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PRESS RELEASE

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Celebrating Indigenous Filmmakers at GRFF

[The Grand River Film Festival \(GRFF\)](#), will feature outstanding work by Indigenous filmmakers from across the country as part of the 2022 festival. This year's programming will offer three feature film programs and a special event in support of our commitment to present new narratives and celebrate Indigenous filmmaking. "We're excited to bring these stories to Waterloo Region," says Michael Clark, programming chair. "We know films have the power to initiate conversations, change perspectives, and build relationships. Our goal with this film program is to provide an opportunity for dialogue and greater understanding."

"Indigenous filmmakers are expanding the modern film and television landscape," says filmmaker Kahstoserakwathe Paulette Moore. "Indigenous storytellers carry philosophy and ways of being that include our lands, original languages, and relationships. These powerful narratives hold the potential to transform as well as entertain."

As part of this programming, GRFF will present [Indigenous Resurgents - Reflection and Action from the Front Lines](#), a free screening of documentaries related to Land Back initiatives. Moderated by Kanyen'kehà:ka (Mohawk) filmmaker Kahstoserakwathe Paulette Moore, this event will feature a discussion with local organizers Amy Smoke, Bangishimo, and Maddie Resmer about the active work taking place both in the Waterloo Region community and in the USA to recognize and uphold Indigenous rights. The event will be held at the Kitchener Public Library (KPL) Central Theatre on May 14 at 2 pm.

Programming Highlights

SPECIAL EVENT - FILM SCREENING AND PANEL DISCUSSION

Indigenous Resurgents - Reflection and Action from the Front Lines
Saturday, May 14, 2022 - 2 PM

This is a free, unticketed event at the Kitchener Public Library Theatre located at the Main Branch. Seating will not be reserved. This program features the screening of two short films: From Wisconsin With Love, and Stories from Land Back Camp with discussion to follow.

Stories From Land Back Camp, Director Erik O'Neill

On Indigenous peoples' day, a large tepee was erected in a busy, urban park close to O:se Kenhionhata:tie (Willow River, presently called the Grand River) with the intention to assert an Indigenous presence just for the day. Over 100 days later, the tepee remained standing, with the space around it transformed into a camp of queer, Two Spirit, trans, and/or non-binary youth learning and practicing their Indigenous cultural heritages and demanding Land Back.

From Wisconsin with Love, Director Kahstoserakwathe Paulette Moore

From 2011 - 2015 community members in Wisconsin's Penoque Hills on the south shore of Lake Superior challenged what would have been the world's largest taconite mine. The centerpiece of that challenge was the Anishinabe-led Harvest Education Learning Project: a five-acre protest/envisioning camp on the edge of the proposed mine site. In 2015 the mining company closed its doors and left the region. "From Wisconsin With Love: People of Harvest" is the story of what the community was fighting for from the perspective of Anishinabe prophecy and practice - and what happened next.

SCREENING AT APOLLO CINEMA

Run Woman Run | Director Zoe Hopkins | Feature Film | Saturday, May 14, 2022 - 7 PM

Beck, a single mom, lives in Six Nations, Canada. After her mother's death, she abandons her dream of becoming a Mohawk language teacher, and an unhealthy lifestyle leads to a diagnosis of Type 2 Diabetes. The ghost of Tom Longboat, a sports legend of the early 1900s, appears to her. He teaches Beck to become an honor runner, dedicating each run to an aspect of creation or a special person in her life. With Tom's help, Beck just might be able to turn her life around.

VIRTUAL SCREENINGS

Bootlegger | Director Caroline Monnet | Feature Film | May 9-22, 2022 - On Demand

Mani, a master's student, returns to the reserve in northern Quebec where she grew up. Her painful past resurfaces. Resolved to reintegrate into the community, she gets involved in the debate around a referendum on allowing the free sale of alcohol on the reserve. Laura, a bootlegger, pockets the profits she makes there under the protection of the band council and her partner Raymond. The latter is still angry with Mani, whom he holds responsible for the death of his daughter in a fire. Opposing forces quickly divide the community into two sides who face each other to determine the best path to independence.

Don't Say Its Name | Director Rueben Martell | Feature Film | May 9-22, 2022 - On Demand

The quiet of a snowy Indigenous community is upended by the arrival of the mining company WEC who have signed an agreement to drill the land. But before drilling starts, WEC employees begin to turn up dead, attacked by a mysterious force. As a local peace officer and a park ranger investigate, they come face to face with the vengeful spirits that have haunted the land for generations

If you are interested in learning more about GRFF please contact Paul Tortolo, Chair, at paul.tortolo@grff.ca For additional information, visit GRFF's website at grff.ca.

ABOUT KAHSTOSERAKWATHE PAULETTE MOORE

Kahstoserakwathe Paulette Moore is a Six Nations-enrolled Kanyen'kehà:ka filmmaker, podcaster, educator and Mohawk language speaker with 25+ years experience as a director/producer/writer with Discovery Channel, National Geographic and other mainstream media. Moore returned to her Six Nations territory a decade ago and has since been creating films about the wisdom, power, and beauty inherent in Indigenous culture and worldview.

In 2019 Moore founded The Aunties Dandelion, a media collective focused on revitalizing community through stories of land, language, and relationships. The group creates monthly podcasts, short narrative films, documentaries, and art experiences, and recently completed two companion speculative art films about identity, legacy, and naming. VeRONAka (2020) is a live-action comedy drama with a documentary twist based on the true story that our Mohawk clan mother gave COVID-19 a Mohawk name so we can be in relationship to it, understand why it is here, and ask it to leave. Rahyne (2021) is a short animated film co-created with the Black Speculative Arts Movement of Canada about a non-binary Afro-Indigenous teen whose identity is united through the spirits of the water.

Moore explores how Indigenous storytelling and culture intersects with education, art, other land-based cultures, and how our narratives influence and transform the powerful and chaotic time in which we find ourselves.

ABOUT GRAND RIVER FILM FESTIVAL

Founded in 2007, the Grand River Film Festival (GRFF) is committed to celebrate and inspire community through the shared experience of film. Featuring compelling documentaries, engaging shorts and premiere features, GRFF presents an integrated cultural experience. The festival encourages community involvement through a shared love for cinema by offering unique and diverse programming with creative community partnerships.