



KINGSTON CANADIAN FILM FESTIVAL



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

PRESENTED BY



KINGSTON

FEBRUARY 26 TO MARCH 2, 2025



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Bringing the best of Canadian film to Kingston.

As part of our goal to help people feel a sense of belonging in their communities, TD is proud to support arts and culture events, initiatives and organizations that amplify diverse voices — like the Kingston Canadian Film Festival.

td.com



Twenty-four years of show biz are in the books and we're ready to celebrate the 25th! On the eve of our big anniversary, we asked our audience: what's your most unforgettable Festival moment? The massive collection of responses could easily fill a book. As expected, visits from the legendary Allan King and Gordon Pinsent are top picks, as are appearances from Kids in the Hall and Baroness von Sketch (we're stoked for Carolyn Taylor this year). The time that wrestler Jake the Snake Roberts crashed our Tango party is less renowned, yet unforgettable.

A personal all-time favourite moment is from 2014, when our opening night film *DRIVING WITH SELVI* received a standing ovation without a dry eye in the house. The audience stood and cheered as Director, Elisa Paloschi, walked on stage for the Q&A. Seconds later, the audience roared (and wept!) as the subject of the film, Selvi, made a surprise visit all the way from India. We still reminisce with festival-goers about that unforgettable night. Nowadays, staff refer to big Festival surprises as "Selvi moments."

My *first* moment? As a patron in 2004, way before Jake the Snake, the Fest invited band Fatal Warsnake to warm up the audience before a late-night film. As the thrash trio ripped through a three-song set, the likelihood of a noise complaint was high. More impressive than their 15-minute set was the five-minute load-out, Marshall stacks and all. Warsnake's 80's Dodge Ram hauled down Princess as City Bylaw arrived to a hushed audience sitting through the quiet, gentle Quebecois feature about a remote fishing village.

As we celebrate our 25th anniversary this year, please keep sending us your Festival moments! The KCFF story stems from such an amazing community: volunteers, staff, board, filmmakers and industry, sponsors, donors and YOU, our dedicated audience. I'm grateful to be part of this community — thank you all! Here's to the next 25 years of unforgettable Selvi moments (and Jake the Snake ones too) and the next chapter of our Festival story.

Marc Garniss

Executive Director, Kingston Canadian Film Festival

When I was 25, I had left the country for a couple of years, to study film in the Chicago area, where I regularly had to reaffirm for my American friends that Canadian cinema did in fact exist. They might have been aware of David Cronenberg, but not much more. At that time, to be fair, the turning-point pictures *Mon oncle Antoine* and *Goin' Down the Road* were barely ten years old. Classics to be, such as *The Grey Fox* and *I've Heard the Mermaids Singing*, remained years from release and acclaim, in Canada and elsewhere.

By the time the Kingston Canadian Film Festival launched, on a cold, clear 3rd of March, 2001, cinema in Canada had gone through booms, busts and echoes. KCFF captured the changes and generations, with a brace of 17 new feature films: by veteran writer-director Denys Arcand (*Stardom*); by younger and mid-career artists including Robert Lepage (*Possible Worlds*) and Gary Burns (*Waydowntown*); and early films by young filmmakers, such as *Maelstrom*, the second feature by phenom Denis Villeneuve. (What ever happened to him? He was going somewhere).

Over the past 24 festivals, we've shown several hundred new feature films and even more shorts, as well as a selection from the historical past of Canadian cinema — which does exist! And we've built an enviable community of festival staff and volunteers, past and present, filmmakers and guests, sponsors and supporters, and, needless to say, moviegoers just like you — a community that continues to evolve and grow. Thank you, all of you.

When I was 25, I figured I was just getting started, and the possibilities were endless. Same with the Kingston Canadian Film Festival.

Blaine Allan

Chair, Board of Directors, Kingston Canadian Film Festival



VENUE LIST

BROOM FACTORY
305 Rideau Street

ISABEL BADER CENTRE
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
390 King Street West

KINGSTON GRAND THEATRE
218 Princess Street

THE SCREENING ROOM
120 Princess Street

LE JARDIN
343 King Street East

THE TOUCAN
76 Princess Street

BOX OFFICE

ONLINE 24-7 KINGCANFILMFEST.COM

Available on our website starting February 1st.
Tickets are available for purchase until showtime
or the show is sold out — whichever comes first!

IN PERSON **BEFORE** THE FESTIVAL

Broom Factory
305 Rideau Street
February 4th, 11th, and 18th; 12 pm to 6 pm

IN PERSON **DURING** THE FESTIVAL

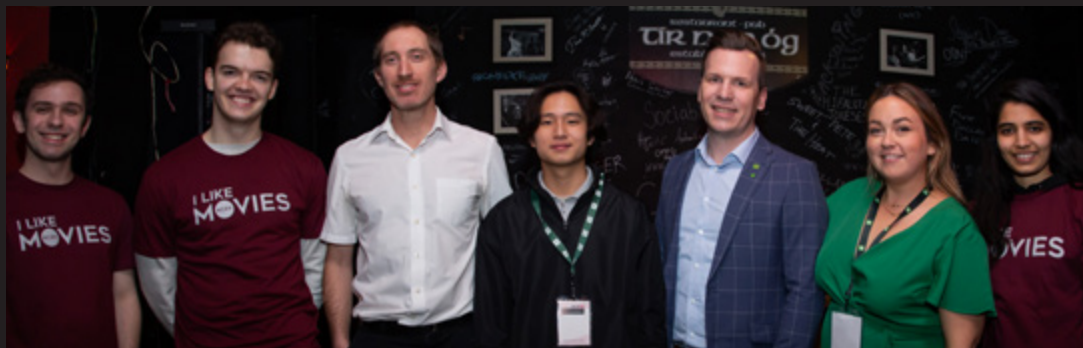
KCFF will have in-person box office locations during the
Festival. Please check the website for locations and hours
of operation.

If you have questions about tickets and passes, please contact:
info@kingcanfilmfest.com
613-777-0161

FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

Specific screening dates and locations are listed on our
website. Scan the QR code or visit KINGCANFILMFEST.COM for
event details.





KINGCANFILMFEST.COM

is the best place to learn everything about this year's Festival, from last-minute special guests to dining recommendations to discounts on accommodations! We're continually making new announcements on our website, so we recommend checking it out on a regular basis. If you need to get in touch with us, we recommend sending an email to info@kingcanfilmfest.com which will be monitored regularly throughout the Fest.

Our staff are happy to help out in person, as well! During the Fest, you can find us at our info booths in the Grand Theatre walkway, on the ground floor at The Screening Room, or at our Festival Hub (location will be announced on our website). Of course our venue managers and volunteers are there to assist (and will be sporting cool volunteer t-shirts and/or wearing staff/volunteer badges). Even if you don't have any questions, come say hi and check out our 25th anniversary merchandise!

AFTER THE CREDITS

One of our favourite parts of the Fest is connecting with the artists and industry professionals who make the films. As always, the majority of our screenings include a post-show Q&A, which is your chance to ask questions and chat with the filmmakers, cast and crew. Want to know who will be here? Head to KINGCANFILMFEST.COM for details — we'll be updating it with last-minute confirmations throughout the Fest.



KINGCANFILMFEST.COM
[@KINGCANFILMFEST](https://www.instagram.com/KINGCANFILMFEST)



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ABERDEEN

DIRECTOR: RYAN COOPER, EVA THOMAS

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 83 MINUTES



A moving story of hardship and resilience, this drama by directors Ryan Cooper and Eva Thomas is anchored by the powerful performance by Gail Maurice, the Métis actor and filmmaker who festival audiences know for her roles in films like *BONES OF CROWS* (KCFF23) and for her own directorial debut *ROSIE* (KCFF23). Maurice stars as Aberdeen, an Indigenous woman who faces daunting challenges as an unhoused person in Winnipeg after being displaced from her community. Thankfully, friends like Alfred (Billy Merasty of *STELLAR*, KCFF23) and Grace (Jennifer Podemski) provide help and solace as Aberdeen strives to not only piece her life back together but restore long-broken bonds in her family. Exhibiting great fierceness and vulnerability, Maurice helps make *ABERDEEN* a vital showcase for some of Canada's best acting talent and for two of its most promising new filmmakers.



ADRIANNE & THE CASTLE

DIRECTORS: SHANNON WALSH

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 86 MINUTES



For her latest documentary, director Shannon Walsh uses decidedly unconventional means to tell what is surely the grandest love story to be presented at KCFF this year. Mixing music-infused reenactments with eye-popping personal videos filmed during the two subjects' incredible life together, Walsh's film pays tribute to Alan and Adrienne, a couple who transformed their home in rural Illinois into a lavishly decorated castle that continues to stand as a testament to their love of artistic expression and their devotion to each other. Indeed, it's a devotion so intense, it transcends even death. That's why viewers may feel as awed and moved by the utterly unique people at the heart of the film as they are by the one-of-the-kind location that Walsh captures so vividly.



DIRECTOR: DALE HESLIP
 LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
 RUNTIME: 88 MINUTES



This year we close KCFF with a bang! Jim Cuddy, Greg Keelor and director Dale Heslip will all join us in-person for a guided tour through the history of one of the country's most venerated bands. Heslip's vivid and very enjoyable documentary traces Blue Rodeo's journey from the Queen Street clubs where it all began to the stages they claim as their own four decades later. In between came many peaks and valleys, but those experiences just seemed to make them stronger. That's because the core of Blue Rodeo's music has always been the deep personal and creative bond that was first forged between Jim Cuddy and Greg Keelor back in high school in North Toronto. Both musicians make for candid and compelling interview subjects as they — along with their bandmates and many others who have come along for the ride — share their memories and their songs in a film that will be savoured by longtime fans and newcomers alike.

Tickets for this event are sold exclusively through the Kingston Grand Theatre box office and can't be included as a selection on a Festival Pass.



DIRECTORS: PATRICE SAUVÉ
 LANGUAGE: FRENCH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)
 RUNTIME: 105 MINUTES



Wealth Management
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The nostalgic yet sharp-eyed story of the bond that develops between two very different neighbours, BLUE SKY JO is a richly nuanced adaptation of an award-winning novel by Marie-Renée Lavoie. Juliette Bharucha gives a terrific performance as Hélène, a 10-year-old girl growing up in a working-class corner of Quebec City in the early 1980s. Though the youngster's vivid imagination provides her with an escape, Hélène's perceptive nature means she's well aware of the growing tensions within her family. That's why her connection to Monsieur Roger (Gildor Roy), an elderly grouch who lives nearby, becomes more valuable than either of them could predict. The winner for best French-language feature at Cinéfest and one of Quebec's most warmly received films of the year, director Patrice Sauvé's drama movingly conveys the kindness and solace that we can sometimes find in the people near us, provided we're ready to look for them.



Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario,
Conseil régional des Mille-Îles

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info@acfomi.ca

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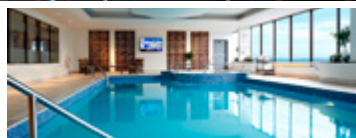
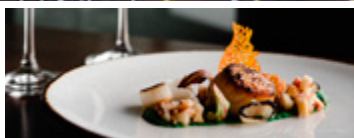
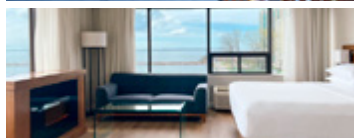
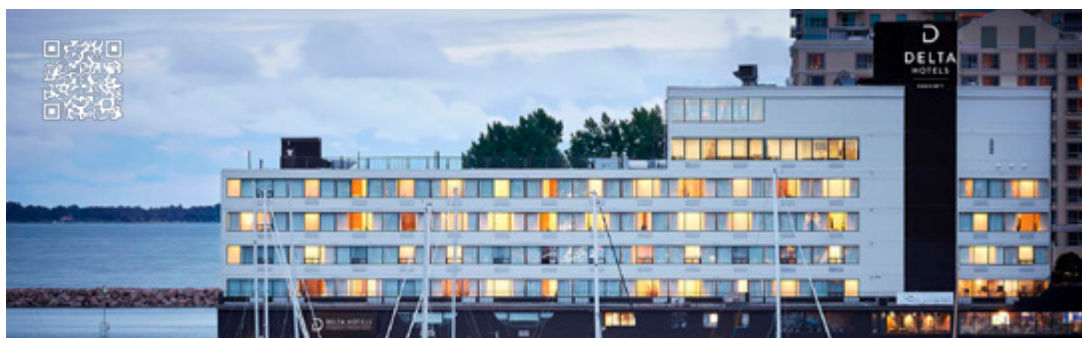
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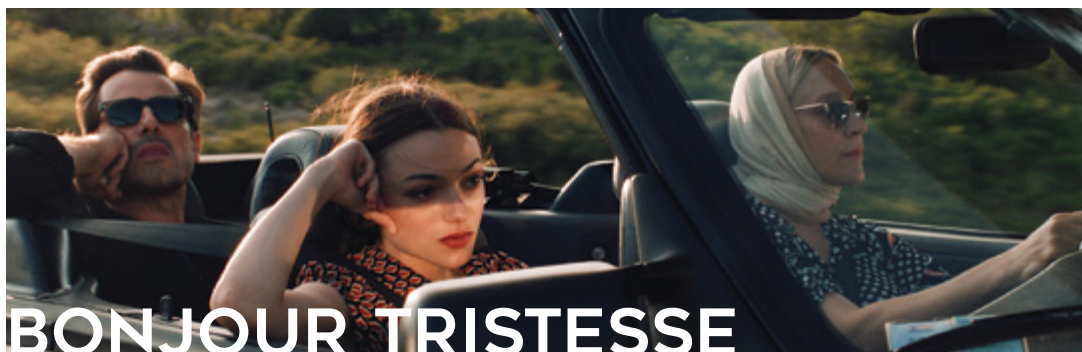
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BONJOUR TRISTESSE

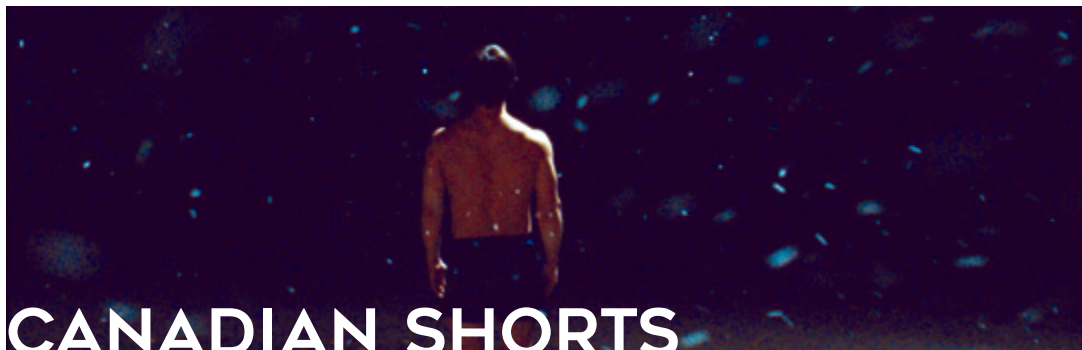
DIRECTOR: DURGA CHEW-BOSE

LANGUAGE: FRENCH AND ENGLISH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

RUNTIME: 110 MINUTES



Previously adapted by legendary director Otto Preminger in 1958, Françoise Sagan's classic coming-of-age novel now serves as the inspiration for another very memorable film, namely this perfectly poised debut feature by Montreal-based writer turned filmmaker Durga Chew-Bose. With its spectacular French seaside setting and chic characters, *BONJOUR TRISTESSE* also rates as one of the most visually sumptuous features at this year's festival. That said, the attractive surfaces here disguise the unrulier and darker energies at work in the story of Cécile (Lily McInerny), a teenager who's unhappy to see her beloved widower father Raymond (Claes Bang) reconnect with his old flame Anne (Chloë Sevigny), prompting her to hatch a scheme that will have unintended consequences. Rich with unspoken desires and other undercurrents of tension, Chew-Bose's adaptation impresses with its cool intelligence and impeccable performances.



CANADIAN SHORTS

DIRECTORS: VARIOUS

LANGUAGE: VARIOUS (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

RUNTIME: 90 MINUTES



Showcasing some of the best short films from across the country, the *CANADIAN SHORTS* program sees more submissions than all other categories combined! This program dates back to Year One of the Fest and has featured a who's who of Canadian film, including films from heavyweights like Zacharias Kunuk and Denis Villeneuve. Carefully curated and culled from an incredible range of work from established and emerging storytellers, our 2025 lineup demonstrates the very simple truth that sometimes less is more. All films in this program are automatically considered for our Best Canadian Short Award, presented on March 2 at the KCFF Awards Party!

JULIAN AND THE WIND
(CONNOR JESSUP)
SHOOT (ROGER GALVEZ)
STRANGERS (LEAH DOZ)
HER BODY (AMELIA MOSES)
FANTAS (HALIMA ELKHATABI)
THE BEST (IAN BAWA)
LOSING YOUR HOME
(EMMANUEL RIOUX)
UASHESHKUN (NORMAND
JUNIOR THIRNISH-PILOT)



CAN I GET A WITNESS?

DIRECTOR: ANN MARIE FLEMING

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 110 MINUTES



The director of festival favourites like *WINDOW HORSES* (KCFF17) and long one of Canadian cinema's most unique talents, Ann Marie Fleming returns with one of her most singular visions yet. This fable presents a possible future in which humankind has been able to move past the challenges and catastrophes that plague our present, albeit with a very grave cost. The teenaged protagonist of Fleming's film, Kiah (Keira Jang) has much to learn when she begins her job as a "Documenter," one who bears witness to the end-of-life ceremonies that are obligatory for citizens who've reached the age of 50. Kiah's new task is further complicated by the knowledge that time's almost up for Kiah's doting mother Ellie, played by the great Sandra Oh. With its introspective tone, smart take on dystopic tropes, and deft grace notes of animation, Fleming's latest marvel is an unusually poignant kind of science-fiction story.



DOOM BOOGIE

DIRECTOR: GEORGE ASSIMAKOPOULOS

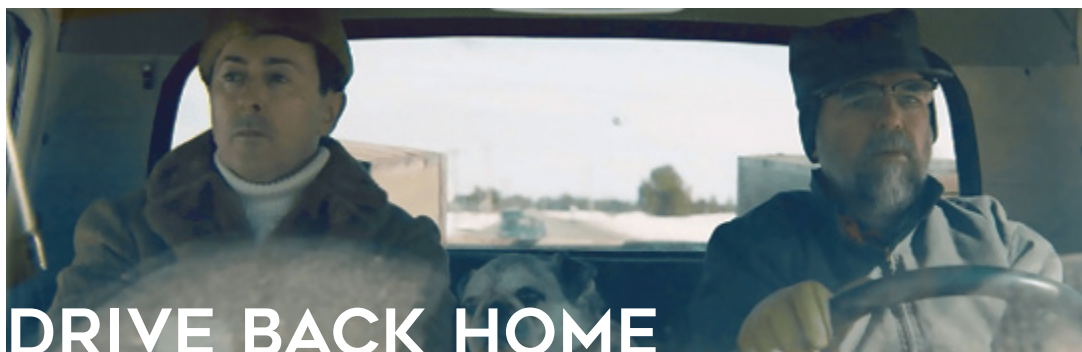
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 90 MINUTES



Returning to KCFF with another very proudly local production, the Branded to Film team promises a movie ride wild and gnarly enough to blow the doors off any grindhouse. Mixing all that is loud and heavy with high tension and gory horror thrills, the tale begins with a hard-rocking band whose imminent breakthrough gets derailed by a messy breakup. Two years later, the four members try to patch things up during a getaway at a cottage in South Frontenac. Unfortunately, they soon discover that their old gripes and resentments are the least of their worries if they hope to survive the weekend. With a cast that includes real-life musicians like Ciara Roberts of Tiny Horse, Jonah Lewis-Anthony of The Wilderness and Hanorah Hanley, George Assimakopoulos's feature combines a sense of raw authenticity about life in a band with an undisguised affection for old-school movie mayhem.

Tickets for this event are sold exclusively through the Kingston Grand Theatre box office and can't be included as a selection on a Festival Pass.



DRIVE BACK HOME

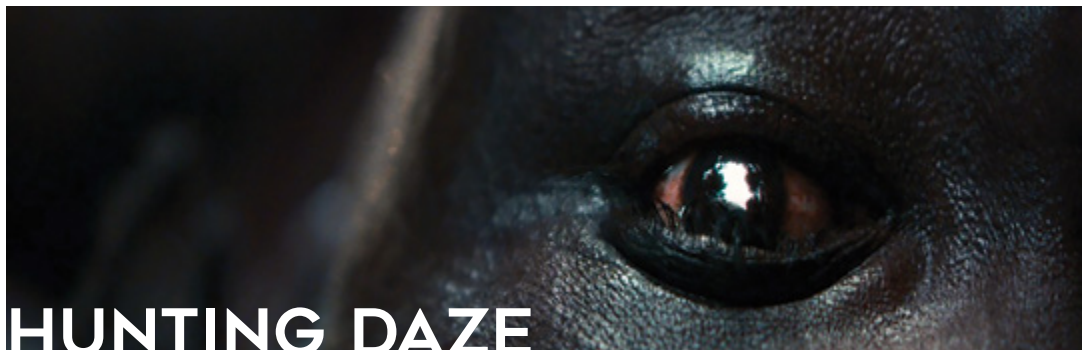
DIRECTOR: MICHAEL CLOWATER

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 100 MINUTES

DELTA HOTELS
KINGSTON WATERFRONT

Inspired by a true story in the family of writer-director Michael Clowater, this poignant yet often very funny film — an audience prizewinner at the Calgary film festival — takes place in a time and place when LGBTQ+ people had precious little opportunity to live their truth. To be more specific, that setting is small-town New Brunswick circa 1970, which is where a grouchy plumber named Weldon (Charlie Creed-Miles) receives a call from the Toronto police to come collect his long-estranged brother Perley (Alan Cumming) lest he face the full consequences of being caught having sex with another man in a public park. What ensues is an uncommonly good-natured kind of road movie as the brothers seek a new understanding of each other, and of the traumatic history they share. The slow-building rapport between Creed-Miles and the always great Cumming is just one of the reasons Clowater's first feature is so endearing and moving.



HUNTING DAZE

DIRECTOR: ANNICK BLANC

LANGUAGE: FRENCH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

RUNTIME: 79 MINUTES

ACFOMI 
Association canadienne-française de film
cinéma indépendant des médias

The bold tale of a hunting trip that goes far off the rails, this whip-smart thriller by Montreal's Annick Blanc rates as one of the most striking and bracing Canadian debut features in recent years. The film's principal power source is Nahéma Ricci, who KCFF audiences will know from her electrifying breakout performance in Sophie Deraspe's *ANTIGONE*, the Festival's opening night film in 2020. Here she stars as Nina, a sex worker who's none too happy to be stranded in the woods with a group of hunters out for a bachelor party weekend. Though the balance of power soon tips in the favour of the small but steely newcomer, the arrival of another outsider raises the stakes yet further. Gripping, stylish and sometimes surreal, Blanc's film boasts no lack of energy or audacity.



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WORLD PREMIERE

IN GOOD HANDS

DIRECTOR: NAOMI OKABE

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 45 MINUTES

FRONTENAC
SINCE 1845 CLUB KINGSTON

The winner of the Best Local Short at KCFF23, Kingston/PEC-based filmmaker, writer and artist Naomi Okabe returns to the Fest with another finely nuanced work. A look at the challenges of balancing life and work — and of finding meaning in both — Okabe's new medium-length documentary introduces viewers to six people who have bucked societal preconceptions and challenged gender stereotypes in the ways they've chosen to serve their families and their communities. Delving deep into the lives of subjects who include a beekeeper, an educator, a flower farmer and a cattle breeder, Okabe generously offers viewers a wealth of insights. We are honoured and excited to be screening the world premiere!



IT'S ALL GONNA BREAK

DIRECTOR: STEPHEN CHUNG

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 94 MINUTES



Stephen Chung's energetic film gives viewers an insider's view of not just the rise of one of Canada's best-loved bands of the millennium, but also a tectonic shift for Toronto's cultural landscape. Along with present-day interviews of members of Broken Social Scene, Chung revisits candid footage he shot of the musicians as the freewheeling indie-rock collective first began to cohere in a series of homes and clubs in the early 2000s. Of course, none of them knew that the songs they were creating together in such a spirit of joy and camaraderie would soon earn them a worldwide audience. As potent as Chung's film as a celebration of Broken Social Scene and the many other music-makers in their orbit — including Metric, Feist, Stars and Jason Collett — it's just as memorable for how it captures a moment in the life of the city before its own transformation.



KCFF DOC FACTORY 1

DIRECTORS: VARIOUS
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
RUNTIME: 80 MINUTES



Inspired by the success of the 18 MM PROGRAM, KCFF DOC FACTORY is our newest year-round filmmaking initiative! Led by our program director Ahmed Ismaiel Nour, the adult participants received instruction on film theory and technique before launching into the creation of their respective films last fall. While some participants have previous experience, the majority of the names you see are individuals who have only flirted with the idea of making a film, or maybe sat on a great idea, in need of a spark or incentive to move forward. KCFF DOC FACTORY is that spark and incentive! While you kick back and enjoy this inaugural edition, maybe you'll find yourself dreaming about your script coming alive on the big screen for 2026!

FROM LAB TO LOVE
(MIKE JOURARD)

FROM THE TIGRIS TO THE
ST. LAWRENCE RIVER
(HANAN ZEINELDIN)

TO LABOUR, WITH LOVE
(KAYCEE LEIGH)

SPRAY THE CHANGE
(JUAN FRANCISCO
VELASCO)



KCFF DOC FACTORY 2

DIRECTORS: VARIOUS
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
RUNTIME: 75 MINUTES

As the KCFF DOC FACTORY director, I hope this small family of filmmakers continues to grow in the coming years. I am proud to present the projects from the first cohort of the program, divided into two showcases that highlight a remarkable range of topics and styles. The filmmakers will be in attendance and look forward to sharing their experiences with you during post-screening discussions. We hope to see you there for the world premiere of these films!

Ahmed Ismaiel Nour
Program Director, KCFF DOC FACTORY

FAMILY BUSINESS
(ALEC ROSS)

MADOCIAN
(DANIEL J. HUSBANDS)

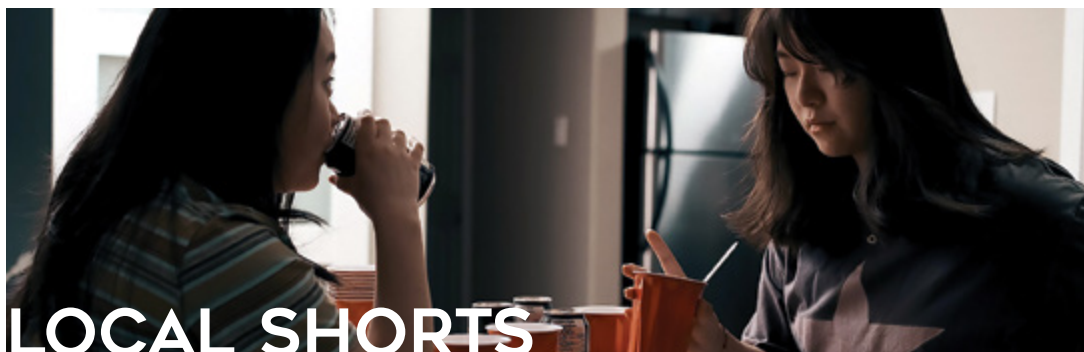
DUST IN THE GATE
(ALAN CODE)

WE NEED SHELTER
(JASON EADE)

YOU WERE THERE FOR ME
(JUAN HUERTA GALICIA
AND COLIN LO)

For a full synopsis and more information on each film, please visit kingcanfilmfest.com

Note that applications for the 2025-26 KCFF DOC FACTORY are now open!



LOCAL SHORTS

DIRECTORS: VARIOUS
LANGUAGE: VARIOUS (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)
RUNTIME: 83 MINUTES



As the Festival turns 25 this year, so does our LOCAL SHORTS program! In earlier editions of KCFF, every feature film was preceded by a locally produced short. In more recent editions, we've offered standalone packages for these films so you can watch them all in a tidy single screening. We estimate that nearly 500 local short films have played at the Fest, including work from names like Audrey Cummings, Les Stroud and Mike Downie. Designed to accommodate experienced filmmakers as well as emerging talent, we're consistently amazed at the scope of work created in and around Kingston! All films in this program are automatically considered for the Best Local Short Award, presented on March 2 at the KCFF Awards Party.

UNDER THE LIGHT OF THE HARVEST MOON
(NOAH LEVAC)

UNCOMFY (JESSICA HINKSON)

PODONAMU (KAI MATEO LEE RONCERIA,
TAYLOR SNELL & ELLIE STIRTON)

A-OKAY (J FIZPATRICK)

PUT THE FUN IN FUNERAL (ANDY TIDMAN)

DISQUIETED (ALEXANDER BIELICKI)

A GODLESS CONVERSATION WITH THE
CANADIAN REVENUE AGENCY
(STEVEN PAUL GRIFFEN)

THE BACHELORETTE PARTY (NATHAN ZHE)



WORLD PREMIERE

MASTERPIECE

DIRECTOR: EVAN BARD
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
RUNTIME: 90 MINUTES



In this debut feature by Kingston writer-director Evan Bard, a struggling artist named Margo faces a big challenge if she hopes to preserve her wedding plans. First, she has to end the passionate affair she's been having. But when her lover refuses to let go and crashes her engagement dinner, his arrival sets off a chain of events that reveal the long-buried secrets that all of the guests have been trying to hide. Anchored by the compelling lead performance by *Shoresy's* Michala Brasseur, Bard's film is a modern comedy of manners that's remarkable for its fine balance between the dramatic and the comedic, and for the many breakout-worthy performers in its ensemble cast. It also astutely portrays the struggles that exist between dedication and responsibility, between art and life... and between Margo and her muses who, on this fateful evening, are most definitely not amused. This is a world premiere at KCFF25!





Kingston
Symphony

Symphonic Speedruns

Saturday, April 12, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.
Live at Grand Theatre



Experience a first of its kind concert concept: world-class speedrunners will complete Cuphead and Celeste in record time, with all of the game's music performed by the Kingston Symphony, live on stage, in sync with the gameplay! With iconic and genre-defining scores by Kristofer Maddigan and Lena Raine, this is a video game concert which is absolutely a cut above the rest. Don't miss out!

Tickets available at
www.kingstonsymphony.ca



MATT AND MARA

DIRECTOR: KAZ RADWANSKI

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 80 MINUTES



While Kazik Radwanski's latest feature sees the Toronto director reunite with the stars of his widely acclaimed ANNE AT 13,000 FEET (KCFF20), his new film's astute blend of comedy and drama makes for a very different but equally engaging viewing experience. Deragh Campbell appears here as Mara, a university professor whose dissatisfactions with her life and career become harder to bear when she reconnects with Matt, a writer and old friend played by Matt Johnson, the star and maker of past fest faves like OPERATION AVALANCHE (KCFF17). A sly, subtle, yet sympathetic study of a woman wrestling with conflicting desires and a pile-up of uncertainties, Radwanski's fourth feature extends great warmth toward its characters despite (or maybe because of) their willingness to mess up their lives.



NINAN AUASSAT: WE, THE CHILDREN

DIRECTOR: KIM O'BOMSAWIN

LANGUAGE: FRENCH, ENGLISH, INNU-AIMUN, ATIKAMEKW (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

RUNTIME: 93 MINUTES



In the latest by Abenaki director Kim O'Bomsawin — who was last at the festival with CALL ME HUMAN (KCFF21) — members of a new generation take the opportunity to share their experiences, hopes, and dreams in a way that won't soon be forgotten. In a process that lasted over six years, O'Bomsawin visited groups of children in three different indigenous nations — Atikamekw, Eeyou Cree and Innu — and delved deep into their daily lives. Capturing her subjects' journeys toward adulthood with great care and sensitivity, this recent prizewinner at VIFF and RIDM serves as an insightful and inspiring portrait of indigenous youth, one that acknowledges the challenges they face while celebrating the hope, joy and beauty they exude.



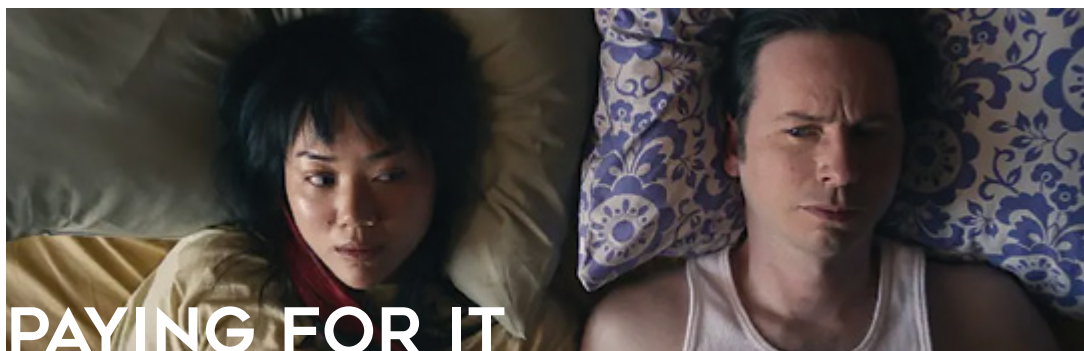
DIRECTOR: MIKE DOWNIE

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 60 MINUTES

HOMESTEAD

One of the past year's biggest television events — and certainly its most resoundingly Kingstonian! — THE TRAGICALLY HIP: NO DRESS REHEARSAL rocked viewers worldwide with its candid and comprehensive look at the band that changed the game for Canadian music. Even at four hours long it left us wanting more, which is why KCFF is thrilled to host director Mike Downie and producer and editor Peter Denes as they share stories about the making of their award-winning documentary. Along with never-aired outtakes and other unseen footage, the screening includes a rare big-screen presentation of some of the Hip's most iconic music videos. And yes, we'll make sure we play it all good and loud.



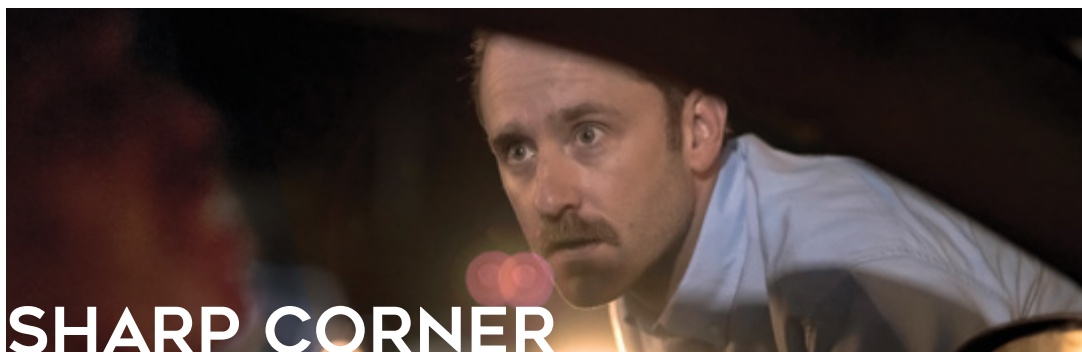
DIRECTOR: SOOK-YIN LEE

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 85 MINUTES

**!★C#
exclaim!**

Even in the wildly varied career she's led in this country's overlapping worlds of film, television, music and art since she first made her mark in Vancouver's music scene in the '80s, Sook-Yin Lee has never done something quite as unique — or as uniquely personal — as her third feature. In adapting the 2011 graphic novel by her former romantic partner Chester Brown, she puts her stamp on an eventful period in her history during the 1990s. Unhappy with her work as a VJ for a music-video station much like MuchMusic (for whom Lee was indeed a very public face), the director's fictional alter ego Sonny (Emily Lê) pursues new romantic connections even as she hopes to sustain her current one. Meanwhile, Chester (Daniel Beirne) conducts an odyssey of his own through his encounters with sex workers, a journey that elicits provocative questions about labour, freedom and desire. Funny, daring and astute, Lee's film maintains a playful sense of humour even as it lays bare potentially discomfiting truths about the things we want and how we go about getting them.



SHARP CORNER

DIRECTOR: JASON BUXTON

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 111 MINUTES

93.5
COUNTRY

Fueled by a quietly intense lead performance by acclaimed American actor Ben Foster, this second feature by Nova Scotia-based director Jason Buxton is a gripping portrait of a man cracking under pressures both external and internal. Based on a short story by Winnipeg writer Russell Wangersky, the drama stars Foster as Josh McCall, a family man who discovers that a tight curve on the road outside his new home has an alarming tendency to cause grisly car accidents. The family's proximity to trauma takes an increasing toll on Josh's relationship with his wife Rachel (Cobie Smulders) and his mental state. More than matching the expectations the filmmaker raised with his 2013 award-winner *BLACKBIRD*, Buxton's skillful second feature succeeds both as perceptive character study and steely psychological thriller.



OPENING NIGHT GALA

SHEPHERDS

DIRECTOR: SOPHIE DERASPE

CAST: FÉLIX-ANTOINE DUVAL, SOLÈNE RIGOT

LANGUAGE: FRENCH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

RUNTIME: 113 MINUTES



KINGSTON

The Opening Night selection at this year's KCFF is one of the most compelling cinematic visions to emerge from Quebec in recent years! Indeed, it's the second time we've showcased the work of director Sophie Deraspe on the Festival's opening night — her bracing drama *ANTIGONE* wowed audiences here in 2020. Here the filmmaker takes inspiration from a memoir by Mathyas Lefebvre, a Montreal ad exec who traded in his urban existence to pursue his dream of becoming a shepherd in the south of France. Though he clings to this somewhat naïve pastoral ideal, Mathyas — played on screen by Félix-Antoine Duval — soon learns about the many big challenges that such a life entails. Emphasizing both the hardships he experiences and the potential for profound insights about work, love, and everything else that connects us to the world around us, Deraspe uses Mathyas' story to create a wholly immersive and deeply moving experience.

After the screening, join us to lift a glass and toast the start of KCFF25! Patrons attending the opening night film are invited to join us for complimentary drinks and apps in the Isabel lobby following the screening. Big thanks to our hospitality partners MacKinnon Brothers Brewing, Three Dog Winery and Tulips & Maple.



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KINGSTON CANADIAN FILM FESTIVAL



WORLD PREMIERE

SINGLE WOMAN SEEKING CHILD

DIRECTOR: BLAIN WATTERS

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 15 MINUTES



The Festival is thrilled to present the world premiere of this delightful and deeply personal film by former Kingstonian, Blain Watters, the winner of KCFF's 25 Years 25 Minutes Pitch Competition. A screenwriter and director who earned wide renown for co-writing SLEEPING GIANT (KCFF16), Watters based his new short on the experiences of his mother. Vanessa Smythe stars as Sandy, a woman in early-'80s Kingston who bucks the conservative nature of the times when she sets out to fulfill her dreams of motherhood (mostly) on her own. Continually enriched by its warmth, humour and generous supply of local colour, Watters' short is the best kind of tribute.

Single Woman Seeking Child will precede the film Still Alive in Kingston. Tickets for this event are sold exclusively through the Kingston Grand Theatre box office and can't be included as a selection on a Festival Pass.



SLAIGHT MUSIC VIDEO SHOWCASE

DIRECTORS: VARIOUS

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 65 MINUTES

KINGSTON



The Slaight Music Video Showcase is back for its fourth edition! In partnership with the Kingston Music Office, KCFF provides core funding, marketing, promotion, and of course a chance to walk the red carpet for the world premiere at the Fest. The 2025 Showcase will unveil 11 brand new music videos, all in contention for both an audience and juried prize. All ticket-holders get a ballot to help us choose the audience winner!

Production companies + musicians:
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 HAPPY KID PRODUCTIONS X THE GERTRUDES
 JL CREATIVE AGENCY X THE BACKSTEPS
 LITTLE MENACE PRODUCTIONS X KASADOR
 REAR GEAR PRODUCTIONS X MEGAN HAMILTON
 BRANDED TO FILM X MANIC SONIC

A ticket to this event includes the post-show Slaight Music Video Showcase afterparty... ROCK ON!

Tickets for this event are sold exclusively through the Kingston Grand Theatre box office and can't be included as a selection on a Festival Pass.



SO SURREAL: BEHIND THE MASKS

DIRECTOR: NEIL DIAMOND, JOANNE ROBERTSON

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 88 MINUTES



One of the most influential movements in the history of 20th-century art, surrealism was itself strongly influenced by Indigenous artists, creators and craftspeople who never gained the fame accorded to Max Ernst and Joan Miró. Directors Neil Diamond and Joanne Robertson make it their mission to uncover the connections between the work of surrealist artists and the Kwakwaka'wakw and Yup'ik ceremonial masks that ended up in studios, museums and collections far from their points of origin. But what might've been a dry lesson in art history becomes a lively, playful and thought-provoking documentary about the fascinating journeys that these masks wended through the art world and the contemporary efforts to return them to their rightful homes.



WORLD PREMIERE

STILL ALIVE IN KINGSTON

DIRECTOR: JASON MIDDAUGH

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 90 MINUTES



Writer-director Jay Middaugh and leading man Bill Welychka have a very good time blurring the line between fact and fiction in this "non-canonical sequel" to the much-loved movie that made a big splash at KCFF17. Showing off his comedy chops in a role based loosely on himself, Welychka stars as an entertainment journalist who's feeling down on his luck until he gets a chance to achieve the national prominence he once enjoyed. But in the course of creating his demo reel — which also serves as a showcase for some of Kingston's most exceptional musical talent, including The Wilderness, Keaton, Luella and Miss Emily — Bill's meetings and misadventures help him to escape his inertia and truly find his place in his new community. As a warm and funny tribute to Kingston and the people who provide it with so much richness and texture, this follow-up will no doubt be another hearty hometown welcome. A world premiere at KCFF25!

Tickets for this event are sold exclusively through the Kingston Grand Theatre box office and can't be included as a selection on a Festival Pass.



WORLD PREMIERE

THE 18 MM PROGRAM

DIRECTORS: VARIOUS

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH, FRENCH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

RUNTIME: 90 MINUTES

LEAD SPONSOR:

DIANE BLAKE AND

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In its second year, KCFF's 18 MM PROGRAM offers youth (18 and under) a free opportunity to learn, collaborate, access mentorship and equipment, and ultimately create a short film to premiere on the big screen at the Festival! Led by our program director, Ahmed Ismaiel Nour, the 18 MM PROGRAM spans nearly 10 months, start to finish, and these 11 short films are the end result. Take note of these names as many will be the filmmakers of tomorrow! All films in this program are automatically considered for the Best 18 MM PROGRAM Award, presented on March 2 at the KCFF Awards Party!

ONE NIGHT ONLY (CONLAN SLEETH)

STILL HERE (NAOMI OWEN)

VALUE (JANEVRA PIER)

WHISPERS IN THE WOODS (RANE GIBBS)

LAST STOP (SAIF AMER)

LEFT ASHORE (MALEAH GOMEZ, DAPHNE RAYMOND)

THE VIOLINIST (LUCIE POIRIER)

THE POMEGRANATE (LINDEN PIER)

TRIALS OF THE SHOW (SEB HEIL)

SKATE (KEVA SEITZ)

BEYOND THE CALCULATIONS (FILIA TOBLO)

Applications for the 2025-26 18 MM PROGRAM are open! Info on our website at kingcanfilmfest.com



THE HEIRLOOM

DIRECTOR: BEN PETRIE

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 87 MINUTES



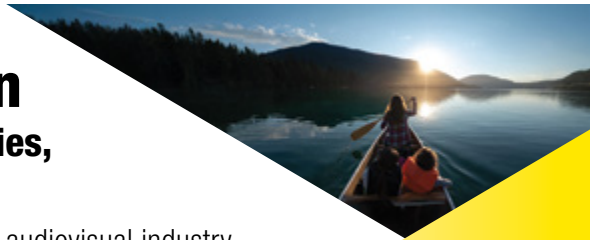
As many of us know firsthand, the enforced proximity caused by the pandemic had some unpredictable effects on our closest relationships. Yet for the characters in this nervy combination of psychological thriller and mutant rom-com, the claustrophobic conditions provoke behaviour that may be more than concerning. Played by real-life couple Ben Petrie and Grace Glowicki — whose past collaborations include Petrie's ingenious 2016 short HER FRIEND ADAM and Glowicki's edgy 2019 feature debut TITO — Eric and Allie get stuck on the idea of adopting a dog. Needless to say, the intensity of this obsession may not benefit anyone in this household, whether human or animal. With elements like Matt Johnson's cameo further heightening the absurdity at hand, Petrie's feature debut makes for a bracing and very memorable study of partners under extreme duress.

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THE HOBBY

DIRECTOR: SIMON ENNIS

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 88 MINUTES



A big-hearted testament to the meaning we find in supposedly meaningless pursuits, this documentary brings viewers into a remarkable community of people who share a deep and abiding devotion to board games. With subjects that include an erudite games historian, several aspiring designers and the many fierce competitors at the World Series of Board Games in Las Vegas, **THE HOBBY** presents this bustling subculture from a variety of perspectives, emphasizing the diversity that exists within it. Even better is the joyful and endlessly curious spirit that suffuses this effort by Simon Ennis, a filmmaker who was last at the Festival with **LUNARCY!** (KCFF13), a look at some of the moon's biggest fans. His latest expresses just as much affection for all the proud games nerds on screen.



THE LAST MEAL

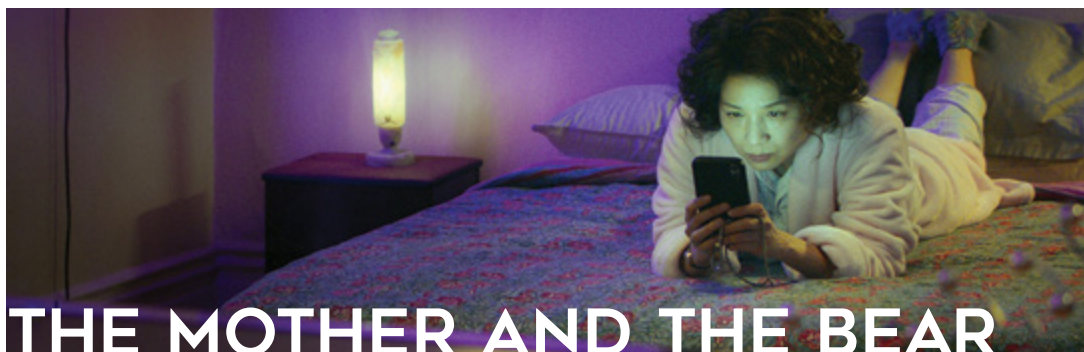
DIRECTOR: MARYSE LEGAGNEUR

LANGUAGE: FRENCH, ENGLISH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

RUNTIME: 111 MINUTES



A powerful story of the traumas suffered by Haitians during the Duvalier regime and their long-lasting effects on families, this drama marks a confident shift to feature filmmaking by documentarian Maryse Legagneur. Gilbert Laumond stars as Reynold, a Montreal man with terminal stomach cancer. Before he goes, he has a chance to repair his relationship with Vanessa (Marie-Evelyne Lessard), his long-estranged daughter. Retold as he eats his daughter's efforts to replicate his favourite meals from back home, Reynold's stories of his experiences in Haiti — including his brutal incarceration — become Vanessa's own opportunity to understand the impact they had on her father. The grand prize winner at the Quebec City Film Festival, Legagneur's film brings a dark chapter in history into the light with great courage and sensitivity.



THE MOTHER AND THE BEAR

DIRECTOR: JOHNNY MA

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH, KOREAN (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

RUNTIME: 100 MINUTES


St. Lawrence
College

Mixing moments of melancholy, poignancy and humour, the latest by writer-director Johnny Ma takes a highly original approach to his film's themes of cultural dislocation and familial relations. After her adult daughter sustains an injury on an icy Winnipeg street that puts her in a coma, Sara (Kim Ho-jung) comes from South Korea to be at her bedside in hospital. Yet even amid this stressful situation, Sara can't help herself from meddling in her daughter's life, a life that she may not know much about at all. Trading in the harder tone of his startling feature debut OLD STONE (KCFF17) for warmer ones that shift from the naturalistic to the wildly surreal, Ma presents a story about family and community that takes many farcical turns yet remains all too relatable.



UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

DIRECTOR: MATTHEW RANKIN

LANGUAGE: PERSIAN, FRENCH (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

RUNTIME: 89 MINUTES


Association canadienne d'éducation de film et de
vidéo
Canadian Film and Video Association

Matthew Rankin's weird and wonderful imagination has served him well in his many inventive shorts and in his first feature THE TWENTIETH CENTURY (KCFF20), but the Winnipeg-bred, Montreal-based filmmaker reaches a new plateau of awe-inspiring oddness with his extraordinary second feature. An absurdist tragicomedy with a series of interconnected tales, it's set in an alternate universe but still plenty wintry version of Winnipeg in which the Iranian-Canadian community predominates, such that Farsi and French are Canada's two official languages. The preponderance of turkeys and Kleenex repositories is one of many further whimsical details. Yet however strange Rankin's tactics may seem, he also tells a moving story about the search for home and human connection. Canada's most recent submission for the best international feature at the Academy Awards, it is also one of the year's most acclaimed films, winning major prizes at the Toronto, Vancouver and Melbourne festivals.



VILLAGE KEEPER

DIRECTOR: KAREN CHAPMAN

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 83 MINUTES

PLAYBACK

Living with her teenage children and her own mother in a too-small Scarborough apartment, a woman seeks to break free of generational cycles of family violence and trauma in this beautifully realized debut feature by Toronto's Karen Chapman. Olunike Adeliyi gives a vivid performance as Beverly-Jean, a widow whose behavior suggests she has experienced violence but dares not speak about it. Yet when she comes to see the trouble that it causes her kids, she begins a process of healing that will affect everyone around her. Both poignant and perceptive as a story about the effects of violence, Chapman's drama extends such care and empathy to its characters that viewers will feel like they're part of the same warm embrace.



YOUNG WERTHER

DIRECTOR: JOSÉ AVELINO GILLES CORBETT LOURENÇO

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 101 MINUTES

 **Empire
Life**

In transforming Goethe's 18th-century novella about a doomed love affair into the stuff of a stylish, snappy, and very modern rom-com, José Avelino Gilles Corbett Lourenço performs what surely qualifies as a magic trick. The charms of the Toronto-based filmmaker and writer's debut feature are greatly enhanced by the efforts of an exemplary cast led by British actor Douglas Booth and Canada's own Alison Pill (*ALL MY PUNY SORROWS*, KCFF22). Booth plays Werther, a literary-minded young man who sees his chance for a grand romance when he meets Charlotte (Pill). Perceiving her engagement to Albert (Patrick J. Adams of *Suits*) as an obstacle to be overcome, Werther pursues his campaign without fully realizing the costs of his actions until too late. But rather than descend into Goethe's gloom, Lourenço aims for a very different direction with his reinterpretation, which is as delightful as it is unpredictable.

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13 March 2025 / 7:30 PM

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featuring China Forbes
22 March 2025 / 7:30 PM

Ladysmith Black Mambazo

28 March 2025 / 7:30 PM

Cirque Kalabanté

- Afrique en Cirque
11 April 2025 / 7:30 PM

Bageshree Vaze's

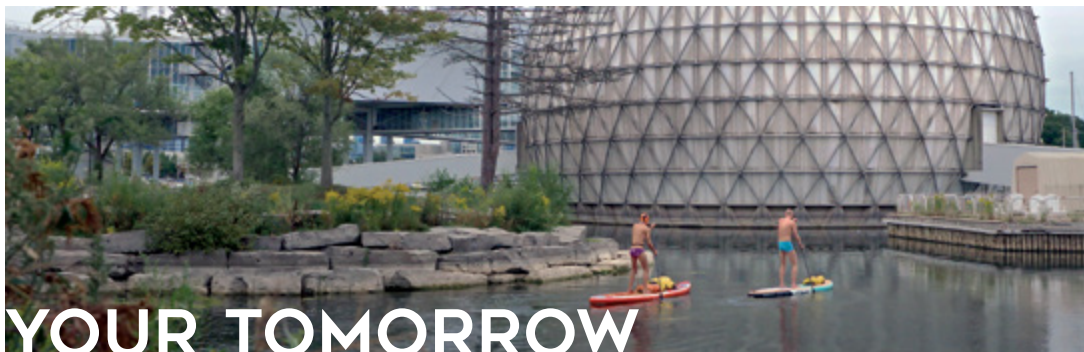
Global Bollywood
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YOUR TOMORROW

DIRECTOR: ALI WEINSTEIN

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RUNTIME: 96 MINUTES



CIBC PRIVATE WEALTH
WOOD GUNDY

From its opening in 1971 to its recent closure as part of a controversial redevelopment plan, Ontario Place always meant something more than just a series of parks, venues and one big dome at Toronto's lakeside. Through its early heyday, it served as a sort of utopian ideal of public space in Canada. Filmmaker Ali Weinstein captures the sad end to that dream in a documentary that was shot during Ontario Place's final year of operations. By contrasting the experiences and perspectives of staff members and visitors with archival images of the park in happier and more hopeful times, her film invites viewers to ponder what was and what could've been. Thankfully, moments of wry and quirky humour continually alleviate the poignant tone.



YOUTH SHORTS

DIRECTORS: VARIOUS

LANGUAGE: VARIOUS (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

RUNTIME: 90 MINUTES



Our YOUTH SHORTS program showcases the work from local youth exploring the possibilities of the medium. Some films are shot with pro cameras, others are shot on cell phones, some scripts are detailed, others are totally improvised — this program shows the creativity and imagination of Kingston's young storytellers! All the filmmakers in this category are high-schoolers or younger (this year one filmmaker is only 9 years old — the youngest in KCFF history). Films in this program are automatically considered for the Best Youth Short Award, presented on March 2 at the KCFF Awards Party!

For a list of the films and filmmakers included in the Youth Shorts Program, please visit kingcanfilmfest.com



FESTIVAL EVENTS

KCFF is much more than a weekend at the movies! In addition to the films, the Festival hosts parties and receptions, live music and comedy, in-conversation events, a dedicated Creative Industries Day, and lots more! Many of these details are announced close to the Festival start date and don't appear in the program guide. For full info on the special events and to find out which special guests will be in attendance for post-screening Q&As, visit kingcanfilmfest.com. While not a comprehensive list, here's just a few of the special events coming to KCFF25...

DWAYNE GRETZKY: LIVE AT THE GRAND

FEB. 27, 7:00 PM, KINGSTON GRAND THEATRE



Canada's reigning champs of nostalgia have put together a special show for KCFF25, featuring a selection of songs from movie soundtracks of the '70s, '80s, and '90s, plus many other singalongs. Band leaders Nick Rose and Tyler Kyte have many acting credits of their own, including recurring roles in Canadian TV shows (*Republic of Doyle*, *24 Hour Rental*, *Instant Star*) and they know how to put on a show.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES DAY

FEB. 28, ISABEL BADER CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS



We're stoked for the second edition of Creative Industries Day presented by KCFF and Queen's Film & Media! Ideal for students, emerging filmmakers, and local industry, Creative Industries Day features six panels, mixers, and table talks with Festival guests, industry pros and Queen's alumni. Creative Industries Day also includes our longest running networking event, Breaking In, which has led to countless collaborations... and sometimes employment!

JEREMY HOTZ: TRÈS MISÉRABLES

FEB. 28, 7:00 PM, KINGSTON GRAND THEATRE



Veteran stand-up and actor (*The Newsroom*, *Speed 2: Cruise Control*), Jeremy Hotz invites you to join him and his renowned dog Shack on their journey across North America as they celebrate the milestone of his 10th national tour, *Très Misérables!* It's a brand-new show filled with Jeremy's iconic miserable jokes and mishaps. Catch Jeremy and Shack on night three of KCFF25!

LETTERKENNY'S ALLIE PEARCE + OLIVIA STADLER

FEB. 28, 9:00 PM, BROOM FACTORY



After Jeremy Hotz, bring your leftover laughs to the Broom Factory to catch *Letterkenny* comics, writers, and actors Allie Pearce and Olivia Stadler!



JAY BARUCHEL

MAR. 1, 1:00 PM, BROOM FACTORY



KCFF has featured Jay Baruchel on screen for nearly 25 years! During our last big anniversary Fest (our 10th anniversary in 2010), *THE TROTSKY* took home our People's Choice Award. But, unfortunately, we've never had Jay to the Fest...until now! Coming off a huge year with *BLACKBERRY* and his hit show *We're All Gonna Die (Even Jay Baruchel)* we'll sit down to chat with Jay about Canadian film, Canadian television, and maybe even Canadian hockey.

MIX & MINGLE

MAR. 1, 2:00 PM, LE JARDIN

A longtime Festival tradition, Mix & Mingle is a chance for passholders, filmmakers and other special guests to casually come together at the midway point of KCFF. In addition to the riveting Festival conversation, you can also expect delicious apps provided by Le Jardin and tasty beverages courtesy of Three Dog Winery and MacKinnon Brothers Brewing. Attendance is reserved for Festival Passholders on a first-come first-served basis.

CAROLYN TAYLOR

MAR. 1, 4:00 PM, BROOM FACTORY



Award-winning comedian, actor, writer, and showrunner Carolyn Taylor (*Baroness von Sketch Show*, *Workin' Moms*, *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*) will be at the Fest to talk about comedy, her career, and her new show, the quixotic figure-skating docu-comedy *I Have Nothing*. Join us for some of the the first episode, followed by an extensive Q&A with Carolyn!

MURDOCH MYSTERIES

MAR. 1, 7:00 PM, BROOM FACTORY



A show with a deep connection to Kingston, check out this special event featuring cast and crew from *Murdoch Mysteries*! Special guests from the show will take you behind the scenes, with a focus on the landmark 300th episode which was shot in downtown Kingston last year. Make sure to bring your questions for the extended Q&A — here's your chance to solve any lingering mysteries behind *Murdoch Mysteries*!

KCFF AWARDS PARTY

MAR. 2, 6:30 PM, BROOM FACTORY



Come celebrate the best of the Fest! On March 2, we'll announce 11 award-winners including our brand-new KCFF Best Canadian Film Award and KCFF Best Canadian First Film Award! For more info on each award, including the juries and prizes, visit kingcanfilmfest.com

Much more programming will be confirmed closer to the Festival start date - for a full list of events, please visit KINGCANFILMFEST.COM



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KCFF could not exist without the support of our amazing community! In 2023, we launched the Circle of Supporters program to offer our wonderful donors a fantastic list of year-round benefits that includes access to special events, VIP experiences, meet-and-greets with emerging talent, tickets, and of course, a charitable tax receipt.

As a charitable organization, we rely on community support to launch and sustain our year-round programs, with all proceeds from our Circle of Supporters program going towards this cause. We currently operate three year-round low/no cost programs that support local youth and emerging filmmakers in their filmmaking journey: the SLAIGHT MUSIC VIDEO PROGRAM, 18 MM PROGRAM, and KCFF DOC FACTORY. In addition to the practical training and skills building on offer, all participants create content that gets to premiere at our annual festival!

We extend our deepest thanks to the KCFF Circle of Supporters Founding Members for your generous support.

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for details on how to join as well as the full list of donor benefits.



KINGSTON

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Murdoch Mysteries (2024)
filmed in Kingston.