

## **BRIGHT NIGHTS: THE 3<sup>RD</sup> BALTIC-NORDIC FILM FESTIVAL**

In collaboration with the Embassies of the Baltic and Nordic nations, the Canadian Film Institute presents this annual festival of films from Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Iceland, Estonia, Lithuania, and Norway.

Bright Nights 2013 features some of the most exciting and entertaining films from the Baltic-Nordic countries, scouted by CFI staff at international film festivals in Cannes, Montreal, and Toronto. We are thrilled to be able to present this excellent collection of films. This third annual Bright Nights has something for everyone, and is presented in partnership with Winterlude 2013! All films are Ottawa premieres!

[Winterlude logo]

Fri./ven. Feb. 8 fev., 19:00

### **SIMON AND THE OAKS**

Lisa Ohlin Sweden 2011 | 121 minutes

An epic drama spanning the years 1939 to 1952, this is the gripping story of Simon, who grows up in a loving working class family on the outskirts of Gothenburg but always feels out of place. He finally convinces his father to send him to an upper-class grammar school, where he meets Isak, the son of a wealthy Jewish bookseller who has fled Nazi persecution. Simon is dazzled by the books, art and music he encounters in the home of Isak's father Ruben, which makes Simon long to know more about his own family background. Isak, on the other hand, draws comfort from learning to do something with his hands, helping Simon's father to build boats. When Isak faces trouble at home, he is taken in by Simon's family and the two households slowly merge, their destinies connecting in unexpected ways as war rages all over Europe. Based on the bestselling novel by Marianne Fredriksson. English sub-titles. **OPENING NIGHT RECEPTION TO FOLLOW!**

Fri./ven. Feb. 15 fev., 19:00

### **SOUNDBREAKER**

Kimmo Koskela Finland 2012 | 86 minutes

As a portrait documentary about Finnish artist and musician Kimmo Pohjonen, *Soundbreaker* is clearly influenced by its inspiring subject. The free-flowing narrative and complex beauty of the film echoes Pohjonen's rebellious music of wheezing accordions and brash synth sounds. Director Koskela's documentary is as electric and loud as a concert film, but woven together with the intimacy and careful craft of a good book. Breathtaking landscapes and staged shots are folded in with footage of live performances and sound recordings, and even Koskela's talking heads and archival photos are mesmerizing, with unconventional framing and strangely absent voiceovers. Ultimately, we are allowed insightful and sometimes humorous access into the process of a truly gifted artist; Pohjonen's music will leave you in buzzing wonderment. The film was selected for the Dubai, Vancouver, and Warsaw International Film Festivals. English sub-titles.

Fri./ven. Feb. 15 fev., 21:00

## INUK

Michael Magidson          Denmark 2012 | 88 minutes

Director Michael Magidson had his work cut out for him. *Inuk* represents “the first film ever made about modern Greenland.” The result is a spectacular coming-of-age drama, engaging audiences in an array of issues — poverty, alcoholism, hunting traditions, technology, global warming — currently affecting the Greenlandic Inuit people. We follow 16-year-old Inuk as he is taken from his troubled life in the Southern capital city Nuuk and placed in a children’s home in the isolated icescape of the North. He soon finds himself under the begrudging supervision of Ikuma and the two embark on a difficult and dangerous hunting trip across the snow, captured with astounding cinematography. *Inuk*, Greenland’s submission for the 85th Academy Awards, has been selected for numerous international festivals and has won a wide selection of prizes and awards. English sub-titles.

Fri./ven. Feb. 22 fev., 19:00

## MAMMA GOGO

Fridrik Thor Fridriksson    Iceland 2010 | 90 minutes

Written and directed by Iceland’s greatest director, Fridrik Thor Fridriksson, *Mamma Gógó* is a daring, touching, and oddly amusing semi-autobiographical drama about Gógó, an elderly woman diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease, and her family’s reaction to her illness. (Fridriksson’s own mother has the condition.) While Gógó is continuously getting herself into trouble, her son the filmmaker struggles with financial troubles after his film latest has flopped. As Gógó’s disease progresses her family decides that it is best for her to move to a nursing home. Both Gógó and her deceased husband, who suddenly appears on the scene, are not happy with that decision. The beleaguered filmmaker is dependent on others when it comes to his finances, so when Gógó settles into the home, he decides to sell his mother’s apartment and valuable artwork. But can he live with the consequences? “A mixture of showbiz satire and piercing drama, *Gogo* turns familiar tropes into a bracingly original movie that will enthral audiences.” Stephen Farber (The Hollywood Reporter) Iceland’s official Oscar submission for Best Foreign Language Film in 2010. English sub-titles.

Fri./ven. Feb. 22 fev., 21:00

## MUSHROOMING

Toomas Hussar                  Estonia 2012 | 93 minutes

*Mushrooming* is an incisive satirical comedic drama about politics, media, and rock and roll. Shortly after Aadu, a middle-aged politician goes on a game show to bolster his popularity, an enterprising journalist discovers Aadu’s possible involvement in corrupt activities. To escape scrutiny, the world-weary Aadu flees to the rural Estonian countryside with his wife, Vilvi, to pick mushrooms. As the media storm gathers back in the city, Aadu and Vilvi pick up an itinerant rock star as they drive around the back roads searching for places to go ‘mushrooming.’ Their adventures on the road together get soon stranger and stranger. Winner of the Best Estonian Film prize at the recent Black Nights Film Festival in Tallinn, *Mushrooming* was also

selected as the Estonian entry for the Best Foreign Language Oscar at the 85th Academy Awards. English sub-titles.

Thurs./jeudi Feb. 28 fev., 19:00

MONSIEUR TAURINS

Alexander Hahn Latvia 2011 | 93 minutes

Alexander Hahn, director of the celebrated Latvian film *Midsummer Madness*, returns with a quirky and heartfelt road movie in *Monsieur Taurins*. This quiet — and at times intimate — character study successfully reproduces a substance-over-style, low-budget documentary tone to examine the life of its curious protagonist, Gunar Taurins (played with restrained eclecticism by Gundars Abolins). When Gunar travels to France, hired to find a suitable property for a wealthy friend's new home, his impulsive, bumbling habits and uncanny ability to run into bad luck leads him into crossing paths with a string of unusual characters who are just as flawed — and unsettlingly real. As a tragi-comic hero, Taurins may not be a particularly likeable character — nor is he meant to be — but rather serves as an excellent cautionary figure in these turbulent economic times. English sub-titles.

Thurs./jeudi Feb. 28 fev., 21:00

Lithuania

TBA

English sub-titles.

Fri./ven. March 1 mars, 19:00

KING CURLING

Ole Endresen Norway 2012 | 75 minutes

Over the past few years, Norway's national cinema has firmly found its place as a contender in high quality dramatic fiction. The hilarious arrival of KING CURLING on the festival circuit, however, highlights Norway's comedic talents, both in front of and behind the camera. Director Ole Endresen and star Atle Antonsen have written a fresh and delightful script together, no doubt the result of their collaborations in television comedy. The result is a truly funny and awe-inspiring comedy about an imperfect man who is utterly devoted to the sport of curling, supported and foiled by ridiculous and unforgettable characters, and delivered with a campiness that deftly sweeps Hollywood tropes aside. If you take the classic underdog sports story, layered with Norwegian charm, and add a hefty dose of the careful framing, whimsy, and dry wit of Wes Anderson — maybe a sprinkle of Coen Brothers bleakness for good measure — you'll have only a glimmer of what KING CURLING brings to the table. It's perfect way to celebrate the end of February.