

## Bystanders leads nominations for Screen Nova Scotia Awards

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6 days ago



The feature from filmmaker Koumbie has six nods, followed by OUTtv's *Sugar Highs* with five.

**H**alifax-based filmmaker Koumbie's debut feature *Bystanders* (pictured) leads the pack of nominees for the 2023 Screen Nova Scotia Awards Gala.

The ninth annual ceremony recognizing Nova Scotia's film, television and animation industry will be held on May 13 in the Schooner Ballroom at Casino Nova Scotia.

*Bystanders* (Picture Plant Limited) picked up six nominations including Best Feature Film, the WIFT-AT Best Nova Scotia Director Award for Koumbie, and the Groundbreaking Performance Award for Deborah Castrilli. The drama also secured three nominations in the ACTRA Maritimes Awards for Outstanding Performances category for Taylor Olson, Marlee Sansom and Peter Sarty.

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The other nominees for Best Feature Film are Halifax-based Tara Thorne's *Compulsus* (Paw Paw Pictures), *Kids vs. Aliens* (Shut Up & Colour Pictures) by Jason Eisener of Dartmouth, N.S., *Lemon Squeezy* (Blurry Logo Productions) by Halifax's Kevin Hartford, and *Queens of the Qing Dynasty* (Hi-Vis Film) by Ashley McKenzie of Unama'ki-Cape Breton.

Koumbie will compete for the director award alongside Rachel Bower for the short doc *The Noodle Group*, Leah Johnston for the short drama *Mother's Skin* and Jackie Torrens for the doc *Bernie Langille Wants to Know What Happened to Bernie Langille*.

OUTtv's original *Sugar Highs* (Emotion Pictures) has five nominations including Best Television Series – Scripted. The dramedy is the most-nominated TV series as well as the leader in Outstanding Performances category with four nods, for Ursula Calder, Samuel Davison, Stephanie MacDonald and Thom Payne.

Last year's leader for TV series nominations, *Diggstown* (Waterstar Entertainment, Circle Blue Entertainment), is also up for Best Television Series – Scripted. CBC's legal drama matched last year's total with four nods, including three in Outstanding Performances for Gil Anderson, Mauralea Austin and Hollis McLaren.

Rounding out the nominees for Outstanding Performance are Briar Mosher in *Mother's Skin*, Lesley Smith in *Compulsus*, Bob Mann in *From*, Trina Corkum in *Trapped*, Calem MacDonald and Phoebe Rex in *Kids vs. Aliens*, and Kirstin Howell and Shelley Thompson in *Moonshine*. Thompson picked up another nod for her role in *King & Pawn* alongside Reid Price.

The other nominees for Best Television Series – Scripted are CBC's *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* (22M Hour Productions) and Bell Fibe TV1's *Vollies* (Canadian Content Studios).

For the Best Television Series – Unscripted, a new category sponsored by the Directors Guild of Canada (DGC), the nominees are Ici Tou.TV's *Les quatre coins de l'assiette* (Connections Productions) directed by Ryan Doucette, Vice's *Living in Flow* (Gorgeous Mistake Productions) directed by Meaghan Wright, Bell Fibe TV1's *Pub Crawl* (Popular Demand Pictures) directed by Jon Mann, and APTN's *Spirit Talker* (Tell Tale Productions) directed by Pepper O'Bomsawin.

The nominees for Best Documentary Film, which is also sponsored by the DGC, are *Bernie Langille Wants To Know What Happened to Bernie Langille* (Peep Media); *How The Wild Things Sleep* (Tell Tale Productions), directed by P.J. Naworynski, Daniela Pulverer and Boris Ram; *On the Fringe* (Broken Turtle Productions) directed by Cory Thibert; and *Words Matter / Klusuaqnn Ajkne'kl* (Princess Space Monster Films) directed by Stephanie Joline.

Competing alongside Castrilli for the Groundbreaking Performance Award are Patrick Cadegan in *Sleepwatching*, Tato' Crisanto and Camille Horton-Poole in *Lemon Squeezy*, Malloy Thurber in *SuperBlood*, Greg Vardy in *Tracy and Martina's Dirty Deeds*, and Ziyin Zheng in *Queens of the Qing Dynasty*.

Up for Best Short Film are *Keeper* (Tori Fleming & Morgan Salter), *Mother's Skin* (Pretty Fierce Films), *Music Resistance* (Story-book Entertainment) and *The Year Long Boulder* (Enodia Films).

Competing for Outstanding Achievement in Editing, the other new category at this year's gala, are Shawn Beckwith, Sarah Byrne, Kim McTaggart and Amy Mielke.

The nominees for Best Animated series are Hulu's *Solar Opposites* (Copernicus Studios) and Nickelodeon's *The Casagrandes* (Jam Filled Entertainment).

The winners of the Community Recognition Award and the Film Crew Excellence Award will be announced live during the event.

*Image courtesy of Screen Nova Scotia*



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