ALANIS OBOMSAWIN

C.C., G.O.Q., C.A.L.Q.

BIOGRAPHY

A member of the Abenaki Nation and one of Canada's most distinguished filmmakers, Alanis Obomsawin is a director and producer at the National Film Board of Canada (NFB), where she has worked since 1967.

ALANIS OBOMSAWIN: A LEGACY

In November 2023, the NFB is launching ***Alanis Obomsawin: A Legacy***, an exclusive 12-disc DVD box set featuring 28 new and classic films. Curated by Obomsawin herself, the collection offers seven never-before-seen bonus features and a full-colour booklet with an introduction by Jason Ryle, International Programmer, Indigenous Cinema, at the Toronto International Film Festival.

"Much has been said and discussed about Alanis's legacy, which, it's vital to point out, is still unfolding with every new film in her remarkable—and remarkably long—career as a director, producer, writer, singer, artist and activist. She is many things to many people, as all great leaders are. Her body of work is astonishing. With over 60 films

already complete and with more in various stages of development, Alanis Obomsawin is unlike most screen storytellers from any nation on Earth," writes Ryle.

NEW AND UPCOMING FILMS

Alanis Obomsawin: A Legacy will feature seven never-before-seen bonuses and world premieres of four short films: ***Wabano: The Light of the Day***; ***The Spirit of the Tŝilhqot'in People Is Hovering Over the Supreme Court***, ***Don Burnstick in Kattawapiskak*** and ***Theo Fleury Visits Kattawapiskak***.

Still upcoming from Obomsawin is ***My Friend the Green Horse***, recreating a childhood dream from her home community of Odanak.

With ***My Friend the Green Horse***, Alanis Obomsawin has directed 65 films in a legendary career now spanning 56 years—one that is devoted to chronicling the lives and concerns of First Nations people and exploring issues of importance to all.

THREE ACCLAIMED SHORT FILM PORTRAITS

Her 2022 film ***Bill Reid Remembers*** was recently named to the short film program of Canada's Top Ten by the Toronto International Film Festival, honouring the best in Canadian cinema. The film is a tribute to the remarkable life and rich legacy of Haida artist Bill Reid.

That same year, she also completed ***Upstairs With David Amram***, a shared reflection on the power of music as a tool for social change by Obomsawin and Amram, both musician-activists.

Her 2021 short film ***Honour to Senator Murray Sinclair*** captures the powerful speech Senator Sinclair gave when he accepted the WFM-Canada World Peace Award, interspersed with the heartbreaking testimonies of former students imprisoned at residential schools.

FILM CYCLE ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN AND PEOPLES

Obomsawin's 2019 production ***Jordan River Anderson, The Messenger*** completed, on an optimistic note, a seven-film cycle devoted to the rights of Indigenous children and Peoples, which began in 2010 when she conducted her first interviews for ***The People of the Kattawapiskak River***.

Named Best Canadian Documentary at the Vancouver International Film Festival, the film tells the story of Jordan River Anderson, and how as a result of his short life almost a quarter of a million First Nations children today have health care equal to that enjoyed by the rest of Canadians.

Walking Is Medicine (2018) followed the story of the Nishiyuu walkers: six young Cree men who recreated the 1,600-kilometre trek from Whapmagoostui in Quebec to Ottawa—a journey whose roots date back millennia.

In 2017, ***Our People Will Be Healed*** brought audiences inside the Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw Education Resource Centre, an innovative school in the Cree community of Norway House.

In 2016, ***We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice*** documented a court challenge by the Assembly of First Nations and Child & Family Caring Society of Canada, which argued welfare services provided to First Nations children on reserves and in Yukon were underfunded.

Her 2014 documentary ***Trick or Treaty?*** follows the journey of Indigenous people in their quest for justice as they seek to establish a dialogue with the Canadian government—and was the first film by an Indigenous filmmaker selected to TIFF's Masters program.

In 2013, she completed ***Hi-Ho Mistahey!***, taking viewers into the heart of Shannen's Dream, a national campaign to provide fair access to education for First Nations youth. The previous year, Obomsawin completed ***The People of the Kattawapiskak River*** (2012), which went behind the headlines to explore the Attawapiskat housing crisis.

For Obomsawin, this film cycle represents a departure for First Nations: "Young people are leading the way. Their leadership and strength is beautiful and inspiring. We are on the road to a place we've never been before, to a new age for Indigenous peoples, and it is our youth who are leading us. This is what I am trying to show in these films."

KANEHSATAKE: 270 YEARS OF RESISTANCE

Obomsawin's body of work includes such acclaimed films as ***Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance*** (1993), a feature-length documentary on the 1990 Mohawk uprising in Kanehsatake and Oka, which received 18 international awards, including the Distinguished Documentary Achievement Award from the International Documentary Association and the Award for Best

Canadian Feature Film from the Toronto Festival of Festivals (now known as TIFF).

This documentary inspired a four-film cycle about the Oka crisis, with ***My Name Is Kahentiiosta*** (1995), ***Spudwrench – Kahnawake Man*** (1997) and ***Rocks at Whiskey Trench*** (2000).

PIVOTAL EVENTS, LANDMARK WORKS

Six years before the Oka Crisis, Obomsawin completed her groundbreaking ***Incident at Restigouche*** (1984), a behind-the-scenes look at Quebec police raids on a Mi'kmaq reserve that features a remarkable on-camera exchange between Obomsawin and Minister of Fisheries Lucien Lessard, who'd ordered the raid.

Richard Cardinal: Cry from a Diary of a Métis Child (1986) is a disturbing examination of an adolescent suicide. She followed that with ***No Address*** (1988), a look at Indigenous homeless people in Montreal—with both films named Best Documentary at the American Indian Film Festival in San Francisco.

Her 2003 documentary, ***Our Nationhood***, chronicles the determination and tenacity of the Listuguj Mi'kmaq people to use and manage the natural resources of their traditional lands. Obomsawin also takes viewers inside the struggle waged by the Mi'kmaq of Esgenoopetitj (Burnt Church) in her 2002 documentary, ***Is the Crown at War with us?***, a

powerful and painstakingly researched look at the conflict over fishing rights.

STORIES FROM ODANAK

The people of Odanak and her own experiences growing up on this Abenaki First Nations reserve have also been the inspiration for a number of films.

In her 2007 documentary, ***Gene Boy Came Home***, Obomsawin turns her camera on the ugliness of war through the eyes of one survivor, Vietnam War veteran and Odanak resident Eugene "Gene Boy" Benedict.

Her people and their stories are the subject of her 2006 feature documentary, ***Waban-Aki: People from Where the Sun Rises***, named Best Documentary at the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival.

Obomsawin drew on her own experiences as a child in Odanak for such works as ***When All the Leaves Are Gone*** (2010), which blends autobiography with fiction as it explores the power of dreams and the strength of the human spirit, as well as her 2005 drama ***Sigwan***, about a young girl who is aided by the animals of the forest.

JOINING THE NFB

Obomsawin began her career as a singer, writer and storyteller, with her professional debut as a performer coming in 1960 at New York City's Town Hall.

She first came to the attention of NFB producers Joe Koenig and Bob Verrall in 1966, when she was the subject of a film by Ron Kelly for CBC-TV's *Telescope* series.

Obomsawin was invited to speak to NFB directors and producers, and the following year, was appointed consultant for Indigenous filmmaking at Canada's public producer.

She dove into filmmaking in 1971 with ***Christmas at Moose Factory***, which she wrote and directed.

MUSIC AND ART

Despite the demands of a legendary filmmaking career, Obomsawin continues to perform and fight for justice for her people.

As a singer/songwriter, Obomsawin has toured Canada, the United States and Europe performing for humanitarian causes in universities, museums, prisons, art centres and folk art festivals. Her 1988 album Bush Lady features traditional songs of the Abenaki people, as well as original compositions.

For over four decades, Obomsawin has worked as an engraver and print-maker,

with exhibitions in Canada and Europe. Mother and child imagery is prominent in her work, which also combines material from her own dreams with animal spirits and historical events.

Following a four-month run at the Vancouver Art Gallery from April 7 to August 6, 2023, the Art Museum at the University of Toronto is presenting *The Children Have to Hear Another Story*, an exhibition tracing Obomsawin's artistic activism over five decades.

Presented in Toronto from September 7 to November 25, the exhibition includes a discussion with Obomsawin and Toronto International Film Festival CEO Cameron Bailey on November 16.

The Children Have to Hear Another Story is also scheduled to open in Montreal, from September 25, 2024, to January 26, 2025, at the MAC at Place Ville Marie.

The exhibition was first shown at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin in 2022. An accompanying book, *Alanis Obomsawin: Lifework* (eds. Richard William Hill, Hila Peleg, and HKW), is published in English by Prestel.

From June 8 to August 25, 2019, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts presented *Alanis Obomsawin, Printmaker/An Artist and her Nation: The Waban-Aki Basketmakers of Odanak***,** featuring prints by Obomsawin alongside works by members of the Waban-Aki nation at Odanak.

Her artwork has also been exhibited at the Maison Lacombe in Joliette, Quebec; the Cinémathèque québécoise and the Canadian Guild of Crafts in Montreal; the Musée des Abénakis in Odanak, Quebec; as well as at the Maison des Arts de Créteil, in Créteil, France.

EARLY YEARS

Alanis Obomsawin was born in New Hampshire on Abenaki territory. When she was six months old, her mother brought her to live on the Odanak reserve northeast of Montreal before returning to the US to work. Alanis thus spent her early years in Odanak. Théophile Panadis, her mother's cousin, initiated Alanis into the history of the Abenaki Nation and taught her many songs and legends. When her mother returned from the US, Obomsawin and her parents

left Odanak for Trois Rivières, where they were the only Indigenous family. Cut off from her roots, speaking little French and no English, Obomsawin held fast to the songs and stories she'd learned on the reserve.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Obomsawin was recently named a Beatty Lecturer by McGill University, in one of the longest running public lecture series in North America. Her October 16 address at Pollack Hall was emceed by Nahlah Ayed, host of the CBC Radio One program *Ideas*.

On July 23, 2023, Obomsawin received the Edward MacDowell Medal, recognizing individuals who have made significant cultural contributions. She is the first woman filmmaker to be awarded the Medal in its 63-year history.

On June 13, 2023, the Banff World Media Festival presented Obomsawin with its Career Achievement Award, in recognition of her extraordinary work and significant impact on the screen-based industries.

On April 18, 2023, she was honoured with a tribute in the Senate of Canada.

In 2021, the Toronto International Film Festival presented Obomsawin with the Jeff Skoll Award in Impact Media, recognizing leadership in creating a union between social impact and cinema, along with a career retrospective entitled *Celebrating Alanis*.

On December 10, 2020, Obomsawin received the Rogers-DOC Luminary Award at the DOC Institute Honours, given to an individual who embodies the creative spirit of the Canadian documentary tradition and displays generosity by supporting the next generation of doc-makers through mentorship.

In October, she received the Glenn Gould Prize, as chosen by an international jury. Often referred to as the "Nobel Prize of the arts," the Glenn Gould Prize is presented once every two years to recognize a unique lifetime contribution that has enriched the human condition through the arts.

Obomsawin was honoured at the 2020 Gala Québec Cinéma, with the Iris Homage, given to someone who has had an exemplary career and whose work has contributed significantly to the influence of Quebec cinema.

Also in 2020, Obomsawin was asked to serve on the jury for the Documentary Award at the 70th Berlinale.

In September 2019, the NFB named the Alanis Obomsawin Theatre in her honour as it moved to its new headquarters and public space in the heart of Montreal's Quartier des Spectacles district.

On June 27, 2019, she was named as a Companion of the Order of Canada—its highest honour, recognizing national pre-eminence or international service or achievement. Obomsawin had been an Officer of the Order of Canada since 2002, following her investiture as a Member of the Order of Canada in 1983.

Also in June 2019, the Kiuna Institution in her home community of Odanak—Quebec's only Indigenous college—named its library in her honour and is hosting her complete film collection.

In May 2019, she received the Paul Gérin-Lajoie Award for Diversity from ENSEMBLE, a Quebec foundation promoting diversity and respect for differences in education. In April of that year, she received the Distinguished Artist Award from the Vancouver Biennale, for her contributions to art, film, and education.

On November 5, 2018, the Montreal mural arts organization MU inaugurated a new public mural of Obomsawin in the Ville-Marie borough, as part of its Montreal's Great Artists collection highlighting those who've made outstanding contributions to Montreal culture. Designed by Atikamekw artist Meky Ottawa, the mural is located in the heart of the Peter-McGill district, where Obomsawin has been living for more than 50 years.

In October 2018, Alanis Obomsawin received the DGC Honourary Life Member Award at the Directors Guild of Canada Awards in Toronto.

In September 2018, she was presented with the Innersauq Honorary Award from Greenland's Nuuk International Film Festival for her body of work.

In May 2018, she was awarded the Simone de Beauvoir Institute Prize from Concordia University in recognition of her longstanding contribution to the advancement of women.

In December 2017, Obomsawin was named Filmmaker of the Year by *Playback* magazine. In June of the same year, she became a member of the prestigious Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, as part of its Documentary Branch.

In May of the same year, as Montreal marked its 375th anniversary, Obomsawin was among the first recipients of the Order of Montreal, receiving the title of Commander, its highest distinction, for her exceptional contributions to the city's cultural life and her exemplary commitment to the community. In March 2017, she received the inaugural Prix Origine at

Montreal's Bâtisseuses de la Cité Awards, for her body of work on Indigenous issues.

In November 2016, Obomsawin received the Technicolor Clyde Gilmour Award from the Toronto Film Critics Association, given to artists whose work has enriched the understanding and appreciation of film in Canada. This award allowed her to select a young filmmaker to whom Technicolor would give $50,000 in services: she chose Amanda Strong. Earlier that month, she was awarded the Prix Albert-Tessier, Quebec cinema's highest honour.

Earlier that year, in June, she was awarded Quebec's highest honour overall when she was named a Grande Officière of the Ordre national du Québec.

In February 2015, Obomsawin received a career achievement award from Artistes pour la Paix. The following month, she was named a Companion of the Ordre des arts et des lettres du Québec. Internationally, Obomsawin was honoured in Chile in October 2015 with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Valdivia Film Festival.

In December 2013, the Women's International Film & Television Showcase in Los Angeles presented its Lifetime Achievement Award to Alanis Obomsawin. In November, the Royal Society of Canada named Obomsawin as its Honorary Fellow for 2013, while the Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television announced that she would receive its Humanitarian Award (Film and TV) for Exceptional Contributions to Community and Public Service at the 2014 Canadian Screen Awards.

In September 2013, Obomsawin was named a recipient of the inaugural Birks Diamond Tribute to the Year's Women in Film at the Toronto International Film Festival, as chosen by a pan-Canadian selection committee of 12 film critics and arts and culture journalists.

In September 2010, Obomsawin was inducted into the Canadian Film and Television Hall of Fame. In the spring of 2009, she was honoured with an Outstanding Achievement Award Retrospective at the Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival. In 2008, she was honoured with the Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement at Rideau Hall in Ottawa. In May of that same year, she was also the subject of a special retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

Obomsawin is the subject of the first-ever book on Native filmmakers, *Alanis Obomsawin: The Vision of a Native Filmmaker*, by Randolph Lewis, published in 2006 by the University of Nebraska Press.

Her many honours also include the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts, the Luminaria Tribute for Lifetime Achievement from the Santa Fe Film Festival, the International Documentary Association's Pioneer Award, the Toronto Women in Film and Television's (TWIFT) Outstanding Achievement Award in Direction, the Canadian Native Arts Foundation National Aboriginal Achievement Award, and the Outstanding Contributions Award from the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association (CSAA). The latter marks the first time that the CSAA has honoured someone who is not an academic in the field of sociology and anthropology.

In June 2023, Obomsawin will receive an Honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Toronto—her 13th honorary degree.

In May 2019, St. Thomas University conferred its honorary degree for her work as an artist in highlighting social issues. In March of that year, the Université de Sherbrooke presented Obomsawin with an honorary doctorate for her body of work and commitment to social justice and Indigenous rights.

In June 2018, Obomsawin was named an Honorary Doctor of Civil Law by Bishop's University and an Honorary Doctor of Laws by Ryerson University. In May 2018, she received the Simone de Beauvoir Institute Prize at Concordia University. In May 2017, she received an Honorary Doctor of Letters from McGill University. In May 2016, she received an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Dalhousie University.

In June 2013, she received an Honorary Doctor of Arts from Dartmouth College, where she had previously been made a Montgomery Fellow in 2011—just miles from where she had been born in Lebanon, New Hampshire. In May 2010, she received an Honorary Doctor of Letters from the University of British Columbia. In June 2008, she received an Honorary Doctor of Letters from the University of Guelph. In October 2007, she received an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Western Ontario. She has also received honorary doctorates in law from Trent University and Queen's University, a fellowship from the Ontario College of Art, an Honorary Doctor of Letters from York University, an Honorary Doctor of Laws from Concordia University and an Honorary Doctor of Literature from Carleton University. She has taught at the Summer Institute of Film and Television in Ottawa.

Obomsawin has served as president of LAND InSIGHTS and is on the board of the Portrait Gallery of Canada and the Aboriginal Visual Culture Program: Art, Media, and Design at the Ontario College of Art & Design. She is also a mentor with the Pierre Elliott Trudeau

Foundation. She has chaired the Board of Directors of the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal and sat on the Canada Council's First People's Advisory Board.

She was also a board member of Studio 1, the NFB's Aboriginal studio, and a former advisor to the New Initiatives in Film, a Studio D program for women of colour and women of the First Nations. As a member of the Board of Aboriginal Voices, she was part of an initiative to obtain a radio licence for the organization. A lifetime member of the Board of Directors for the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, Ms. Obomsawin has also served as a Member of the Board for the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) in Vermont and National Geographic International.

ALANIS OBOMSAWIN FILMOGRAPHY

Upcoming: ***My Friend the Green Horse***
Director/Writer/Producer

2023 ***Don Burnstick in Kattawapiskak***
Director/Writer/Producer

2023 ***The Federal Court Hearing***
Director/Writer/Producer

2023 ***Important to Us***
Director/Writer/Producer

2023 ***The Kattawapiskak School***
Director/Writer/Producer

2023 ***Let's Study Treaty N^{O}5***
Director/Writer/Producer

2023 ***Outdoor Art Gallery***
Director/Writer/Producer

2023 ***The Retaliation Hearings***
Director/Writer/Producer

2023 ***The Spirit of the Tsilqot'in People Is Hovering Over the Supreme Court***
Director/Writer/Producer

2023 ***Theo Fleury Visits Kattawapiskak***
Director/Writer/Producer

2023 ***Wabano: The Light of the Day***
Director/Writer/Producer

2022 ***Upstairs With David Amram***
Director/Writer/Producer

2022 ***Bill Reid Remembers***
Director/Writer/Producer

2021 ***Honour to Senator Murray Sinclair***
Director/Writer/Producer

2019 ***Jordan River Anderson, The Messenger***
Director/Writer/Producer

2018 ***Walking Is Medicine***
Director/Writer/Producer

2017 ***Our People Will Be Healed***
Director/Writer/Producer

2016 ***We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice***
Director/Writer/Producer

2014 ***Trick or Treaty?***
Director/Writer/Producer

2013 ***Hi-Ho Mistahey!***
Director/Writer/Producer

2012 ***The People of the Kattawapiskak River—Six Months Later***
Director/Writer/Producer

2012 ***The People of the Kattawapiskak River***
Director/Writer/Producer

2010 ***When All the Leaves Are Gone***
Director/Writer/Producer

2009 ***Professor Norman Cornett: "Since when do we divorce the right answer from an honest answer?"***
Director/Writer/Producer

2007 ***Gene Boy Came Home***
Director/Writer/Producer

2006 ***Waban-Aki: People from Where the Sun Rises***
Director/Writer/Producer

2005 ***Sigwan***
Director/Writer/Producer

2003 ***Our Nationhood***
Director/Writer/Producer

2003 ***For John, dir. Dale Montour***
Producer

2002 ***Is the Crown at war with us?***
Director/Writer/Producer

2000 ***Rocks at Whiskey Trench***
Director/Writer/Producer

1997 ***Spudwrench – Kahnawake Man***
Director/Writer/Producer

1995 ***My Name Is Kahentiiosta***
Director/Writer/Producer

1993 ***Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance***
Director/Writer/Co-Producer

1991 ***Walker*** (***Playing Fair*** series)
Director

1991 ***Le Patro Le Prévost: 80 Years Later***
Director/Writer/Co-Producer

1988 ***No Address***
Director/Writer/Co-Producer

1988 ***A Way of Learning***
Director/Writer/Producer

1987 ***Poundmaker's Lodge: A Healing Place***
Director/Writer/Co-Producer

1986 ***Richard Cardinal: Cry from a Diary of a Métis Child***
Director/Writer/Co-Producer

1984 ***Incident at Restigouche***
Director/Writer

1980 ***Canada Vignettes: June in Povungnituk***
Director/Writer

1979 ***Sounds from Our People***
Director/Producer/Writer
(a six-part series of half-hour films)
Old Crow
Gabriel Goes to the City
Cold Journey
Cree Way
Mother of Many Children
Amisk

1979 ***Canada Vignettes: Wild Rice Harvest, Kenora***
Director/Writer

1977 ***Mother of Many Children***
Director/Producer/Writer

1977 ***Amisk***
Director/Producer

1976 ***L'il'wata***
Director/Producer
(seven short films)
Puberty: Part 1
Puberty: Part 2
Basket
Mount Currie Summer Camp
Xúsum
Salmon
Farming

1973 ***Manawan***
Director/Producer
(seven short films)
History of Manawan: Part 1
History of Manawan: Part 2
Moose Call
Snowshoes
The Canoe
Children
Partridge

1971 ***Christmas at Moose Factory***
Director/Writer

FILM AWARDS

Bill Reid Remembers

Canada's Top Ten, Toronto International Film Festival, 2022

Hi-Ho Mistahey!

EDA Award for Best Female-Directed Documentary
Whistler Film Festival, 2013

Is the Crown at war with us?

Best Documentary Feature
28th Annual American Indian Film Festival,
San Francisco 2003

Award of Distinction
Indian Summer Festival, West Allis, Wisconsin 2003

Jordan River Anderson, The Messenger

Best Canadian Documentary, Vancouver International Film Festival, 2019

Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance

Toronto-City Award for Best Canadian Feature Film,
Festival of Festivals, Toronto 1993

Feature Documentary Award,
Vancouver International Film Festival, 1993

Best Documentary Feature Film
18th Annual American Indian Film Festival,
San Francisco 1993

Best Full-Length Documentary
Mediawave Film Festival, Hungary 1997

Distinguished Documentary Achievement
IDA 19th Annual Awards Competition, Los Angeles 1993

Special Jury Award, Documentary Category
13th International Amiens Film Festival, Amiens, France 1993

Wind and Glacier Award
Native American Film and Media Celebration,
New York 1994

Special Jury Award: Film and Video Category
Special Jury Award: Current Events Category
37th San Francisco International Film Festival,
Golden Gate Awards 1994

Special Jury Prize Award
Mountain Film Festival, Telluride, Colorado 1994

Award of Excellence for Best Editing
Atlantic Film Festival, Halifax 1993

Sesterce d'argent Special Jury Prize
25th International Documentary Film Festival, Nyon,
Switzerland 1993

"We Are Sovereign" Award
Two Rivers Film Festival, Minneapolis 1993

Second Place Award, Indian Produced Feature Length Documentary
7th American Indian Film and Video Competition,
Oklahoma 1994

Special Award
Aotearoa Film Festival, Whakatane,

New Zealand 1993

Mother of Many Children

Special Jury Prize Award
Mountain Film Festival, Telluride, Colorado 1994

Grand Prize
First International Festival of Films on the Arctic, Dieppe, France 1983

Best Semi-Documentary Award
American Indian Film Festival, San Francisco International Film Festival 1978

My Name Is Kahentiiosta

Second Place Award, Indian Produced Documentary
9th American Indian Film and Video Competition, Oklahoma 1996

No Address

Wind and Glacier Award
The Native American Film and Media Celebration, New York 1992

From Dream to Reality
Two Rivers Native Film Festival, 1991

Best Documentary Award
14th Annual American Indian Film Festival, San Francisco 1989

Honorable Mention, Social Studies Category
37th Annual International Film Festival, Birmingham, Alabama 1989

Nomination, Golden Sheaf Awards
International Short Film and Video Festival, Yorkton, Saskatchewan 1989

Our People Will Be Healed

APTN Award
Montréal First Peoples Festival, 2018

Prix du Jury Meilleur Long Métrage
Festival international du Cinéma des Femmes de Fort-Coulonge, Quebec 2018

Playing Fair (series)

Silver Cindy Award
Cindy Competition, New Orleans 1993

Best Film, Guidance and Counselling Category
International Educational Film and Video Festival, Birmingham, Alabama 1992

Award of Merit, Videotape – Government Media Agency Category
AMTEC Media Festival, Victoria, British Columbia 1992

The People of the Kattawapiskak River

Donald Brittain Award for Best Social/Political Documentary Program
2nd Canadian Screen Awards, Toronto, March 2014

Poundmaker's Lodge: A Healing Place

Bronze Apple Award, Health/Drug and Alcohol Addiction Category
19th National Educational Film and Video Festival, Oakland, California 1989

Certificate of Honorable Mention, Health and Medicine: Addiction, Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco Category
36th Annual International Film Festival, Columbus, Ohio 1988

Richard Cardinal: Cry from a Diary of a Métis Child

Prize for Best Documentary
11th Annual American Indian Film Festival, San Francisco 1986

Special Award for Educational Visual Anthropology to Children and Youth
International Visual Anthropology, Parnu, Estonia 1991

Crystal Apple Award, Human Relations: Teen Suicide Category
19th National Education Film and Video Festival, Oakland, California 1989

Red Ribbon Award, Current Concerns Category
30th American Film and Video Festival, New York 1988

Rocks at Whiskey Trench

Best Native American Director
Festival of Festivals, Palm Springs, California 2002

Spudwrench – Kahnawake Man

Best Documentary over 30 minutes
Dreamspeakers Festival 1998

Best Director, Documentary
Dreamspeakers Festival 1998

Trick or Treaty?

Mark Haslam Award
Planet in Focus International Environmental Film & Video Festival 2014

Audience Choice Award
imagineNATIVE, Toronto, 2014

Waban-Aki: People from Where the Sun Rises

Best Documentary Award
imagineNATIVE, Toronto, 2006

Walker (*Playing Fair* series)

Gold Apple Award, Sexuality and Self-Esteem: Grades 4-6 Category
22nd National Educational Film and Video Festival, Oakland, California 1992

Wind and Glacier Award
Native American Film and Media Celebration, New York 1992

PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Edward MacDowell Medal, Peterborough, New Hampshire, July 2023

Tribute to Alanis Obomsawin
Senate of Canada, Ottawa, April 2023

Jeff Skoll Award in Impact Media, Toronto International Film Festival, September 2021

Rogers-DOC Luminary Award**,** DOC Institute, Toronto, December 2020

Glenn Gould Prize, Glenn Gould Foundation, October 2020

Iris Homage, Gala Québec Cinéma, June 2020

Companion of the Order of Canada, June 2019

Paul Gérin-Lajoie Award for Diversity, Montreal, May 2019

Distinguished Artist Award, Vancouver Biennale, April 2019

DGC Honourary Life Member Award, Directors Guild of Canada, October 2018

Innersauq Honorary Award, Nuuk International Film Festival, Greenland, September 2018

Filmmaker of the Year, *Playback*, December 2017

Commander, Order of Montreal, May 2017

Prix Origine, Bâtisseuses de la Cité, City of Montreal, March 2017

Technicolor Clyde Gilmour Award, Toronto Film Critics Association, November 2016

Prix Albert-Tessier, November 2016

Grande Officière, Ordre national du Québec, June 2016

Lifetime Achievement Award, Valdivia Film Festival, Valdivia, Chile, October 2015

Ordre des arts et des lettres du Québec, Montreal, March 2015

Career Achievement Award, Artistes pour la Paix, Montreal, February 2015

Lifetime Achievement Award, Women's International Film & Television Showcase, Los Angeles, December 2013

Honorary Fellow for 2013, Royal Society of Canada, November 2013

Humanitarian Award (Film and TV) for Exceptional Contributions to Community and Public Service, Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television, 2014 Canadian Screen Awards, announced in November 2013

Birks Diamond Tribute to the Year's Women in Film, Toronto International Film Festival, September 2013

Lifetime Achievement Award, Best in the Biz Tribute, Female Eye Film Festival, Toronto, June 2012

Lifetime Achievement Award, Prix Hommage, GalArt, Quebec, 2011

Inductee, Playback Canadian Film and Television Hall of Fame, Toronto, September 2010

Lifetime Achievement Award, International Madrid Documentary Festival, May 2010

Outstanding Achievement Award, Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, May 2009

Totem d'or pour l'ensemble de son oeuvre, Festival du film de l'outaouais, March 2009

Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement, May 2008

Alanis Obomsawin: A Retrospective, May 14-26, 2008, Museum of Modern Art, New York City

Luminaria Tribute For Lifetime Achievement, Santa Fe Film Festival, December 2007

Special Homage, Abenaki Annual Celebration, Odanak, Quebec, July 2006

Walk of Honour, Dreamspeaker Festival, Edmonton, June 2006

IDA Pioneer Award, International Documentary Association, Los Angeles, December 2004

The Milestone Award, imagineNATIVE, Toronto, October 2004

Life Achievement Award, Parallel Culture Awards, Hungary, May 2003

Highest Distinction, Advancement of Women Awards, Women's Y Foundation of Montreal, April 2003

Honoured by Femmes du cinéma, de la télévision et de la vidéo à Montréal for outstanding contributions to the development of the film and television industry, April 2003

Officer of the Order of Canada, February 2002

Prix Dr. Bernard Chagnan Assiniwi,
Life Time Achievement Award
Festival Land InSights, June 2001

Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts, March 2001

Lifetime Achievement Award, Aboriginal Film Festival, June 1999

Defender of Human Rights through Film,
50th Anniversary of Human Rights Celebration,
May 1999

Lifetime Achievement Award, Taos Talking Picture Festival, New Mexico, 1997

Outstanding Contribution Award, Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association, June 1994

Special Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the advancement of Aboriginal Filmmaking, Dreamspeakers Festival, Edmonton, Alberta, 1994

Award for Outstanding Achievement in Direction, Toronto Women in Film and Television, Director of the Year, 1994

National Aboriginal Achievement Award, 1993

Order of Canada, Confederation, 1992

Pour son apport à la reconnaisance des droits de la femme amérindienne, Le Salon de la Femme, Montreal 1989

Member of the Order of Canada, June 1983

The 12 Arts and Humanities Education Award, NYU, March 1982

Outstanding Canadian of the Year,
Maclean's Magazine, 1965

HONORARY DEGREES AND UNIVERSITY AWARDS

2023 Beatty Lecturer, McGill University, October 2023

Honorary Doctor of Education, Nipissing University, June 2023

Honorary Doctor of Laws, University of Toronto, June 2023

Honorary Doctorate in Cinema, Université Laval, June 2023

Honorary degree, St. Thomas University, May 2019

Honorary doctorate, Université de Sherbrooke, March 2019

Honorary Doctor of Civil Law, Bishop's University, June 2018

Honorary Doctor of Laws, Ryerson University, June 2018

Simone de Beauvoir Institute Prize, Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, May 2018

Honorary Doctor of Letters, McGill University, May 2017

Honorary Doctor of Laws, Dalhousie University, May 2016

Honorary Doctor of Arts, Dartmouth College, June 2013

Montgomery Fellow, Dartmouth College, January 2011

Honorary Doctor of Letters, University of British Columbia, May 2010

Honorary Doctor of Letters, University of Guelph, June 2008

Honorary Doctor of Laws, University of Western Ontario, October 2007

Honorary Doctor of Laws, Trent University, June 2000

Honorary Doctor of Laws, Queen's University,
June 2000

Honorary Doctor of Literature, Carleton University, November 1994

Honorary Doctor of Letters, York University, June 1994

Fellow of the Ontario College of Arts, May 1994

Honorary Doctor of Laws, Concordia University, Montreal, June 1993

AWARDS PRESENTED IN HONOUR OF ALANIS OBOMSAWIN

The Alanis Obomsawin Award for Commitment to Community and Resistance, inaugurated by Cinema Politica, Montreal, March 2011

The Alanis Obomsawin Best Documentary Award, inaugurated by imagineNATIVE, Toronto, October 2002

The Alanis Obomsawin Award, given each year by the Reel Aboriginal Film Festival for Best Documentary, June 2000

The Alanis Obomsawin Award, given each year by the Dreamspeakers Film Festival for Best Documentary, 1994