



Media Release

For Immediate Release // August 12, 2026

STAR-STUDDERED FILMS AT CIFF 2026

Calgary International Film Festival announces Day One Spotlight+, additional Day One films, and first wave of Canadian, International, and North American premieres

Calgary, AB – The **Calgary International Film Festival (CIFF)**, presented by **Servus Credit Union**, is giving audiences their first look at its highly anticipated 2026 lineup with the announcement of its Day One Spotlight+, Day One films, and an exciting collection of Canadian, International, and North American premieres. Running **September 24 – October 4, 2026**, Alberta's biggest film festival will once again transform Calgary into one of Canada's premier cinema destinations, bringing acclaimed filmmakers, celebrated talent, and unforgettable stories from around the world to local audiences.

The festival officially opens with **A LONG WINTER**, directed by acclaimed filmmaker **Andrew Haigh** (45 YEARS, ALL OF US STRANGERS), as the Opening Night Spotlight+ selection. The Alberta-shot feature, which is based on the 2006 short story by Colm Tóibín, will have its **Alberta premiere** at CIFF, launching the festival with one of its signature Spotlight+ events — pairing an unforgettable cinematic experience with an exclusive Opening Night celebration at The GRAND.

"This year we are proud to present one of our biggest collections of Canadian Premieres and International Premieres with a mix of documentary, international, and music-related titles. Many of these films are coming fresh off their World Premieres at prestigious festivals like Cannes, Sundance, and Tribeca," said Adam Keresztes, CIFF's Canadian Features and Shorts Programmer.

"Having A LONG WINTER as our Day One Spotlight is special not just because it's from a fantastic art-house darling director, Andrew Haigh, but it was also filmed around Calgary back in 2025. These films are just a taste of what's to come with our full lineup announcement on August 26th - we can't wait to share our entire slate with audiences and share all the films we are bringing to Calgary from our own backyard and from around the world," added Keresztes.

With its upcoming Canadian Premiere at TIFF, A LONG WINTER has already generated significant awards buzz and features an acclaimed cast including Fred Hechinger (GLADIATOR 2), Ebon Moss-Bachrach (THE BEAR, FANTASTIC FOUR), Caitriona

Balfe, Kit Connor, and D'Pharaoh Woon-A-Tai. Filmed in Alberta against the province's breathtaking landscapes, the film is a fitting choice to open CIFF 2026, celebrating both world-class storytelling and the filmmaking talent that continues to put Alberta on the international film industry map.

Rounding out CIFF's Day One films are three highly anticipated premieres - the Canadian premiere of **THE INCOMER**, directed by Scottish filmmaker Louis Paxton, starring Domhnall Gleeson and Gayle Rankin, at Contemporary Calgary, offering audiences an intimate and compelling new voice in modern cinema. Day One will also feature the Alberta premiere of **THE STUNT DRIVER**, the latest action-comedy from acclaimed Canadian director Michael Dowse (FUBAR, GOON, IT'S ALL GONE PETE TONG) screening at Globe Cinema, delivering Dowse's signature blend of sharp comedy and unforgettable characters. **HA-CHAN, SHAKE YOUR BOOTY!**, starring Oscar-nominee Rinko Kikuchi, also makes its Alberta Premiere. Together these films showcase the breadth of storytelling audiences can expect from CIFF 2026, from crowd-pleasing entertainment to bold, thought-provoking filmmaking.

Alongside the exciting titles screening on Day One of the festival, CIFF is also proud to present the Canadian premiere of **FATHERLAND**, the latest feature from Academy Award-winning director Paweł Pawlikowski (IDA, COLD WAR). **FATHERLAND**, starring Sandra Hüller (THE ZONE OF INTEREST, ANATOMY OF A FALL), earned Pawlikowski the **Award for Best Director at the 2026 Cannes Film Festival**.

CIFF is pleased to announce the following Canadian, North American, and International Premieres at the 2026 festival:

ACT ONE, directed by Sophia Takal (United States)

An aspiring actress, desperate for guidance and belonging, falls under the spell of a manipulative acting coach who draws her into a web of control and obsession. *Canadian Premiere.*

ALL THE RIVERS SPILL THEIR STORIES TO THE SEA, directed by Jeanie Finlay (United Kingdom)

When a mystery tide of poisoned sea life washes ashore on England's NE coast, grief gives way to a turbulent quest for answers, led by the unlikely of rebels. *Canadian Premiere.*

THE BEST SUMMER, directed by Tamra Davis (United States)

Live performances, candid interviews, and behind-the-scenes footage of a 1995 concert tour with Beastie Boys, Sonic Youth, Foo Fighters, Beck, and Bikini Kill. *Canadian Premiere.*

EDIE ARNOLD IS A LOSER, directed by Megan Rico & Kade Atwood (United States)

Timid dork Edie accidentally takes the spotlight when she starts a punk band, becoming an icon to the rest of the losers at her all-girls Catholic school. *International Premiere.*

FATHERLAND, directed by Paweł Pawlikowski (Poland, Germany, Italy, France)

In 1949, Nobel Prize-winner Thomas Mann and his daughter, Erika embark on a road trip across post-war Germany in the latest from Oscar-winner Paweł Pawlikowski. *Canadian Premiere.*

FRAMPTON, directed by Rob Arthur (United States)

From the arena-shaking triumph of "Frampton Comes Alive!" to a final tour shaped by a degenerative diagnosis, Frampton follows a rock icon who lost everything and fought his way back—again and again. *Canadian Premiere.*

FUNK, directed by Aly Muritiba (Brazil)

In a neon-lit Rio de Janeiro favela, fearless young queer talent MC Sabrina must fight to reclaim her music, her body, and her roots—entirely on her own terms. *Canadian Premiere.*

THE GARDEN WE DREAMED, directed by Joaquin del Paso (Mexico)

In a land not their own, amid a fading forest, a family carves out a fragile bubble of tenderness - a fleeting garden of hope where love can still take root. *Canadian Premiere.*

HA-CHAN, SHAKE YOUR BOOTY!, directed by Josef Kubota Wladyka (United States)

Oscar-nominee Rinko Kikuchi stars in this ballroom fantasia about a Tokyo dance enthusiast who must find her way after the tragic loss of her husband. *Alberta Premiere.*

THE INCOMER, directed by Louis Paxton (United Kingdom, Ireland)

On a remote Scottish isle, two siblings hunt, talk to mythical beings, and refuse incomers. Their lives change when a local official arrives to relocate them. *Canadian Premiere.*

RUNNER, directed by Laura García Alonso (Spain)

Elite athlete Cris suffers a psychotic break before nationals and must fight to reclaim both her mind and her dream of running again. *International Premiere.*

SENDER, directed by Russell Goldman (United States)

A recently sober and unemployed woman starts receiving an absurd amount of oddly specific packages that she didn't order and believes she's being watched. *International Premiere.*

SCHOOL FOR DEFECTORS, directed by Jeremy Workman (South Korea, United States)

In an industrial corner of Busan, South Korea, stands the tiny Jangdaehyun School. It is home to 20 students, all of whom are North Korean defectors. *Canadian Premiere.*

THE STUNT DRIVER, directed by Michael Dowse (Canada, Ireland)

Jay Baruchel and director Michael Dowse re-team for a raucous yet heartfelt comedy about a Canadian stuntman who dared to dream big and fly (very) high. *Alberta Premiere.*

THEIR TOWN, directed by Katie Aselton (United States)

Abby and Matt spend a long night wandering around their town, examining their futures and unearthing surprises from their past. *Canadian Premiere.*

WWW: THE WOMEN'S GROUP, directed by Wendy Hill-Tout (Canada)

An in-depth and entertaining documentary about ageing, grief, loneliness, friendship, community and one extraordinary group of women. *World Premiere.*

X-COMMUNICADO, directed by Brian King (Canada)

A mute emissary with a mysterious past must shepherd a damaged soul to salvation before demons can claim it as one of their own. *North American Premiere.*

Stay tuned for **CIFF's Full Festival Lineup Announcement** on **August 26, 2026**, with single tickets on sale at 10 a.m. MST on August 28. For more information, please visit <https://www.ciffcalgary.ca/>

SAVE THE DATE: CIFF's annual Trailer Party on August 26 at the Globe Cinema will feature a media call with Artistic Director Brian Owens and additional exciting announcements, starting at 5:30 p.m.

MEDIA IMAGES: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/146_YX9ui6QS4YEKk93fb3nIMmQcz0v0h

Media Accreditation is now open until August 28 - <https://www.ciffcalgary.ca/media-2/media-accreditation/>

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CIFF | Calgary International Film Festival
September 24 - October 4, 2026
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About the Calgary International Film Festival

Founded in 2000, the Calgary International Film Festival (CIFF) is a not-for-profit charitable organization that brings films and filmmakers from around the world to Calgary for its annual Fall festival and year-round programming. CIFF is now the largest event of its kind in Alberta and the sixth-largest film festival in Canada, bringing audiences together for remarkable and engaging cinematic experiences. CIFF is proud to present its 27th festival from September 24 – October 4, 2026, with in-cinema screenings, celebrating stand-out stories, and offering once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

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