

AWARD-WINNING DIGITAL PLAYGROUND RETURNS TO TIFF

The fifth annual digiPlaySpace exhibition gives kids the power to control the Elements, draw their own videogames, use virtual reality to travel under the Arctic Ocean, program robots, play hockey on the big screen and more



Sensory Imaging, Artist: Adrian Sas

TORONTO — TIFF® will bring families on an interactive adventure this spring with the fifth edition of the award-winning **digiPlaySpace™** exhibition. This engaging and educational digital playground invites kids and families to learn through play with a diverse range of the latest interactive installations, including multi-player videogames, virtual reality, Olympic-sized stop-motion sports, green screen escapades, robotic and circuit building activities in a DIY maker space, and more from acclaimed Canadian and international artists. Opening just ahead of March Break due to popular demand, digiPlaySpace runs for an extended seven weeks at TIFF Bell Lightbox, from **March 5 to April 24, 2016**.

“Creative play makes learning fun and enjoyable,” said Elizabeth Muskala, Director, TIFF Kids. “The world of digital media is evolving so rapidly, and opening up so many new possibilities, that exposure to these kinds of innovative experiences is becoming a necessary part of the learning process in kids becoming media literate in our ever-changing landscape. Fostering a sense of wonder and imagination in the critical-thinking process is vital to inspiring future innovators to pursue careers and interests in the arts, technology, math and engineering.”

“With more innovative installations than ever for kids to touch, play and engage with, digiPlaySpace 2016 is the can’t-miss event for families this spring,” added Nick Pagee, Curator, digiPlaySpace. “This year’s theme of ‘Immersion’ invites children to dive into a magical environment where physical and digital media converge and the imaginary springs into real life around them as they experience the latest creative technologies that are as educational as they are exciting.”

TIFF is a charitable organization with a mission to transform the way people see the world, through film.



The fifth edition of digiPlaySpace is bigger than ever, expanding onto the TIFF Bell Lightbox atrium wall with **Happy Hockey**, from Germany-based artists Johannes Kristmann and Alexander Pieper, a multiplayer hockey videogame that anyone in the building can join with their smartphone; and **Marshmallow Clouds**, a unique and magical interactive light-up cloudscape that ascends the title wall of the exhibition, from Vancouver-based Tangible Interaction in partnership with the New Media program at Ryerson University's RTA School of Media and TIFF.

Internationally acclaimed and award-winning interactive studio Design I/O returns to digiPlaySpace with the North American premiere of **Elements**. Children are immersed in a dynamic environment where they can control the four elements (earth, air, fire and water) through body movement. Co-commissioned by TIFF and Cinekid Festival Amsterdam, **Elements** premiered to audiences in Amsterdam at **Cinekid MediaLab** in October 2015.

Other highlights include the world premiere of **LOlympics**, Toronto-based fine-arts duo Catshrine's sports-themed stop-motion animation installation; **TheBluVR**, an immersive underwater tour of ocean life from virtual reality studio Wevr; the Canadian premiere of **Thymio**, a small programmable and educational robot for kids; the Canadian premiere of **Line Wobbler**, an award-winning and novel game with a unique and fun controller made out of a door-stopper spring and an LED strip, from U.K.-based independent game developer Robin Baumgarten; local game designers Laundry Bear Games' **Trackoons**, a competitive multiplayer game where raccoons face off in a hurdles race in downtown Toronto; the **Augmented Reality Sandbox**, where kids can dig, sculpt and sift through real sand to create a topographic environment, augmented in real time by an elevation colour map; and the Canadian premiere of **Sensory Imaging**, an interactive installation by artist Adrian Sas designed to engage children with sensory processing disorders in an immersive experience encouraging sensory exploration.

Six games featured at digiPlaySpace 2016 will join its international exhibition tour, including the North American premiere of Jérémie Cortial and Roman Miletitch's **Flippaper**, where users draw their own playable pinball games with special paint markers, and five short arcade-style games featured in the **TIFF Kids Animal Arcade: Trackoons, Wanderment: A Curious Commute, SimAntics: Realistic Anteater Simulator, Digital Bird Playground and Pugs Sniffin' Pugs by SpaceBeagles (A TIFF Kids Exclusive)**. Following its successful three-city tour in China, the digiPlaySpace touring package continues on to the Minnesota Children's Museum in Saint Paul, Minnesota, from May 22 to September 4, 2016.

digiPlaySpace 2016 is organized into three main areas, all promoting new avenues and opportunities to learn, create, tell stories and connect. Design is by Mason Studio and aftermodern.lab, who have collaborated to create a dynamic exhibition space that enhances and encourages an immersion with the digital programmes. Full lineup below.

INTERACTIVE INSTALLATIONS

Marshmallow Clouds

World Premiere

Artist: Tangible Interaction, in partnership with the New Media program at Ryerson University's RTA School of Media and TIFF | Canada

An interactive light-up cloudscape ascends the title wall of digiPlaySpace, igniting imaginations as it shines with warm colours and a gravity-defying arrangement.

Keylight

World Premiere

Artist: Aaron Van Domelen | Canada

digiPlaySpace's custom green screen uses the technology of motion pictures to transport children on their very own adventure across the world.

LOlympics

World Premiere

Artist: Catshrine | Canada

Fine-arts duo Catshrine are back with a hilarious sports-themed stop-motion experience.

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Art Alive VR: Aeroplane by Pudlo Pudlat

World Premiere

Artist: Pinnguaq | Canada

Funded with the support of The Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage Grant through York University and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. Special thanks to Dorset Fine Arts of Cape Dorset, Nunavut.

In *Art Alive VR: Aeroplane by Pudlo Pudlat* the iconic Inuit print, *Aeroplane* by Pudlo Pudlat of Kinngait, Nunavut is brought to life by the innovative Samsung GearVR headset experience. Users are placed in the centre of the living print as it breathes and moves around them. Age restrictions apply – Samsung GearVR should only be used by children 13+.

Sago Mini Trucks and Diggers + Build-A-House Activity

World Premiere

Artist: Sago Sago | Canada

Sago Mini's newest app invites kids to interact with six unique virtual dirt-moving machines and construct a building for a friend. The Build-A-House Activity continues the play offline, where kids build and decorate a cardboard Sago Mini house of their own.



TheBluVR, Artist: Wevr



Elements, Artist: Design I/O

Elements

North American Premiere

Artist: Design I/O | USA

Co-commissioned by TIFF and Cinekid Festival Amsterdam

An interactive installation where children embody one of four elements: earth, air, fire or water. Through these dynamic forms, children can define, transform and sculpt the environment using the elements to bring life and light together in a playful, ever-changing space projected onto a giant screen.

Flippaper

North American Premiere

Artist: Jérémie Cortial, Roman Miletitch | France

A mashup of video-gaming, pinball & drawing: visitors can draw their own pinball level using different coloured paint markers on a simple sheet of paper, and then play the game for themselves.

Happy Hockey

International Premiere

Artist: Johannes Kristmann, Alexander Pieper | Germany

An expansion into the TIFF Bell Lightbox lobby with a multiplayer hockey videogame projected on the atrium wall. Anyone can join the game with their smartphone.

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[Sensory Imaging](#)

Canadian Premiere

Artist: Adrian Sas | USA

Sensory Imaging engages children (including those with sensory processing disorders) in an immersive experience that encourages sensory exploration and nurtures their capacity to learn through discovery. As children interact with Sensory Imaging's billowing fabric, the material appears to change hue, radiating colour at the point of contact, rendering a four-dimensional map of their actions.

[TheBluVR](#)

Artist: Wevr | USA

Viewers will strap on Samsung's innovative GearVR headsets and dive deep into the Arctic waters to explore a gorgeous, immersive virtual reality experience that follows ocean creatures in their own habitat. Age restrictions apply – Samsung Gear VR should only be used by children 13+.

[Augmented Reality Sandbox](#)

Artist: Developed by the UC Davis W.M. Keck Center for Active Visualization in the Earth Sciences. Technical support in Toronto is provided by Ryerson's Master of Digital Media program | USA/Canada

Dig, sculpt and sift through real sand to create a topographic environment, augmented in real time by an elevation colour map, contour lines, and simulated water. This system teaches geographic, geologic, and hydrologic concepts such as how to read a topography map, the meaning of contour lines, watersheds, catchment areas and levees.

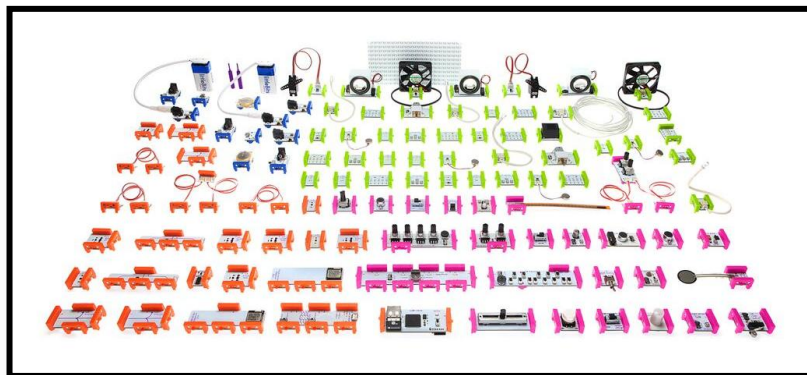
[Monster Mingle](#)

Artist: Cowly Owl | United Kingdom

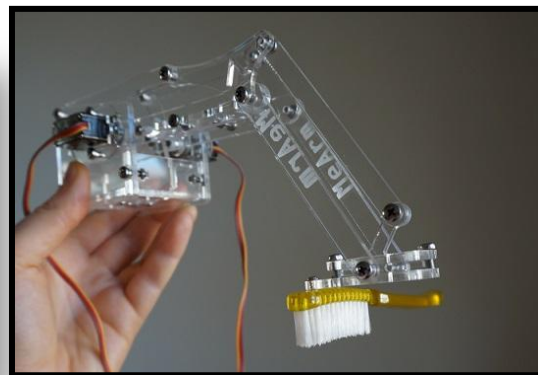
Players can build their own friendly monster with this creative app for kids, discovering fun creatures, musical scenery and hidden surprises as the monster plays in a magical kingdom.

[TIFF KIDS MICRO MAKERS' SPACE](#)

The TIFF Kids Micro Makers' Space is a creative workshop all about DIY, where kids can get hands-on with robotics, circuitry and electronics.



littleBits



The Toothbrush Machine, Artist: Simone Giertz

[African Robots](#)

North American Premiere

Artist: Ralph Borland | South Africa

African Robots is a project to create interactive electronic 'street art', adding interactivity to handmade objects sold by people on the street in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Inexpensive materials like wire, beads and waste wood, plastic and metal are used to create animals, birds, cars, bicycles and more. Basic electronic components can—with the necessary know-how—be added to these to bring them to life.

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[The Toothbrush Machine](#)

North American Premiere

Artist: Simone Giertz | Sweden

A revolutionary way to brush teeth: sit back, relax, and let a robot arm do the job. *The Toothbrush Machine* is made out of a skateboard helmet, a robot arm, an Arduino micro-controller, a toothbrush, and a tremendous amount of laziness and reluctance for dental hygiene.

[Thymio Robot Playground](#)

Canadian Premiere

Artist: Mobsya Association | Switzerland

Thymio is a small programmable and educational robot for kids. In this space, children can program Thymio to carry out numerous experiments, and discover and learn computational thinking, robotics, engineering and digital technologies.

[Line Wobbler](#)

Canadian Premiere

Artist: Robin Baumgarten | United Kingdom

Escape a one-dimensional dungeon by shaking a unique wobble controller made out of a door-stopper spring and an LED strip. Players will laugh, cry and cheer on the action in this award-winning experiment in minimalistic game design, novel input mechanics, retro sound, and creative use of architectural space.

[littleBits Invention Lab](#)

Artist: littleBits, in collaboration with the Toronto littleBits Chapter at Ryerson University Library's Digital Media Experience | USA/Canada

Children can join in on this hands-on invention lab, to learn how these easy-to-use electronic building blocks can unleash creativity at home or in the classroom.

[Choosatron Deluxe Adventure Matrix](#)

Artist: Jerry Belich | USA

A Wi-Fi connected Choose Your Own Adventure®-inspired story printer, blending digital and analogue storytelling. As users play, they make decisions that affect the outcome of the story, and their journey is printed on a keepsake paper scroll they get to keep.

Community Creativity Table

Artist: Gabby Resch, the Semaphore Research Cluster at the University of Toronto | Canada

On Saturdays and Sundays, select kids from local community maker groups will be invited by the Semaphore Research Cluster at the University of Toronto to display and explain their creations in the Micro Makers' Space.

TIFF KIDS 'ANIMAL ARCADE'

Animal themes are a mainstay of the incredibly popular short-animation programmes at the TIFF Kids Festival. digiPlaySpace's "animal arcade" is comprised of short arcade-style game experiences addressing themes of learning through play, collaboration, accessibility, open-exploration and friendly competition.

[Wanderment: A Curious Commute](#)

World Festival Premiere

Artist: Andrew Wang | USA

Players will help a blind kitty get home safely in this innovative and beautiful single-player particle-based 3D video-game. Sounds generated from the kitten's movements reflect off of surfaces in the environment in the form of colourful dots.

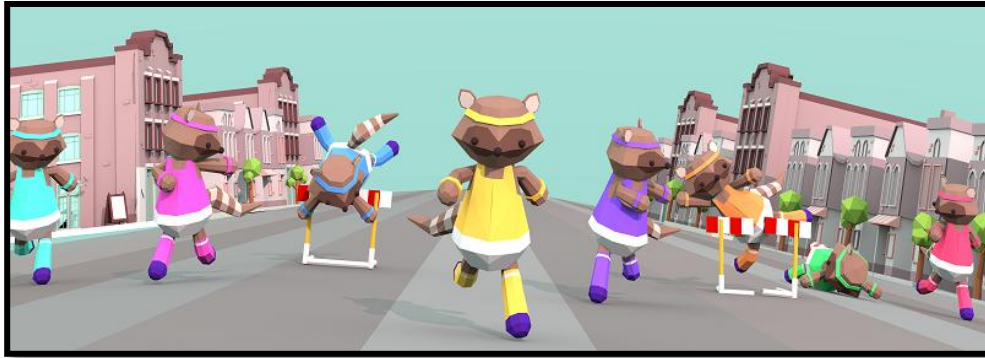
[Pugs Sniffin' Pugs by SpaceBeagles \(A TIFF Kids Exclusive\)](#)

World Premiere

Artist: SpaceBeagles | USA

The first arcade installation of a two-player collaborative game from SpaceBeagles' Pugs franchise, focused on learning how to work together and enjoy a day as a pug in Central Bark park.

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Trackoons, Artist: Laundry Bear Games

[Digital Bird Playground](#)

World Premiere

Artist: Tom van den Boogaart | Netherlands

Flock to this digitalized playground and walk around as a carefree bird exploring a relaxing island. Players can engage in serious things like playing soccer or basketball against each other, or take a gander around the serene surroundings and fool around aimlessly, picking up sticks, frogs and worms.

[SimAntics: Realistic Anteater Simulator](#)

Canadian Festival Premiere

Artist: Liselore Goedhart, Tom Francis | Netherlands/United Kingdom

SimAntics is a two-player competitive anteater simulator. Each player controls an anteater, steering its infinitely extensible prehensile tongue through a network of randomly generated ant tunnels, and trying to stick as many of the ants to the tongue as possible.

[Trackoons](#)

Artist: Laundry Bear Games | Canada

Trackoons is a competitive eight-person multiplayer game where raccoons face off in a hurdles race in downtown Toronto. It was created as part of Dames Making Games' Gym Jam game jam in Spring 2015.

[TIFF KIDS APPCADE](#)

The TIFF Kids APPcade includes over 30 apps, grouped for ages 3 and up, 7 and up and 10 and up, that allow kids and parents to learn together through play and creation, exploring a range of games, creative tools and storytelling activities. The APPCADE also features the Samsung [Look at Me](#) app, which was developed to help children living with autism improve their ability to make eye contact and interpret facial expressions through an engaging, interactive and fun digital device experience. Apps in the APPcade have been carefully selected by the TIFF Kids APPvisory Committee, a panel of experts specializing in children's media, education and the interactive industry.

Tickets for digiPlaySpace go on sale **March 2 at 10 a.m.** for TIFF Members, and **March 4 at 10 a.m.** to the public. Entry to digiPlaySpace is \$10; TIFF Members see it free and have access to a preview day on Friday, March 4. Tickets to digiPlaySpace can also be purchased in a combo package with a ticket for a TIFF Kids International Film Festival, DreamWorks, TIFF Kids Classics, Good Friday and Easter Monday screening for \$15 for children, \$20 for adults.

The TIFF Kids International Film Festival™ takes place at TIFF Bell Lightbox from **April 8 through April 24**. Tickets for the TIFF Kids Festival go on sale **March 2 at 10 a.m.** for TIFF Members, and **March 9 at 10 a.m.** for the public. Prices are: \$13 for adults, \$10.50 for students & seniors, and \$9 for children (13 and under). Opening Night Film and Party: \$35 per person. Premium Screenings (Closing Night Film and Special Events): \$20 per person. Programming for the upcoming 19th edition of TIFF Kids International Film Festival will be announced on March 2.

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TIFF Kids is now accepting submissions for the Jump Cuts Young Filmmakers Showcase, presenting short films created for young people by young people; the submission deadline is Friday, February 26. Filmmakers in grade 4-6 may be eligible for the "filmpossible" award, presented by Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, for the most accomplished film to have an onscreen representation of disability, where the winning film will receive a trophy and \$500 bursary. More information can be found at tiff.net/jumpcuts. TIFF Kids is also looking for young cinephiles to be a part of the Young People's Jury, which will decide the winning films in three categories at the 2016 TIFF Kids Festival; entries to be part of the jury close Friday, February 19. Details can be found at tiff.net/kids.

TIFF prefers Visa.

Social:

#digiPlaySpace
#TIFFKids

About TIFF

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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