



Reelworld Film Festival announces *Simply Johanne* as its 2024 Outstanding Feature Film Award recipient, *A Good Day Will Come* as its 2024 Outstanding Short Film Award recipient, and *Stealing Vows* as its 2024 Audience Choice Award recipient

### **Toronto, ON - November 12, 2024**

The 2024 Reelworld Film Festival+Summit came to a close on November 3 after one week of in-person screenings and events, and two days of virtual panels and mixers. Select films were available to watch online from October 22 to November 3.

Every year, Reelworld presents awards in 15 different categories to films that screened at the festival. The awards are selected by a jury, composed of three jurors for the shorts and three for the feature films. This year, Reelworld is proud to present over \$40,000 in cash prizes to the recipients of its festival awards. The Outstanding Feature Film award recipient receives \$20,000; the Outstanding Short Film award recipient receives \$10,000; and the Audience Choice Award recipient receives \$2,000. All short film award recipients receive \$750, and feature film award recipients receive \$1000.

“Congratulations to all this year's award recipients. At Reelworld we know the impact an award can have on any career, but it's especially crucial for Indigenous and racialized creators and talent who are often overlooked,” said Tonya Williams, Founder and Executive Director of Reelworld Screen Institute. “An award offers national and international recognition, helps with access to funding, and can attract strong talent and collaborators for future projects.”

This year's Outstanding Feature Film Award recipient is *Simply Johanne*, directed by Nadine Valcin. The Outstanding Short Film is *A Good Day Will Come*, directed by Amir Zargara. The Audience Choice Award recipient is *Stealing Vows* (the festival's Opening Night film), directed by Bobby Singh Brown. The full list of award recipients is below.

### **2024 Festival Award Recipients**

#### **FEATURES**

Outstanding Feature Film: *Simply Johanne*

Outstanding Feature Film Producer: Bobby Singh Brown, *Stealing Vows*

Outstanding Feature Film Director: Reza Dahya, *Boxcutter*

Outstanding Feature Film Cinematographer: Hazem Berrabah & Omar Bouhoula, *The Madman*

Outstanding Feature Film Writer: Corey Payette, *Les Filles du Roi*



Outstanding Feature Film Actor: Olivier Ross-Parent, *The Madman*

Outstanding Feature Film Actress: Gia Sandhu, *Stealing Vows*

## SHORTS

Outstanding Short Film: *A Good Day Will Come*

Outstanding Short Film Producer: Amir Zargara, *A Good Day Will Come*

Outstanding Short Film Director: Tara Aghdashloo, *Empty Your Pockets*

Outstanding Short Film Cinematographer: Carine Zahner, *Strangers*

Outstanding Short Film Writer: Ian Bawa, *My Son Went Quiet*

Outstanding Short Film Actor: Kiarash Dadgar, *Empty Your Pockets*

Outstanding Short Film Actress: Aixa Kay, *Hatch*

Audience Choice Award: *Stealing Vows*

“I would like to express my most heartfelt thanks to Reelworld for programming *Simply Johanne* for its Toronto premiere, and for this award. It’s especially meaningful as documentaries often take a backseat to fiction films. Congratulations to my fellow directors for bringing their projects to life and getting them up on the big screen. I know intimately the tremendous labour it entails.”  
- Nadine Valcin, director, *Simply Johanne* (Outstanding Feature Film Award)

“I can’t tell you thrilled and honoured we are to have won the Audience Choice Award at Reelworld. It was a thrill just being part of it; being the Opening Night Film was a huge honour and to win this award on top of that is really special to us. A big thank you from me, the cast, the crew, my co-producer Jeremy Hood, my DP Ricardo Diaz, Gia Sandhu, Fuad Ahmed, Anand Rajaram, and Ali Hassan, also my co-writer; everybody who helped on this film to get it over the finish line. It was five years in the making because of Covid but we got it done. I’m completely honoured and humbled. Thank you so much.” - Bobby Singh Brown, director, *Stealing Vows* (Audience Choice Award)

The Reelworld festival awards (aside from Audience Choice) are decided by a jury, and this year’s recipients will be announced in a pre-recorded video that will stream on [Reelworld’s YouTube channel](#) on Tuesday, November 12 at 7pm ET. The jurors are listed below.



## Feature Film Jurors

### **Abdul Malik**

Screenwriter

Abdul Malik (he/him) is a Canadian-Pakistani screenwriter who dropped out of film school in his twenties to work in the union movement across Canada, returning to the film industry as co-writer of the Tribeca-premiering *Peace By Chocolate*. Since then, Abdul's written on notable high-profile series and features, alongside a bevy of feature and television projects in development with networks and production companies in the US and Canada.

### **Tara Taylor**

Festival Director & Co-Founder, Emerging Lens Cultural Film Festival

Tara Taylor is Festival Director and Co-Founder of the Emerging Lens Cultural Film Festival in Halifax, Nova Scotia. She is also a playwright, filmmaker, multimedia artist, singer and actress. She is a manager at Light House Arts Centre, culture columnist at CBC, and board member at Black Women Film! Canada. Her 2022 musical *Love, Peace and Hairgrease* was nominated for Outstanding Production at the Robert Merritt Awards.

### **Mary Galloway**

Writer, director, showrunner

Mary Galloway, a two-time CSA nominee, illuminates marginalized stories with heart and flair. Named a TIFF Rising Star and featured on *The Hollywood Reporter's* Breakouts list, she created the celebrated web series *Querencia* in 2021. A CFC Directors' Lab and WBD Access x Canadian Academy Directors Program alumna, Galloway has directed impactful projects, including the CBC's *The Cowichan Sweater*.

## Short Film Jurors

### **Ravi Steve Khajuria**

Writer, director

Ravi is a writer/director based in Toronto. His career has been highlighted by nominations and awards from the Writers Guild of Canada, the Directors Guild of Canada, and the Youth Media Alliance. Ravi holds a BFA from York University and is an alumnus of The CFC Directors' Lab.



**Ladan M. Siad**  
Producer

Ladan M. Siad is a Somali-Canadian producer and filmmaker based in Toronto and New York. Siad is founder and principal at Fugee Films. The feature drama, JUDE AND THE JINN written, directed and co-director of photography Rolla Tahir, a recipient of Telefilm Canada's Talent to Watch and Nederland Filmfonds New Dawn, is in post production and actively looking for sales and distribution.

**Marwa Siam-Abdou**  
National Outreach Manager at the Directors Guild of Canada

As the National Outreach Manager at the DGC, Marwa's work is focused on developing campaigns and initiatives that amplify the voices of its Black, Indigenous and People of Colour members. She directly supports the DGC BIPOC Members Committee as well as the DGC'S National Climate Action Committee. She also works with industry professionals to establish a streamlined process of data-collecting for the film and television space.

**About Reelworld:**

Reelworld was founded in 2000 by award-winning actress and producer Tonya Williams to advance opportunities for Indigenous people and Canadians who are Black, Asian, South Asian and People of Colour in the screen industries by providing professional development and advocating for racial equity in Canadian content and production. Reelworld Screen Institute, a non-profit, provides training programs and presents the acclaimed Reelworld Film Festival, which celebrates stories by racialized Canadians. The festival has expanded to include a two-day Summit to shine a spotlight on issues around diversity, equity and inclusion in the Canadian screen landscape. Providing access to opportunities is core to Reelworld, and Access Reelworld is Canada's leading hiring platform for racialized crews and talent. Reelworld Foundation, a registered charity, is transforming the industry by creating mechanisms that hold systems accountable for greater equity.

For more information, please contact:  
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