

**EIGHT HOT DOCS-BLUE ICE DOCS FUND RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED
\$120,000 CAD IN GRANTS AWARDED TO TOP AFRICAN DOC PROJECTS**

BLUE ICE DOCS RENEWS SUPPORT WITH \$1 MILLION CAD OVER FOUR YEARS

Toronto, April 7, 2021 – Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival and Blue Ice Docs are pleased to announce that eight African film projects have been chosen to receive a total of \$120,000 CAD in development and production grants from the Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund in its tenth round of disbursements. Selected from 83 submissions from 24 different African countries, four projects will receive development grants and four will receive production grants. Hot Docs is also thrilled to announce that Blue Ice Docs is renewing their support of this fund, contributing \$1 million CAD over four years to its previous \$2.35 million CAD commitment, allowing Hot Docs to continue investing in African documentary filmmakers, and contributing to the next generation of African documentary talent.

“Thank you so much to Blue Ice Docs for continuing to support this fund for four more years! We’re incredibly grateful for their commitment to championing African filmmakers. Through their generosity, Hot Docs has been able to provide African filmmakers with opportunities to bring their stories and perspectives to global audiences, and to share the truths of their lives and experiences that are often ignored or misrepresented by the international media,” said **Lisa Valencia-Svensson**, acting industry programs director for Hot Docs. “Congratulations to all of the filmmakers whose projects received funding this year. This year’s selection of projects opens our eyes to the varied experiences of individuals and communities on the African continent, and we’re so pleased to be able to support their journey through this fund.”

In addition to funding, five of the grant recipients will also receive support by-way-of a creative filmmakers’ lab and professional development activities throughout the year, including online peer-to-peer mentorship program and direct access to industry mentors, networking opportunities, Hot Docs screenings, the Hot Docs Forum, and support to attend a festival/market in Africa.

The \$3.35-million Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund was created in 2011 to help enable more African documentary filmmakers to tell their own stories, and contribute to the African documentary community’s next generation. To date, the Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund has awarded grants to 78 projects from 24 countries, as well as travel, accommodation and accreditation support to attend the Hot Docs Festival and Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Filmmakers Lab, Durban International Film Festival, Durban FilmMart, and Atlas Workshops.

Eligible projects were considered by the Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund Committee, which included Talal Afifi (Sudan Film Factory), Teboho Edkins (Independent), Hot Docs Industry (Julian Carrington, Distribution Manager & Industry Programmer; Olena Decock, Industry Programmer), and Maia Lekow (Circle & Square Productions).

Application dates for the next round of disbursements will be announced later this year. For further information on the application process, eligibility requirements and deadlines, please visit <https://www.hotdocs.ca/i/film-funds>.

Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund Development Grants:

LAST CALL

Director: Erige Sehiri

Producers: Erige Sehiri, Estelle Robin You

Production Companies: Henia Production, Les films du Balibari

Country: Tunisia, France

With *Last Call*, director Erige Sehiri dives into the dual life of a woman willing to do anything to save her captive brother in Syria.

THE MOTHER OF ALL LIES

Director: Asmae El Moudir

Producers: Asmae El Moudir, Silvana Santamaria

Production companies: INSIGHTFILMS, Soils Films

Countries: Morocco, Germany, Qatar

A young Moroccan woman's search for truth tangles with a web of lies in her family's history. As a daughter and filmmaker, Asmae fuses personal and national history as she reflects on the 1981 Bread Riots, drawing out connections to contemporary Morocco.

THE WALL OF DEATH

Director: Amine Sabir

Producers: Merièm Addou, Nadège Labé, Alexis Taillant

Production companies: IRIS Production, Wendigo Films

Countries: Morocco, France

For 40 years, Hassan and Khadra have been making a living off their motorcycle acrobatics show called "The Wall of Death." They refuse to let their 27-year-old daughter Zahra take over the business, who herself is torn between solidarity with the family tribe and a desire to choose another path.

WE, PEOPLE OF THE ISLANDS

Directors/Producers: Elson Santos, Lara Sousa

Production companies: Kulunga Filmes, Soul Comunicações

Country: Mozambique, Cape Verde

In 1965, a secret operation brought a group of 31 young Cape Verdeans to Cuba where they received anti-colonial military training. Theirs is a history of ideals, convictions and betrayals, and a portrait of the youth who launched a utopian adventure.

Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund Production Grants:

EAT BITTER 吃苦

Directors: Pascale Appora-Gnekindy, Sol Sun

Producers: Mathieu Faure, Pascale Appora-Gnekindy, Sol Sun, Orphée Zaza Emmanuel Bamoy

Production companies: Kea Kwis Production, OAZ Picture Entertainment, Rad Angel Productions

Countries: Central African Republic, United States

Against the backdrop of civil war in the Central African Republic, a Chinese construction manager and local African labourer work on opposite ends of the spectrum to construct a sparkling new bank. As deadlines loom, unexpected twists threaten their jobs, relationships and plans for a better life.

THE NIGHTS STILL SMELL OF GUNPOWDER

Director: Inadelso Cossa

Producers: Inadelso Cossa, Emilie Dudognon, Thomas Kaske

Production companies: 16mmFILMES, IDA.IDA, KASKE Film

Countries: Mozambique, France, Germany

Concerned with the fragmented memories of his childhood during the civil war in Mozambique, filmmaker Inadelso Cossa returns to his grandmother's village to reveal the untold stories that still haunt his generation.

RISING UP AT NIGHT

Director: Nelson Makengo

Producers: Dada Kahindo Siku, Rosa Spaliviero

Production companies: Mututu Productions, Twenty Nine Studio & Production

Countries: Democratic Republic of Congo, Belgium

As Congo launches the construction of Africa's largest power plant on the Congo River, Kinshasa finds itself in darkness and its people struggle for access to light.

WHAT'S EATING MY MIND

Director: Noella Luka

Producers: Sam Soko, Don Edkins, Tiny Mungwe

Production company: LBx Africa, STEPS

Countries: Kenya, South Africa

While studying filmmaking in the US, Noella wakes up in a psychiatric hospital. Confused and diagnosed with unspecified bipolar, she returns home to Kenya. She turns the camera on herself, as well as her friends Nick and Tabitha, as she tries to grapple with her new reality, entangled in family, religion and African tradition.

Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund alumni with official selections in this year's Hot Docs Festival include:

THE COLONEL'S STRAY DOGS

D: Khalid Shamis | P: Steven Markovitz, Khalid Shamis | South Africa, Libya, Qatar | 2021 | 73 min | World Premiere

Recounting his father's dangerous life as an exile in London with a million-dollar bounty on his head, the director questions the cost of his decades-long opposition to Muammar Gaddafi and eventual return to an unrecognizable Libya on the brink of civil war.

THE LAST SHELTER

D: Ousmane Zoromé Samassékou | P: Estelle Robin You, Andrey S Diarra, Don Edkins, Tiny Mungwe | France, Mali, South Africa | 2021 | 85 min | North American Premiere

Weary refugees from Burkina Faso, Togo and Benin, in search of promising futures, stop over at the House of Migrants in Mali, where staff offer basic necessities, warm beds and legal advice for their long journeys ahead.

[Hot Docs](#) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing and celebrating the art of documentary and to creating production opportunities for documentary filmmakers. During the annual Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, April 30 to May 10 in Toronto, a full roster of industry conference sessions, market programs and networking events will be held for over 2,600 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 documentary industry with a multi-million-dollar production fund and financing initiative portfolio, including the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Fund, CrossCurrents Doc Funds, Hot Docs-Blue Ice Group Fund and Hot Docs Partners, and valuable professional development programs, including Doc Ignite and Doc Accelerator.

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

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