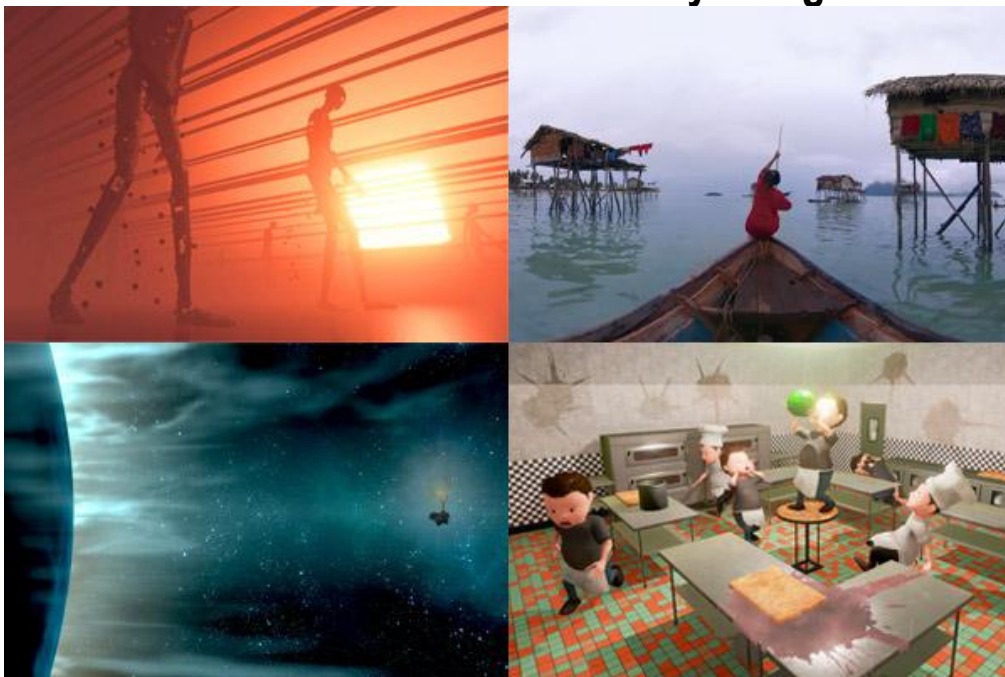


TIFF BRINGS CURATED VIRTUAL REALITY INSTALLATIONS TO TORONTO THIS SUMMER WITH POP

2016 lineup features 26 of the most unique VR art pieces and the best in interactive storytelling



Top-left: *Surge*, Arjan van Meerten, 2015; **Top-right:** *Nomads*, Felix & Paul Studios, 2015; **Bottom-left:** *Irrational Exuberance*, Ben Vance, 2016; **Bottom-right:** *Food Fight*, Pinnguaq, 2016

TORONTO – TIFF® is bringing virtual reality to the public this summer by offering the chance to experience the wonder of high-end VR in a series of curated installations. **POP** is a three-part virtual reality and immersive media pop-up installation series showcasing some of the best virtual storytelling in the world. Divided into three thematic groupings — art and music, documentary, and experimental cinema — the series kicks off with **POP 01: VR + Music + Art** in the HSBC Gallery of TIFF Bell Lightbox from June 24 to 26. **POP 02: VR + Empathy + Real-World Storytelling** takes place from July 15 to 17 and **POP 03: VR + Experimental Film** rounds off the series from August 19 to 21.

Each pop-up of TIFF's latest VR venture will include **POPx** on Saturday nights: a panel discussion where guests can hear from featured VR creators, storytellers and filmmakers.

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



"We are excited to present these works like the pieces of cinematic and artistic expression they are," explains Jody Sugrue, Director, TIFF Digital Studio. "Most VR demonstrations take place at technology conferences and industry events. TIFF is doing something else: preparing a curated collection of projects so the public can experience the wonder, delight, and curiosity at this intersection of story and technology."

The 2016 lineup features award-winning virtual reality art installations, plus Canadian and world premieres. TIFF Bell Lightbox's gallery space will be transformed into a custom-designed VR environment, encouraging people to leave the real world behind and enter a wholly immersive and interactive space.

Visitors to POP will play a drum solo on hamburgers and gummy bears; sculpt and paint in mid-air in collaboration with other artists; experience the devastating isolation of solitary confinement; ride a dragon across an ocean; merge with a being made of pure light; go on an adventure with a lonely hedgehog; see a film that has never been seen before and will never be seen again; step inside the memories of a 93-year-old woman; and experience deep-space travel accompanied by the poetry of T.S. Eliot.

POP 01: VR + ART + MUSIC (June 24–26)

POP 01 is all about music and art, as VR artists pose questions such as: how does one art form influence another? Can you adapt a visual artist's work for VR? What about a song? More and more musicians are releasing 360-degree and experiential music videos, and artists are creating new kinds of work, documenting the creative process and inviting people to produce virtual creations themselves. The inaugural POP will explore this vital and expanding virtual canvas.

Speakers at POPx on Saturday, June 25 include Adam Robezzoli (of New Tropics, speaking about *Light Spirit*), Ersin Han Ersin (of Marshmallow Laser Feast, speaking about *In The Eyes of the Animals*), John Riera (director of Jazz Cartier's "Red Alert" and "100 Roses"), Connor Illsley (technical director of Jazz Cartier's "Red Alert" and "100 Roses") and Karen Vanderborcht (independent director/producer), all discussing the intersection of art, music and virtual reality. POPx is moderated by Joseph Patel, VP of Content for The FADER.

Light Spirit – WORLD PREMIERE!

FriendsWithYou and *New Tropics'* immersive, interactive experience presents a unique encounter with the ephemeral. A playful interaction with a kind and capricious spirit spans the gamut of emotions as one plays, learns from and even merges with the friendly spectre's light and changing form. (HTC Vive Gear)

In The Eyes of the Animals

Creative collective *Marshmallow Laser Feast* explores the line between virtual and real-world experiences. Set in Grizedale Forest in the UK's Lake District, this custom VR experience takes visitors on a fascinating journey as they fly about the forest canopy, come face to face with HiDef critters, and embody various animals as they traverse the landscape. (Custom VR)

SUPERHYPERCUBE

Designed by *Kokoromi*, this intuitive shape-matching gameplay involves rotating an ever-growing cluster of cubes through openings in walls that constantly move towards you. (PlayStation VR)

Oculus Medium

Experience a combination of art + play that lets you sculpt, smooth, paint and create objects directly in virtual reality. Medium utilizes Oculus Touch controllers, bringing authentic natural hand gestures and movement to the experience. (Oculus)

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Playthings

By *Always and Forever Computer Entertainment*, this interactive experience is a colourful, whimsical musical playground set on an island filled with cheeseburger drums and other junk-food instruments that you can play. (HTC Vive)

Tilt Brush – Winner of Best VR Experience at UNITY (2015) and Best GUI at The Proto Awards (2014)!

This award-winning Google program allows users to create room-sized artwork in a 3D virtual space using the HTC Vive headset and controllers. *Variety* has likened it to “Microsoft Paint for the year 2020” and early reviews are claiming that it will be revolutionary for the creation of digital and immersive artworks. (HTC Vive)

Ixian Gate

Designed by Jess Johnson and Simon Ward, this animated VR experience enables audiences to enter the hypnotic spaces depicted in New Zealand-born Johnson’s artworks, which explore potential intersections between language, science fiction, culture and technology. (Oculus)

Surge

Created by 3D animator and musician Arjan van Meerten, *Surge* is a real-time VR music video created for the new generation of headsets, giving insight into the possibilities of VR as a medium for music videos. (Oculus)

GNOG

Developed by KO_OP, this 3D puzzle adventure takes participants on a journey through the universe of playfully interactive monster heads. Each head (or “Gnoggin”) is a unique micro-world with its own set of rules and puzzles. (PlayStation VR)

Strangers with Patrick Watson

Created by *Felix & Paul Studios* and *Watsonia Productions*, this experience invites visitors to share an intimate moment with renowned musician Patrick Watson in his Montreal studio. (Samsung Gear VR)

Inside the Box of Kurios

Step on stage for an intimate look at Cirque de Soleil’s *Inside the Box of Kurios-Cabinet of Curiosities*, created by Felix & Paul Studios and Cirque du Soleil Media. (Samsung Gear VR)

A Grand Expanse

An innovative VR music video for Martina Sorbara and Tiny Lung’s song “A Grand Expanse.” (Samsung Gear VR)

Crown

A new VR video for Killer Mike and El-P of Run the Jewels’ single “Crown” from RTJ2, originally released as a New York Times’ NYT VR app, directed by Peter Martin and the first project in their VRTJ platform. (Samsung Gear VR)

Red Alert & 100 Roses

Jazz Cartier breaks new ground with his virtual reality double feature for “Red Alert” and “100 Roses,” two of the most celebrated singles from his highly acclaimed project, *Hotel Paranoia*. (Samsung Gear VR)

POP 02: VR + EMPATHY + REAL-WORLD STORYTELLING (July 15-17)

POP 02 is all about telling real-life stories in a virtual reality environment. Visitors will enter someone else’s life, see things from other perspectives, and experience fear, wonder, joy and pain. The second installation in the POP series will pose questions such as: what emotions does this technology allow you to experience? What are the possibilities for social connection between people in a virtual environment? What are the limitations and ethical considerations for creators and audiences?

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Confirmed installations are listed below and new projects will be added and announced at a later date. Speakers for POPx on Saturday July 16 will be announced on tiff.net/pop and on TIFF social channels. POPx is moderated by The Verge.

6x9: An Immersive Experience of Solitary Confinement

The Guardian's first virtual reality experience explores what it's like to spend 23 hours a day in a US solitary confinement prison cell measuring six by nine feet. (Samsung Gear VR)

Virtual Strangers

This VR experience by *Mike Harris Design* allows two complete strangers, from different locations anywhere in the world, to come together in a shared virtual space.

Irrational Exuberance

Ben Vance's *Irrational Exuberance* invites visitors into an imagined outer space full of vast starfields, low-gravity physics and other interstellar phenomena. (HTC Vive)

Nomads

Felix & Paul Studios invites you into the worlds of three nomadic groups with their three-part VR experience. Visit the Sama-Bajau people in *Sea Gypsies* who have lived along the coasts of Borneo for centuries; journey to Kenya and Tanzania to see *Maasai* and experience the pastoralists' formidable living culture; and quietly observe the lives of nomadic yak herders in Mongolia with *Herders*. (Samsung Gear VR/Oculus)

Never Forget: An Architecture of Memory

Nicole Del Medico's virtual reality experience allows players to immerse themselves in and navigate the memories of others. Players will wander through a series of 28 rooms that recall the memories and lived experiences of a 93-year-old woman leading up to and during World War II in the Netherlands. (Oculus)

The Lovely Room

Toronto-based Emma Burkeitt and Saffron Bolduc-Chiong's augmented-reality installation invites visitors to dive into the abandoned underwater study of the late 19th century mathematician and programmer Ada Lovelace.

Henry

Narrated by Elijah Wood, this *Oculus Story Studio* piece was developed with former creative talent on the *Brave* and *Toy Story 3* teams. *Henry* is a story-driven VR experience that takes visitors on an adventure with a little hedgehog who ends up all alone on his birthday and makes a wish that changes everything. (Oculus)

POP 03: VR + EXPERIMENTAL FILM (August 19-21)

The final POP installment will move audiences into the realm of experimental cinema. Since the earliest days of film, projecting images within a defined frame has been the basis for cinema — but what happens when that frame disappears? What happens when the audience can choose where to look and what to do? As immersive media becomes more advanced and available, explore the range of cinematic possibilities with VR.

Confirmed installations are listed below and new projects will be added and announced at a later date. Speakers for POPx on Saturday, August 20 will be announced on tiff.net/pop and on TIFF social channels. POPx is moderated by The National Film Board of Canada.

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SANKHARA – WORLD PREMIERE!

This VR experience, inspired by T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*, begins at the end of an astronaut's mission, as we follow him home through our awe-inspiring universe. (Samsung Gear VR)

Food Fight – WORLD PREMIERE!

Designed by *Pinnuaq* (meaning "play" in Inuktitut), this playful VR experience allows users to take a stand against big food while surrounded by angry chefs. There is no margarine for error, bring on the grapes of wrath! (Oculus)

Seances

Conceived by Guy Maddin, Evan and Galen Johnson, and produced by NFB Digital Studio, *Seances* presents a new way of experiencing film narrative, framed through the lens of loss. In a technical feat of data-drive cinematic storytelling, films are dynamically assembled in never-to-be repeated configurations. (Custom VR experience)

The Turning Forest

Created by award-winning multimedia artists Oscar Raby, *The Turning Forest* is a sound based real-time CGI VR experience. Audiences are invited into a magical space of imagination, where rustling leaves are also the footsteps of something familiar, yet strange. (Custom VR experience)

Lost

From the director of Pixar's *The Blue Umbrella*, this piece allows visitors to experience the wonder of an unexpected encounter in a magical forest, created by *Oculus Story Studio*. (Oculus)

Oculus Quill

Thanks to Oculus' new creation tool, illustrators can draw in virtual reality and let audiences see their creations come to life around them, stroke by stroke. (Oculus Touch Controllers)

Tickets for the POP 01 and 02 are on sale now for TIFF Members and the general public. Entry to the timed, two-hour cohort is \$22.75 for the public, and \$16 for TIFF Members. Tickets for the Saturday night speaker event, POPx, are \$35 for the public and \$30 for TIFF Members. Tickets for POP 03 will go on sale on July 22 for the public and July 20 for TIFF Members.

For more information on screenings and activities, or to purchase tickets, please visit tiff.net/pop, call 416-599-TIFF (8433) or 1-800-599-TIFF, or visit the Steve & Rashmi Gupta Box Office at TIFF Bell Lightbox.

Social:

#TIFFxPOP

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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In collaboration with The FADER (POP 01), The Verge (POP 02), and The National Film Board of Canada (POP 03).

Supported by Anne-Marie Canning.

For information, contact the Communications Department at 416-934-3200 or email proffice@tiff.net
For images, please visit our media site at tiff.net/press.

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