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<https://vtiff.org/events/virtual-cinema>

High Resolution stills to be found at <https://vtiff.org/press>

VTIFF Announces April Split Screen titles

Burlington, VT (Apr 6, 2021)

For Immediate Release: VTIFF selects documentary and fiction films with a focus on Environmental Rights for its Split/Screen Series – April 16 – April 25.

The series will be available for 10 days on VTIFF's online portal <http://watch.vtiff.org>.

More information, Tickets and Passes now available on <https://vtiff.org/vtiff-now/split-screen/>

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The 5 films are:

1. NO DEFENSE Sara Ganim | 2020 | Documentary

A new documentary on PFAS by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Sara Ganim examines contamination by PFAS (a broad group of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances) emanating from the old Wurtsmith Air Force Base in Oscoda, Michigan, and how a government's conflict of interest has led to inaction and a growing water crisis in the area. *No Defense* looks at the struggle between the U.S. military and communities dealing with PFAS contamination from U.S. military bases. Oscoda is just one example of those communities. but this is the first documentary that specifically focuses on PFAS contamination at DOD (Department of Defense) sites, of which there are hundreds of sites around the country. More than 650 towns contaminated. Millions of Americans affected.

Bonus Feature: On Earth Day, April 22, at 8pm EST, there will be a live panel discussion led by Nancy Price and Marguerite Adelman of WILPF and by Anthony Spaniola of Need Our Water (NOW).

More info [HERE](#)

2. THIS IS NOT A BURIAL, IT'S A RESURRECTION by Ekwa Msangi | 2021 | Lesotho | Fiction

Special Jury Award for Visionary Filmmaking at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival

The film tells the story of an 80-year-old woman, Mantoa (Mary Twala Mlongo in her last role before passing away), who discovers on Christmas Day that her son has died in a mining accident in South Africa. With no family left alive, she starts making arrangements for her own burial—only to be told by the city council that her landlocked village, Nasareth, is about to be flooded for the construction of a dam and that its residents will be resettled in the city. But Mantoa is resolute in her desire to be buried

alongside her ancestors.

More details [HERE](#)

3. KUESSIPAN by Myriam Verreault | Canada/Québec | 2020 | 117 mins | French w/ English subtitles | Fiction

Adapted from the acclaimed novel Kuessipan and co-written with the novel's First Nation Canadian author Naomi Fontaine. Kuessipan means “your turn” in the Innu language, a title chosen to mark the notion that it is the Innu people's turn to tell their story. The story follows two girls who grow up as best friends in a Quebec Innu community. While Mikuan has a loving family, Shaniss is picking up the pieces of her shattered childhood. As children, they promised each other to be lifelong friends. But as they mature, their lives take different paths, and their personal ambitions diverge leading them to a cultural and identity clash that tests their bond. *Kuessipan* is a beautiful, un-sensationalized look at young womanhood, friendship and community. More info [HERE](#)

4. POWER STRUGGLE by Robbie Leppzer | USA | 2019 | 86 mins | Documentary

Filmed over five years by director Robbie Leppzer, *Power Struggle* portrays a heated political battle and follows the unfolding drama as citizen activists and elected state officials—alarmed at increasing safety violations—take on the federal government and one of the biggest power companies in the U.S. to achieve a rare grassroots environmental victory.

The film captures perspectives on all sides of the controversy, including from local residents both for and against nuclear power, elected officials (including U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders and Governor Peter Shumlin), nuclear engineer Arnie Gunderson, a Vermont Yankee spokesperson, federal nuclear regulators, and many activists.

Bonus Feature: The film is followed immediately by an interview with the director,

Robbie Leppzer.

More info [HERE](#)

5. ANBESSA by Mo Scarpelli | 2020 | Italy/USA/Ethiopia | 86 mins | Amharic w/ English subtitles | Fiction

Ten-year-old Asalif and his mother have been displaced from their Ethiopian farmland by the construction of a condominium. Now living on the divide between a new and ancient world, they are reminded that their country's big dream of "progress" is not for them. Land developers come knocking and Asalif feels his mother's fear of further displacement. On the other side, ferocious hyenas lurk in a dark forest and local farmers speak their lore. To fight back against all that threatens his family, Asalif transforms into a lion (anbessa in Amharic). His newfound power takes him to places he never imagined inside and out of the condo until finally, Asalif must shed the lion persona and find the strength that resides in him as a boy, in order to deal with the tides of change and violence that are usurping his family, his country, and his own identity.

More info [HERE](#)

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More information <https://vtiff.org/vtiff-now/split-screen/>

Split/Screen is an 8-month partnership between the Vermont International Film Festival and Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival, with each organization alternating curating months.

The Vermont International Film Foundation (VTIFF) is a cultural non-profit organization whose mission is to enrich the community and bring the world to Vermont through film. VTIFF operates year-round with monthly screenings on the last Thursday

of each month, a Global Roots Film Festival in the spring as well as supporting Vermont filmmakers. VTIFF celebrates its 35th anniversary in 2020. The largest program of VTIFF is the annual Vermont International Film Festival, best known for featuring groundbreaking and independent films from around the world and Vermont.

The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival is a Vermont-based 501[c][3] non-profit organization with E.I.N. 47-1462141. The Festival was formed to support, promote and exhibit the dynamic and imaginative efforts of first and second time filmmakers and to give new filmmakers a chance to be discovered in a setting that is all about their work, from start to finish. The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival recently concluded a successful presentation of its 6th Annual event, MNFF6: ONLINE, showcasing 26 feature films and 33 shorts, thanks in part to a CARES Act grant from the Vermont Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities. MNFF7 is currently scheduled to take place in Middlebury August 26-29, 2021. More information at middfilmfest.org

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