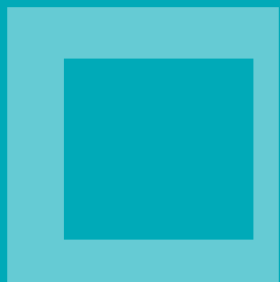


# tiff

# 2019

# Talent



# Contents

We are thrilled to announce our 2019 TIFF Talents. These writers, directors, producers, and actors embody the charisma, determination, and ability that propels great storytelling on screen.

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## **Talent drives the international film industry. It's an elusive quality that is sought after by everyone in the business.**

Decision-makers like distributors, sales agents, and investors recognize that, behind every great film, there are creative talents who provide their ideas, images, and voices. Like TIFF, these decision-makers rely on talent to help change the way audiences see the world through film. They understand that talent is rare, and they rely on curators and development programmes to help identify it. This is where we come in.

TIFF is committed to supporting, nurturing, and championing the next generation of emerging creators. The participants selected for Filmmaker Lab, Writers' Studio, Rising Stars, and Telefilm Canada's PITCH THIS!, in addition to those awarded our Micki Moore Residency and the TIFF–CBC Diverse Screenwriter Award, are provided resources, mentorship, and financial support to hone their craft and accelerate their careers. At least 50% of programme participants are supported by the RBC Female Creator Initiative and Share Her Journey, our successful fundraising initiative committed to increasing participation, skills, and opportunities for women behind and in front of the camera.

Our Talent Development programmes would not be possible without the generous support of Ontario Creates and Telefilm Canada, as well as other sponsors, partners, donors, and mentors. We thank you, the participants thank you, and audiences will thank you once they see the films our alumni create.

Geoff Macnaughton  
DIRECTOR, INDUSTRY

“I think the TIFF Rising Stars programme is an opportunity to be put in a position where I am able to network and build relationships with many people whom I admire and aspire to work with.”

—Stephan James, 2015 TIFF Rising Star alum

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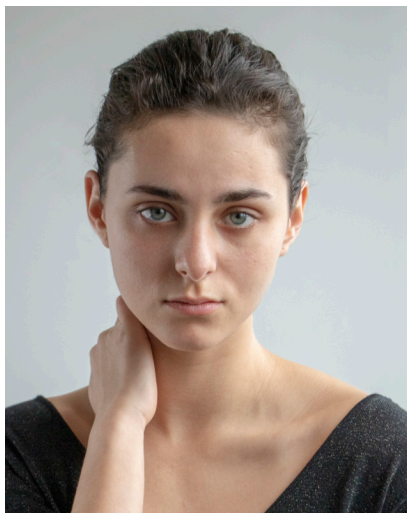
Since his participation in the programme in 2015, Stephan James has seen a meteoric rise with projects including *Race*, *Homecoming*, and the Oscar-nominated *If Beale Street Could Talk*. He has been nominated for Golden Globes and won Canadian Screen Awards, but perhaps most importantly, he continues to advocate for his Toronto community. When James presented at the 2019 Academy Awards, he demonstrated the possible trajectory of a TIFF Rising Star.



# TIFF Rising Stars

TIFF Rising Stars empowers eight charismatic, promising young artists who are poised for international success. They learn professional and business skills, enabling them to take charge of their careers, while their talent is showcased against the backdrop of the Toronto International Film Festival.

It's no surprise that Rising Stars from past years are featuring in some of this Festival's most highly anticipated films: Sarah Gadon (2011) will appear in Semi Chellas' *American Woman*. Connor Jessup (2012) will be appearing in Calvin Thomas and Yonah Lewis' *White Lie*. Cara Gee (2013) will be appearing in Anna Maguire's short *It's Nothing*, and Deragh Campbell (2015) will be starring in the Platform selection *Anne at 13,000 ft*, directed by Kazik Radwanski. From the 2016 cohort, Grace Glowicki stars in Harry Cepka's *Raf*, while Sophie Nelisse will be featured in Aisling Chin-Yee's *The Rest of Us*. From Rising Stars 2017, Jessie Buckley appears alongside Renée Zellweger in Rupert Goold's biopic *Judy*. Lastly, from Rising Stars 2018, Jess Salgueiro appears in Karen Moore's short *Volcano*, and Devery Jacobs returns in Jeff Barnaby's *Blood Quantum*.



## Nahéma Ricci

Nahéma Ricci was born in Montreal. As an interpreter, she has participated in multiple film projects and the stage production *cet intervalle* (17). As a performer, Ricci's onscreen credits include *Ailleurs* (17) and *Antigone*, which is making its World Premiere at TIFF 2019. She is also the author, director, and interpreter of the play *Identikit* (19), which was presented at Montreal's Fringe Festival. She recently completed the 2018–19 Dance as a Profession program at Danceworks in Berlin. In the near future, she will appear in the independent drama *Before El Finâ* and will serve as interpreter for the film *De guerre lasse*, in pre-production.

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### CONTACT

Agence RBL, Canada, Karine Lapierre,  
karine@agencerbl.com



## Mikhaïl Ahooja

Mikhaïl Ahooja is a Montreal-based actor who is very active in Quebec. He has appeared in numerous plays, TV shows, and movies. Recent television credits include *Au secours de Béatrice* (14– ), *Prémonitions* (16– ), and *Juste nous deux* (19– ). He has also starred in the feature films *La Maison du pêcheur* (13), *Fabuleuses* (19), and *The Twentieth Century*, which is making its World Premiere at TIFF 2019.

---

### CONTACT

Edna Talent Management Limited (ETM), Canada,  
Paul Hemrend, paulh@etmtd.com



## Kacey Rohl

Kacey Rohl is from Vancouver. Her first onscreen appearance was the TV series *V* (09–11). She is best known for her roles in *Red Riding Hood* (11), *The Killing* (11–14), *Arrow* (12– ), *Hannibal* (13–15), *Wayward Pines* (15–16), and *The Magicians* (15–19). She is currently shooting the TV series *Fortunate Son*.

### **CONTACT**

Pacific Artists Management Inc., Canada,  
Russ Mortensen, russmortensen@pacificartists.com



## Shamier Anderson

Select television credits include *Wynonna Earp* (16– ) and Amazon's *Goliath* (18), on which Anderson is a regular. Notable features include *Across the Line* (15); roles opposite Nicole Kidman in *Destroyer*, which premiered at TIFF 2018, and opposite Johnny Depp in *City of Lies* (18); and *Endings, Beginnings*, which is premiering at TIFF 2019. Anderson recently wrapped on Spike Lee's *Son of the South* and *Stowaway*, opposite Anna Kendrick. Anderson and his brother Stephan James co-founded the B.L.A.C.K. Ball, an event hosted in Toronto during TIFF and in Los Angeles during Oscars season.

### **CONTACT**

Oscars Abrams Zimel & Associates Inc.,  
Manager, Canada, Daniel Abrams, daniel@oazinc.com  
Mosaic, Manager, U.S., Paul Nelson,  
pnelson@mosaicla.com  
Creative Artists Agency (CAA), Agent, U.S.,  
Matt Martin, matt.martin@caa.com



## Chino Darín

Chino Darín is most known for his breakout performance as Alejandro Puccio in the TV series *Historia de un clan* (15). His film credits include *The Queen of Spain* (16), *A Twelve-Year Night* (18), *El Angel* (18), and the upcoming *Heroic Losers*, premiering at TIFF 2019. He is the son of the renowned actor Ricardo Darín.

### **CONTACT**

William Morris Endeavor (WME), Agent U.S.,  
**Daniel Molina** [dmolina@wmeagency.com](mailto:dmolina@wmeagency.com)  
**Paula Aisenberg Representaciones**, Agent,  
**Paula Aisenberg**, [paula@paulaaisenberg.com.ar](mailto:paula@paulaaisenberg.com.ar)



## Josefine Frida Pettersen

Josefine Frida is a Norwegian actor. Her credits include the TV series *Skam* (15–17), stage productions of the musicals *Hair* and *Robin Hood*, and the feature film *Disco*, which is making its World Premiere at TIFF 2019.

### **CONTACT**

Lindberg Management.,  
**Agent, Anne Lindberg**, [al@lindbergmanagement.com](mailto:al@lindbergmanagement.com)

**“It’s given me a voice outside of being an actor. I’m able to speak for myself, along with seven other creatives who are here and excited to celebrate storytelling.”**



## Geraldine Viswanathan

Geraldine Viswanathan is an Australian actor. Her credits include *Blockers* (18), *Hala* (19), the TV series *Miracle Workers* (19– ), and *Bad Education*, which is making its World Premiere at TIFF 2019. She is currently filming Natalie Krinsky's romantic comedy *The Broken Heart Gallery*.

### **CONTACT**

3 Arts Entertainment, Agent U.S.,  
**Lital Spitzer** lspitzer@3arts.com  
**William Morris Endeavor (WME)**, Agent U.S.,  
**Michael DeVeau** Deveau@wmeentertainment.com



## Kelvin Harrison Jr.

Kelvin Harrison Jr. is an American actor. In 2017, *Filmmaker* Magazine named him one of "25 New Faces of Independent Film." He first garnered attention in *It Comes at Night* (17), which received critical acclaim and earned him a Gotham Independent Film Award nomination for Breakthrough Actor. Other credits include *Monsters and Men* (18), *Luce* (19), and *Waves*, which is premiering at TIFF 2019.

### **CONTACT**

Stride Management, Manager, U.S.,  
**James Jolly**, jjolly@stride-mgmt.com  
**William Morris Endeavour**, (WME), Agent, U.S.,  
**Brad Slater**, bslater@wmeentertainment.com

**“For someone like me it became more than promoting myself and my films. It was about building and adding to the depth of my career.”**

**—Sarah Gadon, 2011 TIFF Rising Star alum**

**“The world’s best filmmakers share openly with the brightest young minds in the art form. I heard the Dardenne brothers discuss the secrets of suspense, and learned about grain structure from master technician Alfonso Cuarón and about optimum conditions for improvisation from the brilliant Lynn Shelton. Filmmaker Lab delivers inspiration in its highest form.”**

**— Patricia Rozema, 2019 Filmmaker Lab Governor  
and former guest speaker**



# TIFF Filmmaker Lab

Each year, the Lab brings together outstanding creators from around the world, deepening their understanding of the industry and empowering them to move forward with their projects.

Since its inception, the Lab has supported hundreds of filmmakers to further their artistry and craft.

Renowned cinematic voices join the participants to provide inspiration, encouragement, and guidance. This year's mentorship is led by four distinguished Governors: producer Cassian Elwes (*Mudbound*), acting coach Miranda Harcourt, writer-director Patricia Rozema (*Mouthpiece*), and director Lulu Wang (*The Farewell*).

Filmmaker Lab has helped develop the careers of many creators, including Heather Young (*Murmur*), Jeff Barnaby (*Blood Quantum*), Semi Chellas (*American Woman*), Daniel Cockburn (*God's Nightmares*), and Renuka Jeyapalan (*Life Support*).

Filmmaker Lab is made possible through the support of Telefilm Canada, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, and the Slight Family Foundation. All female participants are generously supported by the RBC Female Creator Initiative.





## Abbesi Akhamie

Abbesi Akhamie is a Nigerian American writer, director, and producer based in New York City. She received her MFA in film from New York University. Her short film, *Still Water Runs Deep* (17), premiered at TIFF, and has been screened and broadcast worldwide. She is currently developing her debut feature film, *In My Father's House*, which follows an American woman who goes on a journey of self-discovery when she travels to Nigeria to confront her estranged father.

**TIFF FILMMAKER LAB FELLOW**



## Joseph Amenta

Joseph Amenta is a producer, writer, and director. Their recent short film, *Haus* (18), was fully funded by the Canada Council for the Arts and was screened in the International Competition at the Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival. In 2018 they completed their residency at the CFC Directors' Lab. Their upcoming first feature film, *Tribe* (20), received funding from Telefilm's Talent to Watch program and won the Toronto Screenwriting Conference Breakthrough Artist Award. They have an honours degree in Film Studies from Ryerson University.





## Cyril Aris

Cyril Aris is a Lebanese writer-director based in Beirut and New York. His feature documentary *The Swing* (18) premiered in Karlovy Vary and won awards in El Gouna, Rome, London, and Budapest. His short film *The President's Visit* (17) premiered at TIFF and played in over 60 film festivals. Aris holds an MFA from Columbia University and is a voting member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.



## Andreas Bøggild Monies

Andreas Bøggild Monies is a Danish filmmaker. After having worked as a film editor for 12 years, he turned towards directing, resulting in the award-winning short film *Shadow Boxer* (18) about a young girl who takes up boxing after her mother is injured in the ring. He is currently working on developing this short film into his first feature film.

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**“The reason I like to come to Toronto is to get inspired.”**

**—Darren Aronofsky, 2014 Lab speaker**



## Aisling Chin-Yee

Aisling “Ash” Chin-Yee is a Montreal-based filmmaker and a co-founder of the #AfterMeToo movement. Her feature directorial debut is *The Rest of Us* (19), which is premiering at TIFF. Her producer credits include the feature films *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* (13), *Last Woman Standing* (13), and *The Saver* (15). She is currently co-directing a documentary feature with Chase Joynt about jazz musician and transgender icon Billy Tipton, and her feature drama *The Day Between* will start shooting in 2020. Chin-Yee was recently selected for the inaugural cohort of the leadership program 50 Women Can Change the World in Media & Entertainment.



## Nicole Dorsey

Nicole Dorsey was born in Mississauga, Ontario. She has a BFA in film production from Ryerson University. She’s worked extensively as a commercial and narrative director. Her debut feature, *Black Conflux* (19), was part of the WIDC Story & Leadership program and was a finalist in Francis Ford Coppola’s American Zoetrope Screenplay Contest. The film will be making its World Premiere at TIFF. Dorsey also directed the short *Arlo Alone* (16), which premiered in competition at the Atlanta Film Festival and won the A&E Short Filmmakers Award in the NSI Online Short Film Festival.

**TIFF SARA & GRAEME THOMSON  
FAMILY FELLOW**



## Martin Edralin

Martin Edralin is a Toronto-based filmmaker. His work has screened at international film festivals including TIFF, Sundance, and Locarno. His films include *Hole* (14), which won the Grand Prize at Clermont-Ferrand and a Canadian Screen Award for best live-action short; *Emma* (16), a Canada's Top Ten selection at TIFF; and *Building History: The Story of Benjamin Brown* (16), which was nominated for the Heritage Toronto Award for public history.



## Chema García Ibarra

Chema García Ibarra made the short films *The attack of the robots from Nebula-5* (08), *Protoparticles* (09), *Mystery* (13), *The disco shines* (16), and *The golden legend* (19). His films have been selected for the Directors' Fortnight at Cannes, Sundance, and the Berlinale. He has received two honourable mentions from Sundance, and he won first prize in the Avant-Garde Competition at BAFICI. He also won the Méliès d'Or and was nominated for the European Film Awards.

PARTICIPATION SUPPORTED BY  
LA INCUBADORA.



## Beza Hailu Lemma

Beza Hailu Lemma is an Ethiopian filmmaker based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. A graduate of Addis Ababa University's School of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, he has written, directed, and independently produced a number of short films, including 2017's *Ballad of the Spirits*. He is currently writing his debut feature film, titled *The Last Tears of the Deceased*. Hailu Lemma is an alum of Berlinale Talents, Realness African Screenwriters Residency, and Africa Centre's Artist in Residency program.



## Drew Lint

Drew Lint is a Canadian writer-director based in Berlin. In 2009 he graduated from Ryerson University's film program. His debut feature, *M/M* (18), premiered at Slamdance Film Festival and received a special mention from the jury at the Vancouver International Film Festival for the Emerging Canadian Director prize. In 2018, Lint was longlisted for the Directors Guild of Canada Discovery Award.

**“I was amazed with the proximity of the directors that spoke to us in the Lab. It really trained my way of seeing cinema.”**

**—Alejandra Márquez Abella, 2016 Lab alum**



## Jennifer Peedom

Jennifer Peedom is a BAFTA-nominated Australian director, known for her gripping, intimate portraits of people in extreme circumstances. Her credits include the internationally renowned feature documentaries *Solo* (08), *Sherpa* (15), and, most recently, *Mountain* (17), a collaboration with the Australian Chamber Orchestra. She is currently developing her first narrative fiction film about Tenzing Norgay, one of the first people to climb Mount Everest in 1953, along with Edmund Hillary.

**TIFF CANADA GOOSE® FELLOW**



## Samantha Pineda Sierra

Samantha Pineda Sierra is a director, producer, and writer. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in media and communication from ITESM Mexico, she studied film at the University of Essex in England, EICTV in Cuba, IFSS in Australia, and UBC Vancouver, where she is currently pursuing an MFA in Film Production and Creative Writing. She participated in Berlinale Talents FICG31, Blood Window TV, the Oaxaca Film Lab in collaboration with the Sundance Film Institute, and FONCA's Jóvenes Creadores. Her short films include *El Pescador* (11) and *Ascensión* (16), which were both nominated for Ariel Awards.

**TIFF FILMMAKER LAB FELLOW**





## Johanna Pyykkö

Johanna Pyykkö has a bachelor's degree in film directing from the Norwegian Film School. She has made award-winning shorts and been in writers' rooms on several drama series, one being the critically acclaimed *Heimebane* (18– ). Her short *The Manila Lover* (19) premiered in competition at the 58th Semaine de la Critique during Cannes, and her short *My Sister Dances* (19) premiered in the International Competition at Lago Film Fest.

**TIFF FILMMAKER LAB FELLOW**



## Geoff Redknap

Geoff Redknap's special makeup effects artistry has spanned projects from *The X-Files* (93–18) to *Deadpool* (16) and *Deadpool 2* (18). He attended the NSI's Drama Prize program, where he wrote and directed the award-winning short film *The Auburn Hills Breakdown* (08). He also attended the NSI's Features First program with *Hangfire* (then known as *Heaven's Door*), which was a finalist in the 2012 Austin Film Festival Screenplay Competition. He wrote and directed the feature film *The Unseen* (16), which premiered at Fantasia in Montreal. He is represented by Zero Gravity Management.



## Silvina Schnicer

Silvina Schnicer is a filmmaker from Argentina. Along with Ulises Porra Guardiola, she co-wrote and co-directed the short films *La Bicha* (10) and *Destello* (16), both winners of the National Arts Fund in Argentina. Her first feature film, *Tigre*, had its World Premiere at TIFF in 2017. She is currently working on her second feature film, *The Cottage*, in which a middle-class family finds a body during their summer vacation.

TIFF CANADA GOOSE® FELLOW



## Charlie Tyrell

Charlie Tyrell is a Toronto-based filmmaker who works in a hybrid style that often combines live-action footage with stop-motion and 2D animation. His most recent documentary short, *My Dead Dad's Porno Tapes* (18), premiered at Sundance and won awards for best documentary short at the Canadian Screen Awards and SXSW. The film was also shortlisted for the 2019 Academy Awards and was selected for TIFF's Canada's Top Ten series.

The background of the entire poster is a photograph of a room. In the foreground, there is a long wooden table with several red plastic chairs tucked under it. The chairs have a unique design with a large oval cutout in the back. The table is set against a white brick wall. Above the table, there are three orange rectangular boxes containing text. In the background, a large window looks out onto a street. A large, white, snowflake-shaped decoration hangs from the ceiling in front of the window. The floor is covered with a patterned rug.

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## Maya Vitkova-Kosev

Maya Vitkova-Kosev's debut film, *Viktoria* (14), was the first Bulgarian feature in competition at Sundance. The film won 10 awards and was named one of the best films of 2016 by *The New Yorker*. Vitkova-Kosev is currently working on her second feature film, *Afrika*, which was developed at the Sundance Institute's Screenwriters Lab in 2018 and won the Krzysztof Kieslowski ScripTeast Award for the best Eastern European script at Cannes the same year.

TIFF CANADA GOOSE® FELLOW

**“Hearing them go through the same processes as us makes you feel, insanely, that you could reach that stage too.”**

**—Ryan Noth, 2017 Lab alum**



## Charles Williams

Charles Williams is a filmmaker born and raised in Victoria, Australia. His films have screened at over 150 festivals, including TIFF, Cannes, Clermont-Ferrand, SXSW, Telluride, Busan, and Melbourne. His latest short film, *All These Creatures* (18), won the Short Film Palme d'Or at Cannes. He is currently developing his first feature film, *Inside*.

“This programme was incredibly significant because it allowed me to discuss and share my perspective on Indigenous filmmaking practices. It also provided me the opportunity to meet other filmmakers from around the world, where we connected through the strength and resiliency of our diversity. The connections made with the TIFF staff, film mentors, and other visiting guests will always be a memorable experience. The encouragement and support I received during/post the Lab has inspired me to move forward with my own project.”

—Jules Arita Koostachin, 2018 Filmmaker Lab alum





# TIFF Talent Accelerator

Six outstanding female creators are empowered through guidance and the opportunity to advance their careers, so they may tell stories that transform our world.

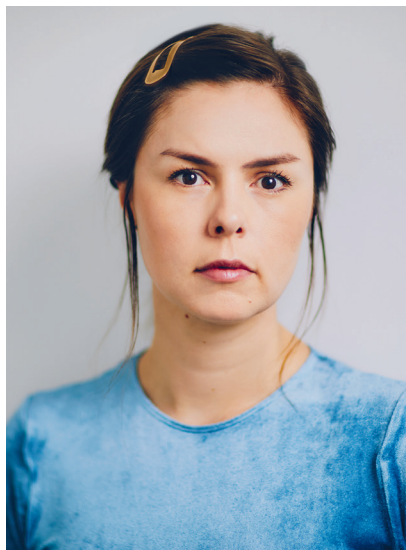
These promising creators have been chosen for a customized development experience, to help them fast-track their careers and projects. The group is a mix of writers, directors, and producers. This opportunity is powered by TIFF's Share Her Journey campaign.



## Karen Chapman

Karen Chapman is an award-winning filmmaker and an alum of Emily Carr University, the Banff Centre, and the CaribbeanTales Incubator, where she won best pitch. In 2018, *Playback* named her one of five filmmakers to watch and she completed the Canadian Film Centre's Directors' Lab. In 2019, her film *Lessons Injustice* (17) won Best Screenplay at the Women in Film & Television - Toronto Showcase and she received support from the Harold Greenberg Fund for her film *Esequibo Rapture*. Currently, Chapman is preparing to shoot her first feature film, *Village Keeper*, through Telefilm Canada's Talent Fund. She is also a participant in the 2019 TIFF Filmmaker Lab.

TIFF TALENT ACCELERATOR FELLOW



## Sofia Bohdanowicz

Sofia Bohdanowicz is a Toronto-based filmmaker. She won the Emerging Canadian Director Award at the 2016 Vancouver International Film Festival for her first feature, *Never Eat Alone*. She won the Toronto Film Critics Association's 2017 Stella Artois Jay Scott Prize and was a runner-up for the 2018 Rogers Best Canadian Film Prize for *Maison du bonheur* (17). Her third film, *MS Slavic 7* (19), premiered at the Berlinale Forum. She is currently in development on a new project and is completing her MFA in film production at York University. She is also a participant in the 2019 TIFF Filmmaker Lab.

TIFF TALENT ACCELERATOR FELLOW





## Shasha Nakhai

Shasha Nakhai is a filmmaker from Toronto with Compy Films and Storyline Entertainment. Her film with partner Rich Williamson, *Frame 394* (16), was shortlisted for an Oscar and named one of TIFF's Canada's Top Ten. She recently released her first feature documentary, *Take Light* (18), which enters the tangled web of Nigeria's energy crisis. Nakhai is currently adapting Catherine Hernandez's award-winning novel, *Scarborough*.

**TIFF TALENT ACCELERATOR FELLOW**

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## Melissa Coghlan

Melissa Coghlan is a Toronto-based producer. Her first feature, *Below Her Mouth* (16), premiered at TIFF. Her current projects in development are *Shot-Blue* and *All My Love Vadim*, which she is producing with Serendipity Point Films and Broken Head Pictures, the production company she co-founded in 2015.

**TIFF TALENT ACCELERATOR FELLOW**

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RBC FEMALE CREATOR INITIATIVE



## Jasmin Mozaffari

Jasmin Mozaffari is a Toronto-based filmmaker. She studied film at Ryerson University's School of Image Arts. Her debut feature, *Firecrackers* (18), premiered at the TIFF and won the award for best film at the Stockholm International Film Festival. In 2019, the film also won the Canadian Screen Awards for direction and editing and was named a *New York Times* Critic's Pick. She will be a participant in the 2020 TIFF Writers' Studio.

**TIFF TALENT ACCELERATOR FELLOW**



## Lisa Jackson

Lisa Jackson is a Genie Award-winning artist working in film and media. She is known for her cross-genre approach. Her films have screened widely on television and at festivals including the Berlinale, Hot Docs, and SXSW. Her credits include *Indictment: The Crimes of Shelly Chartier* (17), which won Best Documentary at imagineNATIVE, and the virtual-reality work *Biidaaban: First Light* (18), which premiered at Tribeca and won a Canadian Screen Award. She is Anishinaabe and lives in Toronto. She will be a participant in the 2020 TIFF Writers' Studio.

**TIFF TALENT ACCELERATOR FELLOW**

# Telefilm Canada's PITCH THIS!

One of the most anticipated and popular Industry events during the Festival, Telefilm Canada's PITCH THIS! returns for its 20th edition this year. Six teams of Canadian filmmakers have six minutes to pitch their feature-film idea to a live audience of industry experts and a jury of film professionals. The winning team takes home \$15,000 to help bring their project one step closer to production.

Pat Mills' *Don't Talk to Irene* (2017), Molly McGlynn's *Mary Goes Round* (2017), and Juan Andrés Arango Garcia's *X500* (2016) are just three examples of projects that were pitched at this event and went on to completion.



## 2019 Finalists

### Blue Flower (Fleur bleue)

**Geneviève Dulude-De Celles, Sarah Mannering, Fanny Drew**

When a video of a six-year-old Romanian art prodigy goes viral on the internet, Mihai is sent to evaluate the girl's production — meaning he has to return to his home country for the first time in 30 years.

### La Cercanía

**Jorge Thielen Armand, Rodrigo Michelangeli**

When Oana's father falls gravely ill in Venezuela, she breaks a 15-year exile in Canada to return home and visit her family one last time. But when she reconnects with Sofia, her estranged half-sister, Oana must commit to helping Sofia transition into adulthood amid the devastation caused by the economic crisis.

### Neverman

**Rodrigo Barriuso, Kyah Green**

When dementia begins to progress, a transgender woman living with Alzheimer's at a transphobic nursing home finds herself mentally regressing to a time before her transition. As the complexities of gender identity resurface, her sense of self becomes an emotional battlefield that she will have to defend and uphold.

### Paying For It

**Kristy Neville, Natalie Urquhart, Sook-Yin Lee**

After his longtime girlfriend begins sleeping with another man, a painfully introverted cartoonist begins sleeping with prostitutes, to the disapproval of his friends and former lover. *Paying For It* is an unconventional romantic comedy about a modern man's search for love and connection.

### What Night Taught Her

**Lauren Grant, Lisa Rideout, Ashley Cooper**

An intimate look inside Canada's first sex workers' rights organization and the people who run it. Delving into the ups and downs of three outreach workers' lives, the film reveals the harsh realities of a job that can mean the difference between life or death.

### Worst Team Ever

**Kat Jayme, Michael Grand, James Brown**

This 80- to 90-minute documentary tells the unfortunate story of what happened to the Vancouver Grizzlies, Canada's other NBA team — gone, but far from forgotten — who just might have been the worst professional sports franchise in history.

“It gave me the confidence to continue to look for ways to carve my space in the Canadian industry. I do want to expand my playground and continue to develop my voice with different projects and different collaborators, and Studio was a really wonderful experience at a professional and human level.”

—Lina Rodriguez, 2018 Studio alum



# TIFF Writers' Studio

Our intensive one-week programme provides space for 10 Canadian screenwriters to consolidate their skills, exchange ideas, and discuss challenges in a collaborative and artistic environment. This year's candidates developed their screenplays with expert support from international script consultants:

- Nikki Saltz (Canada)
- Dane Clark (Canada)
- Christina Lazaridi (US)
- Alesia Weston (US)
- Selina Ukwuoma (UK)

Over the years, Studio has helped cultivate exciting new cinematic voices. Notable alumni include filmmakers Pat Mills (*Don't Talk to Irene*), Molly McGlynn (*Mary Goes Round*), Joyce Wong (*Wexford Plaza*), Ashley McKenzie (*Werewolf*), Yung Chang (*This Is Not a Movie*), and Renuka Jeyapalan (*Life Support*).



## Lindsay MacKay

Lindsay MacKay is a writer and director. Her debut feature, *Wet Bum* (14), premiered at TIFF and was a finalist in the American Zoetrope Screenplay Contest. She is a graduate of the directing program at the American Film Institute, where she won the Franklin J. Schaffner and Richard P. Rogers Spirit of Excellence Awards for her thesis film, *Clear Blue*, which also won the College Television Award. Her work has screened worldwide, including at TIFF, SXSW, AFI FEST, and Camerimage.

### **Mersea**

Meredith, a mythical siren, was condemned to live in a rapidly aging human body after breaking the rules of the ocean by saving the life of a drowning child. When the boy returns 15 years later, the two are irresistibly drawn into a dangerous relationship.



## Lina Roessler

Lina Roessler is a writer, director, and actor. She recently completed an MFA in film production at York University. Her short-film credits include *The Vow* (14), *Winter* (15), *Mustard Seed* (17), and *Shell of a Dead One*, which is currently in development. She is an alum of the 2017 TIFF Talent Lab and the 2018 edition of Berlinale Talents. Her feature screenplay, *The Rescuer*, was a quarterfinalist in the 2018 Slamdance Screenplay Competition. Roessler is now in pre-production for her first feature film, *Best Sellers*, starring Michael Caine and produced by Cassian Elwes.

### **The Rescuer**

When her father and sister are killed by a drunk driver, nine-year-old Meredith thinks she caused their deaths via a magic spell. Seeking redemption, she “rescues” her next-door neighbour, who has epilepsy, and they head out of town on an adventure, trying to find a place for themselves in the world.



## Katie McMillan

Katie McMillan is a Toronto-based screenwriter and director with an interest in social justice and the politics of representation. Her writing is informed by years of advocacy for female artists and artists with disabilities through her work with Women in View and Tangled Art + Disability. Her writing credits include the short films *Imposter* (16), *Worst. Day. EVER.* (16), and *Easy Girl* (16), which she co-directed. She is the winner of the 2017 Telefilm Canada's PITCH THIS! competition and is currently in development on three feature films.

### ***You Are Here***

When she discovers her fiancé cheating on her only weeks before their wedding, 30-year-old Kristin Kellerman makes the first spontaneous decision of her life and embarks on a 2,000-mile cycling odyssey to Tijuana to prove her independence.



## Sharon Lewis

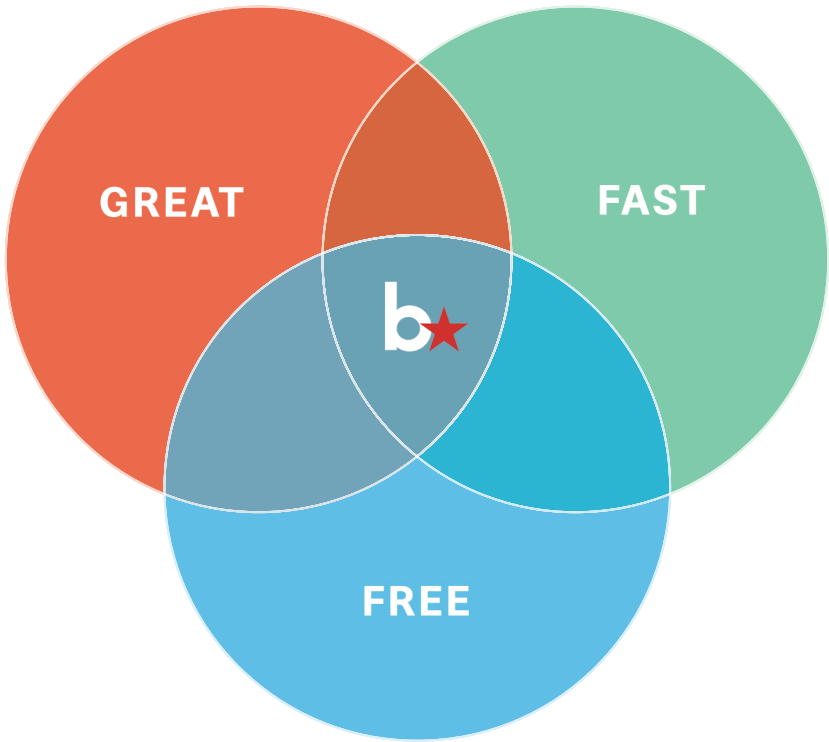
Sharon Lewis is a director working across television, film, and theatre. She is currently adapting her 1994 play *sistahs* into a feature film. Her first feature was the award-winning afrofuturist film *Brown Girl Begins* (17), which has been broadcast on HBO Canada and won awards internationally. Her short films *Ritch* (06) and *Chains* (09) have been sold and broadcast on such networks as BET, HBO, and CBC. She has directed over 100 hours of popular television, and is currently completing her feature doc for the CBC on the first Black gay conductor in Canada.

### ***Sistahs***

A woman dying from cancer tells her feuding sister, lover, and best friend to bring a special ingredient to a ceremonial meal that will either cure her or decide the future of her 12-year-old daughter.

# CASTING

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## Sophie Goyette

Sophie Goyette is a writer and filmmaker. Her films have screened in competition at Sundance, Locarno, and TIFF and have earned a total of 13 prizes. Her credits include the short films *La ronde* (11) and *Le futur proche* (12), and the feature *Mes nuits feront écho* (17), which won the Bright Future Award at Rotterdam.

### **Les Lauréats**

Shaken by her mother's recent death, high-achieving cello student Marie Léveillé-Wawrzyn looks back at her family line, marked by a violent past. At the crossroads of her destructive impulses and her artistic passion, Marie must learn to open up and fight to see human nature as it can be.

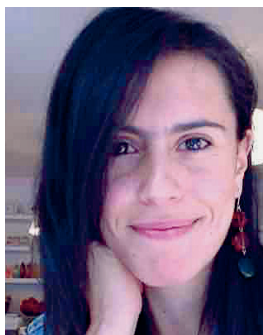


## Melanie Jones

Melanie Jones is the writer and director of over a dozen award-winning short films that have played at festivals around the world. Her first feature, *FSM* (15), premiered at the Whistler Film Festival and had a theatrical release in Vancouver. She is an alum of Women in the Director's Chair, the From Our Dark Side incubator program, Crazy 8s, and the Reykjavik Talent Lab. Her most recent short film, *Shuttlecock* (18), won a Golden Sheaf Award and continues to garner nominations and awards on the festival circuit.

### **Switchback**

A woman must tap her most primal instincts to keep herself and her boyfriend alive after he is seriously injured during an off-season hike. As difficult terrain, bad weather, and a persistent and menacing wolf continue to threaten their survival, she is forced to make a terrible choice that will change her forever.



## Maria Camila Arias

Maria Camila Arias is a Colombian Canadian screenwriter. She wrote *Birds of Passage* (18), which played at TIFF and was shortlisted for Best Foreign Language Film at the 91st Academy Awards. She was the main writer and executive producer of the feature film *Candelaria* (17), which was awarded the GdA Director's Award at Venice Days. She also works as a story editor for several production companies and was part of the writing team for a Netflix fiction series. She teaches screenwriting at a university in Colombia.

### **Magnificent Desolation**

In the 1970s, after the Apollo missions, a depressed astronaut goes to Bolivia's salt desert to search for a blinding light he saw from space. Instead, he meets a shaman. Their unlikely friendship allows the tormented man to finally let go of his anguish.



## Geoff Redknap

Geoff Redknap's special makeup effects artistry has spanned projects from *The X-Files* (93–18) to *Deadpool* (16) and *Deadpool 2* (18). He attended the NSI's Drama Prize program, where he wrote and directed the award-winning short film *The Auburn Hills Breakdown* (08). He also attended the NSI's Features First program with *Hangfire* (then known as *Heaven's Door*), which was a finalist in the 2012 Austin Film Festival Screenplay Competition. He wrote and directed the feature film *The Unseen* (16), which premiered at Fantasia in Montreal. He is represented by Zero Gravity Management.

### **Extraction**

A company creates a technology that allows the rich to have traumatic experiences, extracted and processed by contracted surrogates. When one Ingester takes on a "bad" job, troubling visions drive him on a dangerous journey to rescue a mysterious woman and ultimately confront the company — which is known for making problems disappear.





## Connor Gaston

Connor Gaston is an award-winning filmmaker from Victoria, BC. His work has screened at top film festivals, including TIFF. His first feature film, *The Devout* (15), earned him five Leo Awards, took home the BC Emerging Filmmaker Award at the Vancouver International Film Festival, and was nominated for the 2017 John Dunning Discovery Award at the Canadian Screen Awards. His screenplays have trended on the Black List and earned finalist spots at the Nicholl Fellowship, which landed him American representation. He is a recent alumnus of the Canadian Film Centre and the TIFF Talent Lab.

### *Alice in the Wall*

A grief-stricken filmmaker, obsessed with capturing truth on camera, constructs a small room inside her home in order to film the couple that's moving in — all in the hope of making a “real” movie.



## Faisal Lutchmedial

Faisal Lutchmedial is currently a writer on the third season of the TV drama *Ransom* (2017– ). He began his professional writing career in 2012 when he won the Writers Guild of Canada Bell Media Diverse Screenwriters Program. He also served as a story editor for the fourth season of *The Listener* (2009–14). He wrote, directed, and acted in the short *Useless Things* (09), which won the WGC English Script Prize at the Festival du nouveau cinéma in Montreal. He also wrote and directed the short drama *Mr. Crab* (12), which aired nationally on CBC's Short Film Faceoff.

### *The Voices Inside*

A young woman who suffers from multiple personality disorder witnesses a brutal murder. The detective investigating begins to question his own sanity as he wonders if the woman is actually communicating with the spirits of the dead victims.

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# Share Her Journey

This Festival, we challenge you to take action to support women in film.

[shareherjourney.org](http://shareherjourney.org)

Thank you to Anthropocene Films Inc., Canada Goose®, Anne-Marie Canning, Julian Francis and Sue Edwards, Betty-Ann Heggie, Micki Moore Simpson, RBC Female Creator Initiative, Jennifer A. Tory, the Piers Handling Tribute Gala, and 4,180 supporters who have taken action to make change possible!

## TIFF Micki Moore Residency

Each year an outstanding female screenwriter receives mentorship, an office, and professional development in the heart of Toronto's dynamic downtown district, to support the development of a feature-film screenplay.

The programme runs annually until 2022, and is made possible by broadcaster, journalist, and actor Micki Moore, in tandem with TIFF's Share Her Journey campaign.

**“The Micki Moore Residency was an incredible gift to my creative career. The opportunity to focus on my writing with the support of incredible mentors and story coaches was a huge boost to my script development process. The outcomes that the Residency has led to in terms of my career have been concrete and measurable, and have helped boost my profile as a writer.”**

**—Nikki Saltz, 2018 TIFF Micki Moore Resident**



### Joanne Sarazen

Joanne Sarazen is a screenwriter, playwright, and alumna of the Canadian Film Centre's 2017 Writers' Lab. Her first feature-length screenplay, *Tammy's Always Dying*, makes its World Premiere at TIFF 2019. Produced by Jessica Adams and directed by Amy Jo Johnson, the film stars Felicity Huffman, Anastasia Phillips, Clark Johnson, and Lauren Holly. As a playwright, Sarazen's work has been produced in Montreal, Toronto, and Banff. She was the recipient of the MainLine Theatre's Next Stage Award, and has earned several nominations for her work in the Montreal Fringe Festivals.

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## TIFF–CBC Films Screenwriter Award



### Tracey Deer

Tracey Deer is a Mohawk filmmaker. She served as co-creator, director, and co-showrunner on the acclaimed dramedy *Mohawk Girls* (10–17), which was nominated four years in a row at the Canadian Screen Awards. She has worked with the CBC, the NFB, and numerous independent production companies in both documentary and fiction. In 2016, she won the Birks Diamond Tribute Award at TIFF. She is an executive producer on the TV series *Anne with an E* (17– ). She has multiple projects in development, including a documentary with the NFB about the practicalities of achieving reconciliation and forgiveness, and two features: *Beans* and *Inner City Girl*.



### Meredith Vuchnich

Meredith Vuchnich is an award-winning screenwriter whose work spans genres and is celebrated for its richness of emotion, depth of character, and sense of humour. She co-wrote the feature-film screenplay *Beans*, which goes into production in August 2019. Her television credits include *Train 48* (03–05), *ReGenesis* (04–08), *Godiva's* (05–06), and *Remedy* (14–15). She has developed projects with CBC, CTV, Corus/Global, and YTV. She was nominated for a Gemini Award in 2008 for her work on *ReGenesis*. She is a graduate of the Canadian Film Centre's TV writing programme and has an MA in theatre from Northwestern University.

Elyse Friedman's *Better Now* was awarded a Jury Prize.

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