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MEDIA RELEASE

TIFF DISCOVERY PROGRAMME UNVEILS LINEUP RICH WITH PROMISING DEBUTS FROM EXCITING NEW STORYTELLERS

Carmel Winters, Wanuri Kahiu, Lila Avilés, Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje, Daniel Sawka, Benjamin Gilmour, and Imogen Thomas among programme's list of rising talents

TORONTO – The Toronto International Film Festival® today revealed 46 breakout films from 50 international storytellers as part of its 2018 Discovery lineup, marking a record year for the programme. Hailing from 37 different countries, these promising new filmmakers present works that explore identity, complex portraits of women, and youth as they struggle to navigate a fragile world. Twenty-nine of the films will make their World Premieres at the Festival. The lineup stands out for the impressive number of Asian and Eastern European films – accounting for 26% of the Discovery programme – and the number of films directed by women.

“We are thrilled to present a lineup so rich in distinct new voices committed to great storytelling,” said Kerri Craddock, Director of Festival Programming. “Audiences will embark on journeys with the strong characters in these films that will be sure to engage them from cultural, political, and formal perspectives. With 48% of the titles directed by women, the Festival's Discovery section hopefully signals that change is on the horizon in the international film industry.”

Opening this year's Discovery programme will be Bai Xue's ***The Crossing***, a captivating Chinese film following the journey of an ordinary teenage girl who becomes entangled in illicit activities. “Bai Xue displays the rare talent of a young female filmmaker who has rewritten the coming-of-age genre, colouring it with thrilling action,” said Giovanna Fulvi, International Programmer at TIFF. “TIFF is proud to introduce to the world of movie making one of the strongest new voices from China.”

The programme's highlights include: Adina Pintilie's innovative ***Touch Me Not***, winner of the Golden Bear and Best First Feature in Berlin; Syrian director Soudade Kaadan's ***The Day I Lost My Shadow***, a bewitching film on the Syrian conflict; Nino Zhvania's ***Parade***, the only Georgian feature in the selection; Lithuanian director Marija Kavtaradze's touching ***Summer Survivors***; Han Ka-ram's charming ***Our Body***; and renowned Nigerian actor Genevieve Nnaji's exciting directorial debut, ***Lionheart***.

This year's lineup also stands out for the strong portrayals of sensitive and witty women within it. Among them are Arturo Infante's sci-fi comedy ***The Extraordinary Journey of Celeste García***, starring popular actor María Isabel Díaz; Mexican director Lila Avilés' ***The Chambermaid***; Arash Lahooti's ***Orange Days***; Nikos Labôt's ***Her Job***; and ***Woman at War*** by Icelandic director Benedikt Erlingsson, which has already earned critical praise.

Putting the struggles of young characters front and centre, the Discovery programme includes UK

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actor-director Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje's **Farming**, which tells the story of a Nigerian immigrant facing a racist skinhead gang in 1980s England; Carmel Winters' beautiful **Float Like a Butterfly**; Lukas Dhont's **Girl**; Daniel Sawka's **Icebox**; Rosanne Pel's **Light as Feathers**; Darko Štante's **Consequences**; Ash Mayfair's **The Third Wife**; Imogen Thomas' poetic **Emu Runner**; Ethiopian–Israeli filmmaker Aäläm-Wärqe Davidian's **Fig Tree**; and Joël Karekezi's **The Mercy of the Jungle**, showcasing the breakthrough performance of TIFF International Rising Star Stéphane Bak.

Risk-takers and daring artists also stand out in this year's slate, as in Wanuri Kahiu's **Rafiki**, an electric female LGBTQ+ love story set in Kenya, where homosexuality is illegal; Sameh Zoabi's border-crossing dark comedy **Tel Aviv on Fire**; Ognjen Glavonić's **The Load**; and Irish brothers Andy and Ryan Tohill's suspenseful thriller **The Dig**. Bold Australian filmmaker Benjamin Gilmour will present the groundbreaking **Jirga**.

To close this bright selection, Palestinian director Bassam Jarbawi will introduce North American audiences to his exceptional first feature film, **Screwdriver**, a gripping drama that examines the psychological impact of the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. "Bassam Jarbawi's remarkable feature debut is an important look at mental trauma in the context of the Occupation," said International Programmer Kiva Reardon.

The 43rd Toronto International Film Festival runs from September 6 to 16, 2018.

Films screening as part of the Discovery programme include:

aKasha hajooj kuka | Sudan/South Africa/Qatar/Germany
North American Premiere

ANIARA Pella Kågerman, Hugo Lilja | Sweden
World Premiere

Blind Spot (*Blindsone*) Tuva Novotny | Norway
International Premiere

The Chambermaid (*La Camarista*) Lila Avilés | Mexico
World Premiere

Complicity (*Kazenoki Wa Koto No Youni*) Kei Chikaura | Japan/China
World Premiere

Consequences (*Posledice*) Darko Štante | Slovenia/Austria
World Premiere

Discovery Opening Film

The Crossing (*Guo Chun Tian*) Bai Xue | China
World Premiere

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The Day I Lost My Shadow (*Yom Adaatou Zouli*) Soudade Kaadan | Syria/France/Qatar/Lebanon
North American Premiere

The Dig Andy Tohill, Ryan Tohill | United Kingdom
North American Premiere

An Elephant Sitting Still (*Da Xiang Xi Di Er Zuo*) Hu Bo | China
Canadian Premiere

Emu Runner Imogen Thomas | Australia
World Premiere

ENDZEIT – EVER AFTER (*ENDZEIT*) Carolina Hellsgård | Germany
World Premiere

The Extraordinary Journey of Celeste García (*El Viaje Extraordinario de Celeste García*) Arturo Infante |
Cuba/Germany
World Premiere

Farming Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje | United Kingdom
World Premiere

Fig Tree Aäläm-Wärqe Davidian | Israel/Germany/France/Ethiopia
World Premiere

Float Like a Butterfly Carmel Winters | Ireland
World Premiere

Girl Lukas Dhont | Belgium
Canadian Premiere

Gwen William McGregor | United Kingdom
World Premiere

Helmet Heads (*Cascos Indomables*) Neto Villalobos | Costa Rica/Chile
World Premiere

Her Job Nikos Labôt | Greece/France/Serbia
World Premiere

Icebox Daniel Sawka | USA

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World Premiere

Jirga Benjamin Gilmour | Australia
North American Premiere

Light as Feathers Rosanne Pel | Netherlands
World Premiere

Lionheart Genevieve Nnaji | Nigeria
World Premiere

The Load (*Teret*) Ognjen Glavonic | Serbia/France/Croatia/Iran/Qatar
North American Premiere

Manta Ray (*Kraben Rahu*) Phutti Phong Aroonpheng | Thailand/France/China
North American Premiere

The Mercy of the Jungle Joël Karekezi | Belgium/France/Germany
North American Premiere

Orange Days (*Rooz-haye Narenji*) Arash Lahooti | Iran
World Premiere

Our Body (*A-wol Ba-di*) Han Ka-ram | South Korea
World Premiere

Parade (*Aglumi*) Nino Zhvania | Georgia/Russia
World Premiere

Phoenix (*Fønix*) Camilla Strøm Henriksen | Norway/Sweden
World Premiere

Rafiki Wanuri Kahiu | Kenya/South Africa/France/Lebanon/Norway/Netherlands/Germany/USA
North American Premiere

Saf Ali Vatansever | Turkey/Germany/Romania
World Premiere

Discovery Closing Film

Screwdriver (*Mafak*) Bassam Jarbawi | Palestine/USA/Qatar
North American Premiere

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Summer Survivors Marija Kavtaradze | Lithuania
World Premiere

Tel Aviv on Fire Sameh Zoabi | Luxembourg/France/Israel/Belgium
North American Premiere

The Third Wife Ash Mayfair | Vietnam
World Premiere

Tito and the Birds (*Tito e os Pássaros*) Gustavo Steinberg, Gabriel Bitar, André Catoto | Brazil
North American Premiere

Too Late to Die Young (*Tarde para morir joven*) Dominga Sotomayor |
Chile/Brazil/Argentina/Netherlands/Qatar
North American Premiere

Touch Me Not Adina Pintilie | Romania/Germany/Czech Republic/Bulgaria/France
North American Premiere

Twin Flower (*Fiore Gemello*) Laura Luchetti | Italy
World Premiere

Woman at War (*Kona fer í stríð*) Benedikt Erlingsson | Iceland/France/Ukraine
North American Premiere

Previously announced Canadian titles in the Discovery programme include Akash Sherman's **Clara**, Gwaai Edenshaw and Helen Haig-Brown's **Edge of the Knife**, Jasmin Mozaffari's **Firecrackers**, and Zach Lipovsky and Adam Stein's **Freaks**.

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Reason (*Vivek*) Anand Patwardhan | India
World Premiere

For film synopses, cast lists, images, and more information see tiff.net/discovery

Festival tickets go on sale September 3 at 10am (TIFF Member pre-sale September 1 from 10am to 4pm). Buy tickets online at tiff.net, by phone at 416.599.TIFF or 1.888.599.8433, or in person at a box office. See box office locations and hours at tiff.net/tickets.

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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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For images, visit the media site at tiff.net/press.

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