

## HOT DOCS' DOC ACCELERATOR LAB ANNOUNCES 14 FILMMAKING FELLOWS FOR THE 2022 FESTIVAL

Toronto, April 20, 2022 – Hot Docs is pleased to announce the 14 filmmakers that will participate in the 2022 Doc Accelerator Lab, a bespoke private lab where a diverse group of chosen filmmakers will learn from industry experts and engage in in-depth workshops. The program will focus on skills training and career advancement with a goal to foster an inclusive new generation of Canadian documentary filmmakers, and will provide fellows with access to Hot Docs Festival's industry programming. Fellows will also take part in a paid professional development mentorship in the year following the Festival.

The Doc Accelerator is supported by Netflix through the Canadian Storytellers Project, a five-year initiative investing in core funding and professional development programs for Canadian filmmakers from underrepresented groups. This initiative creates opportunities that support a diversity of perspectives, foster new voices, and make the industry stronger and more sustainable.

"After a two-year online shift, Hot Docs is delighted to welcome our Doc Accelerator fellows to the festival to gather in person," said **Elizabeth Radshaw**, Hot Docs' Director of Industry. "We are grateful for Netflix's continued support and dedication to this next generation of Canadian documentary filmmakers."

In addition to welcoming new fellows, Hot Docs is also pleased to screen work by alumni of the Doc Accelerator Lab, including: Fazila Amiri, director of *And Still I Sing* (Doc Accelerator participant, 2020); Rosalie Chicoine Perreault, producer of *Geographies of Solitude* (Doc Accelerator participant, 2022); Joannie Lafrenière, director of *Gabor* (Doc Accelerator participant, 2016); Victoria Lean, director and producer of *We're All Going to Die (Even Jay Baruchel)* (Doc Accelerator participant, 2016); Claire Sanford, director and producer of *Violet Gave Willingly* (Doc Accelerator participant, 2014); Chris Strikes, director and producer of *Patty vs. Patty* (Doc Accelerator participant, 2019) and Maya Annik Bedward, producer of *Patty vs. Patty* (Diverse Voices participant, 2016).

The 2022 Doc Accelerator lab will be facilitated by Madelaine Russo of Hot Docs, and Sahar Yousefi, producer, Nava Productions.

### The 2022 Doc Accelerator fellows are:

#### **Omolola Ajao**, Toronto, ON

Omolola Ajao is a Nigerian-Canadian filmmaker. Her films waver and work within documentary and narrative revolve around consciousness, temporality and spatiality. Fascinated with observation, and interiority, her documentary work has screened internationally, achieving a Canadian Screen Award. She is currently a 2021-22 TIFF Fellow, and current Hot Docs Fellow.

#### **Valerie Amponsah**, Toronto, ON

Valerie Amponsah is a Ghanaian- Canadian storyteller who brings stories hidden from the depths of her community to light. Influenced by her cultural upbringing and many identities, she aims to bring people together through the experience of storytelling to foster connectedness throughout the Black diaspora and champion change in non-Black spaces. Valerie is also the Founder of The Goddess Essence, a luxury candle and wellness brand dedicated to celebrating the femininity and softness of Black Women.

**Bryan Angarita, Toronto, ON**

Bryan Angarita is a Colombian independent filmmaker from Miami, Florida living in Toronto. He is a Hot Docs Accelerator Fellow and MFA Candidate in York University's Film Production program. Bryan's non-fiction film and video work addresses relationships to immigration, labour, globalization, and community. His films have been presented by the Onion City Experimental Film Festival and Photophobia Moving Image Festival. His work has been supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Toronto Arts Council. In 2021, Bryan completed a residency in analog filmmaking and hand-processing film at Pix Film Gallery. Bryan is currently completing post-production on his latest film, *The Sunshine State*, about a boy and his relationship to his immigrant single mom set in the Florida Everglades. He is currently developing a documentary film about globalization, labour, and community in Colombia's coffee axis titled *Los Guadales*.

**Gabriel Badejo, North York, ON**

Gabriel Badejo is a Toronto-based, Afro-Canadian Producer-Director and Sickle Cell Anemia activist. From a very young age, Gabriel had a passion for storytelling and filmmaking. After graduating from The Toronto Film School, he landed a production assistant role on *The Next Star* and started climbing the production ladder. Gabriel has worked with major brands, such as Google, Converse, Land Rover, and the award-nominated CBC Gem series "The 410". He has also worked with artists such as Billie Eilish, Jessie Reyez and Popcaan, to name a few. Pushing for change, Gabriel is an Ontario Health Sickle Cell QSAC Member, dedicated to creating better lives for people living with Sickle Cell.

**Isabella Carrera Alves, Toronto, ON**

Isabella Carrera started her career as a journalist back in her hometown of Sao Paulo, Brazil, where she worked as a reporter for a number of magazines. In 2015 she pivoted to filmmaking by becoming an Assistant Location Manager for TV, film, and ad campaigns. She moved to Toronto in 2017 to attend Humber College's Film and TV Production program. During that time, Isabella interned at the talent agency Meridian Artists and directed her first short documentary, *Tight, No Pain* (Breakthroughs Film Festival 2020). Since graduating, Isabella has worked as a Production Assistant on the Netflix show *Locke and Key*, and the CBC documentaries *Hockey Mom* and *There's No Place Like This Place, Anyplace* (Hot Docs 2020). She is currently a Production Coordinator for Entertainment One's Family Brands division and has just completed her first project as a Co-producer on the animated short doc *Me, Mahmoud and the Mint Plant*.

**Rosalie Chicoine Perreault, Verdun, QB**

After studying cultural production at UQAM and finishing a specialized graduate diploma in management at HEC, Rosalie Chicoine Perreault begins her career in cinema by accumulating various experiences in production. In 2019, she starts working as a producers' assistant at Metafilms, a Montreal

based production company owned by renowned producers Sylvain Corbeil and Nancy Grant. She now mostly focuses on developing her own projects as an emerging producer. She is constantly looking for projects and filmmakers with a unique vision that stands out from the current cinematographic landscape, both in fiction and documentary. Amongst her most recent projects, *Geographies of Solitude* (Jacquelyn Mills, 2022), her first feature documentary, had its world premiere at the 72nd Berlinale, and was awarded three prizes in the Forum section of the festival.

**Daniel Ennett, Edmonton, AB**

Daniel Ennett is a filmmaker, artist, and advocate from Amiskwacîwâskahikan (<math>\langle \Gamma^{\circ} \text{b} \cdot \hat{\text{r}} \cdot \langle \text{i}^{\circ} \text{b} \text{ " } \Delta \text{b} \rangle \text{ } \rangle</math>, so-called Edmonton). Daniel hosted 3 seasons of the webseries *Invincible*, and *Beneath the Surface*, a short film. Both of those projects followed his adventures as an above elbow/knee quadruple amputee where he tried various adaptive sports like skiing, skydiving, and scuba diving with sharks. He worked as an artist/producer on a 35mm minute-long art film, *Form and Function*. Working with Open Sky Pictures and Catapult Pictures, he created a series of pitches while he finished his honours degree in psychology. As a sophomore filmmaker, he is currently developing the art film *Flesh Ballet*, a visual commentary on ableism. He is also developing the feature-length film *Autonomy and Dignity*, a documentary on the intricacies of carework. He maintains a thriving painting and photography practice, his work currently focuses on bringing light to Disabled experiences.

**Feven Ghebremariam, Montreal, QB**

Feven Ghebremariam is an Eritrean-Canadian filmmaker based in Montreal. She holds a B.A. in communications studies and has also completed a documentary filmmaking program at Institut National de l'Image et du Son (INIS) in 2013. Over the years, she has made short films related to immigration, inclusion and linguistic decolonization. Her work includes *Coming Home to Boon* (2012), which was an official selection of the Festival du Nouveau Cinéma in 2013, *The Other Side of Her Path* (2013), *Jeunes Ailleurs Vieilles Ici* (2015) and *Camfranglais* (2018), an award-winning Afro-futurist documentary that was part of Cinema Politica's Next 150 series. In 2016, she became a founding member of Black on Black Films, a non-profit organization whose mission is to represent and professionalize Afro-descendant creators seeking access to the audiovisual industry in Quebec. Today, Feven is developing her first feature-length documentary and has recently created her own production company.

**Roble Issa, Vaughan, Ontario**

Roble Issa is a Somali-Canadian filmmaker based in Toronto whose focus is on writing and directing dramatic features, documentaries, and one-hour dramas. In 2019, he was part of the initial cohort of a pilot Production Assistant Training Program, facilitated by POV 3rd Street and CEE Toronto, designed to provide black youth with an opportunity to enter the screen-based industry as a Production Assistant. He made his directorial debut with a short documentary entitled *Mending a Crack in the Sky* which was an official selection at the 2021 Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival. The film is currently on the festival circuit in addition to being broadcasted on Crave television. Also in 2021, he was accepted into Reelworld's Emerging 20 Program to develop his debut feature film, *Car*.

**Rose Katché, Vancouver, BC**

Rose Katché is a French filmmaker based in Vancouver. She has a Bachelor in Performing Arts from Nanterre University in Paris (2013) and is also a graduate from the Film Production Program at Concordia University in Montreal (2015). Rose worked as an assistant script supervisor on Luc Besson's *Valerian* before moving to Vancouver, where she became head of her department on many high-profile television shows. Throughout her time on set, Rose has written and directed her own work, all of which is built around the theme of racial identity and family. Rose's most recent narrative short, *The Deliberate Death of My Father*, premiered at the 2021 Pan African Film Festival in Los Angeles and was selected for Telefilm's Not Short on Talent Program at Clermont-Ferrand. Rose is currently developing her first documentary feature, *La Blanche*. The film was selected for the Ontario Creates Development Fund and the 2020 RIDM Talent Lab.

**Gabriela Osio Vanden**, Toronto, ON

Gabriela Osio Vanden is a Venezuelan-Canadian award-winning cinematographer based in Toronto. She has a background in painting and dance which she brings to her work which has premiered at major film festivals including TIFF, Camerimage, SXSW, IDFA, True/False, and Hot Docs. The short documentary *Nuisance Bear* (2022 Canadian Screen Awards Nominee for Best Short Documentary, Honorable Mention: Best Canadian Short Film, TIFF 2021) is her directorial debut. Her university thesis film *Rambler* was awarded an internship with Phedon Papamichael ASC GSC who she shadowed on Alexander Payne's *Downsizing*. Gabriela has a BFA in Film Production from York University, 2015.

**Eva-Loan Ponton-Pham**, Montreal, QC

Eva-Loan is a sculptor and a filmmaker, a graduate of Art History and Visual Arts at Concordia University and the co-founder of Atelier La Coulée, the first cooperative art foundry in Canada. Born and raised in Tiohti:áke (Montreal), her mixed-race, working-class upbringing informs her work, which addresses confluent identities and the complexities of cultural transmission within diasporic contexts. She aims to amplify marginalized voices by focusing on personal and collective narratives that challenge predominant discourses. Currently in development, her debut film *Con Nhang - Incense Children* sparked interest from renowned documentary production company Parabola Films and received support from SODEC, Telefilm Canada, CALQ and PRIM. Eva-Loan is a RIDM Talent Lab alumni (2021) and the film project was selected as part of Quebec's delegation at CPH:DOX 2021 (SODEC LAB).

**Sepehr Samimi**, Vancouver, BC

Sepehr Samimi [He/Him] is an Iranian-Canadian documentary cinematographer, director, and producer with a BFA in film production from Simon Fraser University. His short films have been to festivals such as Montreal World film festival and Cannes. In 2021 along with filmmaker Jen Muranetz, Sepehr founded Understory Films, a production company dedicated to content with purpose. His directorial debut is *A Marvelous Tale to Abundance*, a short doc about land, community and food sovereignty, funded by Canada Art Council. He is currently in production for *Standing with the Ancients*, a frontline feature doc about Fairy Creek, the largest act of civil disobedience in Canadian history. When not engaged in key creative roles on independent docs, Sepehr works in the Vancouver film industry as a camera assistant for popular TV series from networks such as CW and Netflix. He currently resides on the unceded Coast Salish territories, also known as Vancouver, BC.

**Miru Yogarajah, Toronto, ON**

Miru aims to showcase the multifaceted experiences of being a person on the margins and the intimate experiences they host alongside survival and how it intersects with policy. Their works have been produced by the National Film Board of Canada, premiered at the 2020 Inside Out Film Festival, the 2020 Regent Park Film Festival, and others. They were selected for the 2020 Reelworld Emerging 20 program and won the Regent Park Film Festival Emerging Directors' Spotlight Pitch Competition in the unscripted category. They recently received the Hot Docs Cross Current Fund to develop their feature-length documentary *Im/migrant Buyers' Club*, which is produced by their production company Nothing Even Mattress. They are deeply devoted to working with the community to impact policy processes with their community work rooted in Parkdale. They have writing in The Local, Azure, Briarpatch, and more. They love their friends, their dog Neptune, and board games.

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Hot Docs ([www.hotdocs.ca](http://www.hotdocs.ca)) 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 28 to May 8 in Toronto and online, the Festival will offer a dynamic hybrid experience for industry delegates, including a live three-day program of knowledge sessions and networking events on its first weekend and online market programs and sessions, 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-Slaight Family Fund, 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; Rogers Group of Funds as its Founding Partner; CBC Gem as its Signature Partner; Cineplex and Netflix as its Presenting Partners; and Telefilm Canada and the Government of Ontario as its Major Supporters.

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