



2020 LINEUP FOR VANCOUVER QUEER FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCED

AWARD-WINNING INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, AND LOCAL FILMMAKERS SHOWCASED ALONGSIDE MORE THAN 60 FILMS

FESTIVAL PASSES AND TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW AT

WWW.QUEERFILMFESTIVAL.CA

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(Vancouver, B.C.) – The Vancouver Queer Film Festival (VQFF) released today its complete lineup for the 11-day digital film festival, taking place August 13-23, which includes artists from India, Philippines, United States, and Canada. More than 60 films from 10 countries are featured at this 32nd Festival presented by RBC, along with virtual visits from filmmakers, local directors and numerous local performing artists, in addition to virtual parties and post-screening Q&As. Festival passes and tickets are available online today at www.queerfilmfestival.ca.

Curated by Artistic Director Anoushka Ratnarajah, VQFF 2020 opens with director Elegance Bratton's ***Pier Kids***, an uncut guerilla style documentary that unearths Black queer resourcefulness and resilience at its core. The film follows the life of Black Trans woman, Crystal LaBeija and other Queer and Trans youth of colour at the Christopher Street Pier in New York City. The unifying effects of the *Pier Kids* resonate through the veil of safety, solace, and the promise of chosen family. **Elegance Bratton** will be joining the Festival at a virtual Q&A along with producer **Chester Algernal Gordon**.

"When this year began, before the pandemic changed our landscape in unimagined ways, I had already decided on our theme of Still Here," says Ratnarajah. *"The films that I was viewing all explored in one way or another transformation, resilience, and survival. These themes continued to reverberate through all the content I was seeing; in films from Turtle Island, Switzerland, India, Vietnam, and Georgia; in documentaries, narratives, and experimental work. I could feel how deeply queer filmmakers were determined to depict our lives as worth living, worth fighting for, worth celebrating, worth mourning – that we are worthy of seeing and being seen, because we are necessary, beautiful, and complex. And that is what you will see at this year's VQFF."*

VQFF will also feature two special presentations of seminal queer women's history. ***Ahead of the Curve*** is a documentary about the history of Curve Magazine, the longest running lesbian publication in history, featuring interviews with Andrea Pino-Silva, Kim Katrin, Denice Frohman, Amber Hikes, Jewelle Gomez, Melissa Etheridge and Lea DeLaria, and a score composed by the legendary Meshell Ndegeocello. *Ahead of the Curve* celebrates, honours, and interrogates the legacy of a movement while considering the shifts and contractions necessary to create a more representative future for all queer women.

In addition, VQFF will screen a retrospective of ***Long Time Comin'***, Dionne Brand's 1993 documentary that charts the work of two Black queer Canadian artists: folk/jazz singer-songwriter Faith Nolan and multimedia visual artist Grace Channer. Using a combination of interviews and vérité footage of the women at work, Brand showcases their projects as well as their thoughts on art, race, and sexuality. *Long Time Comin'* explores the nuances of the Black Queer femme experience as they navigate occupying privileged spaces, highlighting the significance of Black womxn in queer advocacy. This special presentation is curated by Festival Programming Coordinator Nya Lewis, and will be followed by a panel of local Black queer femme activists, scholars, and activists to share open dialogue about the current position of Black Femmes in advocacy work, and their thoughts on progressing the conversation.

Interim Executive Director Brandon Yan adds, *"This year, our theme is Still Here. To me, this so perfectly acknowledges the resiliency of our communities, our struggles, set-backs and victories, and also an affirmative and defiant statement that our quest for liberation is not yet over. You will see these sentiments woven throughout the exquisite curation of this year's programming."*

Festival favourite **The Coast is Queer** returns, uplifting and spotlighting the work of emerging and established local queer filmmakers. International programming reflects the urgency of queer rights, with ***A Worm In The Heart***. Shot in six cities along the Trans-Siberian Railway, this gripping documentary follows gay couple Paul Rice and Liam Jackson Montgomery as they embark upon a tense journey to detail the lives and stories from the LGBTQ+ community across Russia. Meeting with Nobel Peace Prize nominees, drag queens and ordinary folks, Paul and Liam learn more about the current state of the Russian queer community — providing both broad social and political overviews as well as deeply personal accounts from activists and non-activists alike. Georgian documentary ***March For Dignity*** follows a small group of LGBTQ activists in Tbilisi, Georgia, as they plan for the first ever Pride March in the country. And ***Goodbye Mother*** is a Vietnamese family dramedy that will charm and delight audiences.

For the complete Festival lineup, along with screening dates and times, please visit www.queerfilmfestival.ca.

Full ticketing details, including pricing, can be found at www.queerfilmfestival.ca/buy-tickets.

For interview requests and additional images, please contact Teresa Trovato at teresatrovato@gmail.com.

For more information, please visit the following platforms:

Website: www.queerfilmfestival.ca
Instagram: www.instagram.com/queerfilmfest
Facebook: www.facebook.com/VancouverQFF
Twitter: www.twitter.com/queerfilmfest (#VQFF2020)

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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 queer cinema into school classrooms to combat homophobia, transphobia and bullying, and to provide the language and tools for inclusion. 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. www.outonscreen.com