

NEWS RELEASE

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Alanis Obomsawin a 2019 mentor;
NFB's GGPAA collection to reach 91 films
Seven new National Film Board of Canada shorts celebrate
Governor General's Performing Arts Awards laureates

February 28, 2019 – Montreal – National Film Board of Canada (NFB)

For the 11th consecutive year, the [National Film Board of Canada](#) is bringing together acclaimed Canadian filmmakers to create short cinematic tributes to Canadian performing arts legends, as the [Governor General's Performing Arts Awards](#) (GGPAA) gets set to honour laureates at its 27th annual Awards Gala, taking place April 27, 2019, at the [National Arts Centre](#) in Ottawa.

“Since 2008, we've been thrilled to partner with the GGPAA to honour excellence in Canadian performing arts, creating short film portraits that capture the talent and remarkable accomplishments of our laureates. These films bring together filmmaker, creative concept and laureate in a true artistic collaboration, and stand on their own as memorable cinematic works. We're excited to be part of the gala and to share these films online with all Canadians at [NFB.ca](#),” said Claude Joli-Coeur, Government Film Commissioner and NFB Chairperson.

The NFB is producing seven new films to bring the GGPAA film collection to a total of 91 titles. These works are produced by the NFB in collaboration with the National Arts Centre and the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Foundation. The NFB has been a partner of the GGPAA since 2008. All completed GGPAA films can be streamed free of charge at: [nfb.ca/channels/governor_generals_awards](#).

Also this year, distinguished NFB filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin, O.C., has agreed to serve as GGPAA mentor to Gop Bartibogue, a First Nations artist from the Mi'kmaq community Esgenoopetitj (Burnt Church) in New Brunswick—whose family Ms. Obomsawin had first met while filming her award-winning 2002 documentary *Is the Crown at war with us?* The GGPAA's Mentorship Program provides a way for past laureates to inspire the next generation by offering guidance to talented Canadian artists in mid-career.

Unique film portraits of Canadian performing arts excellence

Lifetime Artistic Achievement:

Stage, film and television actor **Colm Feore**, O.C., takes centre stage in a portrait by **Hannah Cheesman**, a TIFF Emerging Canadian Filmmaker whose short film *Emmy* received the A&E Short Filmmakers Award for best film (*ex aequo*) from the National Screen Institute – Canada.

Satirist, comedian, screenwriter, actor and humanitarian **Rick Mercer**, O.C., is the subject of a film by St. John's director **Stephen Dunn**, whose debut feature *Closet Monster* was named Best Canadian Feature Film at the 2015 Toronto International Film Festival.

Ariane Louis-Seize, whose shorts *Wild Skin* and *Little Waves* had their world premieres at TIFF, directs a tribute to actress, director, writer and artistic director **Lorraine Pintal**, C.M.

The talents of concert pianist **Louise Bessette**, C.M., will be explored by two-time Géméaux Award-winning director **Érik Cimon** (*Les Citadins du Rebut Global, Montréal New Wave*).

Educator, collaborator and an innovative force in dance, **Mavis Staines**, C.M., is celebrated in a short work by **Leah Nelson**, co-founder and creative director of Vancouver-based content creators Giant Ant and KIDDO.

Ramon John Hnatyshyn Award for Voluntarism in the Performing Arts:

A tireless supporter of musical culture in Quebec, **E. Noël Spinelli**, C.M., is being honoured in a film directed by Canadian Screen Award-winning documentarian **Bobbi Jo Hart** (*I Am Not a Rock Star*).

National Arts Centre Award:

Renowned actor and producer **Sandra Oh** is the focus of an upcoming portrait by **Karen Lam**, whose first short film *The Cabinet* won the NSI Drama Prize and who in 2013 received the Artistic Innovation Award from Women In Film + Television Vancouver.

These short cinematic tributes are produced by the Ontario Studio, the Quebec & Atlantic Studio, the British Columbia & Yukon Studio, the Canadian Francophonie Studio, the English and French-language Digital Studios, and the Special Projects Studio.

About the NFB

The NFB is Canada's public producer of award-winning creative documentaries, auteur animation, interactive stories and participatory experiences. NFB producers are embedded in communities across the country, from St. John's to Vancouver, working with talented creators on innovative and socially relevant projects. The NFB is a leader in gender equity in film and digital media production, and is working to strengthen Indigenous-led production, guided by the recommendations of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. NFB productions have won over 7,000 awards, including 20 Canadian Screen Awards, 18 Webbys, 12 Oscars and more than 100 Genies. To access NFB works, visit NFB.ca or download its [apps](#) for mobile devices.

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