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**Italian Contemporary Film Festival
launches its 2016 program**

Screen legend Claudia Cardinale to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award, box office superstar Checco Zalone opens the Festival, Oscar winner Giuseppe Tornatore's The Correspondence headlines the Closing Gala. Six Canadian cities are involved, including in the Niagara Region.

TORONTO, May 9, 2016 – Today at The Ritz-Carlton hotel the Fifth annual Italian Contemporary Film Festival (ICFF), presented by IC Savings, announced its lineup of 70 features, shorts and documentaries, of which 42 are premieres.

The annual festival celebrates the best in contemporary Italian cinema from around the world. Over the eleven days of the Festival, from **June 9-19, 2016**, these films will show audiences in Toronto, Vaughan, Hamilton, the Niagara Region, Montreal and Québec City a wide range of perspectives connected by Italian culture.

“We’re thrilled to be able to champion these films, and equally excited to provide an opportunity for audiences in a record number of Canadian cities to see them at this ever-growing festival,” said Artistic Director Cristiano de Florentiis. “The array of filmmaking voices in this year’s competition is especially impressive, and includes a bright spotlight on features and shorts by Italian Canadian filmmakers.”

“We feel that once again the ICFF is bringing an exciting, relevant program to an ever discerning national Canadian audience,” said Paul Golini, President of ICFF’s Board of Directors. “Top tier artists, actors, directors combined with a compelling Industry Day, make this year’s edition of the ICFF a tangible opportunity to engage both film enthusiasts as well as those looking to explore prospects in the business of film.”

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1287 St. Clair Avenue West, Unit 9, Toronto, ON M6E 1B8



Italian screen legend **Claudia Cardinale**, who starred in such classic films as *Once Upon a Time in the West*, *The Leopard*, *The Pink Panther*, *8 ½* and *Rocco and His Brothers*, to name a few, will be conferred **ICFF's 'Lifetime Achievement Award,'** whose previous recipients include screen legends such as Al Pacino, Oscar winner Roberto Benigni and multiple award winner Carlo Verdone. Cardinale will also present her latest film, *All Roads Lead to Rome*. With her onstage will be her co-star, **Raoul Bova**, who has been featured in many box office smashes, such as *Under The Tuscan Sun*, *Sei Mai Stata Sulla Luna*, and *The Immature*. Bova will also present the film *Rewind and Reboot (Torno Indietro e Cambio Vita)*.

For the first time ever, the ICFF is partnering with the Niagara Integrated Film Festival (NIFF) and will co-produce the 'Spotlight on Italy' program. This new initiative will bring the best Italian films to the Niagara region, thanks to the collaboration of Cristiano de Florentiis Artistic Director and Moira Romano ICFF Board Executive Director; Bill Marshall and Sari Ruda, Co-Founders of NIFF and Tony Watts, NIFF's Program Director.

ICFF's opening film is the international premiere of the comedy ***Quo Vado?***, directed by Gennaro Nunziante. *Quo Vado?*, an immensely popular film in Italy, is the highest-grossing Italian film in box office history. Screenings will be followed by Q&A sessions with the Italian comedian and star of the film, Checco Zalone, as well as director Gennaro Nunziante. The festival will open on June 9 with a gala at Roy Thomson Hall.

The ten-day festival will close with the feature film *The Correspondence*, starring Jeremy Irons, directed by Academy Award Winner **Giuseppe Tornatore** (*Cinema Paradiso*, *The Best Offer*). The film will be screened at the TIFF Bell Lightbox on June 17 at 6:30 pm, followed by the ICFF closing gala at 9:30 p.m. at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel.

ICFF eagerly anticipates the third annual ICFF Industry Day presented by SIRT (Screen Industries and Training Centre Sheridan College/Pinewood Toronto Studios) and ETV Film Inc. Industry Day will be held on Thursday, June 16, once again at Pinewood Toronto Studios. Industry Day provides the opportunity to exhibit and explore the newest screen technologies. Last year's focus on Animation was a resounding success. This year Virtual Reality and 360 Filming will be the focus of immersive workshops, demos and panels on SIRT's Stage 10. Canada's legendary film producer Don Carmody joins numerous industry experts in moderated sessions and panels on successfully navigating today's complex filmmaking industry. An onsite networking cocktail and an After Party at Stirling Room in Toronto's historic Distillery District provide the opportunity to foster business.

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Renowned Italian director Renzo Martinelli, notorious for his incisive investigative films, presents his latest feature, *Ustica*, a film about the downing of an Italian passenger plane in 1980 under mysterious circumstances. The Ustica tragedy represents one of the darkest and most controversial events in modern Italian history.

The festival will also feature an homage to Ettore Scola, one of Italy's most prestigious directors and one of the keystones of the "Commedia all'Italiana" (Italian-style comedy). The ICFF will remember the great director, who has recently passed, with FASHI-ON, an initiative created in collaboration with the Ryerson Institute. The event will be part of the Closing Gala and will feature some of Ryerson's top fashion designers who will create clothes inspired by Scola's classic film *The Family* (*La Famiglia*).

Other films featured at this year's festival include the award-winner *Lo Chiamavano Jeeg Robot* (*Jeeg Robot*), *L'Abbiamo Fatta Grossa* (with Carlo Verdone and Antonio Albanese), *Chiamatemi Francesco* (*Call me Francis*, directed by Daniele Luchetti) and *La Stoffa dei Sogni* (*The Stuff of Dreams*, with Sergio Rubini).

In celebration of the opening of ICFF Montreal, and in recognition of the important exhibition dedicated to Pompeii, ICFF, in partnership with the Montreal Musée des Beaux-Arts, is organizing a soirée on June 12, 2016 at 6 p.m., sponsored by Alfredo and Moira Romano and Traiteur Bon Appetit. The opening gala will welcome 300 guests to a buffet reception and exclusive screening of *Quo Vado?* at the Museum auditorium.

The Niagara Integrated Film Festival will conclude on June 18, 2016 at 7 p.m. with a special screening of *All Roads Lead to Rome*. Claudia Cardinale and Raoul Bova will present the film at the Trius Winery.

This year's ICFF program features works from seven countries: Canada, Italy, Belgium, France, the United Kingdom, Greece and the United States.

Tickets for this year's Festival are now on sale. For full details and schedules please visit: www.icff.ca.

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About ICFF

The fifth annual Italian Contemporary Film Festival (ICFF) runs from June 9-19 2016, during Canada's Italian Heritage Month. The festival presents an international collection of feature films, documentaries and shorts, including premieres, advance screenings and independent films. Screenings are supplemented by guest appearances by filmmakers, actors, authors, academics and other expert speakers who partake in question and answer sessions following most screenings. ICFF is presented by IC Savings and generously supported by The Ritz-Carlton Toronto, Empire Communities, Castlepoint Numa and Cityzen Dominus. It is also supported by major partners: TIFF, Cineplex, Cinematheque Quebécoise, Cinema Guzzo, NIFF, Cinema Cartier, the City of Vaughan, the Italian Embassy, the Consulates General of Italy in Toronto and Montreal, the Italian Cultural Institutes in Toronto and Montreal, the Museum of Fine Arts in Montreal, the Italian Trade Commission and L'Altra Italia. Media Partners are: RAI Italia, CHIN Radio, Panorama, ItalNews, and MyEtvMedia. ICFF partners are: Ryerson University, Centro Scuola e Cultura, TCSB, YCSB, TFCA, ICCO, LUCE, and CIBPA.

Media contact

Giorgio Mitolo – ICFF Media Relations Coordinator

Emily Rickert – ICFF Media Relations

media@icff.ca

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