

**Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT) and  
imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival  
2017 MENTORSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Toronto, March 29, 2017**—imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival and the Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT) are pleased to announce that Toronto-based Kichwa (Ecuador) artist **Samay Arcentales Cajas** is the recipient of the 13th annual LIFT/imagineNATIVE Mentorship. This annual mentorship was developed to offer an Indigenous artist living in the Greater Toronto Area the opportunity to expand their practice into the realm of film, and present their new work in a professional context. Samay will be paired with a suitable mentor, enrolled in LIFT's seasonal workshops and will be provided with access to LIFT's production and post-production equipment. She will receive additional financial and resource support from imagineNATIVE and other to-be-confirmed mentorship partners to complete a film to premiere at the 2017 imagineNATIVE festival (October 18–22).

"LIFT is very excited to support Samay this year as part of our mentorship programme," says Chris Kennedy, LIFT's Executive Director. "The metaphoric and utopic ideals behind her script are a necessary cross-generational call for re-affirmation in troubling times. We are looking forward to seeing this project come to full fruition!"

"imagineNATIVE was impressed with Samay's diversity of experiences in art and education, gaining experience with Toronto's Indigenous artists in varying capacities," adds Daniel Northway-Frank, imagineNATIVE's Industry Director. "Her treatment for her project is ripe with possibilities that can be investigated through LIFT's workshops to find the ideal way bring it to life. We're excited to premiere this work at the 18th imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival."

*"I was ecstatic when I found out that I would receive the LIFT/imagineNATIVE Mentorship. It is a wonderful opportunity to see my creative vision (and that of my family's) be made reality, with the support of such experienced and resourceful people. I am truly honoured for my film "In Moment" to be made part of an ever-growing community of indigenous filmmakers, who are taking back stories into our own hands."*

—Samay Arcentales Cajas

Samay Arcentales Cajas is a Kichwa (Ecuador) digital media and community artist born in Toronto. In her creative practice, she explores the sense of being uprooted, the migration experience, and the meaning of urban indigeneity. Through multimedia work and performance she tangles and untangles her mixed ancestry by including the voices of her family and community. Much of her inspiration comes from her multiple histories and ever-evolving relationships with the outside world, its people, and technology. Her creative journey in the digital realm began with the creation of "Mi Familia Annex Audio Tour", a tour that sketches her family map in the highly-gentrified Annex neighbourhood. Her first short stop motion film "Rimanakuna", premiered at imagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival, 2014. She performed at the Toronto Fringe Festival in 2016 with the

production “*We Are XX*” and is currently in a residency at the Whippersnapper Gallery which will culminate in the showing of her ongoing short documentary project “*Will You Listen?: Latinx Voices of Tkaronto*”.

Previous year’s mentees include actor and choreographer Michael Greyeyes (*Seven Seconds*); Dora and Juno Award nominee Jani Lauzon (*eu•tha•na•sia*); Michelle Latimer (*Tomorrow*); Tyler Hagan (*Estuary*), Adrienne Marcus Raja (*Soli*), Jaene Castrillon (*Celebration of Darkness*) and Jamie Whitecrow (*Heidi Lost*).

On behalf of the Selection Committee, thank you to all of this year’s incredible applicants! To find out more about this annual mentorship, and other artistic opportunities available through imagineNATIVE, please contact [programming@imagineNATIVE.org](mailto:programming@imagineNATIVE.org)

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### **About the Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT)**

LIFT is an artist-run charitable organization dedicated to facilitating excellence in the moving image through media arts education and production resources. LIFT exists to provide support and encouragement for independent filmmakers and artists through affordable access to production, post-production and exhibition equipment; professional and creative development; workshops and courses; commissioning and exhibitions; artist-residencies; and a variety of other services. Founded in 1981 by a small collective, LIFT has since grown to become one of the foremost centres of its kind globally. [www.lift.ca](http://www.lift.ca)

### **About the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival**

Founded in 1999, imagineNATIVE is the international centre for Indigenous-made media arts. Its annual Festival celebrates 18 years in October 2017 and is the world’s largest showcase of film, video, audio, and digital media works created by Indigenous directors, producers, and screenwriters. Year-round imagineNATIVE presents a national tour, screenings across Canada and internationally, and a community screening series based in the Greater Toronto Area. imagineNATIVE is committed to the professional development of Indigenous artists through its numerous workshops, labs, and panels through its Industry Series and through strategic partnerships internationally. imagineNATIVE showcases, promotes, and celebrates Canadian and international Indigenous filmmakers and media artists and is committed to a greater understanding by audiences of Indigenous peoples, cultures, and artistic expressions. [www.imagineNATIVE.org](http://www.imagineNATIVE.org)

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