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MEDIA RELEASE

TIFF CELEBRATES 20th ANNIVERSARY OF CANADA'S TOP TEN LIST OF FEATURES AND SHORTS

The best Canadian films of 2021, from *Drunken Birds* to *Scarborough*
to *Night Raiders* to *Ste. Anne* and more

TORONTO – TIFF unveiled its highly anticipated list of features and short films for Canada's Top Ten, which marks its 20th year in 2021. Compiled by TIFF's team of programmers in collaboration with film experts, the list showcases an incredible wealth of talent in the Canadian film industry, spotlighting work in every genre and honouring a diverse group of filmmakers, as well as emerging directorial talent.

This year's lists include eight first appearances and five Indigenous filmmakers. Additionally, eight of the 10 shorts are directed or co-directed by women, and six directors are alumni from the TIFF Talent Development programmes Filmmaker Lab, Writers' Studio, and Telefilm Canada's Pitch This!

"Canada continues to produce terrific new film talent and we're glad to showcase some of the very best in this year's Canada's Top Ten," said Cameron Bailey, CEO, TIFF. "Not since its inaugural year in 2001 have there been so many first appearances among the feature-film selections. Some of these films made their world premieres during the Festival and are now debuting their works on the international festival circuit, which is remarkable for first-time directors – I couldn't be prouder."

The 2021 Canada's Top Ten features list boasts one of the most varied lineups yet, with the literary adaptations *All My Puny Sorrows* from Michael McGowan, Sébastien Pilote's *Maria Chapdelaine*, and Shasha Nakhai and Rich Williamson's celebrated *Scarborough*, TIFF 2021 People's Choice Award First Runner-up and recipients of the Shawn Mendes Foundation Changemaker Award; *Charlotte*, a beautiful animated biography of a young Jewish artist whose life is cut short in the Holocaust, from filmmakers Eric Warin and Tahir Rana; a powerful and visually striking analysis of globalization in Ivan Grbovic's *Drunken Birds*, Canada's official Oscar submission for Best International Feature; a stylish exploration of the contemporary jazz scene in Thyrone Tommy's *Learn To Swim*; a powerful allegory for the forced removal of Indigenous children in dystopian thriller *Night Raiders* from Danis Goulet, winner of the 2021 TIFF Tribute Emerging Talent Award presented by L'Oréal Paris and supported by MGM; an insightful documentary about the stereotypes projected onto Black women in Jennifer Holness's *Subjects of Desire*; a poignant drama about the plight of teens facing a bleak future in contemporary Sarajevo from Igor Drljača in *The White Fortress*; and Rhayne Vermette's deeply personal debut feature, *Ste. Anne*, a moving drama about family and winner of the Amplify Voices Award for Best Canadian Feature Film presented by Canada Goose at TIFF 2021.

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

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Along with many films by directors making their first appearances on Canada's Top Ten, this year's shorts lineup includes powerful new works by two of Canada's most revered directors in Zacharias Kunuk and Alanis Obomsawin, recipient of the Jeff Skoll Award in Impact Media supported by Participant Media at this year's TIFF Tribute Awards. Kunuk's first-ever animated film in his five-decade career, **Angakusajaujuq - The Shaman's Apprentice** won the IMDbPro Short Cuts Award for Best Canadian Film at TIFF 2021, as well as awards for Best Canadian Short and Best Narrative Short at the Ottawa International Film Festival. The list also includes striking new shorts by returning filmmakers Terril Calder and Albert Shin, who recently won Best Canadian Short Film for his film **Together** at the 2021 Vancouver International Film Festival. Canada's Top Ten shorts will be screened at TIFF Bell Lightbox in a programme format on January 22, 2022.

Audiences can also watch a selection of features at TIFF Bell Lightbox or on digital TIFF Bell Lightbox, including **Drunken Birds**; **Night Raiders**; **Subjects of Desire**; the recently confirmed **Maria Chapdelaine**, available for rent on December 14; and **Scarborough**, which will be screening on January 28, 2022. Stay tuned for more information about feature screenings to be announced in the coming weeks.

TIFF's Top Ten Canadian films of 2021

Features

All My Puny Sorrows Michael McGowan | Ontario
Charlotte Eric Warin, Tahir Rana | Ontario
Drunken Birds Ivan Grbovic | Quebec
Learn To Swim Thyron Tommy | Ontario
Night Raiders Danis Goulet | Ontario
Maria Chapdelaine Sébastien Pilote | Quebec
Scarborough Shasha Nakhai, Rich Williamson | Ontario
Ste. Anne Rhayne Vermette | Manitoba
Subjects of Desire Jennifer Holness | Ontario
The White Fortress Igor Drljača | Ontario

Shorts

Ain't No Time for Women Sarra El Abed | Québec
Angakusajaujuq - The Shaman's Apprentice Zacharias Kunuk | Nunavut/Ontario
Boobs Marie Valade | Québec
DEFUND Khadijah Roberts-Abdullah, Araya Mengesha | Ontario
Fanmi Sandrine Brodeur-Desrosiers, Carmine Pierre-Dufour | Québec
Honour to Senator Murray Sinclair Alanis Obomsawin | Québec
Les grandes claques Annie St-Pierre | Québec
Meneath: The Hidden Island of Ethics Terril Calder | Québec
The Syed Family Xmas Eve Game Night Fawzia Mirza | Ontario

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Together Albert Shin | Ontario

Canada's Top Ten features list was selected by TIFF's programming team (Cameron Bailey, Diana Sanchez, and Steve Gravestock) in collaboration with Alexander Rogalski (Hot Docs) and Brenda Lieberman (Calgary International Film Festival). The shorts list was curated by TIFF's Short Cuts programmer Jason Anderson in collaboration with the following shorts programmers from across Canada: Alex Brundige (FIN Atlantic International Film Festival); Emilie Poirier (Festival du nouveau cinéma); Mariam Zaidi (Hot Docs and Breakthroughs Film Festival); Lisa Haller (Whistler Film Festival); and Curtis Woloschuk (Vancouver International Film Festival). Films screened at a Canadian or international film festival, and films that were released during the calendar year, were considered for inclusion.

TIFF Talent Development programmes are generously supported by the RBC Women Creators' Initiative, NBCUniversal (Every Story fund Founding Partner), the Chanel Women Writers' Network, Anne-Marie Canning, Jennifer A. Tory, Canada Goose®, Betty-Ann Heggie, Michael Worb, Barry Avrich, Micki Moore Simpson, Netflix (via their support of the Accelerator programme), and the Share Her Journey Giving Circle. Learn more about Share Her Journey and the Every Story fund at tiff.net/support

COVID-19 health and safety precautions continue at TIFF Bell Lightbox. Full details on health and safety protocols are available at tiff.net/covid-19

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For Canada's Top Ten film assets, please contact the PR office at proffice@tiff.net.

About TIFF

TIFF is a not-for-profit 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, learning and entertainment facilities; and innovative national distribution program Film Circuit. The organization generates an annual economic impact of \$200 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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