

## Youth Filmmaking in Canada

**By Madeline King**

These festivals, programs, websites, camps, and organizations provide great opportunities for youth who are interested in filmmaking or digital media. Some organizations also provide training for adults who need the technical skills to assist youth patrons or students. It is important that we advocate on behalf of our youth patrons by directing their attention to these opportunities and bring in specialists in the fields of filmmaking and digital art to run programs in our library or community. Furthermore, acquiring any technical training ourselves will allow us as staff to assist with youth filmmaking endeavours. This becomes more important as the field grows and our libraries acquire the equipment for media arts.

### *Programs, Resources, and Festivals*

#### **The Director's Cut**

(<http://www.thedirectorscut.ca/>)

The Director's Cut is a Canadian-based youth filmmaking program. With headquarters in Richmond Hill, ON, there are 400 schools serving over 110,000 youth across Canada and the United States. Programs are directed at ages 5-17 and specialize in silent film, documentary, claymation, paper stop-motion animation, toy stop-motion animation, movie trailers, music videos, digital graphic novels, and interactive story books. The site is great and provides information about acquiring the curriculum and booking a program.

There is a screen room as well to watch films made by youth, free of charge.

#### **Freeze Frame: Media Arts Centre for Young People**

(<http://www.freezeframeonline.org/>)

Freeze Frame is a not-for-profit, charitable organization in Manitoba that offers educational and cultural media arts workshops for youth. Freeze Frame offers hands-on workshops year round in animation, script writing, camera work, sound, lighting, makeup, editing, film, video, television, advertisement, online content, and video games. In an educational, empowering, multilingual and multicultural environment, youth are engaged in a dialogue about the power of media. Youth, even those not enrolled in a program, can submit a video of their own creation for the youth video contests. Youth participants can also be eligible to be part of the youth jury simply by submitting a written critique of a short video or film. The website contains information on these programs and contests, as well as videos to watch, free of charge.

#### **Kid Filmmakers**

(<http://kidfilmmakersmakemovies.ning.com/>)

This site is a worldwide filmmaking portal dedicated to youth filmmaking based out of the United States. Kid Filmmakers is a travelling company that provides programs for grades 1-12 in hands-on training in acting, animation, costuming, directing, editing, film scoring, makeup, screenwriting, special effects and videography, to schools, libraries, community centers, film festivals, and more. Although the company only travels through the United States, the portal can be a great resource for us here in Canada. The site is free to browse and watch the videos that are posted. On the homepage under

the section “Film Camps”, there is a link to the Director’s Cut website, which is a Canadian-run youth filmmaking camp. Under the section “Film Festivals (international)” there are links to Canadian youth film festivals, including Reel Youth, Young Cuts, and TIFF Kids.

#### **Learn 4 Good**

([http://www.learn4good.com/schools/filmmaking\\_programs2.htm](http://www.learn4good.com/schools/filmmaking_programs2.htm))

The Panorama Adventure Camp and Film School, located in Panorama, BC, offers co-ed summer camps for teens aged 15-17. The camp combines wilderness adventure with documentary filmmaking. During their two-week semester programs, campers learn survival and mountaineering skills as well as documentary filmmaking techniques. Crews of five produce a documentary film under the mentorship of Hollywood instructors.

#### **Reel Youth**

(<http://www.reelyouth.ca/index.html>)

Reel Youth is a not-for-profit Canadian organization dedicated to creating and facilitating programs that empower youth to create meaningful art that attempts to inspire positive change in their communities. For ages 19 and under, programs specialize in stop-motion animation, video production, photography, and hip-hop video. Films are not available to stream online but you can order Best-of DVD’s from past years’ film festivals. There is also adult training available for teachers and library staff to learn the technical skills needed to assist youth with these film projects.

#### **Viewfinders: Atlantic Film Festival for Youth**

(<http://www.atlanticfilm.com/festivals/viewfinders>)

Viewfinders is an international film festival for youth that takes place in Halifax, NS, each spring. Viewfinders has year-round filmmaking competitions for youth, film production and mentorship programs, as well as the festival-in-a-van, which covers all of the Atlantic provinces. Youth submitting for film competitions must be 18 years or under and live in one of the Atlantic Provinces. The week-long festival features hands-on media workshops, and industry-professional speakers, as well as screenings of films from around the world.

#### **Young Cuts Film Festival**

(<http://www.youngcuts.com>)

Young Cuts Film Festival began in Toronto in 2001 and moved to Montreal in 2006. It is an international film festival for filmmakers age 29 and under, and is the largest of its kind in the world. The Best 100 films from 30+ countries are selected for screening at the festival. The primary purpose of the festival is to showcase the best young filmmaking talent in the world and give the filmmakers an opportunity to advance their careers. In order to access the large library of films available online through their website, one must be a paid subscriber, although some films may be viewed free of charge. These films truly are the best of their kind, so buying a subscription may be something your library would like to invest in. This festival would be of particular interest to older teens that are actively making films.