

A year ago, my welcome note flashed with excitement for a big KCFF milestone – our 20th edition! We'd booked more films, more guests and more special events than ever before, even adding an extra day to the Fest. Atom Egoyan was coming to Kingston! Ticket sales were through the roof, we had assembled a stellar team and perhaps best of all, the movies were amazing. A week prior to opening night, faint talk of the pandemic circulated – but it seemed like a distant concern, especially for a small community like Kingston. We were keen and confident the show would go on! (This is the part of the movie when the needle scratches *'whirrp* across the record....)

On day two of KCFF (Thursday March 12, I clearly remember) we woke to inboxes full of cancellations, heated words of warning and heightened concern. CTV reported that health officials were suggesting something called "social distancing" which did not gel with festival plans whatsoever. By noon, nearly all our special guests had bailed and the creeping anxiety among staff, volunteers and festival-goers had accelerated. Knowing we'd never make it to closing night alive (metaphorically speaking) an emergency Board meeting was called and we immediately drew up cancellation plans. With over 18 months of preparations, KCFF20 stopped dead in its tracks. By the time Monday rolled around – when we'd normally be tying a nice bow on the Fest – Princess Street resembled a ghost town. To top it all off, Pearl Jam had cancelled their international tour, which meant my colleague Megan's 40th birthday plans were toast.

It's one of those moments you don't forget: the conversations we had that afternoon are still vivid, heartbreaking and tear-jerking (in regards to the Fest, not Pearl Jam). But, at the same time, I distinctly remember the outpouring of support that came both fast and furious – I think it's what they call happy-sad in the movies. Our inboxes still humming along, the anxious tone morphed into one of support and encouragement. Dave from KCCU wrote "we're devastated and in solidarity with KCFF and will do everything we can to minimize the impacts on you and this valuable community festival." Michèle at ACFOMI replied immediately saying "we remain a full supporter of the festival, and you can count on us for next year." There were lots of others, as well – I've saved them all to my KCFF20 email folder which should really be christened the happy-sad folder for the Festival's history books.

In the meantime, we've wrapped our heads around the digital Fest and are really excited for KCFF21! Unlike our 20th, we do not have more films, guests, or special events than ever before but we are just as proud of the incredible line-up of films on offer and especially that you can enjoy them from home. We'll miss the energy of The Screening Room, rush line conversations at The Grand, and the mid-festival mixers at the Tango but hope you'll have a chance to hop on a livestream, ask some questions in Q+As, and take your time over the 10 days to enjoy watching these movies at a more leisurely pace than normal. Our inboxes are somewhat less chaotic, but we're pleasantly receiving messages from cinephiles and newcomers all across Canada and beyond, requesting ticket and pass information. Many of the films have travelled an unusual path this year with release schedules turned upside down. The entire film industry seems both perplexed and intrigued by the digital festival model, yet there's the underlying feeling of "we're all in this together."

It's been a strange and challenging year for everyone and we look forward to hearing YOUR stories, how you're doing, and maybe (fingers crossed) catch a movie together in a theatre very soon! And for Megan's sake, hopefully Pearl Jam reschedules that tour.

- Marc Garniss, festival director

It's very hard to write anything about the past year of life on this planet without using the word "unprecedented." Suffice to say that things have been very different for the KCFF team in preparing for our 21st edition, the festival's first to be entirely virtual.

The changes have been many but what hasn't changed at all is the pride and excitement we feel over being able to introduce viewers to the most exceptional, most extraordinary and most engaging movies made by filmmakers from all over this country. In light of the many challenges of recent times, we are more grateful than ever for the ability of Canada's visual storytellers to create connections, offer insights, foster empathy, inspire action and straight-up entertain. What's more, we know how difficult it is to make this work — and to drum up the attention it deserves — even in far more predictable circumstances than the ones we're coping with!

Even though audiences will be experiencing the KCFF via their TVs, computers and tablets instead of inside the venues we all miss so much, there's no shortage of discoveries to be made. That's true whether you're most looking forward to seeing startling debut features like BEANS and VAGRANT, thought-provoking documentaries such as THE MAGNITUDE OF ALL THINGS and NO ORDINARY MAN, uniquely compelling dramas like MY SALINGER YEAR, MARLENE and DEATH OF A LADIES' MAN, or new cult faves like BLOODTHIRSTY and THE KID DETECTIVE.

We believe that with its continued strength and diversity, Canadian cinema continues to set new standards. We might even say the quality on display at KCFF21 is unprecedented but we're going to avoid that word for now!

- Jason Anderson, Director of Programming (features)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26

3:00 pm **FIRST WE EAT** *Q+A starts at 4:50 pm*
5:00 pm **NADIA, BUTTERFLY** *Q+A starts at 6:55 pm*
7:00 pm **BEANS** *Q+A starts at 8:40 pm*
9:00 pm **BLOODTHIRSTY** *Q+A starts at 10:30 pm*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27

12:00 pm **DEATH OF A LADIES' MAN** *Q+A starts at 1:45 pm*
1:00 pm **YOU WILL REMEMBER ME / TU TE SOUVIENDRAS DE MOI** *Q+A starts at 3:00 pm*
3:00 pm **THE MAGNITUDE OF ALL THINGS** *Q+A starts at 4:30 pm*
5:00 pm **MY VERY OWN CIRCUS/MON CIRQUE A MOI** *Q+A starts at 6:50 pm*
7:00 pm **MY SALINGER YEAR** *Q+A starts at 8:50 pm*
8:00 pm **THE KID DETECTIVE** *Q+A starts at 10:00 pm*

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28

12:00 pm **VAGRANT** *Q+A starts at 1:30 pm*
1:00 pm **SPIRIT BEAR & CHILDREN MAKE HISTORY** *Q+A starts at 1:45 pm*

3:00 pm **NO VISIBLE TRAUMA** *Q+A starts at 4:50 pm*
5:00 pm **MARLENE** *Q+A starts at 6:55 pm*
7:00 pm **SHIVA BABY** *Q+A starts at 8:25 pm*

MONDAY, MARCH 1

6:00 pm **THE PAPER MAN / LAFORTUNE EN PAPIER** *Q+A starts at 7:30 pm*
7:00 pm **NO ORDINARY MAN** *Q+A starts at 8:30 pm*
8:00 pm **LOCAL SHORTS 1** *Q+A starts at 9:15 pm*

TUESDAY, MARCH 2

6:00 pm **LOCAL SHORTS 2** *Q+A starts at 7:15 pm*
7:00 pm **DRIFTING SNOW** *Q+A starts at 8:20 pm*
8:00 pm **ANNE AT 13,000 FEET** *Q+A starts at 9:20 pm*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3

6:00 pm **CALL ME HUMAN / JE M'APPELLE HUMAIN** *Q+A starts at 7:30 pm*
7:00 pm **CANADIAN SHORTS** *Q+A starts at 8:40 pm*
8:00 pm **WORKHORSE** *Q+A starts at 9:30 pm*

THURSDAY, MARCH 4

6:00 pm **YOUTH SHORTS** *Q+A starts at 7:30 pm*
7:00 pm **RESTLESS RIVER** *Q+A starts at 8:45 pm*
8:00 pm **OUT OF THE BLUE** *Q+A starts at 9:40 pm*

FRIDAY, MARCH 5

4:00 pm **BREAKING IN WORKSHOP**
7:00 pm **HOW TO FIX RADIOS** *Q+A starts at 8:40 pm*
8:00 pm **MOUTH CONGRESS** *Q+A starts at 9:15 pm*

SATURDAY, MARCH 6

1:00 pm **COMIC ANIMATION WORKSHOP**
4:00 pm **SETTING THE TONE: SCORING MUSIC FOR FILM**

SUNDAY, MARCH 7

6:00 pm **AWARDS SHOW**

ANNE AT 13,000 FEET

FILM PREMIERE*

Tuesday, March 2 at 8:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 9:20 pm

AVAILABILITY

March 2 at 8:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: Kazik Radwanski

Featuring: Deragh Campbell, Matt Johnson

Language: English

Runtime: 75 minutes

Rating: most audiences; alcohol use

One of Toronto's most acclaimed directors, Kazik Radwanski takes another leap forward with his third and most accomplished feature to date. ANNE AT 13,000 FT also serves as a stunning showcase for the abilities of his lead performer Deragh Campbell. She plays the title character, a socially awkward daycare worker whose emotional swings from elation to desperation cause havoc in her personal and professional lives. Making a rare appearance in a movie he didn't direct, Matt Johnson (OPERATION AVALANCHE, KCFF17) gives an equally remarkable performance as a man who doesn't know what he's in for after he meets Anne, a character who is as volatile as she is unforgettable.

BEANS

FILM PREMIERE*

Friday, February 26 at 7:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 8:40 pm

AVAILABILITY

Ontario only; February 26 at 7:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm.

Director: Tracey Deer

Featuring: Kiawentiio, Rainbow Dickerson, Violah Beauvais, Paulina Jewel Alexis

Language: English

Runtime: 92 minutes

Rating: most audiences; racialized violence, implied sexual violence

The prize winner for Best Canadian Feature at the Vancouver International Film Festival and the year's most widely celebrated debut feature, BEANS sets a poignant coming-of-age story against the backdrop of one of the most tumultuous episodes in recent Canadian history. Partially inspired by director Tracey Deer's experience growing up on the Kahnawake Mohawk Territory in Quebec, the film centres on a bright girl with the nickname of Beans (Kiawentiio). She's just beginning to navigate the treacherous waters of adolescence when the tensions in the community around her erupt into a wider crisis in the summer of 1990. Unflinching in its portrayal of the hatred and racism sparked by the standoff between Mohawk communities and government forces at Oka, BEANS shows the impact of these events in ways that viewers won't ever forget.

BLOODTHIRSTY

FILM PREMIERE*

Friday, February 26 at 9:00 pm
Livestream Q+A 10:30 pm

AVAILABILITY

February 26 at 9:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: Amelia Moses

Featuring: Lauren Beatty, Greg Bryk, Katharine King
So

Language: English

Runtime: 82 minutes

Rating: mature audiences; violence, sexual content

Montreal-based director Amelia Moses establishes herself as one of Canada's most exciting genre filmmakers with this satisfyingly chilling and grisly spin on the werewolf flick. Lauren Beatty stars as Grey, a rising singer-songwriter who comes to a remote house with her girlfriend to make a record with Vaughn (Greg Bryk), a legendary producer with an increasingly sinister approach to unlocking Grey's potential. Working closely with the mother-and-daughter screenwriting team of Wendy Hill-Tout (also at this year's KCFF with MARLENE, another drama co-starring Bryk) and Lowell (who provides the film with its original songs along with Kingston-area musicians Michelle Osis and Terry Benn), Moses maximizes the tension and dread in this provocative allegory about the darkness that can fuel our creative drives.

CALL ME HUMAN

JE M'APPELLE HUMAIN

FILM PREMIERE*

Wednesday, March 3 at 6:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 7:30 pm

Director: Kim O'Bomsawin

Language: French and Innu subtitled in English

Runtime: 78 minutes

Rating: all audiences

AVAILABILITY

March 1 at 6:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm.

Films premiere at a set time and are followed by a livestream Q+A. If you miss the premiere, you can still watch the movie (and a recording of the Q+A) anytime until the end of the festival!

The winner of festival prizes throughout Canada, the latest documentary by Abenaki writer, director and activist Kim O'Bomsawin is a deeply affectionate tribute to an extraordinary woman. As a translator, researcher and poet, Josephine Bacon has long been a keeper of Innu knowledge and traditions, a role that has grown ever more crucial with the loss of elders and other changes for communities like the one where she was born in 1947. Blending stories of Bacon's history with a new journey on the trail of Papakassik, the master of the caribou, O'Bomsawin's film is a richly deserving celebration of a woman who has devoted her life to keeping the past alive for the benefit of her generation and all those that follow.

Récompensé lors de nombreux festivals dans tout le Canada, le dernier documentaire de l'écrivain, directrice de film et activiste Kim O'Bomsawin rend un tendre hommage à une femme hors du commun. En tant que traductrice, chercheuse et poète, Joséphine Bacon a pendant longtemps préservé le savoir et les traditions Innues, un rôle devenu d'autant plus important que les anciens disparaissent et que les communautés comme celle dans laquelle elle est née en 1947 évoluent. Mélangeant les anecdotes issues de la vie de Joséphine Bacon à un nouveau voyage sur les traces du maître du caribou Papakassik, ce film de Kim O'Bomsawin est une remarquable incursion dans la vie d'une femme vouée à entretenir la mémoire du passé au profit de sa génération et de celles qui suivent.

CANADIAN SHORTS

FILM PREMIERE*

Wednesday, March 3 at 7:00 pm
Livestream Q+A 8:30 pm

AVAILABILITY

March 3 at 7:00pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: various details below

Language: English

Runtime: 90 minutes

Rating: most audiences; depictions of self-harm, strong language

KCFF has long been the highlight of my year and coming in to '21 has been no exception. In a year of extraordinary challenges, I took screening the Canadian Shorts as a luxury and a welcomed respite. The incredible art and form practiced by some of our country's best filmmakers has provided me with glimmers of optimism and I'm excited to share them with our audience. The best hope of packaging these works is that there's something here for everyone. Character studies in documentary, contemplative drama, a comedic look at vehicular decorum. Whatever your fancy, I'm sure we have something for you. Thanks for taking the time to explore this varied shorts program, I hope it will provide as much of an escape for you as a viewer as it did for me.

– *Christian Kelley, programmer*

EVERY DAY'S LIKE THIS director Lev Lewis

SUCCOR director Hannah Cheeseman

INUIT LANGUAGES IN THE 21st CENTURY director Ulivia Uviluk

SINKING SHIP director Sasha Leigh Henry

GRANITE MAN OF GILMORE director Matthew Hayes

JO director Carmen Rachiteanu

SCARS director Alex Anna

A SIMPLE F*CKING GESTURE director Jesse Shamata

DEATH OF A LADIES' MAN

FILM PREMIERE*

Saturday, February 27 at 12:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 1:45 pm

AVAILABILITY

Ontario only; February 27 at 12:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm.

Director: Matthew Bissonnette

Featuring: Gabriel Byrne, Jessica Paré, Brian Gleeson, Antoine Olivier Pilon, Suzanne Clément

Language: English

Runtime: 101 minutes

Rating: most audiences; substance abuse, sexual content

Iconic songs by Leonard Cohen provide a highly memorable throughline for writer-director Matt Bissonnette's warm and wry portrait of an incorrigible man who doesn't have much time left to change his ways. Delivering the latest in a long line of terrific performances, Gabriel Byrne stars as Samuel O'Shea, a poet, scholar and womanizer whose last adventure takes him from Montreal back home to Ireland. As Samuel's perceptions of the world become increasingly less trustworthy, Cohen's music takes a starring role in musical fantasy segments that add imagination, wit and grace to this charming and poignant story of a man reckoning with an all too colourful past and a present that's slipping through his fingers.

DRIFTING SNOW

FILM PREMIERE*

Tuesday, March 2 at 7:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 8:20 pm

AVAILABILITY

March 2 at 7:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: Ryan Noth

Featuring: Jonas Bonnetta, Sonja Smits, Colin Mochrie

Language: English

Runtime: 74 minutes

Rating: most audiences

The snow-covered roads and tiny towns of a wintry Prince Edward County provide a suitably melancholy setting for this lovely first feature by Ryan J. Noth. A Cherry Valley-based director and editor previously at KCFF as part of the teams behind *NO HEART FEELINGS* (2010) and *THE NATIONAL PARKS PROJECT* (2011), Noth establishes his own voice with this thoughtful drama about the intersecting paths of two people. A photographer who has returned to the County to deal with his late mother's house, Chris (Jonas Bonnetta) forges a connection with Joanne (the always terrific Sonja Smits), a woman grieving her own recent loss. But even though both characters contend with heavy weather in figurative and literal terms, they approach it with lightness and grace, two qualities that define Noth's film, too.

FIRST WE EAT

FILM PREMIERE*

Friday, February 26 at 3:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 4:50 pm

Director: Suzanne Crocker

Language: English

Runtime: 101 minutes

Rating: all audiences

AVAILABILITY

February 26 at 3:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Suzanne Crocker's ode to the pleasures and challenges of sustainable eating will surely delight all the viewers who connected so strongly with the doctor turned director's ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD, her People's Choice Award winner at KCFF 2015. Crocker's latest documents her family's efforts to spend a year only eating the food they could procure in and around their home in Dawson City. The resulting film highlights the wider issues around food sovereignty and sustainability affecting people and families far from the Yukon landscapes that are so vividly captured here. Crocker's admirers can expect to pick up some useful cooking and dining tips, too.

HOW TO FIX RADIOS

FILM PREMIERE*

Friday, March 5 at 7:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 8:40 pm

AVAILABILITY

March 5 at 7:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm.

Director: Casper Leonard, Emily Russell

Featuring: James Rudden, Dimitri Watson, Willa Crowder, Hector Jenkins

Language: English

Runtime: 91 minutes

Rating: most audiences; smoking, alcohol use

Films premiere at a set time and are followed by a livestream Q+A. If you miss the premiere, you can still watch the movie (and a recording of the Q+A) anytime until the end of the festival!

The KCFF is proud to present a special Local Spotlight screening of the debut feature by Emily Russell and Casper Leonard, the precociously gifted team behind many recent faves in the KCFF's Youth Shorts Program. James Rudden gives a striking performance as Evan, a teenager braving his way through the ostracizing he suffers as a LBGTQ+ youth in a rural community whose members are not necessarily so accepting. But over the course of an eventful summer, Evan's new friendship with Ross (Dimitri Watson) may lead to changes for them both. Filmed on location in Hartington, Newburgh and Bob's Lake under COVID-19 protocols last summer, Russell and Leonard achieve something special with this scrappily charming look at the teen experience as seen by creators who are in the thick of it themselves.

LOCAL SHORTS

LOCAL SHORTS 1

FILM PREMIERE*

Monday, March 1 at 8:00 pm

Livestream Q+A 9:15 pm

AVAILABILITY

March 1 at 8:00pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: various details below

Language: English

Runtime: 60 minutes

Rating: most audiences; strong language

LOCAL SHORTS 2

FILM PREMIERE*

Tuesday, March 2 at 6:00 pm

Livestream Q+A 7:15 pm

AVAILABILITY

March 2 at 6:00pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: various details below

Language: English

Runtime: 60 minutes

Rating: most audiences; strong language

Hello and welcome to KCFF 21's Local Shorts Program! You will surely be blown away by the fabulous films our local filmmakers have created this year! It has been such a pleasure to witness the vast amount of talent that we have right here in Kingston and I'm sure you will all enjoy watching these films just as much as I have. What really stuck out to me as I was watching these films is that even during such a difficult time in the world, creativity and beauty can always be found. I hope these films remind you of the strength, talent, and artistry that this medium can provide, even in the most difficult moments. Sit back, relax, and enjoy some of the fabulous work our community has to offer!

- Alison Cartan, Local Shorts Programmer

Films in Local Shorts 1

A CHINESE LOVE SONG director *Lara Besa*

I HOPE THEY REMEMBER MY NAME director *Patrick Weiers*

MARNEY director *Braden Dragomir*

PATCHWORK HERO director *Emily Pasternak*

PSYCHE director *Daniel Bartchouk*

TWELVE MILES PAST MY DESTINATION director *Matthew Sandell*

WILD WATERS director *Josh Lyon*

Films in Local Shorts 2

AND ALSO, FOR YOUTH director *Eamon Hillis*

MOURN director *Joanna Tsanis*

DAFFODILS director *Adrien Benson*

REMEDIATE: PASSING THE SEEDS director *Shelby Lisk*

THE VIOLINIST director *Michael Lavers*

CATCH YOUR EYES director *Cody Bennett*

MARLENE

FILM PREMIERE*

Sunday, February 28 at 5:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 6:55 pm

AVAILABILITY

Canada only; February 28 at 5:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm.

Director: Wendy Hill-Tout

Featuring: Kristin Booth, Greg Bryk, Julia Sarah Stone, Maxim Roy

Language: English

Runtime: 105 minutes

Rating: most audiences; mature content

In 1959, a jury in Goderich returned a verdict of guilty in the trial of Steven Truscott, a 14-year-old accused of the rape and murder of his 12-year-old classmate Cheryl Lynne Harper. Over the ensuing decades, Truscott's case would gain national attention as a miscarriage of justice, arguably the most famous in Canadian history. Yet by shifting the focus to the tireless quest by Truscott's wife Marlene to prove her husband's innocence, director Wendy Hill-Tout's remarkable new movie becomes a stirring love story as well as a riveting legal drama. Great performances by Kristin Booth and Greg Bryk add further power and richness to Hill-Tout's effort to reveal a little-known side to the Truscott story.

MOUTH CONGRESS

FILM PREMIERE*

Friday, March 5 at 8:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 9:15 pm

Director: Paul Bellini, Scott Thompson

Language: English

Runtime: 68 minutes

Rating: most audiences; strong language

AVAILABILITY

March 5 at 8:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm.

Around the same time The Kids in the Hall were becoming the hottest thing in the comedy world, there was another pop-cultural juggernaut rising right alongside them in Toronto. The fact that The Kids ended up a little bit more famous than Mouth Congress – a wild “gay punk” band fronted by Scott Thompson and Kids pal and writer Paul Bellini – was a historical oversight the duo strived hard to correct decades later with a reunion concert like none Queen Street West had ever seen. KCFF is thrilled to present the world premiere of Bellini and Thompson’s documentary on Mouth Congress’s rise from total obscurity to a spot slightly higher on the fame spectrum.

MY SALINGER YEAR

FILM PREMIERE*

Saturday, February 27 at 7:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 8:50 pm

AVAILABILITY

Ontario only; February 27 at 7:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm.

Director: Philippe Falardeau

Featuring: Margaret Qualley, Sigourney Weaver, Douglas Booth

Language: English

Runtime: 101 minutes

Rating: most audiences; strong language

The filmmaker behind such past fest must-sees as C'EST PAS MOI, JE LE JURE! (KCFF09) and the Oscar-nominated MONSIEUR LAZHAR (the People's Choice Award winner at KCFF12), Philippe Falardeau returns with one of his most engaging films to date. For his third English-language effort, Falardeau brings viewers into the heady yet fiercely competitive literary world of 1990s New York. Margaret Qualley stars as Joanna, an aspiring writer who takes a job at a literary agency. As she learns the ways of the business under the not-so-gentle guidance of her boss Margaret (the always great Sigourney Weaver), Joanna also makes an unexpected connection with the agency's most famous and mysterious client, none other than J.D. Salinger. Based on Joanna Rakoff's memoir of her own time in the publishing-world trenches, Falardeau's film is a witty and often surprising story about creativity and courage.

VERY OWN CIRCUS

MON CIRQUE À MOI

FILM PREMIERE*

Saturday, February 27 at 5:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 6:50 pm

AVAILABILITY

February 27 at 5:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: Miryam Bouchard

Featuring: Patrick Huard, Sophie Laurin, Jasmine Lemée, Robin Aubert

Language: French subtitled in English

Runtime: 100 minutes

Rating: all audiences

Films premiere at a set time and are followed by a livestream Q+A. If you miss the premiere, you can still watch the movie (and a recording of the Q+A) anytime until the end of the festival!

While having a performing clown for a father may sound like fun, it's understandable that the young heroine of this charmer by director Miryam Bouchard may long for a more conventional life. After years on the road with her father Bill – played by Patrick Huard of Quebec hits like STARBUCK (KCFF11) and MOMMY (KCFF15) – Laura (Jasmine Lemée) is eager for stability and normality, two things that any guy who spends so much time wearing a red nose and oversized shoes will struggle to provide. But for this family bond to grow, it clearly has to change, however challenging (and sometimes hilarious) that process may be. Making her feature debut after a string of successful shorts and her work on some of Quebec's best TV shows, Bouchard invests this relatable family story with an abundance of heart and humour.

Même si avoir un père clown de profession peut sembler vraiment amusant, on comprend bien que la jeune héroïne de ce film séduisant, dirigé par Myriam Bouchard, puisse rêver d'une vie plus conventionnelle. Après des années sur la route avec son père – interprété par Patrick Huard, acteur dans des films québécois à succès tels que STARBUCK (KCFF11) et MOMMY (KCFF15) – Laura (Jasmine Lemée) est en quête de stabilité et de normalité, deux choses qu'aura du mal à lui apporter tout individu passant tant de temps à porter un nez rouge et des chaussures trop grandes. Pour cette famille vouée à s'agrandir, les choses doivent changer quels que soient les défis (parfois très cocasses) à relever. Dans ce premier long-métrage, succédant à une série de court-métrages célèbres et à ses contributions dans des séries télévisées québécoises parmi les meilleures, Myriam Bouchard investit cette agréable histoire familiale avec beaucoup de cœur et d'humour.

NADIA, BUTTERFLY

FILM PREMIERE*

Friday, February 26 at 5:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 6:55 pm

AVAILABILITY

Canada only; February 26 at 5:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm.

Director: Pascal Plante

Featuring: Katerine Savard; Ariane Mainville; Pierre-Yves Cardinal; Hilary Caldwell

Language: French subtitled in English

Runtime: 107 minutes

Rating: most audiences; strong language, sexual content, drugs, alcohol

Though it is set in a fictionalized version of the Tokyo Olympics that have yet to happen, this captivating second feature by Pascal Plante (FAUX TATOUAGES, KCFF18) boasts a rare degree of authenticity in its portrayal of an elite swimmer at a crossroads. Those qualities are no accident, Plante having not only drawn from his own past as a high-level athlete but his cast of real-life swimmers, including his extraordinary lead performer. Katerine Savard stars as Nadia, a young woman struggling to determine who she wants to be once she's finished with her last big meet. A Cannes 2020 selection that's attracted acclaim worldwide, Plante's movie combines a distinctive and alluring visual sensibility with a keen understanding of the emotions and inner workings of those who may feel more comfortable with high-pressure competitions and medal ceremonies than the ambiguities and uncertainties that fill other parts of their lives.

Bien qu'il se déroule dans une version fictive des Jeux Olympiques de Tokyo n'ayant pas encore eu lieu, ce deuxième long-métrage captivant de Pascal Plante (FAUX TATOUAGES, KCFF18) dresse avec une rare authenticité le portrait d'un nageur d'élite arrivé à un moment charnière de sa vie. Ce scénario n'est pas le fruit du hasard, car Pascal Plante s'est non seulement inspiré de son passé d'athlète de haut niveau, mais il a également sélectionné de vrais nageurs parmi lesquels figure sa remarquable actrice principale. Dans le rôle de Nadia, Katerine Savard s'évertue à déterminer qui elle veut être à l'issue de sa dernière grande compétition. Sélectionné au Festival de Cannes 2020 et acclamé dans le monde entier, le film de Pascal Plante combine une sensibilité visuelle unique et captivante à une subtile compréhension des émotions et des mécanismes intérieurs chez ces personnes qui peuvent se sentir plus à l'aise sous la pression des compétitions et des remises de médailles, que perdues dans les ambiguïtés et incertitudes ternissant d'autres aspects de leurs vies.

NO ORDINARY MAN

FILM PREMIERE*

Monday, March 1 at 7:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 8:30 pm

Director: Aisling Chin-Yee, Chase Joynt

Language: English

Runtime: 84 minutes

Rating: most audiences

AVAILABILITY

Ontario only; March 1 at 7:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

In the wake of Billy Tipton's death in 1989, the media devoted copious and often cruelly insensitive coverage to a tabloid storytelling of how the American jazz musician had been living as his true male gender for decades, concealing the fact that he was assigned female at birth even to his closest family members. For filmmakers Aisling Chin-Yee and Chase Joynt and their documentary's exceptional array of thoughtful interview subjects, Tipton's story becomes a means to explore perspectives, insights and experiences from within the spectrum of trans expression, a span that's as wide as it is poorly understood, acknowledged and represented, at least until very recently. The result is a film that is frank, engaging and affecting.

NO VISIBLE TRAUMA

FILM PREMIERE*

Sunday, February 28 at 3:00 pm
Livestream Q+A 4:40 pm

AVAILABILITY

Ontario only; February 28 at 3:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: Marc Serpa Francoeur, Robinder Uppal

Language: English

Runtime: 95 minutes

Rating: most audiences; police brutality, racialized violence

Recent events and protests have pushed the issues of police brutality and systemic racism to the forefront of public attention, with departments in communities across Canada facing reckonings. The shockingly high rates of police-related shootings and killings in Calgary give special urgency to this hard-hitting documentary by Marc Serpa Francoeur and Robinder Uppal. By going deep into several disturbing incidents that have left many victims and bereaved family members in their wake, the filmmakers highlight the crisis of accountability and lack of transparency within the city's criminal justice system.

OUT OF THE BLUE

(1980) RESTORED

FILM PREMIERE*

Thursday, March 4 at 8:00 pm
Livestream Q+A 9:40 pm

AVAILABILITY

Ontario only; March 1 at 7:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: Dennis Hopper

Featuring: Linda Manz, Dennis Hopper, Sharon Farrell

Language: English

Runtime: 95 minutes

Rating: most audiences; alcohol and drug use

Made on a shoestring budget in Vancouver and originally released in 1980, this raw indie drama marked the beginning of the way back for iconic actor and filmmaker Dennis Hopper after many years as a Hollywood pariah. Originally enlisted to play the young heroine's ex-con father, he stepped in at the last minute to also direct this story of a rebellious teenage girl (Linda Manz, then coming off her debut in Terrence Malick's *DAYS OF HEAVEN*) who becomes immersed in Vancouver's punk scene. The onscreen presence of many genuine punk rockers and bands such as Pointed Sticks add great authenticity and immediacy to Hopper's portrait of a vulnerable youngster and a broken family caught in a downward spiral. Long out of circulation despite its reputation as one of Hopper's best directorial efforts, *OUT OF THE BLUE* was recently restored for its 40th anniversary.

RESTLESS RIVER

FILM PREMIERE*

Thursday, March 4 at 7:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 8:45 pm

AVAILABILITY

March 4 at 7:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: Marie-Hélène Cousineau, Madeline Piujuq Ivalu

Featuring: Malaya Qaunirq Chapman, Magalie Lépine Blondeau, Mark Antony Krupa

Language: Inuktitut, English, French subtitled in English

Runtime: 98 minutes

Rating: most audiences; sexual violence

The Arnait Video team behind such remarkable past festival selections as *BEFORE TOMORROW* (KCFF09), directors Marie-Helene Cousineau and Madeline Ivalu match the high standards they set for themselves with this moving adaptation of a late work by Gabrielle Roy. *RESTLESS RIVER* tells the story of Elsa (Malaya Quairq Chapman), a young Inuk woman in 1940s-era Kuujuaq whose plans for her future are dashed when she is sexually assaulted by an American soldier. Yet for all the hardships Elsa faces as she raises a son who feels split between two different cultures, she becomes an emblem of courage and resilience in a changing world that can be both cruel and beautiful.

SHIVA BABY

FILM PREMIERE*

Sunday, February 28 at 7:00 pm
Livestream Q+A 8:25 pm

AVAILABILITY

Ontario only; February 28 at 7:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: Emma Seligman

Featuring: Rachel Sennott, Molly Gordon, Polly Draper, Danny Deferrari

Language: English

Runtime: 77 minutes

Rating: most audiences; strong language, sexual content

A young woman's increasingly desperate attempts to keep some big secrets from her family yields many moments of cringe-inducing comedy in this wickedly smart first feature by Emma Seligman. An expansion of the Toronto-bred and New York-based filmmaker's 2018 short film of the same name, SHIVA BABY stars Rachel Sennott as Danielle, an under-achieving twenty-something who is shocked to discover her older lover (and benefactor) at the shiva she's attending alongside her unsuspecting parents. The ensuing string of mishaps is compounded by the additional presence of Danielle's ex-girlfriend and many more intrusive relatives and family friends than she could possibly handle. A favourite at the Toronto International Film Festival, Seligman's film strikes a fine balance between an acerbic brand of humour and a warmth that's both surprising and disarming.

SPIRIT BEAR AND CHILDREN MAKE HISTORY

FILM PREMIERE*

Sunday, February 28 at 1:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 1:45 pm

Director: Amanda Strong

Language: English

Runtime: 40 minutes

Rating: all audiences

AVAILABILITY

February 28 at 1:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

KCFF is thrilled to present this program of three extraordinary animated works by Michif filmmaker and interdisciplinary artist Amanda Strong, a guest of the festival at KCFF18. This showcase includes her newest work: SPIRIT BEAR & CHILDREN MAKE HISTORY, a visually inventive and highly engaging adaptation of Dr. Cindy Blackstock's books for young readers. Like Blackstock's much-loved stories about Spirit Bear, Strong's 28-minute stop-motion animation introduces a new generation of change-makers to the themes of human rights, equity and reconciliation. Completing the program are HOW TO STEAL A CANOE and MIA', two more demonstrations of Strong's artistry and ingenuity, as well as her commitment to developing bold new forms of Indigenous screen storytelling.

THE KID DETECTIVE

FILM PREMIERE*

Saturday, February 27 at 8:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 9:50 pm

AVAILABILITY

Canada only; Saturday, February 27 at 8:00 pm until
March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: Evan Morgan

Featuring: Adam Brody; Sophie Nélisse; Sarah
Sutherland; Wendy Crewson

Language: English

Runtime: 105 minutes

Rating: most audiences; strong language, some
violence

Literature for young readers is full of brainiac sleuths who never fail to crack a case but what happens when these characters get too old to be quite so cute and clever? That's the premise for this darkly hued comedy stars Adam Brody as a smalltown P.I. whose youthful success is long behind him. But when a teen played by Sophie Nélisse (MONSIEUR LAZHAR, KCFF12) enlists him to look into her boyfriend's murder, the washed-up gumshoe finds his shot at redemption. Making his directorial debut after helping create such standouts as THE DIRTYIES (KCFF14), writer-director Evan Morgan delivers a hugely entertaining mystery story whose wry humour boasts a harder edge.

THE MAGNITUDE OF ALL THINGS

FILM PREMIERE*

Saturday, February 27 at 3:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 4:30 pm

Director: Jennifer Abbott

Language: English

Runtime: 85 minutes

Rating: all audiences

AVAILABILITY

February 27 at 3:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

A personal experience of grief collides with the more collective anguish caused by the climate crisis in this thoughtful and graceful documentary by Jennifer Abbott, the B.C.-based filmmaker and writer best known as part of the team behind *THE CORPORATION* and its acclaimed recent sequel. Here Abbott delves deep into her own sorrow over the loss of a loved one while widening her film's scope to include urgent stories of change, disappearance, devastation and hope from all over the globe. The stunning images and powerful insights lend further richness to a film that's unique in its scope and impact.

THE PAPER MAN

LAFORTUNE EN PAPIER

FILM PREMIERE*

Monday, March 1 at 6:00 pm

Livestream Q+A at 7:30 pm

Director: Tanya Lapointe

Language: French subtitled in English

Runtime: 80 minutes

Rating: all audiences

AVAILABILITY

Not available in Quebec; March 1 at 6:00 pm until

March 7 at 11:59 pm

The recent winner of the audience award at the Whistler film festival, Tanya Lapointe's feel-good documentary is a loving tribute to a man who was like a grandfather to several generations of Quebecois children. Warm-hearted and immensely creative, Claude Lafortune delighted his young TV viewers with his paper creations and his stories of family, friendship and faith. Filmed over the two years before Lafortune sadly passed away at the age of 83 from COVID-19 last April, THE PAPER MAN captures Lafortune's late-career renaissance as he gains greater respect for work that was never mere child's play. A longtime reporter and producer for Radio-Canada who's also worked on the Hollywood projects by her partner Denis Villeneuve, Lapointe has crafted a portrait that's as richly detailed (and as marvelous) as her subject's paper-and-scissors creations.

Lauréat du prix du public au Festival du film de Whistler, ce charmant documentaire de Tanya Lapointe rend un tendre hommage à un homme que plusieurs générations d'enfants québécois considéraient comme un grand-père. Chaleureux et d'une créativité sans failles, Claude Lafortune a ravi ses jeunes téléspectateurs avec ses créations en papier et ses histoires de famille, amitié et foi. Filmé au cours des deux années précédant son triste décès de la COVID-19 en avril dernier alors qu'il avait 83 ans, LAFORTUNE EN PAPIER met en lumière la renaissance de Claude Lafortune en fin de carrière, alors qu'il parvient à être davantage reconnu pour son travail qui n'a jamais été un simple jeu d'enfant. Longtemps journaliste et productrice pour Radio Canada, et ayant travaillé sur les projets hollywoodiens de son partenaire Denis Villeneuve, Tanya Lapointe a dressé un portrait tout aussi détaillé (et merveilleux) que les créations papier-ciseaux de son sujet.

VAGRANT

FILM PREMIERE*

Sunday, February 29 at 12:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 1:30 pm

AVAILABILITY

February 28 at 12:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Director: Caleb Ryan

Featuring: Luke Oparah, Ana Isabella Piñero,
Joseph C. Ryan

Language: English

Runtime: 84 minutes

Rating: most audiences; alcohol use

The vulnerability of people living on the streets in Canada's big cities is made powerfully clear by this remarkable and affecting drama, a self-funded feature debut by Calgary's Caleb Ryan. The deserving winner of an acting prize at the ReelWorld festival last fall, Luke Oparah anchors the film with his compelling performance as Frank, a homeless man and alcoholic doing what he can to survive Calgary's harsh winters. Though new opportunities and new connections (including one with a dog in equally dire straits) may lead to better times for Frank, the pains of his past threaten to isolate him again. Eschewing easy sentimentality and easy solutions by focusing on a complicated and often combative character, Ryan has crafted a raw, urgent and authentic portrait of a life at the margins.

WORKHORSE

FILM PREMIERE*

Wednesday, March 3 at 8:00 pm
Livestream Q+A starts at 9:30 pm

Director: Cliff Caines

Language: English

Runtime: 82 minutes

Rating: all audiences

AVAILABILITY

March 3 at 8:00 pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

Films premiere at a set time and are followed by a livestream Q+A. If you miss the premiere, you can still watch the movie (and a recording of the Q+A) anytime until the end of the festival!

Of all the creatures with whom we humans have shared this world, no other has had the same impact on the development of our societies and economies as the horse. Indeed, so much of what we take for granted was built on these animals' backs. With his fascinating documentary, director Cliff Caines continues his look at changing ways in rural Ontario by examining several contemporary examples of horse-powered labour on farms in Elgin County and elsewhere, prompting questions about the persistence of these still-valuable human-animal relationships and their meaning in the modern day. The gorgeous black-and-white cinematography by Ryan Randall – the technical supervisor for the new Vulnerable Media Lab at Queen's University – provides another point of entry to Caines' thematically rich film, which may very well compel viewers to regard these animals with the awe and respect they deserve.

YOU WILL REMEMBER ME

TU TE SOUVIENDRAS DE MOI

FILM PREMIERE*

Saturday, February 27 at 1:00 pm
Livestream Q+A 3:00 pm

AVAILABILITY

Ontario only; February 27 at 1:00 pm until March 7 at
11:59 pm

Director: Éric Tessier

Featuring: Rémy Girard, Karelle Tremblay, France
Castel, Julie Le Breton

Language: French subtitled in English

Runtime: 108 minutes

Rating: most audiences

Beloved for his roles in many of Denys Arcand's best films as well as such made-in-Quebec crowdpleasers as LA FLORIDA and LES BOYS, Rémy Girard is at his very best in Eric Tessier's wise and warm-hearted comedy-drama, based on a play by François Archambault. Girard stars as Edouard, a pompous academic and author who still approaches his life with his usual bluster despite his growing struggle with dementia. Desperate for help after her fed-up mother leaves the scene, Edouard's daughter Isabelle (Julie Le Breton) enlists her boyfriend's daughter Bérénice (Karelle Tremblay of THE FIREFLIES ARE GONE, KCFF19) to care for him. Of course, Edouard is too proud to accept the help, preferring to slide deeper into his memories. Fully embodying a character who elicits fondness, sympathy and frustration in equal measure, Girard brings great energy and insight to Tessier's highly engaging film.

Apprécié pour ses rôles dans plusieurs des meilleurs films de Denys Arcand ainsi que dans des productions québécoises grand public telles que LA FLORIDA et LES BOYS, Rémy Girard est à son meilleur dans cette comédie dramatique sensée et touchante d'Éric Tessier, basée sur une pièce de théâtre de François Archambault. Girard interprète Édouard, un universitaire et auteur prétentieux qui continue d'aborder sa vie avec la même effervescence alors qu'il lutte chaque jour un peu plus contre ses troubles de la mémoire. Cherchant désespérément de l'aide après avoir perdu celle de sa mère excédée, Isabelle (Julie Le Breton), la fille d'Édouard, propose que Bérénice (Karelle Tremblay, La disparition des lucioles, KCFF19), la fille de son conjoint, s'occupe de lui. Bien entendu Édouard est trop fier pour accepter tout soutien, préférant sombrer plus profondément dans ses souvenirs. Incarnant pleinement un personnage qui suscite autant l'affection, que la compassion et la frustration, Rémy Girard apporte une réelle énergie et beaucoup de profondeur à ce film captivant d'Éric Tessier.

YOUTH SHORTS

FILM PREMIERE*

Thursday, March 4 at 6:00 pm
Livestream Q+A 7:30 pm

Director: various details below

Language: English

Runtime: 80 minutes

Rating: most audiences

AVAILABILITY

March 4 at 6:00pm until March 7 at 11:59 pm

The Youth Shorts is a selection of short films made by filmmakers under the age of 17. Dealing with a range of themes, including mental illness, cultural identity, memory, and self-discovery, this program offers a glimpse into the next generation of Canadian filmmakers and storytellers. Produced during the pandemic and under the strain of educational budget cuts, these shorts are a testament to the creativity, passion, and perseverance of young filmmakers. I am truly honoured to be sharing them with you!

– *Sophia Commanducci, Youth Shorts Programmer*

FILMS

THE ART GALLERY director Cailyn Dann

ENDS TOGETHER director Spencer Bubis

CALL OF THE VOID director Kyla Stone

TIMORDIKA director Miles York

THE IMAGINARY ENEMY director Zoe Compson

ELLIOT SHEPARD'S CONCERTO IN D MINOR director EJ Graham