

VOICES  
WITH  
IMPACT



2023





# Contents

VWI23 FILMS & FILMMAKERS.....	4
MENTORS.....	9
FESTIVAL SCHEDULE.....	13
MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES.....	23
ON DEMAND FESTIVAL LINKS.....	23

**VWI is made possible by**



**Mental Health Services  
Oversight & Accountability Commission**

MHSOAC supports transformational change across  
mental health and service systems.



The APA Foundation promotes mental health literacy, connects underserved communities to needed care, and shifts attitudes about mental health.

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## This Years Films



# Dreams of The Ravaged

Breech Asher Harani (Hybrid Documentary, Philippines)



Three young Filipinos recollect their experiences during and after the three of the most fatal super typhoons in the Philippines.

Breech Asher Harani, a filmmaker and time-based media artist from the Philippine. He is the first Filipino Young Creatives Awardee by the International Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and a 2020 Forbes Asia 30 Under 30 honoree.



# The Plastic Horror

Shenuka Corea (Animation, Sri Lanka)



A family sits over a takeout dinner, noticing the amount of plastic containers at the table plunges the young child into a sea of anxiety, overrun with pollution.

Shenuka Corea is a 27 year old Sri Lankan illustrator, animator, writer, comic artist and concept artist. She enjoys making work exploring history, fantasy and speculative fiction. She is currently following an MFA in Visual Narrative at SVA.



# Ethical Consumption

Cassidy Civiero (Narrative Live Action, Canada)



A person goes to great lengths to get rid of their trash.

Cassidy Civiero (he/him) is a transgender filmmaker with a focus on climate change, mental health & mindfulness, and gender & sexuality. He is a writer and co-executive producer for the series *You're My Hero* on CBC Gem. Cassidy believes anything is possible, both in life and on screen.



# Carbon Traces

Stefie Gan (Mixed Media Animation, USA)



Overconsumption in all forms has led to an imbalance. As humans grow more disconnected from their environment, they face an existential crisis and strive to restore the balance.

Jaye Abhau is a documentary filmmaker drawn to stories at the intersection of people and place. Evangeline Modell is a producer, photographer, and journalist working across adventure TV production, branded content, and investigative journalism.



# Beyond The Soil

Jaime Jacobsen & Eric Forbes (Documentary, USA)



A poetic documentary exploring the emotional impact of climate change on farmers and ranchers who are on the frontlines of Colorado's megadrought in the Rocky Mountain West.

A filmmaker who uses storytelling and her work directing the Center for Science Communication at Colorado State Uni. Eric (he/him) is a director and cinematographer from Fort Collins, Colorado, who is passionate about films focused on mental health.



# Are you hungry?

Rachel Rose & Belen Garcia (Narrative live action, Canada)



What's the best way to train an athlete? ARE YOU HUNGRY? explores the wounds and crisis of this pursuit through the relationship between a player and her Coach.

Rachel Rose is a filmmaker with a history of telling powerful stories and bringing together awesome queer and femme creatives.

Belen Garcia is a Mexican Cinematographer who lives and creates in Vancouver, Canada.



# On Burnt Horizons

Hao Zhou (Experimental, China / USA)



A youth drifts around a rural town as intergenerational voices attempt to define his horizons.

Hao Zhou is a filmmaker from southwest China. Working in nonfiction and narrative genres, Zhou explores LGBTQ+ identities, immigration, and personal resistance against marginalization. Currently Zhou teaches filmmaking at Kenyon College (Ohio, US).



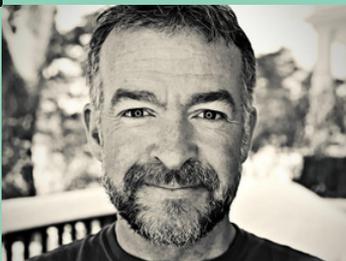
# The Otter

Randy Kelly (Documentary, Canada)



The Otter is the story of Freddie, who, in the midst of burnout, explains some of the contributing mental health factors as she struggles to find the road to recovery.

Randy Kelly is an award-winning film and television director, editor and cameraman based in the Ottawa/Gatineau area in Canada. Over the last 25 years, Randy has worked on dramatic and lifestyle TV series, documentaries, short and feature-length films, cinemoems and music videos in both English and French.



# Out Beyond

## Salman Alam Khan (Narrative Live Action, Pakistan)



Ahmed lives in a family that does not support his ambitions. Afraid to express his true self, he finds the only space in the house where he can be himself

Salman Alam Khan is a filmmaker from Pakistan based in the US working in independent fiction and documentary. His work addresses cultural diversity, human rights & social issues.



# Fortune Cookie

## Fu Yang (Stop Motion Animation, Taiwan / USA)



A fortune-cookie-head tries to find his destiny beyond a dark and desperate situation, but first Cookie must find a way past the creature that blocks his path.

Fu is a Taiwanese filmmaker blending stop-motion, traditional animation, and motion graphics with handmade design. Her award-winning shorts explore connection and meaningful themes. Fu runs a boutique animation studio, Cafe LaBobo LLC, with Ben Ellebracht.



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# This Years Mentors



# Mentorship

We connect our filmmakers with film industry and mental health professionals to ensure our films are of the highest quality. Higher quality films are distributed more widely through multiple channels ensuring the maximum reach for VWI films. Our festival is just the beginning of the journey.

## India Barnardo



India Barnardo is a filmmaker and Disney animator from the UK based in Canada. She's worked on a variety of projects. *Moana 2*, *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-verse*, *The Willoughby's*, *Crash Bandicoot: It's About Time*, *In Your Dreams*, *The Sea Beast*, and her own award winning short, *Cat and Moth*.

## Vicky Du



Vicky Du is a queer, Taiwanese-American filmmaker based in Berlin and New York. Her debut feature documentary [Light of the Setting Sun](#) (Full Frame and IDFA, 2024) examines the intergenerational trauma within her own Chinese-Taiwanese-American family. The film received generous support from PBS, Sundance and more!

## Aliza Bruger



Bomani J. Story is a writer/director born in Riverside, California and raised in Redlands. Bomani wrote *Rock Steady Row*, which won the Grand Jury Prize at Slamdance Film Festival (2018). In 2023, his directorial debut, *The Angry Black Girl and Her Monster* world premiered at SXSW and was nominated for a NAACP Award.

## Huse Monfaradi



Huse Monfaradi is an Emmy-nominated London-based director from Bahrain. He began at MTV, directed iconic Arctic Monkeys videos, and has since created award-winning commercials for major brands like Samsung, Coca-Cola, PlayStation, Mastercard, and YouTube.

## Rosie Choo Pidcock



Rosie is a biracial Chinese Canadian actor and filmmaker living on the Unceded Territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, colonially known as Vancouver, Canada. Her work explores grief, feminine solidarity and the nuances of holding multiple identities.

## Athena Russell



Athena Russell is an award-winning actress, writer, director and producer based in Vancouver, British Columbia. Having amassed a resume of over 45 professional film and TV credits both in front, and behind, the camera.

## Fan Sissoko



Fan Sissoko is a French-Malian artist and filmmaker based in Reykjavik. Her work explores migration, motherhood and neurodiversity. Her animated short 'On The Surface' screened at more than 50 festivals internationally, including Clermont Ferrand ISFF (France 2022) where it received a Special Mention.

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## Festival Events





# Voices With Impact World Premiere

June 26 2023 1pm PT (Online)



Voices With Impact presents the world premiere of 10 brand new short films on the mental health impacts of climate change, and the widespread experience of mental Burnout. These 10 films, produced through the Voices With Impact grant fund, will be showcased in an incredible line up of speakers, youth advocates and world class performers. In the first half of the event we'll focus on the mental health impacts of Climate Change, with films from the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Canada, and the US. Featuring performers Sirintip, Cobra Collins, and Malaika Kegode. After a short interval, we'll showcase our next 5 short films on the topic of Burnout, with stories from Pakistan, China, Taiwan, Canada and the US.

# Premiere Appearances

During our world premiere we'll bring you keynote speeches from climate and mental health experts as well as exclusive performances from artists from all over the world.

## Guest Speakers

### Tamara Toles O'Laughlin



Tamara is an environmentalist focused on equity, access and community. As CEO of the Environmental Grantmakers Association, she builds multiracial climate movements, supports emerging leaders, and advances environmental health through policy, advocacy, and cross-sector coalition-building.

### Rebecca Weston, J.D., L.C.S.W.



Rebecca Weston is a psychotherapist, photographer, and activist living in metro-New York. As a long time social activist with deep roots in clinical practice, Rebecca believes that emotion carries a story that is at once private and social; that change is at once individual and collective.

### Lily Cole



Lily Cole is a filmmaker, writer and actor. Lily wrote the book *Who Cares Wins* and runs a podcast of the same name. Lily is a patron of the Environmental Justice Foundation and an adviser to the United Nation's ECE's Sustainability Pledge.

# Premiere Performances

## AJJ



AJJ is a prolific folk-punk band from Phoenix, Arizona, whose wild sound incorporates eclectic instrumentation and explores many subjects from the topical and political to the absurd. Their latest album *Disposable Everything* speaks to our time and explores mental health in a unique and engaging manner.

## Buddy Wakefield



BUDDY WAKEFIELD is an actor, writer, producer, and three-time world champion spoken word artist featured on the BBC, HBO's *Def Poetry Jam*, ABC Radio National and has been signed to both Sage Francis' *Strange Famous Records* as well as Ani DiFranco's *Righteous Babe Records*.

## Thanya Iyer



Thanya Iyer (synth, violin, voice, piano) is an enigmatic songwriter who crafts sparkling, experimental pop music. Her live band features Pompey (bass, clarinet, voice), Emilie Kahn (harp, flute, voice), and Daniel Gélinas (drums, voice), whose acoustic and electronic contributions enliven serene, spiritual compositions.

# Premiere Performances

## Sirintip



Multimodal artist Sirintip draws inspiration from a range of styles and disciplines. Her works explore unsung intersections of humankind and the natural world.

## Malaika Kegode



Malaika Kegode is an award-winning writer, performer, creative producer and mentor. She creates work for stage, radio, music, and screen.

## Cobra Collins



Cobra Collins (She/Her) is a Métis poet and Spoken Word artist of significant height based in Mohkinstsis (Calgary) - Treaty 7 Territory.

# Festival at a glance

Your quick guide to our events!

Tues 10am PT	Mental Health Panel - Hope in the face of Climate Change
Tues 1pm PT	Filmmaker Panel - Changing Course
Tues 4pm PT	Festival Guest Program: VIFF
Wed 10am PT	Masterclass: Proposals
Wed 1pm PT	Filmmaker Panel - Community
Wed 4pm PT	Filmmaker Panel - Conflict & Identity
Thur 10am PT	Filmmaker Panel - Burnout & Success
Thur 1pm PT	Festival Guest Program: SMHAF
Thur 4pm PT	Mental Health Panel - Hope in the face of burnout
Fri 10am PT	Masterclass: Budgets
Fri 1pm PT	Filmmaker Panel - Climate Anxiety
Fri 4pm PT	Filmmaker Panel - Creativity & Hope

# Online Festival Events

From June 26-30 Voices With Impact will share over 14 live events accessible from anywhere in the world from the comfort of your home! We'll screen mental health short films, as well as filmmaker and mental health panels, and even filmmaking masterclasses.

## June 26: World Premiere Online

### Voices With Impact World Premiere (1pm PT)



10 powerful short films exploring climate anxiety and burnout, created by through the VWI production grant by emerging filmmakers from the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, China, Taiwan, Canada, and the US, alongside youth advocates, keynote speakers and a line up of performers including AJJ, Buddy Wakefield, and more!

## Tuesday 27: Mental Health Panel

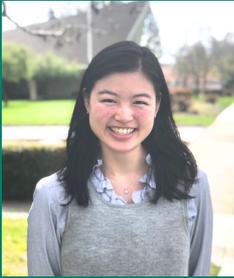
### Hope in the face of Climate Change (10am PT)



Finding hope in the face of climate change? A mental health profession will join VWI filmmakers in sharing their films and discussing the topic of hope, resilience and change.

## June 27: Filmmaker Panel

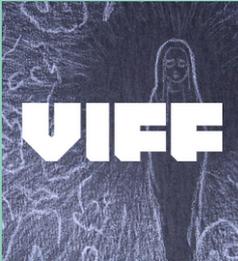
### Changing Course (1pm PT)



Often we can be on a path we don't want to be on, one that's burning us out, how do we change course. VWI filmmakers will share their films and discuss the topic of burnout, knowing your boundaries and changing course.

## June 27: VIFF Guest Program

### Guest Program Curated By VIFF (4pm PT)



Voices with Impact teams up with Vancouver international film festival to offer VIFFs guest program of mental health shorts. Specially programmed for VWI 2023 we explore films from the VIFF archive and discuss mental health and the environment.

## June 28: Masterclass

### Proposals & Pitch Decks (10am PT)



Each year we put out a call for proposals for our production grant, we get a lot of questions on how to put together the all important initial ideas for a short. VWI filmmakers, Jury members past and present join festival director, Chris, in discussing best practise on proposals for next year's voices with impact.

## June 28: Filmmaker Panel

Community (1pm PT)



Community impacts in multiple ways and is a huge part of wellness. Join VWI filmmakers in this screening and discussion around the idea of changing the perspectives that exist within our communities, and what different perspectives from our own can help us see clearer about our own experiences.

## June 28: Filmmaker Panel

Conflict & Identity (4pm PT)



Finding the shape of who we are is a life long journey. Being in situations entirely in conflict with our true identities can be really difficult. This can mean we feel the need we need to hide our true selves, for ease and often for safety. Join VWI filmmakers in this discussion and screening exploring the idea of burnout in relation to identity.

## June 29: Filmmaker Panel

Burnout & Success (10am PT)



Natalie Sandy from Piece of Work Entertainment discusses finding new talent, developing shows for Apple TV+ and her day to day experiences as a Producer. She offers advice for budding writers and gives a unique view into the industry. Natalie has worked on hits like Little America, and WeCrashed.

## June 29: Guest Program: SMHAF

### Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival (1pm PT)



Voices with Impact teams up with Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival to offer a guest program of mental health shorts. Specially programmed for VWI 2023 we explore films from the SMHAF archive and discuss mental health and burnout.

## June 29: Mental Health Panel

### Finding Hope in the face of burnout (4pm PT)



Finding hope in the face of burnout? A mental health profession will join VWI filmmakers in sharing their films and discussing the topic of hope, resilience and change.

## June 30: Masterclass

### Budgets (10am PT)



How much do things actually cost? Each year we put out a call for proposals for our production grant, and a common pitfall is producing a fantastic proposal with an unrealistic budget. VWI filmmakers, Jury members past and present join festival director, Chris, in discussing best practise on proposals for next year's voices with impact.

## June 30: Filmmaker Panel

### Climate Anxiety (1pm PT)



Climate anxiety is real and lots of us are feeling it in lots of different ways. Join VWI filmmakers in this discussion and screening exploring the how we can navigate climate anxiety and guilt. Screening Ethical Consumption, Dreams of the Ravaged and The Plastic Horror.

## June 30: Filmmaker Panel

### Creativity & Hope (4pm PT)



To cap off our week of discussion, we want to talk about how are can help when we're faced with climate change. Can it really help, and if so how? Join VWI filmmakers in this discussion and screening exploring the how we can navigate climate anxiety and guilt.

## June 29: Filmmaker Panel

### Burnout & Success (10am PT)



Natalie Sandy from Piece of Work Entertainment discusses finding new talent, developing shows for Apple TV+ and her day to day experiences as a Producer. She offers advice for budding writers and gives a unique view into the industry. Natalie has worked on hits like Little America, and WeCrashed.



## Festival On-Demand!

Watch back select programs from the festival on-demand through our Eventive platform. All events are free - don't miss out!

[watch.eventive.org/voiceswithimpact](https://watch.eventive.org/voiceswithimpact)

## Mental Health Resources

We platform films that explore mental health themes, so we encourage you to use the resources below should you need to.

**988** SUICIDE & CRISIS  
**LIFELINE**

If you would like to see our curated list of resources please visit our site:

[voiceswithimpact.com/support](https://voiceswithimpact.com/support)

# Anchor Sponsor



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# Presenting Partner



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# Programming Partners



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