

**INTERNATIONAL SHOWCASE**

**Alena**

Friday, May 27  
Daniel Di Grado  
Sweden | 2015 | 83:00

**Canadian Premiere**

After recent traumatic events force her to switch schools, Alena, the new girl in town, meets mean girl Filippa, who is set on making her life miserable. Bullied off the lacrosse team she so desperately wants to play for and embarrassed in front of any potential new friends, life seems hopeless. The only girl who seems to see right through Filippa is the cool and mysterious Fabienne, who has taken a liking to Alena.

As Fabienne and Alena's relationship begins to heat up, things between Alena and Filippa get worse. And on top of the usual high school hell, Alena's dark and rather terrifying best friend from her old school has some unfinished business and is not afraid to spill blood.

Based on the acclaimed graphic novel by Kim W. Andersson, Alena is Show Me Love meets Carrie, a high school love story that is dark and twisted in all the right places.

Swedish with English subtitles  
Official Selection, 2015 Sitges Film Festival

**Angry Indian Goddesses**

Pan Nalin  
India | 2015 | 115:00

Angry Indian Goddesses has been billed as India's first female buddy movie, but what looks on the surface like an Indian Bridesmaids is actually a deeply thoughtful examination of the status of women in India today.

Frieda, a fashion/commercial photographer, is trying to reconnect with the artist inside her and gathers her closest girlfriends to travel to Goa for a surprise announcement: she's getting married. During the weeklong rollercoaster we come to know her diverse group of friends, who act as a snapshot of contemporary Indian society, revealing the changes the country is undergoing and those that desperately need to happen.

Amid the fun and frenzy, secrets begin to tumble out and each woman is inspired by the other to see her life more clearly. But when the outside world seeps into their circle, the celebration of love and friendship is threatened.

English and Hindi with English subtitles

Runner-up People's Choice Award, 2015 Toronto International Film Festival

## **Chemsex**

William Fairman and Max Gogarty

UK | 2015 | 83:00

### **Canadian Premiere**

More commonly called "party and play," or "PnP," a sometimes lethal mix of casual sex and recreational drug use has caused a crisis in many gay communities around the world.

This compelling documentary delves into the dark underworld of modern gay life to tell the vital story of several London men who are struggling to make it out of 'the scene' alive—and of one health worker who has made it his mission to help them.

Working their way through an alphabet of drugs— perhaps most insidiously, T for Tina or crystal meth—the subjects of Chemsex risk drug addiction and HIV infection to pursue their pleasures. But are their three-day sex parties even pleasurable? The candour and self-reflection revealed in this startling wake-up call is astonishing.

The men in Chemsex are located in bars, saunas, shabby apartments and, thankfully, health clinics across London, England, but the global smartphone apps they're using to end their x remind viewers just how much this issue hits home.

Discussion to follow screening

## **Departure**

Andrew Steggall

UK/France | 2015 | 109:00

### **Canadian Premiere**

Departure, the visually rich and emotionally compelling debut feature from Andrew Steggall, centres on an English mother and her teenage son, who spend a week preparing for the sale of their holiday house in the South of France.

Fifteen-year-old Elliot (Alex Lawther, who played the young Alan Turing in The Imitation Game) struggles with his dawning sexuality and an increasing alienation from his mother, Beatrice (acclaimed British actress, Juliet Stevenson). She, in turn, is confronted by the realization that her marriage to Elliot's father, Philip, has grown loveless and that the life she knows is coming to an end.

When an enigmatic local teenager, Clément, quietly enters their lives, both mother and son are compelled to confront their desires and, ultimately, each other.

## **Downriver**

Grant Scicluna  
Australia | 2015 | 99:00

Eighteen-year-old James is released from juvenile detention after serving time for his involvement in the suspected drowning of a young boy whose body has never been found. With no memory of what happened on the day of the murder, James is haunted by his crime. After a visit from the victim's mother, he embarks on a journey to find the dead boy's body and uncover the truth.

There are those in the rural community where the murder took place, however, who would prefer the past to remain buried, and who are willing to do whatever it takes to stop James from succeeding in his quest. Old friendships are questioned, family ties are tested and lives are put in danger as the young man searches for answers.

In his debut feature, director Scicluna (*The Wilding*, *Inside Out* 2012) has crafted a taut and moody thriller that pulls audiences downriver to a place awash with dark secrets and slowly surfacing revelations.

Official Selection, 2015 Toronto International Film Festival

## **First Girl I Loved**

Kerem Sanga  
USA | 2016 | 91:00

### **Toronto Premiere**

While taking photographs for her high school yearbook, Anne begins to develop feelings for star softball player, Sasha. Using the excuse of a yearbook interview, Anne reaches out to her and the two girls quickly form an intimate friendship. As Anne struggles with coming out to her best friend Clifton, both she and Sasha are faced with setbacks as they continue to explore their feelings. Although Anne seems ready to embrace her identity, Sasha is not. Determined to make it work, Anne tries to help Sasha navigate the difficult terrain associated with being a popular athlete who is afraid to be true to herself. Soulfully captured, *First Girl I Loved* explores an array of emotions with delicate, invigorating, cinematic vision. The playful scattering of events creates a disorienting effect that will challenge your expectations of coming-of-age narratives.

Audience Award, Best of Next, 2016 Sundance Film Festival Director in attendance  
This program is rated 14A

## **Front Cover**

Raymond Yeung  
USA | 2015 | 87:00

### **Canadian Premiere**

Front Cover is a sexy, heartwarming romantic comedy that flips cultural stereotypes on its head.

Ryan Fu, a gay Chinese-American stylist, has largely rejected his cultural background. He instead spends his days creating fabulous spreads for magazines and dressing celebrities in the latest and greatest. He is assigned a new task at work: to style Ning, an up-and-coming actor from Beijing who is deeply proud of his heritage.

The men's differences are undeniable. Ryan's Western style clashes with Ning's desire to represent the new China. Egos are at stake and neither is willing to budge. But as they spend more time with one another, their fiery relationship cools down and transforms into something honest and profound.

Director Raymond Yeung's utterly charming second feature is immensely watchable and a welcome addition to the gay Asian-American film genre.

## **Heartland**

Maura Anderson  
USA | 2016 | 98:00

### **International Premiere**

Talented artist Lauren is going through a rough patch. In fact, it doesn't get much rougher. Her girlfriend recently passed away. She has lost her job. And her mother, avoiding the idea that a relationship ever existed, is not willing to support her daughter through her grief.

Lauren hopes that a visit from her brother will help ease some of the tension but, when he brings along his new girlfriend Carrie, things only become more complicated. As city girl Carrie tries to make sense of rural Oklahoma, Lauren works to seduce her into dropping her aloof superiority and opening her heart to small-town life. As the two discover that they have more and more in common, feelings begin to develop.

Heartland is an elegant tale that explores the destruction that comes when we run from pain; the shifting nature of sexuality, and the true meaning of family. Love has its limitations, but the heart knows no bounds.

Audience Award, 2016 Cinequest Film Festival Guests in attendance

## **Holding the Man**

Neil Armfield  
Australia | 2015 | 128:00

### **Toronto Premiere**

Based on Timothy Conigrave's beloved memoir and the subsequent stage play of the same name, Holding the Man is the passionate, funny and achingly sad story of the 15-year romance between Conigrave and the boy he fell in love with during high school, John Caleo.

Teenagers Timothy (Ryan Corr) and John (Craig Stott) were both students at Xavier College in Melbourne during the 1970s. Although they inhabited very different circles at school when they met—Tim was an aspiring actor and John was captain of the rugby team—it was love at first sight.

Their relationship blossomed and endured in the face of prejudice and adversity, both at school and at home. The couple faced their biggest challenge when unexpected illness threatened to tear them apart.

Corr and Stott give captivating performances as the iconic lovers, and the film features a stellar supporting cast that includes Guy Pearce, Anthony LaPaglia, Geoffrey Rush and Kerry Fox, who help establish *Holding the Man* as a heartrending, deeply romantic love story for the ages.

## **I Promise You Anarchy (Te prometo anarquía)**

Julio Hernández Córdón

Mexico/Germany | 2015 | 88:00

Miguel is a handsome young skateboarder involved in a love affair with Johnny, the bisexual son of his parent's housekeeper. Miguel also organizes illegal blood collection for narco gangs who need a steady supply because of Mexico's ongoing drug war. When he agrees to help gather an unusually high number of "cows" to be "milked" for blood, events quickly spiral out of control and Miguel and Johnny are faced with violence, betrayal and unexpected consequences.

Award-winning filmmaker Córdón discovered the actors for his fourth feature through social media, thereby bringing a captivating realism to this story of love, crime and exploitation. Beautifully shot in documentary style and supporting a vibrant soundtrack, *I Promise You Anarchy* provides a unique glimpse into modern Mexico City and illustrates the often unspoken impact of the war on drugs.

Spanish with English subtitles

Best Latin American Film, 2015 Rio de Janeiro International Film Festival Official Selection, 2015 Toronto International Film Festival

## **Me, Myself and Her (Io e lei)**

Maria Sole Tognazzi

Italy | 2015 | 102:00

### **Canadian Premiere**

Marina and Federica seem to have it all: great jobs, a beautiful apartment and a solid relationship. Together for five years, they are loving and comfortable around each other. They share every-thing, from eyeglasses to face cream to their adorable cat, Bengal.

But all is not as it appears. Federica is less comfortable being out than Marina, which causes considerable tension in the relationship. After Marina, a former actress, mentions Federica in an interview, the two fight. Things become much worse when Marina is offered a film role and Federica encounters a man she had an intense crush on years ago. What follows are a series of events that throw their once stable relationship into jeopardy.

*Me, Myself and Her* is a lush drama depicting two very different people who are trying to make it work.

Italian with English subtitles

## **Memories of a Penitent Heart**

Cecilia Aldarondo

USA/Puerto Rico | 2016 | 77:00

### **International Premiere**

Filmmaker Cecilia Aldarondo attempts to understand the life of her Uncle Miguel, 25 years after he died of AIDS, and uncovers layers of unresolved family drama in this deeply personal documentary.

Miguel left Puerto Rico for New York City in the late 1970s where he established a career in the theatre and found a loving relationship with Robert. Yet Miguel struggled to reconcile his homosexuality with his family's deep Catholic faith. Attempting to make sense of the story of her uncle, Aldarondo tracks down Robert and brings long-simmering tensions to the surface.

Mixing home videos, archival material and interviews, Aldarondo artfully explores questions of memory, family, faith and repentance while simultaneously offering a glimpse into a generation of Latino men in the early days of the AIDS crisis.

English and Spanish with English subtitles Official Selection, 2016 Tribeca Film Festival Director in attendance

## **Miles**

Nathan Adloff

USA | 2016 | 90:00

### **International Premiere**

Seventeen-year-old Miles dreams of getting out of his small hometown of Pondley, Illinois, and going to Im school in Chicago. But when his father dies suddenly and his mother realizes that the savings she thought they had for Miles' college fund have been spent, he has to find a new way to pay for his dreams. After learning about a volleyball scholarship, Miles decides to try out for the team. There's just one problem: there is only a girl's volleyball team at his high school.

By turns funny and tender, director Nathan Adloff's semi-autobiographical Im, set in the era of dial-up Internet and bulletin board messaging, offers a unique twist on the sports underdog movie. With a cast that includes Molly Shannon, Missi Pyle, Paul Reiser, and Tim Boardman as the boy at the centre of it all, Miles will have Inside Out audiences rooting for the home team.

This program is rated 14A Guests in attendance

## **The Nest (O Ninho)**

Marcio Reolon and Filipe Matzembacher

Brazil | 2015 | 100:00

### **North American Premiere**

A young soldier named Bruno arrives in the not-so-sunny southern Brazil city of Porto Alegre looking for his long-lost brother, and finds instead a group of colourful queer bohemians who seem eager to accept him as one of their own.

Unveiling the story over four 25-minute episodes, the makers of the 2015 Inside Out hit *Seashore* balance an indie film aesthetic, highlighting atmosphere, emotion and interpersonal dynamics with a television mystery show's sense of adventure and suspense.

The result is intriguing, moving and fun. Nicolas Vargas and Sophia Starosta (a break-out star who's spent some time in Canada) deliver potent lead performances, but the miniseries also gives the supporting roles, some played by young non-actors, plenty of room to strut their stuff, heaving their fabulousness at a society that doesn't accept them. Ultimately, what's right in front of Bruno may be more of a home than the lost family life he's been chasing.

Portuguese with English subtitles

## **Oriented**

Jake Witzenfeld  
UK/Israel | 2015 | 86:00

### **Canadian Premiere**

*Oriented* is an engrossing portrait of three gay Palestinian friends who are confronting their national and sexual identity while living in Tel Aviv.

Khader is a Tel Aviv darling from a prominent Muslim family who lives with his Jewish boyfriend, a local gay club promoter. Fadi is an ardent Palestinian nationalist who finds himself falling in love with an Israeli Zionist. And Naim, a devoted son, lives a completely open life in Tel Aviv, but is deeply conflicted about not being out to his family.

Determined to make a change, the three best friends form Qambuta, a cultural resistance group whose purpose is to create Internet-based content that promotes gender and national equality. Through their activism, the men address what it means to grow up challenged by a multi-faceted identity.

Filmed during the lead-up to the 2014 Israel-Gaza conflict, director Witzenfeld chronicles each man's struggles—their relationships, family, culture and politics, as they live with the ongoing threat of violence around them.

English, Hebrew and Arabic with English subtitles

## **Out Run**

S. Leo Chiang and Johnny Symons  
Philippines | 2016 | 75:00

### **International Premiere**

*Out Run* is a documentary about Ladlad, the world's first LGBT political party in the Philippines.

A key member of the party and the first trans woman to run for office, Bemz Benedito campaigns with recently openly gay Raymond Alikpala and Danton Remoto as they engage locals and mobilize supporters. Ladlad hopes that by winning three government seats they can create long-term change in the lives of LGBT Filipinos. Watch as party members struggle to maintain

Ladlad's vision and at the same time appeal to the general public, the majority of whom are fundamentalist Catholics.

Ladlad challenges micro-aggressive behaviour in hopes of persuading the general public to see them as equals. The race is more than just a political one, however. It represents a shift in the nation's growing acceptance of LGBT Filipinos.

Tagalog with English subtitles

## **Real Boy**

Shaleece Haas

USA | 2016 | 72:00

### **Canadian Premiere**

In this intimate, affecting debut documentary feature from Shaleece Haas, Bennett Miller approaches adulthood in a constant state of transition.

Moving in with his best friend, Bennett begins college and saves up for top surgery, at the same time focusing on staying sober, building his music career, and patiently helping his mother navigate her conflicted emotions around his transition. Along the way, Bennett builds an important friendship with Joe, a fellow transgender musician, which helps ground both men as they continue to move toward their truest selves.

With a soundtrack that features a number of Bennett's original songs, Haas offers deeply emotional glimpses into Bennett's coming-of-age, revealing not only heartache and uncertainty, but also the ultimate joy that comes with irrevocable change.

This program is rated 14A

## **Same Difference**

Joshua Sweeny

USA | 2015 | 87:00

### **International Premiere**

Between 2009 and 2011 a Minnesota school district that strictly adhered to a code of "no promo homo"—quashing gay-straight alliances and requiring LGBT teachers to stay in the closet—experienced a shocking nine student suicides.

Though Same Difference is a scathing indictment of school authorities who could, at best, be described as ignorant, documentarian Joshua Sweeny doesn't want to merely anger viewers

by raging against the system. Instead, he weaves together two stories of teens who came out at a young age. While one student flourishes— appearing on Ellen at age 14—the other struggles in a far less nurturing school environment.

The intimate details of their lives and of the relationships they share with their loving families are beautifully and sensitively captured, providing hope and solutions alongside the anguish.

## **Stuff**

Suzanne Guacci  
2015 | USA | 98:00

### **Canadian Premiere**

After fourteen years together, Trish and Deb Murdoch are going through a difficult time. Deb is a stay-at-home mom raising their two daughters, but she is growing restless, and Trish, a dentist, seems more focused on her practice than on her marriage. Deb has watched her wife become increasingly removed from their life together ever since the death of Trish's father years earlier. Focusing on the daily lives of their daughters, Deb finds herself spending more and more time with Jamie, the tattooed mother of one of the girl's classmates. As the distance between Deb's family grows, her feelings for Jamie grow.

Anchored by strong performances from its three leads, *Stuff* is a touching study of one couple's struggle to decide if what they had is worth fighting for or whether it is time to let go.

## **Suicide Kale**

Carly Usdin  
USA | 2015 | 78:00

### **Canadian Premiere**

*Suicide Kale* is a dark comedic take on how we analyze others and in so doing reveal our own well-intentioned attempts to make sense of situations, while mostly getting it totally wrong.

Short-time girlfriends Jasmine (Brittani Nichols) and Penn (Lindsay Hicks) awkwardly make their way through a lunch-party-turned-catastrophe when they find an anonymous suicide note at the home of the happiest couple they know. It's a modern-day comedy of manners where everyone is trying to keep up appearances while getting to the bottom of things.

Perfectly cast co-stars, Jasika Nicole and Brianna Baker, bring to life a script full of witty dialogue penned by up-and-coming superstar Nichols, who you'll recognize from Amazon's award-winning series, *Transparent*.

Best Feature Award, 2016 Queer Hippo International Film Festival

## **Summertime (La belle saison)**

Catherine Corsini  
France/Belgium | 2015 | 105:00

There was little chance that either Carole, a Parisian teacher and feminist militant, or Delphine, the daughter of a rural farming family, would ever cross paths. But in one of life's beautiful and unlikely occurrences, they not only met, but they also fell in love.

Delphine, wanting to learn more about the world outside of the family farm, is swept up with Carole and her friends, who are fighting on the frontline of the feminist wave of 1970s Paris. Carole, in

a relationship with a man and unprepared for a romance with a woman, is captivated by Delphine. But when the narrow-mindedness of rural France threatens to tear them apart, Delphine must decide between her family's love and acceptance and the happiness she found in the big city.

With standout performances by Cécile De France and Noémie Lvovsky, both women nominated for César Awards *Summertime* is destined to become the newest addition to the list of classic lesbian love stories.

French with English subtitles  
Official Selection, 2015 Toronto International Film Festival

## **Where Are You Going, Habibi? (Wo willst du hin, Habibi?)**

Tor Iben

Germany | 2015 | 80:00

Ibrahim, a young German of Turkish descent, leads a double life, living with his tradition-bound family and spending his days looking for a respectable job. But outside his parent's apartment, Ibo (as he's called by his family and friends) is a confident gay man who works in a sex shop and is on the hunt for Mr. Right.

One fateful day, the charismatic and self-described straight Ali appears at his door and Ibo is instantly obsessed with the wrestler and petty criminal, secretly following him around the city. What begins as a one-sided infatuation quickly evolves into a flirtatious yet meaningful friendship. A series of unexpected events in their lives draw Ibo and Ali closer together but also threaten to tear them apart.

Writer and director Tor Iben (*Das Phallometer*, *Inside Out* 2015) has crafted an utterly charming story about an unlikely friendship and the universal search for love, with the subtle yet powerful theme of racial and cultural acceptance at its core.

German and Turkish with English subtitles