

# INDIGENOUS VOICES + BLACK LIVES MATTER SHARE THE SPOTLIGHT AT THE VANCOUVER QUEER FILM FESTIVAL

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# VANCOUVER QUEER FILM FESTIVAL

(Vancouver, BC) ~ In the wake of the recent tragedy in Orlando, Florida, Out On Screen resolves to continue strengthening and providing a dynamic platform for the queer community through the Vancouver Queer Film Festival.

“When LGBT2Q+ safe spaces are compromised by violence, the safety of an entire community feels more vulnerable,” says Out On Screen Executive Director Stephanie Goodwin. “In moments like this, we are stronger together than we are apart. Now is the time for unity and Out On Screen is committed to continuing to create an uniquely queer public space for our communities to gather, celebrate, and grow.”

The Vancouver Queer Film Festival returns this summer from Thursday, August 11 to Sunday, August 21 . Screening over 80 films from 20 countries, the festival shines the spotlight on Indigenous stories and Black lives – pairing transformative films with parties, bannock, workshops and the most catalyzing gatherings in town.

The Two -- Spirit REEL ness Spotlight , curated by Harlan Pruden, includes the Vancouver premiere of: Two Soft Things, Two Hard Things by Mark Kenneth Woods and Michael Yerxa, and North Mountain by Bretten Hannam.

The Black Lives Matter Spotlight is a collaboration with Black Lives Matter -- Vancouver, fusing the stories of Black icons such as Miss Major with post -- film discussions and a party that's all about Afrobeats.

Vancouver Queer Film Festival, along with guest curator Harlan Pruden of Two -- Spirit Journal, present Two -- Spirit REELness – a three -- film spotlight and works hop on Indigenous stories. Billed as “Brokeback Mountain meets Rambo” and filled with queer hunter brawls, bloody hatchets and arrows, and brave plot twists, North Mountain is a refreshing, Tarantino -- esque action thriller rimmed with threads of romance. Two Soft Things, Two Hard Things by Mark Kenneth Woods and Michael Yerxa explores what happens when a remote Arctic community decides to hold an LGBT2Q pride celebration. With insightful historical grounding on how colonization, religion forced migration, and cultural assimilation have impacted gender and sexuality in Inuit culture, the film attempts to elicit Inuit ways of thinking and being in respect to sexuality and gender that predate colonial notions of pride and queerness. Adam Garnet Jones, a filmmaker of both Cree and Métis heritage, brings us Fire Song . On a Northern Ontario Anishinaabe reserve plagued by a high suicide rate, Shane – a closeted high school senior – dreams of leaving for university in Toronto, but money is tight. As Shane tries to deal with the loss of his sister, he is faced with the choice between his family and his future, while also trying to be true to himself.

Presented with the Vancouver chapter of Black Lives Matter, this spotlight features three films that celebrate the lives of queer and trans\* Black folks, a dance party, and a special Skype Q&A with the star of MAJOR! The carefully crafted documentary MAJOR ! showcases the inspirational activism of Miss Major, an exuberant, inspiring, formerly incarcerated Black transgender leader, former sex worker, community leader, human rights activist, and veteran of the Stonewall Rebellion. Waiting for B takes the audience to Brazil where Beyoncé fans camp out for two months to gain early entry to her concert. As they vogue along the side walks of São Paulo, they reveal their witty and profound insights on race, prejudice, poverty, queer culture, and what it means to be a ‘true’ fan of the ‘Queen Bey’. The third film of the Black Lives Matter spotlight, which will be announced soon, will take the coveted spot at the festival's Closing Gala.

For more information, please visit the following platforms:

Early Bird passes go on sale July 7. General Admission tickets go on sale July 15. Passes and tickets are available online at [www.queerfilmfestival.ca](http://www.queerfilmfestival.ca)

Website: [www.queerfilmfestival.ca](http://www.queerfilmfestival.ca) Facebook: [www.facebook.com/VancouverQFF](https://www.facebook.com/VancouverQFF) Twitter: [www.twitter.com/queerfilmfest](https://www.twitter.com/queerfilmfest)

Full ticketing details, including pricing, can be found at [www.queerfilmfestival.ca/tickets](http://www.queerfilmfestival.ca/tickets)

*About Out On Screen: Out On Screen is a charitable organization that illuminates, celebrates and advances queer lives through film, education and dialogue. The Vancouver Queer Film Festival creates a dynamic platform for queer cinema that reflects a diversity of experiences while connecting and strengthening our communities. The award -- winning Out In Schools anti -- bullying program brings age -- appropriate queer cinema into secondary school classrooms to combat homophobia and transphobia. Out On Screen is proud to be among the leaders in Canada working to create an equitable society where sexual and gender diversity are embraced.*