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Dufferin Film Festival to feature bold Canadian cinema when it returns next month

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Downtown Orangeville will soon be transformed into a vibrant celebration of Canadian cinema with the return of the Dufferin Film Festival (DFF) from Aug. 15 to 17.

Keeping up with the momentum from last year's sold-out festival, organizers of the second annual DFF promise to deliver even more stories, voices and immersive experiences beyond the big screen.

The festival will feature 17 Canadian short films, including three world premieres, two Ontario premieres and an Oscar-qualified short film. Six films created by female directors will also be showcased.

The DFF's filmmaker-first approach helps those breaking into the industry to promote their work to a wider audience. With a more intimate feel than other film festivals, the festival is geared towards people searching for a more personal experience.

?We built this to create real connection with Canadian cinema,? said festival director Kelly McDowell. ?People talk, they connect, they stick around after the credits roll. We celebrate the films, but we also make space for conversation and community. That's what keeps people coming back.?

A range of genres will be showcased at the DFF, such as psychological thrillers, animated comedy, fantasy, historical drama, and personal documentaries.

All of the participating filmmakers are Canadian, and each story shared at the festival reflects a unique perspective from citizens across the country.

A highlight of the festival is the Opening Night Screening, taking place on Friday, Aug. 15. The DFF has curated a powerful selection of short films to kick off the weekend, followed by a Live Q&A and red carpet event at the Orangeville Opera House (87 Broadway).

Also happening Friday, Aug. 15, is a VIP Social at Revival 1863, located in the downstairs area of the Barley Vine Rail Co. restaurant at 35 Armstrong St, Orangeville. This event provides a high-energy evening inside the walls of a hidden speakeasy. Entertainment includes a magician and mentalist, live music by Wild Shot Honey, dancers, prizes and best of all ? a chance to connect with film lovers and creators.

A speaker series will kick off on the morning of Saturday, Aug. 16, featuring three industry professionals. This event will provide an intimate morning of insight, mentorship, and conversation about the realities of working in film.

Following the speaker series on Saturday, DFF attendees are invited to two afternoon screenings, featuring fresh, daring and diverse selections of emerging and established talent. There will be a live Q&A as well as a red carpet at the screenings.

Moving into Saturday evening, Social Under the Stars will be held at Greystones Café. This open-air event will be filled with the smooth sounds of live jazz, while attendees enjoy chef-curated amuse-bouches. This is expected to be a relaxed, refined and radiant event at the DFF.

Last but not least ? the Sunday Finale will feature a screening, live Q&A and red carpet at the Orangeville Opera House, followed by the Awards Dinner.

At the finale event, DFF attendees will celebrate the winning films and toast to a standout season over dinner at Greystones

Restaurant.

?We've focused on building something that feels honest and connected,? said Alex Caucean, DFF film programmer. ?Each film is carefully chosen, and the entire weekend is designed to bring people closer ? to the work, to each other, and to the joy of great storytelling.?

?We built this to shine a light on the incredible filmmaking talent across the country and give them a place where they're not just part of a schedule ? they're the main event,? adds Nick Rose, DFF's director of operations. ?And we've worked hard to make the entire experience top-notch ? from AV to atmosphere.?

With the event selling out last year, anyone interested in attending the DFF should secure tickets early. Tickets are on sale now at dufferinfilmfestival.com. While tickets are available for single screenings, full-access VIP badges are also available for film lovers who hope to take in all the DFF has to offer.