

HOT DOCS-BLUE ICE DOCS FUND TO INVEST \$150,000 CAD IN NINE AFRICAN FILM PROJECTS

Toronto, April 6, 2022 – Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival and Blue Ice Docs announced today the nine African film projects selected to receive \$150,000 CAD in development and production grants. The Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund, now in its eleventh year, seeks to enable more African documentary filmmakers to tell their stories and contribute to the next generation of African documentary talent. Chosen from 77 applications from 25 countries, three of the selected projects will receive development grants, three will be provided with production grants, and three will get post-production grants.

“The nine films selected for this funding round showcase incredible storytelling that needs to be seen on the big screen,” shared **Heidi Tao Yang**, Hot Docs’ Director of Funds & Labs. “These stories span from the mountain to the sea, and the styles range from visual poetry to adrenaline-pumping calls for social action. We are particularly excited to support, for the first time through the Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund, projects from Burkina Faso and Sudan. We look forward to working with lab fellows in person this year, the first time since the pandemic started.”

In addition to the funding of nine projects from eight countries, four of the grant recipients have been invited to participate in a year-long mentorship program, which grants direct access to industry mentors, provides networking opportunities, and includes private filmmaker labs at Hot Docs and the Durban FilmMart/Durban International Film Festival or other festivals and markets in Africa.

Since its establishment in 2011, the Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund has supported 87 unique projects from 26 countries, with \$1,380,000 granted to date.

Eligible projects were considered by the Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund Committee, which included Hot Docs Industry (Julian Carrington, Distribution Manager & Industry Programmer; Olena Decock, Industry Programmer), Naziha Arebi (HuNa Productions), Reda Benjelloun (TV 2M), Toni Kamau (We Are Not the Machine), Mbithi Masya (NBO Film Festival), Magdalene Reddy (Durban FilmMart), and Rama Thiaw (Boulle Fallé Images).

Applications for the next round of disbursements will start on October 5, 2022. For further information on the application process, eligibility requirements and deadlines, visit www.hotdocs.ca/industry/film-funds/hot-docs-blue-ice-docs-fund.

Development Grants:

THE CAMERA NEVER CRIES

Directors: Elsadig Abdelgayoum, Abuzar Adam

Producer: Alyaa Musa

Production Company: Black Balance Artistic Production Co. Ltd.

Country: Sudan

When Elsadig and Abuzar first met while filming the Sudanese revolution in 2019, neither knew they would eventually turn the camera on each other. An intimate journey of a growing friendship between two directors, who seek redemption and beauty through the art of filmmaking when all the odds are against them.

DANCING WITH WATER, MY TORMENTING ENEMY

Director: Cyrielle Raingou
Producers: Alice Abah, Cyrille Masso, Véronique Holley
Production Companies: JCMR, Malo Pictures, Label Vidéo
Countries: Cameroon, France

The odyssey of a director trying to exorcise her fear of water and perhaps finally face the evil eye of Njinou who takes anyone who dares to venture into deep water.

DJELIYA, MEMORY OF MANDING

Director: Boubacar Sangaré
Producer: Mamounata Nikiema
Production Company: Pilumpiku Production
Country: Burkina Faso

Sékou Timité has one ambition: to follow in his late father's footsteps and become a "Djeli", a griot, guardian of the oral memory in West Africa. Interested in the obsolete art of the griot, he leaves his family behind and sets off to confront the modern world on the roads of the legendary Mandingo Empire.

Production Grants:

LAND OF WOMEN

Directors: Nada Riyadh, Ayman El Amir
Producers: Ayman El Amir, Mette-Ann Schepelern, Marc Irmer
Production Companies: Felucca Films, Magma Film, Dolce Vita Films
Countries: Egypt, Denmark, France

In a conservative village in the south of Egypt, dominated by patriarchy, a group of Coptic girls refuses the traditional roles forced upon them, by forming an all-female street theatre troupe. A coming-of-age portrait of girls at the crossroads of their lives.

UNTITLED KENYAN POLITICS PROJECT

Directors: Maia Lekow, Christopher King
Producers: Maia Lekow, Christopher King
Production Company: Circle and Square Productions

Country: Kenya

Logline withheld.

TRASH CEMETERY

Directors: Firas Rebiai, Rami Jarboui

Producers: Firas Rebiai, Dhia Rebiai

Production Company: NAP

Country: Tunisia

Once a heavenly small town on the outskirts of Tunis, El Attar turned into a living hell after Tunisia's largest landfill opened on its doorsteps.

Post-Production Grants

BEFORE THE FINAL PICTURE

Director: Aya Tallah Yusuf

Producers: Aya Tallah Yusuf, Sumer Abd Elnasser

Production Company: Shoghl Cairo Pictures

Country: Egypt

Between Cairo and Dubai, Samar tries to rebuild her life after an acid attack by her ex-partner. The film captures 5 years of her mental and physical healing journey, and the friendship built with another acid survivor.

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Director: Yakout Elhababi

Producer: Yakout Elhababi

Production Company: Behind Closed Doors

Country: Morocco

Portrait of a farming family living in the most marginalized region of Morocco, where livelihood comes exclusively from growing cannabis. The film explores the inherent taboo weighing on them and their children who mirror the parent's work with their games.

DONGA

Director: Muhannad Lamin

Producer: Muhannad Lamin

Production Company: Khayal Productions

Country: Libya

Donga is the story of a fighter in the center of the Libyan conflict who carries a camera as his weapon of choice.

-30-

Hot Docs (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.

Media Contact:

Juan M. Gonzalez-Calcano
Media Relations Manager
Hot Docs
jgonzalezcalcano@hotdocs.ca