

For Immediate Release: Wednesday, August 23, 2023

HOT DOCS UNVEILS DIVERSE SLATE OF 2023 PODCAST DEVELOPMENT LAB FELLOWS

THE HOT DOCS PODCAST DEVELOPMENT LAB, SUPPORTED BY AMAZON MUSIC CANADA AND INSPIRIT FOUNDATION, SERVES AS A LAUNCHPAD FOR BURGEONING BIPOC NON-FICTION AUDIO CREATORS ACROSS CANADA

Toronto, ON – Hot Docs is proud to announce the roster of eighth outstanding participants selected for the third edition of the **Hot Docs Podcast Development Lab**, presented in collaboration with **Amazon Music Canada** and **Inspirit Foundation**. An extension of the renowned annual Hot Docs Podcast Festival—returning live to the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema stage October 18 to 22—the Lab is tailored for emerging or sophomore BIPOC podcast creators residing in Canada who have a non-fiction podcast idea in early development. The 2023 Lab fellowship will culminate with a gathering of this year’s participants at the Hot Docs Podcast Festival, where they will meet with industry leaders and broadcasters, and partake in the Festival’s acclaimed Creators Forum—a place for podcast insiders, audio pros and emerging producers to network, develop their skills and explore new trends—taking place October 19 and 20.

The Hot Docs Podcast Development Lab launched in July 2021 as part of the annual Hot Docs Podcast Festival, which includes other career development programs like the Hot Docs Podcast Career Accelerator, and Creators Forum. This fellowship program takes an immersive approach to story development, pitching, navigating the podcast sphere, and strategic marketing outreach. Lab fellows are enrolled in an extensive months-long private lab, where they get to hear from a variety of industry experts and partake in in-depth workshops. Participants are expertly matched with seasoned audio creators and mentors to develop their story ideas and navigate pathways to success in the industry. Additionally, each project receives a CAD 2,000 creator grant to boost the development of their work, as well as travel and accommodation support when required.

"We are delighted to be working with a group of visionary non-fiction audio creators whose unique projects have excited, inspired, and educated us," shared **Elizabeth Radshaw**, Hot Docs’ Industry Programs Director. "Through the Podcast Development Lab, we are committed to cultivating a vibrant mosaic of essential and diverse stories, providing a platform for emerging BIPOC creators in Canada to share their unique perspectives with the world and to propel their projects into new horizons."

"We are thrilled to support the Hot Docs Podcast Development Lab and the work of this year’s creators," said **Lindsay Michael**, Sr. Podcast Manager, Amazon Music Canada. "The audio talent in Canada is broad

and deep and it's exciting to be part of a program where emerging BIPOC storytellers can take time to develop the significant stories they want to tell in our growing Canadian podcast industry."

"Greater participation in media and the arts—particularly within equity-seeking communities—is vital to a pluralist society where people of different beliefs and backgrounds can participate equally and thrive together," said **Chris Lee**, Inspirit Foundation's Director of Programming. "We are proud to continue to support the Podcast Development Lab and its role in amplifying BIPOC voices."

The selection committee for the 2023 Hot Docs Podcast Development Lab includes renowned non-fiction audio creators Aliya Pabani (*We Are Not the Virus*), Errol Nazareth (Host: CBC Music's *Frequencies* and CBC Radio's *Big City, Small World*), and Nichole Hill (*The Secret Adventures of Black People, I Am America* presented by Tracee Ellis Ross, *New York Magazine's Cover Story*). The 2023 Lab features media heavyweights Dan Misener, Hannah Sung, Pacinthe Mattar, and Veronica Simmonds as mentors. The Lab lead facilitator is Aliya Pabani.

For more information, please visit <https://hotdocs.ca/industry/professional-development/podcast-lab>

The 2023 Hot Docs Podcast Development Lab projects include:

Clean As You Go

Creators: Sadia Ali and Chloe Navaretnam

Clean As You Go is made by two South Asian creatives wanting to highlight South Asian representation in the podcast landscape. Their goal is to showcase Desi creators and converse both critically and casually about Brown identities in Western media.

You Deserve Nothing

Creator: Clif Mark

Meritocracy was supposed to make the world a fairer place for everyone. Instead, politicians from Reagan to Obama used it to justify a society that is less equitable, less mobile and ruthlessly nerdy.

25 NorthEast

Creator: Hussain Khan

A narrative non-fiction podcast about Canadian-Muslim experiences. Each season, the podcast focuses on a theme and tells true stories from the community through people's lived experiences navigating a particular theme. Season 1 focuses on incarcerated Muslims and the people that work with them.

Cosmopolitics

Creator: Kailun Chen

The unhinged diary of a recovering Toronto lawyer who goes surfing once and decides maybe she should quit everything to open a gay bar in Costa Rica instead.

The Baon Box

Creator: Karen-Luz Sison

Journey through the food scene of the most multicultural city in the world. Hear from the Toronto-based immigrants and refugees who make a living through their food—and the origin stories that make the city's food scene so special.

Heart of Greed (alternatively: My Greedy Heart)

Creator: Yasaman Mansoori

The secret pleasure and agony of a double life. It's possible to keep physical worlds separate for a time—but what goes on in the mind (and heart) when you tear yourself in two? What happens when it all comes crashing down?

This is Your Brain on Drugs

Creator: Liz Singh

This is Your Brain on Drugs is a series of short investigative documentary podcast episodes, each depicting a significant person, event, or story from a lesser-known part of our heritage: The Canadian War on Drugs.

Lost and Found – A Podcast About Fatherhood

Creators: Sandro Silva and Tanara MacLean

Lost and Found is a five-part narrative documentary podcast where an Afro-Brazilian man, raised by a single mother, discovers the real meaning of fatherhood.

###

Hot Docs (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 production fund portfolio, and fosters education through documentaries with its popular free program Docs For Schools. Hot Docs owns and programs Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, a century-old landmark located in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood and the world's first and largest documentary cinema, and operates Hot Docs at Home streaming platform.

The Hot Docs Podcast Festival is one of North America's premier podcast festivals, the Hot Docs Podcast Festival is presented by Hot Docs, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing and celebrating the art of documentary. Featuring live performances of chart-topping Canadian and international non-fiction podcasts and the Creators Forum, an industry conference for audio insiders and emerging podcasters, the Festival celebrates the ingenuity of audio storytelling. The eighth annual Hot Docs Podcast Festival returns to Toronto October 18 to 22, 2023.

[Inspirit Foundation](#) funds media and arts for social change, supports young changemakers, and invests its assets to align with its mission to promote inclusion and pluralism in Canada—specifically addressing discrimination based on ethnicity, race, or religion. To learn more, visit inspiritfoundation.org.

[Amazon Music](#) is an immersive audio entertainment service that connects fans, artists, and creators through music, podcasts, and culture. Amazon Music brings fans closer to what they love, with curated and personalized playlists, artist livestreams, artist merch, and Amazon Exclusive podcasts. Prime members get access to millions of songs in shuffle mode, All-Access playlists, plus the largest catalog of top ad-free podcasts, included with their membership. Customers can upgrade to Amazon Music Unlimited for full, on-demand access to millions of songs in HD and a growing catalog of Ultra HD and Spatial audio. Anyone can listen to Amazon Music by downloading the free Amazon Music app, or wherever they listen to music including Alexa-enabled devices. Learn more at www.amazonmusic.com.

Media Contact:

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