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MEDIA RELEASE

TIFF 2019 CONTEMPORARY WORLD CINEMA SLATE OFFERS A GLOBAL SNAPSHOT OF THE WORLD THROUGH ESSENTIAL STORYTELLING

Atiq Rahimi, Mati Diop, Gael García Bernal, Ladj Ly, Pema Tsenden, Hikari, Rubaiyat Hossain, Karl Markovics, Nadav Lapid, Edward Burns, and Grímur Hákonarson included in this year's selection of remarkable talent and award-winning directors

TORONTO – The 2019 Toronto International Film Festival® unveiled today the lineup for its 2019 Contemporary World Cinema (CWC) programme. The rich slate of titles from 48 countries features a wide range of thought-provoking stories that delve into cultural issues and social struggles in poetic and captivating ways. Introducing 21 works directed and co-directed by women, this year's edition of CWC focuses on fractured families, self-exploration, female-driven narratives, and the consequences of social and political crises.

"Contemporary World Cinema is a place where different cultures meet," said Kiva Reardon, International Programmer and new Lead Programmer for the section. "The vision for the programme is to help expand the cinematic canon and push the definition of what has previously been deemed as fundamental. This is a selection of essential, urgent cinema. It has been a pleasure to work with my fellow programmers in this new role to offer bold stories and invigorating films that ask our audiences to reflect on their position in the world."

"Contemporary World Cinema is the heartbeat of the Festival," said Cameron Bailey, TIFF Artistic Director and Co-Head. "This is where audiences feel the pulse of what's happening now all around the world in screen storytelling. It takes a strong curatorial vision to shape that vast variety of films. I'm glad we have Kiva Reardon on the job as CWC Lead Programmer."

With contributions from Cameron Bailey, Brad Deane, Giovanna Fulvi, Steve Gravestock, Dorota Lech, Michael Lerman, Michèle Maheux, Diana Sanchez, and Ravi Srinivasan, Reardon has decided to emphasize the importance of showing the current state of the world through the lens of international, deeply talented filmmakers who help guide us through the reality of our social and political environments.

The African continent is represented in the lineup by eight films beaming with creativity. Opening the programme is Atiq Rahimi's third feature, ***Our Lady of the Nile***, which follows a group of Rwandan girls in a Catholic boarding school. The bewitching work, which boasts hypnotic cinematography, foreshadows the country's 1994 genocide. The programme also serves as a platform for acclaimed regional projects such as Jenna Bass' South African road movie ***Flatland***, Jahmil X.T. Qubeka's ***Knuckle City***, Rabah Ameur-Zaïmeche's ***Terminal Sud***, and Amjad Abu Alala's mystical ***You Will Die at Twenty***.

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Winner of the Grand Prix in Cannes, Mati Diop's exploration of migration, **Atlantics**, leads a bold wave of films exploring pressing global issues: Guatemalan director Jayro Bustamante presents an examination of his country's political wounds with **La Llorona**, in which civil war victims haunt their torturer's life; Laos' first and only female director to ever present a film at TIFF, Mattie Do, couples family loss and time-travelling in **The Long Walk**; and Lijo Jose Pellissery's **Jallikattu** offers a daring allegory on toxic masculinity in a remote Indian village. Other award-winning films included in the slate are **Synonyms**, the Golden Bear-winning film from Israeli filmmaker Nadav Lapid, and the recipients of the 2019 Cannes Jury Prize: French director Ladj Ly's **Les Misérables** and the Brazilian film **Bacurau**, co-directed by Kleber Mendonça Filho and Juliano Dornelles.

This year's CWC slate is also rich in contributions from internationally renowned actors – both in front of and behind the camera – with Mexican actor Gael García Bernal's second film as director, **Chicuarotes**; Austrian performer Karl Markovics's third feature, **Nobadi**; Dutch actor-turned-director Halina Reijn's **Instinct**; and an extraordinary performance from Iranian icon Golshifteh Farahani in Manele Labidi's **Arab Blues**. Produced by US powerhouse Jada Pinkett Smith, Minhal Baig's **Hala** is a coming-of-age story about an American Muslim teenager trying to balance her relationship with her strict parents and her own desires. The film is inspired by Baig's own life and brings to the screen a fresh look at the teen experience.

Other highlights in the programme study the complexity of family dynamics, such as Taiwanese Chung Mong-Hong's lyrical **A Sun**, which focuses on a fractured father-son relationship. **Balloon**, directed by Tibetan filmmaker Pema Tsenden, tells the conflicting struggles of a family dealing with China's one-child policy. And Yaron Zilberman returns to TIFF with the World Premiere of **Incitement**, the first-ever fiction film to depict the cataclysmic assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Spotlighting the struggles and triumphs of women in societies around the world are: Maryam Touzani's domestic epic **Adam**; Hikari's **37 Seconds**, which follows a young manga artist who uses her craft as a tool of self-discovery; and Sharipa Urazbayeva's **Mariam**, the story of a strong Kazakhstani mother and her drive to help her family survive. Films centring on working-class women include internationally acclaimed Bengali director Rubaiyat Hossain's **Made in Bangladesh**, which follows a factory worker fighting for dignity in the world of fast fashion; **The County**, from Cannes prize-winning Icelandic director Grímur Hákonarson; and Edward Burns' intriguing family portrait **Beneath the Blue Suburban Skies**.

The 44th Toronto International Film Festival runs September 5–15, 2019.

Films screening as part of the Contemporary World Cinema programme include:

37 Seconds Hikari | Japan/USA
Canadian Premiere

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Adam Maryam Touzani | Morocco/France/Belgium
North American Premiere

Arab Blues (*Un Divan à Tunis*) Manele Labidi | France
North American Premiere

Atlantics Mati Diop | France/Senegal/Belgium
North American Premiere

Atlantis Valentyn Vasyanovych | Ukraine
North American Premiere

Bacurau Kleber Mendonça Filho, Juliano Dornelles | Brazil
North American Premiere

Balloon (*Qi Qiu*) Pema Tsenden | China
North American Premiere

The Barefoot Emperor Jessica Woodworth, Peter Brosens | Belgium/Netherlands/Croatia/Bulgaria
World Premiere

Beanpole (*Dylida*) Kantemir Balagov | Russia
North American Premiere

Beneath the Blue Suburban Skies Edward Burns | USA
World Premiere

Blow the Man Down Danielle Krudy, Bridget Savage Cole | USA
International Premiere

Bombay Rose Gitanjali Rao | India/United Kingdom/Qatar
North American Premiere

Chicuarotes Gael García Bernal | Mexico
North American Premiere

The Climb Michael Angelo Covino | USA
Canadian Premiere

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Corpus Christi (*Boze Cialo*) Jan Komasa | Poland/France
North American Premiere

The County (*Héraðið*) Grímur Hákonarson | Iceland/Denmark/Germany/France
International Premiere

Dogs Don't Wear Pants (*Koirat eivät käytä housuja*) J-P Valkeapää | Finland/Latvia
North American Premiere

The Father (*Bashtata*) Petar Valchanov, Kristina Grozeva | Bulgaria/Greece/Italy
North American Premiere

Flatland Jenna Bass | South Africa/Luxembourg/Germany
North American Premiere

A Girl Missing (*Yokogao*) Koji Fukada | Japan/France
North American Premiere

Hala Minhal Baig | USA
Canadian Premiere

Henry Glassie: Field Work Pat Collins | Ireland
World Premiere

Incitement Yaron Zilberman | Israel
World Premiere

Instinct Halina Reijn | Netherlands
North American Premiere

The Invisible Life of Eurídice Gusmão (*A Vida Invisível de Eurídice Gusmão*) Karim Aïnouz | Brazil/Germany
North American Premiere

Jallikattu Lijo Jose Pellissery | India
World Premiere

Knuckle City Jahmil X.T. Qubeka | South Africa
International Premiere

La Llorona Jayro Bustamante | Guatemala/France

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North American Premiere

Les Misérables Ladj Ly | France
North American Premiere

The Long Walk (*Bor Mi Vanh Chark*) Mattie Do | Laos/Spain/Singapore
North American Premiere

Made in Bangladesh Rubaiyat Hossain | France/Bangladesh/Denmark/Portugal
World Premiere

Mariam Sharipa Urazbayeva | Kazakhstan
North American Premiere

Maria's Paradise (*Marian paratiisi*) Zaida Bergroth | Finland/Estonia
World Premiere

Nobadi Karl Markovics | Austria
World Premiere

Contemporary World Cinema Opening Film

Our Lady of the Nile (*Notre-Dame du Nil*) Atiq Rahimi | France/Belgium/Rwanda
World Premiere

The Perfect Candidate Haifaa Al-Mansour | Saudi Arabia/Germany
North American Premiere

Red Fields (*Mami*) Keren Yedaya | Israel/Luxembourg/Germany
International Premiere

Resin (*Harpiks*) Daniel Joseph Borgman | Denmark
World Premiere

So Long, My Son (*Di Jiu Tian Chang*) Wang Xiaoshuai | China
North American Premiere

Spider (*Araña*) Andrés Wood | Chile
International Premiere

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A Sun (*Yang Guang Pu Zhao*) Chung Mong-Hong | Taiwan
World Premiere

Synonyms (*Synonymes*) Nadav Lapid | France/Israel/Germany
North American Premiere

Terminal Sud (*South Terminal*) Rabah Ameur-Zäïmeche | France
North American Premiere

Three Summers (*Três Verões*) Sandra Kogut | Brazil/France
World Premiere

Verdict Raymund Ribay Gutierrez | Philippines/France
Canadian Premiere

A White, White Day (*Hvítur, Hvítur Dagur*) Hlynur Pálmason | Iceland/Denmark/Sweden
North American Premiere

The Wild Goose Lake (*Nan Fang Che Zhan De Ju Hui*) Diao Yinan | China/France
North American Premiere

You Will Die at Twenty Amjad Abu Alala | Sudan/France/Egypt/Germany/Norway/Qatar
North American Premiere

Previously announced Canadian features screening at the Festival as part of the Contemporary World Cinema programme include: ***And the Birds Rained Down*, *Antigone*, *The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open*, *Castle in the Ground*, *The Last Porno Show*, *Tammy's Always Dying*, and *White Lie*.**

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

Festival ticket packages start at \$110. See all the Contemporary World Cinema films using your 10-ticket regular flex pack. Purchase packages online at tiff.net/tickets, by phone (416.599.2033 or 1.888.599.8433), or in person at TIFF Bell Lightbox until August 11 while quantities last.

TIFF prefers Visa.

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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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