

Cinéfest SUDBURY

INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DU FILM

THE PEOPLE'S FESTIVAL
C'EST VOTRE FESTIVAL
18-26 SEP 2021

festival presenter
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media release | communiqué

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Cinéfest Sudbury announces 2021 Gala Presentation Programme

SUDBURY – Cinéfest Sudbury is thrilled to announce Gala selections for the 33rd edition of the festival. Cinefest would like to extend thanks towards the support of gala sponsors CTV, Cineplex, Laking Toyota, Milestones, the NOHFC and Desjardins.

OPENING NIGHT GALA – Sponsored by CTV

All My Puny Sorrows [Michael McGowan, Canada, 2021]

Based on the international best-selling novel by Miriam Toews, *All My Puny Sorrows* is the poignant story of two Mennonite sisters who have left their strict religious upbringing behind. While one sibling becomes a world-famous concert pianist obsessed with ending her life, the other, a writer, wrestles with her life choices—all the while making profound discoveries about herself. Director Michael McGowan has had several films screen at Cinéfest over the years, including *Saint Ralph* in 2004, *One Week* as the Saturday Night Gala in 2008, *Score: A Hockey Musical* as the Opening Night Gala in 2010, and *Still Mine* as the Saturday Night Gala in 2012.

SUNDAY NIGHT GALA – Sponsored by Laking Toyota

The Electrical Life of Louis Wain [Will Sharpe, UK, 2021]

The extraordinary true story of eccentric British artist Louis Wain, (played by Benedict Cumberbatch) whose playful, sometimes even psychedelic pictures helped to transform the public's perception of cats forever. Louis Wain was many things during his incredible life: artist, inventor, entrepreneur, trying his best to care for his five sisters and mother. Two events changed his life forever: meeting Emily Richardson (played by Claire Foy), the love of his life, and adopting Peter, a stray kitten. Moving from the late 1800s through to the 1930s, we follow the incredible adventures of this inspiring, unsung hero, as he seeks to unlock the “electrical” mysteries of the world and, in so doing, to better understand his own life and the profound love he shared with his wife.

MONDAY NIGHT GALA

Official Competition (Competencia oficial) [Mariano Cohn & Gastón Duprat, Spain/Argentina, 2021]

In search of significance and social prestige, a billionaire businessman decides to make a film to leave his mark. To do so, he hires the best: a stellar team formed by famous filmmaker Lola Cuevas (Penélope Cruz) and two renowned actors, both enormously talented, but with even bigger egos: the Hollywood actor Félix Rivero (Antonio Banderas) and radical theatre thespian Iván Torres (Óscar Martínez). Both legends, but not exactly the best of friends. Through a series of increasingly eccentric challenges set by Lola, Felix and Iván must face not only each other, but also their own legacies.

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TUESDAY NIGHT GALA

Falling for Figaro [Ben Lewin, Australia/UK, 2020]

Millie (Macdonald) is a brilliant young fund manager who leaves her unfulfilling job and long-term boyfriend to chase her lifelong dream of becoming an opera singer in the Scottish Highlands. She begins intense vocal training lessons with renowned but fearsome singing teacher and former opera diva Meghan Geoffrey-Bishop (Lumley). It is there she meets Max (Skinner), another of Meghan's students who is also training for the upcoming "Singer of Renown" contest. What begins as a brutal competition between Millie and Max slowly turns into something more.

WENESDAY NIGHT GALA –Sponsored by Milestones

Juniper [Matthew Saville, New Zealand, 2021]

Sam (George Ferrier), 17, has been on a self-destructive spiral that could lead to his death. He returns home from boarding school to find his wheelchair-bound English grandmother, Ruth (Charlotte Rampling) has moved in. Ruth is an ex-war photographer with a lust for life and a love of the bottle. Sam soon finds himself profoundly confronted by her alcoholic wit and chutzpah. Their first meeting is awkward; their second violent. Things get worse when Sam finds himself stranded alone with her and her nurse Sarah (Poor) for the school holidays. Both strong-willed characters, a battle of supremacy ensues, enabling Sam to embrace life again and for Ruth to face her mortality.

THURSDAY NIGHT GALA –Sponsored by Desjardins

Le club Vinland (The Vinland Club) [Benoit Pilon, Canada, 2020]

Le club Vinland (The Vinland Club) is the story of an exceptional educator in a boys' college, in the late 1940s. Adored by his students but perceived as too progressive by the superiors of his congregation, the charismatic Brother Jean (Sébastien Ricard) proves to be an advocate of the changes to come in the 50s and 60s. Wanting all at once to solve a historical enigma, to motivate his pupils and to prevent Emile (Arnaud Vachon), a struggling student, from dropping out, Brother Jean leads his students on an archaeological excavation aimed at proving the establishment of an ancient Viking colony on the coast of the St. Lawrence river. The journey will turn the life of the college upside down and leave its mark on the destinies of young Emile and on Brother Jean himself.

FRIDAY NIGHT GALA –Sponsored by NOHFC

Lakewood [Phillip Noyce, Canada, 2021]

Lakewood follows a mother (Naomi Watts) who desperately races against time to save her child as authorities pursue an active shooter in her small town. Lakewood stars Oscar nominee Naomi Watts (21 Grams, The Impossible). Directed by Phillip Noyce (*Clear and Present Danger*, *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, *The Quiet American*) and written by Chris Sparling (*Buried*, *Greenland*, *Sea of Trees*), Lakewood was filmed in North Bay, Ontario.

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SATURDAY NIGHT GALA (7:00 PM) – Sponsored by Cineplex

Night Raiders [Danis Goulet, Canada/New Zealand, 2021]

It is the near future. A military occupation controls disenfranchised cities in post-war North America. Children are property of the State, sent to academies that aim to indoctrinate them and establish undying allegiance to the nation. To escape this fate, a desperate Cree woman named Niska (Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers) has spent years hiding in the deep wilderness with her daughter. After her daughter suffers a serious injury, their need for medicine forces them to return to the city, and Niska's daughter is soon taken away by the State. Determined to get her back, Niska joins an underground band of vigilantes who are making plans to infiltrate a State children's academy. Lead actress Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers directed and starred in *The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open*, which screened at Cinéfest Sudbury in 2019, and she also directed *Kímmapiiyipitssini: The Meaning of Empathy*, screening at this year's edition of the Festival..

SATURDAY NIGHT GALA (9:30 PM)

One Second [Zhang Yimou, China/Hong Kong, 2021]

Based on the novel by Yan Geling, *One Second* centers on rural Chinese village during the Cultural Revolution that comes together to restore a destroyed film reel. A prisoner in a remote farmland (Zhang Yi) escapes from a labour camp to catch a film. He risks everything in his search for a stolen film reel in which his long-lost daughter appears – for one second. Soon he encounters a homeless female vagabond (Li Xiaochuan), an orphaned girl haunted by her own terrible loss who is scheming to steal the reel away, and a film projectionist named Mr. Movie (Fan Wei). *One Second* is a beautiful, moving and deeply personal homage to the redemptive power of cinema.

CLOSING NIGHT GALA

The Card Counter [Schrader, USA/UK/China, 2021]

Redemption is the long game in Paul Schrader's *The Card Counter*. Told with Schrader's trademark cinematic intensity, the revenge thriller tells the story of an ex-military interrogator turned gambler haunted by the ghosts of his past. William Tell (Oscar Isaac), now a casino gambler, runs into Cirk (Tye Sheridan) an angry young man looking for revenge on a military colonel. As part of the revenge scheme, Tell and Cirk try to break into the World Series of Poker, with help from financier La Linda (Tiffany Haddish). However, it's not long before Cirk's erratic behavior drags Tell back into the darkness of his past.

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For additional questions or media inquiries, please contact Michael Scherzinger at mscherzinger@cinifest.com. You can also call us at 705.688.1234, or follow us on Facebook for updated information.