



Fantasia honours Canadian features Black Zombie, Insectasy

BY AMBER DOWLING

3 days ago



The Fantasia International Film Festival continues in Montreal through to Aug. 2.

Maya Annik Bedward's documentary *Black Zombie* (pictured) has won the Northern Excellence Award for Canadian Filmmaking at the 2026 Fantasia International Film Festival.

The Montreal **genre festival** revealed the winners of its juried awards on Sunday (July 26). The fantasy horror *Nightborn* from Finnish director Hanna Bergholm won the Cheval Noir Award for Best Film.

Black Zombie (Third Culture Media) is produced by Bedward, Hannah Donegan and Kate Fraser, while Jennifer Holness, Michael Paszt, Andrew Thomas Hunt, James Fler and Slash serve as the executive producers.

RELATED STORIES

- Kevin Healey, Viral Nation board Headcase feature adaptation
- Raven Banner acquires Canadian rights to Night of the Reaper
- Frontières, Japan's TIFFCOM partner on genre showcase

The film explores the evolution of the zombie from its origins in Haitian spiritual traditions to its place in popular horror cinema. It premiered at **SXSW** in March and had its Canadian premiere at **Hot Docs**.

Toronto-based Raven Banner Releasing is the Canadian distributor, while New York's Kino Lorber has **acquired** the U.S. rights. It will begin its U.S. theatrical run on Sept. 11 with select screenings in New York City and Los Angeles.

The Northern Excellence jury also awarded a special mention to writer-director Angus Silver's *Insectasy* (Foggy Ocean Pictures).

The film is produced by Silver and Connor Slatkoff Sharpe, with James Jeffery and Ian David Nsenga serving as the executive producers. It follows a young woman as she struggles to balance work, her social life and an erotic fascination with insects.

The Northern Excellence jury was led by filmmaker Kier-La Janisse, alongside film critic Matthew Hays, filmmaker and actor Kelly Kay Hurcomb, artist Naomie Jaye, filmmaker Mike Peterson and filmmaker and actor James Watts.

The Fantasia International Film Festival runs through Aug. 2.

With files from Jamie Casemore

Image courtesy of Fantasia

