



Presents

IT COMES IN WAVES

A film by Fitch Jean

105 mins, Canada, 2024

Language: English, Kinyarwanda, with English subtitles

Distribution

Mongrel Media Inc
1213C Bathurst Street
Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5R 3H3
Tel: 416-516-9775 Fax: 416-516-0651
E-mail: info@mongrelmedia.com
www.mongrelmedia.com

 @MongrelMedia

Publicity

Bonne Smith
Star PR
Tel: 416-488-4436
Twitter: @starpr2
E-mail: starpr@sympatico.ca

 /MongrelMedia

IT COMES IN WAVES

Press Kit

A film by Fitch Jean

World Premiere: American Black Film Festival, 2025

SYNOPSIS

Set against the backdrop of the Rwandan diaspora in Canada, *It Comes in Waves* follows Akai, a young man grappling with the legacy of his family's past and the profound impact of intergenerational trauma.

As he navigates the complexities of immigrant life, Akai's journey becomes a universal tale of resilience—showing how individuals and communities confront and transcend their histories. Through its intimate portrayal of the immigrant experience, the film explores themes of identity, belonging, and the silent, enduring strength of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

This deeply personal narrative meditates on the quiet violence of memory, the weight of migration, and the spirituality found in the mundane—revealing how trauma ripples across generations.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

"It Comes in Waves" represents not just my feature directorial debut, but a deeply personal exploration of the immigrant experience and the echoes of history that shape our present.

Drawing from the lived experiences of the Rwandan diaspora in Canada, this film seeks to capture the emotional residue left by dislocation—the unspoken burdens carried by those who've crossed oceans to build something new while tethered to what was lost.

The film's tone is reflective and lyrical, inspired by the emotional precision of early Barry Jenkins and the vérité intimacy of Joshua Marston. We shot across Ottawa, Perth, and Toronto, blending professional actors with members of the Rwandan community to honor the cultural and linguistic integrity of the story—particularly in our use of Kinyarwanda.

The editing process was shaped not just by plot, but by emotional cadence—letting ambient tension and silence speak as much as dialogue. The result is a film that feels lived-in, reverent,

and patient—one that amplifies Black Canadian and immigrant voices, and invites audiences to sit with what’s usually left unspoken.

—Fitch Jean

BACKGROUND

It Comes in Waves marks a significant milestone in Canadian independent cinema as the first completed feature by director Fitch Jean. The film is both a creative breakthrough and a bold shift—elevating Jean from short-form and branded storytelling into the realm of international feature filmmaking.

The film had its world premiere at the American Black Film Festival (ABFF) in Miami in June 2025, spotlighting its themes among a global network of Black-centered stories. It was subsequently selected for the Sidewalk Film Festival in Birmingham, Alabama, and continues its 2025–2026 circuit targeting festivals that platform diasporic, immigrant, and debut voices.

A FILMMAKER’S APPROACH

The casting process spanned nearly a year and was led by Fitch Jean, producer Amir Zargara, and casting director Rachel Osborne. Adrian Walters was cast first as Akai, anchoring the film emotionally and narratively.

The team employed a mix of union actors and non-actors—specifically casting Rwandan Canadians to preserve the linguistic and cultural authenticity of scenes delivered in Kinyarwanda. A professional dialect coach was hired to work with actors unfamiliar with the language.

Principal photography occurred across 14 days, with a single pickup day. The core Ottawa-based crew filmed in Ottawa, rural Perth, and select Toronto interiors. Despite location changes, the visual tone remained cohesive, grounded in natural light, warm textures, and intimate framing.

Post-production was a cross-continental effort. Fitch Jean led editing in Canada. Colorist and cinematographer Jelan Maxwell created a warm, naturalistic look using DaVinci Resolve. Sound design and foley were helmed by Amir Mohabbati, and the original score composed by UK-based Caroline-Jayne Gleave.

CAST

- **Adrian Walters** – *Akai*
 - **Nendia Lewars** – *Zera*
 - **Ryan Rosery** – *Terrell*
 - **Katherine Stella Duncan** – *Sharon*
 - **Mckenzie Small** – *Stacey*
 - **Olunike Adeliyi** – *Sonia*
 - **Franckie Francois** – *Drifty*
 - **Brandon McKnight** – *Capo*
 - **Marium Carvell** – *Juanita*
 - **Tomas Chovanec** – *Norm*
 - **Emmanuel Kabongo** – *Coach Patterson*
 - **Patrick Rubayiza** – *Emmanuel*
-

LOCATIONS & SHOOTING

Principal photography: **May 2023**

Shoot length: **14 days + 1 pickup day**

- **Primary Urban Location:** Ottawa, Ontario
- **Rural Scenes:** Perth, Ontario
- **Additional Scenes:** Toronto, Ontario

KEY PRODUCTION CREDITS

- **Director / Editor:** Fitch Jean
- **Screenplay:** Sammy Mohamed
- **Story:** Sammy Mohamed, Fitch Jean
- **Producer:** Amir Zargara
- **Executive Producers:** Fitch Jean, Weggan Allen, Adrian Walters, Lovell Adams-Gray, Franck Fon, Kerbens Boissette, **Sam Ibrahim**
- **Director of Photography:** Jelan Maxwell
- **Composer:** Caroline-Jayne Gleave
- **Sound Design & Mix:** Amir Mohabbati
- **Art Director:** Elizabeth Fitzpatrick
- **Casting:** Rachel Osborne, Fitch Jean, Amir Zargara
- **Associate Producers:** Trinh Kien, Marshall Ubaruta, Daniel Shojaei, Rodney Jr Basquin
- **Production Companies:**
 - Zargara Productions [CA] – hello@zargara.com
 - BDB Productions [CA] – bdbproductionsca@gmail.com | bdbproductionsinc.com
 - Lenz Films [CA] – hello@lenzfilms.com | lenzfilms.com

THE FILMMAKER

FITCH JEAN

Writer / Director / Editor

Fitch Jean is a Canadian-Haitian filmmaker whose work centers Black and immigrant stories with emotional depth and poetic realism. His films explore trauma, memory, and generational healing through a cinematic lens grounded in silence, spirituality, and interiority.

His directing credits include selections at over 50 international festivals, such as Santa Barbara, Calgary, and Edmonton. He has earned awards including Outstanding Producer at Reelworld and Audience Choice at the New York International Children's Film Festival.

Jean's style combines lyrical visual storytelling with intimate character work, often reflecting diasporic tension and quiet resilience. His shorts, docuseries, and now debut feature all share a common purpose: to tell culturally specific stories with universal emotional reach.

It Comes in Waves marks Jean's first feature-length film, continuing his mission to create work that is both grounded and expansive, with an eye toward truth, legacy, and cinematic empathy.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

- **Country of Production:** Canada
- **Year of Completion:** 2024
- **Duration:** 105 minutes
- **Language:** English, Kinyarwanda
- **Color:** Yes (Color, DCP Ready)
- **Sound:** 5.1 Surround + Stereo
- **Genre:** Drama
- **Format:** 4K Master, HD, DCP

FESTIVAL HISTORY

2025

- *American Black Film Festival (ABFF)* – World Premiere – Miami, Florida
- *Sidewalk Film Festival* – Official Selection – Birmingham, Alabama

The film continues its festival journey through 2025–2026, targeting platforms that spotlight Black, diaspora, immigrant, and debut filmmakers.

CONTACT

Canadian Distribution:

Mongrel Media – Toronto, Canada

Festival & Screening Inquiries:

Fitch Jean

fitch@exaltaproductions.com

Production Companies:

Zargara Productions – hello@zargara.com

BDB Productions – bdbproductionsca@gmail.com

Lenz Films – hello@lenzfilms.com

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that the land on which this film was made is the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg People. The Algonquin peoples have lived on this land since time immemorial. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to create *It Comes in Waves* on this land.