



BANFF
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PRODUCERS EDITION
Paramount+



BANFF SPARK Accelerator for Women
in the Business of Media: Producers Edition

2026 PARTICIPANTS



Deydra Baptiste
L'ÉTAT NOIR

With nearly 20 years of experience in the arts and entertainment sector, Deydra brings a unique blend of lived experience and cross-disciplinary expertise. Her passion lies in fresh, multi-genre storytelling that amplifies voices still underrepresented in mainstream media.

Deydra's creative work has been generously supported by Telefilm, Hot Docs, the Black Screen Office, and the National Screen Institute, and explores narratives grounded in her experiences as a first-generation Canadian, Afro-Caribbean, AuDHD woman. Through her production company, she helps marginalized creatives access funding, sharpen their stories, and bring their visions to life through market-ready pitches.

At the core of her career is a commitment to advocacy and amplification—especially for disabled and marginalized creatives—through hands-on creative consulting, mentorship, and guidance.

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Jennifer Beasley
Fiasco Global Media

Jennifer Beasley is Vice President of Television Development at Buffalo Gal Pictures and President of the newly launched Fiasco Global Media. A WGC-nominated writer turned Executive Producer, she brings over two decades of experience across Canadian television and film, spanning scripted comedy and drama as well as feature development and production.

Jennifer began her career in the camera department before transitioning into scripted television in 2008. A graduate of the Canadian Film Centre's Prime Time Television Program, she launched her writing career on the award-winning comedy *LESS THAN KIND*, where her co-written Season 2 finale earned a WGC Comedy Writing Award nomination. She went on to write and story edit for critically acclaimed series including *CRA\$H & BURN* (Showcase) and *MEN WITH BROOMS* (CBC).

At Buffalo Gal Pictures, Jennifer has played a key role across development and production, earning Supervising Producer and Production Executive credits on features such as *A VERY SORDID WEDDING* (2017), *LOOK AWAY* (2018), *SIBERIA* (2018), and *JT LEROY* (2018). Her recent television credits include Executive Producer and Producer on the four-season Indigenous-led comedy *ACTING GOOD* (CTV Comedy/APTN), one of CTV's most-watched comedies, and Executive Producer on the procedural *THE SPENCER SISTERS* (CTV/The CW), a co-production with Lionsgate Canada.

Her most recent feature credit is Executive Producer on *RUMOURS* (2025), a political satire directed by Guy Maddin and co-directed by Evan Johnson and Galen Johnson, starring Cate Blanchett and Roy Dupuis.

In early 2025, Jennifer launched Fiasco Global Media, an independent television development company focused on character-driven series built around authentic voices, distinctive perspectives, and richly drawn ensembles. The company develops stories grounded in lived experience, with an emphasis on bold, emotionally resonant characters that travel across markets while remaining rooted in place. She previously served on multiple On Screen Manitoba committees and was Co-Chair of the Board of Directors from 2020–2023.

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Josiane Blanc
Diversified Voices Productions

Josiane is a writer, director, and producer whose work often explores social issues and cultural interactions. Named as one of Playback magazine's 10 To Watch, she has had the opportunity to dedicate the past five years to writing, directing, and producing various projects. These include her documentaries WORDS LEFT UNSPOKEN, LOUD&HERE, TALES OF ORDINARY FATPHOBIA, and two seasons of her scripted series AINSI VA MANU/HOGTOWN. A 2024 alumni of the TIFF Series Accelerator, Josiane's work has received over 50 nominations and 22 awards, including three Canadian Screen Awards, five Gemini nominations, and one Kidscreen Awards nomination for Best Series, Best Screenplay, and Best Director. She also co-produced, co-wrote, and co-directed season 1 of the half-hour dramedy HOTEL BEIRUT (8x30), which premiered at the Cinemania Festival in October 2024. Her upcoming projects include the feature documentary Endo-guerrières and the drama feature, WHICH WAY HOME.

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Tanya Brunel
White Bear Films

Tanya Brunel, Red River Métis from Manitoba, has been developing and producing motion picture, television and digital media content with a focus on Indigenous narratives since 2001.

Her recent projects include the multiple award-winning films JULIANA & THE MEDICINE FISH, THE CORRUPTION OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE, feature documentaries THE COVER UP and COMING HOME, and the six part limited drama series LITTLE BIRD. LITTLE BIRD, distributed internationally by Fremantle, premiered at Series Mania in France, where it won the Audience Choice Award. It was also nominated for 19 Canadian Screen Awards, winning 13, including Best Drama Series. Her latest project, MANY WOUNDS, a feature film based on the New Zealand film Once Were Warriors, starring Sera-Lys McArthur, Alex Meraz, and Kiowa Gordon, is scheduled for release in 2025.

Tanya is an alumni of the Transatlantic Partners, Producers Without Borders, the Banff Diversity of Voices Initiative, and the Banff Spark Accelerator for Women in the Business of Media. She most recently served as Program Manager for the National Screen Institute's 2022 Indigenous Storyteller Edition, and is currently a mentor for Cultural Industries Ontario's Cinema Ascent program and the Empowering BIPOC program at PictureNL.

Tanya is a board member of the Reelworld Screen Institute and the Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA) serving as the Vice-Chair of Industrial Relations and the Indigenous Producers Working Group.

Tanya was twice nominated for the CMPA Established Producer Indiescreen Award in 2020 and 2023 for her work as a Producer.

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Vanessa Caceres
Righteous Pictures

Vanessa Caceres was born in Colombia, where she studied Industrial Engineering before moving to Canada in 2003 and setting her sights on film production. In 2005, her first production, the short film CARJACKING, was selected for the Montreal World Film Festival. In 2009, she was a line producer on TRANSIT, which was released theatrically in Canada by eOne Films. Her first feature as a producer, GENERATION WOLF, had an extensive festival run, winning Best Latin Film at the Borrego Springs Film Festival, and was acquired by Samuel Goldwyn Films in 2016. Her second feature, THE OFFICE GAMES, was later acquired by Quiver Distribution.

Vanessa's commitment to her craft led her to several industry programs, including the Sundance Collab Producing Program (2020), the Reelworld Producer Program (2021–2022), and the SODEC Lab at Hot Docs (2023). Representing Reelworld, she appeared at Content Canada (2022) and Prime Time Ottawa (2023), and in 2024 she completed the Training Lab organized by Amazon MGM Studios.

Her most recent dramatic feature, INVISIBLE AMERICA, which she both wrote and produced, shines a light on the plight of migrant workers in North America and is currently on the festival circuit. Vanessa also ventured into documentary film with MY FRIEND OMAR, supported by the CMF, Radio-Canada, and CBC. The film, which follows the battle of a seasonal worker fighting for status in Canada, premiered on television and major platforms in May and June 2024.

She is passionate about socially engaged, character-driven stories with international reach.

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Uga Carlini **Towerkop Creations**

Uga Carlini is a multi-award-winning producer, screenwriter, director, and the founder of Towerkop Creations—a production company devoted to heroine-centered, emotionally charged storytelling. Since 2010, Carlini has carved out a distinct creative identity across fiction, documentary, hybrid forms, music videos, and commercial content, crafting work defined by emotional precision, mythic resonance, and a deeply human lens.

Her producing slate includes the internationally acclaimed *ALISON*, the Netflix hit *ANGELIENA*, and the hybrid feature *BEYOND THE LIGHT BARRIER* for Amazon Prime. Alongside her feature work, she has created high-impact music videos for Sony—reaching millions of viewers—and produced content across reality, branded storytelling, and short-form formats. Recognised as a 2025 Chicken & Egg Award Nominee, GEMS 2025 Emerging TV Producers Program participant, and 2023 Academy Gold Fellowship Nominee, Carlini continues to expand her creative footprint with female driven heroine storytelling.

Through Towerkop Creations, she champions minority voices and stories often excluded from traditional market pathways, developing content with clear export potential and multi-territory growth. Her work sits at the intersection of resilience, identity, and reinvention, drawing from lived experience and a global creative lineage.

Carlini's Canadian development slate currently includes the midlife immigrant comedy TV series *THE MAN MANUAL* and two prestige features shaped by her signature blend of emotional depth and global appeal. Guided by her belief that "we make films that remember who we are, reveal who we can become, and deliver globally resonant stories for today's audiences," Carlini brings a uniquely personal, courageous, and creatively generous vision to the evolving landscape of Canadian cinema that can travel globally.

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Laurie Case
Lake Tide Media Inc.

With over 30 years of experience in film and television, Laurie is an accomplished senior producer in Vancouver's television market.

In 2021, Laurie partnered with long-time colleague Deborah Wainwright to establish Lake Tide Media Inc. Together, they have developed a slate of socially focused projects and produced three one-hour documentaries for CBC's **THE PASSIONATE EYE: ACROSS AND DOWN**, **DOPPLEGANGERS: FACE TO FACE**, and **SWIPE.BEAT.REPEAT**.

Prior to founding Lake Tide, Laurie served as series producer on CBC's acclaimed four-part series **THE OLAND MURDER**, and in 2016/17 held the role as Senior VP of Force Four Entertainment, overseeing the company's Vancouver production slate. Case was also at the helm of **BORDER SECURITY: AMERICA'S FRONT LINE** for three seasons, and in the producer role on **BORDER SECURITY: CANADA'S FRONT LINE** for three seasons. With a diverse range of credits in a variety of roles, Laurie is known for her strong narrative instincts and strategic oversight – bringing deep experience and a steady hand to every phase of production.

Laurie also played key roles on critically acclaimed documentaries such as **THE WILD HORSE REDEMPTION** (CBC/TIFF selection), and **THE SUICIDE TOURIST** (CTV/Gemini winner). Beyond her professional work, she has dedicated more than 25 years to producing, writing, and co-directing films for Hope International Development Agency, helping raise millions of dollars for communities in need around the world.

When she's not making television, Laurie is a mom, wife, avid skier, and softball player. She also contributes her communications skills to two local non-profits.

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Flordeliza Dayrit

Milo Productions Inc.

Flordeliza Dayrit is the Co-Founder and Chief Creative Officer at Milo Productions Inc., an international media company dedicated to producing culturally rich, globally engaging entertainment for young audiences. A visionary Filipino-Canadian storyteller, she is committed to telling meaningful stories that highlight under-represented cultures, and diverse histories, for kids and families.

Flordeliza is recognized as a Netflix Diversity of Voices Fellow, a Banff Sparks Recipient for Women in Media, and has been named one of the world's Most Influential Muslims by The Muslim 500. Her creative work blends cultural depth with adventure-driven storytelling, inspiring young audiences to see themselves in global narratives.

She is the co-writer and director of *Time Hoppers: The Silk Road*, the first installment in Milo Productions' adventure franchise. The film was released across MENA and Africa in more than 300 theatres in October 2025, marking a significant milestone for diverse children's content in mainstream cinema. It is set to expand its reach internationally with a first quarter of 2026 theatrical release across the United States and Canada in over 750 screens. A UK release will follow later in 2026.

Flordeliza's work aims to bridge cultures, connect young audiences to world history, and inspire curiosity about global civilizations. With a focus on authentic representation, she continues to develop film, television, publishing, and interactive projects that spark imagination in children worldwide.

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Paula Devonshire
Devonshire Productions Inc.

Paula Devonshire is an Indigenous Canadian Mohawk from the Bay of Quinte First Nation. She has collaborated with renowned filmmakers such as Neil Jordan, Atom Egoyan, George A. Romero, and Alex Kurtzman. She was the first Canadian to participate in the Inside Pictures Producer Program in London, England.

Devonshire worked as a TV production executive at eOne, where she produced the TV adaptation of John Grisham's **THE FIRM**. Her production credits also include popular shows like **VIKINGS**, **PEOPLE OF EARTH**, the Emmy-nominated **STAR TREK**, and **CLARICE**, based on **The Silence of the Lambs**.

She produced two sequels to the critically acclaimed film **GINGER SNAPS** with Copper Heart Entertainment, where she also contributed to the Oscar-winning animated film **RYAN**. Additionally, she produced George Romero's **DIARY OF THE DEAD** (Sundance, TIFF) and **SURVIVAL OF THE DEAD** (Venice, TIFF). She also worked on **REAL TIME**, which premiered on opening night at Slamdance and TIFF, as well as Atom Egoyan's **REMEMBER** (Venice, TIFF), starring Christopher Plummer (Venice, TIFF). Other projects include **INDIAN HORSE**, which was executive produced by Clint Eastwood, Neil Jordan's **GRETA**, starring Isabelle Huppert and Chloë Grace Moretz, and Zoe Hopkins' **RUN WOMAN RUN**.

Devonshire recently premiered three films at TIFF in 2025, **BLOOD LINES** by TIFF Top 10 winner Gail Maurice, **STEAL AWAY** by world renowned Clement Virgo, and **NIKA & MADISON** Nika & Madison by award winning director Eva Thomas. Paula was presented with the CMPA Indie Screen award for Feature Producer of the year at the opening night of TIFF 2025.

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Lauren Grant

Clique Pictures

Clique Pictures is a vibrant film and television production company that focuses on working with female creative talent in front and behind the camera. Owned by award-winning filmmaker Lauren Grant, the company is based in Toronto, Canada. MODERN WHORE by Nicole Bazuin and Andrea Werhun with executive producer Sean Baker is her latest production. The film premiered at TIFF and has been awarded two Best Feature Documentary Awards (Silverwave & CUFF), one Jury Award (CUFF Docs), and a special mention for the TIDES award from VIFF. Known for her producing work, her films include SUGAR DADDY, THE RETREAT, RIOT GIRLS, WET BUM, PICTURE DAY, as well as the documentaries WILFRED BUCK, ON THE LINE, METAMORPHOSIS, and TRACEABLE. Lauren served as Executive Producer on THE STICKY for Amazon. Her directorial debut short film THINGS WE FEEL BUT DO NOT SAY screened at festivals in North America before premiering on CBC. Her latest short film ERASE & REWIND won the Golden Sheaf Mental Health award at the Yorkton Film Festival. Her feature screenplay AFTERWARDS was named to the WScripted Cannes Screenplay List in 2024 under head juror Vanessa Kirby. She won a Canadian Screen Award for the short documentary TAKE A WALK ON THE WILDSIDE and a Genie award for SAVAGE. The Hollywood Reporter named Lauren one of 15 Talents to Watch, and she is an alumna of ACE Producers, Rotterdam Lab, Berlinale Talent Campus, and TIFF Studio. She's currently completing her Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing at the University of British Columbia.

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Kate Green
Kate Green Productions Inc.

Kate Green is an award-winning director and producer known for her cinematic storytelling and her ability to forge deep emotional connections with audiences. A creative leader committed to vibrant, authentic women-centered narratives, she brings a strong visual and intuitive sensibility to every project.

Her feature documentary *MENOPAUSE: COMING IN HOT* (TELUS Originals) premiered at the Whistler Film Festival 2025. She is also releasing her World War II short drama *BREAKTHROUGH*, starring William B. Davis, in 2026. Kate produced the short-form series *One ONE BABY PLEASE* (OUTtv) and is launching a new company dedicated to Vertical Micro Dramas debuting in 2026.

Kate created and directed the sci-fi series *NARCOLEAP* (TELUS Optik TV, CBC GEM, Highball TV), which earned multiple Canadian Screen Award nominations, Writers Guild of Canada and Leo nods, and international festival wins including “Best Sci-Fi” at Miami Web Fest, Baltimore Next Media, and Asia Web Awards. With more than 300K views and 2.4M in social reach, Season 2 continued its success, winning Best Digital Series at the Blood in the Snow Festival.

Her earlier documentaries *NOT A STRANGER* and *MELTING STARS* received multiple festival honours, while her short film *MURPHY'S LAW* (CBC, CBC GEM) won Best Horror Thriller at the Wild Bunch Film Festival.

Kate has directed and produced factual and lifestyle programming for Oxygen, HGTV, W Network, CBC, History, Discovery, Fuel TV, and Channel 4. She recently worked in the Challenge Department for *FEAR FACTOR: THE NEXT CHAPTER* with Johnny Knoxville and served as Segment Director on Netflix's hit *MILLION DOLLAR SECRET* Season 2.

She is an alumna of Vancouver Island University, the University of British Columbia, Women in the Director's Chair, the National Screen Institute, the Reykjavík International Film Festival Talent Lab, and the Whistler Producer's Lab.

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Amanda Handy
Nomad Films Inc.

Amanda took over ownership of Nomad Films in 2023 after serving as Producer and Partner for 16 years. Successfully leveraging her diverse film and television experience that included running the Business Affairs and Marketing departments for some of Canada's biggest drama and documentary production houses. Amanda has a passion for film and television, expertise in producing international coproductions, and her strengths lie in her ability to see projects through from the initial development of creative ideas all the way to the distribution of the final product. She has created and implemented several initiatives to position Nomad as a leading company in the film and television industry.

Since joining Nomad, Amanda has worked as a producer on the critically acclaimed documentaries *WHEN WE WERE BOYS* (Official Hot Docs, and True False Film Festival Selections), *THE AL QAEDA CODE* (Banff Rockie Awards Nominee), the four part documentary series *EMPIRE OF THE WORLD* (Banff Rockie Awards Nominee), as well as Nomad's first drama feature film, the Afghan-based *ACT OF DISHONOUR* (Official Selection for the Edinburgh Festival). Amanda has most recently produced five seasons of *POLITICAL BLIND DATE* (TVO, CPAC, The Toronto Star), *COMPANY TOWN* (CBC's POV), *GIRAFFES: THE FORGOTTEN GIANTS* (CBC's The Nature of Things, PBS International), and *YEARBOOK* (TVO).

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Kat Kelly Hayduk

Turtlebox Productions Inc.

Kat Kelly Hayduk has three decades of experience in media production. In the late 1990s, she worked as a production supervisor at DreamWorks Animation on **THE PRINCE OF EGYPT** and **SHREK**. After meeting her Canadian husband, Kat moved to Vancouver and began working in video game production at Electronic Arts (EA). In 2009, she left EA to co-found Turtlebox Productions with her husband, Cam.

Turtlebox produces live-action and animated properties for kids and families. In 2023, they created a factual tween series for TVOKids called **AINARA'S BOOKSHELF**, and produced a live-action pilot for an unscripted series for YouTube Originals. They've also created five short films for Sesame and a 2022 Kidscreen and Youth Media Alliance Award-winning series of digital shorts for Peacock Jr. called **MARIA: MINI-EXPLORER**. Their work includes live-action content for several WGBH/PBS Kids series including **THE RUFF RUFFMAN SHOW**, **DESIGN SQUAD GLOBAL** (Daytime Emmy nominated) and the **PINKALICIOUS & PETERIFFIC SHOW**. In 2025, Turtlebox released three digital series: the stop-motion show **BUMPADOO!** for TVOKids, **MINI-EXPLORERS!** for Shaftesbury Kids, and the music video series **BABY BAND** for Peacock Jr.

Turtlebox's tagline is "Making Meaningful Fun," which reflects their commitment to producing media that is both engaging and inspiring.

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Allia Janzen
Campfire Stories Inc.

Allia Janzen is a mixed-race South Asian Canadian Producer and Director. She grew up navigating the very different worlds between Saskatchewan, Canada and New Delhi, India. Creatively, her approach to projects is informed by her disability and being a BIPOC woman. This brings a lens to her storytelling that is genuine and respectful. Her allyship extends to mentoring and creating space for other marginalized communities. She is a partner in the production company, Campfire Stories who produce the award-winning children's television show STORIES OF THE NORTH on Citytv Saskatchewan.

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Karen King
Ratings Unltd Inc.

Karen A. King is an award-winning producer, broadcaster, and senior executive recognized for her groundbreaking contributions to Canada's screen industry. A member of Canada's Who's Who, she was the first Black woman in Canada to produce a feature film and the first to premiere at the Cannes Film Festival. As Senior Production Executive at Global Television, Karen oversaw acclaimed scripted series including DA KINK IN MY HAIR and COMBAT HOSPITAL. At Quebecor, as Executive Director of Independent Production, she managed multimillion-dollar production funds, led the launch of Toronto 1, and advanced inclusive commissioning strategies across commercial, documentary, and scripted projects. Earlier, at the National Film Board of Canada, Karen served on the Special Mandate Team for Cultural Diversity, where she produced award-winning documentaries and initiatives that broadened representation and proved that stories from diverse communities could achieve both critical and commercial success. Recipient of the Excellence in Media Award and named a Woman of Honor, Karen remains the only two-time winner of the Canada Award for programming that best reflects the nation's diversity on and off screen. She is the founding Vice President of the Black Film and Video Network, a former director of Women in Film and Television (WIFT), Canadian Women in Communications, the Advisory Panel of the Ryerson School of Media and the Broadcast Standards Council of Ontario. Karen is a gifted speaker and trainer committed to making the industry more inclusive so it can better serve today's markets.

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Jenna MacMillan
Club Red Productions

Jenna MacMillan is an award-winning filmmaker and founder of Club Red Productions. Her feature directorial debut THE SNAKE (written by and starring Susan Kent) is slated to premiere in 2026. She produced the internationally sold thriller A SMALL FORTUNE, the hit comedy WHO'S YER FATHER (Paramount+), and the groundbreaking AMI comedy series PRETTY BLIND. Jenna also serves as Executive Director of Anchor Fest and is a recipient of multiple industry honours, including WIFT-AT's Filmmaker of the Year and DGC Atlantic's Making Waves Award. She was named one of Playback Magazine's 10 to Watch in 2025.

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Naomi Mark

Midnight Light

Naomi Mark is a multi-hyphenate storyteller who works across genres in both documentary and scripted film and television. Her award-winning films have been commissioned by CBC and Knowledge Network and have screened in festivals around the world.

Varied in genre, Naomi's films range from emotive character-driven documentaries that explore family bonds and the nature of grief to quirky comedies that dive into environmental and social issues. Some of Naomi's films include UNDERDOG (2016 Short of the Week), THE ARCTICS (winner of the 2021 Yorkton Film Festival's Golden Sheaf Multicultural Award), and the feature length documentary HOW TO BEE (winner of the 2019 RIFF Marilyn Mason Award).

Naomi is an alumna of Women in the Director's Chair, Telefilm Talent-to-Watch, GEMS Emerging TV Producer Program, and Hot Docs Accelerator.

In 2017 Naomi co-founded the Yukon-based production company, Midnight Light, with partner Marty O'Brien.

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Émilie Martel

Kannon Films

Émilie is a Franco-Ontarian with mixed Québécois and Huron-Wendat ancestry. She has directed, written, and produced a diverse range of series spanning various genres, most of which are her original creations. She has directed and produced two seasons of the animated youth series called LES MÉTIS: NOTRE CULTURE, NOS HISTOIRES (19x13min); the Gémeaux-nominated non-scripted tween cooking series, PETITES BOUCHÉES DU MONDE, (33x13min), and the fictional teen series about girls in a hockey league called GANG DE HOCKEY (8x13min). She also directed and produced a diverse portfolio of non-fiction series and independent films such as ALIAS MARIE-SOLEIL (1x48min), QUIMSACOCHA (1x8min), AU CŒUR DU YUKON (7x52 min), and 180 (14x22min). Her projects have received support from Telefilm Canada, Ontario Creates, Hot Docs, the Canadian Council for the Arts, the Ontario Art Council, among others. In 2018, she received the Canadian Women Artists' Award from the New York State Council on the Arts. She is also an alumna of Women in the Director's Chair and the Access BIPOC Producer program from the National Screen Institute of Canada. She is currently working on a portfolio of fiction and non-fiction series, shining a spotlight on women-centric stories, cultural diversity, and environmental themes.

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Ashlee Pearce
Picture Show Media

Nominated producer Ashlee Pearce is the founder of Picture Show Media, an Alberta-based production company dedicated to creating distinctive, commercially resonant films and series. Holding a BFA in Theatre and Motion Picture Arts Acting, Ashlee began her career in front of the camera before transitioning into producing, gaining a comprehensive understanding of story, performance, and on-set collaboration.

With more than a decade of industry experience, she has produced over a dozen films for major networks, including Lifetime and The CW, with additional releases on Netflix, Paramount+, Peacock, and TF1. Her strengths include development, financing, scheduling, creative oversight, and delivery, bridging both the creative and operational demands of filmmaking.

During her time with Northern Gateway Films, she helped deliver broadcast and independent features at scale, including the Telefilm National-supported LEGENDS OF CONQUEST 3D, an ambitious immersive feature showcasing her commitment to innovation and global-minded storytelling.

Now leading Picture Show Media, Ashlee is building a slate of original projects that reflect her creative sensibility and passion for character-driven narratives. Upcoming titles include INSTAFAME, a modern psychological horror, and CHRYSALIS OF TIME, an intergenerational drama exploring memory, love and legacy.

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Nadine Pequeneza
HitPlay Productions

Nadine Pequeneza is an award-winning documentary director-producer, writer, and the founder of HitPlay Productions in Toronto. Over the past 10 years, HitPlay's feature films have garnered 12 Canadian Screen Awards and Gemini nominations, and won awards for Best Writing in a Documentary Program, Best Canadian Feature at the Planet in Focus International Film Festival, and a Silver Gavel Award from the American Bar Association. On the festival circuit, HitPlay's films have premiered at Hot Docs, VIFF, DocEdge, Ji.hlava, and other notable festivals.

Pequeneza's fiction screenplays are based on more than two decades of filming true stories around the world. Her first feature screenplay 1047 DAYS was a semi-finalist for the Humanitas New Voices Fellowship 2023, and the adapted short was selected for the CFC/Netflix Calling Card Accelerator. Her second feature RARE EARTH was selected for Stowe Story Labs, Athena Writers Lab and the Alfred P. Sloane Fellowship 2025. Her latest dramatic TV pilot DESCENT was a top-10 finalist in Final Draft's Big Break Competition 2025 and has been selected for The Writers Lab Canada 2026.

HitPlay is currently in production on three feature documentaries: an undisclosed hybrid documentary (Ford Foundation, Perspective Fund, StoryBoard Collective), a Canada-Spain co-production SEEING GREEN (Telus, Knowledge Network, CMF POV, Telefilm, Redford Center, ICAA, ICEC, Caixa) and a Denmark-Canada co-production ACCOUNTERS OF WAR (DK, DFI, CBC, CMF, Rogers).

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Angélique Richer
Mustang Productions Inc.

Angélique Richer is a seasoned producer and passionate entrepreneur who has been active in the television and film industry for 30 years. In 2016, she founded Mustang Productions, an independent company recognized for its agility and creative flair in a rapidly evolving market. Her mission: to produce authentic, inclusive, and deeply human stories that resonate with impact.

Among her recent achievements, the feature documentary *AU BOUTTE DU RIEN PANTOUTE* stood out at the Prix Gémeaux, earning multiple awards including Best Biographical Documentary Program and Best Direction. The series *NIP* also received an Award of Excellence from the Youth Media Alliance.

Committed to the audiovisual community, Angélique has served on the executive committee of Doc Québec and on the board of the Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television, helping advance documentary practices toward greater diversity and equity.

In 2019, she co-founded Kasko with Mohawk-Abenaki filmmaker Angie-Pepper O'Bomsawin—an incubator where creators from diverse backgrounds take an active role in all stages of production. Together, they have produced acclaimed projects such as *BULL'S EYE* and *LITTLE BIG COMMUNITY*, both nominated by the Youth Media Alliance and the Canadian Screen Awards.

Trained in visual arts and currently completing a Bachelor of Management (B.Gest) at HEC Montréal, Angélique brings a rare blend of artistic sensitivity and strategic insight. A respected leader, she stands out for her dynamism, empathy, and remarkable adaptability.

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Renée Claude Riendeau
Lustitia

Award-winning television producer and content creator with over 20 years of experience developing premium documentary series and formats for Canadian and international markets. Founded and leads Groupe Lustitia, specializing in socially conscious documentaries that educate while entertaining. Multiple Gemini Award nominations with a proven track record of creating compelling, authentic content that resonates across cultural boundaries.



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Nataline Rodrigues

Grit & Grace Entertainment

Nataline Rodrigues is a strategic, results driven, entertainment executive with a solid foundation in independent production and a proven track record in broadcasting, known for delivering compelling cross platform content in all genres for global audiences.

Nataline is the founder of Grit & Grace Entertainment, a production company committed to creating inspiring and insightful content for the international market. Her breadth of direct hands-on media expertise includes concept and script development, creative and physical production, service production, talent development, mentorship and training, post-production, budgeting and financing including international co-productions, as well as a deep understanding of regulatory and funding frameworks.

In her roles at Brain Power Studio and Vortex Media, Nataline has developed and produced series, movies and indie features for the global market. Nataline also works as a strategic advisor on LUV TV, a new social network and channel for the romance creator community. As Director of Original Content at Rogers Sports and Media, Nataline oversaw the submission, development, production, and acquisition of original programming for television brands and platforms like Citytv, OMNI, FX and Viceland.

Nataline is known for delivering results that include ratings, revenue and critical acclaim with numerous Christmas and thriller movies, dramatic scripted series like HUDSON AND REX, WONG & WINCHESTER, BAD BLOOD, NIRVANA THE BAND THE SHOW, and unscripted international formats like CANADA'S GOT TALENT, BACHELOR CANADA, STORAGE WARS CANADA, as well as Vice originals like VICE GUIDE TO FILM AND COMEDY.

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BANFF SPARK Accelerator for Women in the Business of Media: Producers Edition 2026



Priyanka Shailendra

Dancing Panda Films

Priyanka Shailendra has been part of the Indian film industry for over 15 years, gaining extensive experience in film production, direction, and writing. As a member of a renowned Bollywood family of writers and lyricists, she has been immersed in cinema and music since childhood and aspires to create magic through visuals. She has written three Bollywood feature films that are currently in progress: THE ARTIST, BLOODY STORY, and ME, which were crafted for different entities in India. Her creative adaptability has enabled her to meet the evolving requirements of broadcasters, and she recently contributed as an assistant producer to the Canadian Screen Award-nominated film POTLUCK LADIES, which aired on Hollywood Suite, YES TV, and Amazon Prime.

Priyanka has successfully ventured into directing, showcasing her talents across various platforms. She has helmed commercials for prominent brands such as Yes Bank, Gili Apparels, and Zee Ozee Network. Her short film, THE UNNAMED CRIME, was nominated at the Mumbai International Women's Film Festival in 2013, further solidifying her directorial prowess while also producing the same. She also directed a musical short film for Zoom TV featuring former Miss India Ankita Shorey, produced by the esteemed music channel helmed by the Times of India group.

Priyanka's producing work spans India and Canada. In 2020, she was an associate producer on a Disney Hotstar show. Her short film DARK MEMORIES premiered at IFFSA in 2024 and was selected for Lift-Off Global Network in 2025. She also produced FRIENDS AT MY EXPENSE, which was showcased at Nuit Blanche Toronto 2023. Her feature FROZEN received recognition at the 2023 Canadian Film Festival Pitch Platform and The Big Pitch at TIFF in 2024.

Most recently, Priyanka and her team won the Tasveer Film Fund 2025 for their short film PETTICOAT, further establishing her voice in bold, boundary-pushing storytelling. Priyanka is an alumna of the Norman Jewison CFC Producer's Lab 2024, actively working across the Indian and Canadian film and television industries.

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Francine Zuckerman
Z Films Inc.

As a filmmaker and producer with a long-standing commitment to meaningful storytelling, Francine has built a sustainable path for her company, creating content that resonates deeply across audiences. Her work focuses on women's stories—told through the lens of history and politics—bringing together viewers drawn to both personal and societal transformation.

Francine's projects blend fiction and non-fiction, allowing her to reach a wide and diverse audience. On the fiction side, she is developing a limited series, **THE EDIBLE WOMAN**, based on the novel by renowned Canadian author Margaret Atwood, in collaboration with international partners and a UK-based writer. Additionally, Francine is working on a feature-length fiction film, an Ontario/Quebec co-production called **A CONTRE COEUR**.

Francine's non-fiction work spans from theatre adaptations to documentaries exploring themes of history, politics, health, and the environment including two feature documentaries, **ALMA ROSE**, a Canada/France co-production, and **MY GERMAN ROOTS ARE SHOWING**, a co-production involving Canada, New Zealand, and Germany.

Many of these stories focus on the impacts of war and conflict but consistently highlight themes of resilience and redemption. One of her documentaries, featuring the late Olivia Newton-John, explores the link between environmental issues and human health. Francine is currently developing a new documentary that integrates animation, an innovative approach designed to reach and engage new audiences.

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