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CALIFORNIA FILM INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES
2021 VIRTUAL DOCPITCH
TO LAUNCH FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 2021
WILL AWARD \$70,000 TO DOCUMENTARY FILM PROJECTS

DOCPITCH IS PART OF DOCLANDS DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL
May 7 – May 16, 2021

SAN RAFAEL, CA – The California Film Institute (CFI) Founder / Executive Director, Mark Fishkin, announced a \$70,000 pledge from the Nancy P. & Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation, Project No. 9, and members of the California Film Institute Board of Directors for DocPitch 2021, a CFI initiative designed to aid filmmakers in completing a documentary film project currently in development.

What: 2021 DocPitch Fundraising Forum
Launch Date: Friday, April 30, 2021
Time: 10:00 AM (PT)
Audience Voting Window: April 30, 10:00 AM (PT) – May 10 at Midnight (PT)
Awards Presentation: Sunday, May 16 @ 5:00pm (PT)
Livestream presentation with filmmaking teams in attendance
\$30,000 Audience Choice Award and \$40,000 in Juried Awards

"DocPitch may not be our oldest CFI program, nor our largest, but its impact cannot be denied," said Fishkin. "It was designed to connect documentary filmmakers with an active and essential audience of funders, industry participants and contributors, and film enthusiasts. From its inception, DocPitch has proven to be an important step in bringing these vital stories closer to completion by awarding monies to individual projects currently in development." Fishkin continued: "We at CFI thank our major DocPitch supporters, the Nancy P. and Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation, and Project No. 9, as well as our DocPitch sponsor, Netflix, and all those who have raised their hands to give concrete support, and to do their part, in helping sustain a thriving documentary community."

"Despite being another challenging year for filmmakers, this year's DocPitch submissions included a record number of outstanding projects currently in development and production," said Joni Cooper, Director of Programming, DocLands Documentary Film Festival. "We received the most diverse and varied cohort of documentary projects to date, from creative filmmakers from across the country and around the world. This certainly makes the job of the juries incredibly difficult, but it also opens their eyes to the myriad of upcoming, unique projects that DocPitch attracts." Cooper continued: "We're extremely grateful to our funders, donors, and sponsor who support filmmakers through DocPitch in such a generous way, and who see the essential work that filmmakers do, especially during such challenging times."

Designed to connect filmmakers and their ideas to funders, distributors, philanthropic organizations, fellow filmmakers, and future audiences, the 2021 DocPitch fundraising forum will launch with a virtual conversation on Friday, April 30, moderated by DocLands Director of Programming Joni Cooper. Selection committees comprised of Julie Campfield, ro*co Films; Kelly Clement, DocLands; Joni Cooper, DocLands; Ken Jacobson, AFI/DocLands; Jill Tidman, The Redford Center; and Maida Lynn, Genuine Article Pictures, have chosen five feature-film projects, from 72 submitted projects, currently in early-to-late stages of completion to participate in DocPitch.

The filmmaker pitches will be available to audiences globally on Friday, April 30 at 10:00 AM (PT). Voting for the Audience Choice Award will be open through Monday, May 10 at Midnight (PT). Four industry awards and one Audience Choice Award will be announced Sunday, May 16, 2021, during a live online awards presentation with all five filmmaking teams.

Through viewing the pitches and casting their vote, the audience will decide which project will receive the \$30,000 Audience Choice Award. Following that announcement, an industry jury will present the remaining pitching teams with an additional \$40,000 in awards. Funding for this project is made possible with support from the Nancy P. & Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation and Project No. 9 and members of the California Film Institute Board of Directors.

This year's jury of industry professionals includes – **Jimmie Briggs**, Principal, Skoll Foundation; **Jon-Sesrie Goff**, Program Officer, Ford Foundation, **Carrie Lozano**, Director, Documentary Film Program, Sundance Institute.

Please join us on April 30th to become a member of the first audience to view these new projects in development and cast your vote to support these documentary filmmakers!



DocPitch Finalist Information

Finding the Money, Maren Poitras

Finding the Money traces the rise of a controversial new economic theory dubbed “Modern Monetary Theory” or MMT. Led by Stephanie Kelton, a relatable economist with a knack for public speaking, she asserts for Congress, the sole issuer of the US dollar, “finding the money is actually the easiest part!”

Higher 15, Ameha Molla

Filmmaker Ameha Molla unravels a long-held family secret about his uncle, a former Ethiopian revolutionary who escaped from prison and fled to the United States. His uncle’s story sparks a deeper quest for answers to the legacy of war and violence, and the meaning of family.

Mom & Dad’s Nipple Factory, Justin Johnson

Following Randi’s battle with breast cancer and subsequent mastectomy, her husband Brian, a serial entrepreneur and tinkerer, embarks on an extraordinary journey to help her feel complete. In the pursuit of the perfect prosthetic nipple from a bedroom in their conservative Wisconsin town, Brian launched a project that grows from a labor of love into an unintended calling with the power to change thousands of lives.

A Photographic Memory, Rachel Elizabeth Seed

A daughter attempts to piece together a portrait of her mother, a daring journalist and a woman she never knew. Uncovering the vast archive Sheila Turner-Seed produced, including lost interviews with iconic photographers, the film explores memory, legacy and stories left untold.

The Untitled 19th* News Film, Chelsea Hernandez, Heather Courtney

The Untitled 19th News Film* documents the first years of a revolutionary news startup that is challenging the status quo of the mostly white male legacy newsrooms. This observational film follows The 19th* diverse group of journalists as they tell stories centering women, people of color, and the LGBTQ+ community.

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 May 7-16, 2021. 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.

DOCLANDS Sections

Art of Impact engages and sparks action by sharing stories that open our eyes to the global community and its disparate cultures, politics, personal narratives, and biographies.

The Great Outdoors transports us outside to truly appreciate, explore, and ultimately compel us to save and conserve our environment and the wilds of our precious and precarious planet.

WonderLands lifts our spirits through stories of joy, wonder, and possibility.

About California Film Institute

The California Film Institute (CFI) is a non-profit organization dedicated to celebrating and promoting film and media arts through the presentation of the internationally acclaimed Mill Valley Film Festival celebrating its 44th year in 2021 and the 5th annual DocLands Documentary Film Festival, the ongoing cultivation of the next generation of filmmakers and film lovers through CFI Education, which features a broad range of activities, including 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. Additionally, CFI acts as a year-round film-centric town hall with a diverse calendar of programming at the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, one of the leading non-profit independent theatres in the country. The art of storytelling through film enables CFI to touch 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 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 proud to acknowledge the following for their continued support of DocLands: Nancy P. and Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation; Wareham Development; Project No. 9; Genuine Article Pictures; Jennifer Coslett MacCready; Vickie Soulier; Bellam Self Storage and Boxes; Netflix; the Jim Boyce Trust and Kris Otis; The EACH Foundation; Make it Better Media; and the Academy of Integrated Humanities and New Media. We are also fortunate to have continued support from our DocPitch sponsor, Netflix, and DocPitch funders: the Nancy P. and Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation, Project No. 9, and Members of the California Film Institute Board of Directors.

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