

Beat: Vips

## **Fifth Edition of the BIRKS DIAMOND TRIBUTE TO THE YEAR S WOMEN IN FILM at TIFF**

### **Telefilm Canada and Birks Partner Again**

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**USPA NEWS** - Telefilm Canada and Birks partner once again for the Fifth Edition of the Birks Diamond Tribute to the Year's Women in Film during the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). This year's Honourees reflect Canada's Rich Talent and the Diversity of our Storytellers from coast-to-coast-to-coast :

Telefilm Canada and Birks partner once again for the Fifth Edition of the Birks Diamond Tribute to the Year's Women in Film during the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). This year's Honourees reflect Canada's Rich Talent and the Diversity of our Storytellers from coast-to-coast-to-coast : Directors Alethea Arnaquq-Baril, Ashley McKenzie, Catherine Bainbridge, Chloé Leriche, and Mina Shum; actors Amanda Brugel, Ellen Wong, Kawennáhere Devery Jacobs, Mylène Mackay, and Shailyn Pierre-Dixon; and screenwriters Joanne Arseneau and Sherry White.

The 12 Canadian Female Actors, Directors, and Screenwriters were selected by a Pan-Canadian Jury of 27 Journalists and Bloggers covering the World of Art, Culture and Entertainment. The Recipients will be honoured on Tuesday, September 12, 2017 at a Private Event at The Spoke Club, Toronto.

'High-profile Events such as the Birks Tribute are important because they contribute to raising the Media Profile of Female Talent, to reinforcing their Notoriety, and to helping advance their Careers,' said Carolle Brabant, Executive Director, Telefilm Canada. 'This inspires the next Generation of Female Creators and shows them that Success is indeed possible. Telefilm Canada is thrilled to partner with Birks for a fifth year to spotlight Women Creators at TIFF'

This year's Group of Women join a Diverse Group of 50 past Honourees which include : Alanis Obomsawin, Sarah Polley, Evelyne Brochu, Tatiana Maslany, Sarah Gadon, Jennifer Baichwal, Karine Vanasse, Deepa Mehta, Catherine O'Hara, Léa Pool, Sandra Oh, Caroline Dhavernas, Patricia Rozema, Emma Donoghue, among others.

#### **- DIRECTORS**

\* Alethea Arnaquq-Baril, Director, is an Inuit Filmmaker from the Canadian Arctic where she runs Unikkaar Studios Inc. In her Award-winning APTN Documentary Tunniit : Retracing The Lines Of Inuit Tattoos (ImagineNATIVE 2011 premiere) Alethea traveled across the Arctic to speak with Elders about Inuit Tattoo Practices and the causes of their near Disappearance, before getting her Own Traditional Face Tattoos....

\* Ashley McKenzie, Director, lives on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. Her debut Feature Film Werewolf was made there with an entirely Local Cast. Werewolf premiered at TIFF ('16) and the Berlinale ('17), won the Grand Prix Focus QC/Canada at Festival du Nouveau Cinema ('16), and was named one of Canada's Top 10 Features by TIFF. McKenzie is the latest Recipient of the Jay Scott Prize, which recognizes an Emerging Talent who is positively affecting the Direction of Canadian cinema....

\* Catherine Bainbridge, Director, is a Director/ Writer/ Executive Producer/ Producer, on Rumble, and Co-founder of Rezolution Pictures, with an accomplished career in Media. She has brought her Signature enthusiasm and passion for Storytelling to Countless Documentary, Drama, Comedy, and Interactive Media Projects, notably the Peabody Award-winning Documentary 'Reel Injun', about Native Stereotypes in Hollywood Films. Her role as Director on Rumble encapsulates her love and devotion to Music, History, Politics, and bringing important Indigenous Stories to the Mainstream.

\* Chloé Leriche, Director, has Written, Directed, Edited and Produced Before the Streets with the support of the Three Atikamekw Communities, a Nation she worked with through Wapikoni Mobile, encouraging Native Youth to express themselves by means of Documentaries and Music Videos. The Film premiered at the 66th Berlinale in the Generation Competition and has since won 10 Awards and 5 Mentions in different Film Festival. It was nominated in 6 Categories such as Best Film at the Canadian Screen Awards

and at the Gala Québec Cinéma where toward its Eight Nominations, the main Actor, the Atikamekw Rykko Bellemare, won 'Revelation of the Year'.

\* Mina Shum, Director, has Written and Directed five Award-winning Feature Films, from her first Feature Double Happiness (Fine Line Features) to her recent Feature Documentary, Ninth Floor (Itunes/NFB). Meditation Park, her latest Feature will have its World Premiere at TIFF 2017. Shum has also found Success in Television. Her Episodic directing Work includes : About A Girl, Noah's Arc, Exes and Oh's, Bliss, The Shield Stories and Da Vinci's Inquest for which she was nominated for a Director's Guild Award.

#### - ACTORS

\* Amanda Brugel, Actor, voted one of Hello! Canada Magazines 50 Most Beautiful, Multi-award Winning Actor Amanda Brugel made her Film Debut alongside Christopher Walken in Vendetta. Fast forward to 2014, Brugel won the 'Outstanding Performance Female' Actra Award for the indie comedy, Sex After Kids. Immediately following, Brugel broke onto the International Stage, playing the highly acclaimed role of 'Officer Parker' in the Academy Award winning sensation Room. This year, she can be spotted Kodachrome opposite Jason Sudeikis and Ed Harris....

\* Ellen Wong, Actor, was born and raised in Toronto, Ontario. After early appearances on Canadian TV Shows such as This is Wonderland, she landed her Breakout Role as 'Knives Chau' opposite Michael Cera in Edgar Wright's Scott Pilgrim vs. The World. Since then, Ellen has been cast in numerous TV Shows and Films, including her starring turn as 'Jill Chen' on the CW's Carrie Diaries. She also received an ACTRA Award Nomination for Best Female Performance for her Standout Role in the Film Silent Cargo....

\* Kawennáhere Devery Jacobs, Actor, was born and raised on the Mohawk Reservation of Kahnawake, QC, which has shaped her Passion for Indigenous Rights Activism and interest in Politically-charged roles in Film. Her debut Leading Role as Aila in the Award-winning Feature Film, Rhymes for Young Ghouls (2013), resulted in Jacobs being nominated for Best Performance By An Actress In A Leading Role at the 2014 Canadian Screen Awards....

\* Mylène Mackay, Actor, is a Graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada. She garnered a Canadian Screen Award Nomination as Best Supporting Actress at the 4th Canadian Screen Awards for her Performance in Endorphine. In 2016, she appeared as Nelly Arcan in Anne Årmond's film Nelly, and as Marguerite in André Forcier's film Kiss Me Like a Lover (Embrasse-moi comme tu m'aimes). She was named one of the Toronto International Film Festival's Rising Stars of 2016, alongside Grace Glowicki, Jared Abrahamson and Sophie Nélisse. In 2017, she won the Prix Iris for Best Actress for Nelly.

\* Shailyn Pierre-Dixon, Actor, is best known for her Role as 'Zoe', Daughter of Will Smith's Character (Deadshot), in the 2016 Hollywood Blockbuster Suicide Squad ; as well as 'Young Aminata' in the 2015 Award-winning Mini-series The Book of Negroes, an Adaptation of Lawrence Hill's Highly Acclaimed Novel of the same title. Shailyn's powerful performance as 'Young Aminata' won her a Canadian Screen Award for Best Supporting Actress, as well as a Golden Maple Award nomination for Newcomer of the Year, and ACTRA Award nomination for Outstanding Performance....

#### - SCREENWRITERS

\* Joanne Arseneau, Screenwriter, is a Versatile Author who moves easily between Humour and Drama and from Television Series to Cinema. Faits Divers, her most recent TV Series, will be broadcast this fall (2017) in Prime Time on SRC (CBC). She is currently developing another Series Project for SRC (Vent d'Ouest) and also plans to write a Screenplay for an Historical Film. Rights to the Format of her Le Clan TV series, broadcast on SRC in 2016, were picked up in the US and Germany. Co-author of Season 2 of the Rescapés, she was also head of creative and writing for Season 1 of the 19-2 Police Series, which received Unanimous Critical Acclaim....

\* Sherry White, Screenwriter, has Written the recently Produced Feature Film, Maudie, starring Ethan Hawke and Sally Hawkins, which Premiered at Telluride in 2016 and released through Mongrel and Sony Pictures Classics this June 2017. Other Film Writing Credits include Relative Happiness, Down to the Dirt, and The Breadmaker. She also Wrote and Directed the Genie Nominated Feature Film Crackie, which screened at over Thirty Festivals worldwide, including Toronto International Film Festival, Karlovy Vary, and Torino Film Festival, where it took home the jury prize....

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Ruby BIRD

<http://www.portfolio.uspa24.com/>

Yasmina BEDDOU

<http://www.yasmina-beddou.uspa24.com/>

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**Editorial program service of General News Agency:**

UPA United Press Agency LTD

483 Green Lanes

UK, London N13NV 4BS

contact (at) unitedpressagency.com

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