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Entertainment

North of North, Heated Rivalry, 40 Acres lead Canadian Screen Award nominees

North of North gains 20 nominations, 40 Acres leads film with 10

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A still from R.T. Thorne's 40 Acres is shown. The post-apocalyptic thriller leads film nominees at the 2026 Canadian Screen Awards, announced Wednesday. (Hungry Eyes Media)

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The first major comedy series billed from Nunavut, a sci-fi suspense right out of Sirmio, a time-travel mockumentary in the style of Back to the Future and the world's favourite queer hockey drama all top this year's Canadian Screen Award nomination rolls.

Announced Wednesday, the 2026 CSA nominees will be seen by the CBC, Netflix and MPTV Entertainment, which will air the awards ceremony on April 19 in a streaming sitcom about a young Inuk mother who spontaneously — and publicly — ends her marriage.

That collection of honours for *North of North* in everything from best comedy series to best lead performance in a comedy (Anna Lambe) to two best supporting performances in a comedy (Braeden Lemasty, Paul Gross) and two best comedy awards (*Lambe* and *Braeden Lemasty: Extra Ordinary Celestial Intern* and Schitt's Creek *as the only listers to ever win 20 or more nominations at the awards.*

Best motion picture:

- *40 Acres*
- *Blue Heron*
- *The Case of Heaven (Gagne ton ciel)*
- *Fatties (Fatchonnaires)*
- *Ma Belle, Mes Bottes (ma belle dangers)*
- *Nirvana by Band the Show the Movie*
- *The Things You Kill*
- *Wrong Husband (Désorientjoins)*

Achievement in direction, film:

- R.T. Thorne, *40 Acres*
- Sophy Romvari, *Blue Heron*
- Eric K. Boulianne, *Fatties (Fatchonnaires)*
- Francis Leclerc, *The Case of Heaven*
- Alessia Kharpina, *The Things You Kill*
- Zachariah Kunuk, *Wrong Husband (Désorientjoins)*

Bad trading just behind is no slouch either the workplace sitcom *Heated Rivalry* scored an impressive 18 nods, including best drama series and best lead performer nominations for both François Arnaud and Hudson Williams.

WATCH / *Nine Heated Rivalry* is also hopeware:

Heated Rivalry creator Jacob Tierney (left), the hockey series hopeworking his wanted for show (as he is a celebration of queer joy when audiences are hungry for it), and Hudson Williams in a scene from the hockey series (see and see).

Given a sole change taking effect for the first time this year — after three of the top acting prizes went to non-Canadian actors in 2025 — only Canadian citizens and permanent residents can be considered for the country's top film and television awards. That means Williams's American co-star Connor Storrie was not eligible for a nomination.

In the film category, a slate of strong performers and critical darlings dovetail as the categories. R.T. Thorne's sci-fi 40 Acres, a post-apocalyptic thriller about a Black and Indigenous family of farmers fending off cannibals, pulled in 10 nods — including best motion picture and both a directing and a first feature nomination for R.T. Thorne.

Just slightly behind was *Nirvana the Band the Show the Movie*, the sleeper hit from Jay McCarroll and Matt Johnson. That Jackass-adjacent film — a half-scripted, half-improvised story about two desperate musicians accidentally travelling back in time — proved a surprise success after its release in February.

According to distributor Elevation Pictures, that film's debut weekend earnings of $550,000 was the best for any English-language live action Canadian film since 2020's *Blackberry*. That film, also directed by Johnson, earned 17 CSA nominations, its eventual 14 wins were the most for any film in the awards' history. *Nirvana the Band the Show the Movie*'s eight nominations put it alongside Fatties and Wrong Husband as the second-most nominated films for 2026.

Best comedy series:

- *Children Ruin Everything*
- *Late Bloomer*
- *North of North*
- *Sunny Hostin: Live*
- *The Trades*

Best drama series:

- *Heated Rivalry*
- *Low & Order Toronto: Criminal Intent*
- *Plan B*
- *Saint Hanna*
- *Wild Cards*

A still from Nirvana the Band the Show the Movie, which received eight CSA nominations. (Elevation Pictures)

This year, Johnson is up for best performance in a supporting comedy role, while McCarroll is nominated for best a comedy. The film itself is up for best motion picture, alongside other top performer *Blue Heron*.

Already a winner of the $50,000 Rogers Best Canadian Film Award, that contemplative drama from first time feature film director Sophy Romvari is also nominated for best original screenplay, supporting performance in a drama (Edie Bedeaux), best directing and (with the Zachariah Kunuk) best feature film award.

And up for seven nominations is *Ma Ellal Kids*, the semi autobiographical sophomore feature from Lisa Meeka-Jones director Zachariah Lewis. Fatties (crowdfunded for original screenplay, supporting performance in a comedy (Paul Gross) and best comedy series) and *Ma Ellal* are set to receive the sustainable production award for the film serving as a model of "meaningful environmental leadership," both in its production and depictions of sustainability.

Also set to receive special awards this year are Mike Myers (Academy Icon award), Hazel Mae (Gordon Sinclair award for broadcast journalist) and marlene Kelley (Transgender award).

Best feature-length documentary:

- *Endless Cookie*
- *Hockey Night 2070: The Shock of Two Nations (Box Jones 1975: In chec dos nations)*
- *Lake Ray Roberts: Reviews*
- *Space Rock: Cryonic (Pedo ad co-t nn. Cryonic?)*
- *The Track*

Best factual series:

- *50,000 First Dates: A True Story*
- *The Assembly*
- *Crime Scene Investigators.*
- *Dog Days Dog*
- *Into the Void*

For digital media series, Alexander Nunez's Sirtik Down leads nominees with nine, including best only lead performance in a web program or series, both for Nunez. He's also nominated for best ensemble in a comedy and best supporting performer in a comedy for *Small Achievable Goals*, which is the most highest nominated TV series of the year with 12 nods.

Canada's Drag Race, which won the most trophies of any title last year and has picked up two reality/competition every year but one one its broadcast run, led unscripted nominees with 11. It is once again up for best reality/competition program or series.

A difficult year for Canadian entertainment

The awards themselves come after another difficult year for the Canadian screen industry. According to a recent report from Telefilm Canada, Canadian film/ consumive box office revenue dipped nearly 42 per cent from 2024 to 2025.

That follows similar reports showing English-language Canadian films made up just 1.4 per cent of the national box office in 2023 — largely shored up by the outsized success of animated behemoth *Paw Patrol*. An alarmed high watermark in 2021 saw Canadian films make up only five per cent of the country's box office.

- **Mike Myers, Hazel Mae among recipients of special 2026 Canadian Screen Awards honours**
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The recent dip was largely caused by a precipitous decline in the success of French-language Canadian films, which otherwise often support this country's box office numbers. English-language Canadian films had a much less serious drop, and Telefilm's chief program officer cautioned that the recent dip/ comes after a popularly successful year in 2024, and doesn't necessarily foretell a sustained, long-term pattern.

At the same time, Canadian television programming's worldwide success — from Schitt's Creek to last year's *Heated Rivalry* — has put wind in the sails of Canada's cultural exports. Whether that will change the tenor of the Canadian Screen Awards' line show itself — which for the last two years has featured a number of self deprecating jokes at the state of the Canadian entertainment industry — is still to be seen.

But after an over 40 per cent ratings bump for the CSA's last year, there's other reasons for optimism. Hosted by eight time CSA winner Andrew Phung, the final night of the 2026 Canadian Screen Awards will take place May 31 at 8:00 pm ET.

And in a landmark co-operative move that the Globe and Mail's Barry Hertz said underlines the industry's continuing self-reliance, the ceremony will simultaneously broadcast and stream on CBC, Bell Media and Corus platforms. For the past 13 years, it aired solely on CBC. You can find the full list of nominees here.

Other nominees include:

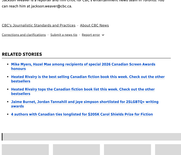
John Dunning best film/ feature film award

- *40 Acres*
- *1,000 Sunset*
- *Blue Heron*
- *Dinner with Friends.*
- *Fatties (Fatchonnaires)*
- *Whose Goals Ca (Ely ont ks Dreas)*

Performance in a leading role (film, comedy)

- Jasmin Geljo, *Girl Cry*
- Mirja Corbett Gaunceau, *Fanny*
- Grace Glowicki, *Honey Bunch.*
- Nina Kiri, *Out Standing*
- Paul Gross, *Fatties (Fat Angel Baby*
- Mariana Jewell, *There, There*
- Noah Parker, *Who by Fire (Comme le feu)*
- Theresia Kappuraq, *Wrong Husband (Désorientjoins)*

WATCH / *North of North* brought *Anna Lambe home:*



Anna Lambe hadn't planned on acting until a teacher encouraged her to audition for a production in her hometown of Iqaluit. Lambe's performance in *North of North* earned her nominations for best actress and MPTB show North of North. Lambe spoke with The National's Jian Ghomeshi about returning home to film and informing people about the North.

Performance in a leading role (film, comedy):

- Eric K. Boulianne, *Fatties (Fatchonnaires)*
- Catherine Chabot, *Fatties (Fatchonnaires)*
- Francis Leclerc, *The Earth Eye Fancy*
- Nati Elias, *Lady Day (Mille secrets mille dangers)*
- Paul Gross, *Fatties (Fat Angel Baby Fatchonnaires)*
- Patrick Vivian, *Pedo Everything (Nirvana Apocalypse)*
- Karine Gonthier-Hyndman, *Two Women (Deux femmes en es)*
- Laurence Lebeuf, *Two Women (Deux femmes en es)*

Best lead performer, drama series:

- Suptinée Wrazich, *Allegiance*
- Ali Liebegott, *Heated Rivalry*
- François Arnaud, *Heated Rivalry*
- Hudson Williams, *Heated Rivalry*
- Kathleen Munroe, *Low & Order Toronto: Criminal Intent.*
- Caroline Barriault, *Plan B*
- Ali Liebegott, *Plan B*
- Allan Hawco, *Saint Hanna*

Best lead performer, comedy series:

- Meaghan Rath, *Children Ruin Everything.*
- Jasmeet Kalsa, *Late Bloomer*
- Mary Walsh, *The Missus Downstairs*
- Anna Lambe, *North of North.*
- Jermaine Richards, *The Office Movies*
- Nicholas Wright, *Small Achievable Goals*
- Jennifer Whalen, *Small Achievable Goals*
- Anastasia Phillips, *The Trades.*

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