Images Festival 2026

METABOLIZING MOVING IMAGES

April 9—13, 2026

Land Acknowledgement

Images Festival operates on sacred, and stolen land from the Anishinaabe, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, the Huron-Wendat, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Tkáron:to is currently home to Indigenous and Métis peoples who settle on this land. As part of Treaty 13 and the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Covenant, we acknowledge that we all eat from the same bowl and spoon, and must take only what we need, ensuring resources are available for all.

As art workers, artists, and curators, it is imperative that we denounce, and remain openly critical of this country's ongoing racism and violence. It is our responsibility as a platform and arts presenter, to to develop the organisational infrastructure that is dedicated to supporting Indigenous peoples who work, curate, present and participate in the festival.

Images expresses our solidarity with Indigenous people on Turtle Island and globally. We are committed to continuing to learn, critique, and challenge the settler colonial structures we are complicit in.

Mission

Images Festival is a non-profit, artist-led festival dedicated to experimental film, media arts, contemporary art, and the spaces in which these forms coexist. Images' programming interrogates the conditions of contemporary moving image culture, and provides a platform for artists, filmmakers, curators, and other practitioners to engage with experimental practices in both form and content.

Vision

To cultivate a sustainable experimental moving image culture in Tkáron:to/Toronto and our global communities.

Code of Conduct

Images is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination and harassment, where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, can contribute fully, and have equal opportunities under the Ontario Human Rights Code. The right to freedom from discrimination and harassment extends to all staff members, community participants, members, guests of members, event hosts, sponsors, presenters, exhibitors and attendees as outlined within the Images Festival Code of Conduct. Forms of discrimination, harassment on the following grounds, and or any combination of these grounds: racism, sexism, homophobia, ageism, classism, transphobia, and ableism is not tolerated. We reserve the right to refuse entry to our events, venues, inclusive of our online programming, that Images Festival hosts without notice for any individual(s) who do not abide by the code of conduct.

Accessibility

Images Festival is committed to providing an accessible festival and continues to work to reduce barriers to participation in our events. As part of our commitment to accessibility and disability justice, we look to support all members of our community—our artists, audiences, volunteers, partners, and team through the availability of mental and physical access services within our programs. Please see our website for individual program-by-program details.

More detailed information outlining our access services available for each program is listed on our website.

If you have any access-related needs during the festival, please contact Front of House Manager, Gen Oliver, at foh@imagesfestival.com

Metabolizing Moving Images

Considering experimental moving images as a part of broader cultural, ecological, political, and spiritual systems, the theme Metabolizing Moving Images asks what the gut has to do with it. What does a moving image require of a body? Where might it linger within us? When we invite moving images into our sightlines, do we also invite them into our nervous system, our memory, our grief, our lineages, our dreams? Might they leak or seep beyond the body? And how do they circulate between media, bodies, and worlds? Do they generate energy? When do they nourish? Act as poison? What is their shelf life, half-life? Do they have an afterlife? And once they have entered a body, do they ever truly exit?

Schedule

Thursday, April 9, 2026

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Surrendur
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Saturday, April 11, 2026

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Location: Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space, The Commons, 401 Richmond St.
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My Father's Imagination II
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Refusing (Reproductive) Labour: Ecological Solidarities

Time: 2:00 - 4:00 pm EDT
Location: CineCycle, 129 Spadina Ave.
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our bodies hold time

Time: 4:30 - 6:30 pm EDT
Location: CineCycle, 129 Spadina Ave.
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Epic fails, or, ordinary failure just wasn't enough

Time: 7:30 - 9:30 pm EDT
Location: Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave
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Sunday, April 12, 2026

we felt our cells tumble, cluster, and creep

Time: 1:00 - 2:00 pm EDT
Location: Le Labo, 401 Richmond St. #277
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We’re here to please you, Baby
Time: 3:00 - 5:00 pm EDT
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SAVAC Presents: Monitor 16
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Monday, April 13, 2026

Curators-in-Residence Panel
with Alper Turan, Katie Lawson, and Kiera Boult
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In Conversation
with Dayna McLead, Mikiki and Kiera Boult
Time: 11:15 am - 12:15 pm EDT
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Surrendur:
In Conversation with Karthik Pandian and m. nourbeSe philip
Time: 10:00 - 11:00 am EDT
Location: CineCycle, 129 Spadina Ave.
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Dance&Alchemy
Time: 4:00 - 7:00 pm EDT
Location:CineCycle, 129 Spadina Ave.
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The Gaza Biennale T'karonto Pavilion: Witnessing Sumud
Closing Reception and Magazine Launch
Location: A Space, A Space Windows
401 Richmond St W. Suite 110.
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Images Festival Closing Party
Time: 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm EDT
Location: CineCycle, 129 Spadina Ave.
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Programs

ELIXIR FRAME

Film screening and performance followed by a conversation with the artists.

Date: Thursday, April 9, 2026

Time: 7:30 - 9:00 pm EDT

Location: Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave

Film: Cursive

Artists: Fan Wu and Serena Lee

Curator: Jaclyn Quaresma

How can we cultivate a relation of nourishment, rather than consumption, with moving images? Extending from their ongoing conversation, Serena Lee and Fan Wu invite you into a space of cinematic alchemy—through images, movement, language, and breath.

This program, entitled ELIXIR FRAME, brings together philosophical and aesthetic practices of the everyday, pairing Serena Lee's film Cursive with Fan Wu's performance-oration Spiritual Metabolism: Theses on Transmutation. Serena writes:

> **"In the years before he dies, my grandfather writes a poem of four words, again and again. In Broadview Chinatown, in his kitchen, he writes with dollar store markers four words that can be translated literally as: what, place, writing, sound. Translated indirectly the poem asks 'Do you read me?'"**

Serena documents an experiment with Chinese writing through plural perspectives and sentence fragments in her newest video Cursive (2025). Tracing language as a form of energy circulation, she asks: How can we describe the connective tissue of the world? How might we dwell in language, as movement? Cursive offers glimpses of an ongoing process

of working with qi "vital energy" at the intersection of martial arts, calligraphy, and dance. Starting from her grandfather's poem, Cursive unfolds ways of reading between gesture and image, abstraction and longing.

Responding in part to Serena's Cursive, Fan will engage the audience in a participatory conversation by asking: What can we learn from Daoist and Buddhist traditions about the workings of metabolism and its alchemical potential of transmutation? Fan writes:

> "Transmutation begins with the deep acceptance of a feeling. I deny grief by ironizing it; I deny anger by setting off into a rage where I can't feel my body any more. To transmute, we must first take in, chewing as slowly as the thing requires in order to best metabolize it in bodymind. If transcendence is the attainment of enlightenment—the soul passing over into Nirvana—then transmutation is the bringing of enlightenment into daily life. Nirvana then becomes a practice of ordinary digestion: an attitude of openness that must be sustained rather than a divine state that can at last be attained."

Reflecting on cinema as a space of transmutation, Fan invites us to reflect on the possibility of openness, beyond contexts that often constrict us into identity and non-contradiction.

In closing ELIXIR FRAME, Serena and Fan offer a prompt for the audience to take with them over the course of the five day festival: How can we dwell in the cinematic experience as a form of nourishment? Returning to this question, Fan and Serena will host Dance&Alchemy, presented in partnership with Dancemakers, to close the 39th Images Festival. As a relaxed, open-ended workshop, Dance&Alchemy will engage with elements of qigong, taijiquan, narrative meditation, calligraphy, poetry, and somatic translation.

Cursive

World Premiere
Filmmaker: Serena Lee
Specs: Austria/Canada | 2026 | Digital Video | 40 mins
Language: English, Chinese (Cantonese, Mandarin), and Japanese with English subtitles

Documenting an experiment with Chinese calligraphy through plural perspectives, generations, and sentence fragments, Cursive traces how our bodies inhabit language. A portrait of qi "vital energy" at the intersection of martial arts, calligraphy and dance, Cursive follows manifold ways of reading between gesture and image, abstraction and longing.

Images Festival House Party

Date: Thursday, April 9, 2026
Time: 9:30 pm - 11:30 pm EDT
Location: The Commons, 401 Richmond St.

Kick off the 39th edition of Images Festival with a party at The Commons! Come as you are, get comfortable, and celebrate the start of the week with music, good company, and plenty of food and drink.

bodily burden

Film screening and followed by a conversation with disability activist and scholar Eliza Chandler.

Date: Friday, April 10, 2026

Time: 11:00 am - 1:00 pm EDT

Location: Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave

Films: the air we breathe, Document with No End, Less Lethal Fetishes, Caves of Our Insides

Artists: Christina Battle, Kym McDaniel, Naomi Rincón Gallardo, Sabīne Šnē, and Theo Cuthand

Curator: Katie Lawson

bodily burden features a constellation of six short films that are entangled by breath as a means of understanding the relationship between the climate crisis and the permeable bodies and environments that are radically altered through the toxic accumulations of extractive industry. How do we begin to process such entanglements, particularly as many forms of pollution are invisible, silent, and scentless? The contributors to this program share filmic strategies to contend with environmental harm and the rise in chronic illness and disability, working with elements of experimental documentary, speculative fiction, personal storytelling, and theatrical performance. Although bodily burden is shot through with grief and loss, there are occasional glimmers of humour and absurdity, too.

These works traverse distinct locales, beginning in a swirl of smog and particulate matter in Edmonton through Christina Battle's the air we breathe, a film whose tendrils are also tied to Ontario's "Chemical Valley"—grounding the program in a Canadian context. Kym McDaniel's film Document with No End brings viewers to the American Southwest, anchored by the "Environmental Nuclear Bomb" that is Utah's Great

Salt Lake—a site in which increasing drought has exposed polluted sediment, contributing to airborne arsenic and heavy metals as well as historic nuclear testing during the 1950s with its impact on downwind communities. Through questions about the entanglement of harmful corporations and arts funding or art governance, Theo Cuthand also homes in on Chemical Valley, considering the health impacts of the petrochemical industry on the Aamjiwnaang First Nation in Less Lethal Fetishes. With Sabīne Šnē's video work, Caves of Our Insides, the program zooms out from these specific contexts to sit with the planetary relationships of the more-than-human through the element of iron. bodily burden closes in the toxic ruins of an open-pit mine in Veta Grande Zacatecas, Mexico with Naomi Rincón-Gallardo's Sangre pesada (Heavy Blood). While breath moves throughout the entirety of the program, there is an intentional and gradual movement from the skies of Battle's opening work to the ground beneath our feet with Šnē and Rincón-Gallardo.

The health impacts of the nuclear-industrial complex, mining operations, petrochemical processing, military manufacturing and chemical warfare—all subjects that weave through this program—attack every system of the body, yet the biological impacts are often hard to prove. The writer and activist Sunaura Taylor's concept of "disabled ecology" is central to bodily burden as a way of describing the networks of human and more-than-human disablement that are created when ecosystems are profoundly altered by various industries. Throughout the program, there are ripples of recognition that the distribution of these effects stem from environmental racism and Indigenous land dispossession, which inform the location of industrial sites alongside the determinants of gender and class. Just as the so-called "sacrifice zones" absorb the slow violence of polluting industries, the remediation of more-than-human worlds will be an intergenerational responsibility. Certain contaminants operate beyond the scale of human time—as in the case of PFAs or "forever chemicals" or the billion-year half-life of uranium. Pollution has a temporal element, just as these films weave together past, present, and future.

the air we breathe

Filmmaker: Christina Battle
Specs: Canada | 2023 | Digital | 9 mins
Language: English with English subtitles

Combining research about Edmonton's air quality, along with personal storytelling and speculative imaginings, the air we breathe deeply considers the complicated ways in which our air impacts us: from the way that smells travel through it and the memories they evoke; to the physical impacts of pollutants through shared inhalation; to the ways in which the air serves as a metaphor of connection in a cultural sense.

Document with No End

World Premiere
Filmmaker: Kym McDaniel
Specs: United States | 2025 | Digital | 11 mins
Language: English

Document with No End contends with the impact of environmental collapse on interpersonal relationships, disability, and an "unknown future". The filmmaker draws connections to her (and her cat's) autoimmune disease and the Great Salt Lake—a drying body of water in Salt Lake City, Utah—that has become disabled due to capitalism. Questions are posed regarding the future of the planet, human survival, and the feminist negotiations necessary to stay in relationship, despite disease and fear.

Less Lethal Fetishes

Filmmaker: Theo Cuthand
Specs: Canada | 2019 | Digital | 9 mins
Language: English

Not a sex video, maybe a sexy video? About a latent gas mask fetish, but maybe actually about a certain art world tear gas controversy the filmmaker was involved in? But also about Chemical Valley in Southern Ontario? But with, like, a dick and tits and vag and gas masks and smoke bombs, lots of smoke bombs. A pretty film about weird shit.

Caves of Our Insides

North American Premiere
Filmmaker: Sabīne Šnē
Specs: Latvia | 2024 | Digital | 6 mins
Language: English with English subtitles

Caves of Our Insides explores our connections to the Earth, tracing how iron links human bodies to the planet's core. It reflects on iron's dual role as both a life-giver, essential to blood and breath, and a force of destruction, forged into the weapons that disrupt various forms of beings.

Unstill Image

Film screening followed by a conversation. Artists will be present.

Date: Friday, April 10, 2026
Time: 7:30 - 9:00 pm EDT
Location: Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave
Films: Weird Absurd Whatever, Katarakt, Last May in Theaters, Manal Issa, 2024, [pink noise]
Artists: Arief Budiman, Clint Enns, Çiçek Kahraman, Elisabeth Subrin, Sofia Dona, and Zeynep Dadak
Curator: Alper Turan

A sovereign gaze always fixes us within a single frame, one shot, a capture—in the prison cell, on the border shoreline under watch, the street in revolt, or the city under bombardment. The works in Unstill Image both submit to and sabotage that capture. Here, vision is blurred, saturated, withdrawn, or blacked out altogether: a cinematic rehearsal of freedom; sight narrowed by exile; perception torn between what

happens on the street and what is projected on the screen; an actress who withholds her image; and finally, the image's disappearance into a black field that leaves only imagination. When power reduces each of us to a single frame, can we move out of it together by moving with moving images?

Unstill Image gathers paired and impaired gazes that strain the single frame, convening multiple agents of the moving-image world in a shared field of looking.

An imprisoned filmmaker, Çiğdem Mater, imagined into freedom in Zeynep Dadak and Çiçek Kahraman's Weird Absurd Whatever, where rehearsal becomes a fragile space to think and speak with someone the state has excised from view. The double shoreline of Sofia Dona's Katarakt, filmed from the village of Katarraktis on the island of Chios, where a fixed strip of sea between Greece and Turkey becomes a blurred horizon through which a WWII refugee and a contemporary political exile look toward—and away from—their lost homelands. Arief Budiman's Last May in Theaters, where ticket sellers in Jakarta and Gwangju stay at the cinema counter while uprisings rage outside, remembering revolt as an endless war film the screen could never translate. In Elisabeth Subrin's Manal Issa, 2024, a Lebanese Arab actress revisits questions once posed to Maria Schneider—whose exploitation in Last Tango in Paris hangs heavily over the conversation—while an empty balcony in Beirut under bombardment holds the frame. And Clint Enns' [pink noise], a silent cinematic text in which a black screen and closed captions, drawn from the SRT file, invite spectators to "see" only through imagination. Across these correspondences—freedom/incarceration, exile/homeland, screen/street, text/sense, presence/absence—images move as they resist the isolating frame, loosening vision from sovereignty so that impaired looking may proceed through unusual alignments.

Unstill Image is in a conceptual romance with its companion program, Feral Vision. If Unstill Image traces how political violence and scopic regimes press visuality into fixed frames, Feral Vision turns to caged animals, strained comprehension, and unstable witnesses to trouble the limits of perception. Between them, the two programs plot a loose constellation of visions that never fully coincide with what settles on the screen.

Weird Absurd Whatever

North American Premiere
Filmmaker: Zeynep Dadak and Çiçek Kahraman
Specs: Turkey/Germany | 2025 | Digital Video | 7 mins
Language: Turkish with English subtitles

Working from the enforced absence of filmmaker-producer Çiğdem Mater—sentenced to 18 years in prison in a trial tied to the 2013 Gezi Park protests for a documentary she never shot—Dadak and Kahraman braid dreams, screen captures, and AI images into a rehearsal for release, summoning Mater as a still-imagined free artist against the state's attempt to erase her.

Content Warning: Discussion of political imprisonment, state repression, and censorship.

Katarakt

North American Premiere
Filmmaker: Sofia Dona
Specs: Greece | 2023 | Digital | 27 mins
Language: Greek and Turkish with English subtitles

Katarakt links blurred vision and the borders between Turkey and Greece. In Katarraktis, testimonies of a woman who once fled the Nazi invasion to Turkey and a political exile now stranded and facing Turkey intertwine, tracing memory, distance, and the strained act of looking across water toward an unreachable elsewhere.

Content Warning: References to war, displacement, Nazi invasion, and political exile.

Last May in Theaters

North American Premiere
Filmmaker: Arief Budiman
Specs: Indonesia/South Korea | 2025 | HD Video | 23 mins
Language:Indonesian and Korean with English and Korean subtitles

Set in Jakarta and Gwangju, this film lingers with two ticket clerks during the May 1980 and May 1998 uprisings that toppled dictatorships in South Korea and Indonesia—events they never joined. Stories and rumours reach them like an endless war film, unfolding inside ordinary lives behind the box office.

Manal Issa, 2024

Filmmaker: Elisabeth Subrin
Specs: France | 2025 | DCP | 10 mins
Language: English with English subtitles

Filmed in Beirut hours before bombing escalated in 2024, Subrin's portrait centres acclaimed Lebanese-French actress Manal Issa, who refuses to appear on camera. Distilled from yearlong conversations, Issa's disembodied voice reflects on acting amid global conflict, echoing and extending Maria Schneider's critique of sexism, exploitation, and the politics of looking prompted by her mistreatment during the making of Last Tango in Paris.

Content Warning: Discussion of war and bombing; references to sexism, abuse, and exploitation in the film industry.

[pink noise]

Ontario Premiere
Filmmaker: Clint Enns
Specs: Canada | 2025 | SRT > HD | 11 mins
Language: English and French with English subtitles

A silent cinematic text, [pink noise] proposes an anti-immersive experience: a black screen with closed captions but no synchronous sound or image, leaving viewers alone with language and their own imagination. Each screening becomes a collective experience, unique to every viewer.

Feral Vision

Film screening followed by a conversation. Artists will be present.

Date: Friday, April 10, 2026
Time: 4:45 pm - 6:45 pm EDT
Location: Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave
Films: What Birds Talk About When They Talk, Animal Eye, Unless the Eye Catch Fire, Koki, Ciao,
Artists: Brandon Poole, Carlo Nasisse, Quenton Miller, and Richard Ibghy & Marilou Lemmens
Curator: Alper Turan

What does it mean to watch someone else's watching—especially when that "someone" is an eagle, a cockatoo, a forest of unseen birds, insects, marine creatures, or many nonhuman eyes whose ways of seeing exceed what our own vision, and our cameras, can ever fully capture? Feral Vision gathers works that trouble the stability of testimony by shifting our attention to perception itself: how beings register the world, how those registrations are remembered, translated, and mis-translated, and how moving images metabolize these fragile accounts into something we can almost—but never fully—grasp. What happens when the moving image tries to inhabit that perception by proxy?

In Animal Eye, scientists and philosophers try to decode how animals see, using specialized cameras, spectral ranges, and technical experiments to approximate nonhuman vision. The film keeps us suspended in a speculative zone. Every technical experiment becomes a reminder that we are looking at an apparatus looking at an animal looking at the world—a relay of gazes that never quite settles. Vision here is not a

stable viewpoint, but a chain of attempted translations. What Birds Talk About When They Talk turns this impulse into a wry choreography of text. Birdsong remains off-screen and off-language; instead, captions, myths, field notes, and phonetic spellings skitter across the frame. The birds never appear, and yet they organize everything—our knowledge systems, our metaphors, our desire to subtitle what refuses to speak "for" us. Captioning—which usually claims to stabilize meaning—becomes a flickering, unfinished effort to keep pace with sonic life.
Unless the Eye Catch Fire follows the afterimage of another creature: an eagle that falls into a man's pickup truck in Nova Scotia. Within a week, the man, his dog, and the bird are dead. The film doesn't solve this coincidence; instead, it diffracts the event through the sister's recollections, a basement well, and an eagle rehabilitation centre. Testimony here is spatial, atmospheric, unresolved—vision moving through thresholds rather than settling into explanation.

Koki, Ciao closes the program with another impossible witness as a single bird holds court over history: Koki, Josip Broz Tito's 67-year-old cockatoo—once part of the Non-Aligned Movement's "animal diplomacy" and now kept in a public zoo—narrates over previously unseen Yugoslav state archives. State officials, Hollywood stars, and parades of dictatorship re-emerge as caged memories refracted through one talking animal: a shaky witness to a regime it could never fully understand, a bird's-eye is the afterimage of power, whose body still carries the memories of that era.

Across these works, perception is never a single, stable viewpoint. It is a relay: between species, between archive and present, between caption and call. Feral Vision treats cinema as a way of metabolizing other beings' perceptions—taking in their partial, faltering testimonies and rereleasing them as images that stay productively, insistently unstill.

In this sense, Feral Vision is in conceptual romance with its companion program Unstill Image: Unstill Image looks at the ways political violence and scopic regimes press visuality into fixed images while each work worries those limits from within through rehearsal, distance, withholding, blackout, and re-imagining. Feral Vision takes up this tension at the level of perception itself, letting vision go feral—routed through animal eyes, (mis)translations, and speculative proxies—so that perception returns decentered, broken out of its confines, and irreducibly multiple.

What Birds Talk About When They Talk

North American Premiere
Filmmaker: Richard Ibghy & Marilou Lemmens
Specs: Canada | 2026 | 4K Video | 14 mins
Language: Birdcalls with English subtitles

What Birds Talk About When They Talk is a video animation that humorously ventures into the stakes of interpretation. Through a cross-cultural collection of references culled from mythology, science, cartoons, and literature, the piece conflates the historic and the contemporary to create a portrait of birds' distinct voices and the fascination they exercise on humans.

Animal Eye

Canadian Premiere
Filmmaker: Carlo Nasisse
Specs: USA | 2025 | 16mm > Digital | 14 mins
Language: English and Spanish with English subtitles

Scientists and philosophers studying nonhuman sight confront the limits of their own vision in this 16mm, multi-textured essay. Using ultraviolet, infrared, polarized imaging, Animal Eye assembles kaleidoscopic views of how animals might see, asking how science, cinema, and imagination can approach worlds that resist human comprehension.

Unless the Eye Catch Fire

Canadian Premiere
Filmmaker: Brandon Poole
Specs: Canada | 2025 | Digital Video | 14 mins
Language: English

On October 24, 2018 in Belliveau Cove, Nova Scotia, an eagle falls into the back of a man's pickup truck; within a week, the man, his dog, and the bird are dead. Their linked deaths refract through the sister's memories, a basement well and an eagle rehab centre, turning this coincidence into speculative testimony.

Koki, Ciao

Ontario Premiere
Filmmaker: Quenton Millere
Specs: Netherlands | 2025 | Digital Video | 11 mins
Language: Serbo-Croatian (BCMS) with English subtitles

The autobiography of Koki, the 67-year-old cockatoo once kept by Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito. Formerly part of the animal diplomacy of the Non-Aligned Movement and now living in a zoo, Koki narrates over unseen archives, where caged memories and histories of dictatorship flicker through one talking animal.

Surrendur

Film screening followed by a conversation. Artists will be present.

Date: Friday, April 10, 2026

Time: 7:30 - 9:30 pm EDT

Location: Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave

Films: Surrendur

Artist: Karthik Panadian

Curator: Jaclyn Quaresma

sur•ren•dur
a mandala for falling monuments, for falling into relation, for opening the to the frequency of love in revolt

ren•dur
to describe this world, destroy it, open the portal to the next, and repeat

en•dur
expanding time
communing there

Surrendur transmits the stories of Mike Forcia (Bad River Anishinaabe)—the American Indian Movement activist who orchestrated the toppling of a monument to Christopher Columbus—and Ta Pe'juta Wičhá pi Win (Hunkpati Dakota Oyate), whose political consciousness was awoken when she danced around the fallen statue with her daughter. The George Floyd Uprising, the Anishinaabe Seven Fires Prophecy, and the Dakota 38+2 Memorial Ride are interwoven through the director's unique style of editing nonsynchronous 16mm film and sound. Oscillating between intimate conversation and kinetic montage, Surrendur traces the riverine network of migration and homecoming, chance encounter, and carefully

cultivated collaboration that drew Pandian into deep relation with Forcia, Win, and other luminous activists and artists from Minneapolis, the heart of revolt at the centre of Turtle Island.

Surrendur

World Premiere
Filmmaker: Karthik Pandian
Specs: USA | 2026 | DCP | 86 mins
Language: English, Spanish, K'iche', Tamil, Anishinaabemowin, and Dakota with English subtitles in select scenes.

A mandala for falling monuments, for falling into relation, for opening the manasu—meaning both heart and mind in Tamil—tuning to the frequency of love in revolt transmitted from Minneapolis and conducted by artist Karthik Pandian with activists Mike Forcia (Bad River Anishinaabe) and Ta Pe'juta Wičhá pi Win (Hunkpati Dakota Oyate), and Jamaican sonic sculptor Douglas R. Ewart.

Return of the Bright Night

Exhibition

Artist: Sophie Sabet
Curator: Jaclyn Quaresma
Date Range: Thursday, April 9 – Saturday, April 25, 2026
Opening Reception: Saturday April 11, 2026 11:00 am - 12:30 pm
Hours:
Tuesday – Wednesday - 12:00 to 5:00 pm
Thursday – Friday - 12:00 to 6:00 pm
Saturday - 12:00 to 5:00 pm
Location: Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space, The Commons, 401 Richmond St.

Originating from Sophie Sabet's short film of the same name, this exhibition revisits a moment of political and familial rupture to investigate how structures of power in political crises cause residual alienation across temporalities, lineages, and geographies. Return of the Bright Night mines the gaps and fissures within memories and migration, tracing the past in order to negotiate the present.

Return of the Bright Night

Filmmaker: Sophie Sabet
Specs: Canada | 2025 | Digital | 10 mins
Language: Farsi with English subtitles

Revisiting a moment of political and familial rupture to investigate how structures of power in political crises cause residual alienation across bodies, temporalities, and geographies. Return of the Bright Night mines the gaps and fissures within memories and migration tracing the past in order to negotiate the present.

My Father's Imagination II

Performance followed by a conversation. Artists will be present.

Date: Saturday, April 11, 2026
Time: 12:30 - 1:30 pm EDT
Location: The Commons, 401 Richmond St.
Artist: Eshan Rafi
Curator: Jaclyn Quaresma

After the outlawing of Communism in the 1950s in Pakistan, artist Eshan Rafi's father joined an underground Communist group there. As a young man in the 1970s, he was dedicated to revolutionary politics and the potential of a more equitable way of living. From his teens until he was married in his early thirties, Eshan's father operated illegally-owned

printing presses and was known for being a strategist and a writer whose work mobilized people.

My Father's Imagination II is a performance that reinscribes the political life of Eshan's father into the present day. With image-based ephemera connected to their father's past including posters, along with contemporary photographs taken by the artist on a recent trip to Lahore, Eshan methodologically speaks back to the images, expanding beyond the images' place in history, and setting them within the context of their own body here in so-called Toronto, Canada. Eshan asks: What might it mean to be both politically dissident and a political descendant? How might the body be host to these questions? Could one begin to find answers through movement? How might an inherited, still image be metabolized through the moving body?

This line of inquiry is driven by Eshan's dance practice and activates a psychic mode of problem-solving guided by a state of feeling that is prompted by the imagery they, as performer, interact with. These states are simultaneously processed by the mind-body through a kind of environmental and temporal transpositioning. In My Father's Imagination II, Eshan assumes the position of medium, with these familial-historical images becoming sites of psychic excavation and their performance a sense- and place-making exercise for future generations.

My Father's Imagination II

Artist: Eshan Rafi
Length: 40 mins
Language: English and Urdu

Inspired by Communist imagery printed during their father's time practicing revolutionary politics in 1970s Lahore, Pakistan, My Father's Imagination II traces the inheritance of resistance and its histories. In the absence of formal records, memory is remade through images produced and stories recounted in the present day.

Refusing (Reproductive) Labour: Ecological Solidarities

Film screening followed by a conversation. Artists will be present.

Date: Saturday, April 11, 2026

Time: 2:00 - 4:00 pm EDT

Location: CineCycle, 129 Spadina Ave.

Films: Extra Life (and Decay), The Rabbit Always Dies, The world was always full of us

Artists: Anouk Verviers, Oona Taper, and Stéphanie Lagarde

Curator: Katie Lawson

Refusing (Reproductive) Labour: Ecological Solidarities is shaped by encounters with the injustices of labour under capitalism, the imposition of the nuclear family, and the medical-industrial complex. This film program seeks to acknowledge economic and ecological collapse as two threads of the larger knot that make up our moment of global polycrisis. Faced with the failures of modernity, its story of progress and the separability between humans and the rest of nature, these filmmakers imagine otherwise—offering alternative ways of being in relation. Stéphanie Lagarde, Oona Taper and Anouk Verviers are worldbuilders, playing with fact and fantasy, experimenting with polyphonic, interspecies narrators, and conjuring dystopian visions (real and imagined). These films are united by a desire for new solidarities, building (interspecies) relationships, and forming alliances with the more-than-human world.

Throughout the program, intentional gatherings of women and non-binary folks are joined by a series of strange bedfellows: rabbits, frogs, rocks, fungi, citrus, and trees are central characters, too. Opening with Stéphanie Lagarde's Extra Life (and Decay), the unmanaged forest with its mycelial enmeshment represents the possibility of collective resistance to the demand for "controllable normalized units of profitability." The inclusion of non-human kin is literal in Oona Taper's The Rabbit Always Dies as it focuses on the absurd scientific experiments that led to the pregnancy tests of the twentieth century that relied on live frogs and rabbits. In Anouk Vervier's The world was always full of us, feminist cyborgs cross distant mountain ranges to seek care for womb-related chronic pain, invoking rockslides or scree as metaphors for endometriosis. In either case, loose rocks and debris tumble downwards— piling up on each other, finding moments of temporary stability with the potential to give way and fall to pieces once more, like errant endometrial cells accumulating.

Each film also reveals different ways that reproductive health and labour are inextricably bound with the demands of late-stage capitalism and the desire for infinite economic growth. In Extra Life (and Decay), the narrator points to the ways that care work is under-valued and stripped of resources as their child enters daycare and the Deutsche Bank declares a new era for the global economy: "The Age of Disorder." The sutures from Lagarde's birth are described "like purse strings ready to be pulled tight," and in the sweet tones of baby talk, she chronicles the origins of capitalism and wage labour to her infant. The enduring prioritization of wealth accumulation is a driving factor in Taper's chosen subject of the Hogben pregnancy test, which gained popularity as the use of African clawed frogs was fast and cheap. But the Hogben method had a hidden cost—shipped globally in large numbers and released into the wild, the frog became an invasive species that spread chytrid fungus, leading to the extinction of more than 200 amphibian species. In The world was always

full of us, Verviers notes that for those seeking care for endometriosis, treatment is often prioritized for those pursuing procreation, the medical-industrial complex valuing compliant bodies that will contribute to a new generation of labourers over those that are "deviant," refusing the societal expectations of child-rearing.

Extra Life (and Decay)

Toronto Premiere
Filmmaker: Stéphanie Lagarde
Specs: France/Netherlands | 2025 | Digital | 22 mins
Language: French with English subtitles

A polyphonic narrator—filmmaker, parent, forest, insects, fungi, childcare worker—declare their absolute refusal of labor exploitation, and the necessity to join collective bodies in resistance. Who ordered legibility? Extra Life (and Decay) celebrates hospitality as a survival tool to fight morbid politics of isolation. An ode to the multitude, the illegible, the unmeasurable.
Content Warning: Shaky footage. May cause motion sickness, vertigo, headache.

The Rabbit Always Dies

Toronto Premiere
Filmmaker: Oona Taper
Specs: United States | 2025 | Digital | 9 mins
Language: English with English subtitles

An experimental documentary that reveals facts and fantasies of the history of pregnancy tests from the 1930s-60s, which relied on the use of live frogs and rabbits. These pregnancy tests changed the world: they expanded our understanding of hormones, gave women more reproductive choice, but also caused ecological crisis– devastating certain amphibian populations.

The world was always full of us

Toronto Premiere
Filmmaker: Anouk Verviers
Specs: Canada/United Kingdom | 2025 | DCP | 28 mins
Language: English

The world was always full of us is the second chapter of a dystopian trilogy that examines womb-related chronic pain. In this speculative future, those dealing with pain have merged with their treatment and transformed themselves into cyborg feminists who have the power to act not only on but with their pain. All seven performers in the film live with womb-related chronic pain, forming a sense of community in this shared experience.

our bodies hold time

Film screening followed by a conversation. Artists will be present.

Date: Saturday, April 11, 2026
Time: 4:30 - 6:30 pm EDT
Location: CineCycle, 129 Spadina Ave.
Films: Gorg O Mish (Twilight), Fragments of, Alley, Anomalies dans le paysage, An Archive of Disappearing Sounds, El ruido del tiempo (The Noise of Time), (The Land Where Ghosts Could Speak), blue & sentimental, Gacela Herida (Wounded Gazelle),
Artists: Chloë Gordon, Defne Kırmızı, Diana Esther, Elena Calvo Polo, Félix Caraballo, Michaela Michalak, Patricio Escartín, Radin Khodadadi, and Tianhui Wu
Curator: Ghislan Sutherland-Timm

our bodies hold time indiscriminately settles into our soft and heavy shapes, defining and characterizing land, body, and artifact. Rust, dust, wrinkles, and mold surface and become textures of memory. Our presence and residency in time are marked by these textures. Through their tactility, we embody times passing.

our bodies hold time features nine student-made films that disassemble and collage cinematic time. Through a process and treatment of its passing materialized in film, Western conceptions of time are counteracted by the films' own pacing.

In the program's opening, Gorg O Mish (Twilight) by Radin Khodadadi invokes a sense of disorientation of time in a fragmented yet rhythmic pacing as seeing becomes both a subject and a mirror. Over the span of a six-year production, Khodadadi's film was patiently moulded by time's alterations.

Fragments of by Elena Calvo Polo follows an assortment of found footage reels collaged and projected in a non-linear fashion. As timelines merge, the past is reassembled. By the worn condition and mending of the reels, the feeling of time becomes tangible through the materiality and fragility of Polo's craftsmanship.

In Alley by Defne Kırmızı, time sits in passivity with a camera capturing walking pedestrians. Wisps of movements come in and out of frame as the pedestrians become unknowing performers. As time marinates, Alley unfolds as unfolds a lapse in time.

Chemistry in filmmaking is tended to delicately by Félix Caraballo in Anomalies dans le paysage. The Magtogoek / St. Lawrence river is embedded into Caraballo's film through an eco-processing development. Harvesting from the river banks, ANOMALIES DANS LE PAYSAGE emerges in nature's time.

An Archive of Disappearing Sounds by Michaela Michalak mediates on the Land and its silences. Time is characterized not only by visual imprints of identity but as well as the audible and inaudible sounds that shape it.

Patricio Escartín's El ruido del tiempo (The Noise of Time) follows the awakened spirit of a villager searching for its lost home in Xoco while witnessing how the construction of Mítikah threatens the land and its tradition. When time is colonized and weaponized, culture is neglected. Land and its ancestral bodies decay.

(The Land Where Ghosts Could Speak) by Tianhui Wu uncovers memories recollected by the body and mind's amnesia. The body remembers and the unhealed past can carry forward, settling unconsciously into our crevices.

In blue & sentimental by Chloë Gordon, cyanotypes from a family's archive are animated. In twelve frames per second, memories re-emerge in shifting tones of blue pigments. Tangible, blue & sentimental crystalizes nostalgia onto watercolour paper.
In the program's closing, Herida (Wounded Gazelle) by Diana Esther recites entries from a mother written to her separated daughters. As custodians of time, memories resurrect and are recontextualized by following generations.

Time acts in dualism to erode and erect. Its presence is here and gone. By a phantom of gravity, it organically moulds us. our bodies hold time forms by the pacing of nine films that become and dissolve into memories, frame-by-frame.

Gorg O Mish (Twilight)

Filmmaker: Radin Khodadadi
Specs: Canada | 2025 | DCP | 5 mins
Language: No dialogue

An experimentation with perceived movement and composition, drawn from six years of photographic fragments—an imprint of shifting visions, where seeing becomes both a subject and a mirror. "Gorg O Mish," a Persian expression for twilight, can be translated literally as "wolf and ewe." This film is named after the liminal moment between day and night when shapes blur and certainty falters; when you can't distinguish a sheep from a wolf. This film lives in space of confusion, ambiguity, and quiet transformation.

Fragments of

Canadian Premiere
Filmmaker: Elena Calvo Polo
Specs: Spain/France | 2024 | Digital Video | 4 mins
Language: English

The film, made without a camera, shows the support itself, shows the splices, works the declared montage, reveals the lateral perforations and does not limit itself to showing only the space of the frame, as well as intervening manually on the emulsion.

Content Warning: Strobing and flashing lights

Alley

North American Premiere
Filmmaker: Defne Kırmızı
Specs: Austria/Turkey | 2025 | DCP | 6 mins
Language: No dialogue

The camera lingers, tracing a quiet alley where people are glimpsed, reflected, and lost. A game unfolds, where shifting perspectives turn passersby into performers. Elsewhere, landscapes are slipping away and rebuilt on a cyclical pattern. A brief syncopation in a daily routine, an interplay of bodies and place in motion.

Anomalies dans le paysage

Toronto Premiere
Filmmaker: Félix Caraballo
Specs: Canada | 2025 | 16mm > HD | 8 mins
Language: No dialogue

Anomalies dans le paysage is a film in four tableaux in which four audiovisual landscapes unfold in all their strangeness: Spices, leaves, and local seaweed reveal and imbue their hues into this film which was shot and developed on the very banks of the Magtogoek (St. Lawrence) River from which it was composed.

Content Warning: Strobing and flashing lights

An Archive of Disappearing Sounds

Canadian Premiere
Filmmaker: Michaela Michalak
Specs: Canada | 2026 | DVC | 12 mins
Language: English with English subtitles

An Archive of Disappearing Sounds is a meditation on environmental grief by evoking a contemplative cinematic space through listening as praxis. As light and sound pollution from settler cities encroach, what inaudible sounds are heard in the disappearing silences of the Land? This film reflects on Indigenous critiques of the increasing scales of ecocide resulting from settler colonialism through tracing genealogies of extinction.

El ruido del tiempo (The Noise of Time)

Canadian Premiere
Filmmaker: Patricio Escartín
Specs: Mexico | 2024 | Digital | 12 mins
Language: Spanish with English subtitles

In Xoco, Mexico City, the spirit of a villager awakens in search of its lost home. In their journey, the ghost discovers that while Xoco still celebrates its festivities, a new commercial complex, Mítikah, threatens the existence of both the traditions and the town.

(The Land Where Ghosts Could Speak)

North American Premiere
Filmmaker: Tianhui Wu
Specs: United Kingdom/China | 2024 | Digital Video | 14 mins
Language: Chinese with English subtitles

In this personal piece, the artist uncovers memories through sleep talking, exploring the tension between her body's recollections and her mind's amnesia. Using family archives and her own body, the film delves into her trauma, revealing a broader conflict between individual identity and the unspoken violence within family and state.

Content Warning: Trauma-related content

blue & sentimental

World Premiere
Filmmaker: Chloë Gordon
Specs: Canada | 2024 | DCP | 1 min
Language: No dialogue

An exploration of the loss of physical media and growing up in the age of technology, blue & sentimental is made up of digital video frames transferred onto watercolour paper via a cyanotype process, scanned, and re-animated at twelve frames per second. The archival footage and accompanying audio, shot by the filmmaker's father, documents the first days home from the hospital as a newborn up until kindergarten graduation.

Gacela Herida (Wounded Gazelle)

World Premiere
Filmmaker: Diana Esther
Specs: Dominican Republic | 2024 | Digital Video | 5 mins
Language: Spanish with English and Spanish subtitles

A mother writes to her five- and two-year-old daughters during their forced separation, letting her words drift across a sea of distance.

Epic fails, or, ordinary failure just wasn’t enough

Film screening and perfromance.

Date: Saturday, April 11, 2026

Time: 7:30 - 9:30 pm EDT

Location: Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave

Films: Gathering Dust, bio (space/opal), FoUBARthes: Death of an Author, A Weak & Panicked Animal, How to excel at everything

Performance: Response 00.003

Artists: Cassie Packham, Dayna McLeod, Fox Maxy, Jake Starr, Marion Balac, and Mikiki

Curator: Kiera Boult

The works in this program call on my inner internet child, left behind on early-2000s platforms like MySpace. Here, the digital plane becomes haunted by a familiar past. Ancient avatars, unruly subjects, and gaudy profile layouts, shaped by the internet’s early mess and excess, resist contemporary pursuits of mastery and efficiency, surfacing early selves left behind for their failure to be productive. These works subvert the language of mastery by using pixelated .gifs, 3D-modelled landscapes, and found footage to raise questions about the origins of our early selves and what remains of them in the hyper-optimized present. This self has been shaped by broken HTML code and self-built worlds that extractive data practices have since paved over. Still, the traces of our early internet selves persist.

Across the program, these unfinished selves share a refusal of optimization. Through perseverance, they have survived decades of software updates, compression, and neglect, forming a swirling archive of early online exchange, chaotic and ungoverned by efficiency. What happened to our unusable contributions to the internet? Have they been drifting around as fragmented pixels, waiting to be regurgitated by future users?

These digital leftovers linger as material that dominant systems cannot absorb or render profitable. Instead, they spill into myths, trends, and ghosts within the algorithms of the next generation. Given a second life through contemporary appropriations of early Y2K aesthetics, fragments of our past selves, first born online in the early 2000s, are returned to us, altered in the process. The next generation reworks and returns parts of ourselves that could liberate, while exorcising the outdated toxins that shaped their origins. Moving through popular culture and online subcultures, this program proposes an alternative lineage of the internet, one that can nurture and heal our inner internet child by reclaiming the mess and excess of our past and refusing the optimization of future.

Gathering Dust

Canadian Premiere
Filmmaker: Fox Maxy
Specs: USA | 2023 | Digital | 5 mins
Language: English and Payómkawichum Chaam'teela

Gathering Dust creates connections between water, intergenerational care, and encroaching urban development. Like the film's layered visuals, numerous sources converge to create the film's soundscape. The film contemplates lessons exchanged between elders and youth, and the differences between generations, friction vs. flow, and the layers underneath Los Angeles.

Commissioned by The Academy Museum of Motion Pictures in 2023, this film screened in the exhibition Shifting Perspectives: Vertical Cinema, initiated by Jessica Niebeland and organized by a curatorial collective.

bio (space/opal)

Toronto Premiere
Filmmaker: Cassie Packham
Specs: Canada | 2024 | MP4 | 5 mins
Language: English subtitles without dialogue

bio (space/opal) is a machinima self-portrait narrated by a shapeshifting digital artist living on the Second Life grid. Through dance, world-building, and her own music, space/opal relates her origin story, moving between dream, memory, and networked becoming to explore what it means to emerge from one's own future.

FoUBARthes: Death of an Author

Toronto Premiere
Filmmaker: Dayna McLeod
Specs: Canada | 2024 | Digital | 3 mins
Language: English

Media performance artist Dayna McLeod asked ChatGPT to write an increasingly snarky and heated dialogue between Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault about "The Death of the Author," inspired by Barthes' famous essay. This script is performed by AI actors of the theorists, with Dayna's AI doppelgänger, DaynAI, acting as host to their debate.

A Weak & Panicked Animal

Canadian Premiere
Filmmaker: Jake Starr
Specs: Australia | 2024 | Digital | 12 mins
Language: English with English subtitles

Civilization endeavors to minimize the uncertainties of human survival.. The sidewalk, the fence, the clearing all serve as boundaries, a tacit agreement between the human and non-human, stipulating that neither shall cross these thresholds without consequence. A Weak & Panicked Animal examines how deeply human civilisation depends on denial, contingency, interdependence, and the fact that no matter how fortified our cities become, we are still enmeshed in a chaotic, planetary ecosystem.

Content Warning: Police bodycam footage and CCTV, scenes containing blood and animals in distress.

How to excel at everything

North American Premiere
Filmmaker: Marion Balac
Specs: France | 2024 | DCP | 23 mins
Language: English, Catalan, Korean, Spanish, French, and Mandarin with English subtitles

In How to excel at everything, two Pokémon-like friends follow online tutorials to master every skill. Loosely adapted from Flaubert's Bouvard et Pécuchet, the film examines algorithm-driven self-learning, YouTube rabbit holes, and DIY culture, where gamified self-help replaces institutional pedagogy in an endless, disoriented learning odyssey of contemporary digital life.

Response 00.003

World Premiere
Artist: Mikiki
Specs: Canada | 2026 | Performance and Live Video | 20 mins
Language: Spanish with English subtitles

Do Not Resuscitate
Acquired Brain Injury
AIDS jokes
Cognitive Processing Therapy
SLOMW
Community Reinforcement Approach
Intrusive Thoughts
Resuscitate
The Compulsion to Repeat

we felt our cells tumble, cluster, and creep

Performance

Date: Sunday, April 12, 2026

Time: 1:00 - 2:00 pm EDT

Location: Le Labo, 401 Richmond St. #277

Artist: Anouk Verviers

Curator: Katie Lawson

In dialogue with her most recent film, The world was always full of us, Anouk Vervier presents a new performance work. Anouk explores issues of the exhaustion of female and non-binary bodies, and aims to prefigure possible practices of care, kinship, and resistance.

We're here to please you, Baby

Film screening followed by a conversation with Kiki and Riss Sean Cruz.

Date: Sunday, April 12, 2026

Time: 3:00 - 5:00 pm EDT

Location: Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave.

Films: Sacred Disease, Per Se, Pixel Metabolism, Interface Ulcer, LetMEbeaWomanTM.mp4

Artists: Deirdre Logue, E. Jane, Renèe Helèna Browne, and Zhongyao Wang

Curator: Kiki

Welcome to Kiki's Enmeshment. I'm Kiki and I'll be your host. Let the low-strained voice of Deirdre Logue familiarize you with this evening's events, as she explains: "[w]hat I really want to say is private, so what makes it so hard to say is that I really don't understand it, per se..." I want to share a craving for enmeshment, a desire that motivates the performance persona, Kiki. A desire that is shaped and formed in reality TV, where the lines between selfhood and audience collapse. In this program, we explore the shared limits of persona: how much Kiki gives, how much she feeds the embodiment of desires, and where her boundaries and mine begin to dissolve.

Real Housewife of New York City Bethenny Frankel screams, "Go to sleep! Go to sleep!" I am delighted to bring you to Scary Island. Production's failed attempts to reconfigure a Real Housewife's breakdown leave audiences searching beyond the show for truth, taking to message boards and bloggers to find it. Exposing this rupture between show and audience, a longing for intimacy emerges, one that demands the fall of all boundaries between performance and reality. "I'm here to please you, Baby."

Sinking deeper, we turn to comfort viewing: it's our girls from Sex and the City! It's Kiki's favourite Miranda era, when she goes Black. Renèe Helèna Browne's Sacred Disease (2020) isn't a nostalgic revisiting of foundational texts on love; it's a warning about language and how it binds us. How deep will another's desire go before your body rejects it? For Renèe's characters, their bodies convulse, vomit, and shit until all other desires are removed.

"TAKE A XANNAAAAX!" echoes from the Real Housewife of New York City Ramona Singer as she prescribes a cure for her castmate's codependence. If the process of enmeshment is anxiety-inducing, Zhongyao Wang's Pixel Metabolism's Interface Ulcer (2025) has a cure for our sacred disease. Pop the pink pill and let every membrane it passes bring us closer to our

"compulsive desire to merge with every interface." The singularity is in our guts, and we love it! I've forgotten where I started as the viral sound of Tiffany "New York" Pollard proclaiming "Whatever—I don't give a fuck. Do I look like I give a fuck? Because I don't!" resounds throughout the cinema. Now we turn to the stage as E. Jane's LetMEbeaWomanTM.mp4 (2020) introduces the Black Diva, unmatched by any light we've ever seen. Jane reminds the Black Diva, in all her presence, that her own desires aren't safe from scrutiny. The stage she stands on reminds her of the lines she must stay within. The voice of the great Wendy Williams thanks Whitney Houston for giving her "her moment," and Houston responds, "I love you, Wendy." Dear audience, this craving for enmeshment, "it's not exactly a secret, per se...It's just that I don't know how to say it the right way...per se." This program became a path from body to stage, to screen, to Kiki, and we hope it pleases you, Baby.

Sacred Disease

Toronto Premiere
Filmmaker: Renèe Helèna Browne
Specs: United Kingdom | 2019 | Digital | 20 mins
Language: English with English subtitles

Sacred Disease is a two-colour animated film exploring language and its power over the body when consumed by the performance of romantic partnership. The script—developed from the TV series Sex and the City, The Heroides by Ovid, and Renèe Helèna Browne's own experiences—brings classical and contemporary sources into dialogue to explore desire, narration, and the ways speech becomes embodied within intimate relationships.

Per Se

Filmmaker: Deirdre Louge
Specs: Canada | 2005 | Digital | 4 mins
Language: English

This work is dedicated to the moment of hesitation that precedes saying something meaningful and to the difficulties of expressing oneself.

Pixel Metabolism, Interface Ulcer

North American Premiere
Filmmaker: Zhongyao Wang
Specs: China | 2024 | Digital | 5 mins
Language: English

Pixel Metabolism, Interface Ulcer envisions a disembodied, screen-dominated AI future encircled by satellites: virtual imagery is compressed into a tiny pink pill that invades the flesh in reverse, dissolving the boundary between digital and biological. Users become self-experimenting cyborgs, forced to recalibrate touch and bodily perception between ingestion and rejection.

LetMEbeaWomanTM.mp4

Canadian Premiere
Filmmaker: E. Jane
Specs: USA | 2020 | Digital | 7 mins
Language: English and African-American Vernacular English

Celebrating women who expand beyond the possibility of belonging to anyone or anything, LetMEbeaWomanTM.mp4 beautifully captures the aporia of longing to be held and refusal to be grasped, one that inevitably led the artist back to the searing question guiding Sojourner Truth's 1851 Black feminist manifesto: "Ain't I a Woman?"

SAVAC Presents: Monitor 16

Film screening and reception. Date: Sunday, April 12, 2026

Time: 6:00 - 9:00 pm EDT

Location: The Commons, 401 Richmond St.

Curators: Sameena Siddiqui and Vicky Moufawad-Paul

SAVAC (South Asian Visual Arts Centre) is thrilled to premiere the 16th iteration of Monitor, its longstanding experimental film and video program, in partnership with Images Festival.

Monitor is dedicated to the presentation of experimental short films and videos that initiate dialogue around the shifting nature of politics, economies, and landscapes across the Global South and its diasporas. Since 2005, SAVAC's Monitor program has engaged an international community of artists, curators, and audiences through artists' works that transcend languages, borders, and political divides.

SAVAC is a not-for-profit, artist-run centre in Canada committed to increasing the visibility of culturally diverse artists by curating and exhibiting their work, providing mentorship, facilitating professional development, and creating a community for our artists. We were founded to be an organization staffed by people of colour, committed to support the work of artists of colour.

For over 25 years, SAVAC has operated without a gallery space as an explicit, political choice. We support work that (in)directly addresses the ways histories of people of colour are represented alongside the story of ongoing colonialism on Turtle Island and post-colonial histories of the Global South. These works are challenging, experimental and offer multifarious perspectives on the contemporary world.

Curators-in-Residence Panel

with Alper Turan, Katie Lawson, and Kiera Boult

Date: Monday, April 13, 2026

Time: 10:00 - 11:00 am EDT

Location: CineCycle, 129 Spadina Ave.

Join us in Toronto's coziest cinema space for a warm, celebratory farewell to the 39th edition of Images Festival. Come dressed to feel good, linger with friends, and enjoy ample food and drink as we close out the week together.

In Conversation

with Dayna McLead, Mikiki and Kiera Boult

Date: Monday, April 13, 2026

Time: 11:15 am - 12:15 pm EDT

Location: CineCycle, 129 Spadina Ave.

Curator: Kiera Boult

Please join us for an intimate conversation with artists Dayna McLeod and Mikiki, and curator Kiera Boult, expanding on the themes explored in the eponymous program Epic Fails, or, ordinary failure just wasn't enough, taking place on Saturday, April 11, 2026, from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. EDT at CineCycle.

Surrendur:

In Conversation with Karthik Pandian and m. nourbeSe philip

Date: Monday, April 13, 2026

Time: 10:00 - 11:00 am EDT

Location: CineCycle, 129 Spadina Ave.

Please join us for an intimate follow-up conversation with Karthik Pandian and m. nourbeSe philip. This session will build on both the making of and themes present in his first feature film Surrendur (2026) offering opportunity for in depth dialogue.

Dance&Alchemy

Workshop

Date: Monday, April 13, 2026

Time: 4:00 - 7:00 pm EDT

Location: CineCycle, 129 Spadina Ave.

Artists: Fan Wu and Serena Lee

Curator: Jaclyn Quaresma

We will explore
potential alchemical mixtures from the repertoires of artists Fan Wu and Serena Lee, including qigong, taijiquan, parable, calligraphy, poetry, and somatic translation.

We will begin
by grounding ourselves in space and in the presence of our bodies.

We will read
and counter-read Fenollosa's "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry" by pushing at the limits of alphabetical languages that are traditionally considered non-pictographic.

We will write
between image and word, wet and dry, light and shadow—sensing how language appears through what it omits—the negative space it's bound to speaking.

We will follow
Mei-mei Berssenbrugge, Du Fu, Ikkyu—and many others in the lineage of the supple phenomenology of attention—and compose using the density of the ordinary as an ever-replenishing raw material.

Presented in collaboration with Dancemakers, this workshop is part of a composite program that bookends the 39th edition of Images Festival featuring Serena Lee and Fan Wu in their years-long conversation.

The Gaza Biennale T'karonto Pavilion:

Witnessing Sumud, Closing Reception and Magazine Launch

Date: Monday, April 13, 2026
Time: 4:00 - 7:00 pm EDT
Location: A Space Windows,401 Richmond St W. Suite 110.
Artists: Alaa Abu Saif, Alaà Al Shawa, Liza Madi, Mosaab Abusal, Motaz Naim
Curator: Vicky Mouawad-Paul

In April 2024, artists from Gaza began to gather together under a single project to find ways to utilize art to resist this genocide. Many artists in Gaza have been working throughout this war, defying all challenges, creating works that remind us that art is essential to life and our survival as a species. A collective project has emerged into a global art event: the Gaza Biennale.

The Gaza Biennale is a collective event, a growing network, and perhaps a movement. While war has scattered and displaced our people, the biennale gathers over 40 artists on a single platform, uniting their voices. Emerging from deep roots, this Biennale extends an open invitation to local and international institutions to host and produce these exhibitions and to work with us as partners. We offer a unique opportunity to art institutions to exhibit invaluable works that reflect the need for creativity in the darkest of times.

Join us for an evening that brings together art, scholarship, and collective action, from 4:00 – 7:00 pm, for the closing of The Gaza Biennale

T'karonto Pavilion: Witnessing Sumud, at A Space.

This closing event marks the launch of Gatherings' double issue, "Palestine and Campus Movements: Sites of Transnational Feminist Solidarities," with readings and reflections from contributors whose work spans feminist resistance, collective care, and the global campus movements demanding justice for Palestine. The Palestinian Youth Movement choir performs, and the evening features a panel discussion bringing together the issue's editors, creators from Stitched!, Living with Drones, a live journalism show that documents the realities of drone warfare in Gaza, and artists and writers from the issue. Together, these voices refuse the separation of art, scholarship, and activism.

For more detailed information on the Gaza Biennale and on the closing event please visit: https://gazabiennale.org/ and https://aspacegallery.org/

Images Festival Closing Party

Date: Monday, April 13, 2026

Time: 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm EDT

Location: CineCycle, 129 Spadina Ave.

Join us in Toronto's coziest cinema space for a warm, celebratory farewell to the 39th edition of Images Festival. Come dressed to feel good, linger with friends, and enjoy ample food and drink as we close out the week together.

Exhibitions

Return of the Bright Night

Date Range:

Thursday, April 9 – Saturday, April 25, 2026

Hours:

11:00 am- 5:00 pm

Location:

Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space,
The Commons, 401 Richmond St.

Curator:

Jaclyn Quaresma

CSV x Images

Date Range:

Saturday April 11, 2026 - Monday April 13, 2026

Hours:

Saturday - Sunday

11:00 am - 4:00 pm

Monday

6:00 - 8:00 pm

Location:

Charles St. Video,76 Geary Ave, Toronto, ON M6H 2B5

Biographies

Alper Turan

Alper Turan is an independent curator and PhD candidate at the University of Toronto whose work moves between text, body, and image to examine state violence, the politics of images/visibility, and transnational queer aesthetics and HIV/AIDS cultural production. A 2023–24 Whitney ISP Curatorial Fellow and 2023–24 General Idea Fellow at the National Gallery of Canada, he is adjunct curator at Protocinema and has presented with Wallach Art Gallery, Wiener Festwochen, and the 13th Sharjah Biennial.

Anouk Verviers

Anouk Verviers is a multidisciplinary artist based between Tiohtià:ke/Mooniyang/ Montreal (CA) and London (UK). Her work takes the form of films, performances, and installations that are developed with collaborators. In her practice, she adopts a fluid and experimental approach that deviates from ways of being and doing that are formulated by systems of power.

Arief Budiman

Arief Budiman is an artist and filmmaker based in Yogyakarta. His practice engages with fabricated realities, speculative histories, public archives, and collective memory to uncover hidden narratives and erased histories. He uses archives and technology as tools to open up readings of the past, blending fiction and non-fiction to create multi-layered narratives that function as alternative histories.

Brandon Poole

Brandon Poole is an artist and filmmaker whose films document the folkloric and vernacular constructions of place. His films have screened at EXiS (Seoul), Mimesis (United States), non_syntax (Tokyo/Taipei), Antimatter (Victoria), Suspaustus Laikas (Vilnius), Iowa City Docs (Iowa City), and EASTEAST (London). He is a Lecturer at the University of Victoria and a PhD Candidate at McGill University.

Carlo Nasisse

Carlo Nasisse is a director and cinematographer whose work explores ecology and the relationships between humans, landscapes, and politics. His films have been supported and exhibited by The New Yorker, POV Shorts, PBS, Vimeo Staff Picks, the Times Art Center in Berlin, and the Rockbund Museum of Art in Shanghai. They have screened at major festivals including SXSW, True/False, Camden International, Oberhausen, SFFILM, and Slamdance. He has received grants from the Austin Film Society, Jigsaw Productions, the Wenner-Gren Foundation, and FOCINE. Carlo holds an MFA in Documentary Film and Video from Stanford University.

Cassie (Onoyota'a:ka)

Cassie (Onoyota'a:ka) is an artist-researcher working at the intersections of Indigenous futurism, digital sovereignty, and relational world-building. Through machinima, generative systems, and virtual environments, she creates spaces of care, kinship, and digital continuity. Their practice bridges land-based knowledge with emerging technologies to imagine sovereign futures across interconnected worlds.

Chloë Gordon

Chloë Gordon is a filmmaker, sound designer, and multimedia artist from Toronto. Her work focuses on queer memory and place, often exploring these themes through analogue mediums and evocative soundscapes. Her work has previously screened at Inside Out Film Festival and Artifact Film Festival.

Chris Kennedy

Chris Kennedy is an independent filmmaker, film programmer, and writer based in Toronto. He is the Executive Director of the Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto. He programmed for Images Festival from 2003-06, Pleasure Dome from 2000-06 and TIFF Cinematheque's year-round The Free Screen/Wavelengths series from 2012-2019. He co-founded and co-programmed Early Monthly Segments from 2009 to 2018. He holds an MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and his short experimental films have screened at over one hundred film festivals worldwide.

Christina Battle

Christina Battle's (Edmonton, Canada) research and artistic work consider the parameters of disaster; looking to it as action, as more than mere event and instead as a framework operating within larger systems of power. She has exhibited internationally in festivals and galleries.

Çiçek Kahraman

Çiçek Kahraman is an award-winning film editor and video artist whose credits include nearly thirty films, some of which have premiered and been awarded at festivals such as Berlinale and Venice. With an MA in Film and Television from Boston University, Kahraman continues her artistic practice between Berlin and Istanbul.

Clint Enns

Clint Enns is a visual artist, writer, and curator based in Tiohtià:ke / Montréal.

Dayna McLeod

Dayna McLeod is a middle-aged, queer performance-based media artist. Her work often uses humour and capitalizes on exploiting the body's social and material conditions. Her video essays have been published in [in] Transition, ASAP/Review, Teknokultura, and Intermédialités and have been named in the British Film Institute Sight & Sound Best of Video Essays lists for 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024. Her video and performance work has been presented in numerous venues around the world.

Defne Kırmızı

Defne Kırmızı is a PhD candidate in the History of Art and Architecture Department at Boston University, where she works on the emergence of conceptual art practices through recurring group exhibitions in Turkey between the years 1974-1988. She received her Masters of Fine Arts degree in Studio Arts with a concentration in photography from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Deirdre Logue

Deirdre Logue is a Canadian film and video artist and activist with over two decades of experience working with artist-run organizations dedicated to media arts exhibition and distribution. Her solo work, grounded in performance for the camera, focuses on the self as subject, exploring anxiety, queerness, and the limits of ability through single-channel works and multi-channel installation. Her compelling self-portraits investigate what it means to inhabit a queer body in an age of anxiety.

Diana Esther

Diana Esther is a Dominican filmmaker and sound designer. She has worked in the sound department on audiovisual campaigns, short films, feature films, and video art installations. She is currently developing several projects at early stages exploring collective memory, land transformation, and fragility.

E. Jane

E. Jane is an interdisciplinary artist who lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Their work focuses on Black femmeness, surveillance, labor, and performance, and uses the Black diva as a Black feminine archetype. They are curious about what the diva perceives, how she feels, and what she desires.

Elena Calvo

Filmmaker, programmer, and researcher Elena Calvo combines her professional and academic activity with the cultural management of events and activities through the Algarabía Cultural Association, which she founded. She has taken part in several festivals as a jury member, collaborated with Casa Árabe in Córdoba, and participated in the 16th edition of S8 in A Coruña. She recently organised and coordinated a week of activities around "Memory and Domestic Cinema" and the "Muestra de cine Palestino" at Casa Árabe.

Elisabeth Subrin

Elisabeth Subrin is a filmmaker and artist whose award-winning films and installations have screened at Cannes, Viennale, the New York Film Festival, IDFA, and the Whitney Biennial, among others. Known for her use of reenactment since her landmark film Shulie (1997), she directed Maria Schneider, 1983 (César for Best Documentary Short, 2023) and the feature A Woman, A Part. A Guggenheim, Fulbright, and Sundance Fellow, she is a professor of film and media artat Temple University.

Eliza Chandler

Eliza Chandler (she/her) is an Associate Professor in the School of Disability Studies and Executive Director of the Office of Social Innovation at Toronto Metropolitan University. Her work bridges disability arts, politics, and social movements, with a focus on critical access, disability justice, and decolonial approaches to cultural accessibility. She lives and works in Toronto, Canada.

Eshan Rafi

Eshan Rafi (b. 1986, Lahore) is a Toronto / Tkaronto-based artist working across time-based, lens-based and choreographic practices. Their works deal with the intersection of political events and personal archives, often staging the impossibility of representation. Rafi is an alumni of the Home Workspace Program at Ashkal Alwan in Beirut, Lebanon, and has participated in residencies at Fondazioni Antonio Ratti in Como, Saas-Fee Summer Institute of Art in Berlin, and the Banff Centre for the Arts, among others. Their work has been exhibited, performed, and screened internationally.

Fan Wu

Fan Wu is a writer and interdisciplinary artist who's currently researching the transmission of Daoism across cultures and aesthetic traditions. His image-related writing can be found online at Diffusion Film Festival, The Flaherty Seminar, C Magazine, and The Capilano Review.

Félix Caraballo

Félix Caraballo is a filmmaker working in Tiohtiá:ke / Montreal and N'dakina / Marieville. His practice takes the form of films, live 16mm projections, and installations. Félix's work questions the relationships between landscapes, their components, and the singular properties of analog processes.

Fox Maxy

Fox Maxy is Payómkawichum and Iipay Kumeyaay, from the Mesa Grande Band of Mission Indians. Her work blends experimental form with themes of kinship, emotional well-being, nightlife, fashion, and environmental advocacy. Her debut feature, Gush, premiered at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival, followed by Guts and Glitz.

Ghislan Sutherland-Timm

Ghislan Sutherland-Timm (they/she) is a multidisciplinary craftsman, media-based researcher, and cultural worker based in Tkaronto / Toronto. Their practice braids archival materials in collage-making with analog-based works and methodologies in expanded cinema. Sutherland-Timm volunteers at the8fest Small-Gauge Film Festival and The ArQuives. They hold a BFA in Integrated Media from OCAD University and are an alum of the Independent Imaging Retreat: Film Farm (2024) and Black Women Film! Canada (2019).

Jake Starr

Jake Starr is a research-based artist residing on unceded Gadigal land (Sydney, Australia). Starr's practice yearns across disciplines toward speculative post-human futures. Their work builds webs of intimacy between seemingly disparate im/materialities to produce imaginaries that exist beyond the constrictions of historical grand narratives and anthropocentric hegemony.

Karthik Pandian

Karthik Pandian is an artist and teacher developing ceremonial technologies. He has presented his works in moving image, sculpture, and performance at venues such as the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Hammer Museum, and the New York Film Festival, and on digital platforms such as the Criterion Channel and Triple Canopy. He is a professor of Art, Film, and Visual Studies at Harvard University.

Katie Lawson

Katie Lawson is a curator and writer. She is currently a SSHRC-funded PhD candidate at Western University, where she works with the Centre for Sustainable Curating. She has curated exhibitions for a wide range of institutions, including the Toronto Biennial of Art, regional galleries, municipalities, and artist-run-centres in Canada. Lawson was awarded the Hnatyshyn Foundation Fogo Island Arts Young Curator Residency in 2023 and participated in the Sustainable Institution Residency at Atelier LUMA in 2024.

Kiera Boult

Kiera Boult is a Hamilton-based interdisciplinary artist, performer, and cultural worker. Her practice uses camp and comedy to question the role and identity of the artist and the institution. Through her iconic persona, Kiki, a self-described "guilt-free" celebrity, Boult offers sharp critiques from the perspective of a celebrated Black biracial icon navigating white institutions with ease. She is an MFA candidate at Western University and a member of the Toronto Performance Art Collective, which organizes the biannual international performance festival 7a*11d.

Kym McDaniel

Kym McDaniel is an experimental filmmaker and interdisciplinary artist working across fields of moving image, choreography, and disability studies. Her embodiment as a dancer living with chronic pain informs her relationship to time, the body, and movement in her work.

Marion Balac

Marion Balac explores the impulses between emotion and technology across video, installation, and online media. She studies replicated communities—theme parks, tourist sites, forums—where gaps between representation and reality emerge. Her work, marked by deadpan humor and melancholy, has been shown internationally. She has been teaching at the Beaux-Arts de Marseille since 2021.

Michaela Michalak

Michaela Michalak is a LGBTIQ filmmaker & activist-scholar, who researches politics of memory in relation to sound and silence. They have exhibited internationally at the Lopez Museum (Phillipines), the 2nd Moscow Biennale, the Lisbon Architecture Triennial, and the Bronx Museum, amongst others. They have screened across Canada at La Lumière Collective (QC), Pix Film Collective (ON), and Blinding Light Cinema (BC). They are currently a PhD candidate at York University.

Mikiki

Mikiki is a performance and video artist and queer community health activist of Acadian/Mi'kmaq and Irish descent from Ktaqmkuk/Newfoundland, Canada. Their work emerges from harm reduction and HIV response, using art-activism to address sex panic, drug use, grief, and collective care amid the polycrisis.

Naomi Rincón Gallardo

Naomi Rincón Gallardo is a visual artist living and working between Mexico City and Oaxaca. From a decolonial-cuir perspective, her critical-mythical worldmaking addresses the creation of counter-worlds in neocolonial settings. Her fabulations integrate her interests in theater games, popular music, Mesoamerican cosmologies, speculative fiction, vernacular festivities and crafts, decolonial feminisms and queer of colour critique.

Oona Taper

Oona Taper is a moving image artist and assistant professor at Kansas City Art Institute. She creates installations and animations that are deeply invested in the materiality of moving images. Her work tries to process the constant mundane apocalypses of the modern world through humor, whimsy, and daydreams.

Patricio Escartín

Patricio Escartín is a Mexican filmmaker whose work explores memory and identity through an atmospheric and sensorial approach across fiction, documentary, and fantasy. He directed The Noise of Time (2024) which has been internationally awarded and widely screened. He is completing a Cinematography Degree at ENAC–UNAM and previously studied at the University of Essex.

Quenton Miller

Quenton Miller is an Australian/UK filmmaker and artist based in the Netherlands. He studied at Van Eyck Academy and the Master of Artistic Research programme at KABK Den Haag, where his focus on film developed out of playfully disorientating video installations, as well as writing and designing for literary publications. Often leaning into comedy, his films follow alienated characters wrestling with language, truth, time and history, with neurodiverse experiences of language and the cultural history of narrating animals playing key roles.

Radin Khodadadi

Radin Khodadadi is an emerging Iranian filmmaker based in Vancouver. Drawing on a background in photography, he creates introspective films that reflect a personal and experimental approach to form and storytelling. His previous short, Let's Go Away, was officially selected by the Rise Film Festival and the Vancouver International Youth Film Festival.

Renèe Helèna Browne

Renèe Helèna Browne is an Irish artist working across film, drawing, and spoken word. Their work has been exhibited and screened internationally at institutions and festivals including the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Talbot Rice Gallery, Oakville Galleries and more. Renèe is a recipient of the Salzburger Kunstverein Sunset Kino Award for excellence in contemporary film and their work is held in public collections.

Richard Ibghy & Marilou Lemmens

Richard Ibghy & Marilou Lemmens are visual artists working across sculpture, video, installation, public art, and artist books. Grounded in rigorous research and project-specific material experimentation, their practice investigates the entanglements of ecology, economy, epistemology, and history. Over several years, they have examined the history of science and other forms of knowledge. More recently, their work seeks to expand concepts of hospitality, care, and interspecies communication.

Sabīne Šnē

Sabīne Šnē is a Latvian mixed-media artist who explores the relationships between humans and the more-than-human, focusing on how organisms and elements sustain life on Earth, and how extractive processes impact them. Her works have been presented internationally in solo and group exhibitions, screenings, and festivals.

Serena Lee

Serena Lee is interested in how energy circulates. She plays with cinema, movement, place-making, sound, performance, writing, and collective study. Serena is based between Toronto and Vienna, where she completed a PhD at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, focusing on the martial art of taijiquan as a methodology for aesthetic inquiry.

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Sofia Dona

Sofia Dona is a visual artist based in Athens and Munich. Her installations and video works challenge familiar spatial and social structures, focusing on interruptions, sudden breaks in historical narratives or everyday life that expose hidden systems of power and control. Her work has been shown internationally at venues such as Gropius Haus (Bauhaus Foundation), Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Instituto Municipal de Arte y Cultura (Tijuana), nGbK (Berlin), Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo (Turin), and EMST (Athens).

Sophie Sabet

Sophie Sabet is a Toronto-based visual artist working in video and installation. Drawing on family histories and domestic archives, her practice examines how displacement is inscribed in the body and how it can fragment ideological perspectives. Her work has recently been exhibited at Modern Fuel and The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, with an upcoming screening at MoMA Doc Fortnight 2026. Sabet is pursuing an MFA in Moving Image at Bard College's Milton Avery School of Arts.

Stéphanie Lagarde

Stéphanie Lagarde is a visual artist and filmmaker. Her works explore human strategies of occupation and the control of space throughout systems of objects, signs, and political/social structures. She creates conflicting scenarios from assemblages of sounds, images, and texts drawn from multiple sources. Her films have been presented at festivals internationally.

Theo Jean Cuthand

Theo Jean Cuthand was born in Regina, Saskatchewan in 1978. Since 1995, he has been making experimental videos and films, and more recently, has expanded to feature films and video game development. Cuthand's work has been screened and exhibited widely in Canada and the United States. He is a trans man who uses he/him pronouns. He is Plains Cree and Scots, and resides in Toronto.

Tianhui Wu

Tianhui Wu is a Hainanese artist and filmmaker currently based in Edinburgh. Her works examine the body as political by blending her personal transnational experiences and incorporating personal memory under collective trauma. She engages with historical and contemporary perspectives on East and Southeast Asian identity, memory, and resistance.

Tomonari Nishikawa

Born in Nagoya, Japan in 1969, Tomonari Nishikawa was a filmmaker, artist, curator, and friend to many in the experimental film community. His films explore the idea of documenting situations/phenomena through a chosen medium and technique—often focusing on process itself. His work has been screened at numerous film festivals and art venues worldwide, including TIFF and New York Film Festival. Nishikawa passed away in April 2025 in New York, where he was Chair of the Cinema Department at Binghamton University.

Yuula Benivolski

Yuula Benivolski (b. 1980, Moscow) is an artist and filmmaker working with 16mm film, video, photography and projection. She constructs auto-fictional narratives through forensic explorations of landscapes and their corresponding archives, to examine how major historical events are remembered and portrayed by those who witnessed them. Most recently, her work has been shown at e-flux Screening Room (2023), San Francisco Cinematheque (2024), DOXA Documentary Film Festival (2025), Millennium Film Workshop (2025), DIFFUSION Film Festival (2025), and the Barbican Centre (2026). She is currently completing her first feature, titled The Black Box is Orange.

Zeynep Dadak

Zeynep Dadak is a Berlin-based filmmaker and interdisciplinary artist. Her work merges fiction and non-fiction to examine questions of identity, memory, and politics of emotion. She holds a PhD in Film from NYU Tisch School of the Arts, and her films were screened at Berlinale, Rotterdam, and AFI among other major festivals.

Zhongyao Wang

Zhongyao Wang, born in Harbin in 1996, lives and works in Beijing. She graduated from the Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts. Zhongyao's practice spans digital video, installation, sculpture, and writing. Her work has been shortlisted for the Lumen Prize and has been exhibited internationally at venues including the Venice Arsenale, TANK Shanghai, and The Wrong Biennale.

List by Name:

Alper Turan
Anouk Verviers
Arief Budiman
Brandon Poole
Carlo Nasisse
Cassie Packham
Chloë Gordon
Chris Kennedy
Christina Battle
Çiçek Kahraman
Clint Enns
Dayna McLeod
Defne Kirmizi
Deirdre Logue
Diana Esther
E. Jane
Elena Calvo Polo
Elisabeth Subrin
Eliza Chandler
Eshan Rafi
Fan Wu
Félix Caraballo
Fox Maxy
Ghislan Sutherland-Timm
Jake Starr
Karthik Pandian
Katie Lawson
Kiera Boult
Kym McDaniel
Marion Balac
Michaela Michalak
Mikiki
Naomi Rincón-Gallardo
Oona Taper
Patricio Escartín
Quenton Miller
Radin Khodadadi
Renèe Helèna Browne
Richard Ibghy & Marilou Lemmens
Sabīne Šnē
Serena Lee
Sofia Dona
Sophie Sabet
Stéphanie Lagarde
Theo Cuthand
Tianhui Wu
Yuula Benivolski
Zeynep Dadak
Zhongyao Wang

Venues

CineCycle

129 Spadina Avenue

Located in the old coach house down the lane behind 129 Spadina Avenue, on the east side between Richmond Street West and Adelaide Street West. CineCycle is not yet fully wheelchair accessible. The laneway entrance beside 129 Spadina has two steps and no automatic doors. The rear entrance has no steps, but the path is uneven. Inside, the space (including gender-neutral washrooms) is all on one level. We're working with the 401 building to improve accessibility. If you have any specific access needs or would like to arrange a walkthrough, please get in touch.

Innis Town Hall

2 Sussex Avenue, Toronto ON M5S 1J5

Sidewalk-level entrance, elevator and ramp available, door width 32 inches, no automatic doors. No accessible parking on site. Four wheelchair-accessible seats in the cinema. 15 step-free seats in row 9. Accessible gender-neutral washrooms located on the 2nd and 3rd floors.

Le Laboratoire d’art

277 - 401 Richmond Street West, Toronto ON M5V 3A8

Located on the second floor of 401 Richmond, Le Labo is in a wheelchair-accessible building equipped with an elevator to each level of the building. It has two wheelchair-accessible entrance ways via Dark Horse Café (east of Spadina Avenue) and the northeast corner of the building with ramp access and automatic doors.

TIFF Lightbox

Reitman Square, 350 King Street W., Toronto, ON M5V 3X5

Please check www.tiff.net for daily hours of operation
TIFF Lightbox's entire building is accessible to people in wheelchairs or with any other mobility impairments. We have escalators to each level with publicly accessible cinemas, lobby elevators to all levels, and barrier-free washroom facilities on each level.

Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space

440-401 Richmond St West Toronto, ON M5V 3A8

Street level entrance, ramp, elevator, automatic doors, door width 34”. Gender neutral accessible (32”+) washrooms, stall, no automatic door. No accessible parking on site. To access Bachir/Yerex, use either the stairs or elevator to the 4th floor.

Charles Street Video

76 Geary Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M6H 2B5

Charles Street Video is located on the ground floor at 76 Geary Ave. There is a short set of steps at the double-door entrance and an accessibility ramp to reach a second, single-door entrance. All doors open outwards, and none are powered.

Tickets

Ticket Information

To ensure experimental moving images is more widely available, Images Festival is committed to reducing financial barriers by offering a selective-tier ticket price to our programs. By opting into a ticket price, our hope is that Images attendees can reflect and support our efforts based on accountability, on mutual reciprocity, and encourage programming that reflects our broader community.

Tickets to Images Festival's screenings are available on a sliding scale including tiers at $50, $15, $5, and $0. Tickets are available at our online box office at imagesfestival.com. If there are tickets still available on the day of the screening, patrons can purchase tickets in-person at Innis Town Hall.

Passes

Please review our website for the most up to date information on passes and pricing.

Festival passes are available for $65 and provide access to all screenings. We will first allocate seats in the theatre for pass-holders, which are then released once the screening begins, at which time they become available to the rush line.

Industry passes are available for $65 to artists, curators, filmmakers, and arts administrators. These passes provide access to all festival screenings as well as online access to the same screenings, the latter of which remain available for two weeks after the festival ends. In-person pass holders have priority seating, but any unclaimed seats will be released to the rush line once the screening begins.

Student Passes are available for $30. You must bring a student ID with you when picking up your Student Industry Pass. Student Industry Passes provide access to all festival screenings on a rush basis.

All gallery exhibitions and online programs are free.

Please email frontofhouse@imagesfestival.com with any questions.

Awards

2026 Images Festival Awards

Independent Jury: Hiba Ali, eunice belador, and Saffron Maeve

Boundless Vision Award

Awarded to a festival project that is expansive and imaginative in vision, while creatively resourceful in its production and execution. This award was established in 2015 to honour Scott Miller Berry, who was the Executive Director at Images Festival for a decade. The prize is $1,500 cash and is sponsored by Deanna Wong, Charles Street Video, Scott Miller Berry, Oakville Galleries and an anonymous donor.

Radical Forms Award

This honour goes to an artist whose work is impervious to constraints—willful, unruly, and uncontrollable. This award was established in 2000 to honour the former Executive Director Deirdre Logue. The prize is $1,000 cash and is sponsored by V tape, Deirdre Logue and an anonymous donor.

York University Award for Best Student Work

Awarded to the best student work on screen. The prize is $500 cash, and is sponsored by York University's Department of Cinema & Media Arts.

Niagara Custom Lab Award

The Niagara Custom Lab Award is presented to artists and filmmakers who maintain a curiosity and commitment to exploring celluloid within their films. The recipient will receive access to laboratory services including processing, scanning and printing motion picture film at Niagara Custom Lab, valued at $1,200. Sponsored by Niagara Custom Lab.

For the Love of Celluloid

Since 1982, Main Film, located in Tiohtià:ke (Montreal), has been recognized by its peers as an artists' center that nurtures and uplifts the emergence of a vibrant and innovative generation of filmmakers, especially within the analog practice. We are proud to be defenders of the analog practice in Canada. Main Film is excited to sponsor the "For the Love of Celluloid" award, to be presented at Images Festival. This award aims to celebrate and honour the exceptional dedication and passion for celluloid film within the independent cinema scene. The prize is $500 cash and is sponsored by Main Film.

Astrolab Production Award

Awarded to an emerging filmmaker who showcases an exciting synthesis of curiosity, experimentation, and innovation. The recipient will receive a certificate valid for one day of production in Studio 1 of Astrolab Studios, valued at $3750. Sponsored by Astrolab Studios.

Jury

eunice bélidor

Montréal-born eunice bélidor is a curator, author, and researcher. She is a scholar-in-residence at Concordia University, teaching in the Graduate Curatorial Practice Diploma. Her current curatorial methodology focuses on epistolary writing and its intersection with radical hospitality, care, as well as affective and speculative archiving and racial issues. She has published essays and reviews in various publications, books and journals, notably in C Magazine, The Brooklyn Rail, Hyperallergic, Vie des Arts and Espace. Her exhibitions have been presented in Canada and Europe, more recently at Centre Clark, the MAI, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, the Musée d'art Contemporain, and at Galerie de l'UQAM. In 2018, she was the recipient of the Hnatyshyn Foundation–TD Bank Group Emerging Curator in Contemporary Art Award. She has held curatorial and managerial positions at articule, the FOFA Gallery at Concordia University (Montréal), and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. She is currently a film curator and programmer at the Montreal International Arts Film Festival (FIFA).

Saffron Maeve

Saffron Maeve is a Toronto-based critic and film programmer. She is a regular contributor to The Globe and Mail, and her writing has appeared in Film Comment, Sight and Sound, Reverse Shot, MUBI Notebook, Documentary Magazine, and more. She is the curator of the screening series CONTOURS at Paradise Theatre and Apparatus Theory at Revue Cinema, and the quarterly reading series Crit Salon. Saffron has curated programs for TIFF, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Cinematheque (BC), and Spectacle Theater. Presently, Saffron is pursuing a PhD in Cinema & Media Studies at York University.

Hiba Ali

Dr. Hiba Ali is a digital artist, scholar, and educator working across immersive environments, installation, moving image, garments, and sound. At the intersection of technology, embodiment, and care, their practice explores how digital space can become a site of rest, healing, and collective transformation. Rooted in worldbuilding and digital somatics, Ali creates XR-based environments that center refuge, agency, and embodied connection, particularly for bodies shaped by migration, diaspora, and colonial histories.

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Airian McLeish
Film and Video Reviser

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Ghislan Sutherland-Timm
2026 Images Festival Emerging Curator

Alper Turan
Katie Lawson
Kiera Boult
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THANKS

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York University Department of Cinema & Media Arts
Zamalek

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Centre for Sustainable Curating
Cinecycle
Charles Street Video
Critical Distance Centre for Curators
Digital Arts Resource Centre
ED Video
Factory Media
Festival of Recorded Movement (FORM)
Future of Film Festival
Gallery TPW
imagiNATIVE
Innis Town Hall
Inside Out
Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice, University of British Columbia

InterAccess
Le Labo francophone and media artist-run centre
Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto
Media Arts Network of Ontario/Réseau des arts médiatiques de l'Ontario (MANO/RAMO)
Media City Film Festival
Mercer Union
MENA Film Festival
MOMENTA
Planet in Focus
Rendezvous with Madness Festival
Summerworks
Toronto Arab Film Festival
Toronto Dance Theatre
Toronto Queer Film Festival
Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival
University of Toronto Cinema Studies Institute
VIVO
VTape
Women and Gender Studies, University of Toronto
National Film Board of Canada
NIMAC
Xpace
YYZ Artists Outlet

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