

April 21, 2020 - Please include in your announcements and listings

## The 5th Annual Toronto ReelAbilities Film Festival Goes Online!

**Seven Feature Films, Eight Shorts and more!**

**ReelAbilities Film Festival** returns for its 5th Anniversary with a twist - now it's all online! From May 20 - 24, 2020 **ReelAbilities Film Festival** will showcase Canadian and International shorts, features, and documentaries about Deaf and disability cultures and by filmmakers and actors with disabilities and/or who are Deaf.

**ReelAbilities Film Festival** traditionally offers film screenings, artist Q&As, workshops, and events in various venues across the City of Toronto, but in 2020 **ReelAbilities** will present over 15 film screenings, panels, workshops and events via interactive online presentations.

*"We are thrilled to bring ReelAbilities online - where we can reach even more people. We're excited to showcase amazing films and the creativity of disability and Deaf cultures. We're pleased that we can continue to host important conversations, highlight and convene fantastic filmmakers, directors, actors and writers, and provide a platform for learning about accessible media,"* said Liviya Mendelsohn, Artistic Director of **ReelAbilities Film Festival Toronto**.

Highlights from the 5th Annual **ReelAbilities Film Festival** include the following films: **Code of the Freaks**, a blistering critique of Hollywood representations of disabled characters; **Kupenda**, where three determined teenagers set out to challenge their community's long-held stigma against disability and climb Mount Kilimanjaro; **Sock Guys**, a peek inside a business owned and operated by a young man with Down Syndrome and his father, where people with intellectual disabilities work alongside their neurotypical colleagues; and **From My Side of the Spectrum**, the winner of the first ever Sandra Carpenter ReelAbilities Toronto Film Festival Student Film Award by 16 year old student filmmaker Aiden Lee.

*"We are delighted to celebrate the fifth year anniversary of the ReelAbilities Film Festival virtually. This year's fantastic selection of films spans globally and brings forth stories from Deaf and disability communities that offer thought-provoking cultural critiques, feature the outstanding achievements of our communities around the world, and revel in our vibrant lives. Now more than ever, in this trying and isolating time, it is vital to have welcoming forums like ReelAbilities that make space for us to come*

*together, partake in enriching discussions and collectively enjoy the remarkable artistic contributions of these filmmakers,"* said **Linda Luarasi**, ReelAbilities juror.

Full programming for **ReelAbilities Film Festival** will be announced shortly. Additional events including the ReelAbilities Comedy Night, ReelDance, and ReelEducation matinees have been postponed until late 2020.

**ReelAbilities Film Festival** was established in New York in 2007. In 2016, it crossed the border into Canada as ReelAbilities Film Festival: Toronto, making it the first international chapter of the Festival.

**ReelAbilities Film Festival Toronto**

May 20 - 24, 2020

Full schedule to be announced soon

<https://reelabilities.org/toronto/>

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**ReelAbilities Film Festival Funders:** National Accessibility Awareness Week, Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, Toronto Arts Council, P&L Odette Foundation.

**ReelAbilities Film Festival Sponsors:** AMI Media

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