

# 2008-09 REEL YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL

## PRESS RELEASE



**Reel Youth is about empowerment. It is about young artists reclaiming the media to express their creativity, originality and vision for a better world. It is about connecting communities with their youth.**

**The media is one of the most powerful influences on our culture. Reel Youth operates under the belief that the youth voice is both highly relevant and significant. The Reel Youth Film Festival (RYFF) takes this vision to the screen in a celebration of youth culture, discovering and promoting young filmmakers while showcasing the richness and diversity of a new generation of films.**

**The Festival screens short films made by young people under 20, and tours in partnership with youth media organizations, high schools, community groups and international film festivals. The 2008/09 tour kicked off at the Vancouver International Film Festival and will continue across Canada to Calgary, Winnipeg, Inuvik, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, St. John's and Halifax; as well as communities in the Netherlands, Austria, Scotland, India, Nepal, Mexico and the US.**

The Reel Youth Film Festival creates an opportunity for communities to gain insight into youth culture and the issues concerning young people. By providing distribution for culturally, socially and economically diverse opinions to be expressed, the RYFF supports filmmakers with a message.

It also directly assists the organizations that make films with youth. Proceeds from the screenings go directly to the Reel Youth Film Festival's local partners and the audience votes dictate the People's Choice Awards.

The Festival showcases a wide variety of films from moving biographies to funny, enlightening glimpses into the youth psyche. *Reel Youth* gathers films from independent collectives, youth film organizations and media classes throughout Canada and around the world.

A youth jury judged over 400 submissions, based on entertainment value, technical merit and the message they portray. Each screening is made up of 25% local content with the remaining 75% representing the most cutting edge youth made films.

A panel of local youth filmmakers engage in a facilitated conversation with the audience at the end of each screening about youth culture and the issues raised in the films. It is also a way of recognizing the young filmmakers and empowering their voice in their community.

Major sponsors of the Festival include the Vancouver Foundation's Youth Philanthropy Council, Mobius Media, Tides Canada Endswell Fund, Dogwood Initiative, The National Film Board of Canada's CITIZENShift, 604 MEDIA, Hollyhock and the Vancouver International Film Festival.

For more info on **Reel Youth** and to watch the festival trailer see: [www.reelyouth.ca](http://www.reelyouth.ca)

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