

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For National Indigenous Peoples Day, NFB shares second-year progress on its Indigenous Action Plan

NFB reaches Indigenous production spending commitment of 15% one year ahead of target; production underway or recently completed on 40 works by Indigenous creators from across Canada



(To Wake Up the Nakota Language by Louise BigEagle. Photo: © Taryn Snell/NFB)

June 19, 2019 – Montreal – National Film Board of Canada (NFB)

For [National Indigenous Peoples Day](#) (June 21), the [National Film Board of Canada](#) (NFB) is marking the second anniversary of the launch of its [Indigenous Action Plan](#) with a **slate of 40 Indigenous-led works** in development, production or recent release—while delivering on a **commitment to devote a minimum of 15% of its production spending on Indigenous works**, one year ahead of schedule.

Announced on June 21, 2017, the [NFB’s Indigenous Action Plan](#) is a response to the [TRC’s](#) calls to action and systemic inequities in Canada’s screen sector facing Indigenous creators. The plan was drafted in collaboration with an Indigenous advisory group and contains 33 commitments in four main areas: organizational transformation, industry leadership, production and distribution.

The NFB’s progress on its Indigenous Action Plan also includes advances in community engagement, online accessibility, educational resources, and hiring, as well as adopting new industry protocols for working with Indigenous creators and content.

“Over the last two years, the NFB has worked diligently and consistently in implementing its Indigenous Action Plan,” said Jason Ryle, speaking on behalf of the Indigenous Advisory Group. “During this time, the NFB has demonstrated that a determined leadership within a large national institution can take decisive, timely, and practical actions that support Indigenous filmmakers, productions, and capacity—and lead to positive change. The Advisory Group is particularly pleased to see so many Indigenous-led projects in development and production and congratulates all those involved for the successes achieved to date, while we also look forward to what is to come.”

“This current and upcoming body of work by Indigenous filmmakers brings together talented artists from across Canada, who are bringing vital stories and perspectives to Canadian and international screens. Together, they

are helping to define the future of Indigenous cinema, strengthening Indigenous communities, and changing how we understand each other and share this land,” said Claude Joli-Coeur, NFB Chairperson. “At the NFB, we’re working hard to honour the commitments in our action plan, and I’m profoundly grateful to the Indigenous advisory group for continuing to work with us and guide us in this process.”

Production highlights include:

- **Tasha Hubbard’s** award-winning feature doc [*nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up*](#) ([Downstream Documentary Productions](#)/NFB in association with [CBC DOCS](#) and [APTN](#)), following the aftermath of the shooting death of Colten Boushie. The first Indigenous film to open Hot Docs, it’s currently in theatres across Canada.
- **Michelle Latimer’s** feature doc ***The Inconvenient Indian***, an adaptation of Thomas King’s *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America*, is currently winding up production. Co-produced by 90th Parallel and the NFB, with Jesse Wenthe as creative producer.
- **Kim O’Bomsawin’s** ***Nin, Auass***, an intimate feature doc portrait of the experience of early childhood in the communities of Pessamit, Manawan and Whapmagoostui, currently in production.
- **Alanis Obomsawin’s** upcoming documentary ***Jordan’s Principle*** (working title), her 53rd film in a legendary NFB career.
- ***Urban.Indigenous.Proud***, a partnership between the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres and the NFB, exploring urban Indigenous culture and lived experiences within five Friendship Centre communities.
- **Angelina McLeod’s** recently completed short doc series ***Freedom Road***, about Shoal Lake 40, a First Nations community separated for 100 years from the mainland because of an aqueduct built to supply water to Winnipeg.
- An all-Indigenous edition of the NFB’s animation mentorship program, [Hothouse](#), in partnership with the [imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival](#), with emerging animators **Meky Ottawa**, **Kassia Ward** and **Chris Grant** currently in production on a short film. This 12th season of **Hothouse** has also created mentorship opportunities for Indigenous associate producers **Amanda Strong** and **Amanda Roy**, who bring a wealth of Indigenous storytelling experience to the project.
- ***Meneath***, an augmented reality project by **Terril Calder**, which explores the seven deadly sins as defined in Christianity alongside the seven sacred teachings as defined by Native spirituality.
- Multimedia installations from Indigenous artists: Caroline Monnet and Ludovic Boney’s ***Hydro***, an installation at the Musée de Joliette from February 2 to May 5, 2019; and from now until July 13 at Victoria’s Open Space, Dominic Lafontaine and Jessie Short’s ***Neither One Nor the Other (Ni l’un, ni l’autre)***, developed during the second edition of ***Déranger***, a creative lab for Inuit, Métis and First Nations multidisciplinary artists working in the French language.

The NFB was also one of several organizations to provide financial support to the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival for the creation of [On-Screen Protocols & Pathways: A Media Production Guide to Working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Communities, Cultures, Concepts and Stories](#), released in March of 2019. The NFB is applying the principles outlined in the media production guide across its slate of productions—a process based on respect, reciprocity, humility, meaningful collaboration and consent.

Other year two highlights include:

- The [Aabiziingwashi \(Wide Awake\) Indigenous Cinema Tour](#) of Indigenous-directed titles from the NFB’s collection has **surpassed 1,300 screenings to date**, in every province and territory. The tour is working with partners to bring Indigenous cinema and discussions to communities big and small across Canada. New titles for 2019 will include ***nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up***, ***Freedom Road***, ***Jordan’s Principle*** and Christopher Auchter’s ***Now Is the Time***.
- Launched in early 2018, [Indigenous Cinema](#) is the NFB’s rich online collection of Indigenous-made films, now featuring more than 300 titles for free. To help mark National Indigenous Peoples Day 2019, new titles include award-winning films like ***Birth of a Family*** by Tasha Hubbard, ***Three Thousand*** by Asinnajaq and ***Holy Angels*** by Jay Cardinal Villeneuve (starting June 17); along with the premiere of

the five films from ***Urban.Indigenous.Proud***: Kristi Lane Sinclair's ***Full Circle***, Darlene Naponse's ***Places to Gather and Learn***, Clayton Windatt's ***Some Stories...***, Jamie Whitecrow's ***The Old Game Lacrosse*** and Tracie Louttit's ***Zaagi'idiwin*** (starting June 21).

- A trusted source of quality educational content for schools across Canada, the NFB will soon be launching a new online educational experience that draws from the NFB collection, providing Indigenous perspectives on the history and culture of Indigenous peoples in Canada, and geared for students in grades 9 to 12.
- Indigenous employees now represent 1.25% of all staff at the NFB. The NFB has committed to achieving 4% Indigenous representation across all sectors and levels of the NFB's workforce—a minimum of 16 Indigenous team members—by 2025.

About the NFB

The NFB is Canada's public producer of creative documentaries, auteur animation, interactive stories, and immersive experiences. Since 1968, the NFB has produced over 300 works by First Nations, Métis and Inuit filmmakers—an unparalleled collection that pushes past dominant narratives and provides Indigenous perspectives to Canadian and global audiences. Guided by the recommendations of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the NFB is implementing an [action plan](#) with commitments that include devoting a minimum of 15 percent of overall production spending to Indigenous-led productions and making these works more accessible via [Indigenous Cinema](#), a new destination on NFB.ca, and its apps for mobile devices.

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Associated Links

[National Indigenous Peoples Day](#)
[NFB's Indigenous Action Plan](#)
[Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada \(TRC\)](#)
[Downstream Documentary Productions](#)
[CBC DOCS](#)
[APTN](#)
[Hothouse](#)
[imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival](#)
[Aabiziingwashi \(Wide Awake\) Indigenous Cinema Tour](#)
[Indigenous Cinema](#)

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