

For Immediate Release

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**FIN Atlantic International Film Festival announces
full festival program for event, September 12 - 19 in Halifax**

(Halifax, NS) – **FIN Atlantic International Film Festival** announced its full program today, featuring over 120 film screenings and a full slate of special events, to be presented over eight days in Halifax, September 12-19.

The **Opening Night Gala** returns to the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium at the Dalhousie Arts Centre on Thursday, September 12 at 7 p.m. *Murmur*, the debut feature film from award-winning Halifax filmmaker Heather Young, has been selected as the Festival's Opening Night Gala presentation. *Murmur* tells the story of sixty-something year-old Donna who, following a DUI charge, is scheduled to perform community service in an animal rescue shelter. Over time, she begins to relate to the abandoned animals that surround her, and she forms a particular bond with a senior dog, Charlie, who she brings home to prevent from being euthanized. She begins rescuing other animals from the shelter and buying them online, until her small apartment is over-run — her unchecked compulsion for connection ultimately causing her home and life to fall into further disarray.

Murmur captures the quiet, contemplative story of a woman who, grappling with alcohol dependence and loneliness, struggles to find a way to ease the pain. Starring a cast of Nova Scotian non-professional actors, many of whom are playing themselves in the film, Young skillfully crafts an enduring story of aging and the human-animal connection.

Following the Opening Night Gala film presentation is the **FIN Atlantic International Film Festival's Opening Night Celebration**. With a reputation as one of Halifax's most anticipated parties of the year, this red-carpet event will take place at the The Waegwoltic Club on Thursday, September 12, starting at 9 p.m.

The Festival's **Closing Night Gala** on Thursday, September 19 at 7 p.m. will be *The Lighthouse*, directed by Robert Eggers (*The VVitch*). Eggers chose Nova Scotia's Yarmouth and Cape Forchu as the place to shoot this dark and stormy tale of two men stationed on an off-shore lighthouse for four weeks in the late 1890's. Over the course of the time they spend together, they descend into a maelstrom of terror and madness. Willem Dafoe and Robert Pattinson both deliver Oscar-calibre performances alongside stunning black and white cinematography that beautifully captures the punishing weather of the Atlantic coast.

Following the Closing Night Gala film presentation is the Festival's time-honoured **Closing Night Party**, which will take place on Thursday, September 19, starting at 9 p.m. (location TBA, check finfestival.ca for details).

In addition to the Festival's Opening and Closing nights, this year's Gala Presentations lineup will once again feature screenings at both 6:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. Featured in the **6:30 p.m. Gala Presentations** are two Atlantic Canadian productions: legendary Canadian documentarian John Walker's *Assholes: A Theory*, about – you guessed it – assholes and what makes them tick; and, *Conviction*, from directors Nance Ackerman, Ariella Pahlke, and Teresa MacInnes, which envisions alternatives to prison through the eyes of women behind bars. The 6:30 p.m. Gala Presentations program also includes, François Girard's *The Song of*

Names, Atom Egoyan's ***Guest of Honour***, and François Ozon's ***Grâce à Dieu (By the Grace of God)***.

"The Atlantic International Film Festival has always been about discovery of awesome films from around the world, and wow are we setting the bar this year," said Wayne Carter, Executive Director. "From the astounding opener "Murmur", the debut feature from Halifax filmmaker Heather Young to the locally shot bonafide Oscar contender "The Lighthouse" as the closer, we are giving audiences the opportunity to travel around the world through film and back again with some of the best movies this year."

Also included in the 6:30 p.m. Gala Presentations is the **Reel East Coast Shorts Gala**. Presented by CBC, the Reel East Coast Shorts Gala features nine short films on Wednesday, September 18. The evening will feature works by an impressive cast of Atlantic Canadian filmmakers, including Deanne Foley's ***Radical***; Jenna MacMillan's ***Sunnyside***; Jillian Acreman's ***North***; Adam DeViller's ***Bad Morning***; Anna Wheeler's ***Melody***; Millefiore Clarkes' ***Solastalgia***; Bretten Hannam's ***Wildfire***; Charles Wahl's ***Little Grey Bubbles***; and Sandi Rankaduwa's ***Ice Breakers***.

Featured in the 9:30 p.m. Gala Presentations are: Céline Sciamma's critically acclaimed ***Portrait of a Lady on Fire (Portrait de la jeune fille en feu)***; Ellen Page and Ian Daniel's ***There's Something in the Water***, a personal journey exploring environmental racism in Nova Scotia; Nicolas Bedos' comedic ***La belle époque***; Ken Loach's social drama ***Sorry We Missed You***; Rupert Goold's ***Judy***, starring Renée Zellweger as Judy Garland; and Laurence Mathieu-Leger's ***Willy***, the story of Fredericton-born hall of famer, Willie O'Ree, who was the first Black hockey player in the NHL.

Featuring the newest and most anticipated films of the year, moviegoers will want to be first in line to see the 2019 Special Presentations lineup, sponsored by Cineplex Events. Savour the sights and sounds of soon to be award-winning films: ***Parasite (Gisaengchung)***, the Palme d'Or winning black comedy from acclaimed Korean auteur Bong Joon-ho; ***Blood Quantum***, the latest feature from Canadian writer-director Jeff Barnaby (*Rhymes for Young Ghouls*) that follows the spread of a zombie plaque through a Mi'gmaq community; ***Gordon Lightfoot: If You Could Read My Mind***, a deeply personal conversation with the acclaimed singer/songwriter from filmmakers Joan Tosoni and Martha Kehoe; ***American Woman***, the debut feature from Semi Chellas and starring Hong Chau and Sarah Gadon; ***Les Misérables***, the Cannes Jury Prize winner from French filmmaker Ladj Ly; ***Mystify: Michael Hutchence*** from writer/director Richard Lowenstein, an intimate look at the late INXS lead singer that uses never before seen archive footage, outtakes, and private home video; ***Cunningham***, a 3D cinematic experience about legendary American choreographer Merce Cunningham from director Alla Kovgan; ***Where Does A Body End***, a vivid portrait of the music and legacy of the band Swans from director Marco Porsia; ***It Must Be Heaven***, the latest sly comedy from filmmaker Palestinian filmmaker Elia Suleiman; ***Linda Ronstadt: The Sound Of My Voice***, a profile of the singer's tumultuous life and times of one of the most successful and versatile female singers of the 20th century from directors Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman; ***The Last Full Measure***, a fact-based war drama from director Todd Robinson and starring Sebastian Stan, Christopher Plummer, William Hurt, Ed Harris, Samuel L. Jackson, and Peter Fonda; ***Where's My Roy Cohn?*** a dissection of the political powerbroker from Matt Tyrnauer; ***Float Like A Butterfly***, the story of an aspiring Irish female boxer from director Carmel Winters; and, ***The Whistlers (La Gomera)***, a Romanian crime thriller from filmmaker Corneliu Porumboiu.

The **EXTREME** Program is back this year with more wild and unexpected trips. From Brazil comes **Bachurau** (Kleber Mendonça Filho and Juliano Dornelles) a far-out riff on the “spaghetti western” featuring bounty hunters, ghosts, UFO’s and copious amounts of blood. Lauded by director Guillermo Del Toro, **Monos** (Alejandro Landes) is “Apocalypse Now” meets “Lord of The Flies” featuring guerilla warfare child soldiers in a stunning and tension filled film that could only be described as epic and monumental.

Atlantic Canadian productions are well represented in both the **Features** and **Documentaries** programs, including: **Body & Bones** (Melanie Oates); **Entropic** (R.W. Gray); **Radical Age** (Jackie Torrens); **Drag Kids** (Megan Wennberg); **It Was All So Wonderful: The Everyday Magic of Mary Pratt** (Kenneth J. Harvey); **Her Last Project** (Rosvita Dransfeld); **Hear Here!** and **The Mill** (Daniel Baugh); **A Fire in the Cold Season** (Justin Oakey); **L'Nuk 101: Finding Common Ground** and **Atautsikut / Leaving None Behind** (John Houston); **Luben & Elena: The Art of Love and The Love of Art** (Ellia Yonova); **Nakatuenita - Respect** (Kent Martin); **Searching for God in India** (Alan Collins); **A Shadow in the Mirror** (Ron Foley Macdonald); **We Are Sailor People** (Julie Stewart); **What Happened to Holly Bartlett** (Sonya Jampolsky); and **Never Too Old** (Marcia Connolly).

Rounding out this year’s complete program is a top-tier lineup of features and documentaries from Canada and around the world. Viewers will delight in a wide range of films such as: **Antigone** (Sophie Deraspe); **Happy New Year, Colin Burstead** (Ben Wheatley); **The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open** (Kathleen Hepburn and Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers); **Jordan River Anderson, The Messenger** (Alanis Obomsawin); **Alpha, The Right to Kill** (Brillante Mendoza); **The Cake General (Tårtgeneralen)** (Filip Hammar and Fredrik Wikingsson); **Il pleuvait des oiseaux (And the Birds Rained Down)** (Louise Archambault); **Clifton Hill** (Albert Shin); **Young Ahmed (Le Jeune Ahmed)** (Jean-Pierre Dardenne; Luc Dardenne); **Come to Daddy** (Ant Timpson); **Temblores (Tremors)** (Jayro Bustamante); **The Twentieth Century** (Mathew Rankin); **Killing Patient Zero** (Laurie Lynd); **It’s in the Blood (San Fhuil)** (Beatrix A. Wood); **Cleanin’ Up the Town: Remembering Ghostbusters** (Anthony Bueno); **Sometimes, Always, Never** (Carl Hunter); **To Live to Sing (Huo zhe chang zhe)** (Johnny Ma); **Because We Are Girls** (Baljit Sangra); **Blue Note Records: Beyond the Notes** (Sophie Huber); **King Bibi** (Dan Shadur); **The Rest of Us** (Aisling Chin-Yee); **There Are No Fakes** (Jamie Kastner); **Standing on the Line** (Paul Émile d’Entremont); **The Lodge** (Severin Fiala and Veronika Franz); **Who Let the Dogs Out** (Brent Hodge); and **Nomad: In the Footsteps of Bruce Chatwin** (Werner Herzog).

In partnership with the **Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (AGNS)**, the Festival will also include a presentation of the work of **Althea Thauberger**, who will be the subject of an exhibit at the AGNS this Fall. Part of the Documentaries Program are two of Thauberger’s innovative documentaries which will be screened on Sunday, September 15 at 2 p.m. The works presented are: **Mad Mad Mad Mad Filmy World (Pagal Pagal Pagal Pagal Filmy Dunya)** and **Take Back Benčić (Preuzmimo Benčić)**.

Returning to the Festival once again this year is the **Restored! Program**. Screening as a compliment to the presentation of the final film by Agnès Varda (1928-2019), **Varda by Agnès** – in the Festival’s Documentaries Program – this year’s Restored Program features four seminal films directed by Varda throughout her career. One of the most important and innovative filmmakers in the history of cinema, the four Varda films included, that have recently undergone restoration efforts, are: **Cléo de 5 à 7** (1962), **Le bonheur** (1965), **Mur murs** (1980), and **Vagabond** (1985).

The Festival is also honoured to work with the **Nova Scotia Talent Trust** in celebration of their **75th Anniversary**. Curated by Shannon Brownlee, a short film program entitled ***Then, Now, Change: Visions of Nova Scotia*** will be presented on Thursday, September 19 at 9:10 p.m., and features the work of past recipients of the Nova Scotia Talent Trust's Scholarships and Awards.

Also included in this year's lineup is a wide selection of **Short Film Programs**, featuring both Canadian and international selections.

The 2019 Atlantic International Film Festival will host several one-of-a-kind special events and parties to celebrate the movies, the people and the city of Halifax. Returning is **Festival Music House Atlantic**, presented by Radio Starmaker Fund. This year's lineup includes Halifax legend **Matt Mays**, one of R&B's most exciting new stars **Reeny Smith** and country music sensation **Makayla Lynn**. The Festival will host the 39th Atlantic International Film Festival Awards Reception, presented in partnership with the Linda Joy Media Arts Society, honoring the amazing talents of Atlantic Canadian film industry professionals,

FIN Partners, a unique event focusing on film, television, and digital fiction projects from across Canada and around the world, will take place from September 12-14 as part of FIN Atlantic International Film Festival. Each year, top Canadian and international industry players (including producers, investors, sales agents, funding agencies, broadcasters and distributors) are selected to attend. Recognized as one of the world's pre-eminent co-production markets and celebrating its 22nd year, FIN Partners 2019 is shining the spotlight brightly on the **United Kingdom, Ireland**, and the **USA** for the second of a two-year focus. Offering close to 1,000 pre-scheduled 1-2-1 meetings, co-production focused roundtable sessions, cutting edge panels, visionary keynote speakers, screenings and receptions as well as the popular Nova Scotia Lobster Dinner by the Sea, FIN Partners delivers unparalleled co-production and financing possibilities.

This year, FIN Partners will welcome delegates from more than 20 countries from as far as New Zealand, Russia and India, as well as delegations from the UK and Ireland. Selected producers will attend with more than 100 creative and commercial projects in development, with the goal of moving their projects one step closer to production.

In addition to a full program of networking events and panel discussions with industry leaders, the market will kick off with an opening keynote conversation with London-based producer, Finola Dwyer, a twice Oscar-nominated, BAFTA award-winning film & television producer. Finola runs Wildgaze Films, one of the UK's leading independent production companies with her producing partner Amanda Posey. In addition to acclaimed titles including ***Their Finest, Our Souls at Night, An Education***, and more, Wildgaze's 2016 film ***Brooklyn*** took the North American box office by storm and was nominated for three Oscars (including Best Picture) and six BAFTAs, winning the Outstanding British Film BAFTA. As a three-way co-production between the United Kingdom, Canada, and Ireland, ***Brooklyn*** is a shining example of the co-production potential within this year's Spotlight region.

FIN Partners' panel discussions explore co-production financing and up-to-the-minute distribution strategies and are stacked with some of the entertainment industry's most influential leaders who are equipped with the knowledge and experience necessary to lead spirited discussions which will pique our curiosity, infusing new energy into the conversations we have on the ground at FIN Partners.

For more information, visit: finpartners.ca.

Tickets for screenings and special events along with passes are on sale TODAY, August 14 at 1 p.m.

Tickets will be available online at finfestival.ca. Tickets will also be available at the Festival Box Office in Park Lane Mall (5657 Spring Garden Road) beginning Tuesday, September 3. For hours of operation, visit: finfestival.ca.

Tickets for the Opening Night Film & Celebration go on sale TODAY, Wednesday, August 14 at 1 p.m. and will be available through the Dalhousie Arts Centre Box Office (6101 University Ave.), by phone at 1-800-874-1669 and online at dal.ca/dept/arts-centre or finfestival.ca. Tickets for the Opening Night Celebration alone will be available at finfestival.ca or at the Festival Box Office.

"The key ingredient of everything we do here at FIN is always the incredible support we receive from our sponsors and audience and when you mix that with top-drawer efforts from our staff and volunteers you have the mixture for magic," added Carter. "We pride ourselves on producing events that are open and accessible to everyone."

About FIN Atlantic International Film Festival

FIN Atlantic International Film Festival is an eight-day celebration of film and media from around the world. It's a festival that turns Halifax into an international mecca for the arts, abuzz with movie-lovers and filmmakers alike. Discover a variety of local, national and international films that explore all corners of life, culture, entertainment and the global human experience. A champion of Atlantic Canadian filmmakers, all of our film selections are chosen with our audience in mind and our special events are designed to bring our community together.

A not-for-profit organization, FIN began as a tiny, grassroots operation in St. John's, Newfoundland in 1981, relocating to Halifax the following year. Nearly four decades later, FIN Atlantic International Film Festival has evolved into one of Canada's premier film festivals. Whether for unabashed film-lovers, curious onlookers, or industry folks, FIN offers an ocean of opportunities to engage through the celebration of film.

FIN is now a year-round celebration of film, growing beyond our cornerstone event in September to include: FIN Partners, FIN Kids, FIN Outdoor, FIN Makers and FIN Campus.

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Film photos: [HERE](#)

For interviews opportunities and to apply for media accreditation, contact:

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