



34th International First Peoples' Festival : From the realm of shadows to the light of life

The 34th FIPA is about to take off. Sparkling on screen and stage, in darkened rooms and sunny squares, in the spotlight and in the radiant days of summer, Indigenous artists will dazzle with their talent, enlighten with their gaze, move with their sincerity.

Native art is still, and always will be, an art of fight. The title of DJ Shub's concert-event, *War Club Live*, presented on Friday August 9th on Place des Festivals, reminds us of this. In the long saga of the resilience of the world's indigenous peoples, artists are the warriors of joy, recounting the dark hours to better turn the page, raising their fists to defend the beauty of the world and beating the drum for the rebirth of a happy and peaceful relationship between us, human brothers and sisters, and Mother Earth, so afflicted by the rapacity of unsustainable industrial growth. The hour of struggle is also a day of celebration, a joyous march whose steps herald the advent of a radiant affirmation of Indigenous peoples the world over.

Festivalgoers, step into the light!

First Peoples cinema: the 2024 competition

Yintah, the opening film, tells the story of ten years of struggle by the Wet'suwet'ens to safeguard the ecology of their territory threatened by oil companies. It is the first of 19 feature-length films, eleven of which are fiction, to be presented as Montreal premieres at the Cinéma du Musée, until August 15th. This formidable film cycle will close with the screening of Warwick Thornton's latest opus, *The New Boy*, in which a kidnapped Aboriginal child finds himself under the authority of an unorthodox nun. Other dramas focus on childhood: *Yana-Wara*, by the late Oscar Catacora, tells the story of a tragic young heroine in the legal and spiritual world of a Quechua community; *Valentina*, the journey of a Mixtec child who must overcome the mourning of her father; or on a lighter note, *Frybread Face and me*, in which an urban native teenager must, against his better judgment, spend his summer vacations with his Navajo grandmother.

Aboriginal struggles to preserve the last great natural spaces, threatened by deforestation, are documented in numerous field films. The world premiere of Santiago Bertolino's Quebec production *Amazonie, à la rencontre des gardiens de la forêt* will join *The Wind Blows the Border* (Brazil) and *This is our everything* (Germany) in this spirit. The Greek film *The Land of the Forgotten Songs* focuses on the great founding myths of the indigenous populations of the Amazon basin.

The film also features love stories with happy endings: *Eallogierdu, the Tundra Within Me* by Sami director Sara Margrethe Oskal. And Corey Payette's *Les Filles du Roy (The King's Daughters)*, a trilingual (English, Kanien'keha, French) musical film offering an aboriginal, feminist viewpoint on the contact period through dance and song.

All these feature-length films and their accompanying shorts are in the running for prestigious awards, including the Teueikan and Rigoberta Menchu Grand Prizes.

Great concerts on a lively square

On the Quebecor stage on the Place des Festivals, FIPA 2024 presents five nights of concerts, a play (in reading mode) and a women's haka workshop.

Highly anticipated is DJ Shub's concert-performance on August 9th at 8:30 p.m., in Montreal, on the Place des Festivals. Drawing on his experience on stages all over the world, DJ Shub is set to lift the whole city with a heady performance of rhythm and fervor, carrying a message of protest and pride. *War Club Live*: a frenzied celebration of indigenous rhythm, featuring breathtaking performances by dancers in full regalia.

A premiere of the new *Saimaniq Sivumut*, presented by the OktoEcho ensemble and its collaborators, Inuit throat singers. Preceded by a concert with Khano Llaitul, a traditional Mapuche artist, accompanied by a Chilean jazz quintet.

Back by popular demand, Māmā Mihirangi & the Māreikura return with a rousing concert and open women's haka workshop on Sunday August 11th.

The Inuit duo Piqsiq (August 10th), the Maori ensemble IA (August 8th) and the Innu rappers Native Mafia Family (August 9th), with their very different styles, will bring the crowds to their feet in the main square of the Quartier des spectacles.

Finally, in collaboration with *Jamais lu*, a reading of *Sous les branches du sapin blanc*, written by Moira-Uashteskun Bacon, an Innu from Mashteuiatsh.

Non-stop entertainment on the Place des Festivals, including artisan booths, a haka workshop, traditional dances, a skateboard ramp with native instructors from Nations Skate Youth (thanks to Vans!), Wapikoni short films in the Maison longue and, as a demonstration, a brand-new video game Two Falls (Nishu Takuatshina).

Visual arts: exhibitions to see

At La Guilde : *Time and Tide*, with recent works by Inuit artists Eldred Allen and Jason Sikoak.

At the Institut culturel du Mexique/Espacio Mexico, *Los motivos de la selva*, to mark the 30th anniversary of the Zapatista uprising.

And on the Place des Festivals, in giant format, works by Abenaki artist Christine Sioui-Wawanoloath.

And much more!

In the Grande Bibliothèque, a rerun of last year's outstanding Aboriginal films, nominated for the APTN award. Return of the Air-Canada-Matera Award.

At the McCord Stewart Museum, several activities and screenings in the Bombardier Room, including on Wednesday, the 7th, an evening meeting with Leo Koziol, director of the Waira Maori Film Festival about Maori cinema.

Two film masterclasses in collaboration with ISO-BEA (to be announced).

A preparatory meeting for a future symposium, Regards autochtones sur les Amériques.

Screenings in Kahnawake in collaboration with the Mohawk Cultural Center.

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34 years of FIPA

The First Peoples' Festival remains an international event, a place of encounter and celebration where, through singular works, committed creators bring their millennia-old cultures into the present. The bearer of all the fruits of joyful struggle, the event, despite the ups and downs of festivals, succeeds in 2024 in the feat of once again offering the best of the world's aboriginal creativity in the heart of Tiohtià:ke/ Montreal.

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