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Abstract

*Global Stages, Native Voices: Indigenous Cinema at Cannes Film Festival*

The Cannes Film Festival has long held a prestigious role in the global film industry, serving as a critical hub for the production, distribution, and reputation-building of international cinema. Indigenous cinema's increasing presence at Cannes challenges many of the festival's traditional frameworks, particularly as it raises questions about how Indigenous films are categorized, represented, and received by global audiences. Cannes offers Indigenous films a gateway to international visibility, and it simultaneously exposes these works to an international and sometimes an audience not familiar with the specific cultural context. Within this context, Indigenous cinema from diverse regions—including the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand—challenges and enriches global visual culture with culturally rooted storytelling practices and specific aesthetic forms.

This work critically examines how Indigenous films at Cannes navigate the complex dynamics between visibility and cultural integrity. Through examples from the festival's history, including *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* (2001), this discussion explores the benefits of international recognition for Indigenous films and how filmmakers assert control over their representations. Additionally, the question arises: to what extent might exposure at a global festival shape these narratives to align with international cinematic standards and potentially challenge the community-centered storytelling traditions at their core? Addressing these considerations highlights the dual role of Cannes and similar festivals as platforms for Indigenous cinema and spaces that may inadvertently impose external interpretive frameworks.