

Festival reviews

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This year's RIDM lineup officially kicks off Thursday night with a group of illegal immigrants trying to get from Calais to London. The festival closes Nov. 23 with a road movie about a retiring rodeo star. In between, there's a heartbreaking family reunion, a superhero with anger problems, Native American DJs, a grieving father who turns to magic and Montreal's most notorious street artist - among many others. Here are the films we've managed to see so far (ratings are out of five):

Tiger Spirit (Canada, 2008: Min Sook Lee) 4.5 stars During their occupation of Korea, the Japanese killed tigers to demoralize the population. Since then, tiger sightings have acquired mythological status in Korea as a symbol of both the people's spirit and their yearning for a country that is dead and gone. This is the story of that spirit, as seen in the lives of North Korean defectors living in the South and hoping to cross the barbed wire to renew their ties with long-lost family members in the North via a fragile government-sanctioned family-reunion lottery. Woven into all this is Lee's own story and the birth of her child Song Ji. "Who is Korean?," the director wonders. This film is a gripping, and very moving, exploration of the answer. (In English and Korean with English subtitles; Nov. 17 at 7:45 p.m. and Nov. 18 at 5:30 p.m. at the Cinémathèque québécoise.) *BP*