

In Brief: Deborah Cox named first BSO Award of Excellence recipient

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Plus: Daniel Chan upped to agent at Connekt Creative, two Canadian shorts win at FIFEM, and more.

Grammy-nominated musician and actor Deborah Cox (pictured) will be the inaugural recipient of the Black Screen Office's (BSO) Award of Excellence.

Cox will be presented the award at the upcoming **BSO Symposium** taking place April 1 at the Toronto Region Board of Trade.

The Award of Excellence was created by the BSO to acknowledge and celebrate Black trailblazers that have made significant contributions to the entertainment industry. Cox, who has starred in films such as *Sidelined: The QB and Me* and *Influence* as well as the HBO series *Station Eleven* and BET+'s *First Wives Club*, was the first Black woman to be inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame in 2022.

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"[Cox's] remarkable talent and unwavering dedication have paved the way for countless Black artists in Canada and beyond," said BSO CEO Joan Jenkinson in a statement. "We look forward to celebrating her extraordinary career and honouring the profound impact she has made on Black culture."

Vancouver's Connekt Creative ups Daniel Chan to agent

Daniel Chan, previously talent coordinator at the Vancouver-based national talent agency Connekt Creative, has been promoted to agent.

Chan began at the agency in 2017 as an assistant to its founder, Nigel Mikoski, and in 2022 was promoted to talent coordinator. From November 2022 to December 2023, he served as a business affairs coordinator for Reel One Entertainment before returning to Connekt.

"[Chan's] eye, high standards and exceptional taste for talent make him a wonderful addition to the agent team here at Connekt," said Mikoski in a statement.

Mikoski formed Connekt after his 2016 departure from Integral Artists, which he founded in early 2013. The company's clients include Gerry Dee (*Mr. D*), Kevin Alves (*Yellowjackets*), Louis Ferreira (*House of David*), Jessica Steen (*Heartland*) and Arnold Pinnock (*Plan B*).

Chan's appointment makes him the third agent at the company, alongside Mikoski and Yvonne Gustafson, Mikoski told *Playback Daily*.

Earlier this month, Integral Artists acquired fellow Vancouver-based company King Talent.

Two Canadian shorts win at FIFEM

Two Canadian short animated films were recognized at this year's edition of the Montreal International Children's Film Festival (FIFEM).

Writer-director Torill Kove's *Maybe Elephants* (NFB, Mikrofilm) was selected by the festival's children's jury for the Best Canadian Short Film Award. The autobiographical Canada/Norway coproduction, produced by Lise Fearnley, Maral Mohammadian and Tonje Skar Reiersen, follows a family after its move to Kenya. The children's jury consisted of Isak Guinard Butt, Charline Joyal, Sacha Lapointe, Agathe de Latrémouille and Maya Seers.

Les fleurs sauvages (Club Vidéo), directed by Rodolphe Saint-Gelais and Thierry Sirois, received the Best Canadian Short Film Award. Written by Saint-Gelais, the film is presented as a voice mail message giving instructions on how to mow the narrator's lawn. The professional jury comprised Germany's Michael Harbauer, director of the SCHLINGEL International Film Festival; South Korean film critic and festival programmer Sang-yong Lee; Hélène Singer, festival director for the New Caledonia-based La Première Séance; and Canadian screenwriter and director Alain Jacques.

The 2025 edition of FIFEM ran from March 1 to 9.

B.C. film and tourism agencies partner to launch Cineventure

B.C.'s tourism and film industries have partnered to launch Cineventure, an AR platform designed to transform the province's filming locations into immersive tourism experiences.

According to a statement from Cineventure, the collaboration between the BC Film Commission, Screen BC, and six municipal Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) marks the first major partnership between two of the province's most successful industries.

The digital platform launches with 25 self-guided interactive routes across Greater Vancouver, featuring productions that showcase the region. It includes exploration of locations seen in *Riverdale*, *When Calls the Heart*, *Happy Gilmore* and *Twilight*, among other projects.

Cineventure will use a multifaceted approach to promote the offering, including social media and digital. "We will also tap into the well-established marketing channels within the tourism industry, including tourist information booths, hotel concierge services, cruise ship hubs, and airport terminals," said Ryan McKee, project and creative director, Cineventure, in a statement. "Additionally, influencer marketing is effective in the travel space, and we look forward to collaborating with influencers, movie and TV superfans, and content creators to amplify our reach."

The initial launch includes partnerships with destination marketing organizations from Burnaby, Langley, New Westminster, Richmond, Squamish and Surrey, with additional municipalities already committed to joining throughout 2025.

Bardel Entertainment, Think Tank Training Centre launch \$21,000 B.C. CG arts scholarship

Vancouver-headquartered animation studio Bardel Entertainment is partnering with North Vancouver-based 3D art school Think Tank Training Centre to launch a \$21,000 CG arts scholarship.

The Imagination in Motion Scholarship aims to support underrepresented B.C. students seeking VFX training. Through the scholarship, starting in June, five students will be selected to receive \$4,250 towards their tuition for the 16-week CG Fundamentals Certificate Program at Think Tank Training Centre. According to the company, the online program offers hands-on training from industry professionals and gives students the opportunity to learn CG fundamentals.

Along with the course from Think Tank, the selected participants will also gain access to industry workshops and events led by Bardel professionals.

Applications for the scholarship open on March 17.

With files from Nicholas Sokic, Media in Canada and Realscreen

Image courtesy of Deborah Cox

