



**MEDIA RELEASE // FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ANNOUNCING JURY AWARD WINNERS AT CIFF'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL!

Calgary, AB - The Calgary International Film Festival is proud to bring together celebrated voices from global film communities to serve on the CIFF 2024 Jury. Our 25th Grand Jury has deliberated and is pleased to recognize this year's most exceptional feature and short films.

With 12 awards and over \$60,000 CAD in cash and prizes, plus one winning short gaining eligibility for Academy Awards consideration, CIFF is proud to announce this year's winners:

RBC Emerging Canadian Artist Award (\$10,000 CAD)

This juried award is given to the Canadian director who creates the best first or second narrative feature film. Presented by RBC.

Jury members: Emily Renner Wallace, Linda Nainaar, Dylan Pearce

Grand Jury Prize: UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE, directed by Matthew Rankin

Honourable Mention: WE FORGOT TO BREAK UP, directed by K Knox

Jury Statement:

"We chose UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE as the winner because it stood out with its unique blend of cultures and surreal storytelling that was both visually stunning and emotionally impactful. The film's ability to weave humour and absurdity into a deeper narrative about identity and belonging really struck a chord with us. Matthew Rankin's creative vision and the film's clever use of Winnipeg as a cultural melting pot made it a compelling and thought-provoking experience."

Director Statement:

"Our whole team is so deeply touched. CIFF has been such a heroic leader in championing Canadian cinema, and it is so encouraging and meaningful for us to be recognized by the Emerging Artist Jury Award. Our movie is about drawing very close feelings of intimate proximity between spaces where we might imagine great distance and solitude, and so it brings us so much joy to reach out across the Prairies and connect with our friends in Alberta in this way." - Matthew Rankin.

DGC Canadian Documentary Feature Award (\$5,000 CAD)

This juried award is given to the Canadian director who creates the best documentary in the section. Presented by the Directors Guild of Canada.

Jury members: Katie Wackett, Jeffrey Winter, Chris Krieger

Grand Jury Prize: WILFRED BUCK, directed by Lisa Jackson
(Door Number 3 and National Film Board of Canada co-production)

Honourable Mention: SINGING BACK THE BUFFALO, directed by Tasha Hubbard

Jury Statement:

“WILFRED BUCK is a rare and powerful combination of poetic form, social activism, personal history, and an alternative view of science and the origins of the Universe. Born of profound anger and sadness, WILFRED BUCK manages to find precious joy and triumph in the reimagining of the human story. For this reason, we are pleased to award it the winner of the Best Canadian Documentary at CIFF 2024.

Director Statement:

“It’s an honour for Wilfred Buck to be recognized with the DGC Canadian Documentary Award. On behalf of the talented film team, Wilfred and his community, I want to thank CIFF and the DGC for this recognition. I’d also like to acknowledge Lethbridge-based Blackfoot Elder Dr. Leroy Little Bear, who played an important role in both development and production, as a leader in expanding the conversation on Indigenous science. I hope this film can further the dialogue between Western science and Indigenous ways of knowing.” - Lisa Jackson, writer, director and co-producer of Wilfred Buck.

Best International Narrative Feature Award (\$1,000 CAD)

This juried award is given to the international director who creates the best narrative cinema from around the globe (U.S., Canadian Co-Productions & International).

Jury members: Lauren Case, Morgan Evans, Vienna Kunnas

Grand Jury Prize: MY FAVOURITE CAKE, directed by Maryam Moghaddam and Behtash Sanaeaha

Honourable Mention: BOB TREVINO LIKES IT

Jury Statement:

“We chose MY FAVOURITE CAKE as the winner of Best Feature Film. An artfully directed work anchored by Lili Farhadpour’s brilliant performance, this beautiful and relevant film depicts the joys of love and human connection while never letting us forget the dangers lurking just outside the door.”

Directors Statement:

“We’re really honoured and excited to receive this award. First we want to say thanks to the jury for choosing us and sure we want to say thanks to the festival for selecting our film. Making movies about love, women, and her freedom without lies and

redlines is forbidden in Iran. But even if we can't be there, our film is there and gets love and affection from you miles away from here. That's what they can't get from us. This award means a lot to us." - Maryam Moghaddam and Behtash Sanaeeha

International Documentary Feature Award (\$1,000 CAD)

This juried award is given to the international director who creates the most compelling non-fiction cinema from around the globe (U.S. & international).

Jury Members: Julian Carrington, Michelle Morgan, Simon Ennis

Grand Jury Prize: BLACK BOX DIARIES, directed by Shiori Ito

Honourable Mention: DAHOMEY, directed by Mati Diop

Special Jury Prize for Artistic Subversion: SECRET MALL APARTMENT, directed by Jeremy Workman

Jury Statement:

"An emotionally indelible expose that draws the audience into the experience of a sexual violence survivor. BLACK BOX DIARIES is an engrossing legal drama and a provocative character study."

SHORTS IN COMPETITION

Jury for all Shorts Awards: Dylan Rhys Howard, Jason Long, Laura O'Grady, Jason Marsden, Kristen Anderson-Sauve.

Short Film Grand Jury Prize (\$2,500 CAD)

This juried award is given to the best overall short film at the festival and also qualifies the winner for consideration in the appropriate category of the Academy Awards®, without the standard theatrical run that a film typically needs to qualify for an Oscar® nomination.

Grand Jury Prize, Best Overall Short Film: THE ASSISTANT, directed by Pierre Llanos

Live Action Short Film Award (\$1,000 CAD)

Grand Jury Prize: SOME KIND OF PARADISE, directed by Nicholas Finegan

Special Mention for Acting: MUNA (Kosar Ali)

Best Animated Short Film Award (\$1,000 CAD)

Grand Jury Prize: THE MIRACLE, directed by Nienke Deutz

Documentary Short Film Award (\$1,000 CAD)

Grand Jury Prize: HELLO STRANGER, directed by Amélie Hardy

Jury Statement:

"This poignant and visually-stirring short documentary is a lyrical representation of the queer experience. Part personal essay, part tone poem, it offers its audience one of cinema's greatest gifts: the opportunity to briefly step into someone else's life, to

understand their hopes, their dreams, and the uniquely painful challenges they continue to face every single day. It's the kind of film that can't help but build a greater sense of empathy and understanding within the human beings who are lucky enough to come across it. In other words: it is the kind of film the world sorely needs. The jury is delighted to recognize HELLO STRANGER as the Best Short Documentary at CIFF in 2024.”

Experimental Short Film Award (\$1,000 CAD)

Grand Jury Prize: CORPUS AND THE WANDERING, directed by Joy Roy

Alberta Short Film Devon Bolton Memorial Award (\$1,000)

+ \$10,000 Gift Card from Sunbelt Rentals Towards the Winner's Next Project

Grand Jury Prize: LAST SUMMER, directed by Barry Bilinsky

Jury Statement:

“This movie touched all of our hearts...from frame one until the credits rolled, this film exemplifies pure unadulterated joy, drama, absurdity, nuance, youthful anxiety, fun, and love. There's nothing better than getting to create stories with friends, and we the audience were spoiled in getting to watch the fruits of your labour. This film is a love letter to many classic Hollywood coming-of-age movies, but with its largely young Indigenous cast and crew it gives viewers a wholly unique and emotional experience. An important movie for an underserved audience. Thanks to all who had a hand in making LAST SUMMER.”

Student Short Film Award, Presented by Indigekin Productions (\$1,000 CAD)

Grand Jury Prize: BUG DINER, directed by Phoebe Jane Hart

Jury Statement:

“This delightfully unhinged short animation transplants carefully observed portraits of quotidian life in the human realm into a raunchy, absurdist universe of the filmmaker's uniquely twisted design. With a combination of cheeky animation and outrageous innovation in voice acting, BUG DINER is a remarkable achievement in student filmmaking. The jury guarantees you will never look at a praying mantis the same way ever again.”

NBCUniversal Youth by Youth Canada Short Film Award (\$1,000 CAD)

+Up to \$18,000 Scholarship to Vancouver Film School and \$2,500 Gift Card from Sunbelt Rentals Toward the Winner's Next Project

Grand Jury Prize: NIX'S SYMPHONY, directed by Karina Loerchner

More information on this year's judges: <https://www.ciffcalgary.ca/festival/awards/meet-the-jury-ciff-2024/>

**Stay tuned post-festival for the 2024 CIFF AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARDS
PRESENTED BY TELUS**

The best of the fest, decided by the fans themselves! Most films at the festival are eligible for our Audience Awards, which are based on the collective score of the audience ballots collected at each screening online and in cinema. Winners will be announced post-festival.

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CIFF | Calgary International Film Festival

September 19 – September 29, 2024

ciffcalgary.ca | @CIFFcalgary

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About the Calgary International Film Festival

Founded in 2000, the Calgary International Film Festival (CIFF) is a not-for-profit charitable organization that brings films and filmmakers from around the world to Calgary for its annual Fall festival and year-round programming. CIFF is now the largest event of its kind in Alberta and the sixth-largest film festival in Canada, bringing audiences together for remarkable and engaging cinematic experiences. CIFF is proud to present its 25th Anniversary festival from September 19 – September 29, 2024 with in-cinema screenings, celebrating stand-out stories and offering once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

CIFF thanks their Presenting Partner



CIFF thanks their 2024 Public Funders

