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**CFI'S VIRTUAL DOCPITCH LAUNCHES AUGUST 13, 2020
WILL AWARD \$125,000 TO DOCUMENTARY FILM PROJECTS**

**DOCLANDS DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL
TO TAKE PLACE WITH THE MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL
OCTOBER 8 – 18, 2020**

SAN RAFAEL, CA (August 11, 2020) – The California Film Institute (CFI) Founder / Executive Director, Mark Fishkin, announced a \$125,000 pledge from the Nancy P. & Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation and Project No. 9 for **DocPitch 2020**, a CFI initiative designed to aid filmmakers in completing a documentary film project currently in development.

What: 2020 DocPitch Fundraising Forum
Launch Date: Thursday, August 13
Livestream conversation with the eight filmmakers
Time: 7:00 PM (PDT)
Audience Voting Window: August 13, 7PM (PDT) – August 19 at Midnight (PDT)
Awards Presentation: Friday, August 21 @ 7:00pm (PDT)
Livestream presentation with the eight filmmakers in attendance

"When we launched the very first DocPitch, it was our privilege to give filmmakers an opportunity to develop their projects, have a voice, and share their vision," said Fishkin. "With each year, I'm honored to say the amount of funding we've been able to give to filmmakers has increased. In these unprecedented times, it's even more important than ever for us to be able to give these talented filmmakers support to move forward and complete their projects." Fishkin continued: "I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Nancy P. and Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation and Project No. 9, who have been so supportive of DocPitch over the years. Their passion for documentary filmmaking and truth through storytelling is inspiring."

"We are absolutely thrilled to be able to offer this level of support to documentary filmmakers," said Joni Cooper, Director of Programming, DocLands Documentary Film Festival. "We're committed to providing financial support to filmmakers each year, and acknowledge this generous additional support will go a long way to allow the powerfully impactful, lasting, and essential creative work of these filmmakers to continue during such challenging times."

Designed to connect filmmakers and their ideas to funders, distributors, philanthropic organizations, philanthropists, fellow filmmakers, and future audiences, the 2020 DocPitch Fundraising Forum will launch with a virtual conversation on Thursday, August 13th at 7:00pm (PDT) moderated by DocLands Director of Programming Joni Cooper. A selection committee comprised of Julie Campfield, ro*co Films; Joni Cooper, DocLands; Melissa Fondakowski, The Redford Center, and Maida Lynn, Genuine Article Pictures, have chosen eight feature-film projects currently in early-to-late stages of completion to participate in DocPitch.

The filmmaker pitches will be available to view by audiences globally on Thursday, August 13th at 7:00pm (PDT). Voting for the Audience Choice Award will be open through Wednesday, August 19th at Midnight (PDT). Eight industry awards and one Audience Choice Award will be announced Friday, August 21, 2020 during a virtual conversation with all eight filmmakers.

The audience, through viewing the pitches and casting their vote, will decide which project will receive the \$25,000 Audience Choice Award. A jury of industry professionals will present three major and five minor documentary filmmaking grants totaling \$100,000.

This year's jury of industry professionals includes – **Simon Kilmurry**, Executive Director, International Documentary Association; **Freida Lee Mock**, Academy® and Emmy® Award-winning documentary filmmaker and 2020 recipient of the DocLands Honors Award; **Paola Mottura**, Manager, Documentary Fund, Sundance Institute; **Denae Peters**, Program Officer, Perspective Fund; **Speech Thomas**, Grammy® Award-winning musician, music and documentary film producer, humanitarian.

Please join us on August 13th to become a member of the first audience to view these new projects in development and cast your vote to support documentary filmmakers!



500 DAYS IN THE WILD
Dianne Whelan



AMERICAN ESPIONAGE
Christopher Smith



BLACK & GOLD
Khadija Diakité



BLACK MOTHERS
Débora Souza Silva



MY NAME IS ANDREA
Pratibha Parmar



NOMADS
Vanessa Carr | Josh Gleason



SAL Y CIELO
Taylor Rees



STARTUP EMBASSY
Kenji Yamamoto

DocPitch Finalist Information

500 Days in the Wild, director Dianne Whelan

500 Days in the Wild is a feature documentary about an artist's journey to look for lost wisdom on the world's longest trail. A story that calls us back to a place of reverence for the earth.

American ESPionage, director Christopher Smith

American ESPionage traces the incredible true story of the rise and fall of the United States' Cold War era, top-secret psychic espionage program as told through the story of Major Paul Smith.

Black & Gold, director Khadija Diakité

Black & Gold reveals the untold stories of African-American athletes in the sport of women's gymnastics, as they battle near unbeatable odds, societal barriers, racism, and stereotypes, at the highest levels of the sport, in the pursuit of Olympic gold.

Black Mothers, director Débora Souza Silva

Black Mothers follows the journey of two women working to disrupt our country's cycle of police brutality. As one mother navigates the turbulent aftermath of her son's attack, the other channels her grief into organizing other mothers to fight for justice.

My Name is Andrea, director Pratibha Parmar

My Name is Andrea is a cinematic evocation of key moments from the life of feminist outlaw, maverick thinker, and intellectual genius of the 20th Century Andrea Dworkin. Dworkin's powerful voice speaks vividly to our contemporary #MeToo moment and reveals the lasting influence of a controversial, global feminist thinker.

Nomads, directors Vanessa Carr, Josh Gleason

Trapped in a high cost, low wage nation, several Americans seek to thrive—and survive—on wheels.

Sal y Cielo (Salt & Sky), director Taylor Rees

In the driest desert on earth, the Atacama in northern Chile, a community fights for their right to survive in the face of lithium mining which is draining the water underneath their feet; all for false promises of saving the planet.

Startup Embassy, director Kenji Yamamoto

Three high-tech entrepreneurs arrive in Silicon Valley with visions of triumph. Their chances of success are minuscule and each of them suffers painful disappointments, gambles with financial ruin, and endures extended separations from family.

DocLands Documentary Film Festival at MVFF

CFI is excited to bring a selection of feature length titles and short films from the previously postponed DocLands Documentary Film Festival (04/30-05/03/2020) to the Mill Valley Film Festival this fall, including a virtual conversation with 2020 DocLands Honors recipient and acclaimed documentary filmmaker Freida Lee Mock. The full slate of DocLands films is listed below:

Augmented, director Matthew Orr

Between The Notes, director Jordan Hwang

The Book Makers, director James Kennard

Calabria By Feel, director Maya Pisciotto

Citizen Penn, director Don Hardy

Current Sea, director Christopher Smith

Dick Ogg: Fisherman, director Cynthia Abbott

The Dilemma of Desire, director Maria Finizo

Five Years North, directors Zach Ingrasci, Chris Temple

From Kurils With Love, director Taylor Rees

He Dreams of Giants, directors Keith Fulton, Louis Pepe

Home, director Jen Randall

The Infinite Race, director Bernardo Ruiz

The Last Glaciers in Yosemite, director Alexander Schwartz

Laurel Canyon: A Place In Time, director Alison Ellwood

Merhawi, director James Walsh

The Most Vulnerable, director Don Hardy

One Word Sawalmem, directors Natasha Deganello Giraudie, Michal "Pom" Preston

Out on a Limb, director Jordan Manley

Piano to Zanskar, director Michal Sulima

Public Trust, director David Garrett Byars

Queen Without Land, director Asgeir Helgestad

The Roads Most Traveled, director Bill Wisneski

Socialism: An American Story, director Yael Bridge

The Undocumented Lawyer, directors Zach Ingrasci, Chris Temple

Unnúr, director Chris Burkard

About DOCLANDS

Presented by the California Film Institute, DocLands Documentary Film Festival brings compelling stories and the provocative insights behind them to Marin County, California. Expanding upon the exchange of ideas and inspiration through public screenings, engaged conversations and grassroots networking events, DocLands aims to build an active, involved, fully supportive community around documentary film, dedicated to initiating connections and partnerships that will illuminate and invigorate the business and art of non-fiction filmmakers.

About California Film Institute

The California Film Institute (CFI) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to celebrating and promoting film as art and education with a diverse series of annual programs, including the presentation of the internationally acclaimed Mill Valley Film Festival, celebrating its 43rd year in 2020 and the documentary film festival DocLands; building the next generation of young filmmakers and audiences through CFI Education, featuring a broad range of activities, screenings, Q&A sessions, and seminars with top international and local filmmakers and industry professionals, as well as a rich program of classes and hands-on-workshops for all Bay Area students and lifetime learners. Year-round, CFI acts as a film-centric town hall with a varied calendar of programming at the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, one of the leading non-profit independent theaters in the U.S. Celebrating and promoting the art of storytelling through film enables CFI to engage an average of 275,000 guests throughout the year with films and events that entertain as well as address a breadth of social, environmental, and cultural issues. CFI is also the majority owner of the Sequoia Theater in Mill Valley, California. Additionally, through CFI Releasing, a national non-profit film distribution initiative, CFI enables filmmakers and sales agents to collaborate with U.S. independent exhibitors, giving nationwide audiences access to quality independent film and promoting this work as a valuable artistic and educational medium conveying different visions, viewpoints, and cultural perspectives. CFI relies on the generosity of its community to sustain these core programs. The invaluable support of our sponsors, foundations, and individual donors ensures our continued success. For more information visit cafilm.org

Supporters

CFI is once again proud to acknowledge the leadership support of Christopher B. and Jeannie Meg Smith, Jennifer Coslett MacCready, Vickie Soulier and Nancy P. and Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation, and the continued major support of The EACH Foundation, Genuine Article Pictures, The Gruber Family Foundation, Jim Boyce Trust and Kris Otis, Marin Community Foundation, The Bernard Osher Foundation, and Teresa Wolf. We are also fortunate to have the contributions of the following DocPitch supporters Netflix, Nancy P. and Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation and Project No. 9.