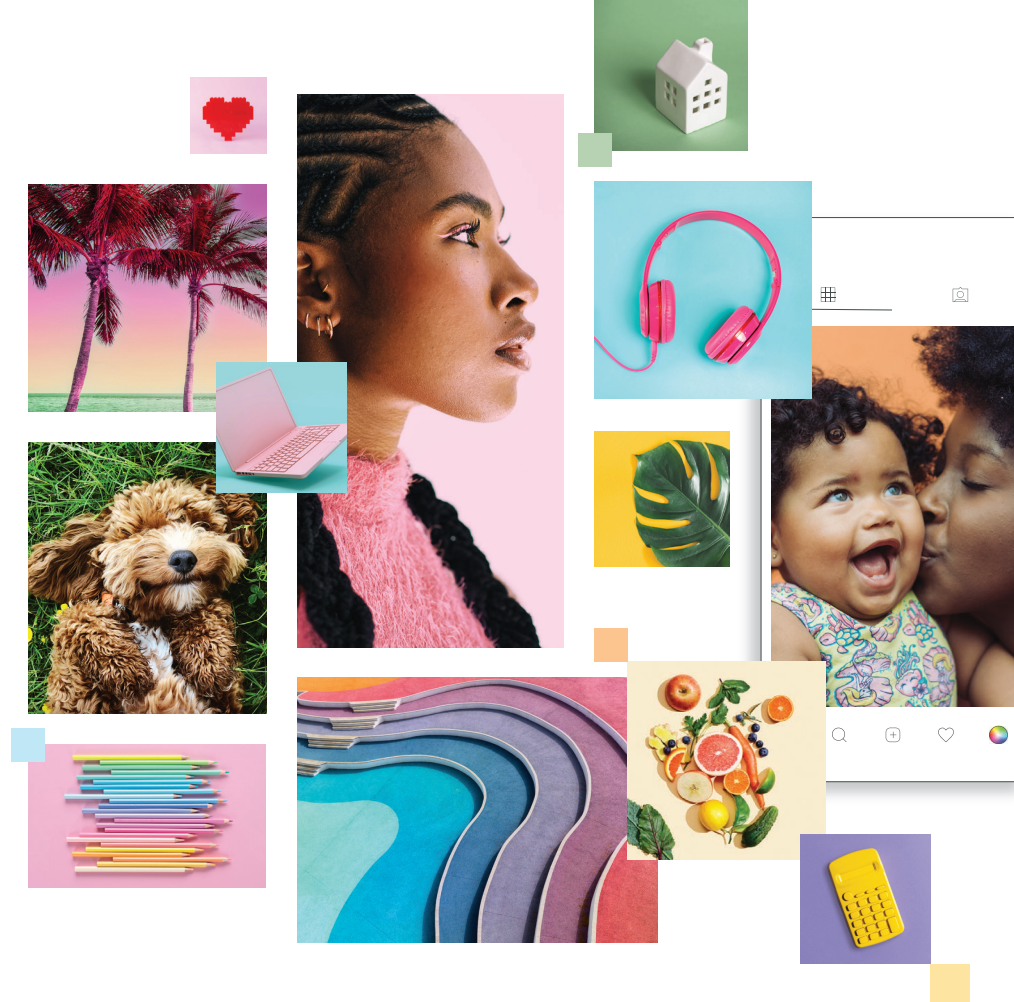
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2023 Reelworld Visionary Award

The Visionary award honours individuals whose work, passion and determination has made a significant contribution to Canadian film, television and media. Their dedication has opened doors for diverse artists and forever changed the Canadian entertainment landscape.

LIVE AT THE REELWORLD SUMMIT!



Luncheon & Fireside Chat with Anita Lee and film critic Radheyen Simonpillai
November 2, 1.15-2.15pm
Courtyard by Marriott Toronto Downtown



ANITA LEE
Chief Programming Officer, TIFF

As TIFF's Chief Programming Officer, Anita Lee helms artistic and strategic leadership for TIFF and TIFF Lightbox. Prior to TIFF, Lee served as the Executive Producer and Studio Head of NFB Ontario. A veteran media executive with over 25 years in the industry and 15 years in public media, Lee led the programmatic and strategic vision for Canada's award-winning public agency in Toronto.

Lee is also recognized widely for her past producing achievements of critically acclaimed films including Sarah Polley's *Stories We Tell*. Anita Lee founded the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival in 1997 and was honoured in 2021 with a festival award in her name, the Anita Lee Firehorse Award for change-makers. Lee has also been recognized with a 2022 WIFT - Toronto Crystal Mentorship Award as well as the Rogers-DOC Luminary Award in 2022. She has received two Peabody Awards and three Canadian Screen Awards, including the 2023 Award for Best Feature Length Documentary (*To Kill a Tiger*). She has been a member of the Academy of Motion Pictures and Sciences since 2016.

2023 Reelworld Award of Excellence

The Award of Excellence honours an individual whose creative excellence in film over decades has positively impacted the representation of Canada's diversity nationally and internationally.

LIVE AT THE REELWORLD SUMMIT!



Luncheon & Fireside Chat with Traci Melchor and journalist Jee-Yun Lee
November 1, 1-2pm
Courtyard by Marriott Toronto Downtown



TRACI MELCHOR
Senior Correspondent, ETALK and Resident Judge, Canada's Drag Race

Traci Melchor, a beloved icon in Toronto's entertainment scene, is a senior correspondent for Canada's ETALK and a Resident Judge on the Crave Original series, *Canada's Drag Race: Canada Vs. The World* and *Canada's Drag Race*. With extensive experience, she has interviewed a multitude of stars, from Beyoncé to Oprah Winfrey. She is also a two-time Canadian Screen Award winner for Best Host, Factual or Reality/Competition Series.

Melchor has covered high-profile events such as the Oscars and the Super Bowl, and she co-hosted CTV's daytime talk series, *The Social*, for two and a half years. Beyond her on-screen success, Traci has earned recognition for her contributions to the media and supports various charitable organizations, including those focused on mental health. When she's not working, she cherishes time with her twins and two adopted cats, balancing the day-to-day of motherhood and her entertainment career.

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Bell
FUND

Darla Contois

Cree-Salteaux performer and playwright

- ▶ Reelworld Emerging 20 Program Participant (2023)
- ▶ Plays the lead role in Little Bird on APTN and Crave

Bell Fund is a proud supporter of Little Bird and of the Reelworld Film Festival with its commitment to emerging Canadian creators.



2023 Reelworld Emerging 20 Program

The **Reelworld Emerging 20 Program** is dedicated to helping screenwriters from racialized backgrounds propel their careers forward. The program is split into two streams - features and series. Participants have the opportunity to undergo a comprehensive screenwriting program, where they can develop their screenwriting skills and learn about the industry and entertainment business from seasoned professionals, in addition to working together with a paired story editor to develop their projects.

FILM



COLE FORREST
Project: *Fish*



MICHAEL HWANG
Project: *A Funeral*



RAINE LEMAY
Project: *Woman With A Camera*



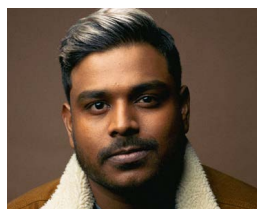
SARA RANGOONI
Project: *Leveled*



ZENA SCHULTZ
Project: *Out Of The Bottle*



GAVIN SEAL
Project: *Laughing With God*



GANESH THAVARAJAH
Project: *Man Abroad*



MARGARITA VALDERRAMMA
Project: *Eyes Open*



ANAÏSA VISSER
Project: *Ashes*



ALICE WANG
Project: *Don't Forget Me*

SERIES



BRISHKAY AHMED
Project: *Afghan Smoke*



AMIRA ANDERSON
Project: *Duplicity*



ROSIE CHOO PIDCOCK
Project: *Esther & Sai*



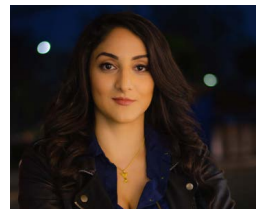
DARLA CONTOIS
Project: *In Care*



LEA GERONIMO
Project: *Adventure Space*



MEARA KHANNA
Project: *Little Boxes*



PANTA MOSLEH
Project: *Pass The Salt*



JESSICA POWELL
Project: *The Rejects*



MITCHELL SADDLEBACK
Project: *Lilly's Got A Callback*



NICK WEST
Project: *Gemini Twins*



Reelworld Producer Program

The **Reelworld Producer Program** offers a comprehensive 12-month curriculum, fostering mentorship and educational avenues for aspiring producers within the television industry. This initiative guides its participants through an immersive journey into the Canadian entertainment sector's intricacies. Under the guidance of experienced mentors, program participants will engage in the practical aspects of the industry. Tasks include forming a corporation, securing intellectual property rights, script selection and optioning, crafting deal memos, handpicking essential creative personnel and casting directors, and much more.

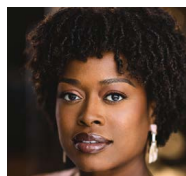
2023 Reelworld Producers



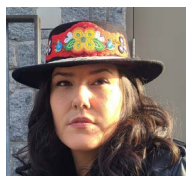
**PATRICIA
CHICA**



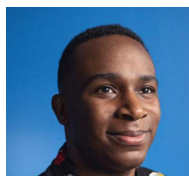
**ANDREW
CHIU**



**LISA MICHELLE
CORNELIUS**



**DEBBIE
COURCHENE**



**MALACHI
ELLIS**



**JUDY
ISEKE**



**JEE-YUN
LEE**



**GRAYSEN
SANGSTER**



**MENG MELODY
SHANG**



**VINUJA
SHANTHASORUBAN**



**VIRINDERPAUL
SINGH**



Reelworld Producer Accelerator

The **Reelworld Producer Accelerator Program** is a year-long curriculum that provides support to the 2023 producers to continue to develop their projects optioned last year. The 2023 Reelworld Producers went through an intensive 12-month program - meeting with over 40 mentors, attending Banff for pitches and networking, and TIFF so they could broaden their circle of contacts. With many receiving Letters of interest to access development funds and producing other projects on their slate, Reelworld will continue to support their process.

2023 Accelerator Producers



LANRE AJAYI



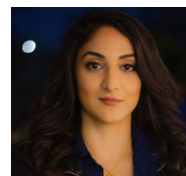
**DAVID
ANDERSON**



**KENT
DONGUINES**



**SEN
KATPAGANATHAN**



**PANTA
MOSLEH**



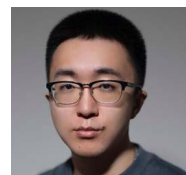
**NIJITH
RAJU**



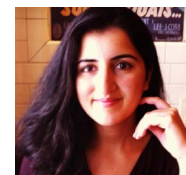
**ALICIA
RAMDEO**



**LADAN
SIAD**



JOHN TAN



RUA WANI



Reelworld Black Entrepreneurs Program

The **Reelworld Black Entrepreneurs Program** is a 9-month training initiative for Black casting directors, agents, managers, and producers in Canada. The program takes the participants through structuring a company for success while training them in the key areas of strategic planning, finance, human resources, and marketing. We acknowledge the support of the Government of Canada through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario for making this program possible.

Jump start your producing career.

Apply to the

Reelworld Producers Program

presented by Bell Media.

www.Reelworld.ca



AGENTS



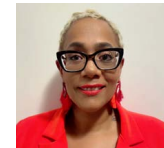
BRIAN GIBSON



DANIELLE MITCHELL



LIESL MULHOLLAND



MALIKA RILEY



ANDRIA BARRETT

CASTING DIRECTORS



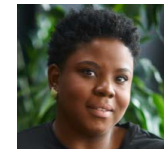
FRANCINE BUCHNER



HALEN KING



DANIEL MATHIAS

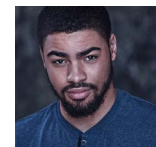


NATANYA BARROCKS



RODNEY DIVERLUS

FILM PRODUCERS



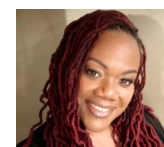
JADIEL DOWLIN LEWIS



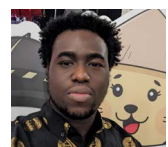
RYAN SINGH



CARLINE ZAMAR



MICHELLE FRANCIS-SMITH



PATRICK SMITH JR.

MANAGERS



Reelworld Training Lab presented by Amazon MGM Studios

The **Reelworld Training Lab presented by Amazon MGM Studios** is a new training program for both Canadian line producers and series writers. The program will offer training and upskilling opportunities to racially diverse and Indigenous talent in Canada, and will foster a pipeline of Canadian production talent and help support Amazon MGM Studios' projects in Canada.

"We are looking for producers and writers to help develop their skills and fill more roles on our Amazon MGM Studios series developed and filmed in Canada. We believe Reelworld is the perfect organization for this given their track record in advocacy and training," said Brent Haynes, head of local originals, Prime Video, Canada. "We want this program to deliver results, with more Canadian producers developing the skills and knowledge to work on our productions; new writers in our writers' rooms, and have it create a deep and connected pipeline to our development and productions in Canada."

"We are delighted to announce this collaboration with Amazon, a collaboration that holds immense promise for advancing diverse storytelling in Canada," said Tonya Williams, founder and executive director of Reelworld Screen Institute. "By leveraging the global reach and influence of Amazon, we have the opportunity to drive positive change in the Canadian entertainment industry. Amazon and Reelworld firmly believe that programs alone are insufficient in effecting real progress. Our shared goal is to establish a concrete path to actual jobs, as this is the key to achieving the impact we all desire and ensuring genuine change in inclusion and equity within our industry."

The Reelworld Training Lab presented by Amazon MGM Studios will start in January 2024

Applications are open now!
Deadline to apply: November 17, 2023



Market Ready

Reelworld's **Market Ready** initiative, in partnership with Warner Bros. Discovery (WBD) Access Canada, provides Reelworld program alumni with training, prep and access to key markets in Canada and around the world, such as the Cannes Film Festival, Banff World Media Festival, Content Canada and Content London. These markets open doors to forge deals, build new relationships that lead to development, and help attendees gain visibility in an industry where who you know matters.

All Reelworld program participants chosen to participate in Market Ready go through two months of rigorous preparation (including training on Pitching, Sales and Financing, Marketing, and Network Building), making sure all their pitch assets are ready, and that they themselves are prepared to step into these arenas with all the skills and tools needed to make valuable industry connections. All expenses for the participating Reelworld alumni — including passes, travel, and accommodation — are covered.

The goal of the Market Ready initiative is to see delegates get their projects into development, be partnered with senior producers, and build relationships with their peers to foster a supportive network which is vital to their long term success.

To date Reelworld has taken delegates to the following markets:

- Prime Time
- Cannes Film Festival
- Banff World Media Festival
- TIFF
- Content Canada
- Content London



Check Out Other Amazing Opportunities At Reelworld!

MERIDIAN ARTISTS APPRENTICESHIP

Embark on a 3-week, paid mentorship-training journey and witness the inner workings of a service agency. This program, developed in collaboration with Meridian Artists, offers an invaluable hands-on experience.

LEVEL UP

Experience the world of Canadian writing and directing with this paid on-the-ground program, in partnership with Rogers Sports & Media, Shaftesbury, and Pope Productions. Selected writers immerse themselves in the virtual writers' room of City TV's hit show Hudson & Rex for four weeks, followed by one week on set. Meanwhile, chosen directors shadow a Hudson & Rex director for four weeks, engaging in production meetings with various departments.

REELWORLD HOLLYWOOD CONNECTOR PROGRAM

An ongoing initiative between the Consulate General of Canada in Los Angeles and Reelworld Screen Institute. This fosters enduring connections between Canadian talent and LA-based producers and executives.

WHERE TO START WORKSHOPS

Tailored for Canadian Black, Indigenous, Asian, South Asian, and People of Colour seeking to explore roles within film and television production. Previous workshops included: Art Department in partnership with the DGC Ontario, Location Management with the City of Toronto, and Costume Department with Nabet 700-M UNIFOR.

#HERFRAMEMATTERS: PROTOCOL GUIDELINE

Supported by the Government of Canada's Feminist Response and Recovery Fund, Reelworld presents a groundbreaking protocol aimed at eradicating racialized sexual harassment in the Canadian screen-based sector. This initiative also strives to enhance the representation of women of colour in the media.

To receive emails about these Reelworld opportunities and more, click [here](#).



Many Stories Told. Many Voices Heard.

We are proud to support the Reelworld Film Festival and their mission to embrace diversity across Canada, and give all creators a platform to shape their stories.



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Helping artists bridge the gap from emerging to established.

Together with organizations like **Reelworld Screen Institute**, we support a diverse range of Canadian talent in local communities and across the country through **RBC Emerging Artists**.

rbc.com/emergingartists



**Emerging
Artists**