

22 Films.
One Weekend.
All Ireland.



Awarded Partner Festival status with Toronto International Film Festival in 2016, The Toronto Irish Film Festival (TIRFF) was founded in April 2009 by Michael Barry and John Galway who have over 45 years' collective experience in the Canadian film and television industry.

Now in it's 9th year, the Toronto Irish Film Festival celebrates the very best of Irish cinema and promotes the work of Irish filmmakers to the Greater Toronto Irish community and the Toronto film festival public. With sold-out screenings from 2010 to 2018, TIRFF has quickly assumed the role of leading promoter of Irish film within Canada.

Reaching a potential audience of 250,000 Torontonians of Irish descent, as well as millions of Toronto-based movie lovers, TIRFF provides a unique cultural destination for Toronto and Ontario based ex-patriots, from the very old and the very new, to connect with the culture of home through the magic of cinema.



Michael Barry | Co-Founder | Co-Programmer | Brand Director

Michael was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland and grew up listening to the sounds of the jungle, living right at the foot of Belfast Zoo. Michael immigrated to Canada in 1992 with a degree in Computer Science. Michael's film industry experience began at Astral Media working for The Movie Network and Viewers Choice Pay-Per-View brands. Michael has held senior acquisitions, operations and promotions positions at Canada's largest communications, theatrical exhibition and film festival organizations including Cineplex Entertainment, Telus Communications, Bell Media and Hot Docs International Film Festival. As a proud Belfast native Michael's favourite Irish feature is "In The Name of the Father". His favourite Irish short is Domhnall Gleeson's brilliant "Noreen". Michael's first film, "The Wexford", a short documentary profiling Scarborough's most iconic diner, won the Audience Choice Award at the 2017 Scarborough Worldwide Film Festival.



John Galway | Co-Founder | Co-Programmer | Executive Director

John is a MBA graduate with 25 years of experience in film and television, John's career ranges from film festivals, to production and financing. After starting his career at TIFF, he then moved into financing, with positions at the Ontario Media Development Corporation, the Canadian Media Fund and at Telefilm Canada where he served as a Regional Director and the Television Sector Head. In 2005, he joined The Harold Greenberg Fund as President and Board Member. At the Fund, he has overseen investments of more than \$30 Million and has helped develop over 1000 feature film and television projects. In addition to the main feature film development and production programs, John has overseen partnerships and funding support for film festivals, script writing labs, film promotion initiatives and awards, documentaries and short film projects.

FRI MAR 1st | 7pm | [Under The Clock](#)
SAT MAR 2nd | 12pm | [Bloomsday Way](#)
SAT MAR 2nd | 2:30pm | [Pigeons of Discontent](#)
SAT MAR 2nd | 2:30pm | [Allan With 2 L's](#)
SAT MAR 2nd | 2:30pm | [Strong At The Broken Places](#)
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SAT MAR 2nd | 2:30pm | [Grá & Eagla](#)
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SAT MAR 2nd | 2:30pm | [Shed Men](#)
SAT MAR 2nd | 5pm | [The Belly of The Whale](#)
SAT MAR 2nd | 8pm | [Dublin Old School](#)
SUN MAR 3rd | 12pm | [Grá & Eagla](#)
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SUN MAR 3rd | 2:00pm | [The Family Way](#)
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Director in
attendance

FRI MAR 1st | 7pm | OPENING FILM | Under The Clock

Director | Colm Nicell

Screening Sponsor | Tourism Ireland

Presented in collaboration with The Irish Film Institute, Culture
Ireland and Arts Council Ireland

Canadian Premiere | Documentary

Our Opening Night film is Under The Clock – a landmark film that explores the social history of Ireland told through the heart-warming tales of ordinary people whose relationships began at one of Ireland's most famous meeting places. A must-see for any Dubliner, 'Under The Clock' unites stories of love and loss, hope and disappointment that all began under Dublin's iconic landmark, Clerys' clock.

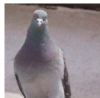


SAT MAR 2nd | 12pm | Bloomsday Way

Director | **Godfrey Jordan**

World Premiere | **Documentary**

This Toronto-Irish Community Celebration showcases how Irish heritage inspired the City of Toronto to name Beaches neighbourhood lane-ways in honour of James Joyce's novel, "Ulysses." Featured participants include Ireland's Ambassador to Canada, Jim Kelly, Toronto Bloomsday founder, Mary Durkan, broadcaster Rory O'Shea and ex-City Councillor, Mary Margaret McMahon. Toronto Bloomsday's gatherings have taken place annually since 1986 and it recount the events which occurred on June 16th, 1904, as written in "Ulysses." Musicians, actors, singers, writers and other fun-loving literary folk celebrate the occasion in a classic Irish manner. Director will be in attendance.



SAT MAR 2nd | 2:30pm | [Pigeons of Discontent](#)

Director | [Paddy Cahill](#)

Co-presenter | [Hot Docs](#)

Canadian Premiere | [Documentary](#)

In the otherwise tranquil Dublin neighbourhood of Stoneybatter, one local quirk has divided neighbours. The Pigeons. This hilarious short documentary looks at the local Pigeon population, while we listen to impassioned opinions from the disgruntled neighbours.

Director in
attendance



SAT MAR 2nd | 2:30pm | **Allan With Two Ls**

Director | **Gillian Griffin**

Co-presenter | **Hot Docs**

Canadian Premiere | **Documentary**

Allan has just turned 99. He sits with his grand daughter, the filmmaker, and recalls memories of life in Dublin from a century gone by. With his lighthearted nature, Allan conveys to the audience, and his grand daughter, his secret to a long and happy life. Director will be in attendance.



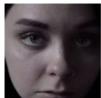
SAT MAR 2nd | 2:30pm | Strong At The Broken Places

Director | [Anna Rodgers](#)

Co-presenter | [Hot Docs](#)

Canadian Premiere | [Documentary](#)

During his divisive visit to Ireland in 2018, Pope Francis is challenged by human rights activist, Colm O’Gorman, to tell the truth about the cover up of abuse in the Catholic Church.



SAT MAR 2nd | 2:30pm | **Recovery**

Director | **Siofra Quinn Gates**

Co-presenter | **Hot Docs**

Canadian Premiere | **Documentary**

A short film that tells the story of people who have recovered from a traumatic experience, such as sexual assault, and the recovery process required to move on with life. Featuring the voices of three female victims accompanied by visual representations on screen. A powerful, short documentary.



SAT MAR 2nd | 2:30pm | Grá & Eagla

Director | **Caitríona Ní Chadhain**

Co-presenter | **Hot Docs**

Canadian Premiere | **Documentary**

Grá & Eagla is a short documentary examining Irish people's attitudes towards our native language. The story follows comedian Áine Gallagher as she prepares material for her bilingual stand-up comedy show, giving her an opportunity to explore why so many Irish people feel passionately about the Irish language but lack the confidence to speak it. (In English & Gaelic).



SAT MAR 2nd | 2:30pm | **Smithy & Dickie**

Director | **Hannah Quinn**

Co-presenter | **Hot Docs**

Toronto Encore | **Documentary**

A celebration of love letters written in the 1940's by young Irish sweethearts, how young people of today react to them and a thoughtful exploration on how the current explosion of digital communication may be obliterating our most precious, hand-written memories.



SAT MAR 2nd | 2:30pm | [Shed Men](#)

Director | [Kirsty Conway](#)

Co-presenter | [Hot Docs](#)

Canadian Premiere | [Documentary](#)

This is a delightful story about older men spending time together, working in gardens and wood-sheds throughout Dublin. The sheds provide camaraderie, purpose and company. The film showcases men supporting each other, through different health issues and personal situations.



SAT MAR 2nd | 5:00pm | [The Belly of the Whale](#)

Director | [Morgan Bushe](#)

Starring | [Michael Smiley](#), [Art Parkinson](#), [Pat Shortt](#)

Canadian Premiere | [Drama](#)

Starring Michael Smiley (Rogue One: A Star Wars Story, My Name Is Emily) and Pat Shortt (The Guard, The Flag, Life's A Breeze). Director Morgan Bushe salutes the Coen Brothers in this dark Irish western. Two down-and-outs, a young runaway orphan and a flailing alcoholic, team up to confront the town heavy by devising a plan to rob the amusement arcade.



SAT MAR 2nd | 8:00pm | Dublin Old School

Director | **Dave Tynan**

Canadian Premiere | **Drama**

Presented in collaboration with **The Irish Film Institute, Culture Ireland and Arts Council Ireland**

Starring Emmet Kirwan ('71, Heartbreak), Ian Lloyd Anderson (Love/Hate, Game of Thrones), Seana Kerslake (A Date for Mad Mary, Can't Cope, Won't Cope). Dublin Oldschool tells the story of Jason, a wannabe DJ, on a drug-fuelled trip through the streets of Dublin as he stumbles from one session to another. Somewhere between the DJs, decks, and drug busts he stumbles across a familiar face from the past, his brother Daniel. The brothers haven't seen or spoken to each other in years but over a lost weekend they reconnect and reminisce over raves, tunes and their troubled past.



SUN MAR 3rd | 12:00pm | In The Shadow of the Glen

Director | **Sean O'Cualain**

Canadian Premiere | **Documentary**

Presented in collaboration with **The Irish Film Institute, Culture Ireland and Arts Council Ireland**

In this documentary, director Seán Ó Cualáin tells the plight of his village as he follows a year in the life of the people of Loch Con Aortha. Understanding that the Gaelic civilisation to which they belong to has disintegrated, they strive to protect and preserve their identity. (In English & Gaelic).



SUN MAR 3rd | 2:00pm | **The Family Way**

Director | **Nuno Bernardo**

Starring | **Ciara O'Callaghan, Clara Harte, Steve Gunn**

Canadian Premiere | **Comedy**

Starring Ciara O'Callaghan (Mrs. Brown's Boys, Bridget & Eamon) and Steve Gunn (Fair City, Ripper Street). In this hilarious short comedy, a family is thrown into turmoil when positive pregnancy tests are found in the bathroom drawer.

Director in
attendance



SUN MAR 3rd | 2:00pm | **Bless Me Father**

Director | **Paul H. Horan**

Starring | **Francis Magee, Phelim Drew**

Canadian Premiere | **Drama**

In a small Irish town, where secrets are rare, a local man goes to church to confess his to a priest who learns he had a bigger role in the man's life than he ever thought.



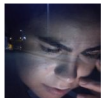
SUN MAR 3rd | 2:00pm | **Troubles**

Director | **Jonathan Harden**

Starring | **Fra Fee, Niall McNamee, Tony Devlin**

Canadian Premiere | **Drama**

A troubled traditional Irish musician re-enters the fold after a long absence. An emotionally stunted friend wants to offer an apology. When words fail them both, music is all they have to bring them together.



SUN MAR 3rd | 2:00pm | [Almost Home](#)

Director | [Emmet O'Brien](#)

Starring | [Shannon Hurley](#)

Canadian Premiere | [Drama](#)

In this haunting short drama, a heartbroken sister recalls the last words of a wayward daughter.



SUN MAR 3rd | 2:00pm | [Ma](#)

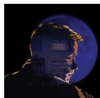
Director | [Anne Marie Kelly](#)

Starring | [Anne Marie Kelly, Jamie McClean](#)

Canadian Premiere | [Drama](#)

We can all empathize with the grief of the mother who's lost a child. But should we empathize with the grief of the mother of the person responsible? This powerful short drama asks the question.

Director in
attendance



SUN MAR 3rd | 2:00pm | **Scope**

Director | **Richard Keaney**

Starring | **Fiach Kunz, Andrea Kelly**

Canadian Premiere | **Drama**

Starring Fiach Kunz (Game of Thrones, Black 47) and Andrea Kelly (Terminal, The Clinic). When a young man drops out of college to care for his mother, he too finds himself increasingly insulated from the outside world. Director will be in attendance.



SUN MAR 3rd | 2:00pm | **Vegetable**

Director | **Mícheál Fleming**

Starring | **Mícheál Fleming, Claire Loy, Degrán Geraghty**

Canadian Premiere | **Comedy**

Yes, it's a film about Irish zombies...because the vege-tables have turned on a desperate trio of zombies, who are left with no choice but to chomp on vegetables to survive. (In English & Gaelic).



SUN MAR 3rd | 2:00pm | First Disco

Director | **Helen O'Reilly**

Starring | **Alex Deegan, Olivia McKevitt, Noah Scolard**

Canadian Premiere | **Comedy**

A first disco. Everyone's had one. Think back to 1983. Culture Club are no. 1, everyone's glued to Knight Rider, and Kelly Harrison is not only experiencing her first crush, she's going to her first disco. Kelly's only problem is she's getting train track braces in her mouth right before the big night.



SUN MAR 3rd | 5:00pm | **The Camino Voyage**

Director | **Donal O’Ceilleachair**

Canadian Premiere | **Documentary**

Presented in collaboration with **The Irish Film Institute, Culture Ireland and Arts Council Ireland**

Featuring Academy Award-winning Irish musician, Glen Hansard (Once, Sing Street, The Commitments), The Camino Way is a modern day Celtic odyssey. A crew including a writer, two musicians, an artist and a stonemason embark on the Camino by sea, in a traditional boat that they built themselves, as they embark on the 2,500km voyage from Ireland to Santiago de Compostela.
(In English & Gaelic).



SUN MAR 3rd | 8:00pm | CLOSING FILM | [The Dig](#)

Director | [Andy Tohill & Ryan Tohill](#)

Starring | [Moe Dunford, Francis Magee, Lorcan Cranitch](#)

Toronto Encore | [Drama](#)

Screening Sponsors | [Northern Ireland Bureau, Tourism Ireland and Invest Northern Ireland](#)

Presented in collaboration with [The Irish Film Institute, Culture Ireland and Arts Council Ireland](#)

Starring Moe Dunford (Black 47, Vikings, Game of Thrones) and Francis Magee (Rogue One: A Star Wars Story, Black Mirror). Winner of Best Picture at the Galway Film Fleadh.

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