



July 8, 2021

**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **TIFF ANNOUNCES 2021 INDUSTRY CONFERENCE THEMES** **SHARE HER JOURNEY MOVEMENT REIGNITED WITH PROGRAMME INITIATIVES & PARTNER SUPPORT**

**TORONTO** – The Toronto International Film Festival® announced today a first look at its **2021 Industry Conference**. The five-day event, taking place September 9–13, will inspire and incite discussions for creative and business entrepreneurship, while examining the vital role creators play within an evolving and challenging media landscape. This year’s Conference and development programmes, including Filmmaker Lab and Rising Stars, is once again available online to accredited professionals from around the world.

“This is a pivotal moment in the industry,” said Geoff Macnaughton, Senior Director of Industry & Theatrical, TIFF. “As the industry continues to grapple with the lack of inclusivity and diversity, TIFF Industry Conference will spotlight creators, filmmakers and industry professionals who are actively working towards a safer, more inclusive and equitable industry, with sessions exploring the creative process, collaboration for better representation, behavioural standards and policies, equitable hiring practices, and diverse voices in film criticism.”

The 2021 Conference comprises six distinct sections: **Visionaries** (formerly Master Classes), offers inspirational sessions with prominent individuals who are forging new creative and business pathways in the industry; **Dialogues** will take the shape of intimate conversations on craft between creators, including directors, actors, writers, showrunners, and more; **Perspectives** features moderated and focused discussions on the current state and future of the industry in relation to the panelists’ area of expertise; **Microsessions** are curated discussions that highlight new technologies and new ways of doing business; **Spotlights** highlight talent, incentives, and pitches from around the globe; and, new this year, **Connections** are sessions for emerging to mid-career filmmakers to interact with experts and gain practical knowledge to move their projects, as well as their understanding of the industry, forward. TIFF’s Industry Conference is supported by media partners including *The Hollywood Reporter* for the Visionaries section, *Variety* for the Dialogues section, and *Screen International* for the Perspectives section.

TIFF will continue its pass-gifting initiative in 2021 for emerging film creators from underrepresented communities. This initiative provides new diverse talents and future professionals with access to the Festival’s Industry Conference, Press & Industry screenings, and networking tools to expand their careers and connections for new opportunities. Last year, pass-gifting supported 272 emerging filmmakers in collaboration with community organizations across North America and supporting partners.

New this year, both press and industry delegates are invited to follow @TIFF\_Industry on Twitter for the latest announcements, news updates, and live tweets from the Industry Conference, press conferences, and the Festival. This social tool will connect delegates, stimulate conversation, and amplify important discussions.

There are three different pass types for industry delegates to experience the Festival this year. Also new in

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



2021, TIFF's Digital Talks pass now includes access, upon availability, to online Press & Industry screenings for films in the Short Cuts, Discovery, and Wavelengths programmes, in addition to the Industry Conference. Full information on industry pass types are available at [tiff.net/industry](http://tiff.net/industry).

Details on digital conference programming, talent development initiatives, and industry programmes will follow throughout the summer. TIFF will announce talent appearances and update accredited professionals on in-person offerings regarding Press & Industry screenings, in the coming weeks, as government plans for reopening the city and the country are finalized.

**Share Her Journey** began in 2017 as a five-year campaign and commitment to address gender parity and championing women in front of and behind the camera through TIFF's Festival and year-round initiatives. It has since evolved into a permanent TIFF initiative, supporting creators at every stage of their professional journey. This global movement is dedicated to building frameworks, empowering creators, and forging paths for women to succeed as storytellers who help shape our cultural landscape.

TIFF is delighted to continue with Share Her Journey's talent development initiatives. These include the Betty-Ann Heggie Speaker Series, dedicated to sparking conversation on gender equity in the screen industry and offering skills-building for industry professionals that will favourably impact women in film; and the Micki Moore Writer-in-Residence programme, which supports quality screen storytelling by women. Both programmes support Share Her Journey's mission to prioritize gender parity with a focus on mentorship to strengthen inclusion, accessibility, and diversity in film for women filmmakers.

TIFF is also thrilled to announce the renewed commitment of the recently renamed RBC Women Creators' Initiative (previously the RBC Female Creator Initiative) for the next two years in support of the TIFF Talent Accelerator programme, TIFF Industry access for women and non-binary creators and film professionals, as well as International Women's Day programming celebrating BIPOC talent. RBC is a long-standing supporter of the arts and film, recognizing the important role they play in building vibrant communities and strong economies. RBC has been the official bank of TIFF since 2008, and became a founding supporter of Share Her Journey in 2017.

"The industry as a whole acknowledges that gender inequity is systemic, so change has to happen at every level," said Joana Vicente, TIFF Executive Director and Co-Head. "By providing practical support to creators with diverse perspectives, TIFF has been able to identify a cycle of impact encompassing four key stages where creators are directly supported by Share Her Journey. The cycle traces the creative journey from inspiration and ideation to a finished work shared with audiences, and is rooted in the objective of having more women-led films created, seen, and celebrated."

Additional highlights over the previous five years include: 280 official Festival titles have been directed, co-directed and co-created by women; 362 women creators have been provided with deep skills-development opportunities; over 66,000 people have taken action to support women in film; and 22 women luminaries, experts, and changemakers in film have become Share Her Journey Ambassadors, including TIFF's newest Ambassador and 2020 TIFF Emerging Talent Award presented by L'Oréal Paris and supported by MGM recipient, award-winning filmmaker Tracey Deer.

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Since its launch, Share Her Journey has been supported by: Anthropocene Films Inc., Aurora, Canada Goose®, Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW Canada), Anne-Marie Canning, Betty-Ann Heggie, Micki Moore Simpson, Netflix (via their support of the Accelerator programme), RBC Women Creators' Initiative (previously the RBC Female Creator Initiative), The Slight Family Foundation, Sara & Graeme Thomson, Temerty Foundation, Jennifer A. Tory, an Anonymous donor, the Piers Handling Tribute Gala, the Share Her Journey Giving Circle, and over 7,000 individuals and organizations.

TIFF continues to work closely with the Province of Ontario, the City of Toronto, and public health officials on the safe execution of the Festival, with its number-one priority being the health and well-being of both Festival filmgoers and residents of the community. Based on the provincial government's recently announced reopening plan, TIFF is planning to operate at a higher capacity for indoor theatres by September, likely with mandatory mask usage for Festival-goers. To help ensure the safest possible experience, TIFF has once again partnered with Medcan, a global healthcare leader providing medical expertise, consultation, and health inspiration to achieve its mission to help people "Live Well, For Life." Based on the pillars of evidence-based care, exceptional client service, and the latest in technology, Medcan's team of over 90 physicians supports employee health care across the continuum of health, including its "Safe at Work System," which helps organizations navigate the pandemic.

The 46th Toronto International Film Festival runs September 9–18, 2021.

Please visit [tiff.net](http://tiff.net) for more information.

TIFF prefers Visa.

#### **Social Media:**

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#### **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, major exhibitions, and 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](http://tiff.net).

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