

****FULL LIST OF FILMS AND SYNOPSES FOLLOWS****



**PLANET IN FOCUS INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL
RETURNS FOR ITS 26th EDITION WITH AN ENERGIZING LINEUP**

Festival is set to open with the Ontario Premiere of *NECHAKO: It WILL BE A BIG RIVER AGAIN* and close with the Canadian Premiere of *YANUNI*.

The 26th annual Planet in Focus International Environmental Film Festival (PIF) runs from October 21-26, 2025 at the Paradise Theatre. PlanetInFocus.org

TORONTO (September 23, 2025) – The [Planet in Focus International Environmental Film Festival \(PIF\)](https://PlanetInFocus.org), Canada’s largest and longest running environmental film festival, has announced its 26th Anniversary film lineup slated for October 21-26, 2025. This year’s edition will be filled with opportunities to build community, learn from guest speakers and filmmakers, and engage with films that shift our understanding of the world we live in. This year’s PIF will run at the gorgeously restored art deco cinema, Paradise Theatre in Toronto.

“As always, we are beyond excited to offer Toronto audiences an opportunity to reflect on and learn more about environmental issues through the art of film,” said Planet in Focus’ Executive Director Katherine Bruce. “So many of the issues covered in our lineup are incredibly relevant today, from social justice to activism, from sustainability to allyship. We are thrilled to be celebrating 26 years of using film as a catalyst for change and very proud of the program this year; we can’t wait to share it with our audiences.”

The festival will open with the **Ontario Premiere** of Lyana Patrick’s *Nechako: It Will Be a River Again*. A [Lantern Films](https://LanternFilms.com)/[Experimental Forest Films](https://ExperimentalForestFilms.com)/[National Film Board of Canada](https://NationalFilmBoardofCanada.ca) (NFB) co-production, *Nechako* is a crucial documentary from Stelat’én filmmaker Lyana Patrick that follows two Indigenous Nations fighting for our collective future. When the Kenney Dam was built in the 1950s, it diverted 70 percent of the Nechako River into an artificial reservoir, severely impacting the lives of local Stelat’én and Saik’uz Nations. What followed were decades of resistance, including legal actions against the Canadian federal and provincial governments and Rio Tinto Alcan, a subsidiary of a global mining conglomerate.

*Director Lyana Patrick will be in attendance at the screening.

Closing out the festival will be the **Canadian Premiere** of *Yanuni*, a documentary by Richard Ladkani, a film that follows the extraordinary journey of Juma Xipaia, an Indigenous chief from the Brazilian Amazon, as she rises from a remote village in Xipaya territory to the political frontlines of climate justice. A fearless defender of her people and the rainforest, Juma has survived six assassination attempts while confronting illegal gold miners, land-grabbers, and multinational corporations threatening her ancestral land.

*Executive Producer Dax Dasilva will be in attendance at the screening.

Among the **Feature Films** in the festival lineup are several exciting **Canadian film Premieres**:

The End of the Internet, by Toronto filmmaker Dylan Reibling - **Canadian Premiere**.

A film about the invisible operating system of the modern world. Through a series of encounters with radical technologists - from an anarchist squat in Berlin, to a futuristic landscape in Taiwan, to a remote village in the Amazon rainforest - we trace the tentacles of the internet around the world to see how it shapes our lives in surprising ways. A journey through infrastructure and power with the techno-dissidents trying to forge a new path forward.

*Director Dylan Reibling will be in attendance at the screening.

Everest Dark, by Vancouver filmmaker Jereme Watt – **Toronto Premiere**

Mount Everest has become a graveyard strewn with the bodies of fallen climbers. To appease the gods, famed Nepalese mountaineer and national hero Mingma Tsiri Sherpa, risks everything to remove the body of a fallen climber and appease the sacred mountain.

*Producer Merit Jensen Carr will be in attendance at the screening.

Your Higher Self, by Montreal filmmaker Annie St-Pierre – **Toronto Premiere**

Part sympathetic portrait and part exposé of the absurd. *Your Higher Self* dives into the world of life coaching - a modern phenomenon in full swing- embodying the quest of our individualistic society: to be oneself, only better.

*Director Annie St-Pierre will be in attendance at the screening.

All Access Festival passes are now on sale, ticketing and other info can be found at planetinfocus.org

[To learn more, click here to visit the Planet in Focus website.](#)

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About Planet in Focus

Planet in Focus is a non-profit organization whose mission is to use film as a catalyst for change by raising awareness of critical environmental issues through a variety of media-based initiatives including; the Planet in Focus International Environmental Film Festival, the Green School Tours, the Cross Canada Campus Tours and year-round screenings that showcase the best environmental films from Canada and around the world. [PlanetinFocus.org](#)

For media inquiries, please contact:

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PLANET IN FOCUS ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL 2025 LINEUP

OPENING NIGHT

***Nechako* | Lyana Patrick | Canada | Ontario Premiere**

A [Lantern Films/Experimental Forest Films/National Film Board of Canada](#) (NFB) co-production, *Nechako* is a crucial documentary from Lyana Patrick that follows two Indigenous Nations fighting for our collective future. When the Kenney Dam was built in the 1950s, it diverted 70 percent of the Nechako River into an artificial reservoir, severely impacting the lives of local Stellat'en and Saik'uz Nations. What followed were decades of resistance, including legal actions against the Canadian federal and provincial governments and Rio Tinto Alcan, a subsidiary of a global mining conglomerate.

Nechako follows the people fighting today to restore a river and a way of life: Nations going up against industry, community leaders advocating for their people, Elders documenting their histories and community members living off the land. An urgent call to action, Patrick's film asks what survival looks like when it serves everyone, in a story 70 years in the making—a story of hope and resistance against all odds, amidst large-scale environmental destruction and despite the will of powerful institutions.

*Director Lyana Patrick will be in attendance at the screening, October 21, 2025.

***CLOSING NIGHT ***

***Yanuni* | Richard Ladkani | Austria, Canada, Germany, USA | Canadian Premiere**

Yanuni follows the extraordinary journey of Juma Xipaia, an Indigenous chief from the Brazilian Amazon, as she rises from a remote village in Xipaya territory to the political frontlines of climate justice. A fearless defender of her people and the rainforest, Juma has survived six assassination attempts while confronting illegal gold miners, land-grabbers, and multinational corporations threatening her ancestral land.

*Executive Producer Dax Dasilva will be in attendance at the screening October 26, 2025.

FEATURE FILM SELECTION

***The End of the Internet* | Dylan Reibling | Canada | Canadian Premiere**

A film about the invisible operating system of the modern world. Through a series of encounters with radical technologists - from an anarchist squat in Berlin, to a futuristic landscape in Taiwan, to a remote village in the Amazon rainforest - we trace the tentacles of the internet around the world to see how it shapes our lives in surprising ways. A journey through infrastructure and power with the techno-dissidents trying to forge a new path forward.

*Director Dylan Reibling will be in attendance at the screening

***Climate in Therapy* | Nathan Grossman | Sweden**

What will happen when a group of scientists get a chance to process their feelings about climate change in group therapy? *Climate in Therapy* is a feature documentary that follows seven climate scientists as they confront a previously unknown field of study: their own emotions.

***Everest Dark* | Jereme Watt | Canada | Toronto Premiere**

Mount Everest has become a graveyard strewn with the bodies of fallen climbers. To appease the gods, famed Nepalese mountaineer and national hero, Mingma Tsiri Sherpa, risks everything to remove the body of a fallen climber and appease the sacred mountain.

*Director Jereme Watt and Producer Merit Jensen Carr will be in attendance at the screening.

***Ways to Traverse a Territory* | Gabriela Dominguez Ruvalclaba | Mexico | Toronto Premiere**

Mexican director Gabriela Dominguez Ruvalcaba grew up in San Cristóbal de las Casas, in the heart of mountainous Chiapas, where Indigenous peoples have long maintained a strong tradition of resistance. *Ways to Traverse a Territory* is inspired by Indigenous ways of being and her concern over the destruction of the land they co-inhabit. A gentle act of reflexive documentary and community partnership, *Ways to Traverse a Territory* meditates on cultural identity and environment through intimate conversations, staged tableaux scenes, and naturalistic vérité.

***Been Here Stay Here* | David Usui | USA | Canadian Premiere**

Been Here Stay Here is a quiet, immersive portrait of a place long used as a symbol, but rarely heard on its own terms. Set on Tangier Island—a centuries-old evangelical fishing community in Virginia's Chesapeake Bay—the film eschews the tropes of conventional climate storytelling. There are no experts, voiceovers, or statistics. *Been Here Stay Here* invites audiences to sit with the lived reality of a community facing the slow erosion of its land, not through spectacle or alarm, but through faith, memory, and daily life.

***The Last Dive* | Cody Sheehy | USA | Toronto Premiere**

Terry is a legendary figure in Baja Mexico, an American veteran who has spent decades living on—and in—the water. Once a man burdened by a troubled past, Terry's life was transformed by an unlikely friendship with Willy, a 22-foot oceanic manta ray. For nearly two decades, Willy would slap his wings against the hull of Terry's sailboat to signal their next dive, and together they explored the ocean's depths—an extraordinary bond that turned Terry into an unexpected conservationist.

Now in his 80's, Terry embarks on one final journey to a remote island in hopes of reuniting with his old friend. But he's also searching for something deeper: peace, closure, and a chance to say goodbye.

***Snow Leopard Sisters* | Ben Ayers, Sonam Choekyi Lama, Andrew Lynch | UK | Toronto Premiere**

Snow Leopard Sisters tells the inspiring story of an unlikely yet powerful friendship between two Indigenous women in one of the most isolated corners of the Himalayas.

The film follows local snow leopard conservationist Tshiring Lhamu Lama as she mentors 17-year-old Tenzin Bhuti Gurung, who is desperate to escape a forced marriage. Together, they journey through the treacherous yet breathtaking landscape of the Himalayas in search of the last remaining endangered snow leopards.

Through intimate vérité footage and stunning cinematography, the film highlights the power of women's voices in conservation, shaping a better future for themselves and the elusive snow leopards.

***Your Higher Self* | Annie St-Pierre | Canada | Toronto Premiere**

Part sympathetic portrait and part exposé of the absurd. *Your Higher Self* dives into the world of life coaching - a modern phenomenon in full swing- embodying the quest of our individualistic society: to be oneself, only better.

*Director Annie St-Pierre will be in attendance at the screening.

**DOC Ontario: Truth Matters Series - *Gaza Sound Man* | Palestine
*Documentary Filmmaking Under Extreme Circumstances***

Sound engineer Mohamed Yaghi works tirelessly to record sounds in the Gaza Strip, leading an auditory journey through four stories, each character reflecting the war's impact since October 7th. Through their voices and experiences, we witness how the sounds of this devastated region have been transformed. A fascinating and original perspective on how humanity endures horror and maintains hope against the odds.

*A panel discussion will follow the screening.

SHORT FILM SELECTION

***The Lost Season* | Mehdi Ghanavati | USA**

Earth is experiencing its final winter. A streaming company hires all available camera operators to film the final weeks of this soon-to-be-lost season. After seeing their footage as a form of ecological exploitation, the camera operators refuse to commodify further climate collapse with their labor.

***True Nature* | Mathieu Boudreau | Canada | World Premiere**

Every autumn, hunters in Gaspésie cut themselves off from the digital world for a while. They retreat into the forest, a disconnected territory. But a growing constellation of small network access zones is threatening this salutary pause in nature, and questioning our relationship with technology in our daily lives.

***Archipelago* | Malena Szlam | Canada**

Archipelago of Earthen Bones — To Bunya forms part of a film constellation that stretches across the Pacific, from Chile to Australia. Malena Szlam trains her camera on far-flung volcanic landscapes, by turns barren and verdant. The dazzling in-camera multiple exposures of the film evoke the layered histories of Mount Beerwah to the titular Bunya

Mountains, tracing a path along the central eastern ranges of Australia, which were illuminated in the afterglow of Hunga-Ha'apai eruption. The film's environmental evocations are further deepened by field recordings and sonified atmospheres from artist Lawrence English.

***Diario de Verano* | Franci Duran | Canada**

Plants foraged in Tkaronto's Kensington Market and Parkdale are brought to life in this experimental film by Anivides

*Directors Cristal Buemi and Francisca Duran will be in attendance.

***Lessons From Our Grandfather* | Ashley Qilavaq-Savard, Jennifer Kilabuk | Canada**

An Inuk's life is tied to the cold, so a warming Arctic climate is a stark reminder of how climate change can impact cultural transference over generations. Filmmaker sisters draw on their grandfather's wisdom to prepare their daughters for resilience in a changing world.

***By The Shore* | Rojin Aslan Vesek | Turkey**

An old woman who does not want to leave her home and her past on an island that is starting to flood due to the climate crisis must decide when the ocean waters come to her door.

***Between Salt and Sky* | Felipe Rosa | Brazil/Chile**

In the heart of the Bolivian altiplano, where the infinite white of the Salar de Uyuni meets the deep blue of the sky, an epic battle unfolds. Ariel Flores, leader of the Rio Grande community, faces a monumental challenge: to preserve the millennial tradition of capturing and shearing wild vicuñas in a rapidly transforming world. Climate change threatens the delicate balance of this unique ecosystem, while the exploitation of lithium, the planet's largest reserve, beckons with progress, but at what cost?

***Silent Sanctuary* | Carter Kirilenko and Adam Combs | Canada | Ontario Premiere**

Hornby Island in British Columbia is one of many warming coastal regions where kelp has vanished. In response to the loss of these vital sea forests, a small team of marine biologists and local divers, known as the Kelp Rescue Initiative, has taken action to restore kelp populations along the island's shoreline. In a groundbreaking study, the team experiments with planting different genetic variations of kelp from warmer regions in hopes of discovering a strain that can withstand the rapidly rising water temperatures. Despite the challenges, they are able to bring back wild kelp to Hornby Island for the first time in 10 years. However, as the scientists push on, they realize the chances of restoring kelp around the world may be slimmer than they initially hoped.

***Ashen Sun / Soleil Gris* | Camille Monnier | France**

Under a scorching sun, Charlie is bored stiff and dreams of going to the seaside. But she's forced to stay in a dingy motel with her cousin Jess, who slouches in her deckchair. The two teenagers don't get along and bicker at every opportunity. On the radio, the monotone voice of an eminent researcher in collapsology predicts the imminent end of the world. The pool is empty, the sun is beating down and the tension is mounting: the ecological apocalypse announced on the airwaves suddenly becomes real.

CANADIAN SHORTS PROGRAM: "Cause and Effect – Encounters on Earth"

This program brings four internationally acclaimed films from four different Canadian directors to Toronto audiences for the first time. The sociopolitical explorations, told through unique filmic languages, take us to remote locations to contemplate the majesty and fragility of our earth.

***An Uncertain Eternity* | Ella Morton | Canada**

An Uncertain Eternity follows the journey of icebergs that travel from Ilulissat Icefjord in Greenland to the East coast of Newfoundland in Canada. Narrated by Greenlanders and Newfoundlanders, this film explores the political, social and spiritual implications of the icebergs and how they are changing as the planet warms.

*Director Ella Morton will be in attendance at the screening.

***Lessons on Flight* | Cecilia Araneda | Canada**

Shot on 16 mm film, eco-processed with olives and hand coloured on site in rural Chile, *Lessons on Flight* examines the flight patterns of the green-backed firecrown hummingbird.

***Perfectly A Strangeness* | Alison McAlpine | Canada**

In the dazzling incandescence of an unknown desert, three donkeys discover an abandoned astronomical observatory and the universe. A sensorial, cinematic exploration of what a story can be.

***Messengers* | Jeffrey Zablony | Canada | Ontario Premiere**

A poetic exploration of three subterranean telescopes in remote regions of Canada, Japan, and Antarctica that reveal a new way of perceiving the universe from within. Underground, we are dreaming into the earth.

* Co-producer/cinematographer Adam Crosby will be in attendance at the screening.

FREE FAMILY PROGRAM: Saturday, October 25th at 11:30am

***Arctic Shifts* | Anna Lindemann | USA**

Scientific climate simulations and speculative storytelling combine to reveal the connections between our human activity and the ecosystem and environmental changes occurring in the Arctic, the region of our planet warming most rapidly due to climate change.

***Blu's* | Rajesh PK | India**

Growing up freely in harmony with nature, witnessing her beautiful environment being swallowed up by industrialisation, BLU decides to fight for the wildlife, meadows, rivers and trees before they disappear completely.

***Snow Bear* | Aaron Blaise | USA**

Set in a rapidly changing world, Snow Bear tells the story of a polar bear in an unforgiving environment on his quest to find a friend.

This independently produced 2D hand drawn film was painstakingly created entirely by Aaron Blaise over 3 years. With Aaron's lifelong dedication to studying, drawing, and animating animals, the adventure is infused with humor, relatability, and emotional depth in the tradition of classic animated films.

***The Leap Beneath* | Roman Willi | Switzerland**

Narrated by Coyote Peterson, this film dives into the hidden world beneath the forest floor. Follow a springtail's clumsy quest for food through a bustling ecosystem where mites, beetles, and other tiny creatures keep the forest alive.

***The Straight Poop* | Sue Orloff | USA**

An animated short entertains while presenting eye-opening information on one of the fastest, most effective ways to slow the rate of global warming. Our film is an engaging way of addressing the dangers of climate change that educates in a non-threatening comical way. Individuals concerned about climate change can make relatively small personal choices that can have a huge positive effect.

***I Dream About Colourful Earth* | Will Kim | USA**

Using watercolor animation technique, "I dream about Colorful Earth" brings to life the director's dreams and memories of Earth. Blending fluid motion and vibrant imagery, the film explores themes of connection, resilience, and unity. As colors merge and transform, the dream unfolds a poetic reflection on humanity's shared journey.

***Humans Build the Biggest Nests* | Isaac King | Canada**

What are "Nuisance Animals"? What are "Companion Species"? Alone and together, their stories are revealed through overlapping spotlights.

*Director, Isaac King will be in attendance at the screening.

Preserve Our Culture | Eduoard Kaltush | Canada

For Edouard Kaltush, the Innu culture is a remedy that must be practised and preserved. To pass on his traditional skills, he teaches three children in his community how to weave snowshoes and fish for lobster at low tide.

The Mayan Forest: When a Tapir Gazes Upon You | Tania Álvarez | Mexico/UK

In the Mayan forest of Mexico and Belize, two groups of children set out in search of the Central American Tapir, an endangered animal that has been of great importance to the ecosystems and cultures of the Yucatan Peninsula. The sounds of the jungle, their memories and myths are woven into a correspondence.