

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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KYLE FOSTNER APPOINTED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

VANCOUVER, BC - The Board of Directors of Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF) announce the appointment of Kyle Fostner as Executive Director. The decision concludes an international search that follows an unprecedented 18-months for the organization during which Fostner served as Interim Executive Director. Fostner assumes the role immediately. His appointment is accompanied by a slate of dynamic new additions to VIFF's Board of Directors, which were appointed at the organization's AGM on June 9, 2021.

"The Board takes great pleasure in announcing the appointment of Kyle Fostner as Executive Director. The past year could have been devastating for VIFF, and yet against the pandemic backdrop we not only survived but thrived due to Kyle's clear vision and confident stewardship," says Lucille Pacey, VIFF Board Chair. "Since joining VIFF in 2014, Kyle has proven himself to be a tireless champion of film; rapidly assuming increased responsibility and leadership within the organization. In a year fraught with uncertainty, Kyle astutely guided VIFF through the pandemic, spearheaded the pivot to a hugely successful digital film festival, and crafted a robust strategic plan that represents the ambitious and exciting future of VIFF. We're confident Kyle's wealth of experience and passion will further shape and deliver the organization to new heights."

Fostner is an experienced cultural innovator and community builder with a demonstrated track record of organizational leadership, financial acuity, and artistic credibility. His journey in cultural management began at a grassroots level while performing, touring, and releasing records as a musician for more than 10 years. A strategic thinker and natural leader, he has a long history in experimenting with new and innovative ways to support the industry, including owning and operating LFTTCKT from 2012-2017 - a web-based platform that offered promoters, venues, and musicians an inexpensive and simple box office solution.

As General Manager of Montreal's Casa Del Popolo and Sala Rossa from 2006-2014, he guided the longstanding and iconic music venues to record success, significantly contributing to the cultural fabric of the city. In 2014, Fostner made a move West and joined VIFF as a Venue Manager. In subsequent years, his responsibilities expanded from Guest Services Manager in 2015 to VIFF's first-ever Director of Operations in 2016. Fostner co-founded and developed VIFF Live in 2017, which resulted in memorable presentations from Kronos Quartet live scoring Guy Madden's 'Green Fog' and Kid Koala's 'Satellite, a Turntable Orchestra'. More recently, he led all aspects of the \$2.8M renovation of the VIFF Centre, and helped to secure significant funding from all three levels of government, while supporting VIFF's philanthropic capital fundraising efforts.

"It is a tremendous honour and a great responsibility to be offered the opportunity to serve as Executive Director of VIFF - an organization with whom I have a longstanding and deeply passionate connection," says Fostner. "The events of this past year have shown us just how interconnected and interdependent we are. VIFF is an organization that celebrates and strengthens these connections, both globally and locally. I am excited to continue to build - and make accessible - a platform for our community of creators and voices. Together, we look forward to redefining what a film festival can be."

The announcement coincides with VIFF's June 9, 2021 AGM, which saw the appointment of three new leaders to its Board of Directors:

Am Johal is the Director of SFU's Vancity Office of Community Engagement and Co-Director of SFU's Community Engaged Research Initiative. He has additional affiliations with SFU departments including Graduate Liberal Studies, Centre for Dialogue, Labour Studies and the Institute for the Humanities. He has been on the boards of the Vancity Community Foundation, Bloom Group, Indian Summer Arts Society, 221A, the Or Gallery and the City of Vancouver's Arts and Culture Committee. He is the co-author of 'Global Warming and the Sweetness of Life: A Tar Sands Tale' with Matt Hern and Joe Sacco.

Doreen Manuel (Secwepemc/Ktunaxa) is the Director of the Bosa Centre at Capilano University. She has 15 years experience in the film industry and 33 years experience in teaching. Manuel has an extensive background working in First Nations education and community development in both rural and urban centers.

Manuel comes from a long line of oral historians and factual storytellers from her First Nations traditional background. She is a founder of the Tricksters and Writers program and has won many film industry and education leadership awards in the community including the 2019 Woman of the Year award from Women in Film and TV Vancouver (WIFTV). She is on the Board of Directors for Knowledge Network and Moving Images Distribution.

Johnna Sparrow is a member of the Musqueam First Nation and a producer at Salish Sparrow Productions. Her unique experience in building collaborative relationships between First Nations and non-First Nations organizations arose from her role as Communication Protocol Office in the Musqueam Indian Band in the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. Her previous work experience and relationships with development executives in Vancouver led her to her current role as Indigenous Relations Advisor in development. Sparrow's role is to build and strengthen relationships between Indigenous communities and development officials, ensuring that Indigenous voices are heard and included in the development of their land and territories.

The new appointees join VIFF's Board of Directors: Colin Browne, Lydia Guo, Matt Hall, Catherine Olsen, Farnaz Riahi, David Shephard, Michelle Yung, and Board Chair Lucille Pacey and Director Emeritus Dave Hewitt.

Vancouver International Film Festival celebrates its 40th anniversary from September 30-October 10, 2021.

About VIFF | viff.org

Founded in 1982, the Greater Vancouver International Film Festival Society is a not-for-profit cultural society and federally registered charitable organization that operates the internationally acclaimed Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF) and the year-round programming at the VIFF Centre. VIFF produces screenings, talks, conferences and events that act as a catalyst for the community to discover the creativity and craft of storytelling on screen.

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