RENCONTRES INTERNATIONALES
DU DOCUMENTAIRE DE MONTRÉAL
MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL

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The Montreal International Documentary Festival (RIDM) Unveils its 2016 Programming

Montreal, Wednesday, October 19, 2016 – The 19th annual Montreal International Documentary Festival (RIDM) is coming this November 10 to 20. With **128 films** from **35 countries** and more than 100 guests, the RIDM is a key event for everyone who appreciates the art of the documentary.

The festival will present **13 world premieres**, **18 North American premieres, 24 Canadian premieres and 31 Quebec premieres,** and will inaugurate a new competition for Canadian short and medium-length films. Once again, the RIDM is distinguishing itself as a key springboard for emerging artists and local productions.

The RIDM is very pleased to open the festival with the Quebec premiere of ***Fire at Sea*** by **Gianfranco Rosi**. The film is a unique immersion in the everyday life of Lampedusa, an Italian island famous for being the European landing point for numerous refugees. The film won the Golden Bear at this year's Berlin Film Festival, and establishes Gianfranco Rosi as one of today's great documentary filmmakers, thanks to a rare aesthetic sensibility and a willingness to confront the major issues of the day – themes echoed in the rest of the festival's 2016 line-up. The film is presented in collaboration with Amnesty International Canada (French Branch) and distributed by EyeSteelFilm.

To close the festival, the RIDM opens another window on the world's upheavals with ***Freelancer on the Front Lines*** by **Santiago Bertolino** (*Carré rouge sur fond noir*), an all-access look at the life of Jesse Rosenfeld, a freelance journalist who covers conflict zones. An essential film that helps us understand how the written media interpret global issues in the age of Twitter and 24-hour news cycles. It is produced and distributed by the NFB and will open across Quebec in spring 2017.

OFFICIAL COMPETITION

11 awards will be presented to the makers of winning films in **four competitive sections**.

International feature competition

The 11 films in the international feature competition, presented by Bell Media, are a strong, varied group that testify to the creativity, diversity and relevance of reality-based cinema.

Documentary cinema has always presented powerful socio-political reflections through the prism of intimate stories. In ***Another Year*** (Shengze Zhu), one working class family's dinners inspire viewers to ponder the challenges facing a large part of China's population; the heartbreaking ***We'll Be Alright*** (Alexander Kuznetsov) follows the struggles of two young Russian women locked up in a psychiatric hospital for life; the stories of the two protagonists on a poetic odyssey in ***Tempestad*** (Tatiana Huezo) reveal the tragedy of human trafficking in Mexico; and in ***Mixed Feelings*** (Guy Davidi), a small Tel Aviv apartment turned acting school is the improbable scene of group therapy surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A more essay-style approach is taken by ***The Great Wall*** (Tadhg O'Sullivan) and ***Havarie*** (Philip Scheffner), films that experiment with the documentary form as a way of documenting the current migrant crisis.

While documentary film often tackles the world's burning issues, it is also a peerless vehicle for revealing the beauty and depth of the human spirit, as seen, for example, through the touching, disturbing, hilarious and unforgettable protagonists of ***Calabria*** (Pierre-François Sauter), a tenderly existential road movie; ***Il Solengo*** (Alessio Rigo De Righi

and Matteo Zoppis), a playful investigation set in rural Italy; and ***Kate Plays Christine***, a fake making-of that lays bare the actor's profession. Director Robert Greene's refusal to make a distinction between fiction and documentary in *Kate Plays Christine,* the better to shatter his actress's mystery, has echoes in the similarly free approach taken in ***Brothers of the Night*** (Patric Chiha), an exploration of Vienna's nighttime underworld reminiscent of Fassbinder and Kenneth Anger, and ***The Human Surge*** (Eduardo Williams), a journey filmed on three continents. The latter two works are both essential films about marginalized youth in a globalized world.

Canadian feature competition

The ten films in the Canadian feature competition are as diverse and ambitious as their international counterparts, travelling the world and exploring every documentary approach.

Prison in Twelve Landscapes is a brilliant and original essay by Brett Story on the devastating impacts of the American penal system; ***Angry Inuk*** is an important and essential cri de coeur by Alethea Arnaquq-Baril, presenting the Inuit perspective on the seal hunt; ***Gulîstan, Land of Roses*** is an impressive, masterful and sensitive first film by Zaynê Akyol, filmed among a group of PKK women soldiers. Also in this section are a sadly poetic portrait of two young Inuit in ***Living with Giants*** by Aude Leroux-Lévesque and Sébastien Rist; an elusive, surreal story of a family in ***Michael Shannon Michael Shannon John*** by Chelsea McMullan; the story of the making of a Gide and Kafka-influenced film as told by Andrea Bussmann and Nicolás Pereda in ***Tales of Two Who Dreamt***; and a pair of deeply humanistic chronicles: ***The Stairs*** by Hugh Gibson and ***Resurrecting Hassan*** by Carlo Guillermo Proto. Without a doubt, the future is bright for documentary film in Quebec and the rest of Canada. Several established filmmakers are also very much alive and well, as evidenced by John Walker's ***Quebec My Country Mon Pays***, a personal film that unpacks the divisions between Quebec's anglophone and francophone communities, and by Sylvain L'Espérance, returning to the RIDM with ***Combat au bout de la nuit***, an epic, politically aware, eclectic work about the recent upheavals in Greece; it is L'Espérance's most ambitious film yet.

International short and medium-length competition

Short and medium-length films are often the most open and adventurous of all, and the 14 international films in this year's selection stay true to that tradition. A year after his retrospective, Thom Andersen returns with a new personal journey through the prism of film history with ***A Train Arrives at the Station***. The ethnographic film is reinvented in ***He Who Eats Children***, an unusual investigation/performance by Ben Russell in a village in Suriname; ***The Masked Monkeys*** (Anja Dornieden and Juan David González Monroy) is a disturbing, intensely sensory look at Indonesian trained monkeys; and ***Uzu*** (Gaspard Kuentz) is an immersion in a fascinating yet terrifying Japanese mystical ritual. Meanwhile, ***Kwassa Kwassa*** (Tuan Andrew Nguyen and Superflex), ***Remains from the Desert*** (Sebastian Mez) and ***Bunkers*** (Anne-Claire Adet) take three unforgettable looks at the lives of refugees; ***A Model Family in a Model Home*** (Zoe Beloff) uses a playful hybrid approach to revisit an old Bertolt Brecht project in the light of today's American housing crisis; ***The Great Theater*** (Słtawomir Batyra) is a breathtaking audio-visual opera that takes viewers behind the scenes of the Grand Theatre of Warsaw; ***Isabella Mora*** (Isabel Pagliai) observes, from a healthy distance, the lives of wayward girls in northern France; ***Long Story Short*** (Natalie Bookchin) makes excellent use of split-screen to condemn indifference to America's marginalized people; ***Speaking is Difficult*** (AJ Schnack) uses a simple yet hard-hitting concept to denounce ubiquitous violence in the United States; and ***Non contractuel*** (Paul Heintz) transports us into the absurd world of the corporate workplace. Lastly, ***Indefinite Pitch*** (James N. Kienitz Wilkins) is a dense work that defies categorization, built on dazzling associations of ideas centred on the word *pitch.*

Canadian short and medium-length competition

For the first time, the RIDM presents a competition exclusively for short and medium-length films from Quebec and the rest of Canada, aimed at recognizing and encouraging dynamic emerging artists working in a too-often-neglected medium. The films submitted did not disappoint. ***24.24.24.*** is a dance of time and movement filmed across from Marché Maisonneuve; ***Andrew Keegan déménage*** is a pensive piece that takes a fresh look at the absurdities of urban planning; ***Animals Under Anaesthesia: Speculations on the Dreamlife of Beasts*** is as unclassifiable, joyful and strange as its title implies; ***The Botanist*** and ***Gatekeeper*** take us to Tajikistan and Japan respectively, presenting portraits of older men of unexpected talent; ***Dialogue(s)*** is an amusing deconstruction of the essence of men's talk; ***Hier à Nyassan*** is a patient look at the pace and substance of everyday life in a village in Burkina Faso;

and ***Vol de nuit*** is a poetic and political reflection on police actions at UQAM during the spring 2012 student demonstrations. Collectively, these are skilful and bold works by RIDM veterans (Young Chang, Catherine Hébert, Brian M. Cassidy and Melanie Shatzky) and talented newcomers (Philippe David Gagné, Daniel Dietzel, Justine Harbonnier, Maxime Lacoste-Lebuis, Maude Plante-Husaruk and Clara L'Heureux-Garcia).

PANORAMA

Special presentations

Like every year, the biggest names and most prestigious works of the festival season will be shown as **Special presentations**. Nikolaus Geyrhalter, Claire Simon, Sergei Loznitsa, Wang Bing, Avi Mograbi and Alanis Obomsawin are back at the RIDM with, respectively, ***Homo Sapiens***, ***Le concours***, ***Austerlitz***, ***Ta'ang***, ***Between Fences*** and ***We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice***, six distinctive works that take us, respectively, to the four corners of a world abandoned by humanity; behind the scenes of the admission process for the FÉMIS, one of France's top film schools; among tourists visiting concentration camps; into the unsettled lives of a people living as refugees between China and Myanmar; into a theatre workshop in an Israeli refugee camp; and to the heart of a legal struggle for equal social services for indigenous children.

The creative process is also a major theme, with ***David Lynch: The Art Life*** (Rick Barnes, Olivia Neergaard-Holm and John Nguyen), in which the cult filmmaker reveals his deepest creative inspirations; ***Cinema Novo*** (Eryk Rocha), a joyous tribute to the brilliant Brazilian films of the 1950s and 60s; and ***Mr. Gaga*** (Tomer Heymann), a must-see for everyone who appreciates modern dance. Closer to home, a dialogue between Gilles Vigneault and Fred Pellerin is the centre of ***Le goût d'un pays*** (Francis Legault), which explores Québécois identity through the prism of maple syrup. Rounding out the special presentations are a pair of intelligent and delightful films: the animated documentary ***NUTS!*** (Penny Lane), an unlikely but successful cross between *South Park* and *Citizen Kane*, and ***Swagger*** (Olivier Babinet), a gem of humanity and creativity filmed among young students in a Paris *banlieue.*

Portraits

Portraits showcases touching and universal individual stories. Returning to the RIDM, Kimi Takesue presents ***95 AND 6 TO GO,*** her most personal film to date, about her gruff, deeply sympathetic Japanese-American grandfather; the grand prize winner at this year's Hot Docs, ***Brothers*** (Aslaug Holm), follows two Norwegian boys for more than eight years, resulting in a truly absorbing film, a sort of documentary *Boyhood*; in ***The Great Fortune*** (Kirsten Burger, Mikko Gaestel and Johannes Müller) we are invited into the bizarre, luxurious life of a mean, exasperating billionaire playboy with Down syndrome who loves nothing more than to ham it up for the camera; ***Mrs B., a North-Korean Woman*** (Jero Yun) recounts the heartbreaking, eventful life of a woman who fled North Korea, was sold to a Chinese family, and reunited, too late, with her family in a South Korea that proves not to be the promised land they had all hoped for. Lastly, ***Peter and the Farm*** (Tony Stone) introduces us to an eccentric, complex and endearing farmer.

States of the world

This section features deeply political films. In the tradition of the finest testimonial documentaries, the great filmmaker Mahamat-Saleh Haroun presents, in ***Hissein Habré, a Chadian tragedy***, first-person accounts from victims of the infamous Chadian dictator; the inventive ***INAATE/SE/ [it shines a certain way. to a certain place/it flies. falls./]*** by the Ojibway brothers Adam and Zack Khalil, reinvents the historical narrative and shakes the Western concept of history; Nicolas Wadimoff brilliantly questions the convictions and revolutionary commitment of his former professor in ***Jean Ziegler, l'optimisme de la volonté***; John Gianvito has made a major work of critical history on the Philippines with ***Wake (Subic)***; and ***Starless Dreams*** by Mehrdad Oskouei captures the hopes and fears of Iranian teens in a re-education centre.

Beyond boundaries

For several years, filmmakers have been skilfully blurring every distinction between creation and reality. Their unclassifiable, creative films have been shown at both fiction and documentary festivals. This new section includes a selection of the year's most original genre-busting works. Two years after ***Memphis*** (RIDM 2014), Tim Sutton is back with ***Dark Night,*** a haunting film that stands as a worthy heir to Gus Van Sant's *Elephant;* Michal Marczak has made a

lyrical chronicle of the drink-and-dance fuelled nights of Warsaw youth in the superb ***All These Sleepless Nights***; a young Chinese woman reinvents herself in Argentina in the understated ***El futuro perfecto*** by Nele Wohlatz; and two young actors discover real feeling as they read the letters of the poets Ingeborg Bachmann and Paul Celan in the magnificent ***The Dreamed Ones*** by Ruth Beckermann.

Beat Dox

This year, the festival's section dedicated to music-themed documentaries presents four films with widely divergent styles and subject matter. From a portrait of a brilliant, quirky Russian pianist in ***Oleg y las raras artes*** (Andrés Duque) to the absurd, kitschy and rather creepy phenomenon of Japanese "idol" groups in ***Raise Your Arms and Twist*** (Atsushi Funahashi), to the fraught lives of two underground techno DJs in Tehran in ***Raving Iran*** (Susanne Regina Meures), and John Bolton's ***Aim for the Roses***: part biographical investigation, part musical comedy, in tribute to a conceptual album dedicated to a Canadian stunt man from the 1970s.

UXdoc

For its fifth edition, **UXdoc** once again presents a selection of interactive and virtual documentary experiences, with six projects combining games, cinema and cutting-edge digital technology. Virtual reality takes centre stage this year with ***6x9*** (Francesca Panetta and Lindsay Poulton), an intense immersive experience developed by The Guardian, set inside a solitary-confinement cell; ***Collisions*** (Lynette Wallworth), which transports us to the aboriginal community of Martu in the Australian outback; and ***S.E.N.S VR*** (Charles Ayats and Armand Lemarchand), the first virtual-reality game adapted from a graphic novel, transporting us to a meditative, philosophical labyrinth. ***Network Effect,*** an installation by Jonathan Harris and Greg Hochmuth, based on thousands of online video clips, confronts us with the Internet at its best – and at its worst. Lastly, two web projects, ***Jerusalem, We Are Here*** (Dorit Naaman) and ***Projet Archipel*** (Guillaume Campion and Guillaume Côté), invite us to the Palestinian heart of Jerusalem and to the banks of the St. Lawrence surrounding Montreal respectively.

RETROSPECTIVES

Pierre-Yves Vandeweerd: a poetic quest for the in-between

He is one of the most important political filmmakers of our time, and a true poet who is constantly redefining the documentary form. This year the RIDM celebrates the work of Pierre-Yves Vandeweerd (*Territoire perdu*, grand prix, RIDM 2011) with the filmmaker's first North American retrospective. The retrospective will be accompanied by a master class.

Animating Reality: when the creative genius of animation sets its sights on the documentary

Programmed in collaboration with the Sommets du cinéma d'animation, which will present two programs as part of its festival, Animating Reality is a stunning overview of the many ways in which animation approaches documentary, and vice versa. From Theodore Ushev and Jonas Odell to Marie-Josée Saint-Pierre, Chris Landreth, Pierre Hébert, Signe Baumane, Peter Lord and many more, the filmmakers in this retrospective transport us beyond reality, the better to make sense of it.

Deborah Stratman: the underside of the visible world

The RIDM is also continuing its collaboration with the **Visions** series with three programs of films by **Deborah Stratman**, organized jointly with the Cinémathèque québécoise. This is a unique opportunity to discover the work of a major multidisciplinary artist who exposes the underside of the visible world.

CONTEST

In parallel with the festival, Télé-Québec will broadcast, on its La Fabrique culturelle web portal, a program of short and medium-length films selected by the RIDM programming team. From October 26 to November 20, a contest called "La Fabrique culturelle et les RIDM craquent pour les courts" will invite the public to watch a selection of Quebec-made short films on lafabriqueculturelle.tv. Viewers will vote for their favourite work, with the winner awarded the Prix Fabrique culturelle de Télé-Québec, including a $500 prize.

PARALLEL ACTIVITIES

The RIDM organizes many parallel activities alongside its film program. Lectures, round tables, screenings followed by debates, concerts and interactive installations will all enliven the festival's 11 days.

Discussions

Two round tables will explore the ins and outs of **documentary writing** and reflect on the rich and complex connections between **documentary and animated film**.

Two **debates** on current affairs will follow screenings of ***Quebec My Country Mon Pays*** (on Quebec's anglophone community) and ***Living With Giants*** (on the challenges facing young Inuit).

Since the Quiet Revolution, countless anglo-Quebecers have left the province, often reluctantly. The malaise of those who have stayed is often palpable. This sensitive topic, seldom discussed in French-language media, is confronted head-on by John Walker in ***Quebec My Country Mon Pays***. Several panelists will discuss the issues raised by the film.

A discussion about the present and, especially, the future of Inuit youth, surrounding the film ***Living With Giants*** by Sébastien Rist and Aude Leroux-Lévesque. With, amongst other panelists, Anne Pélouas, journalist and Canadian correspondent for Le Monde and author of *Les Inuits : résistants !* (Éditions Ateliers Henry Dougier, 2015).

Also, **Indigenous Videographers Shoot Back** will gather a wide range of indigenous directors who will discuss their work. Shoot Back is a manifesto of sorts, inviting a reversal/refusal of the traditional tropes of representing native stories. A constellation of Ojibway, Abenaki and Inuit artists and filmmakers discuss their own practices and processes, debate their disentanglement from the grips of colonial storytelling, and propose instead an energized and authentic engagement with places, people and histories. With Alanis Obomsawin, Alethea Arnaquq-Baril, Isabella-Rose Weetaluktuk, Zach and Adam Khalil, and moderated by Audra Simpson.

Special screenings

Hosted by Patrick Masbourian, **La soirée de la relève ICI RDI** will present eight short documentaries by emerging filmmakers. An award will be presented to one of them, as selected by a jury of Radio-Canada representatives. This is an excellent opportunity to discover some of today's most promising new talent. The event is free of charge. As part of this collaboration, Radio-Canada will present a program titled *Les nuits du documentaire* on November 11 on ICI Explora, on November 12 on ICI Radio-Canada Télé and on November 13 on ICI ARTV at 11:57 p.m. each night, in conjunction with the RIDM.

Families are invited to discover **L'enfance animée**, a program of animated documentaries for viewers age 6 and up, as an introduction to several essential recent films.

Lastly, for the second time the RIDM will host a **public listening session,** without images, in which audio alone will spark listeners' imagination. The feature presentation will be *Demain les Innus,* an audio work by Jonas Pool. Opening the session will be a short work called *Nouer & dénouer* by Alexandra Viau, which was selected via a competition.

Installations

Presented by the Canada Media Fund, the **UXdoc Space**, located in Norman McLaren Hall at the Cinémathèque québécoise, will host interactive works as well as the webdocumentary portion of the RIDM's Young Audiences program. This is where everyone will have the chance to explore ***Futur, pas sûr***, the new webdocumentary produced by the RIDM and created by students from Eurêka high school in Park Extension. This is the most exciting edition of UXdoc yet, with a strong group of interactive projects, installations and virtual reality works that showcase the best in new documentary narrative forms.

In conjunction with his retrospective, **Pierre-Yves Vandeweerd** has created a cinematic installation called ***Nouménie,*** to be presented at the RIDM's festival headquarters. The same venue will also host ***LUX: a video installation by John Blouin***. And, on display in the Luce Guilbeault Foyer at the Cinémathèque québécoise will be an audio-photographic exhibition titled ***Décliner votre identité,*** created by the Art Entr'Elles collective.

Once again, the RIDM will present an original interactive installation in Place Pasteur. The **Gifoscope** is inspired by the praxinoscope, an optical toy invented by Émile Reynaud in the late 19th century, and by the animated GIF, a popular format for short clips on the Internet.

Concert series

In parallel with the **Beat Dox** selection of music-themed documentaries, the **Beat Dox Sessions** will present live music every evening at festival headquarters. Programmed by Melanie Turner, in partnership with local music-industry luminaries like Blue Skies Turn Black, Heavy Trip, Pop Montreal and M for Montréal, the series features local artists such as She-Devils, Un Blonde, Wake Island, PHERN, The Submissives, Exit Someone, LOON and more.

The RIDM thanks its partners

The RIDM is grateful for the support of its institutional and principal partners, sure to make this 19th edition of the festival a memorable one. Thanks to the Ministère de la culture et des communications, SODEC, the Secrétariat de la région métropolitaine, Telefilm Canada, the Ville de Montréal, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Conseil des arts de Montréal and Canadian Heritage, and Bell Media, the CSN, Canal D, the Canada Media Fund, TV5, FACTOR, Radio-Canada, Télé-Québec, Planète+ and Tourisme Montréal.

About the RIDM

Quebec's only film festival dedicated to documentaries, the Montreal International Documentary Festival presents the best reality-based films, including the works of established directors and new talents.

The 19th edition of the RIDM will take place from November 10 to 20, 2016
at Cinéma du Parc, the Cinémathèque québécoise, Concordia University, the Pavillon Judith Jasmin Annexe and the RIDM's festival headquarters at 3450 Saint-Urbain St.

Tickets, passes and five-ticket booklets are now on sale via the RIDM website at www.ridm.ca and in person at the La Vitrine box office or via www.lavitrine.com.

Information: www.ridm.ca / info@ridm.ca

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