

FILM, TV, AND INTERACTIVE MEDIA LEADERS DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF CHILDREN'S CONTENT AT THE TIFF KIDS FESTIVAL INDUSTRY FORUM

Speakers from LAIKA Entertainment (*Kubo and the Two Strings*, *ParaNorman*, *Boxtrolls*) and Sesame Workshop headline the conference

Toronto – The TIFF Kids Festival Industry Forum returns in 2017 with a two-day programme on **April 19 and 20 during the TIFF Kids International Film Festival™ (April 7–23)**. The Forum provides an opportunity for filmmakers, television and interactive producers, game designers, and researchers to converge and discuss the latest creative and business trends in the children's film and entertainment industry. This year's edition will focus on writing and authentic storytelling, technology and media as an educational tool, and adapting creatively to changes in the business landscape.

"Great storytelling lies at the heart of successful screen content. We're thrilled to welcome a lineup of exceptional creators and innovators who are leaders in shaping children's content, here in Canada and internationally," said Kathleen Drumm, Director, TIFF Industry. "The Forum will provide delegates with a look at future trends and technologies, while offering delegates of all experience levels, a tremendous occasion for professional development."

Highlights include a keynote from **Mark Shapiro**, head of Brand Management at **LAIKA Entertainment**, a presentation by **Sesame Street** film producer **Kimberly Wright**, and **Sesame Workshop** researcher **Susan Scheiner**, as well as a rare opportunity for up-and-coming filmmakers to pitch their short film ideas to the Sesame team.

Registered delegates will have access to keynote sessions, panels, roundtables and workshops featuring over 30 leading artists and business executives in the children's entertainment and education industries. In addition, delegates enjoy networking opportunities and have access to TIFF's award-winning interactive playground, digiPlaySpace.

Industry registration for the TIFF Kids International Film Festival is now open and delegates can find more information at tiff.net/industry. TIFF Industry is offering two pass options this year: the **TIFF Kids Industry Pass** and the **TIFF Kids Forum Pass**. Both pass types include access to the Industry Forum (available on a first-come, first-served basis), the award-winning digiPlaySpace, and the TIFF Kids Festival Industry Lounge (located in the Bell Blue Room), in addition to exclusive online resources, including the TIFF Kids Festival Delegates Guide, and an invitation to the TIFF Kids Festival Industry Cocktail. The TIFF Kids Industry Pass also includes 10 advance public tickets (one per screening, subject to availability) and same-day tickets to public and school group screenings. The pass also grants access to the Industry Screening Library. College and university students are eligible for discounted rates. To find out more about these rates, contact us at tiffkidsindustry@tiff.net.

TIFF KIDS FESTIVAL INDUSTRY FORUM – PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Breakfast at TIFF: Where are the Canadian children's films on the big screen?

In this special TIFF Kids edition of Breakfast at TIFF, we explore the current output of Canadian feature-length family and animated films. Canadian productions dominate the television market, both domestically and internationally, compared to a relatively low number of animated and live-action feature films produced here. With a wealth of talented creators and the significant box office potential of family films, why aren't we producing more content in this space? We talk to the funders, producers, and distributors who are investing in children's long-form content.



Speakers:

Stephanie Azam (Feature Film Executive, Telefilm Canada)

Joanna Miles (VP Marketing, eOne)

Kate Sanagan (Head of Sales and Distribution, Sinking Ship Entertainment)

Moderator:

Peter Moss (PMD Entertainment)

Keynote: LAIKA ENTERTAINMENT

LAIKA Entertainment's Mark Shapiro takes us inside the process of creating the Oscar-nominated *Kubo and the Two Strings*, the renowned stop-motion animation studio's latest and most ambitious work to date. We delve into the characters, story development, and groundbreaking production style that marks this Oregon studio as an unstoppable Hollywood outsider.

Speaker: Mark Shapiro (Head of Marketing and Brand Management, LAIKA Entertainment)

Inside the Sesame Workshop

For over 40 years, teaching preschoolers useful skills like counting and their ABCs has always been at the heart of *Sesame Street's* programming. Now that the show is produced in over 150 countries, Sesame Workshop's remit has expanded to tackling complex emotional skills and difficult social issues with a well-honed method of approachable content. Join us for this rare opportunity to take a look inside the Sesame Workshop.

Speakers:

Kimberly Wright (film producer, *Sesame Street*)

Susan Scheiner (researcher, Sesame Workshop)

Show Me a Hero: Idols, Influencers and Activists

In the age of #instafame, a star is born online every minute. Viral videos and hashtag campaigns have the potential to reach and influence millions of kids across the world. But what is the message? Here we examine the ethos, methods, craft, and the business behind a few online phenoms who are using their platforms for social activism, inspiration, and positive change.

Speakers:

Brad Montague (writer, director, *Kid President*)

Jonathan Davids (CEO, Influidity)

Joshua Williams (founder, Joshua's Heart)

Moderator:

Debbie Gordon (Director, kidsmediacentre)

Co-presented by kidsmediacentre

Sesame Workshop Pitch

The Sesame Workshop Pitch is back! Sesame Workshop producers are here to meet talented Canadian producers, directors, and writers. 10 selected applicants will have the opportunity to pitch a short film for the iconic television show. All registered delegates will be able to sit in on the session, learn from the pitchers, and gain feedback from Sesame Workshop. Previous pitchers have gone on to develop successful, long-lasting relationships with Sesame and produce award-winning content.

TIFF is a charitable organization with a mission to transform the way people see the world, through film.

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Case Study: *Dino Dana*

Dino Dana is the upcoming follow-up to Sinking Ship Entertainment's Emmy-nominated *Dino Dan*. We sit down with the series creator and key broadcast partners to discuss the evolution of the franchise, taking creative risks, championing strong female characters, and the proven value of diversity on screen and behind the scenes.

Speakers:

JJ Johnson (founding partner, Sinking Ship Entertainment)

Marney Malabar (Head of TVOKids)

Tara Sorensen (Head of Kids Programming, Amazon Studios)

Sylvie Langlois (Head of Acquisitions, Children and Family, Québecor Contenu)

TIFF Kids Industry Forum Opening Cocktail

TIFF and Sinking Ship Entertainment invite you to join us for complimentary drinks and hors d'oeuvres in the TIFF Bell Lightbox Atrium. Network with your fellow delegates and let your inner child loose as you explore digiPlaySpace, TIFF's award-winning interactive playground! digiPlaySpace co-curators Matt Nish-Lapidus and Elizabeth Muskala will be onsite. *Co-presented by Sinking Ship Entertainment*

How to: Prepare and Sell Your Show Bible

Designed for emerging television content creators, this instructional session will arm you with the essential dos and don'ts for the preparation of a streamlined series bible. How do you take your idea from concept to executable package? What do the development executives need to know? What is the ideal length? Veteran showrunners lend their insight and experience to help you stand out from the pack and present like a pro.

Speakers:

Stephanie Kaliner (writer, *Camp Lakebottom*; *Winston Steinburger and Sir Dudley Ding Dong*)

Michelle Melanson Cuperus (President, Radical Sheep)

Philippe Ivanusic (creator, *Freaktown*; *The League of Super Evil*)

Mike Geiger (writer, co-creator, *Winston Steinburger and Sir Dudley Ding Dong*)

Finding Home in a Changing World

What does it mean to call a place "home"? In today's rapidly changing world, children are confronted with issues of nationhood, belonging, displacement, and acceptance. We talk with TIFF Kids Official Selection filmmakers about arming kids with the tools of resilience, adaptability and compassion, to help them make sense of the shifting definition of "home".

Speakers:

Werner Fielder (director, *Halim*)

Arvid Klapper (director, *Baka*)

Meikeminne Clinckspoor (director, *Cloudboy*)

Massud Rahnama (actor, *Halim*)

The New School: Technology in the Classroom

Tablets, computers, apps, and mobile devices are an integral part of everyday life, for adults and children alike. Digital technology creators are responding to this by rapidly developing modern, useful programs specifically designed for in-classroom use. However, is the education system prepared to adapt to a tech-centric curriculum? Educators and digital innovators discuss the challenges and potential value of embracing a "new-school" approach.

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Speakers:

Dr. Jennifer Rowsell (Brock University)

Additional speakers to be confirmed.

Moderator: Dr. Richard Lachman

Workshop: Adapting a Classic for a Modern Audience

Daniel Chuba, director of the animated feature *The Boxcar Children*, delivers a workshop on bringing a classic property to life in animation. Dan walks us through the production process and gives us a peek at the upcoming *The Boxcar Children: Surprise Island*.

Meet the Funders

Representatives from government associations and broadcast media funds provide updates on their funding programs, tips on the application process, and how to find money to finance your project.

Speakers:

Suzanne Lacey (Bell Fund)

Rod Butler (Canada Media Fund)

Additional speakers to be confirmed.

Meet the Development Executives

Canadian producers and broadcasters discuss the development and writing process for children's television series and movies. Find out the types of content and characters that companies are looking to develop, and how to better shape your pitch.

Speakers:

Nathalie Dumoulin (VP Creative Affairs, 9 Story Media)

Stephanie Betts (VP, Development, DHX Media)

Marie McCann (Senior Director of CBC Kids)

Suzanne Wilson (VP Family Entertainment, Breakthrough Entertainment)

Meet the Buyers

This session allows delegates to connect directly with buyers of children's entertainment content, including Canadian distributors, broadcasters, and online platforms that serve a wide range of audiences.

Speakers:

Sandrine Pechels de Saint Sardos (Director, Disruption and Distribution Platforms, Groupe Média TFO)

Kirsten Hurd (Program Acquisitions, TVO Kids)

Additional sessions and guests, as well as dates and times, for the TIFF Kids Festival Industry Forum will be available at tiff.net/industry on March 31.

The TIFF Industry Office would like to thank the TIFF Kids Industry Advisory Committee for their support and guidance:

Jamie Piekarz

Children's Media Consultant

Peter Moss

Partner, PDM Entertainment

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Andrew Rosen

Producer, Aircraft Pictures

Cal Brunker

Independent Filmmaker

Bob Barlen

Independent Filmmaker

Martha Sepulveda

Independent Filmmaker

Questions about the Forum programme can be directed to industryprogramming@tiff.net.

Questions about the registration process can be directed to tiffkidsindustry@tiff.net.

The TIFF Kids International Film Festival takes place at TIFF Bell Lightbox from April 7 through April 23.

Social:

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About TIFF

TIFF is a charitable cultural organization whose mission is to transform the way people see the world, through film. An international leader in film culture, TIFF projects include the annual Toronto International Film Festival in September; TIFF Bell Lightbox, which features five cinemas, major exhibitions, and learning and entertainment facilities; and innovative national distribution program Film Circuit. The organization generates an annual economic impact of \$189 million CAD. TIFF Bell Lightbox is generously supported by contributors including Founding Sponsor Bell, the Province of Ontario, the Government of Canada, the City of Toronto, the Reitman family (Ivan Reitman, Agi Mandel and Susan Michaels), The Daniels Corporation and RBC. For more information, visit tiff.net.

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For information, contact the Communications Department at 416.934.3200 or email proffice@tiff.net.

For images and artist bios, visit tiff.net/press.

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