

HOT DOCS INDUSTRY WEEK WRAPS WITH \$110,000 CDN IN *FIRST LOOK* PITCH PRIZES AWARDED TO THREE HOT DOCS FORUM PITCHES

Toronto, ON, May 10, 2021 – Hot Docs is pleased to announce the winners of the \$110,000 CDN *first look* Pitch Prizes at this year's Hot Docs Forum. Funded by participants of Hot Docs *first look* program, an initiative that provides philanthropic supporters and investors in documentary film curated behind-the-scenes access to Hot Docs Forum and market, with a top up from Hot Docs, winning projects were selected by participants after viewing all pitches. Select Forum pitches are now available for viewing by All-Access Pass holders on Hot Docs' online conference platform at hotdocs.ca, along with the full lineup of industry conference sessions, until May 31.

"The 22nd edition of the Hot Docs Forum was a bold and powerful mix of cinematic artistry and journalism," said **Lisa Valencia-Svensson**, Hot Docs' acting industry programs director. "Congratulations to the recipients for this year's fifth annual first look prizes. We're thrilled and honoured to support this intrepid group of filmmakers."

The first prize of \$50,000 CDN went to *Light of the Setting Sun* (D: Vicky Du | P: Danielle Varga, Vicky Du | Walking Productions, LLC (USA), Setting Sun Productions, LLC (USA)), in which a Taiwanese-American filmmaker confronts her family's silence around the cycles of violence that have persisted since the Chinese Communist Revolution of 1949. The second prize of \$35,000 CDN went to *Mother Vera* (D: Cécile Embleton, Alys Tomlinson | P: Laura Shacham | She Makes Productions Ltd. (UK)), which weaves the inner world of a strikingly unusual Orthodox nun with the community that saved her life. The third prize of \$25,000 CDN went to *Fire of Love* (D: Sara Dosa | P: Shane Boris, Ina Fichman, Sara Dosa | Fire of Love Productions Inc. (Canada/USA)), an unexpected love story of two intrepid scientists who die in a volcanic explosion.

New this year, the Sunny Side of the Doc Pitch Prize was awarded to *Made in Ethiopia* (D: Xinyan Yu, Max Duncan | P: Tamara Dawit, Xinyan Yu, Max Duncan | Made in Ethiopia, LLC (USA), Gobeze Media Inc. (Canada)), which tells the story of three trailblazing women who navigate the bumpy expansion of the biggest Chinese industrial park in Ethiopia. Selected by organizers of Sunny Side of the Doc, the winner receives a complimentary pass to that event happening in June.

This year's Hot Docs Forum saw a total of 20 projects representing 16 countries pitch to a virtual roundtable of more than 50 key funders and decision makers, as well as filmmakers and prize juries. More than 850 curated Hot Docs Deal Maker pitch meetings for the 20 Forum projects and 36 additional selected projects and more than 790 curated Distribution Rendezvous pitch meetings for 124 projects were arranged, with the meetings scheduled to continue throughout the month.

At this year's Hot Docs, a full week of industry programming was attended by over 3,377 delegates and 214 decision makers from 86 countries, including: two keynote interviews with Jenna Wortham and Questlove; three Masterclasses featuring Stanley Nelson, Jennifer Holness and Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers; 10 conference sessions; one panel discussion; one Citizen Minutes promo event; three tutorials; four *Anatomy of a Scene* presentations; 15 Close Up With... sessions featuring leading broadcasters and platforms; seven Micro Meetings; nine coffee break hangouts and networking meet-ups; and one live concert featuring Fanny. Hot Docs also hosted official delegations from: Chile, Colombia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Manitoba, Nordic region, and Scotland. Registration for All-

Access Passes will remain open until the end of May, with all content available to view on the platform until May 31.

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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 presented 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 were 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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