



## Opening Night Outdoor Film Screening

Slash / Back

Nyla Innuksuk • 86 mins • Canada • 2022 • English & Inuktitut, w/ Eng. subtitles

\* Director Nyla Innuksuk in Attendance + Actress Tasiana Shirley who plays Maika + Rory Anawak, who plays Thomassie

Pangnirtung, Nunavut: A sleepy hamlet, nestled in the majestic mountains of Baffin Island in the Arctic Ocean, wakes up to a typical summer day. No School, no cool boys (well... except one), and 24-hour sunlight. But for Maika (Tasiana Shirley) and her ragtag friends, the usual summer is suddenly not in the cards when they discover an alien invasion threatening their hometown. These teenagers have been underestimated their whole lives and, using makeshift weapons and their horror movie knowledge, they show the aliens you don't fuck with the girls from Pang.

@ Club SAW Outdoor Courtyard  
Wednesday August 10, 8:30pm  
(Doors at 7:00pm)

Come early at 7:00pm for our festival opening welcome and powwow showcase featuring First Nations singing, drumming and dancing!

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

## Slash / Back Trailer

SLASH/BACK Trailer [HD] Mongrel Media



### ABOUT THE CAST

**Tasiana Shirley (Maika) (16) (she/her)** Tasiana is currently in grade 11 and is interested in pursuing education as a means of giving back to her community and helping solve ongoing challenges faced in the Arctic. Tasiana also enjoys weightlifting and working for her Anaanattiaq's Inuit arts/crafts retail business during her spare time. **Alexis**

**Vincent-Wolfe (Jesse) (16) (she/her)** Alexis Vincent-Wolfe has lived most of her life in Iqaluit and is active in cadets, and hunting, boating and skidooing are some of her favourite activities. As a top cadet and marksman, she also is studying to become a pilot and is considering becoming a commercial pilot in the future.

**Nalajoss Ellsworth (Uki) (14) (she/her)** Nalajoss was born and raised in Iqaluit, Nunavut. She is an active swimmer/skier. She enjoys art activities, such as drawing, painting, and making short videos. Nalajoss has had several small roles in both television and film, including *Qanurli*, *Two Lovers and a Bear*, and *The Grizzlies*. Nalajoss loves seeing the world, she travels whenever she has the chance and loves time on the land to hunt and spend time with her family.

**Chelsea Prusky (Leena) (17) (she/her)** As an Inuk who is a direct descendant of the Ahiarmuit people, Chelsea is proud to be fluent in Inuktitut. She is a champion swimmer and has attended acting camps and performed in the Nunavut children's television series *Anana's Tent*. Born in Calgary, Alberta and raised in Arviat, Nunavut, she is passionate about all aspects of her culture.

**Frankie Vincent-Wolfe (Aju) (11) (she/her)** Frankie Vincent-Wolfe was born and raised in Iqaluit, Nunavut, and has appeared in many advertising campaigns. Frankie likes working with her hands—sewing, crocheting, baking and crafting. The youngest girl in a big creative family, she loves acting in school plays and films.

**Rory Anawak (Thomassie) (17) (he/him)** Rory currently lives in Ottawa and spent much of his childhood living in Iqaluit. He enjoys a range of hobbies, including swimming, playing the drums, gaming, skidooing, boating and hunting. He is passionate about theatre and the arts. After highschool, Rory plans to attend a theatre program and continue his acting career.

### ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



**Nyla Innuksuk** (Producer, Writer & Director) Nyla Innuksuk is the founder of Mixtape VR, which produces film, virtual and augmented reality content. A writer for Marvel Comics, Nyla co-created the character of Snowguard, a teenage superhero from Pangnirtung, Nunavut, and a member of Marvel's Champions League. Most recently, Nyla wrote and directed her first feature film titled *Slash/Back*, an alien invasion horror about a group of teen girls from the Arctic. In 2019 Innuksuk was named one of the Top 5 To Watch by Playback Magazine.

Working in mixed media allows Nyla to channel her passions for technology and genre storytelling among mediums that include interactive graphic novels, film, television and synthetic experiences. Originally from Igloolik, Nunavut, Nyla studied film at Ryerson University. In addition to her film and digital work, Innuksuk sits on the board of directors of Ontario Creates and the Glenn Gould Foundation. In 2020, Nyla was asked by UN Women to represent Canada in discussing the future of emerging technologies in G7 countries. Nyla has participated often as an early tester of emerging technology for Google, is an ambassador for the Northern Indigenous Film Fund in Norway and is currently a research fellow at MIT. She is represented by Keya Khahatian at UTA.



**THE BEGINNINGS OF SLASH/BACK**  
by Nyla Innuksuk

It has been a real journey since I first began pitching this movie in 2016. It was an impossible thing to do: raise enough money for a feature film with unknown actors as a first-time director, bring a crew to the end of the world to a community nobody has ever filmed a feature in and hire a local Inuit crew to work alongside professional filmmakers.

I learned many lessons in the process of making this movie, and it was made possible because of a deep respect for the community and people of Pangnirtung, the passion of our young crew and the delightful teenage cast that this movie has lovingly and painfully stitched together. The passion, energy and dedication of everyone involved shines through.

*Slash/Back* is a personal film. It deals with teenagers processing shame in their Indigeneity as I did when I was growing up. It channels the stories I wished I would have seen when I was a child in love with movies. This movie was a second chance at life. The week before I pitched the film at the 2016 Toronto International Film Festival, I had been told I had a 50/50 chance of surviving the month. It sounds crazy, but one of the first things I thought when I won the pitch was, "I can't make a movie in a month." I did not want to die before I had a chance to make a movie. I tell you this not for sympathy, but because it's part of the story. There are so many stories attached to this film, because of this film, part of this film—all of which I feel are worth telling because



Slash/Back is a story of survival, both onscreen and in my life. Four months after my life-saving organ transplant in 2017, I flew to Iqaluit where I met Alexis, Chelsea and Nalajoss, three of the actors who would go on to play Jesse, Leena and Uki, respectively. In this time of recovery, these pre-teen girls and I filmed a proof of concept and built the world that would become Slash/Back. My co-producers at Scythia Films, Stellar Citizens and Red Marrow believed in me and the story of girls finding empowerment enough to fight to make an Indigenous-led film entirely in a small Arctic community. As an Indigenous filmmaker, I hadn't had an experience of professionals in the industry taking big risks with me. This belief, in an Inuk girl fighting challenges, is what has allowed me to tell this story.

## VISUAL APPROACH & CINEMATIC IMPRESSIONS

*by Nyla Innuksuk*

I grew up in Nunavut, a part of the world that is steeped in creativity and imagination. Myths and monsters from traditional storytelling are terrifying, and our history informs fantastical scenarios. I believe this is why I have always been so enthralled with the sci-fi and horror genres. Yet, growing up, I never saw myself represented in popular culture. With Slash/Back, I want to depict the community I come from as a place where Indigenous youth see themselves thrive. Authenticity is the key word to describe our visual language. It applies to the way the camera moves, the light, the colour and the energy and tempo of the editing. A documentary aesthetic creates a naturalistic feel. The lighting is natural, and the colours are informed by the vibrant sky blue and ambers of the landscape. We shot in Pangnirtung using a mix of handheld and Steadicam to enhance our immediate and intimate feel. The film also treated the environment as a character. Finally, the combination of sound and stunning panoramas of the Arctic tundra allow the audience to feel the presence of air and visualization of souls. Traditional throat singing is integral to Inuit culture, and Hallucination joined the creative team as key composers to the film's score. They worked with the Nunavut landscape, world renowned performer Tanya Tagaq, and contemporary Inuit musicians, such as my father, Pakak Innuksuk who is a traditional Inuit drum performer. The result is a soundscape both eerie and exciting.

