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### Kingston film festival has U.S. flavour

Posted By Sarah Crosbie

Posted 11 hours ago

This year's Kingston Canadian Film Festival could easily be dubbed the Kingston Canadian Hollywood Film Fest.

For the past seven years, the annual event has featured Canadian films with largely unknown Canadian casts.

This year, it's like the United States has invaded our little celebration of Canadian cinema.

Today, the festival will announce its full lineup of 18 films for the Feb. 27 to March 2 event. Many of the movies have big-name stars.

Most notably, of course, is Kingston director Bruce McDonald's film *The Tracey Fragments*, which features Ellen Page, the breakout star of the year who is nominated for a best actress Academy Award for her role in *Juno*, a story about teenage pregnancy.

*Emotional Arithmetic*, a film about three people who met at a Nazi detention camp in the Second World War, and reunite 35 years later, stars powerhouses Susan Sarandon, Christopher Plummer and Gabriel Byrne. It also stars Quebec actor Roy Dupuis, who also plays the main role in the Romeo Dallaire story *Shake Hands With the Devil*.

*Poor Boy's Game*, a movie about a white man who must move back to his crime-infested neighbourhood after serving time for almost beating a man to death, stars Danny Glover.

*Walk All Over Me*, a movie about a small-town girl who ends up crashing in the big city with a dominatrix, stars Leelee Sobieski, and *All Hat*, a film about an ex-con who moves back to small-town Ontario and concocts a plan to save local farms, features Rachael Leigh Cook.

Even Robert Englund, better known as Freddy Krueger from *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, stars in a film.

Festival director Alison Migneault said there are a surprising number of celebrities in this year's batch of films.

"It's interesting there are a lot of Hollywood stars," she said.

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"People are making a foray into Canadian film. That's a testament to the fact that Canadian films are really good."

That's not the end of the Hollywood story. This year's film festival will also be showing two shorts that are up for Oscars.

In 1969, teenager Josh Raskin snuck into a Toronto hotel to interview John Lennon about his "bed-in" peace protests. Thirty-eight years later, he's turned it into the Oscar-nominated animated short, *I Met The Walrus*. That film will compete against *Madame Tutli-Putli*, a stop-motion animation film, in the animated short category.

(Kingstonians can still submit their shorts to the festival for possible inclusion. The deadline is Feb. 15.)

The festival will feature big-names, but it will also highlight local ones. Two of this year's feature films are local productions. *Cabfair*, by Justin Chenier, is being called "The Trailer Park Boys meets Taxi Driver on the mean streets of Kingston." The fictional documentary follows cabbie Reggie O'Brien through the streets of the city as he endures countless adventures.

*The Death of Indie Rock*, directed by Rob Fitl, is about three guys in a band who jump at a chance at a regular-paying gig in Montreal. Both movies were shot in Kingston.

Though there are films with Hollywood celebrities and films that are purely local, Migneault said she expects *How She Move* to be the No. 1 draw. It's a dance movie about a girl who must drop out of her private school and move back to her poor neighbourhood, where she becomes the girl everyone knew - an incredible step dancer.

The movie is unlike anything the festival has ever brought to Kingston and Migneault is hoping it will lure some younger movie fans to the festival.

  
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The Kingston Canadian Film Festival will also be targeting high school students this year. On Feb. 29, the festival will be going to Holy Cross Secondary School for a one-day mini Canadian film festival.

In the coming days, Migneault will announce the celebrities who'll be coming to promote their films.

Migneault is hoping Queen's University alumnus Tom Cavanagh will be returning to the city to promote Breakfast With Scot, the gala opening film about a gay sports broadcaster who unexpectedly becomes a parent when his partner becomes the legal guardian of his nephew, Scot - who turns out to be flamboyantly gay.

"We always try to open with a warm-hearted comedy," she said. "It's a cute film and what our audience expects for our opening night film."

For more information on the Kingston Canadian Film Festival, visit [www.kingcanfilmfest.com](http://www.kingcanfilmfest.com).

Kingston Canadian Film Festival list of entries

**Breakfast With Scot:** Starring Queen's University grad Tom Cavanagh, this movie tells the story of a former NHL player turned sports broadcaster who is gay. He's forced to examine why he's still in the closet with many people when his partner becomes the guardian of a young boy, Scot, who is outrageously flamboyant.

**How She Move:** A movie for the dance-loving crowd. A high school student is forced to leave her private school and return to her crime-filled neighbourhood where she rekindles a love for dancing. Starring Keyshia Cole as herself.

**All Hat:** An ex-con returns to his rural Ontario roots and outwits a wealthy thoroughbred owner trying to take over local farms.

**Up The Yangtze:** Made by Chinese-Canadian filmmaker Yung Chang, the documentary explores the Yangtze - known in China as "The River" - and its role in the Chinese economy.

**Continental, Un Film Sans Fusil:** A French film with English subtitles, this film is a dark but comic look at the strange things people do to cure their loneliness.

**The Tracey Fragments:** The movie, by Kingston director Bruce McDonald, stars Oscar nominee Ellen Page as a bullied teen in Winnipeg. It is shown almost entirely in split-screen. McDonald will be at the festival to promote his film and take part in the annual filmmaker seminar.

**Amal:** Amal is the only honest auto-rickshaw wallah in India, generous even to a cheat in tattered clothes - who turns out to be a millionaire who leaves his fortune to Amal. Now, someone just has to find him among the thousands of speeding auto-rickshaws.

**Muffins for Granny:** Filmmaker Nadia McLaren interviews seven First Nations elders about their experiences in residential schools. Her Ojibway grandmother also spent time in a residential school.

**Walk All Over Me:** Tricia Helfer of Canada's Next Top Model and Battlestar Galactica fame, stars in this movie about the misadventures of two dominatrixes in Vancouver who get mixed up with a bunch of bad guys out looking for their cash.

**Emotional Arithmetic:** Three people who formed a life-long bond while housed at a detention camp during the Second World War are reunited 35 years later. The threesome must resolve issues of trust, unrequited love and survival.

**Bluff:** A French movie with English subtitles, this comedy-ensemble film is about a condemned house that faces demolition until an inspector makes a discovery inside the house.

**The Green Chain:** Everything you ever wanted to know about British Columbia's logging industry.

**Toi:** A French movie with English subtitles, Toi is an erotic and sexually explicit look at the complex line between happiness and desire.

**Jack Brooks: Monster Slayer:** A blood-and-gore movie about a plumber who's been angry ever since his family was murdered by a creature. One night, at night school, his professor unleashes an ancient curse with terrifying results.

**Poor Boy's Game:** This movie is about a white man who beats a black man almost to death. After serving his time in prison, the man must go back to the same violent neighbourhood that created him. But when he returns, he finds an unlikely ally: the father of the boy he left to die.

**The Death of Indie Rock:** Three friends are in a band, stuck working low-paying jobs. But then, a dream job of a regular gig in Montreal opens up. But they learn the road to fame is a bumpy one.

**Cabfair:** In this fictional documentary, a film crew follows a cabbie around the streets of Kingston, documenting his crazy daily adventures.

**Shake Hands With the Devil:** A film adaptation of the Romeo Dallaire autobiography of the same name, it stars Quebec film star Roy Dupuis, who also played hockey legend Maurice Richard in *The Rocket*. **Late Fragment:** This film allows the viewer to play a sort of choose-your-own-adventure game by controlling the flow of the story with the click of a button. This film will be a special presentation. Those interested in seeing it will need to book a time through the film festival.

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