

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### **Sundar Prize Film Festival Announces 2026 Official Lineup, Schedule, and Festival Highlights**

**Surrey, BC** – February 18, 2026 – The Sundar Prize Film Festival has officially unveiled its 2026 lineup, screening schedule, and programme highlights, showcasing a powerful slate of films that explore identity, belonging, resilience, and social change.

Taking place April 23 to 26, 2026 at the North Delta Centre for the Arts and Landmark Cinemas Guildford in Surrey, this year's festival presents 61 official selections chosen from 823 submissions, representing a highly competitive 7.4 percent acceptance rate.

The 2026 festival theme, *Home Is Complicated, So Are We*, reflects a unifying thread across the programme.

#### **Quote**

“Though vastly different in form, genre, and geography, the films selected this year are united by a shared inquiry into belonging. Home is explored not only as a physical place, but as identity, memory, community, and longing — a nuanced, ever-evolving concept, much like ourselves,” states Executive Director and Senior Programmer, Sidartha Murjani.

#### **By the Numbers**

This year's official selections demonstrate strong representation and artistic excellence:

- 81 percent Canadian films
- 68 percent produced in British Columbia
- 54 percent directed by women
- 78 percent created by filmmakers from underrepresented communities including IBPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ creators

International selections from China, Malaysia, US, India, Vietnam, Taiwan, Iran, and Jordan.

## Headline Films and Standout Selections

### 2026 Headliners

Among this year's standout titles is **Saints and Warriors** by Patrick Shannon, a multi-award-winning documentary that has garnered **three Leo Awards** (Best Direction, Best Editing, Best Cinematography – Feature Documentary), a **Hot Docs Top 5 Audience Award**, the **CIFF Grand Jury Prize for Best Canadian Documentary**, and the **DOXA DGC Colin Low Award for Best Canadian Director**.

Set against the backdrop of the Haida basketball season, the film follows leaders of the iconic rez ball team, the Skidegate Saints, as they defend their All Native Basketball Championship title while simultaneously fighting for sovereignty over their land and waters — rights stolen through the Indian Act. [Film Assets](#)

**Calorie**, directed by Eisha Marjara, is inspired by a real-life tragedy. The film follows a family burdened by unresolved trauma as they struggle to find their way back to one another — and back home. [Film Assets](#)

In **The Fire in Our Hearts**, director Josias Tschanz documents a powerful story of resistance and resilience. As wildfires threaten a remote region of British Columbia, the Cheslatta Carrier Nation and Southside residents stay to defend their land, transforming crisis into a blueprint for sovereignty and collective action. [Film Assets](#)

**One Day This Kid** by Alexander Farah — inspired by David Wojnarowicz's seminal text — is an intimate exploration of silence, fear, and inherited tension as a young boy navigates an unspoken future with his father. The film previously screened at **TIFF 2024**, won **Best Narrative Short at SXSW 2025**, and recently welcomed **Dan Levy (Schitt's Creek)** as Executive Producer. [Film Assets](#).

International highlights include **Bayaan** by Bikas Mishra, starring Huma Qureshi. The film world-premiered at the **Toronto International Film Festival** and screened at the **Busan International Film Festival**. Set in a small Indian town, the story follows a rookie detective investigating allegations against a revered cult leader, confronting a culture of silence and blind devotion. [Film Assets](#)

Additional selections include **Sheepskin** by Ethan Wingrove, starring Hudson Williams (*Heated Rivalry*) [Film Assets](#), and **Ramen Boys** by Jason Sakaki, winner of **Best 2SLGBTQ+ Film at the Itaewon Film Festival**. Sakaki also recurs in AMC's upcoming Silicon Valley–set thriller *The Audacity* [Film Assets](#)

## Quote

Amar Sangha, Co-Founder of the Sundar Prize Film Festival and Founder of Sher Pride, the registered charity behind the festival, emphasized the significance of this year's programme:

"This year's lineup reflects the very heart of why we created the Sundar Prize Film Festival. These films are courageous, visionary, and deeply human. They amplify voices that deserve to be heard and stories that inspire empathy, understanding, and meaningful change. We are honoured to present a programme that not only celebrates cinematic excellence but also strengthens community through storytelling."

## About the Festival

The Sundar Prize Film Festival is an international film festival dedicated to socially conscious storytelling and diverse voices. The festival brings together filmmakers, audiences, and industry leaders for screenings, panels, and community engagement, positioning Surrey and the surrounding region as a growing hub for film and cultural dialogue.

## FULL FESTIVAL LINEUP AND SCREENING SCHEDULE AND TICKETS

**The full festival lineup and screening schedule can be found here - [Link](#)**

## Summary of Schedule

Thursday, April 23, 2026 – North Delta Centre for the Arts (11425 84 Ave, Delta, BC V4C 2L9), Opening Night, Film Screenings, and Refreshments, 5 pm to 11 pm (Opening Remarks start at 6:00 pm).

Friday, April 24, 2026 – North Delta Centre for the Arts (11425 84 Ave, Delta, BC V4C 2L9), Film Screenings, 12 pm to midnight.

Saturday, April 25, 2026 – Landmark Cinemas Guildford, Surrey (15051 101 Ave, Surrey, BC V3R 7Z1), Film Screenings, 10 am to 9:30 pm.

Sunday, April 26, 2026 – Landmark Cinemas Guildford, Surrey (15051 101 Ave, Surrey, BC V3R 7Z1), Closing Night, Film Screenings, and Award Ceremony, 1 pm to 9:30 pm (Awards Ceremony starts at 7:30 pm).

Programming Inquiries:

**Sidarta Murjani**

Executive Director and Senior Programmer

[programming@sundarprize.com](mailto:programming@sundarprize.com)

Festival Inquiries:

**Amar Sangha**

Co-Founder of the Sundar Prize Film Festival and Founder of Sher Pride

[info@sherpride.ca](mailto:info@sherpride.ca)

OFFICIAL WEBSITES

[www.sundarprize.com](http://www.sundarprize.com)

[www.sherpride.ca](http://www.sherpride.ca)

**Special Thanks to our Official Sponsors, Supporters, and Partners**

100 Gay Men For A Cause

ACTg Vancouver

BCGEU

BCTF

Canadian Race Relations Foundation

City of Surrey

CMPA-BC

Creative BC

Discover Surrey

Government of Canada

Forest Bean

HEU

HSA

Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Landmark Cinemas Surrey, Guildford

Pacific Backlot

TELUS STORYHIVE and TELUS originals

Unifor – Social Justice Fund

Vancouver Film Studios

Crazy8's

GEMS

iSAFF

KDocsFF  
MENA Film Festival  
Vancouver Asian Film Festival  
Vancouver International Film Festival  
Vancouver Latin American Film Festival  
Vancouver Queer Film Festival  
BC Civil Liberties Association  
Boundless Lion Productions  
Delta Pride  
Goodness Pictures Ltd.  
Himmat Media  
Living Wage BC  
Love Intersections  
Moving Images Distribution  
Mustang Justice  
Punjabi Market Collective  
SWRBOT  
The Celluloid Social Club  
The Cold Reading Series  
Stir  
The Times of Canada  
Urban Asian

#### **Exclusive Media Partner**

CBC

#### **Thank you for your support!**

Please consider making a **tax-deductible donation** to **Sher Vancouver LGBTQ Friends Society (Sher Pride)**, the registered charity behind the **Sundar Prize Film Festival**. For nearly **20 years**, Sher Pride has created safe, life-affirming spaces, amplified marginalized voices, and used the power of film and community to drive social change. Your support helps sustain this vital work and ensures it continues for generations to come.

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/sher-vancouver-lgbtq-friends-society/>

*"If everyone just helps and mentors one person in their life, then all the people of the world will be empowered." Amar Sangha*

*I acknowledge that I live, work and play on the unceded traditional homelands of the Semiahmoo, Musqueam, Katzie, Kwikwetlem, Kwantlen, Qayqayt and Tsawwassen people.*