

BALLINRAN



ENTERTAINMENT

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**NEW BALLINRAN ENTERTAINMENT DOCUMENTARY ‘THE CROSSWALK’
WEAVES TOGETHER STORIES FROM STRATFORD, ONTARIO’S VIBRANT 2SLGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY**

(STRATFORD, July 31, 2024) – [Stratford-Perth Pride](#) is getting behind a new documentary from Stratford-based studio [Ballinran Entertainment](#) which will share the powerful and evocative stories of some of the most fascinating people who are part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in Stratford and Perth County.

The Crosswalk is inspired by the tireless efforts of **Kelly Ballantyne**, owner of [Sirkel Foods](#) and allies and supporters in the community, to install a rainbow crosswalk in the heart of Stratford’s heritage downtown in front of City Hall - a stone’s throw away from the Avon Theatre, where the Stratford Festival’s production of the hit musical [La Cage aux Folles](#) is being presented this season.

While the pride flag is proudly flying and the streetlamps illuminate the colourful rainbow crosswalk in Stratford, there’s also an important and, at times, unsettling story taking place in the background, according to the film’s producer **Craig Thompson, President and Executive Producer of Ballinran Entertainment**.

“La Cage aux Folles is a work of fiction, but its underlying theme of acceptance is a timely reminder for the social discourse taking place beyond the stage where that acceptance is still a work in progress,” says Thompson, pointing to several incidents elsewhere in the region where Pride crosswalks have been defaced, and pride flags have been banned.

The Stratford Pride crosswalk was initially approved by Stratford City Council in 2022 but a few days after it was installed, the crosswalk was vandalized and ultimately replaced. It is now a symbol of support for Stratford’s newly-minted community organization Stratford-Perth Pride, which is supporting the sponsorship and crowdfunding campaign for the documentary.

“We are grateful that an accomplished filmmaker like Craig Thompson is interested in turning his focus and attention to members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in Stratford, and in rural Ontario,” says Melissa Marcelissen, Co-Chair, Stratford-Perth Pride. “Sharing stories of exceptional members of the queer community is critical when it comes to representation. Only too often, the stories that young people navigating coming out and their families hear are those of the challenges and hardships faced by queer folks. So, by focusing on the joys that exist in the lives of 2SLGBTQIA+ folks, this film helps contribute to overcoming an incomplete narrative that queer youth and others face in today’s media.”

Although Ballantyne’s personal journey will anchor the documentary, the film will include other characters from Stratford’s 2SLGBTQIA+ community and delve into issues such as education and inclusion initiatives as well as social programs and support available in and across the Stratford-Perth area.

About Stratford-Perth Pride:

Stratford-Perth Pride provides 2SLGBTQIA+ programming, resources, and education to make Perth County a more welcoming, accepting, and inclusive community.

About Ballinran Entertainment:

Founded in 1995, Ballinran Entertainment captivates audiences through the power of cinematic storytelling. The key to our success is our ability to uncover the drama in the stories we capture from all corners of the world, from the exotic flavours of Bollywood, to the bone-chilling Canadian Arctic, to the breath-taking savannah of Africa. We bring decades of industry experience to the screen, creating internationally-filmed productions that are distributed globally. Learn more www.ballinran.com

Photo image gallery (photo credit: Ann Bagglely) [here](#).

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For further information, and/or to book interviews, please contact:

Kismet Baun, Director of Communications

Ballinran Entertainment

e. kismet.baun@ballinran.com

c. (647) 391-5730