

SHORT IN LENGTH, LONG ON IMPRESSION: TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL PACKS CANADIAN SHORT FILM LINEUP WITH EXTRAORDINARY AND DIVERSE WORKS

TORONTO — The Toronto International Film Festival® unveils a slate of 44 world-class homegrown short films packed with strong emerging voices and uniquely Canadian perspectives. Boasting a lineup as diverse in themes and cultures as the country itself, this year's roster is highlighted by a record number of Canadian works in the Wavelengths programme. From smart satire to savvy social commentary, twists on genre to gut-punching powerful dramas, quirky documentaries to delightfully deranged animation and daring, formal experiments, these works showcase fascinating, provocative stories in short form.

Films in the Short Cuts programme are eligible for the Award for Best Canadian Short Film. This year's jury includes the head of the shorts program and creations unit at Canal+ France, Pascale Faure, film writer John Anderson (*The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*), and actor Rizwan Manji (*Outsourced*, *The Wolf of Wall Street*).

The 40th Toronto International Film Festival runs from September 10 to 20, 2015.

SHORT CUTS

4 Quarters Ashley McKenzie, Canada

Toronto Premiere

Willy and Jane just want to feel happy in one another's company. He's a sleep-deprived student living close to the bone. She's a troubled drug addict in constant need of \$20. Nursing their fledgling friendship on the margins of society proves to be a wicked problem.

A New Year (*Nouvel an*) Marie-Ève Juste, Canada

World Premiere

Florence is having a New Year's Eve party, but at 37 weeks pregnant she feels somewhat ambivalent about the festivities and frolics of her friends.

Bacon & God's Wrath Sol Friedman, Canada

World Premiere

In this short documentary, a 90-year-old Jewish woman reflects on her life's experiences as she prepares to try bacon for the first time.

The Ballad of Immortal Joe Hector Herrera, Canada

World Premiere

Written with a nod to traditional cowboy songs and to the northern ballads of Robert W. Service, this film puts a supernatural twist on a tragically romantic Western. Voiced by Canadian actor Kenneth Welsh (*Twin Peaks*, *The Aviator*, *The Day After Tomorrow*) and scored by Toronto greats The Sadies, this is the third chapter in the silly rhyme collection *Beastly Bards*.

BAM Howie Shia, Canada

World Premiere

In a dense inner city haunted by primordial gods, a young boxer struggles to understand the disturbing consequences of his explosive rage — both inside and outside the ring. Presenting the young boxer's battles in terms both heroic and tortured, *BAM* combines a biting urban soundtrack with a hand-drawn, comic-book style, mashing up cacophonous drums and grinding electronics with soft brushwork and swift action.

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Benjamin Sherren Lee, Canada

World Premiere

When a dually-pregnant lesbian couple loses one of the babies in utero, the grieving mothers break their surrogacy arrangement with their closest friends in order to keep the remaining baby.

Beyond The Horizon Ryan J. Noth, Canada

World Premiere

In 1845 Sir John Franklin led 128 men on the ships HMS Erebus and HMS Terror on a search for the Northwest Passage. The fate of the crew and ships has been slowly uncovered since September 2014, when Parks Canada archaeologists discovered the resting place of the HMS Erebus in the remote Arctic Ocean. Reflecting on the ship and story from the perspective of the sailors and the archaeologists, the film paints a crushing visual portrait of a place where time can lose all meaning.

Boxing Grayson Moore and Aidan Shipley, Canada

World Premiere

Sheila returns to her weekly boxing class after a traumatic event, and tensions mount when one of the other women refuses to stop showering her with sympathy.

Boy Connor Jessup, Canada

World Premiere

After a fatal bicycle accident, 12-year-old Jacob moves through the world as a ghost. Unseen and unheard, he trails his classmate home from school. As the ghost boy watches, an image of a grief-stricken family slowly begins to take shape.

Casualties of Modernity Kent Monkman, Canada

World Premiere

Celebrity artist and humanitarian Miss Chief Eagle Testickle tours a hospital specializing in the treatment of conditions afflicting modern and contemporary art. Led by the doctor of fine arts and closely supervised by the no-nonsense head nurse, Miss Chief encounters romance, tragedy and triumph.

Clouds of Autumn Trevor Mack and Matthew Taylor Blais, Canada

North American Premiere

Set on the Tsilhqot'in plateau in the 1970s, this film focuses on two siblings, and explores the impact that Canadian residential schools had on the relationships of First Nations children with each other, their heritage, and nature itself.

Dogs Don't Breed Cats (*Les chiens ne font pas des chats*) Cristina Martins, Canada

Canadian Premiere

Pregnant and homeless, Joëlle shows up at the home of her father Jeff. Even though this solitary non-conformist and former punk rocker is reluctant to the idea, she decides to stay and Jeff is overwhelmed by his new interactions with the daughter he barely knows.

Dredger Phillip Barker, Canada

World Premiere

The crew of a salvage ship is tossed into turmoil when the young captain's wife becomes infatuated with an older shipmate. She casts herself ashore but can't break free from the seabed of secrets the old man brought to the surface.

The Guy From Work (*Les gars d'la shop*) Jean-François Leblanc, Canada

World Premiere

Raynald is a family man who has been working in the same tire plant for over 30 years. This week, there is nothing unusual in his daily life: work, hockey games with the guys, and family night. However, Raynald will make the biggest move of his life.

It's Not You Don McKellar, Canada

World Premiere

It's not you...or is it? Whether dumper or dump-ee, being in that situation brings out feelings you didn't know you had. Under the direction of the talented Don McKellar, the graduating class of the National Theatre School of Canada takes audiences through the perpetuity of break ups.

KOKOM Kevin Papatie, Canada

Toronto Premiere

Kevin Papatie, participant of the Wapikoni Mobile for 10 years, presents a beautiful experimental film that pays tribute to his grandmother — his kokom — and to the Anishnabe people who have survived the trials of history and remained strong.

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The Magnificent Life Underwater (*La vie magnifique sous l'eau*) Joël Vaudreuil, Canada World Premiere
 In this absurd animated parody of a classic undersea adventure show, an authoritative narrator reveals the wonders and mysteries of the sea — although the banal habits of these homely aquatic creatures have an odd familiarity.

The Man Who Shot Hollywood Barry Avrich, Canada World Premiere
 In a town lit up by a thousand stars, Jack Pashkovsky practiced his art anonymously. By the time he was finished, he had brilliantly photographed hundreds of the biggest Hollywood icons from Garbo to Swanson. His collection of photographs have never been seen. Until now.

Mia' Amanda Strong and Bracken Hanuse Corlett, Canada World Premiere
 A young Indigenous female street artist walks through the city streets painting scenes rooted in the supernatural history of her people. As the alleyways become her sanctuary and secret gallery, her art comes to life, pulling Mia' into her own transformation via the vessel of a salmon. This hybrid documentary uses animation and sound as a vehicle to tell the story of transformation and re-connection.

Mobilize Caroline Monnet, Canada World Premiere
 Guided expertly by those who live on the land and driven by the pulse of the natural world, this film takes audiences on an exhilarating journey from the far north to the urban south. The fearless polar punk rhythms of Tanya Tagaq's "Uja" underscore the perpetual negotiation between the modern and traditional by a people always moving forward. The National Film Board of Canada (NFB) invited four talented and renowned Aboriginal artists to create a program of works addressing Aboriginal identity and representation by reworking material in the NFB's archives.

Never Happened Mark Slutsky, Canada World Premiere
 When colleagues Grady and Laura have an affair on a business trip, they decide it might be easier if it just never happened.

Never Steady, Never Still Kathleen Hepburn, Canada World Premiere
 Distressed and overwhelmed by the mistakes of his past, a young lease-hand returns from Alberta's oil fields to his childhood home on Lillooet Lake, where he finds solace in the strength of his recently widowed mother.

NINA Halima Elkhatabi, Canada World Premiere
 At 16 years old, Nina is helpless to her 4-month-old baby's incessant crying. Without any escape from the cries and from this new presence in her life, she ventures out from her tiny apartment into a working-class neighbourhood of Montréal for a brief escapade.

o negative Steven McCarthy, Canada World Premiere
 A young woman and the man who takes care of her find shelter in a roadside motel and take the necessary steps to feed her addiction.

Our Remaining Lives (*Les vies qui nous restent*) Luiza Cocora, Canada World Premiere
 Having recently moved to Quebec, Sofia, a 10-year-old Romanian girl, lives with her mother in a small flat in Montreal. In a world where technology imposes human isolation, Sofia is trying to understand her new life.

Overpass (*Viaduc*) Patrice Laliberté, Canada World Premiere
 A 17-year-old named Mathieu goes out one night to write graffiti on an overpass. But whereas his actions require a swift escape from the scene of the crime, their true meaning is far more unexpected.

Portal to Hell!!! Vivieno Caldinelli, Canada World Premiere
 The late and great "Rowdy" Roddy Piper plays a crusty superintendent who is thrust into the ultimate fight against evil when a pair of cultists opens a multidimensional portal in his basement.

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Quiet Zone (*Ondes et silence*) David Bryant and Karl Lemieux, Canada Canadian Premiere
This film takes audiences deep into the world of those who suffer from electromagnetic hypersensitivity. Combining elements of documentary, film essay and experimental film, David Bryant and Karl Lemieux — known for their work in the musical group Godspeed You! Black Emperor — weave together an unusual story in which sound and image distort reality to convey the suffering of these “wave refugees.”

Rock the Box Katherine Monk, Canada World Premiere
Electronic dance music (EDM) is now the most lucrative sector of the music industry but it's dominated by men. To break that glass ceiling, a Vancouver-raised deejay named Rhiannon Rozier did something she never thought she'd do: pose for *Playboy*. Thanks to its impressionistic images, exhilarating montage and Rozier's remarkable candour, this film tells the story of one woman who rocked conventions by owning her own image, her own voice, and her own box.

She Stoops To Conquer Zachary Russell, Canada World Premiere
An aspiring performer struggles to breathe life into a new character she's created. Suddenly, she sees him: the real-life version of the man she's been playing. Where's the line between inspiration and theft? A gender-bending romantic comedy about a man and her double.

The Sleepwalker (*Sonámbulo*) Theodore Ushev, Canada North American Premiere
A surrealist journey through colours and shapes inspired by the poem *Romance Sonámbulo* by Federico García Lorca. It's visual poetry in the rhythm of fantastic dreams and passionate nights.

The Swimming Lesson (*Le cours de natation*) Olivia Boudreau, Canada North American Premiere
Brought by her mother to her first swimming lesson, a 7-year-old girl must find, on her own, her place in the unfamiliar world of the pool.

Volkaan Bahar Noorizadeh, Canada/Iran/USA World Premiere
Insightful and enigmatic, this multi-layered meditation on the experience of exile begins with the streets of Tehran gradually filling with enigmatic streams of lava. In Michigan, a boy and his father's fateful journey ends up amid dinosaurs and a plastic volcano.

World Famous Gopher Hole Museum Chelsea McMullan and Douglas Nayler, Canada World Premiere
A portrait of Torrington, a fading Albertan farm town with a secret wish to be frozen in time like the taxidermied gophers that populate its world-famous tourist attraction.

MIDNIGHT MADNESS

The Chickening Nick DenBoer and Davy Force, Canada World Premiere
How can a boy not get excited when his dad gets a new job as senior chief night manager at Charbay's Chicken World and Restaurant Resort, the world's largest fast food entertainment complex in North America? However, in this short film things quickly get very, very clucked.

The Chickening will screen preceding the Opening Night Film in the Midnight Madness programme.

WAVELENGTHS

Bunte Kuh Ryan Ferko, Parastoo Anoushahpour and Faraz Anoushahpour, Canada/Germany Toronto Premiere
Through a flood of images, a narrator attempts to recall a family holiday. *Bunte Kuh* combines a found postcard, family photo album, and original footage to weave together the temporal realities of two separate vacations.

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Engram of Returning Daichi Saïto, Canada

World Premiere

The figure of the jig-saw / that is of picture, / the representation of a world as ours / in a complex patterning of color in light and shadows, / masses with hints of densities and distances, / cut across by a second, discrete pattern / in which we perceive on qualities of fitting and not fitting / and suggestions of rhyme / in ways of fitting and not fitting – / this jig-saw conformation of patterns / of different orders, / of a pattern of apparent reality / in which the picture we are working to bring out appears / and of a pattern of loss and of finding / that so compels us that we are entirely engrossed in working it out, / this picture that must be put together / takes over mere seeing. — Robert Duncan, poet

Fugue Kerstin Schrödinger, Canada/Germany

North American Premiere

Fugue is a formal and physical experiment in order to understand the relationship between image, sound and movement. Movements are also printed on the part of the film strip that is read as optical sound by the light sensitive sensor of the projector. What you hear is what you see.

May We Sleep Soundly Denis Côté, Canada

World Premiere

Winter persists. Something happened. At the heart of the woods, on the slopes of mountains, in the streets and even inside homes, a strange silence took up residence. Will there remain a soul to witness the recent event?

May We Sleep Soundly will screen preceding the feature *88.88*.

Office Space Modulation Terrarea (Janis Demkiw, Emily Hogg and Olia Mishchenko), Canada

World Premiere

The Office Space Modulator is an improvised animation device employing an outsized Lazy Susan as the central mechanism to produce looped analogue projections of light and shadow. The resulting single-take field recordings document a subtle gymnastic interplay of scale, transparency, reflection, rotation, puppetry, and general field-ground tomfoolery.

Palms Mary-Helena Clark Canada/USA

World Premiere

Musical and mysterious, this is a sphinx-like, modular film in four parts, with two hands animating stillness, the repeated approach of headlights, a < --- > tennis match, and thoughts that emerge like objects.

Something Horizontal Blake Williams, Canada/USA

World Premiere

Three-dimensional flashes of Victorian domestic surfaces and geometric shadows transform the physical world into a somber, impressionistic abstraction, while elsewhere a spectre emerging from the depths of German Expressionism reminds us that what goes up always comes down.

Théodolitique David K. Ross, Canada

World Premiere

Théodolitique merges the geodetic and the filmic, linking the very long history of land surveying with the comparatively new technologies of filmmaking. Connecting these two methods of visual observation and recording, the film documents student surveyors from the École des Métiers du Sud-Ouest-de-Montréal as they take an outdoor exam over the course of a single day.

UNcirCling John Creson and Adam Rosen, Canada

World Premiere

Elegant and enigmatic, *UNcirCling* is a visual music miniature composed of a bokeh of lights and digital chirping.

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TIFF is a charitable cultural organization whose mission is to transform the way people see the world, through film. An international leader in film culture, TIFF projects include the annual Toronto International Film Festival in September; TIFF Bell Lightbox, which features five cinemas, major exhibitions, and learning and entertainment facilities; and innovative national distribution program Film Circuit. The organization generates an annual economic impact of \$189 million CAD. TIFF Bell Lightbox is generously supported by contributors including Founding Sponsor Bell, the Province of Ontario, the Government of Canada, the City of Toronto, the Reitman family (Ivan Reitman, Agi Mandel and Susan Michaels), The Daniels Corporation and RBC. For more information, visit tiff.net.

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