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HOT DOCS NAMES PRODUCER, DIRECTOR AND FILM PROGRAMMER HUSSAIN CURRIMBHOY ITS NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

VETERAN PROGRAMMER HEATHER HAYNES ASSUMES
THE ROLE OF DIRECTOR OF FESTIVAL PROGRAMMING

Toronto, ON – Hot Docs is pleased to announce the appointment of **Hussain Currimbhoy** as the organization’s new Artistic Director. With an illustrious career in the film industry and a passion for elevating and championing works by marginalized filmmakers, Currimbhoy is set to bring a new vision to Hot Docs, overseeing programming for Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, Toronto’s Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema and Docs for Schools, the organization’s national educational program. Hussain Currimbhoy takes the helm from Shane Smith, who departed the organization in June, and will assume his role immediately.

"I am delighted to welcome Hussain to the Hot Docs team, where he will curate the next chapter of our organization’s story. I am confident that with his unique vision, tremendous experience, and remarkable talents, he will successfully steer Hot Docs’ programming team into an exciting new phase. Toronto is thrilled to welcome you back, Hussain!" said **Marie Nelson**, Hot Docs’ president.

“It is an absolute honour to take up this position with one of my favourite film festivals, and in my hometown, no less,” shared **Hussain Currimbhoy**, Hot Docs’ new artistic director. “I must paraphrase poet and author Mahmoud Darwish to sum up how I feel about delivering a new vision for Hot Docs: ‘When you see something beautiful, it breaks walls down.’ Together with Hot Docs’ world-renowned programming team and a lot of bonhomie, we will do just that. Our aim is to deepen our Festival and year-round programming to provide even more opportunities for our audiences to engage with the best of documentary film in all its forms. I am excited to get started and to continue this vital endeavour of showcasing creative, unique docs by the world’s most exciting filmmakers in Toronto, while also sharing the richness of Canada’s extraordinary, diverse talent with the world.”

Born in Toronto and raised internationally, Hussain Currimbhoy is a film producer, director and film curator with works spanning documentary and fiction films since 2002. Hussain is an executive producer on feature documentaries such as *And, Towards Happy Alleys* (Berlinale, CPH:DOX), *Praying For Armageddon* (CPH:DOX), *Tomorrow’s Freedom* (Sheffield DocFest) and *The Beloved* (Melbourne International Film Festival). Hussain has worked with the CMP in Chicago as their director of investment and global strategy, and lead for the Shifting Voices Film Fund, CMP’s signature program designed to elevate and support feature documentary works by marginalized filmmakers.

As a film programmer, Hussain has worked for film and industry events around the world including Sundance Film Festival, Sheffield DocFest, Melbourne International Film Festival, Nordisk

Panorama Film Festival, Doc 10, and the Red Sea International Film Festival. In 2023, Hussain created and launched the Gåsebäck Film Festival, an independent film event in Helsingborg, Sweden that is dedicated to showcasing international cinema, regional short films and filmmaker masterclasses.

Additionally, Hot Docs announced today Associate Director of Festival Programming **Heather Haynes's** promotion to the role of Director of Festival Programming, effective immediately. With over 17 years of exceptional work at the organization, Heather's journey has been marked by significant achievements, showcasing her unwavering commitment to the Festival's success.

Hussain Currimbhoy will lead programming for the upcoming 2024 Hot Docs Festival, April 25 to May 5 in Toronto. Collaborating closely with Hot Docs' seasoned programming team, which now boasts an expanded roster reflecting the team's growth and development, Hussain will work alongside newly appointed Director of Festival Programming Heather Haynes, Festival Programming Manager Kristin Boivin, Programming Administrative Coordinator Sadia Ali, Senior International Features and Shorts Programmer Angie Driscoll, Senior Canadian Programmer Alex Rogalski, Senior International Programmer Myrocia Watamaniuk, and programmers Samah Ali, Vivian Belik, Jesse Cumming, Gugi Gumilang, Lucila Moctezuma, Margaret Pereira, Gabor Pertic, Kaitlynn Tomaselli (associate programmer), Mariam Zaidi, Yiqian Zhang (associate programmer).

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[Hot Docs \(www.hotdocs.ca\)](http://www.hotdocs.ca), 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. Year-round, Hot Docs supports the Canadian and international industry with professional development programs and a multi-million-dollar film fund portfolio, and fosters education through documentaries with its popular free program Docs For Schools. Hot Docs owns and programs the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, a century-old landmark located in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood and the world's first and largest documentary cinema.

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