Presents

Window Horses

The
Poetic Persian Epiphany
of Rosie Ming

A film by Ann Marie Fleming
(89 min., Canada, 2016)
Language: English

Distribution

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MongrelMedia

A film by Ann Marie Fleming
2016 | 89 min 9 s

« ***Window Horses hits all the things that are important to me: it's pro-girl, pro-tolerance, pro-diversity and PRO-ART!! My nieces are mixed race and it's very important to me that they see themselves represented in this society.***»
— Sandra Oh

Synopsis

Window Horses is a feature-length animated film about a young Canadian poet who embarks on a whirlwind voyage of discovery—of herself, her family, love, history, and the nature of poetry. Directed by award-winning filmmaker Ann Marie Fleming, and featuring the voices of Sandra Oh, Don McKellar, Nancy Kuan, and Shohreh Aghdashloo, the film is filled with poems and histories created by a variety of artists and animators, who set out to blend a vast myriad of differences between cultures, philosophies, arts, and time frames.

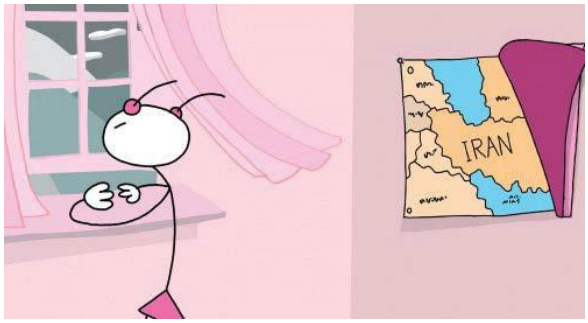
Twenty-year-old poet Rosie Ming lives at home with her over-protective Chinese grandparents, never having travelled anywhere alone. When she's invited to perform at a poetry festival in Shiraz, Iran, she meets colourful poets and Persians, and finally learns more about the Iranian father who she had assumed abandoned her. Rosie embarks on an unwitting journey of forgiveness, reconciliation, and understanding, as she discovers her father's past and her own cultural identity.

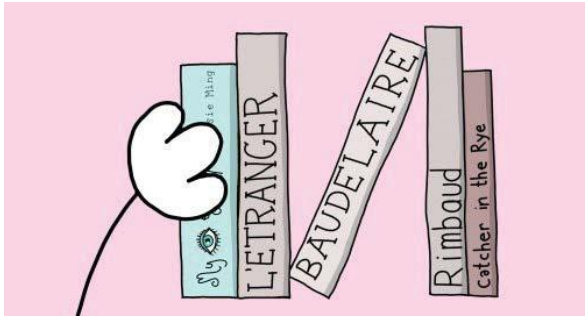
Window Horses takes a sensitive, subtle, and playful look at building bridges between cultural and generational divides. It's a film about being curious, staying open, and finding your own voice through the magic of poetry. It's a film about identity and the imagination.

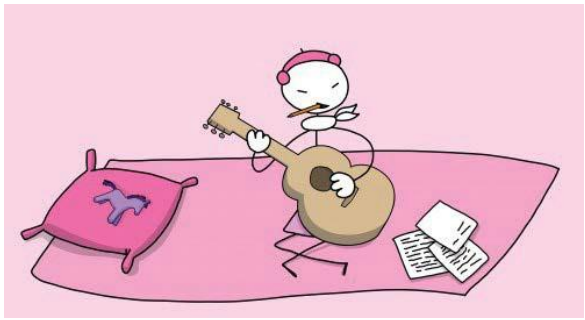
The Style

This is a film filled with poetry and stories. While the narrative of the film is presented in one particular style, the poems and histories will be created by different artists, to both accentuate and blend the myriad of differences in cultures, philosophies, time frames and poetry. It is a film about identity and the imagination.

Window Horses **poems come to life with multiple beautiful animation styles.**







Prizes and awards

OFFICIAL SELECTION
ANNECY 2016

OFFICIAL SELECTION
TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2016

BEST BRITISH COLUMBIA FILM and BEST CANADIAN FILM
VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2016

JURY PRIZE-FEATURE FILM
BUCHEON INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL 2016

AUDIENCE AWARD
ANIMASYROS-INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL AND FORUM 2016

CENTENNIAL BEST CANADIAN FILM AWARD
REEL ASIAN 2016

Team & Characters

Ann Marie Fleming • Writer / Director / Producer

Ann Marie Fleming is an award-winning Canadian independent filmmaker, writer, and artist. Born in Japan to Chinese and Australian parents, Fleming creates work that addresses themes of family, identity, history, and memory. She adapted her 2003 animated documentary *The Magical Life of Long Tack Sam* into an Eisner Award-winning graphic novel in 2007, and has followed with a number of acclaimed short films, including *I Was a Child of Holocaust Survivors* (2010), *Big Trees* (2013), and the animated web-series *My Place* (2009) for Discovery USA's Planetgreen.com. Her latest project is *Window Horses*, a feature-length animated film about a young Canadian poet discovering her family history.

Sandra Oh • Executive Producer

Korean-Canadian actress Sandra Oh is best known for her work on the American medical drama *Grey's Anatomy*, for which she won a Golden Globe, two Screen Actors Guild awards, and five Primetime Emmy Award nominations. Her feature film roles include the widely acclaimed Canadian film *Double Happiness* (1994), directed by Mina Shum, as well as *Under the Tuscan Su*n (2003) and *Sideways* (2004). Most recently on stage in *Death and the Maiden* at the Victory Gardens Theater in Chicago, Oh is currently voicing the protagonist of (and co-producing) ***Window Horses***, a feature-length animated film about a young Canadian poet discovering her family history.

Shirley Vercruysse • Producer

Shirley Vercruysse is the Executive Producer of the National Film Board of Canada's Pacific & Yukon Centre, based in Vancouver, BC, where she leads the team producing documentary and animation projects. The studio's latest projects include the feature-length documentary *Ninth Floor* (Mina Shum) and short films *Debris* (John Bolton) and *Rock the Box* (Katherine Monk).

Projects currently in production include the feature-length musical documentary *The Road Forward* (Marie Clements), the animated feature film ***Window Horses*** (Ann Marie Fleming), co-produced with Stickgirl Productions, and the animated shorts *I AM HERE* (Eoin Duffy) and *The Mountain of Qwawk* (Christopher Auchter).

Prior to joining the NFB in February 2014, Shirley was an independent film and television producer based in Calgary, Alberta. Her feature credits include waydowntown, *A Problem with Fear, Comeback Season, Radiant City, Angels Crest, The Future Is Now!*, and *Fubar II*.

Michael Fukushima • Producer

Michael Fukushima has been making films since 1984. He joined the NFB in 1990 to direct the animated documentary *Minoru: Memory of Exile* (1992), winner of the Hot Docs Best Short Documentary award. Michael became an NFB animation producer in 1997, co-founding the NFB's flagship emerging filmmaker program, Hothouse, in 2002, and opening up the studio to new audiences and new technologies with a move towards urban and diverse stories and creators.

He was appointed executive producer of the NFB's fabled Animation Studio in 2013. Notable films produced or executive produced by Michael include Genie Award winner *cNote* (2004), by Chris Hinton; Shira Avni's animated documentary Tying Your Own Shoes (2009), which won the Golden Dove at DOK Leipzig and the prestigious NHK Japan Prize; Ann Marie Fleming's *I Was a Child of Holocaust Survivors* (2010); *Muybridge's Strings* (2011), by Oscar-nominated Japanese filmmaker Koji Yamamura; Oscar-nominated films *Dimanche* (2011), by Patrick Doyon, and *Me and My Moulton* (2014), by Torill Kove; and, most recently, Cordell Barker's *If I Was God* and Randall Okita's *The Weatherman and the Shadowboxer*. Michael now mostly produces the producers and offers up sagacity, but he continues to keep his hand in — this year, on the first short film in two decades by Oscar winners Alison Snowden and David Fine, and on Oscar winner Torill Kove's next short film.

Sandra Oh

Best known for her work as Cristina Yang in *Grey's Anatomy*, this versatile Korean Canadian actress has also starred in *Sideways*, *Arli$$*, *Under the Tuscan Sun*, and *Last Night*. Most recently on stage in *Death and the Maiden*, one of Sandra's career highlights was as the Cookie Fairy on *Sesame Street*. Her work is about transformation!

ROSIE

Rosie Ming is a mixed-race, 20-something, introverted, closet poet who dreams of going to Paris, and doesn't really know anything about her own parents.

Nancy Kwan

Nancy Kwan has been the star of more than 40 films, from the 1960s to today. From her memorable role in *The World of Suzie Wong* to her remarkable performance in *Flower Drum Song*, Nancy Kwan is one of the first actresses of Chinese descent to achieve fame in Western cinema, opening the doors for many actors to follow.

GLORIA

Gloria, Rosie's overprotective grandmother, raises her since she was little. Originally from Hong Kong, she passed on her francopholia to her beloved granddaughter.

Shohreh Aghdashloo

Shohreh Aghdashloo is an Iranian and American actress and author known for her Academy Award nominated performance in *House of Sand and Fog*. She also won an Emmy Award for her work in the HBO miniseries *House of Saddam*.

MEHRNAZ

Mehrnaz is a Women's Studies prof at the University of Tehranm and her love is Persian poetry. She is a cultural ambassador of the festival.

Camyar Chaichian

Camyar Chaichian is an actor, writer and director. Born in Iran and raised in London, New York and Vancouver, he has performed extensively across Canada and the United States and is the founder of one of Canada's leading independent theatre companies, Neworld Theatre. He is also a published playwright, and his opera librettos have been produced in Canada and the United States.

CYRUS

Cyrus has a dream... to bring people, particularly, Persian diasporas together through poetry. He is the director of the First Annual Shiraz International Poetry Festival.

Omid Abtahi

Omid Abtahi is an Iranian-born American actor. After immigrating to the United States with his family as a child, Abtahi has made a name for himself as an accomplished actor on stage, in film, and on television. You can see him in *The Hunger Games: Mockinjay Part 2*.

RAMIN

Ramin is the cousin that Rosie never even knew she had.

Navid Negahban

Navid Negahban is an Iranian American theater, film, and television actor. He has appeared on *24*, *The West Wing*, *CSI: Miami* and the critically acclaimed drama, *Homeland*. In 2009, Negahban won Best Actor at the Noor Iranian Film Festival.

MERHRAN

Mehran is the father Rosier never knew.

Ellen Page

Ellen Page is a Canadian actress, director, and activist known for her Academy Award nominated performance as the title character in Jason Reitman's Juno. She can be seen in the drama, *Into the Forest*.

KELLY

Kelly is Rosie's best friend who likes to talk A LOT.

Kristen Thomson

Kristen Thomson was born in Toronto, Ontario. She is known for her one-woman play *I, Claudia*, which was adapted to film in 2004. She was the recipient of a Genie Award for her performance in Sarah Polley's *Away from Her*.

CAROLINE

Kristen Thomson plays the beautiful Caroline, Rosie's absent mother.

Eddy Ko

Eddy Ko is a Chinese and Canadian actor. One of Hong Kong's highly regarded screen actors, recently having a role in the Hollywood film *The Martian*, he is well known through numerous TV and film credits in the Chinese film industry, going back to the late 1960s. After immigrating to Canada in the 90s, Eddy has made numerous appearances in films such as *Lethal Weapon 4*, *The Counting House*, and *Largo Winch*.

STEPHEN

Stephen is Rosie's grandfather. He came to Canada from Hong Kong in 1967 when our doors were open and welcoming immigrants, to find a better life for his family.

Payman Maadi

Payman Maadi plays Payman, the Rumi interpreter who recites from the Masnevi, which runs deep and dear to Persian culture and carries a main theme in our film: a constant longing to return to our home, which can be interpreted spiritually, emotionally, physically. It is a text that teaches us how to love.

Don McKellar

Don McKellar was born in Canada and has had a varied career as a writer, director and actor. He was the screenwriter of *Roadkill* and *Highway 61*, and co-writer of *Dance Me Outside*, the Genie Award-winning *Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould* and *The Red Violin* (he also appeared in the latter two). He received a Genie Award as Best Supporting Actor for his role in Atom Egoyan's *Exotica* and the Prix de la Jeunesse at Cannes for his directorial debut, *Last Night*, which he also wrote and starred in. He wrote, directed and played the lead in his second film, *Childstar*. Other film appearances include David Cronenberg's *eXistenZ*, Olivier Assayas's *Clean*.

He collaborated on the film adaptation of José Saramago's Nobel Prize-winning novel *Blindness*. Directed by Fernando Mereilles, McKellar starred with Julianne Moore, Gael Garcia Bernal and Mark Ruffalo. He also directed the Max Films feature *The Grand Seduction* starring Brendan Gleeson and Taylor Kitsch.

McKellar starred in the acclaimed television series *Slings And Arrows*, which aired on TMN and Movie Central in Canada and Sundance Channel in the States. He also directed and executive produced the CBC series *Michael: Tuesdays & Thursdays* and the HBO Canada series *Sensitive Skin*, in which he co-stars with Kim Cattrall.

His stage writing credits include the five plays he co-created with the Augusta Company and the book for the musical "The Drowsy Chaperone", for which he won a Tony Award.

DEITMAR

Dietmar's a young poet from Germany who maybe hasn't been around the block as many times as he projects.

Credits

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY
Ann Marie Fleming

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Sandra Oh

PRODUCED BY
Ann Marie Fleming (Stick Girl Productions)
Shirley Vercruysse (NFB)
Michael Fukushima (NFB)

CAST
Sandra Oh (Rosie Ming)
Shohreh Aghdashloo (Mehrnaz Filsoof)

FEATURING
Nancy Kwan (Gloria)
Omid Abtahi (Ramin/Rumi)
Camyar Chaichian (Cyrus Kazimi)
Mehdi Darvish (Sassan)
Esme Finley (little Rosie)
Nima Gholamipour (tour guide)
Azadeh Khatibi (doctor)
Eddy Ko (Stephen)
Payman Maadi (Payman)
Ramin Mahjouri (taxi driver)
Taylor Mali (himself)
Don McKellar (Dietmar Langweillig)
Panta Mosleh (Shahrzard Abbibi)
Navid Negaban (Amir/Mehran)
Azita Sahebjam (aunt Farah)
Kristen Thomson (Caroline)
Houshang Touzie (Hassan)
Jun Zhu (Di Di)
AND
Ellen Page as Kelly

LEAD DESIGN AND ANIMATION
Kevin Langdale

COMPOSER
Taymaz Saba

SOUND DESIGN & SUPERVISOR
Gordon Durity

EDITORIAL TEAM
Ann Marie Fleming
Ileana Pietrobruno
Jean-Denis Rouette

LINE PRODUCER
Ruth Vincent

ANIMATION TEAM

GUEST ANIMATORS
Ian Godfrey
Nathaniel Akin

ANIMATION SERVICES
Jester Coyote Animation Inc.
Jesse Cote
Brad Gibson
Chloe Liu
Eben Sullivan
Patrick Dufresne
Prajay Mahta
Jacyntha Cadwell

GUEST DIRECTOR-ANIMATORS

Rosie's poem – **Janet Perlman**
History of Iran – **Sadaf Amini**
Hafiz history – **Bahram Javaheri**
Bani Adaam – **Dominique Doktor, Shira Avni** (consultant)
Taylor Mali's poem – **Elissa Chee**
Dietmar's Poem – **Michael Mann**
Hafiz poem – **Jody Kramer**
Cow poem – **Kunal Sen**
Masnevi – **Louise Johnson**
Rumi poem – **Lillian Chan**

HORSE DESIGN, ANIMATION & CALLIGRAPHY
Younger Yang

HORSE DESIGNS & KEY FRAME SEQUENCES
Joe Chang

ANIMATION ASSISTANT
Christine Li

ADDITIONAL ANIMATION
Natty Boonmasiri
Reid Blakely
Gemma Goletski
Pyrrha Powilanska-Burnell
Ceile Prowse

SCENE SET UP ARTISTS
Mona Lisa Ali
Natty Boonmasari
Pyrrha Powilanska-Burnell

PHOTOGRAPHERS
Lever Ruhkin
Adam Greydon

PRODUCTION TEAM

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT
Alexis Adams
Dan Emery

ANIMATION MANAGEMENT
Pyrrha Powilanska-Burnell
Claire Maxwell

ASSISTANT CO-ORDINATOR
Natty Boonmasiri

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
Devon Ellis-Durity

ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS
Gordon Durity
Mehrdad Farbod
Azadeh Khatibi

PRODUCTION ACCOUNTANT
Wendy Jackman

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Optis Finance

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Joe Truesdale
Paul Martin
Werner Thomas

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Michael MacLennan

POETRY CONSULTANTS
Malini Mahin
Jan Walls

FARSI CALLIGRAPHY
Sadaf Amini
Yadolla Kaboli

FARSI TRANSLATION
Mehrdad Farbod
Maryam Najafi
Taymaz Saba

IRANIAN CULTURAL CONSULTANTS
Mehrdad Farbod
Bahram Javaheri
Maryam Najafi

MUSIC CONSULTANTS
Mashallah Mohammedy
Jamal Salavati Khurdistani

MUSICIANS

VOCALS
Jamal Salavati Kurdestani
Taymaz Saba
Sahra Amini

Setar – **Ali Mahinpour**
Ney – **Amir Eslami Mirabadi**
Taar – **Soroush Nasab**
Percussion/synthesizer/digital instrument programmer - **Mehrdad Abkenari**
Guitar – **Ammar Sedqui**
Oboe/flute/clarinet/melodica/violin/erhu - **Marco Del Rio**

Dastaan songs

Kamancheh- Saeed Farajpouri
Oud – Hossein Behrouzinia
Santoor – Amir Mohandesan
Vocals – Anita Zanganeh, Sahra Amini

POEMS

"I need to know…" (Rosie's poem)
written by **Ann Marie Fleming**
from "Breathless: the book of Anne"

"Mah" (Di Di's poem)
written by **Sean Yangzhan**

"Bani Adaam"
Abu-Muhammad Muslih al-Din bin Abdallah Shirazi (Saadi)
English adaptation by **Ann Marie Fleming**

Hafiz, "We Should Talk About This Problem"
From the Penguin publication I Heard God Laughing renderings by **Daniel Ladinsky**
Copyright © 1996 & 2006 by Daniel Ladinsky and used with his permission

"The Moon Exactly How it is Tonight"
written and performed by **Taylor Mali**

"Masnevi"
Mowlana Jalal-e-Din Mohammad Molavi Rumi (Rumi)
composed and arranged by **Kavan Honarmand**
performed by **Payman Maadi, Haanaah Kamkar** vocals, **Fardin Laharpoor**, ney

"do you know what this lute music tells you?"
Rumi
from " Say Nothing : poems of **Jalal al-Din Rumi** in Persian and English "
English adaptation by **Iraj Anvar & Anne Twitty**

"Cow Poem"
written by **Ann Marie Fleming**

"Now that I am with you…"
Rumi
English adaptation by **Mehrdad Farbod** & **Ann Marie Fleming**

"Horse" (Rosie's poem)
written by **Ann Marie Fleming**

SONGS

"LuckLucky"
written and performed by **Veda Hille**
courtesy of Veda Hille

"Fromage Français"
composed by **Ian Hughes**
courtesy of Audio Networks Canada

"Masnevi" (end credits)
composed and arranged by **Kavan Honarmand**
performed by **Payman Maadi, Haanaa Kamkar** (vocals) **Fardin Laharpoor** (ney)

"Improvisations"
Performed by **Hamnavazan**

"Sarmast"
composed by **Saeed Farajpouri**
arranged by **Taymaz Saba**
performed by **Hamnavazan**

"Saz-O Avaz"
composed by **Saeed Farajpouri**
arranged by **Taymaz Saba**
performed by **Hamnavazan**

"Naghmeha"
composed by **Saeed Farjpouri**
arranged by **Taymaz Saba**
performed by **Amir Eslami**

"Window Horses"
written and performed by **Ann Marie Fleming**
with **Brad Nelson** (guitar)

VOICE RECORDING SERVICES

Walker Sound Studios (LA) – **Genevieve Vincent**
Bad Robot Sound (LA) – **Charles Scott**
Dark Studios (Toronto) – **Gabe Knox**
Big World Sound (Vancouver) – **Doug Paterson**

DIALOGUE EDITOR
Michael Werth

FOLEY
1010 Audio

VIDEO MASTERING
Cinematik Post

POST-PRODUCTION SOUND SERVICES PROVIDED BY
Big World Sound

RE-RECORDING ENGINEER
Doug Paterson

CLOSED CAPTIONING
Line 21

CANADIAN CASTING DIRECTOR
Neera Garg, Your Sound Inc.

ANIMATIC VOICE WORK
Azita Sahebjam • Tara Sahebjam • Kamyar (Kami) • Peter Chow • Camyar Chaichian • Farshid Homayoon Nasserabadi • Ali Abbasi • Kelly Constabaris • Werner Thomas • Pochu Auyeung • Wendy Dallian • Mehrdad Farbod • Ann Marie Fleming • Ruth Vincent • Rebecca • Tara Nazemi • Mahin Milani • Zhangsean Zhang • Kevin Langdale • Banashef Mohseni

PROMOTIONAL AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

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John Dippong • Cathy Schock • Bill Hurst

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Karen Powell • Dean English

Joe Cruz

Rock-It Promotions

Indiegogo

Akademie Schloss Solitude
Jean-Baptiste Joly

Indiegogo campaign managers
Social media – **Bella Sie**
Design & marketing –
Pyrrha Powilanska-Burnell
Web support – **LeftRight Minds**

this film is based on the graphic novel
"Window Horses: the Poetic Persian Epiphany of Rosie Ming"
written by **Ann Marie Fleming**

"stickgirl"
appears by the permission of
Ann Marie Fleming

NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA BC & YUKON STUDIO

Production supervisor – **Jennifer Roworth**
Technical edit coordinator – **Wes Machnikowski**
Production coordinator – **Kathleen Jayme**
Centre administrator – **Carla Jones**

NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA ANIMATION STUDIO

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR – **Eloi Champagne**
TECHNICAL CO-ORDINATOR – **Steve Hallé**

thank you **Michelle Van Beusekom**
and **Teri Snelgrove**

Telefilm Canada
Lauren Davis • Steve Bates • John Dippong

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ONF NFB

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About the NFB

The National Film Board of Canada (NFB) produces groundbreaking animation at its studios in Montreal and at NFB centres across Canada, as well as via international co-productions with many of the world's leading auteur animators. The NFB is a leader in developing new approaches to stereoscopic 3D animation and animated content for new platforms. The NFB has created over 13,000 productions and won over 5,000 awards, including 15 Canadian Screen Awards, 17 Webbys, 12 Oscars and more than 90 Genies. To access acclaimed NFB content, visit NFB.ca or download its apps for smartphones, tablets and connected TV.

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