



NEW FILMS FROM CANADA

MARCH 7 - 10, 2019

IFC CENTER, NEW YORK

TELEFILM
CANADA

Canada



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CANADA NOW 2019

Look up. Way up. Up above that distant 49th parallel. Soon you will begin to see the swirling illuminations of those northern cinematic lights: Canada Now 2019 is here.

Yes, your Canadian neighbours are again coming south, bringing tales of restless youth, ancient indigenous stories of tragedy and healing, compelling personal dramas about reinventing our world with the power of our imaginations, plus a trio of riveting, dramatic documentaries about the global environmental crisis, war crimes in Europe, and the struggle for civil rights in the United States of America.

This latest Canada Now selection includes daring and impressive works by both veteran filmmakers and new Canadian visions by emerging directorial talents.

The 2019 Canada Now showcase celebrates the independent creative spirit that has always been a hallmark of Canadian cinema.

**Follow us on Facebook at @CanadaNowFilm
www.CanadaNowFestival.com**

CANADA NOW is presented by Telefilm Canada in partnership with the Consulate General of Canada in New York City and with the support of Air Canada.

**Directors of the CANADA NOW films will be present
at screenings for Q & A.**



*Anthropocene:
The Human Epoch*



THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 7:00 PM

ANTHROPOCENE: THE HUMAN EPOCH

Directors: Jennifer Baichwal, Nicholas de Pencier, Edward Burtynsky

U.S. Distributor: Kino Lorber in association with Kanopy

2018 | 87 MINUTES | ENGLISH

Four years in the making, *Anthropocene: The Human Epoch* is a visually arresting cinematic rumination on humanity's recent, rapacious technological transformation of the Earth. This multiple award-winning documentary by Jennifer Baichwal, Nicholas de Pencier and Edward Burtynsky elaborates upon the ideas of the Anthropocene Working Group, international scientists who argue that since the mid-twentieth century the world has entered the 'Anthropocene Epoch,' a new, uncharted historical era that is the result of humanity's massive, invasive, environmentally dangerous impact on the planet. Crossing the globe from Siberia to Kenya, Chile to Australia, Canada to Germany, China to the United States, the filmmakers observe gargantuan open pit mining, deforestation, chemical pollution, species extinction, and the already evident effects of climate change.

Meditative, occasionally humorous and, yes, hopeful, *Anthropocene* is both timely and urgent. It will change the way you see the world: what you see here cannot be 'unseen.' Narrated by Alicia Vikander, this breathtakingly immersive film is a clarion call to rethink our relationship to our planet. Unforgettable.

- **Rogers Best Canadian Film 2018, Toronto Film Critics Association; Canada's Top Ten 2018**
- **Sundance Film Festival 2019; Berlin International Film Festival 2019**

Nicholas de Pencier and **Edward Burtynsky** will attend the screening to introduce and discuss their film.

Jennifer Baichwal and **Nicholas de Pencier** are Toronto-based filmmakers whose critically acclaimed films include *Manufactured Landscapes* (2006), *Watermark* (2013), and *Long Time Running* (2017). Internationally renowned photographer **Edward Burtynsky** has worked with Baichwal and de Pencier on several films.

FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 7:00 PM

HUGH HEFNER'S AFTER DARK: SPEAKING OUT IN AMERICA

Director: Brigitte Berman

2018 | 101 MINUTES | ENGLISH

From Brigitte Berman, Oscar winning director of *Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got* (1985), comes this remarkable documentary of one of America's most influential and controversial cultural icons, Hugh Hefner. In addition to its considered portrait of Hefner as a man of his times who also transcended them, this film features an incredible array of archival footage from Hugh Hefner's landmark TV series, *Playboy's Penthouse* (1959-1960) and *Playboy After Dark* (1968-1970). Amongst the martinis and bonhomie, Hefner's shows offered urgent cultural and political commentaries from pop culture luminaries such as Lenny Bruce, Dick Gregory, and Gore Vidal, as well as sensational live musical performances by Nina Simone, Joan Baez, Steppenwolf, Ray Charles, and Sammy Davis, Jr.

"An illuminating glimpse at a time when Hugh Hefner was on the cultural cutting edge."
Todd McCarthy, *The Hollywood Reporter*

- **Audience Award at the Whistler Film Festival 2018**
- **Telluride Film Festival 2018; Santa Barbara Film Festival 2019**

Brigitte Berman will attend the screening to introduce and discuss her film.

Born in Frankfurt, Germany and educated in Canada, **Brigitte Berman** is one of Canada's most celebrated documentary filmmakers, whose work spans film and television production. Her other films include *The Circle Game* (1994), *Testing the Limits* (1998), *Hugh Hefner: Playboy, Activist and Rebel* (2009), and *The River of My Dreams: A Portrait of Gordon Pinsent* (2016).



FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 9:00 PM

CLARA

Director: Akash Sherman

U.S. Distributor: Screen Media

2018 | 105 MINUTES | ENGLISH

Astronomy professor Isaac Bruno is obsessed with searching the cosmos for evidence of extraterrestrial life. Moreover, he is certain that he's close to a major celestial revelation. When this obsession raises eyebrows and scepticism within his university department, he ignores a colleague's advice to slow down and get his life together. Haunted by a personal tragedy, Isaac instead resolves to work even harder. Denied further university funding but determined to continue his research, he advertises for an unpaid research assistant. In walks a young woman named Clara, an artist who shares with Isaac a deep fascination with space. Their unlikely scientific collaboration soon brings them to the brink of making a monumental discovery. It also brings them closer together and, although Isaac states that 'outer space is a safer bet than love,' Clara's arrival just might change his mind.

"And more than anything, the film is admirably ambitious. Sherman is in his early 20s and *Clara* is his first narrative feature, and it's about nothing less than the meaning of life and the quest to find if we're alone in the galaxy. ... Sherman's idealism is infectious." Alex Hudson, *Exclaim!*

► Toronto International Film Festival 2018

Akash Sherman will attend the screening to introduce and discuss his film.

Originally from Edmonton, **Akash Sherman** moved to Toronto to study film at Ryerson University. In addition to his second feature, *Clara*, Sherman has made the low budget feature, *The Rocket List* (2016), and has extensive experience as a visual effects artist for television shows including *Four In The Morning*.

SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 5:00 PM

EDGE OF THE KNIFE/SGAAWAAY K'UUNA

Directors: Gwaai Edenshaw, Helen Haig-Brown

2018 | 100 MINUTES | HAIDA WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

Set in the 19th century on the island of Haida Gwaii on British Columbia's north Pacific coast, *Edge of the Knife* is the legendary indigenous tale of Adiits'ii, who retreats alone into the forest after a tragic accident at sea takes the life of his beloved nephew. Wracked with grief and hounded by spirits, he slowly transforms himself into the Wildman, or Gaagiixit. Will he ever be forgiven? Can he forgive himself? Can he ever re-enter his community? A daring, groundbreaking film made entirely in two dialects of a nearly extinct Haida language (note: 2019 is UNESCO's the Year of Indigenous Languages).

Edge of the Knife is a startling, absorbing drama; from the producers of *The Fast Runner* and *Searchers*.

"Tyler York delivers a performance that goes from restless and raw to tragic and ferocious... [This is] a film stacked with stunning imagery, where the natural and mythical get tangled. *Edge of the Knife* begins by mourning for a lost future. But in telling this story it finds hope yet."

Radheyana Simonpillai, *NOW Magazine*

► Canada's Top Ten 2018; Best Film, Best Directors, Best Actor, Vancouver Film Festival 2018
► Toronto International Film Festival 2018

Helen Haig-Brown is an Indigenous media artist of the Tsilhqot'in First Nation in British Columbia. Her 2009 short drama *?E?Anx/The Cave* was selected at Sundance and Berlin festivals, and was named one of Canada's Top Ten Short Films by the Toronto International Film Festival. **Gwaai Edenshaw** is a multi-disciplinary Haida artist working in sculpture, illustration, storytelling, and now cinema. *Edge of the Knife* is Haig-Brown and Edenshaw's debut feature film.



SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 7:00 PM

THE FIREFLIES ARE GONE/ LA DISPARITION DES LUCIOLES

Director: **Sébastien Pilote**

2018 | 96 MINUTES | FRENCH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

On the verge of her high school graduation, a brilliant, high-spirited young 18 year-old woman named Léo can't wait to get out of her drab small town in Quebec's hinterland. Tired of her mother's nagging, her stepfather's relentless and reactionary right wing opinions, and her absent father who lives and works far far away, Léo is restless, alienated, and bored. She's also weary of adults telling her what is best for her future. All of Léo's ennui and frustration changes, however, when she meets Steve, a quietly charismatic 30-something guitar teacher who still lives in town in his mother's basement. Taking guitar lessons from Steve proves to be a catalyst for change for Léo, and their growing, unlikely friendship will transform them both forever.

"Karelle Tremblay has something of compatriot Ellen Page's naturalness, self-possession and dry delivery." "Beautifully crafted and emotionally effective drama."
Demetrios Matheou, *Screen Daily*

- **Canada's Top Ten 2018; Best Canadian Feature Film, Toronto International Film Festival 2018**
- **Official Competition at Karlovy Vary Film Festival 2018; Palm Springs Film Festival 2019**

Sébastien Pilote will attend the screening to introduce and discuss his film.

Born in the Saguenay Lac Saint-Jean region of Quebec, writer-director **Sébastien Pilote** has emerged as one of the most talented filmmakers of his generation. His first feature, *The Salesman* was selected to screen in the competition at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival, while his second, *The Auction*, captured the Best Screen Play Award at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival.

SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 9:00 PM

GENESIS/GENÈSE

Director: **Philippe Lesage**

2018 | 129 MINUTES | FRENCH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

In this deft, insightful coming-of-age film, three interconnected storylines capture teenagers discovering love and navigating those treacherous territories between disappointment, exhilaration and shame. Guillaume, Charlotte and Felix are all shaken by first loves in the turmoil of their adolescence. The awkward but intelligent Guillaume attends a boarding school, where he gradually develops intense and unfamiliar feelings for his best friend, Nicolas; Guillaume's sister Charlotte sees her world turned upside down when her boyfriend leaves her and she then falls for a rather unsavoury older man. The third storyline involves Félix, a teenager who experiences his first pure love at summer camp. As their lives, loves, and conflicts intersect, the richly detailed, intimate dramas of *Genesis* slowly unveil a remarkable set of personal possibilities for Felix, Charlotte, and Guillaume.

"Lesage's filmmaking, with its unhurried editing and eerily echoing music cues, is in expert sympathy with his hovering, out-of-time protagonists" John Hopewell, *Variety*

- **Canada's Top Ten 2018; Best Film, Best Director, Best Actor at Valladolid International Film Festival 2018; Best Film, Best Actor at Montréal Festival of New Cinema**
- **2018 Locarno International Film Festival, Stockholm Film Festival, Thessaloniki Film Festival**

Philippe Lesage will attend the screening to introduce and discuss his film.

Montreal-based **Philippe Lesage** began his career as a documentary filmmaker, with films such as *Pourrons-nous vivre ensemble* (2006) and the award-winning *Ce cœur qui bat* (2010). He moved into narrative feature filmmaking with the critically acclaimed, *Les Démons* (2015), which premiered at San Sebastian International Film Festival in Official Competition and went on to be selected by more than 40 international festivals, capturing several awards. Before *Genesis*, Lesage's most recent feature film is *Copenhagen: A Love Story* (2016).



SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 5:00 PM

THE ACCOUNTANT OF AUSCHWITZ

Director: Matthew Shoychet

2018 | 80 MINUTES | ENGLISH

"Just following orders." Seven decades after World War II, with the extraordinary trial of 94 year-old Oskar Gröning, that infamous phrase no longer works as a defense. In 2015, Gröning, known as the "Accountant of Auschwitz," was charged with being criminally responsible for the murder of 300,000 Jews. Gröning's sensational and controversial trial made headlines worldwide, sparking intense, incendiary debates across the political spectrum. Should he face trial at age 94? Can he be held responsible all these years later?

Within its rich weave of archival footage, contemporary trial coverage, and interviews with survivors and human rights advocates, Shoychet's searching, intelligent documentary offers compelling and cogent investigations of history, conscience, and justice. Astonishing.

"Emotionally powerful and intellectually challenging. 5 stars!"
NOW Magazine

► **Hot Docs International Documentary Film Festival 2018; DocUtah International Documentary Film Festival 2018; Palm Springs Film Festival 2019**

Matthew Shoychet will attend the screening to introduce and discuss his film.

Matthew Shoychet is a Toronto-based filmmaker who has worked in the narrative and documentary film worlds for many years. A graduate of York University's Film Production BFA and Sheridan College's post-graduate program in Advanced Television and Film, Shoychet's short films include, *Red Ether* (2011), *Faker Chaser* (2012), *Patrick: Evil Awakens* (2014), and *Anne Frank: 70 Years Later*. (2015). *The Accountant of Auschwitz* is his feature film debut.

SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 7:00 PM

MOUTHPIECE

Director: Patricia Rozema

2018 | 91 MINUTES | ENGLISH

Faced with the sudden death of her mother and wrestling with the daunting responsibility of delivering the eulogy, aspiring writer Cassandra finds solace and inspiration in her imagination and in her memory, which rapidly become indistinguishable. As the funeral service approaches, Cassandra's conflicted, complex reflections on and memories of her mother intensify and push her life in new and unexpected directions. Moving back and forth in time, the film's multifaceted narrative probes the intimacies and emotional complexities of *how* we remember, *what* we remember, and *why* we remember. Based on the award-winning play by Norah Sadava and Amy Nostbakken (who also brilliantly co-star in the film as two 'versions' of Cassandra).

Mouthpiece is an inventive, engaging narrative of personal rebirth from the acclaimed director of *I've Heard The Mermaids Singing*, *Grey Gardens*, and *Into The Forest*.

"A thoughtful interrogation of modern womanhood, leavened by gallows humour."
Scott Tobias, *Variety*

► **Canada's Top Ten 2018; WIFTV Artistic Merit Award (Drama)**
► **Vancouver Film Festival; Toronto International Film Festival 2018; Palm Springs Film Festival 2019**

Patricia Rozema will attend the screening to introduce and discuss her film.

Patricia Rozema is a prominent member of the 'Toronto New Wave' group of filmmakers that burst on the international film scene in the mid-1980s. Her debut film, *I've Heard the Mermaids Singing* (1987), was a huge success at the Cannes Film Festival and launched her long, productive career in cinema and television. Her other films include *When Night Is Falling* (1994), *Mansfield Park* (1999), *Happy Days* (2000), *Grey Gardens* (2013), and *Into The Forest* (2015).

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Program notes by Canada Now series curator, Tom McSorley,
Executive Director, Canadian Film Institute.