

# Vancouver International Film Festival

26 Sept – 06 Oct

**VIFF**

Tickets [viff.org](https://viff.org)



## VIFF ANNOUNCES FILM AWARD WINNERS

43rd Vancouver International Film Festival  
September 26 – October 6, 2024

**VANCOUVER, BC (OCTOBER 3, 2024)** Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF) is thrilled to announce the winners of this year's juried international film awards and revamped Canadian film awards. Winners were announced in a ceremony yesterday evening at the False Creek Yacht Club in the following categories: SUMMIT Award (Best Canadian Film), HORIZON Award (Emerging Canadian Director), TIDES Award (Best Canadian Documentary), and ARBUTUS Award (Best BC Film), in addition to the international SHORT FORUM Award and VANGUARD Award.

The winners of the VIFF Audience Awards will be announced after the festival during the week of October 7.

"VIFF showcased an incredibly high calibre of talent this year, and our juries had the enviable but challenging task of agreeing on which films should receive awards," says Kyle Fostner, Executive Director of VIFF. "Our jury members are fellow artists and industry leaders who weighed each film in competition with great care. And, while there can only be a few outstanding films selected, we want to acknowledge the overwhelming artistry and innovation present in every single official selection. It's a true privilege to share VIFF's highest honours with this year's winning films, which resonated so strongly with our juries and audiences."

### CANADIAN AND INTERNATIONAL FILM AWARD WINNERS:

#### **SUMMIT Award (Best Canadian Film)**

\$15,000 award presented by Directors Guild of Canada  
Jury: Zarrar Kahn, Shane Smith, and Rebecca Steele

#### **Winner: *Universal Language*, dir. Matthew Rankin**

Jury statement: "The jury is pleased to recognize the SUMMIT Award to a film that reaches new heights within the landscape of Canadian cinema. It highlights Canadian cinema as a global force, while still championing a local culture that finds itself in transformation. This film was far from the most neutral experience of our lives, and so we are pleased to award the 2024 Vancouver International Film Festival SUMMIT Award to *Universal Language* by Matthew Rankin."

### **HORIZON Award (Emerging Canadian Director)**

\$3,000 award presented by Directors Guild of Canada

Jury: Yi Jung Chen, Chris Chong Chan Fui, and Jamila Pomeroy

#### **Winner: Director Jerome Yoo, *Mongrels***

Jury statement: "In their debut feature, this director created a beautiful portrait of a family experiencing grief in a new country and culture. The director has a pointed authorship both aesthetically and emotionally. The tone was both poetic and surreal, speaking to the complexities of familial love and grief. We award the 2024 HORIZON Award to Jerome Yoo for *Mongrels*."

#### **Special Mention: Director Sanja Živković, *Cat's Cry***

Jury statement: "*Cat's Cry* is a heartbreaking family drama with strong social commentary. Sanja Živković effortlessly unpacks the complicated emotional struggle between a reluctant mother, loving family and an adoption system — all of which are trying to do the right thing."

### **TIDES Award (Best Canadian Documentary)**

\$15,000 award presented by ROGERS Group of Funds

Jury: Ana Belén Asfura Fuentes, Rachel M'Bon, and Corey Payette

#### **Winner: *Ninan Auassat: We, the Children*, dir. Kim O'Bomsawin**

Jury statement: "The film we chose for the TIDES Award offers a profound look at life through the eyes of youth, using breathtaking cinematography to reflect the cycles of nature and existence. The unfiltered stories of a new generation, filled with resilience, unfold with striking authenticity. The filmmaker's approach feels both intimate and universal, capturing the essence of childhood and community in ways that are truly unique. The sound design and music weave through the narrative like a heartbeat. It is a portrait of life, as seen through the eyes of the next generation, where hope is not just a word, but a vision of the future. Our selection for the TIDES Award is *Ninan Auassat: We, the Children* by Kim O'Bomsawin."

#### **Special Mention: *Inay (Mama)*, dir. Thea Loo**

Jury statement: "This film dives deeply into the unspoken truths of intergenerational trauma. It holds nothing back, offering no comfort, only the space to confront inherited scars and the silence that surrounds them. Our special mention is *Inay (Mama)*, by Thea Loo."

### **ARBUTUS Award (Best BC Film)**

\$10,000 award presented by Creative BC

\$15,000 in post-production services credit provided by Company 3

Jury: Jorge Amigo, Joella Cabalu, and Mila Zuo

#### **Winner: *Inay (Mama)*, dir. Thea Loo**

Jury statement: "Our pick for the ARBUTUS Award is a bold and brave film that deeply affected our jury. This film offers a refreshing and layered lens on a familiar subject by showing the complexities of how flawed Canadian immigration policies impact families, intimate relationships, and people's well-being.

Seamlessly weaving home videos, Super 8, and candid conversations, with glimpses of the hazy Philippine landscape, the director shows how memories of our homeland and unresolved trauma due to government enforced family separation are ever present and ongoing. With an uncontrived and restrained approach, this film models a pathway for healing and communication between loved ones across generations.

It left our jury with a sense of hope and excitement for this emerging filmmaker's future. The jury is pleased to present the ARBUTUS Award for outstanding feature film produced in BC to *Inay (Mama)* by Thea Loo."

#### **Special Mention: *The Stand*, dir. Christopher Auchter**

Jury statement: "The Special Mention goes to a film that not only astutely diagnoses the broader structural problems within Canada's settler colonialism, but it also offers us a vision of resistance through what Jacques Derrida describes as an 'unconditional hospitality.' In this current historical moment in which Indigenous land claims are still being denied across Canada, and when we are bearing witness to western colonialism's ongoing war games in Gaza and now Lebanon, Sudan, and Congo, when it feels that the veil of civility has been lifted and that courage has become a scarce resource, this film feels urgently necessary.

How do we hold space for dissent and yet STAND against what we know to be morally wrong against the human and the more-than-human world? This groundbreaking film of found footage offers one brilliant and surprising response to this very question, creating a compelling, dramatic, and enigmatic work that speaks to the powers of Indigenous steadfastness and resistance.

The jury is pleased to present a special jury mention for outstanding feature film produced in BC to *The Stand* by Christopher Auchter."

### **SHORT FORUM Award**

\$5,000 award presented by NOVUS

Jury: Chris Hyde, Michael Scoular, and Pegah Tabassinejad

#### **Winner: *Strawberry Shortcake*, dir. Deborah Devyn Chuang (Taiwan)**

Jury statement: "*Strawberry Shortcake* impressed the jury immediately with its fully realized world, in which production design, performance, and camera direction can quickly pull us into a sense of safety and just as powerfully shatter it. Deborah Devyn Chuang is a director unafraid of taboos, and committed to a vision of cinema that can express the commonly unsayable and unthinkable. We're pleased to recognize this striking short film and can't wait to see the work still to come."

#### **Special Mention: *Judas Icarus Twists His Wrist*, dir. Kerr Holden (Canada)**

Jury statement: "Both glam and understated, Kerr Holden's *Judas Icarus Twists His Wrist* stood out for its invigorating, precise montage, in which layers of animation, sound, doc, and fiction strip away and then build up this portrait of an individual and their community. From its visceral opening, it's clear that Kerr Holden understands the power of a single cut, and how it can transmit waves of resonance and clarifying energy. The jury is glad to recognize this exciting work of cinema with a Special Mention."

### **VANGUARD Award**

\$5,000 award presented by Lochmaddy Foundation

Jury: Hannah Baek, Miryam Charles, and Noé Rodríguez

#### **Winner: *78 Days*, dir. Emilija Gašić (Serbia)**

Jury statement: "With striking ability to navigate an intimate family portrait, providing nuanced insights into sisterhood and parenthood, this film captivates from its very first scene. Yet the true accomplishment of this proposal emerges unexpectedly as the film unfolds, revealing a sophisticated understanding of the hybrid nature of film. Its precise editing yields a mesmerizing artifact where absence and presence weave a fractured coming-of-age story amid war. The jury is honored to award the 2024 VANGUARD Award to Emilija Gašić's *78 Days*."

#### **Special Mention: *Hanami*, dir. Denise Fernandes (Switzerland, Portugal, Cape Verde)**

Jury statement: "With a refreshing sensibility, this film skillfully offers space for the viewers to reflect and experience what character and story can be outside of narrative conventions. It reminds us that poetic life is possible in the gentle courage to be oneself in relation to place and community. With nuanced performances and compelling visuals that pay homage to the islands of Cape Verde, the jury would like to award a Special Mention to Denise Fernandes' *Hanami*, a film that will resonate with us for a long time to come."

## **Tickets and Information**

Adult Ticket	\$19
Senior Ticket	\$17
Student/Youth	\$14
Accessible	\$14
VIFF+ Members	\$16
VIFF+ Premium/Patron/U25	\$14
Ticket Pack of 6	\$108 / \$94 VIFF+ / \$86 Premium/Patron/U25
Ticket Pack of 10	\$170 / \$150 VIFF+ / \$136 Premium/Patron/U25
Student 6 Pack	\$78

Senior 6 Pack	\$96
Senior 10 Pack	\$155
Festival Pass	\$425
Platinum Pass	\$1,200
Artist & Industry Pass	\$175
Artist & Industry Premium Pass	\$425
VIFF Talks	\$25
VIFF Live Tickets	\$16-\$60
Signals	\$35 plus fees and taxes

More ticket details at [viff.org/ticket-info](https://viff.org/ticket-info).

To explore VIFF's complete 2024 programming, visit [viff.org](https://viff.org).

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#### Press Kit

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About VIFF | [viff.org](https://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 xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

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