

HOT DOCS INDUSTRY CONFERENCE RE-IMAGINES A MORE REPRESENTATIVE AND EQUITABLE DOCUMENTARY ECOSYSTEM AFTER A CHALLENGING YEAR

FREE ONLINE ACCESS WELCOMES NEW VOICES INTO THE CONVERSATION

Toronto, ON, March 31, 2021 – Hot Docs is pleased to announce the full program of sessions slated for this year’s online industry conference, taking place during the Hot Docs Festival, April 29-May 9. After enduring the extraordinary difficulties of this past year, the upcoming conference seeks to embrace the opportunities that lie within and inspire the community to re-imagine documentary’s role in our quickly evolving world, based on principles of social justice and equity. Featuring an outstanding lineup of keynote speakers, panel discussions, master classes, Micro Meetings and more, this year’s conference will include over 20 online sessions. As part of Hot Docs’ commitment to accessibility and welcoming new voices into these vital conversations, the online industry conference will be offered for free to the worldwide documentary community for a limited period of time.

“As this year’s conference is about re-imagining the place of documentary film and media within a world that has faced so many challenges, often caused or exacerbated by structural inequalities, over the past year, it was important for us to offer an option for accessing this year’s conference sessions for free. This is part of our commitment to welcome new voices into the fold and lower entry barriers, so that everyone is able to participate in these crucial conversations,” said **Lisa Valencia-Svensson**, acting industry programs director for Hot Docs. “We have an extensive lineup of notable speakers and guests who will be sharing their knowledge and experience. We can’t wait to dive into this thought-provoking conference with our documentary community.”

Free registration for the online industry conference is now open and registrants will have access to conference content for the duration of the Festival. Paid All Access Pass holders will have an extended window to watch conference content and will also maintain exclusive access to pitching programs and market intelligence, including **Hot Docs Forum**, curated pitch meeting services **Hot Docs Deal Maker** and **Distribution Rendezvous**, **Close Up With...** sessions with key decision-makers, and **The Doc Shop**, where delegates can view this year’s slate of Festival films. All Access Pass holders also maintain exclusive access to **Hot Docs Online Community**, where they can connect and network with other registered delegates, and access online social and networking events throughout the Festival.

Speakers already announced for this year’s industry conference include opening keynote speaker **Jenna Wortham**, staff writer for *The New York Times Magazine* and co-host of the hit podcast *Still Processing*, and acclaimed filmmakers **Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers**, **Jennifer Holness**, and 2020 Outstanding Achievement Award recipient **Stanley Nelson**, who will each lead masterclasses discussing their careers and their work to cultivate and uplift Black, Indigenous and other marginalized voices.

Timely conversations about inequality and oppression, but also about how to work concretely and compassionately towards systemic change, will be heard in: *What’s the Responsibility of the Doc World?*, an open conversation with IDFA artistic director Orwa Nyrabia and Sundance Documentary Film Program director Carrie Lozano about how the doc industry can best serve the societies in which we live and work; *The Power of Mentorship*, presented by OYA Media Group, about the next generation of filmmakers and the importance of creating opportunities for underrepresented youth; *Cinema For Care*, an exploration with Loira Limbal (director of the official selection *Through The*

Night) of why filmmaking must be centred on principles of ethics and care; and ***Everything You Wanted to Know About Accessibility but Were Afraid to Ask***, presented by FWD-Doc, which details how doc-makers can create films that are more accessible to Deaf and Disabled communities.

Some of the effects of the global pandemic on the film industry will be addressed in ***Leveraging Your Online Premiere***, which will offer practical advice for those looking to enter into the online festival screening circuit, featuring guest speakers James Lebrecht and Nicole Newnham, filmmakers of the Oscar-nominated *Crip Camp*, and Cecilia Aldarondo, director of Hot Docs' 2020 official selection *Landfall*.

The relationship between documentary filmmaking and journalism will be discussed in ***I Am a Journalist. This is Why I told My Story as a Documentary***, in which journalists Tanya Talaga (director of official selection *Spirit to Soar*) and Jennifer Ngo (director of official selection *Faceless*) will discuss their transition into doc film and the lessons learned along the way; and ***The Myth of Objectivity***, presented by the REMC and Media Girlfriends, which looks at how the lines drawn between journalism and storytelling affect stories about race when told by BIPOC journalists and filmmakers.

Additional sessions include: ***This Was My Oscars Campaign***, a discussion with the filmmakers of last year's Oscar short nominee *St. Louis Superman*; ***From Doc to Narrative and Back Again***, co-presented by BIPOC Film & TV, the Documentary Organization of Canada and the DOC Institute, about the practical ways in which doc makers are bringing their skills and ideas to fiction projects; and ***Guidelines for the Documentary Waterfall***, presented by the Documentary Producers Alliance, who will discuss their equity investment recoupment guidelines developed in an ongoing effort to address career and industry sustainability.

Additional free content will include Festival **Big Ideas** Q&A's, conversations with notable subjects and experts on issues featured in the film, **Micro Meetings**, which offer insider intelligence from broadcasters, funders and tech leaders, and a live online performance by all-female punk band Fanny, the subjects of the 2021 official selection *Fanny: The Right to Rock*. Free programming will also include two new strands of on-demand content: **Anatomy of a Scene**, which will feature a director with a film in this year's Festival discussing a specific scene from their film, and **Why You Need to Think About**, short tutorials geared towards emerging filmmakers.

To view the full industry conference schedule, please visit <https://www.hotdocs.ca/i/ind-program>.

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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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