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Hometown premiere for Jennie Williams' NFB documentary *Billy Gauthier: Carving the Future* at the St. John's International Women's Film Festival
SIWFF also presents the latest work by award-winning Montreal animator Catherine Lepage



(Images provided by the NFB)

September 22, 2026 – Moncton – National Film Board of Canada (NFB)

The [National Film Board of Canada](#) returns to the [St. John's International Women's Film Festival](#) (SIWFF) from October 20 to 24 with **two new short films**, including the **Newfoundland and Labrador premiere** of Inuk filmmaker **Jennie Williams' *Billy Gauthier: Carving the Future***, recently named **Best Atlantic Short Documentary** at the Atlantic International Film Festival in Halifax.

Born and raised in **Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL**, Williams first worked with the NFB on her multi-award-winning [Nalujuk Night](#), offering a close-up look at an **exhilarating and sometimes terrifying Nunatsiavut tradition**. Now she's back with another powerful exploration of **Labrador Inuit culture**, following **Inuk carver Billy Gauthier** as he creates a **monumental sculpture**, on display at **The Rooms** in St. John's.

Also featured at the festival is the new NFB animated short [Ultra Strong](#) by Montreal's **Catherine Lepage**. A candid **autofictional work** about embracing your **true nature**, the film features a special appearance by **Bruce Dickinson (Iron Maiden)** and an original score and narration by **Régine (Arcade Fire)**, in her solo film composer debut.

More about the films

Billy Gauthier: Carving the Future by **Jennie Williams** (16 min 33 s)

Press kit: mediaspace.nfb.ca/epk/billy-gauthier-carving-the-future

- With each stroke of his blade, **acclaimed Inuk carver Billy Gauthier** instills his art with his **passion** for his home, **Labrador**. His carvings are sought after **across the globe** for their flowing intricate details and **profound messages rooted in Inuit culture and connections to the natural world**. ***Billy Gauthier: Carving the Future*** is an **intimate look** at the master sculptor's **meticulous process** and the **inspiration** behind one of the most **ambitious creations of his career**: the carving of a **monumental whale skull**.
- **Jennie Williams** creates films from a Labrador perspective that reflect a deep love of the North and Inuit culture. She is passionate about showing audiences around the world something they have not seen before, in work that shares the intimate moments and larger-than-life landscapes that make her birthplace so unique. Her 2021 NFB film ***Nalujuk Night*** collected seven awards and honours, including Best Short Documentary at the Canadian Screen Awards and Best Atlantic Short Documentary at the Atlantic Film Festival.

Ultra Strong by **Catherine Lepage** (9 min 35 s)

Press kit: mediaspace.nfb.ca/epk/ultra-strong

- Catherine tries to **toughen** herself to **impress the “princes”** in her circle, who turn out to be **more off-putting than charming**. When all her **dubious strategies fail**, she must **face the ultimate test**: learning how to embrace her **true nature**. The film features a special appearance by **Bruce Dickinson**, legendary singer, songwriter and frontman of **Iron Maiden**, who plays an idealized version of himself in both the English and French versions of the film, as well as narration and original music by **Régine (Arcade Fire)**.
- Montreal-based animation filmmaker, graphic novel writer and illustrator **Catherine Lepage** is known for her distinctive visual style and the self-deprecating humour she uses to broach sensitive topics, such as mental health, social pressure and self-affirmation. **Ultra Strong** is her second film with the NFB. Her previous film, ***The Great Malaise*** (2019), screened at SJIWFF, played more than 50 festivals worldwide, earned seven awards and was named a Vimeo Staff Pick.

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