

HOT DOCS WRAPS WITH FIVE TOP CANADIAN DOCS SHARING \$50K CDN ROGERS AUDIENCE AWARD AND *DEAR FUTURE CHILDREN* TAKING FESTIVAL AUDIENCE AWARD

HOT DOCS INDEPENDENT CINEMA RELIEF FUND EXCEEDS GOAL RAISING \$72.9K CDN

Toronto, ON, May 10, 2021 – Hot Docs has wrapped its 28th annual Festival, which was presented online from April 29-May 9 to audiences across Canada. The 11-day event streamed 222 films from 66 countries, 129 recorded filmmaker Q&As, five Curious Minds events centered on film topics, and 11 live events, including a Q&A for opening night selection *A. Artificial Immortality* that featured director Ann Shin and guest subject Dr. Deepak Chopra, five Big Ideas discussions presented by Scotia Wealth Management featuring filmmakers and guest subjects, four NFB-hosted filmmaker Q&As, and a livestream of a special keynote interview with Questlove on his film *Summer Of Soul (...Or, When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised)*.

“By all accounts, this year’s Festival exceeded our wildest expectations. Audiences from every province and territory in Canada and a record number of industry professionals and filmmakers from across the globe came together online to celebrate the power of documentary to inform, entertain, engage and inspire,” said **Alan Black**, managing director of Hot Docs. “We are so proud to have played a part in helping filmmakers find new audiences and opportunities, and overjoyed that audiences were so moved. Our sincerest thanks to our community and our partners who made this Festival possible. We can’t wait to meet again in person next year.”

During a special livestream on Sunday evening, the winners of the Rogers Audience Award were announced. Honouring the top five Canadian feature documentaries as determined by audience poll, each winning film this year came from a different Canadian province. This year’s award was presented to: ***FANNY: The Right to Rock*** (D: Bobbi Jo Hart | P: Bobbi Jo Hart, Robbie Hart | Quebec, Canada), an epic rock doc about fierce female 1970s rockers Fanny, who collected fans like David Bowie in their heyday, who reunite 50-years later with a new record deal and a chance to rewrite history; ***Kímmapiiyipitssini: The Meaning of Empathy*** (D: Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers | P: David Christensen, Lori Lozinski, Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers | Alberta, Canada), which goes inside the Kainai First Nation in Alberta to show the community’s efforts to heal from the opioid crisis; ***Someone Like Me*** (D: Sean Horlor, Steve J. Adams | P: Teri Snelgrove, Shirley Vercautse | British Columbia, Canada) about a group of strangers who band together to help a queer youth escape to Vancouver from life-threatening violence in Uganda; ***Still Max*** (D: Katherine Knight | P: Katherine Knight, David Craig | Ontario, Canada) in which Toronto multidisciplinary artist Max Dean goes on a vivid journey of resilience and creativity after a cancer diagnosis; and ***Hell or Clean Water*** (D: Cody Westman | P: Jennifer Hawley | Newfoundland, Canada), which looks into the motivations of a diver who devotes his life to cleaning up Newfoundland’s shores. Each film’s director will receive a cash prize of \$10,000 CDN.

At the close of audience voting, it was determined that ***Dear Future Children*** (D: Franz Böhm | P: Johannes Schubert, Ansgar Wörner, Franz Böhm | Germany, UK, Austria) received the highest overall rating and won the Hot Docs Audience Award. *Dear Future Children* tells the story of three women coping with the staggering personal impact of frontline activism as they fight for change in their respective countries of Chile, Hong Kong and Uganda. As an Academy Award® qualifying festival, the winner of the Hot Docs Audience Award qualifies for consideration in the Documentary Feature category without the standard theatrical run, providing it otherwise complies with Academy rules.

Hot Docs is a charitable, not-for-profit organization committed to advancing the art of documentary and supporting opportunities for independent filmmakers.

Also in the audience poll, the top mid-length film was *Spirit to Soar* (D: Tanya Talaga, Michelle Derosier | P: Nida Marji, Shivani Srivastava, Rose LeMay | Canada), journalist Tanya Talaga's follow up to her award-winning book which sees her return to Thunder Bay after the inquest into the deaths of seven First Nations high school students; and the top short documentary was *A Concerto Is a Conversation* (D: Kris Bowers, Ben Proudfoot | P: Kris Bowers, Jeremy Lambert, Ben Proudfoot | USA, Canada), in which acclaimed film composer and jazz pianist Kris Bowers sits down with his 91-year-old grandfather, who reflects on his journey to California from Jim Crow Florida. For a list of the top five mid-lengths and shorts please visit the [Hot Docs website](#).

The top 20 documentaries in the audience poll are:

1. **DEAR FUTURE CHILDREN** (D: Franz Böhm | P: Johannes Schubert, Ansgar Wörner, Franz Böhm | Germany, UK, Austria)
2. **WRITING WITH FIRE** (D: Rintu Thomas, Sushmit Ghosh | P: Rintu Thomas, Sushmit Ghosh | India)
3. **FANNY: THE RIGHT TO ROCK** (D: Bobbi Jo Hart | P: Bobbi Jo Hart, Robbie Hart | Canada)
4. **KÍMMAPIIYIPITSSINI: THE MEANING OF EMPATHY** (D: Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers | P: David Christensen, Lori Lozinski, Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers | Canada)
5. **SOMEONE LIKE ME** (D: Sean Horlor, Steve J. Adams | P: Teri Snelgrove, Shirley Vercruysse | Canada)
6. **STILL MAX** (D: Katherine Knight | P: Katherine Knight, David Craig | Canada)
7. **HELL OR CLEAN WATER** (D: Cody Westman | P: Jennifer Hawley | Canada)
8. **SUBJECTS OF DESIRE** (D: Jennifer Holness | P: Jennifer Holness, Sudz Sutherland | Canada)
9. **STREET GANG: HOW WE GOT TO SESAME STREET** (D: Marilyn Agrelo | P: Trevor Crafts, Ellen Scherer Crafts, Lisa Diamond | USA)
10. **ONE OF OURS** (D: Yasmine Mathurin | P: Laura Perlmutter, Andrew Nicholas McCann Smith | Canada)
11. **A ONCE AND FUTURE PEACE** (D: Eric Daniel Metzgar | P: Mikaela Beardsley | USA)
12. **WE ARE THE THOUSAND** (D: Anita Rivaroli | P: Simone Catania | Italy)
13. **FIRESTARTER - THE STORY OF BANGARRA** (D: Wayne Blair, Nel Minchin | P: Ivan O'Mahoney | Australia)
14. **IMAD'S CHILDHOOD** (D & P: Zahavi Sanjavi | Sweden, Latvia, Iraq)
15. **IT IS NOT OVER YET** (D: Louise Detlefsen | P: Malene Flindt Pedersen | Denmark)
16. **REBEL HEARTS** (D: Pedro Kos | P: Shawnee Isaac-Smith, Kira Carstensen, Judy Korin | USA)
17. **WITH DRAWN ARMS** (D: Glenn Kaino, Afshin Shahidi | P: Glenn Zipper, Sean Stuart, Glenn Kaino, Afshin Shahidi | USA, Mexico)
18. **SPIRIT TO SOAR** (D: Tanya Talaga, Michelle Derosier | P: Nida Marji, Shivani Srivastava, Rose LeMay | Canada)
19. **IN THE SAME BREATH** (D: Nanfu Wang | P: Nanfu Wang, Jialing Zhang, Julie Goldman, Christopher Clements, Carolyn Hepburn | USA, China)

20. SUMMER OF SOUL (...OR, WHEN THE REVOLUTION COULD NOT BE TELEVISED) (D: Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson | P: Joseph Patel, p.g.a., Robert Fyvolent, p.g.a., David Dinerstein, p.g.a. | USA)

Hot Docs' popular Docs For Schools education program presented a selection of Festival and other documentaries for free to 363 schools in Ontario and other provinces. After student votes were tallied, *With Drawn Arms* (D: Glenn Kaino, Afshin Shahidi | P: Glenn Zipper, Sean Stuart, Glenn Kaino, Afshin Shahidi | USA, Mexico), was named the winner of the Scotiabank Docs For Schools Student Choice Award. The award comes with a \$5,000 CDN cash prize, courtesy of Scotiabank. Featured in this year's Special Presentations program, *With Drawn Arms* looks back at the 1968 Olympics when track star Tommie Smith and his teammate raised black-gloved fists on the podium, and the aftermath of that powerful gesture.

Announced prior to the opening of the Festival, the Hot Docs Independent Cinema Relief Fund was launched to provide financial relief to independent cinemas across the country forced to suspend operations during the pandemic. Hot Docs audiences gave generously to the Fund in the lead up to and during Festival, and Hot Docs is pleased to announce the appeal raised \$72.9K CDN, exceeding the target by over 240 per cent. Twenty-seven applications to the Fund have been submitted and a list of cinemas receiving grants will be announced later this month. The Fund was developed and is administered in consultation with the Network of Independent Canadian Exhibitors (NICE).

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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.

FILM STILLs AVAILABLE

Media Download Site: <https://www.hotdocs.ca/download>

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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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Hot Docs is a charitable, not-for-profit organization committed to advancing the art of documentary and supporting opportunities for independent filmmakers.

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