

RECIPIENTS OF CROSSCURRENTS CANADA DOC FUND, SUPPORTED BY NETFLIX,  
ANNOUNCED  
\$245,000 CDN AWARDED TO TEN CANADIAN PROJECTS

Toronto, ON, October 20, 2021 – Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival is pleased to announce that ten films—seven features and three shorts—have received development and production grants totaling \$245,000 CDN from the CrossCurrents Canada Doc Fund. The Fund, established with the support of Netflix, was launched during the 2018 Hot Docs Festival and supports a diversity of voices and perspectives with the goal of building a more vibrant, representative and sustainable industry.

“We are thrilled to once again be able to support important and often underrepresented voices from across Canada as they bring their stories out into the world,” said Hot Docs’ Acting Industry Programs Director **Lisa Valencia-Svensson**. “As a society, we are only as strong as our understanding of ourselves and of each other. These engaging films will allow audiences to deepen their perspectives on who we are, what we are going through in our lives, and how we can truly build community together.”

“It is vital that we continue to elevate and create opportunities for as many underrepresented voices as possible,” said **Lisa Nishimura**, Vice President, Independent and Documentary Film, Netflix. “The work of this year’s recipients will contribute to greater inclusivity in our industry and help drive change through their stories.”

The CrossCurrents Canada Doc Fund is a cornerstone of the Hot Docs Canadian Storytellers Project, generously supported by Netflix. The Project is a five-year initiative meant to address systemic barriers and opportunity gaps that exist within the documentary film community. For their partnership on the Project, Hot Docs and Netflix received the 2021 Business / Arts Community Impact Award this past June.

“Thanks to Netflix, we’re able to provide meaningful support to filmmakers looking to tell unique stories,” said **Olena Decock**, Funds Manager for Hot Docs. “We are in awe of the tenacity and adventurous spirits of this year’s ten grantees.”

This fund, which has disbursed \$700,000 in four years, aims to foster original storytelling from creators with unique vantage points, and is open to emerging and sophomore documentary storytellers who are Indigenous, Francophone, Deaf and/or have a disability, racialized and/or persons of colour.

Eligible projects were considered by the CrossCurrents Canada Doc Fund Committee: Lucius Dechausay (Filmmaker & Producer, CBC Arts), Kyla Harris (Filmmaker, Independent), Hot Docs (Olena Decock, Manager, Funds and Labs & Lisa Valencia-Svensson, Acting Industry Programs Director), Mélanie Lê Phan (Executive in Charge of Production, Digital Originals, CBC), Niki Little (Artistic Director, imagineNATIVE), Selin Murat (Consultant, Independent) and Kaya Wheeler (Manager, Programs and Development, National Screen Institute).

Development Funds

**THE BLACK ACADEMY** (feature)

Director/Producer: Deydra Baptiste

Production company: Independent

A full-length documentary with never-before-explored insight into the hearts and minds of Black female academics and creatives; their testimonials on what it is to be Black in the context of post-secondary education; and a presentation of the diverse and dynamic contributions made to their domains and the world at large.

**IM/MIGRANT BUYERS CLUB** (feature)

Director: Mirusha Yogarajah

Producers: Mirusha Yogarajah, Amos Adetuyi and Floyd Kane

Production company: Circle Blue Entertainment

Tamil communities use a subversive baking system where people can receive large lump sums of money without interest and credit score assessments. *Im/migrant Buyers Club* explores this system that comes with many stories of triumph, vilification and growth.

**THE SICKLING** (feature)

Directors/Producers: Gabriel Badejo and Yazmeen Kanji

Production company: Independent

Gabriel Badejo has only ever known a life controlled by Sickle Cell Disease. As he seeks a cure for this life-threatening illness in a prejudicial system, we follow Gabriel's journey through the intense physical and emotional changes he experiences.

Production Funds

**BEYOND BORDERS** (short)

Director: Carol Nguyen

Producer: Audrey-Ann Dupuis-Pierre

Production company: 9424-6899 Québec inc.

*Beyond Borders* is a short, animated documentary illustrating the director's journey visiting Vietnam for the first time, where inner turmoil and questions of home began to surface. The film touches upon themes of cultural identity and intergenerational trauma.

**LES JOURS (DAYS)** (feature)

Director: Geneviève Dulude-De Celles

Producers: Sarah Mannering and Fanny Drew

Production company: Colonelle films

One week before her 29th birthday, Marie-Philip learns that she has breast cancer, and that her "big cancer" will put her through a "big year". A year of treatment lies ahead of her, in which a director, in her mid-thirties, will enter her life.

**KOKUM, WITH LOVE.** (short)

Director/Producer: Kim Stadfeld

Production company: Heart's Path Media Inc.

Flora Bear's youngest granddaughter searches for truth and answers about her Indigenous grandmother's life.

**OUR GRANDMOTHER THE INLET** (short)

Directors: Kayah George, Jaime Leigh Gianopoulos

Producers: Kayah George, Jaime Leigh Gianopoulos and Rachelle George

Production company: OGTI Productions Inc.

A short poetic documentary film featuring Kayah George that portrays the hardships of being an urban indigenous youth while holding love and intrinsic connection to the water and land. Shot on Tsleil-Waututh territory.

**TWYSTED SPIRIT** (feature)

Director: Gabrielle Zilkha

Producers: Jenn Mason, Gabrielle Zilkha and Twysted Miyake Mugler

Production company: Four Corners Productions Inc.

Dedicated to creating a better world for Black and Brown 2SLGBTQ+ youth, Canadian ballroom pioneer Twysted Miyake-Mugler reconnects with the religious community he left behind and confronts his painful past in this hybrid dance documentary about personal healing, spirituality and community.

**WE SHALL EAT WHEN THE RIVER IS FULL** (feature)

Director/Producer: Banchi Hanuse

Production company: Smayaykila Films Inc

The relationship between the sputc (eulachon) and the Nuxalkmc (Nuxalk people) intertwine, merge and separate as the lines distinguishing the Nuxalkmc from the sputc, and all other beings, waver and perhaps disappear altogether in this spiritual tale of wealth, loss and recovery.

**WORDS LEFT UNSPOKEN** (feature)

Director: Josiane Blanc

Producer: Rayne Zuckerman

Production company: IGP Productions Inc.

After avoiding speaking at all cost for over two decades, Joze Piranian, a severe stutterer, decides to confront his fears. The documentary follows Joze as he makes peace with his stutter and becomes the man he's always wanted himself to be.

The application dates for the fourth round of funding will be announced in the New Year.

For further information on the application process, eligibility requirements and deadlines, please visit <http://www.hotdocs.ca/i/crosscurrents-doc-fund>.

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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 each year, a full roster of industry conference sessions, market programs and networking events are 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 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 Docs Fund and Hot Docs Partners, and valuable professional development programs, including Doc Ignite and Doc Accelerator.

Media Contact:  
Andrea Smitko  
Media Relations Manager, Hot Docs  
asmitko@hotdocs.ca  
416-203-2155 ext. 292