

44th Vancouver International Film Festival



VIFF ANNOUNCES JURIED CANADIAN AND INTERNATIONAL FILM AWARD WINNERS

44th Vancouver International Film Festival
October 2 – 12, 2025

VANCOUVER, BC (OCTOBER 9, 2025) Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF) is thrilled to announce the winners of this year's juried Canadian and international film awards. Winners were announced in a ceremony yesterday at the Chambar Restaurant in the following categories: SUMMIT Award (Outstanding Canadian Narrative Feature), HORIZON Award (Outstanding First or Second Canadian Narrative Feature), TIDES Award (Outstanding Canadian Documentary), and ARBUTUS Award (Outstanding BC Film), in addition to the international VANGUARD Award and SHORT FORUM Award.

The winners of the VIFF Audience Awards will be announced after the festival during the week of October 13.

"This was another tough year for the VIFF juries, as this year's filmmakers are exceptionally talented," says Kyle Fostner, Executive Director of VIFF. "Our jury members are artists and industry leaders themselves, who know just how much love and hard work went into making every title. It was with great consideration and care that our award winners were selected, as representative examples of cinematic excellence, in a highly competitive year rich with films of undeniable quality."

CANADIAN FILM AWARD WINNERS

SUMMIT Award (Outstanding Canadian Narrative Feature)

\$15,000 award presented by Directors Guild of Canada
Jury: Gillian McKercher, Melanie Miller, Amar Wala

Winner: *The Things You Kill*, dir. Alireza Khatami

Jury statement: "We, the jury, were honoured to watch an incredible slate of films that pushed cinematic boundaries and affected us deeply. One film, however, stood out among the rest for its powerful exploration of the duality within us all. Its meticulous sense of craft and intentional pacing was at once challenging and enthralling. Ultimately, it is just a remarkable piece of filmmaking. The jury is pleased to award the 2025 VIFF SUMMIT Award to *The Things You Kill* by Alireza Khatami."

HORIZON Award (Outstanding First or Second Canadian Narrative Feature)

\$3,000 award presented by VIFF

Jury: Karen Chapman, Mike Johnston, Sung Moon

Winner: *Blue Heron*, dir. Sophy Romvari

Jury statement: "The jury was resoundingly impressed with this filmmaker's poignant first film, bravely using the tools of cinema to break form between narrative, documentary, memory and grief. Time stands still in this deeply personal film as the director attempts to conduct the uncontrollable inevitability of loss, reminding us about the power of the universal language of cinema. The jury is pleased to present the Vancouver International Film Festival's HORIZON Award to Sophy Romvari for *Blue Heron*."

TIDES Award (Outstanding Canadian Documentary)

\$15,000 award presented by ROGERS

Jury: Anja Block, Igor Drljača, Asia Youngman

Winner: *The Track*, dir. Ryan Sidhoo

Jury statement: "For its poignant portrayal of resilience, this bittersweet coming-of-age story follows three young men growing up in post-war Bosnia. Despite limited resources and a training ground marked by the scars of conflict, they hold fast to a shared Olympic dream. Told with quiet strength and striking intimacy, the film reminds us of the power of perseverance and the enduring importance of hope. We are proud to present the TIDES Award to Ryan Sidhoo for *The Track*."

Special Mention: *Modern Whore*, dir. Nicole Bazuin

Jury statement: "The jury would also like to acknowledge *Modern Whore* by Nicole Bazuin with a Special Mention for its memorable point of view, formal experimentation, and candid exploration of reclaiming meaning in an industry that remains stigmatized and unprotected. This documentary is a powerful testament to family bonds, community building, and resilience."

ARBUTUS Award (Outstanding BC Film)

\$10,000 award presented by Creative BC

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

Jury: Sabrina Furminger, Thea Loo, Tarique Qayumi

Winner: *Blue Heron*, dir. Sophy Romvari

Jury statement: "This year's ARBUTUS Award-winning film gripped us with its gutsy formal approach, blending genre with confident direction and deftly weaving together a heart shattering autofiction. This new directorial voice commands the cinematic language with poise and maturity—an incredible debut that brings pride to the BC filmmaking community. We are pleased to announce that this year's ARBUTUS Award for outstanding BC production goes to *Blue Heron* by Sophy Romvari."

Special Mention: *The Track*, dir. Ryan Sidhoo

Jury statement: "The jury would like to recognize the dedicated filmmaking found within *The Track* by Ryan Sidhoo. This important documentary successfully personalizes and contextualizes the plight of Bosnia and Herzegovina's young people by highlighting the perseverance of the national luge team. *The Track* offers a powerful message about the ravages of war that can destroy in an instant what could take generations to rebuild."

INTERNATIONAL FILM AWARD WINNERS

VANGUARD Award

\$5,000 award presented by Lochmaddy Foundation

Jury: Antoine Bourges, Ryan Ermacora, Sanja Živković

Winner: *Wind, Talk to Me*, dir. Stefan Djordjevic (Serbia/Slovenia/Croatia)

Jury statement: "For its unique treatment of reality and construction of a wholly original visual language and grammar. The film utilizes a quiet, minimalist approach that simultaneously feels full with emotion and compassion for the subject of the film as well as all the participants. The film succeeds in immersing the viewer in a region and landscape through thoughtful cinematography, sound design and considered pacing. The jury was notably impressed by the director's adept use of non-actors and the memorable role of the dog Lija, which imbues the narrative with genuine sincerity and emotional depth. The jury is pleased to present this year's VANGUARD Award to *Wind, Talk to Me.*"

Special Mention: *Thus Spoke the Wind*, dir. Maria Rigel (Armenia)

Jury statement: "For its haunting visual poetry and resonant emotional core. This film observes life in a rural Armenian village through the eyes of a young boy, whose limited perspective gives the story its oblique, compelling form. The director's attention to landscape and culture brings immediacy and authenticity, while non-actors convey the rhythms and constraints of life in a conservative, patriarchal environment. Most impressive is the film's visual and auditory language, which forms a mesmerizing sensory experience that lingers well beyond its runtime. The jury awards a Special Mention to Maria Rigel's *Thus Spoke the Wind.*"

SHORT FORUM Award

\$5,000 award presented by Nikon

Jury: Özgün Gündüz, Asher Penn, Devan Scott

Winner: *No Skate!*, dir. Guil Sela (France)

Jury statement: "Our selection for the SHORT FORUM Award embodies short narrative filmmaking at its most delightful. A love story charged with vibrant, youthful energy, it blends humor and sincerity with effortless grace. Despite being shot in some of the world's most familiar locations, the film nonetheless manages to leverage an iconoclastic visual style defined by long lenses and compressed compositions to reveal contemporary Paris as the bustling, grungy metropolis it is so rarely shown to be. Elevated by two hard-edged lead performances with palpable chemistry, Guil Sela's *No Skate!* is a singular romantic comedy that is as biting as it is humanistic."

Special Mention: *ripe*, dir. Solara Thanh Binh Đặng (Canada)

Jury statement: "Our choice for Special Mention is a short film that both works on its own terms and represents great potential for realization on a wider canvas. A beautifully rendered fable about the weight of tradition that is unmistakable in its satirical aims without ever becoming didactic, Solara Thanh Binh Đặng's *ripe* is a confident and culturally incisive work."

Tickets and Information

Adult Ticket	\$21
Senior Ticket	\$19
Student/Youth	\$16
Accessible	\$16
VIFF+ Members	\$18
VIFF+ Premium/Patron/U25	\$16
VIFF Talks	Various
VIFF Live Tickets	Various
Signals	\$35 plus fees and taxes

More ticket details at viff.org/ticket-info.

To explore VIFF's complete 2025 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 x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and səli#wətaʔɬ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

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