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HOT DOCS UNVEILS AWARDEES OF CROSSCURRENTS INTERNATIONAL DOC FUND THEATRICAL STRAND, ALLOCATING \$30,000 CAD TO TWO DOCUMENTARY PROJECTS

Toronto, ON – Hot Docs, in collaboration with the Panicaro Foundation, is pleased to reveal the recipients of \$30,000 CAD in funding for two international documentary projects under the **CrossCurrents Doc Fund - International Theatrical Stream**. This fund is dedicated to supporting filmmakers who are telling stories from within underrepresented and marginalized communities. The two selected films are ***Untying the Knot*** (D: Chona Mangalindan | Philippines, UK) and ***Withheld*** (D: Withheld | Yemen).

"In these powerful narratives, we witness the resilience and strength of individuals from historically underrepresented communities, expertly captured by two talented female directors," said **Heidi Tao Yang**, Hot Docs' Director of Funds & Labs. These stories delve into the human spirit, showcasing the untold stories of survival and determination. These films not only amplify the voices in these regions but also serve as a testament to the universal strength that binds us all together."

"The Panicaro Foundation believes in the transformative power of storytelling. In partnership with Hot Docs, we are proud to support and amplify the voices of documentary filmmakers hailing from underrepresented and marginalized communities," shared **Caroline Birks**, Board Member, Panicaro Foundation. "This \$30,000 CAD funding for two international documentary projects exemplifies our commitment to fostering diversity, empathy, and understanding through impactful storytelling."

In 2016, the Panicaro Foundation introduced the International Theatrical Stream within the CrossCurrents Doc Fund at Hot Docs Festival, with a mission to foster understanding and appreciation of unheard voices. Over the years, the Fund has allocated \$260,000 CAD to support 17 full-length feature projects in production, each helmed by emerging filmmakers representing 14 countries.

229 projects from 60 countries were considered by the CrossCurrents International Doc Fund Committee, which included: Caroline Birks (Board Member, Panicaro Foundation), Sarvnik Kaur (filmmaker, Snooker Clubs Films), Nicolas van Hemelryck (filmmaker, Casatarantula) Yiqian Zhang (Outgoing Manager of Funds and Labs, Hot Docs).

UNTYING THE KNOT

Director: Chona Mangalindan
Producers: Ramzy Haddad, Chona Mangalindan
Production company: Amaya Films
Country: Philippines, United Kingdom

In the Philippines, the last country outside the Vatican where divorce is illegal, women in trouble and abusive marriages risk their lives for freedom.

WITHHELD

Director: Withheld

Producer: Withheld

Production company: Withheld

Country: Yemen

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About Hot Docs

Hot Docs, North America's largest documentary festival, conference and market, is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing and celebrating the art of documentary and to creating production opportunities for documentary filmmakers. Since its inception in 1993, Hot Docs has supported the Canadian and international industry with professional development programs and a multi-million-dollar production fund portfolio, including the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Fund, CrossCurrents Doc Funds, Hot Docs-Slaight Family Fund, Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund, Hot Docs Partners, and valuable professional development programs, including Doc Ignite and Hot Docs Incubator.

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