



## **The Canadian Sport Film Festival gets set for the Rio Olympics with powerful three-day event**

### **The 8th Annual festival features compelling stories about Toronto and Rio**

TORONTO, April 22, 2016 – From Rio to Toronto and around the world, **the 8th annual Canadian Sport Film Festival (CSFF)** gives audiences an even closer look at the sports they love, the teams they follow and the social issues that often surround them. Presented in partnership with returning sponsor, **Toronto Pearson International Airport**, the festival takes place on May 20-22 at TIFF Bell Lightbox.

“With billions of eyes on the Summer Olympics this year, and Toronto’s recent experience as host city for the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games, we know international sporting events generate a craving for healthy dialogue and discussion surrounding important social issues,” said Russell Field, Executive Director. “Our film festival addresses that need as the majority of our films feature a sport that will be part of this summer’s competition in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.”

Every year, CSFF films feature the remarkable resilience of people in challenging circumstances who find hope through sport. Powerful stories are put on screen that highlight the ways in which sport, recreation, and play matter in the everyday lives of people and offer opportunities for social change.

Of the 23 films presented this year, highlights include:

- **Fighting for Peace (Opening Night)** – Two young boxers living in one of Rio’s most violent and poorest slums are on a quest to become national champions. With one having lost a sister to addiction, and the other as sole provider for his mother and seven siblings, the film looks at what it takes to be a winner.
- **Sully’s (Opening Night)** – As one of Toronto’s most legendary boxing gyms, Sully’s served as a training home of Nicky Furlano, George Chuvalo and even Muhammad Ali. Viewers will learn more about the man behind the beloved boxing institution.
- **Eastern** – Four students at a storied Toronto high school with a great basketball pedigree find themselves competing for the school’s last chance at championship glory. With the school closing down, they are trying to write a memorable end to one of Canada’s most historic sport programs.
- **Ron Taylor: Dr. Baseball** – In celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Toronto Blue Jays, celebrate the life of Ron Taylor. After winning World Series championships as a pitcher, Ron Taylor gave up baseball for a career

- in medicine. Find out how a life-changing tour of Vietnam led him to become the team physician for the Toronto Blue Jays.
- **Zanzibar Soccer Dreams (Closing Night)** – With all eyes on the Canadian national women’s soccer team’s pursuit of Olympic gold in Rio, meet a remarkable group of women who are fighting just for the right to play the game. Soccer players in Zanzibar have had to overcome religious, cultural and gender prejudices, and the world premiere of this film will be attended by both the film’s director and star.
  - **Boxing For Freedom (Closing Night)** – Two sisters who are the best female boxers in Afghanistan aim to compete in London 2012 Olympics. But they must first overcome the challenge of being physically active women in a country that doesn’t support it.

As part of the festival, the Canadian Sport Film Festival reaches out to young people in the Greater Toronto Area. CSFF is hosting an interactive panel and engaging workshop for youth that will allow them to actively participate by making their own films. Former Olympic Gymnast **Alexandra Orlando**, and Olympic boxing hopeful **Arthur Biyarсланov** are scheduled to participate in the panel.

“As Canada’s largest airport, Toronto Pearson is in the connections business. We know that sports have a unique ability to connect people, allowing them to overcome differences and build stronger communities,” said Robyn Connelly, Director of Community Relations, Greater Toronto Airports Authority. “We’re proud to partner with the Canadian Sport Film Festival again this year to help increase awareness of how sports can help our city to thrive.”

Tickets will be on sale on Monday May 2, 2016. The full program and official festival trailer are available at [www.sportfilmfestival.ca](http://www.sportfilmfestival.ca)

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For more information, videos or photos, please contact:

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### **About Canadian Sport Film Festival**

The Canadian Sport Film Festival (CSFF) brings together the theatre of sport and the medium of film to tell unique, provocative and passionate human stories from around the world. CSFF also works to showcase international films and filmmakers not typically screened or widely available. In addition, CSFF educates, engages and entertains communities throughout Canada using powerful stories told on film through sport, many of which promote physical activity as a means to achieve long-

lasting health benefits to both body and mind. For more information, visit [www.sportfilmfestival.ca](http://www.sportfilmfestival.ca)

**About Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA)**

The GTAA is the operator of Toronto Pearson International Airport, the largest airport in Canada and one of the largest in North America in terms of passenger and air cargo traffic. In 2015, more than 41 million passengers passed through the airport. By the mid-2030s it is estimated Toronto will serve 65 million per year. As a global hub airport, Toronto Pearson positively contributes to the area's economy by employing thousands, connecting travellers and goods, and attracting business from around the world.