

**PRESIDENT OF TORONTO'S IN SYNC MEDIA LALITA KRISHNA
NAMED RECIPIENT OF 2021 DON HAIG AWARD**

Toronto, ON, May 3, 2021— Hot Docs is pleased to announce that Lalita Krishna, president of In Sync Media, has been named this year's Don Haig Award recipient. Now in its 16th year, the Don Haig Award is presented to an outstanding Canadian independent producer with a feature-length film in competition at the Festival, with the recipient being selected by a jury of independent producers. The Award recognizes creative vision and entrepreneurship, as reflected in the recipient's body of work and Festival film(s), as well as a track record of mentoring emerging Canadian filmmakers. In Sync Media produced 2021 Official Selection *Bangla Surf Girls*. Krishna will be presented with a \$5,000 cash prize, courtesy of the Don Haig Foundation.

"The Don Haig award is one of the few that recognize the work of producers. I feel privileged and humbled—particularly because I know that the jury is made up of peers which makes this recognition even more special," said **Lalita Krishna**, president of In Sync Media. "Documentary has given so much meaning to my life that it seems fair to pay it forward. This award also recognizes the importance of giving. A popular Eastern proverb says: 'while it's an honour to receive – it's a privilege to give'."

Lalita Krishna has been producing and directing documentaries for over 20 years. Passionate about diversity and inclusion, Lalita's films reflect her strong belief in empowering underrepresented voices. She is the writer and producer of Hot Docs Official Selection *Bangla Surf Girls*, and her recent features include co-producer on *Fear of Dancing* for CBC Gem, Documentary Channel, and producer of *Untying the Knot*, which premiered on CBC's Documentary Channel in November 2019. Previous productions include *Listen to Me*, which won Best Feature Doc at Reelworld Film Festival, 2015; *Lowdown Tracks DM*, a digital website companion to Bishari Films' feature documentary; and *Semisweet: Life in Chocolate*, an internationally acclaimed film about child labour in the chocolate trade, with a mobile app to track ethical chocolate. An early adopter of new technology, Lalita created *Breakout*, an interactive documentary series for CBC Kids, which also served as the launching pad for the careers of many young filmmakers who directed different episodes. Lalita was also the visionary behind the DOC Institute's Breakthrough Lab, which has equipped hundreds of filmmakers with the skills to develop and pitch their films in the competitive marketplace.

Lalita's films have won multiple awards, including the Reelworld Film Festival– Best Canadian Feature Award (*Listen to Me*, 2015; *Tiger*, 2005), and the Canadian Screen Award for best music (*Semisweet: Life in Chocolate*, 2012). Her projects have also been nominated for the Japan Prize (*Sweatin It*, 2002; *Jambo Kenya*, 2005), the Chris Award for Best Social Documentary (*Ryan's Well*, 2002; *Chaos, Chords & Karma*, 2004; *Move Your World*, 2005); and Audience Choice Awards at TIFF Kids (*Move your World*, 2006) and the Montreal South Asian Film Festival (*Untying the Knot*, 2019). Lalita is also the winner of the 2013 Crystal Award for mentorship given by WIFT (Women in Film and Television), the 2012 Trailblazer Award given by the Reel World Film Festival, and she is the recipient of the Dream Catcher Award given by the Hope and Dreams Festival NJ, for using her craft to better humanity. In 2018, Lalita was appointed co-chair of the Hot Docs board of directors.

As part of the Award, the recipient can name an emerging female documentary filmmaker to receive a \$5,000 cash prize, courtesy of Hot Docs, and a complimentary All-Access pass for Hot Docs 2022. Lalita Krishna has chosen Bangladeshi filmmaker Elizabeth D. Costa, director of *Bangla Surf Girls*, to receive this prize.

Past winners of the Don Haig Award include filmmakers Bob Moore (2020), Peter Raymont (2019), Ina Fichman (2018), Daniel Cross (2017), Ed Barreveld (2016), Anne Pick (2015), Michael McNamara (2014), Merit Jensen Carr (2013), Mia Donovan (2012), Rama Rau (2011), Philip Lyall and Nimisha Mukerji (2010), Brett Gaylor (2009), Yung Chang (2008), Hubert Davis (2007), and Guylaine Dionne (2006).

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[Hot Docs](#), North America's largest documentary festival, conference and market, is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing and celebrating the art of documentary and to creating production opportunities for documentary filmmakers. Hot Docs will present its 28th annual edition online from April 29-May 9, 2021, during which a full roster of industry conference sessions, market programs and networking events will be held for Canadian and international delegates, including the renowned Hot Docs Forum, Hot Docs Deal Maker, Distribution Rendezvous and The Doc Shop. Year-round, Hot Docs supports the Canadian and international industry with professional development programs and a multi-million-dollar production fund portfolio, and fosters education through documentaries with its popular free program Docs For Schools. Hot Docs owns and programs the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, a century-old landmark located in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood and the world's first and largest documentary cinema, and operates Hot Docs at Home streaming platform.

Hot Docs is proud to include Scotia Wealth Management as its Presenting Platinum Partner; Rogers Group of Funds as its Founding Partner; CBC Gem as its Signature Partner; Crave and Netflix as its Presenting Partners; and Telefilm Canada and the Government of Ontario as its Major Supporters.

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