



The Vimy Foundation and the National Film Board of Canada partner on *Return to Vimy*

First time the NFB has colourized its own archives for a film project—revealing previously unseen material in century-old films from the Great War

November 2 – Toronto – To commemorate the Centennial of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, the Vimy Foundation and the National Film Board of Canada have partnered to launch a new original short film entitled ***Return to Vimy***, written, directed and produced by Denis McCready.

Starting November 7, Canadians of all ages can watch this 9-minute film online at [NFB.ca](#) and [Vimyfoundation.ca](#), as well as at 17 Cineplex Entertainment cinemas across Canada, where it will be shown for one day only along with the re-release of Paul Gross's feature drama *Passchendaele*.

Return to Vimy uses an evocative format, interweaving colourized archives and animated sequences to tell the story of the Canadian Expeditionary Forces' efforts during the First World War. Inspired by the pilgrimage of thousands of yearly visitors to the Vimy Memorial, this is the first time the NFB has colourized its own archives for a film project, utilizing a digital-transfer process that revealed previously unseen material among these century-old films from the Great War.

In the film, a young Canadian woman visits the Vimy Memorial, bringing with her a notebook of sketches and diary entries that her great-grandfather made during months of preparation to take back Vimy Ridge. These sketches transform into colourized archival live-action footage, transporting us back in time to witness the daily lives of soldiers in the Canadian Corps, bringing to life the long and detailed preparations that led to this legendary battle.

Produced by the NFB in partnership with the Vimy Foundation, ***Return to Vimy*** aims to re-engage Canadians, especially youth, with Canada's First World War history. Black-and-white photography and cinematography can often be a barrier for modern audiences; this new colourized footage will bring Canadians of today closer to the men and women who sacrificed so much, more than one hundred years ago.

"Many Canadians today see the First World War through a series of faded black-and-white photos and grainy video footage, disconnected from their modern reality," said Jeremy Diamond, Executive Director of the Vimy Foundation. "Colourizing these events brings a new focus to our understanding and appreciation of Canada's giant event during the First World War. ***Return to Vimy*** is a new look at Canada's role in the First World War and we are confident this footage and this story will resonate with all Canadians, but especially youth, as they attempt to connect to the stories of War a century later."

— Jeremy Diamond, Executive Director, The Vimy Foundation

"***Return to Vimy*** combines innovative storytelling and advancements in digital colourization to breathe new life into archival materials and bring this pivotal moment in Canadian history back to life for audiences of all ages. As Canada's public producer, we've been telling our country's stories and sharing our history since 1939—during times of peace as well as on the frontlines when Canada has been in combat. ***Return to Vimy*** joins an important collection of over 600 titles on the two world wars and other major conflicts, including more than 150 online works, accessible at [NFB.ca](#)."

— Claude Joli-Coeur, Government Film Commissioner and NFB Chairperson

The Vimy Foundation is a registered charity founded in 2006. The mission of the Vimy Foundation is to preserve and promote Canada's First World War legacy as symbolized with the victory of the Battle of Vimy Ridge in April 1917 – a milestone when Canada earned its place on the world stage. To learn more, visit [www.vimyfoundation.ca](#).



The NFB is Canada's public producer of award-winning creative documentaries, auteur animation, interactive stories and participatory experiences. NFB producers are embedded in communities across the country, from St. John's to Vancouver, working with talented creators on innovative and socially relevant projects. The NFB is a leader in gender equity in film and digital media production, and is working to strengthen Indigenous-led production, guided by the recommendations of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. NFB productions have won over 7,000 awards, including 18 Canadian Screen Awards, 17 Webbys, 12 Oscars and more than 100 Genies. To access NFB works, visit [NFB.ca](#) or download our [apps](#) for mobile devices.

Quick Facts

- The film is part of the Vimy Foundation's *First World War in Colour* project, supported by the Department of Canadian Heritage.
- The film marks the first time the NFB has colourized footage from its own archival collection.
- During the restoration process, new, never-before-seen elements of the frames were discovered by the NFB.
- The film's director, writer and producer, Denis McCready, assembled an impressive team to collaborate on the project, including Sylvain Bellemare, who recently won an Oscar in Sound Editing for the film *Arrival*, and Academy Award nominee and multi-award-winning NFB animation filmmaker Claude Cloutier (director of *The Trenches*).

Links

[First World War in Colour](#)
[NFB](#)

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For media inquiries:

The Vimy Foundation
CAROLINE ROSS
Communications & Administrative Coordinator
T: 416.595.1917 ext. 6
cross@vimeyfoundation.ca

National Film Board
JENNIFER MAIR
Publicist
Cellular: (416)436-0105
j.mair@nfb.ca