



VIFF ANNOUNCES NEW COMPOSER FILMMAKER ACCELERATOR AND LINEUP FOR VIFF AMP

42nd Vancouver International Film Festival
September 28 – October 8, 2023

VANCOUVER, BC (SEPTEMBER 7, 2023) Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF) is proud to unveil VIFF Amp's Composer Filmmaker Accelerator program, a brand new interdisciplinary initiative that fosters emerging composers and filmmakers from around the world, in addition to this year's lineup for the VIFF Amp Music in Film summit. **VIFF is offering a limited number of free tickets to the Composer Filmmaker Accelerator Showcase, featuring members of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, on Saturday, October 7 from 4–6pm at the Annex.**

The Composer Filmmaker Accelerator is curated by Emmy-nominated Miriam Cutler, co-founder of Alliance For Women Film Composers and former advisor to the Sundance Institute Film Music Intensive. The two-month program is an opportunity for 12 composers and four filmmakers to learn from acclaimed professionals in the field in an integrative approach that emphasizes collaboration and cross-disciplinary synergy. The composers will work closely with the filmmakers to create an original score to picture — four scenes will each feature three different scores. The final compositions will then be recorded at Bryan Adams' Warehouse Studios and also performed live with members of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in a special screening on Saturday, October 7 at 4pm.

Program Faculty:

- **Damon Tedesco**, Recording Engineer and Scoring Mixer
Damon Tedesco is the Recording Engineer and Scoring Mixer for the VIFF Amp Composer Filmmaker Accelerator. For the last 25 years, Damon has specialized in recording music for film and television. A member of the Television Academy, he has recorded and mixed music for hundreds of commercials, TV shows, films, and documentaries. He is currently the scoring mixer for Family Guy and American Dad, and recently worked on Lost City and Hocus Pocus 2.
- **Michelle Sudduth**, Scoring Session Producer
Michelle Sudduth is the Scoring Session Producer for the VIFF Amp CFA program. Michelle is a composer, songwriter, and classically-trained pianist, and has worked in the booth on many film and TV recording sessions in Los Angeles. She called Vancouver home while in graduate school (UBC) and credits UCLA's Film Scoring program with equipping her to create music for media. Most recently, Michelle has joined a cohort of composers for MTV/Paramount's FirstTime Composers initiative through 2024.

- **Alex Clark**, Copyist and Orchestrator

With a composition degree from Wilfrid Laurier University and over a decade as an orchestra librarian, Alex Clark has spent most of his professional career behind the scenes of large classical music productions preparing music for musicians or leading the digital video production teams. In recent years Alex has gained experience in sound design, cinematography, directing cameras for live orchestral concerts and recordings, arranging for orchestra and rock band as well as composing for chamber ensembles, full symphony orchestra and electronic music for a short film. Alex has remained active as a viola player and conductor during his time in Arts Administration.

"VIFF Amp has long been dedicated to bringing the best of the music and film world together, helping establish careers through a commitment to nurturing relationships between Vancouver and Hollywood," says Tony Scudellari, VIFF Amp Co-curator and Senior VP of Television Music at Sony Pictures Entertainment. "We're now extending this collaborative approach to the industry in a way that will help shape future generations of film composers. For too long, composers and directors have been taught in silos. The Composer Filmmaker Accelerator is an opportunity for participants to learn from each other and find a more collaborative way of creating impactful cinema together."

Miriam Cutler, curator of the Composer Filmmaker Accelerator, adds: "The Composer Filmmaker Accelerator offers participants a rigorous experience that will ignite their creativity and inspire them to explore their abilities to the fullest potential. The inaugural roster of participants is immensely talented and we are excited to be able to share their artistry with VIFF audiences in a unique showcase of their final work that is not to be missed."

The esteemed filmmakers partaking in the program are **Ana Valine**, duo **Andrew Huculiak** and **Cayne McKenzie**, **Dide Su Bilgin**, and **Jason Karman**.

The inaugural program saw more than 200 applications from Composers around the globe. From those applications, those selected for the first Composer Filmmaker Accelerator are:

- **Alexandre Côté** is an LA based composer for film, television, and video games. After graduating Berklee College of Music at the top of his class, Côté began his career working as an assistant to several composers, most notably BAFTA-winner Abel Korzeniowski. He has composed music for Activision's *Call Of Duty: Vanguard*, which received a Grammy nomination in 2022, and contributed additional music to the third season of Apple TV's *See*, Netflix's *The Witcher*, *Blood Origin*, and Netflix's *We Have A Ghost*.
- **Beryl Rosenblum** is an LA-based composer for the screen and stage, as well as an award-winning classical pianist. Having played such an important role in her life, the piano features heavily in her music, and therefore contributes greatly to her cinematic melodies and innate ability to write lyrical themes. She has recorded her work with orchestras and chamber ensembles in notable recording studios such as Fox Newman Scoring Stage (Los Angeles, California), La Seine Musicale (Boulogne-Billancourt, France), FAMES Project (Skopje, Macedonia), and Chicago Recording Company (Chicago, Illinois).
- **Bijan Olia** is an Iranian-American composer/producer who has written the music for the feature romantic comedy *Better Half* as well as additional music for the Freeform TV Series *Siren*, Warner Brothers' *Lego DC Superheroes: Brain Drain*, and the virtual reality video game *Resident Evil VII Biohazard*.
- **DeAndre James Allen-Toole** is a composer for film, television, games, and new media best known for his original score to Julian Higgins' neo-Western feature *God's Country* starring Thandiwe Newton. He is also known for writing additional music on multiple projects, including *4400*, *Citizen Ashe*, *Reopening Night*, *Four Seasons Total Documentary*, *Future of Work*, *Cat People*, and more. Driven by a life-long love of jazz, electronica, and experimental music, he is a Detroit-bred composer boasting an eclectic style shaped by years of playful musical exploration.
- **Elizabeth Phillips-Weiner** is a composer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and producer born and raised just outside of Philadelphia. She weaves together her love of folk music with modern cinematic elements to create evocative and intimate scores for film and tv, and songs that tell compelling stories through unique soundscapes. Her music has premiered in films at the Tribeca Film Festival, Hollyshorts, DOC NYC, Urbanworld Film Festival, and Raindance.
- **Felipe Tellez** is a Colombian-Canadian, BIPOC media composer. Recently he composed for the Canadian-Nigerian production *Orah*, which was selected for TIFF 2023 and the US-Canadian film *Tomorrow*, which recently premiered in California's Cinequest Festival 2023. Felipe's unique style merges

modern electronics, traditional folk from Colombia, and a classical symphonic approach. Recently he orchestrated for Hubert Davis' award winning documentary *Black Ice*, and did music copying and conducting on *Brother* (14 CSA nominations in 2023).

- **Gabriella Hirsch** is a composer, pianist, and lyricist for film, television, theater, and multimedia. She is newly based in West Los Angeles. Recent film highlights include the animations *Dear Yeda* (Lisboa Indie Film Festival) and *Gold* (New York Short Film Festival), the documentary *Creating Space* (NYU NewsDoc Film Fest), and the dramatic short *Second Intention* (NYU First Run Film Festival).
- **Madison Anglin** is a composer for various types of media who likes to stem from textural and rich harmonic palettes. She earned her Master's Degree in Screen Scoring from New York University in 2023. The program has led Madison to score several different projects ranging from animation to investigative documentaries. Madison's collaborations have screened at DOC NYC Festival, The American Black Film Festival and The Atlanta Film Festival. *Interrogated*, a documentary she co-scored, was shortlisted for a Student Yugo BAFTA Award. She has collaborated on multiple projects with filmmakers from NYU Tisch, Columbia University, and FIT.
- **Medhat Hanbali** is a composer who specializes in music for media. His expansive palette ranges from orchestral to jazz and led him to score a multitude of critically acclaimed projects across the globe such as *Inside Lehman Brothers* (BBC), *The World According to Amazon* (CBC/France 5), *Gala des Olivier* (ICI Tele), *Mouvement Deluxe* (Teletoon), and *Si On S'aimait Encore* (TVA).
- **Mina Salib** is an Egyptian composer and music producer born in Cairo. He has been telling stories through music for as long as he can remember, as a singer and a choir leader. As a pianist, he creates all shades of drama, comedy and thrill — his work as a film composer culminates in a journey of understanding of human psychology and emotion.
- **Shao Jean Sim** is a Los Angeles based composer, songwriter/producer. On top of her work in the film and television industry, she has also written music for theater productions, commercials and ventured into video games scoring. Having worked for composers Tom Howe, Didier Lean Rachou and alongside Dan Romer, her credits include Fox Searchlight's *Wendy* (lead orchestrator & conductor), *Ted Lasso* on Apple TV+ (score tech engineer), and Discovery's *Bering Sea Gold* (score mixer).
- **Shirley Song** is an Australian born Chinese composer who resides in Los Angeles. She and her writing partner (good friend/partner in crime), Jina An, are the composers for the upcoming Netflix TV show *Exploding Kittens*, based on the popular party card game, the TV show spin off of *To All The Boys* film series, *XO, Kitty* (2023), and the Netflix romantic comedy *A Tourist's Guide to Love* (2023). The duo also composed music for the 2021 Christmas Netflix film *Princess Switch 3: Romancing The Star*, featuring Vanessa Hudgens.

VIFF AMP

Oct. 4-7 | Beaumont Studios, Birdhouse, The Warehouse Studio & The Ironworks
Amp & Industry professionals only

This year's lineup for VIFF Amp also includes six featured panels, available for Industry Pass professionals only. Attendees will be able to hear from such masters as Jojo Villanueva (*Straight Outta Compton*, *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2*), Morgan Rhodes (*Selma*, *Space Jam: A New Legacy*), and Natasha Duprey (*The L Word*, *Snowpiercer*) through sessions that dive deep into the art of music supervision, composition, and more.

"We have seen firsthand the impact that VIFF Amp has had on the careers of conference attendees," says Rob Calder, VIFF Amp Co-curator and Founder of Secret Study. "We are excited to be able to continue to build pivotal relationships through a robust program that offers professionals a chance to learn from some of the best and brightest in the field today."

VIFF Amp is funded by Creative BC, FACTOR Canada, Music BC, and RBC Foundation; supported by ASCAP, BMI, DGC, MPC and SOCAN; and the Community Broadcast Partner is TELUS STORYHIVE.

VIFF Amp's Music In Film Summit nurtures, educates & champions emerging and newly established music professionals (composers, songwriters, music entrepreneurs), with a strong focus on elevating those from marginalized or underrepresented communities. The program provides creative insights, mentorship, and unique career development opportunities from international experts in the music for media space.

The Art of Music Supervision | Thursday, Oct. 5

Moderator: Tony Scudellari

Four feature film music supervisors who have worked on everything from indies to major blockbusters will discuss their work in an informative and interactive setting. Original in format and geared towards real-time learning, this event is a must-attend for aspiring content creators. Featuring Bonnie Greenberg, Jojo Villanueva, Maureen Crowe and Morgan Rhodes.

Stages to Screens | Thursday, Oct. 5

Moderator: Jane Aurora

Three local artists represented by three local music companies (from influential start-ups to major indies) perform songs that have been successfully synced in film and TV over the past year. This panel explores the journey of the music from inception to final placement. Featuring Eboshi of Cartal Madras (Snakes x Ladders), Jon Bryant (Netzwerk).

The Art of Composition | Friday, Oct. 6

Presented by the Directors Guild of Canada

Moderator: Adrian Ellis

A successful screen composer is able to handle a combination of skills: communication, translation, execution, and adaptation. This moderated conversation between a film director and composer team will offer a revealing, candid look behind the curtain: What is their creative process? How does the composer meet the filmmaker's needs? How can the power of music aid in storytelling? Featuring Director Clement Virgo and Composer Todor Kobokov.

VIFF Amp Town Hall | Friday, Oct. 6

Moderators: Rob Calder & Tony Scudellari

Following the intensive learning experience at VIFF Amp, attendees can join an open conversation about opportunities within an evolving music-in-media ecosystem, with a focus on initiatives from some of this year's partner organizations. The town hall will explore advocacy, funded programs, mentorship opportunities and the future of equity in the entertainment world with experts and advocates for emerging talent in the music for media space. Featured speakers to include Allyson Newman (Alliance for Women Film Composers), Amritha Vaz (Composers Diversity Collective), Erin Collins (SESAC/Reel Change Program), Heather McIntosh (Alliance for Women Film Composers), Lachi (RAMPD), Tracy McKnight (Broadcast Music, Inc), and representatives from ASCAP and SOCAN (TBA).

Music BC's SOUNDOFF | Friday, Oct. 6

Presented by Music BC, SOUNDOFF is a platform for Vancouver's most promising musicians, with a focus on song placement and sync licensing in film and TV. Local artists perform songs and connect with music supervisors in this expansive yet intimate live gathering. Featuring music supervisors Angela Jollivette, Bonnie Greenberg, Kyle Merkley, Natasha Duprey, and Valerie Biggin; and performing artists Adam Mah, Ché Aimee Dorval, Kylie V, NADUH, and Zada.

Scoring Masterclass: Animated Explorations | Saturday, Oct. 7

Three local composers are highlighted in this deep dive exploration of scoring for animation, featuring a curated live ensemble performance of works. Curated by Amritha Vaz, featuring panelists Jay Stutler (Senior Vice President, Music Disney), Sascha Paladino (showrunner), and composers Amanda Cawley, Kalaisan Kalaichelvan, and Red Janes.

Composer Filmmaker Accelerator Showcase | Saturday, Oct 7. 4–6pm

Venue: Annex

Host: Michelle Sudduth, Rob Calder & Tony Scudellari

A concert performance featuring 12 original scores by the inaugural cohort of the Composer Filmmaker Accelerator Program. The performance is the culmination of their work and is the first public live-to-picture performance of the music, featuring members of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

Tickets and Information

To book your free ticket to the Composer Filmmaker Accelerator Showcase, on Saturday, October 7 from 4–6pm at the Annex, visit viff.org/ticket-info.

To learn more about the VIFF Amp Music in Film Summit, visit viff.org/amp.

To explore VIFF's complete 2023 programming, visit viff.org.

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About VIFF | viff.org

Beyond film exhibitions, VIFF strives to engage and empower communities, encourage dialogue and champion local artists. With decades of experience and an unwavering commitment to creating exceptional programs, VIFF has transformed into a highly esteemed annual festival and a premier arthouse cinema.

Founded in 1982, the Greater Vancouver International Film Festival Society is a not-for-profit cultural society and federally registered charitable organization that operates the internationally acclaimed Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF) and the year-round programming at the VIFF Centre. All year, VIFF produces screenings, talks, conferences and events that act as a catalyst for the community to discover the creativity and craft of storytelling on screen.

VIFF is presented on the traditional and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and sə́lilwətaʔɬ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

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