



**THE LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO (LIFT)  
AND THE IMAGINENATIVE FILM + MEDIA ARTS FESTIVAL  
2019 MENTORSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Toronto, April 18, 2019**—The imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival and the Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT) are pleased to announce that Toronto-based artist **Cole Forrest** is the recipient of the 15th annual LIFT/imagineNATIVE Mentorship. Cole is an Ojibwe artist originally from Nipissing First Nation. 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. Cole will be paired with suitable mentors, enrolled in LIFT’s seasonal workshops and will be provided with access to LIFT’s production and post-production equipment. He will receive additional financial and resource support from imagineNATIVE and other to-be-confirmed mentorship partners to complete a film for premiere at the 2019 imagineNATIVE Festival (October 22–27).

“Cole’s project really stood out for us this year,” says Chris Kennedy, LIFT’s Executive Director. “We were able to imagine what it would look like based on the words on the page and feel that it will look especially beautiful on film.”

“Cole is a rising talent in our community, and someone who takes advantage of new opportunities for creative growth, which makes him an exciting recipient of our longest standing professional development program. We look forward to premiering his work at our 20th anniversary Festival in October,” adds Daniel Northway-Frank, imagineNATIVE’s Institute Director.

“I am incredibly grateful as an emerging Indigenous artist to be seen, heard and given the opportunity by such wonderful organizations. This mentorship means so much to me in furthering my artistic practice and developing new technical skills. This is special. I am ready to work hard. And I am excited to create. Chi-Miigwetch to imagineNATIVE and LIFT!”

—Cole Forrest

**Cole Forrest** is an Ojibwe artist based in Toronto, Ontario. Originally from Nipissing First Nation, Cole strives for compassion and acceptance within the arts. Cole trained and honed his craft at the “Big Medicine Studio” while working with the group Aan-mitaagzi. Cole has written, directed, and acted in various student/independent short films, theatre pieces, and a musical. Cole’s films have been screened at both imagineNATIVE and the Toronto Queer Film Festival (TQFF). Cole is a recipient of the Ken and Ann Watts Memorial Scholarship. Cole recently finished a run of his new one-act play “The Heels of Our Grandfathers” as a part of the Paprika Festival and On The Edge Fringe. Currently, Cole works with the Coalition for Music Education in Canada as an ambassador for their Youth4Music Program and leads their Indigenous initiative, Ngamwag Shkinweg. He is developing a new play, “Firestarter” as a part of Paprika Festival’s Indigenous arts program. Cole Forrest is regarded as an emerging cultural leader of Northern Ontario. He is proficient in movement, theater, media, music, and most notably, writing.

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*), Jamie Whitecrow (*Heidi Lost*), Samay Arcentales Cajas (*In Moment*) and Natasha Naveau (*Menaptwi (Smoked)*). Cole will premiere his new short at the 20th annual imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, October 22-27, 2019.



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 Institute Coordinator Adriana Chartrand at [achartrand@imaginenative.org](mailto:achartrand@imaginenative.org)

Follow this program on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter: **#LIFTiNMentorship**

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

The Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT) is Canada's foremost artist-run production and education organization dedicated to celebrating excellence in the moving image. 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. LIFT is supported by its membership, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Ontario Arts Foundation, the Government of Ontario and the Toronto Arts Council. <https://lift.ca>

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

The imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival is the largest international festival of its kind that celebrates the latest works by Indigenous peoples on the forefront of innovation in film, video, radio and new media. The imagineNATIVE Institute, a department within the organization, also runs year-round professional development opportunities for Indigenous screen creatives, and hosts a series of industry relevant talks each Spring. Each fall, the Festival presents a selection of the most compelling and distinctive Indigenous works from around the globe. The festival's screenings, parties, panel discussions, and cultural events attract and connect filmmakers, media artists, programmers, buyers, and industry professionals. The works accepted reflect the diversity of the world's Indigenous nations and illustrate the vitality and excellence of our art and culture in contemporary media. This year's festival runs October 22-27, 2019. <https://imaginenative.org>