



Photo by Caleb Seguin

Shelby Lisk, a Loyalist College photojournalism alumni, had her short documentary she made about Manasie Akpaliapik, an Indigenous sculptor, play at Belleville's DocFest and got to watch it on the big screen at the Empire Theatre. She was one of two winners of the 'best local film' at the festival.

DocFest showcases stories

By Caleb Seguin

The city of Belleville has set aside three days every year for the past nine years to celebrate documentaries from our region and across the world.

It might not be TIFF, and it might not be Sundance, but Belleville people came out in high numbers to watch amazing documentaries at 2020's DocFest, over three days in downtown Belleville. The festival was organized by the 11-member DocFest committee, plus countless more volunteers who helped out throughout the weekend.

DocFest this year showcased over 50 documentary films and celebrated the directors for the countless time and effort they put into their documentaries.

Documentary films are in a league of

their own and should be celebrated that way. The countless hours interviewing subjects to pull an unscripted narrative out of a simple storyline are only a small part of creating a documentary. We like to think that the people who capture our hearts and minds as subjects in documentary films are just like us -- regular folks who just so happen to have cameras in front of them for extraordinary reasons.

Belleville downtown DocFest takes the time to recognize local filmmakers such as the Loyalist College film and television production program, which has their own event for screenings at the school. This allows students to display short documentaries to the community and to a panel of three judges with filmmaking backgrounds and get live feedback and

critiques they can use going forward in their profession. The three best films are featured as a part of the local spotlight at DocFest to promote the next generation of filmmakers.

Holly Dewar, chair of the DocFest committee, said it is highlight to have the work of Loyalist film at TV production students presented.

"For them to show films in front of a big DocFest audience and get that response is just so amazing and they are telling our stories through their documentaries," said Dewar.

"I think that is so important to see yourself reflected, especially being from Belleville. It's nice to see positive stories because there was always a feeling that Belleville was a bit of an underdog."

The three student productions selected

this year for DocFest were *Until The Cure*, *Tears Mean Love* and *The Barber*.

Directed by Udai Singh, *Until The Cure* is about a Phil Howlett, a professor of the community and justice studies program at Loyalist, who runs a charity marathon every year in Orlando, Florida, at Disney World.

He is 61 years old and still runs every year for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society to raise money for cancer and cancer research.

Jessi Odaisky directed *Tears Mean Love*. The film is about a woman named Evelyn Wilson, who won the Peter Soumal alias Unsung Hero Honour, awarded by the Canada Walk of Fame for her volunteer work. She devotes much of her time raising money to fight kids cancer, but she also does a lot of volunteering around

Trenton.

Luiza Anderle directed *The Barber*, which is about a local barbershop owned by Tiff Pope and how she managed to start her business in a male-dominated industry.

Shelby Lisk, a Loyalist College photojournalism alumni, had her short documentary she made about Manasie Akpaliapik, an Indigenous sculptor. She was won of two winners of the 'best local film' at the festival said "It feels really wonderful to have the film come home and play at Belleville's DocFest and to watch it on the big screen at the Empire Theatre was amazing - my first time seeing my work in a venue like that. I am really honoured that the committee choose my film as one of the best local films this year."

Women's Day celebrated at Macaulay House

By Sam Brown

Historic Macaulay House in Picton came alive on Sunday as the women of the household and the community at large, Mrs. Charlotte Macaulay and the servant Jane, hosted visitors in celebration of International Women's Day.

The event featured the ladies of the home: Mrs. Charlotte Macaulay, Reverend William Macaulay's second wife, and Jane, a servant woman who lived in the house with the family for six years, as well as the panache of a local artist and musician.

"At Macaulay House, the main narrative tends to be about Reverend William Macaulay, who was in many ways considered Picton's founding father," Jennifer Lyons, the head curator for the county museums, explained.

"We know a little bit about the women of the household, whether it's his wife Charlotte or some of the servants who lived and worked here as well. But they don't really get front and centre too often."

In the spirit of International Women's Day, the display was meant to highlight the dignity of women, and the differences between the situations for women in the past compared to the present.

"It's a very clear picture when you look at Mrs. Charlotte Macaulay, and her servant Jane, what their day-to-day lives

were like. We have come a long way in terms of women's rights and what women can accomplish in their day-to-day lives. Men too, for that matter. It's a very different world from the 1850s that we represent here," Lyons said.

In order to bring Mrs. Charlotte Macaulay and Jane into the spotlight for International Women's Day, Tammy Lloyd from Lady Victorian Historical Presentations played the role of Mrs. Charlotte Macaulay and Suzanne O'Connor took on the role of Jane. They took the time to dress up in historically accurate costumes and temporarily adopted the mannerisms in an authentic performance. As visitors wandered the house, they had the opportunity talk to these women and gain more insights into the history of the house and the roles of females who lived there.

"We have a couple of volunteers who have gone to extreme measures to create wonderfully authentic costumes," Lyons said.

"That just added some of the historical context for visitors."

Indeed, one was given the impression of stepping back into the 1850s upon entering the cozy kitchen where 'Jane' was engaging with curious guests while they enjoyed snacking on cupcakes and sampling locally made beverages.



Photo by Sam Brown

Suzanne O'Connor, playing the role of Jane, a servant of the Macaulays for six years in the 1800's, talks to Phoebe Landucci and Hope Schein, both 5, and Misu Burns at the historic Macaulay House on International Women's Day.

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