

TIFF PRESENTS

HIGHER[^]LEARNING

Breaking Free: Stories of Isolation and Struggle Participant Biographies

Terril Calder is a Métis artist born in Fort Frances, Ontario. She studied film at the University of Manitoba and has directed several short films, including *Vessel* (13), *Repercussions* (13), *The Traveling Medicine Show 3: Transformation* (14), *The "Lodge"* (14), and *SNIP* (16).

Danis Goulet programs for the Toronto International Film Festival's Short Cuts section and is a former Artistic Director of the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival. She has curated award-winning projects and developed initiatives for the Ontario Arts Council, served on the boards of the Toronto Arts Council and the Images Festival, and was on the programming committee for the Canadian Film Centre's Worldwide Short Film Festival. She is an alumna of TIFF Talent Lab and the National Screen Institute's Drama Prize Program, and her own films as director have screened at numerous festivals including TIFF, Berlinale, imagineNATIVE, and the Sundance Film Festival. Danis, who is Cree/Métis, was born in La Ronge, Saskatchewan, and currently resides in Toronto.

Johnny Ma was born in Shanghai and raised in Canada. He studied film at Columbia University. His short films are *The Robbery* (10), *Play* (11), *The Genius from Quintino* (12), and *A Grand Canal* (13). *Old Stone* (16) is his first feature film.

Ashley McKenzie is an emerging writer-director from Cape Breton Island. Her debut feature, *Werewolf* (16), premiered at TIFF and is a feature selection at the Canada's Top Ten Film Festival. Her short *4 Quarters* (15) screened at TIFF, VIFF, Stockholm IFF, and Festival du nouveau cinéma, and won Best Atlantic Short at the Atlantic Film Festival, while *Rhonda's Party* (10) was included in Canada's Top Ten Shorts. Ashley is a three-time recipient of the Shaw Media Fearless Female Director Award from the National Screen Institute of Canada, and won CBC's Short Film Faceoff. She is an alumnus of TIFF Talent Lab and co-owner of grassfire films.

Thyrone Tommy is a Toronto-based filmmaker. His short films include *Seed of a Deadbeat* (12), *Liar, Cheater, Whore* (12), and *Avalanche* (14). *Mariner* (16) is his latest short film.