



Always honest, not always pretty.

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“Always Honest, Not Always Pretty”

**2015 FEMALE EYE FILM FESTIVAL
ANNOUNCES AWARD WINNERS AND FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS**

The 13th Annual Female Eye Film Festival, which ran from June 16th to June 21st, 2015 in Toronto Canada, wrapped up the six-day event on Sunday night with the CLOSING AWARDS CEREMONY and RECEPTION at The Royal Cinema. The evening’s event included the announcement of festival film Award Winners (listed below) and a tribute to the 2015 Honourary Guests. Screenings boasted full houses, artists took part in panel discussions and workshops including three Best In the Biz Tributes, as well as Industry moderated panels with public funders, and other decision makers in television, digital media, and distribution along with pitch sessions for writers with screenplays.

The 2015 festival is proud to have presented eighty-six (86) feature and short films from across Canada, the United States, and other countries including Armenia, France, Italy, Germany, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Iran, India, Australia, Taiwan, Uganda, and the Philippines, as well as sixteen (16) screenplays from North America and Mexico, with eleven Script Readings read by ACTRA Members.

Leslie Ann Coles, Founder/ Executive & Artistic Director of The Female Eye: “It is a great honour and a privilege to be among so many talented, determined, and creative women filmmakers. The FeFF will stand as long as women directors require an exclusive showcase in which to screen their work. As long as the issue of gender inequity prevails in our industry, so shall the Female Eye Film Festival.”

Coles also announced the dates of the 2016 festival have also been announced: June 14th – June 19th, 2016. Submissions are already being taken, with an early deadline of July 31st, 2015.

Below is a summary of BEST IN THE BIZ acceptance speeches, as well as official competition film AWARD WINNERS.

Léa Pool, RECIPIENT OF THE HONOURARY DIRECTOR AWARD 2015.

Member of the Order of Canada; Award-winning, internationally distributed filmmaker.

"I first began making films in the eighties as a young woman. All I wanted was to express my own vision, my own language, and my own emotions. I remember being apprehensive presenting my films at women's film festivals, with fear of being labeled as a "feminist filmmaker," or as a "gay filmmaker. I was afraid to be marginalized. I'm still concerned by the ongoing inequalities of our industry where few women's voices are heard. Fortunately and as usual, women are standing strong. So, I believe it's important to get involved, to teach, to support and inspire women filmmakers to persist fighting for equality. I believe it is our duty."

Léa Pool's Tribute was facilitated by Carol Whiteman, President and CEO, Creative Women Workshops Association and Producer, The Women's In The Director's Chair (WIDC) program. Award sponsored by WIDC OutReach Initiative.

Sandra de Castro Buffington, RECIPIENT OF THE HONOURARY MAVERICK 2015.

Founding Director of the Global Media Center for Social Impact at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health.

"I am thrilled to be recognized by the Female Eye Film Festival. My work inspires storylines in television and film to transform our world and to change the narrative on what it means to be fully human. Storytellers have the power to illuminate what is working and to reimagine a society of opportunity, interconnectedness and outrageous love. May this award honour all creative women and awaken us to our highest potential. Director and founder Leslie Ann Coles levels the playing field in the entertainment industry by creating a platform for women's voices to be recognized and to celebrate the rich diversity of our storytellers. These are the stories the world needs to hear."

Sandra de Castro Buffington's Tribute facilitated by LA Coles, FeFF Founder/ Executive & Artistic Director.

Kay Armatage, RECIPIENT OF THE OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2015.

Scholar, teacher, filmmaker, programmer and advocate for social change.

"I was tremendously pleased the FeFF chose to honour me with this wonderful event.

The presentation was thorough and brilliant, with an array of terrific slides representing many aspects of my work over the years. I was especially happy to see so many of my old friends and colleagues there, because we worked together on nearly all my projects - academic, film production, festival organizing and curating, and feminist advocacy. The narrative of my projects was in fact a history of a community of women."

Kay Armatage Tribute facilitated by Melinda Barlow, Professor of Film at the University of Colorado.

2015 AWARD WINNING FILMS & SCREENPLAYS

BEST FILM AWARDS

Best Animation 2015, *Love in the Time of March Madness*, directed by Melissa Johnson (USA)

Best Experimental 2015, *Swallowed Whole*, directed by Heidi Kumao (USA)

Best Short Film 2015, *Lunchbox Loser*, directed by Virginia Abramovich (Canada)

Best Debut Filmmaker 2015, *Reign*, directed by Corey Misquita (Canada)

Best Debut Feature 2015, *The Park Bench*, directed by Ann LeSchander (USA)

Best Canadian Feature 2015, *Sitting on the Edge of Marlene*, directed by Ana Valine (Canada)

Best Foreign Feature 2015, *Sunday*, directed by Michelle Joy Lloyd (New Zealand)

Best Documentary 2015, *A Question of Humanity*, directed by Heather Angel Chandler (USA)

Best of Show 2015, *K'na the Dreamweaver*, directed by Ida Anita del Mundo (The Philippines)

BEST SCREENPLAYS AWARDS, presented by Script Development Officers Monica Lee Bellais (USA) and Kimberly Skyrme (USA) and Script Coordinator, Lindsey Connell.

Kimberly Skyrme: "The Female Eye Film Festival is an astonishing expression of the talent that thoughtful and intelligent women bring to the film industry. I am thrilled to be included among them as a producer for a second time and look forward to participating with FeFF again next year."

Monica Lee Bellais: "This year was a special treat to have A GOOD EGG screen, and to be a facilitator for the screenwriting workshops where we met incredibly talented Canadian actors who can bring gifted screenwriters' visions to life!"

Best Screenplay, Red Velvet Coat, written by Precious Chong (Canada)
Best Reserve, Minnie Finster, written by Jen Frankel (Canada)
Best Low Budget, Tree Hugger, written by Crystal Wood (USA)
Best Fresh Voice, A Widow, written by Zdenka Turecek (USA)
Crowd Pleaser, Minnie Finster, written by Jen Frankel (Canada)

Best Live Pitch: Chimera, written by Stacey Dodge (Canada), made possible with the support of Don Carmody Productions, and Cinespace Inc.

Jim Mirkopoulos, VP of Cinespace Toronto, "Cinespace is proud to have been a major sponsor of the FFFF for the second year now. Sitting in the live pitch contest was especially a treat, as it underscored our company's core belief: there is no shortage of great stories and amazing talent in Canada, and we definitely need to see more from the female perspective. With fewer overall opportunities to support Canadian content, and with Telefilm needing to re-focus their efforts to effectively reach this talent, supporting the FFFF is wonderful way to achieve this goal, and I urge more companies to jump aboard and make it even bigger and better next year."

OTHER FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

The OPENING RECEPTION featured a SOLO PHOTO EXHIBITION by Anna Lupien featuring 57 Quebec Women Filmmakers (Montreal, Canada).

ANNUAL FFFF TORONTO PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT, "FIRE", 14 local filmmakers: Amy Wilson , Claudette Abrams, Eddie Steiner, Elaine Brodie, Elyse Pomeranz , Imogen Whist, Inger Whist, Jenn Wilson, Kasha Sequoia Slavner , Katherine Keates, Lynn Leonard, Shannon Griffiths, and Tineke Jorritsma.

OPENING GALA FEATURE Reign written and directed by debut filmmaker, Corey Misquita, produced with students and graduates of Humber College's Film and Television Production (FMTV) program, and featuring well-known Canadian actors Samantha Weinstein (ACTRA award winner), Jordan Todosey (Degrassi) and Julian Richings (X-Men: The Last Stand). Debut feature Writer/ Director Corey Misquita took home the award for BEST DEBUT FILMMAKER.

CLOSING FEATURE, The Anniversary, written and directed by Valerie Buhagiar. The Female Eye has celebrated Canadian director Valerie Buhagiar's short films over the years and was delighted to premiere her debut feature film, a comedy with Colin Mochrie (Whose Line Is It Anyway) and theater actress Deborah Hay.

5TH EDITION DIRECTORS ROUND TABLE, facilitated by Leslie Ann Coles, FeFF Founder/ Executive & Artistic Director, and Carol Whiteman, President and CEO, Creative Women Workshops Association and Producer at Women In The Director's Chair (WIDC) program, involved many filmmakers, screenwriters and producers who discussed "Issues & Tips." Discussions on leadership styles, confidence and assertiveness, shared resources with our sister filmmakers and ideas for T-Shirts and Bumper Stickers evolved out of listening what women directors have to do to garner the respect and recognition when they walk onto a set to face their predominantly male crews.

The Female Eye Film Festival would like to acknowledge its sponsors: Canada Council for the Arts (5th Edition Young Filmmaker Workshop), Ontario Media Development Corp. (OMDC), Telefilm Canada, Cinespace Film Studios, Don Carmody Productions, Vistek, Profusion Expo 2015, Artscape Youngplace, The Backroom Agency, IATSE 873, Etta Productions, Women In the Director's Chair (WIDC), Creative Women Workshops Associations, William F. White, WIFT, Alliance of Women Director's (AWD), ACTRA Toronto, The Royal Cinema, Cinemas, InkTip, Kodak, The Garo Group, Steam Whistle, and Co-op cabs.

Thank you to Rebeka Antanina Budrys, Willie Anicic, FeFF Award Sculpture & Designer. A special thanks to the Female Eye Film Programmers, Script Development Officers, Program Hosts and the Awards Jury. We applaud the talented actors who took part in the Script Reading Series.

Many thanks to all our Industry Guests and to all our fabulous volunteers, Volunteer Captains, and especially to our Volunteer Coordinator, Ruti Prikhoji, Script Coordinator, Lindsey Connell, and assistance, Melanie Berthelo, and Sandra Barletta, and to our Board of Directors and the Advisory Committee for their continued support.

Background about Female Eye Film Festival

"Always Honest, Not Always Pretty"

Founded in 2001 by independent filmmaker, Leslie-Ann Coles, the FeFF provides an exclusive showcase for women directors of independent cinema. Based in Toronto, in its inaugural year, the FeFF presented 42 films. By its tenth anniversary (2012), the festival had doubled the number of films presented, having become a competitive event with a popular Best Film and Best Screenplay Awards, Industry Initiatives Program, Best In The Biz Tributes Pitch Sessions, along with a FeFF Photo Exhibit, and the Young Filmmaker

Development Workshop.

The Female Eye produces programs that fall outside of the annual six day festival including the “December 6th” program commemorating the massacre of fourteen women at Montreal’s École Polytechnique, with a program of films speaking to issues of violence against women. Inspired by an invitation to present a slate of films at UN Headquarters on International Women’s Day (2004), the FeFF has presented select films in other cities including Female Eye Sudbury, KIN International Women’s Film Festival (Yerevan, Armenia), The Flying Broom International Women’s Film Festival (Ankara, Turkey), and in 2016 is slated to present in Bellingham WA.

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LOOKING AHEAD: 14TH ANNUAL FEMALE EYE FILM FESTIVAL, June 14th – June 19th, 2016. Early Deadline: July 31st, 2015

For more information about the festival please visit www.FemaleEyeFilmFestival.com.

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“The lack of gender equity in filmmaking [and in other arts] is perhaps a self-sustaining cycle. Movies shape the way that people see the world and by extension, the way that people see women.” - Odessa Kelebay

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