

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release:



13th ANNUAL REGENT PARK FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 2015 FILM LINE-UP

Toronto - Thursday October 22, 2015: The Regent Park Film Festival (RPF), Canada's only free-of-charge community film festival, announced this year's festival line-up at a Gala Fundraiser on Thursday night. From Daniel's Spectrum, right in the heart of the Regent Park community, Festival Programmer Onyeka Igwe presented an exciting line-up that will run from November 18th through to the 21st. This year's RPF will showcase forty-six shorts and feature films from inner city communities across the world – twenty of these are from Toronto based filmmakers, four of which are from Regent Park itself. All screenings are free to the public and will take place at Daniel's Spectrum at 585 Dundas Street East.

“Situating in a re-developing community, this year's festival explores all the different ways we think about home,” said Ananya Ohri, Executive Director of the Festival. “We are very proud of this year's program which showcases stories that resonate with people across Toronto who love film and see it as a tool to build community.”

Hosted by the multi-talented Corey Bowles, the Regent Park Film Festival will kick off with the **RBC EMERGING DIRECTORS' SPOTLIGHT & PITCH EVENT** on November 18th at 7:30PM. The evening will begin with a conversation with Clé Bennet (Actor), Min Sook Lee (Director), Dawn Wilkinson (Director/Screenwriter) and Sharon Lewis (Director/Actor). The esteemed panel will discuss getting their starts in the film industry, followed by a presentation of some of the best emerging Canadian talent. Four directors, aged 26 and under, will screen their short films and pitch their future projects to a panel of celebrity guests and compete for a cash prize. These films explore the complexities of immigrant life, colourism, and the fables of slavery.

HAPPY 1 YEAR

Alicia Bunyan-Sampson
Drama | Canada | 2014 | 11 mins

Teenaged Charlee is set to celebrate a milestone like none other. It's been a year since she had her abortion. Those plans are quickly halted however, when she discovers a secret that threatens to tear her family apart.

JOY

Heyishi Zhang

Drama | Canada | 2015 | 15 mins

Heyishi Zhang weaves a nuanced story of quietly defiant 9-year-old, Jia Qing, as she navigates between the worlds of her traditional Chinese family, and the complex webs of elementary school politics. The film provides poignant observations on the experience of feeling different in a society that sees itself as completely tolerant; and reveals some novel benefits of having parents who don't speak the same language as the teachers.

SHADE

Michael Nguyen

Documentary | Canada | 2015 | 5 mins

SHADE is an irresistible shout-out to all those who think when it comes to beauty, white is right. This crackling short features two young Somali poets, Zeinab Aidid and Shadiya Aidid, who deliver the goods on the pressure that black and brown people feel to conform to western notions of beauty. Fun, irreverent and uplifting, SHADE is crisp and stylistic, with an unforgettably confident spoken word performance by two intrepid young poets.

THE STORY OF LOVER'S LEAP

Andrew Moir

Documentary | Canada / Jamaica | 2015 | 11 mins

Filmed in the town of Tophill, Jamaica, THE STORY OF LOVER'S LEAP is an exploration of the ways in which ancient legends and oral histories are carried through generations and retold in numerous varied ways. In this film three women tell their own version of the story of Lover's Leap allowing us to take a glimpse into the ways that folklore captures the attention of younger generations.

The **Closing Night** film is Ravi Patel's **MEET THE PATELS**, which will screen on Saturday November 21st at 8:00 PM.

MEET THE PATELS

Ravi Patel

Documentary | USA | 2013 | 88 mins

Finding one's true love is easy for some, for the rest of us it's a frustrating and heartbreaking process. Throw in a few traditional stipulations and meddling parents, and you have the hilarious and honest story of Ravi Patel. As a first-generation Indian American, Ravi is torn between traditional expectations and the lure of an independent life. Ravi breaks up with his white, red-haired, American girlfriend and goes on a worldwide quest to find love the traditional way, arranged matchmaking. Luckily his mother is a well-known matchmaker. With her help, he travels across North America and India in search of true love.

FEATURE FILM PROGRAM

AFTER THE LAST RIVER

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 19 | 3:00 PM - 5:30 PM

Victoria Lean

Documentary | Canada | 2015 | 88 mins

This innovative social-justice documentary explores the First Nations activism opposing the De Beers diamond mine in Attawapiskat, Northern Ontario. The filmmaker, Vicki Lean, follows her father, an ecotoxicologist, to Attawapiskat in order to find out how De Beers diamond mine is affecting the community environmentally and socially.

Screened as part of the DIGITAL ACTIVISM WORKSHOP.

KAAKA MUTTAI (THE CROW'S EGG)

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 19 | 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

M. Manikandan

Drama | India | 2014 | 109 mins

This comedy-drama set in Chennai, India invites us into the world of two young boys living in the slums. They call themselves Crow's Egg the Elder and Crow's Egg the Younger as they play across the city and make friends with local characters like Juice Box. This light and warm-hearted feature film navigates the social and political realities of India through the innocent eyes of two young boys.

MINA WALKING

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 19 | 8:30 PM - 10:45 PM

Yosef Baraki

Drama | Afghanistan & Canada | 2015 | 110 mins

Mina is a young girl who sells knick-knacks on the streets of Kabul to earn enough for her family who consist of her grandfather suffering from Alzheimer's and her father who does little to care for and nurture Mina. Not wanting to neglect the possibility of educating herself, Mina makes a rebellious decision that will drastically change her life.

Talkback with filmmakers in attendance.

MARGARITA, WITH A STRAW

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 20 | 8:30 PM - 10:45 PM

Shonali Bose

Drama | India | 2014 | 100 mins

Laila is a strong willed and adventurous young adult with cerebral palsy on a journey of sexual and personal self-discovery. She travels from India to New York to pursue her dreams with her mother in tow. On this journey Laila faces challenges and adventures and comes to realise what is most important in life.

Talkback with Indu Vashist, Andrew Morrison-Gurza and Stella Palikarova.

LOWDOWN TRACKS
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 21 | 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Shelley Saywell
Documentary | Canada | 2015 | 88 mins

Inspired by Depression-era musicians who recorded folk music in the early 20th century, filmmaker Shelley Saywell and Lorraine Segato of The Parachute Club follow five homeless musicians in Toronto, who are provided with recording studio session time and Segato's band to create an album. As the recording process unfolds, the artists recount their stories of addiction and abuse, their struggles with the bureaucratic issues and the financial hardship of life on the street. LOWDOWN TRACKS is a moving portrait of poverty, homelessness, and the power of music as a means of healing, reconnection and survival.

Talkback with AJ Withers, Shelley Saywell and Lorraine Segato.

HOME FEELING: STRUGGLE FOR A COMMUNITY
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 21 | 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Jennifer Hodge
Documentary | Canada | 1983 | 58 mins

In the age of the Black Lives Matter movement, we are aware of the issues facing communities of colour in Toronto today: police violence and harassment as well as poverty and gentrification. These stories are not new, HOME FEELING: STRUGGLE FOR COMMUNITY tells the story of the black population of Jane & Finch in the 1980s.

HOME FEELING: STRUGGLE FOR COMMUNITY is preceded by,

THE CAPSULE

Kevin Wynter
Documentary (short) | Canada | 1997 | 28 mins

Created with found footage, Kevin Wynter stitches together a powerful and critical video essay that depicts drug dealings in Regent Park in the late 90's from the perspective of the dealers and the users. Questioning the role that the media plays in stereotyping marginalized communities, Wynter's film takes us back to a very different time in the history of Regent Park.

Talkback with Desmond Cole, Anupa Mistry, Tomas Kanene and Yusra Ali.

SHORT FILM PROGRAM

SHORTS: REIMAGINING HOME **FRIDAY NOVEMBER 20 | 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM**

Stories about understanding the spaces we inhabit move around in and belong to.

GAZONTO

John Greyson

Documentary / Experimental | Canada | 2014 | 5 mins

Canadian Director, John Greyson, ingeniously brings the concept of war to the doorstep of Canadian viewers by reconstructing the Israeli strikes on Gaza in Toronto. He asks, "what would happen to Toronto, or to your city, if, like Gaza, six thousand places had been heavily bombed in just a few weeks?" Using video game simulation the film not only reconstructs war in a space common to Canadians, it also highlights the desensitization of war and violence in modern culture through gaming.

THREE WALKS

Mary Porter

Documentary | Canada | 2014 | 12 mins

A place is a place is a place — THREE WALKS is a series of stop-motion animations that explore how we construct a sense of place from the spaces we inhabit. Director, Mary Porter, chose three sites to which she has a personal connection and takes the viewer on a personal journey to explore her understanding of these places. Set in Halifax, Toronto and Vancouver, the film is a uniquely Canadian perspective on a country growing through government projects, international influence and internal gentrification.

THE HOME PROMISED

Betty Xie

Documentary | Taiwan & Canada | 2014 | 19 mins

A case study on forced displacement, and a redefinition of the concept of home. Set in the context of Taiwan's rapid urbanization, residents of the Shaoxing housing community face eviction, and must choose a potential new location to call home. Through the president of the community's council, we gain a sense of both a personal and logistical interpretation of the issue at hand, as well as a sense of what home means to him. THE HOME PROMISED is an engaging and thought-provoking film that will challenge audiences as well as give a sense of appreciation.

CANICULE (SUMMER DAY)

Felix Dufour-Laperriere

Drama | France & Canada | 2011 | 15 mins

A young, restless boy is left to his own devices while his mother, a caretaker, spends the day at her employer's apartment. Through subtle but striking combinations of sound and image, this experimental piece reminds us of the darker implications of immigrant labour.

LES FRÉMISSEMENTS DU THÉ (THE WAY OF TEA)

Marc Fouchard

Drama | France | 2014 | 21 mins

LES FRÉMISSEMENTS DU THÉ (THE WAY OF TEA) follows a young, rebellious man named Alex in a small town in northern France as he enters into Malik's grocery store. While faced with racism and hostility by Alex, Malik calmly invites him to have tea with him, showing no discrimination or anger, in exchange for free groceries. The following day, Alex faces a conflict and finds protection in Malik's grocery store as he stands guard with patience to resolve potential conflict.

WE LIVE THIS

James Burns

Documentary | USA | 2015 | 11 mins

An inspiring documentary, WE LIVE THIS follows four teens from the projects who unite to pursue their dreams as performers. Dancing on the subway platforms and in trains, these teens continue to gain local fame, both good and bad, doing what they aspire. While this documentary follows the concept of poverty and struggles among the youth in the projects, who are surrounded by both positive and negative opinions, the passion and motivation that lies within these young performers continue to enrich the eyes of many.

Q&A with filmmakers in attendance.

SHORTS: TESTAMENTS OF HOME

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 21 | 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Home means something deeply personal and specific to all of us, these films reflect on that unique and special bond we have to the places we call home.

THE ROUTES

James McDougall

Documentary | Canada | 2014 | 4 mins

A route forges connections, builds networks and bridges people, place and space. James "Zick" McDougall's THE ROUTES captures this integration through the lens of a picturesque bicycle ride on his First Nation Reserve, Kitigan Zibi, and its surrounding community. By engaging with the intimacies of geography and nostalgia, the film moves past introspection and contemplates the relative nature of traumatic memory and loss. In steering the path towards the plight of two local missing women, Maisy Odjick and Shannon Alexander, the film foregrounds the roots of identity and kinship and poses questions about the structures of remembrance, collective inquiry, responsibility and resolve.

MY ENEMY, MY BROTHER

Ann Shin

Documentary | Canada | 2015 | 18 mins

MY ENEMY, MY BROTHER is a compelling story of human connection in the most unlikely of circumstances. As two war vets recall their harrowing memories of the Iran-Iraq war, a specific moment that stands out when one profound encounter would change the paths of their lives forever. Paths that, decades later, bring both men to their new home in Canada.

SEEDS OF THE PAST

Aisha Jamal

Documentary | Afghanistan & Canada | 2015 | 7 mins

What does home feel like? After emigrating from Afghanistan, Amina and Abdul Bari make a new home in Canada. Through their love for gardening and nostalgia for their homeland they create a beautiful oasis, where each flower and shrub evoke a memory - a closeness to history, family, childhood and homeland.

CALL AND RESPONSE

Craig Commanda

Documentary | Canada | 2015 | 5 mins

A guitar solo opens to a young Native man who encounters a man in traditional attire, responding to his guitar solo with his drum. CALL AND RESPONSE demonstrates communication between two cultures through music.

PASSING

Lucah Rosenberg & J. Mitchell Reed

Documentary | Canada | 2015 | 22 mins

In this ground-breaking intimate documentary profile, three young Trans men of colour reflect on their place within the urban settings of Houston, Toronto and Brooklyn, while examining the personal narrative histories of identity, transition, masculine performativity and representation. Through insight into the precarious nature of contemporary gender and race norms, relations and expectations, each individual's journey weaves together records of resilience and growth and highlights the diverse needs of a growing, yet underserved LGBTQ population. By rendering the unfamiliar recognizable, PASSING serves as an agent for cultural change and generates a safe space to unpack themes of social progress, love and acceptance.

HOME (PORTRAIT OF DAYBI)

Mathieu Favreau

Documentary | Canada | 2015 | 5 mins

Daybi, an accomplished Canadian rapper who has lived and worked in both New York and Los Angeles, tells a story of his return to a reserve community. At the

Kahnawake Mohawk reserve he has found a home base with an enriching cultural environment to inspire his art and expression and provide a nurturing setting for his son to grow up in.

HOLY MOTHER MY MOTHER

Vivek Shraya

Documentary | Canada & India | 2014 | 8 mins

In 2013 the filmmaker travelled with his family to India for the nine-day Navratri Festival. In documenting his experience, the filmmaker not only celebrates the Divine Mother goddess but also his own mother, whom he follows throughout the trip as she reflects on the joys and trials of motherhood.

SEAVIEW

Zinnia Naqvi

Documentary / Experimental | Canada & Pakistan | 2015 | 12 mins

Having spent parts of her childhood in Karachi, Pakistan where her family had lived before immigrating to Canada, the filmmaker decides to revisit the country as an adult, 17 years later. By superimposing voiceover and textual commentary on old home videos, as well as juxtaposing past footage with recent captures, the filmmaker comments on the deceptive nature of image-making and how it might configure one's memory, while also reflecting on the gender norms that were expected of her during her stay in Pakistan.

ABEL'S MOM

Kick Start Arts Society

Drama | Canada | 2015 | 7 mins

This short, compelling film tells the story of how our central character came to live in Canada. This is one episode of a web series that is being developed as part of Kick Start Art Society's Regent Park Project. This 'test' video is the first piece produced - part of a much larger filmmaking initiative, which will be produced in the spring.

JULIO

Eui Yong Zong

Documentary | Brazil | 2015 | 5 mins

JULIO is a short documentary about the struggle that many face when taking care of a loved one. Set in Brazil, a young Korean woman is forced to take care of her brother Julio after being abandoned by both their parents. In this context, not only are they seen as foreign racially, but are also alienated due to Julio's disability. It is from this that they draw strength from each other to endure. An inspiring film that will draw equal parts sympathy, as well as hope, JULIO provides a new perspective on family, and how it is much more than its conventional definition.

Q&A with filmmakers in attendance.

FREE BREAKFAST & A MOVIE

SHANA: THE WOLF'S MUSIC
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 21 | 9:00 AM - 11:15 AM

Nino Jacusso
Drama | Switzerland / Canada | 2013 | 95 mins

SHANA: THE WOLF'S MUSIC is a coming-of-age story about a young girl named Shana who is going through a difficult time coming to terms with losing her mother. As Shana begins distancing herself from friends and family alike, a teacher who befriends her discovers her musical talent. Soon, Shana begins to find ways to listen to her ancestors and follow her heart in pursuing her dreams as a musician.

A delicious pancake breakfast will be served at 9:00 AM. Film begins at 9:30 AM.

About the Regent Park Film Festival

The **Regent Park Film Festival** is Toronto's only free-of-charge community film festival, dedicated to showcasing local and international independent works relevant to inner-city communities like Regent Park, the largest and oldest public housing project in Canada. The 13th annual film festival takes place November 18 -21.

The Festival's principal activity is to organize an annual festival, along with year-round school and community screenings, panel discussions, performances and film/video workshops at no cost. The Festival aims to reach isolated communities throughout Regent Park and beyond, providing a forum for people from all walks of life to engage in critical dialogue on social issues and to enjoy films from all over the world.

For ticket information visit: www.regentparkfilmfestival.com
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