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## **CFI'S VIRTUAL DOCPITCH LAUNCHES APRIL 29, 2022 WILL AWARD \$100,000 TO DOCUMENTARY FILM PROJECTS**

DOCPITCH IS PART OF THE DOCLANDS DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL  
ONLINE MAY 5 – 11, 2022  
IN-PERSON AT THE CHRISTOPHER B. SMITH RAFAEL FILM CENTER  
MAY 5 – 8, 2022

SAN RAFAEL, CA (April 15, 2022) – DocLands Documentary Film Festival (DocLands) announces the five finalists for **DocPitch**, a program designed to connect filmmakers, with projects currently in development or post-production, to potential funders, distributors, organizations, philanthropists, fellow filmmakers, and future audiences.



**What:** 2022 DocPitch Fundraising Forum  
**Launch Date:** Friday, April 29, 2022  
Livestream conversation with the five filmmaking teams  
**Time:** 10:00 AM (PT)  
**Audience Voting Window:** April 29 @ 10:00 AM (PT) – Sunday, May 8 @ 11:59 PM (PT)  
**Awards Presentation:** Wednesday, May 11 @ 10:00 AM (PT)  
Livestream presentation with the five filmmaking teams in attendance  
**Awards:** \$45,000 Audience Award  
\$40,000 Jury Award  
\$5,000 Award to each of the remaining three films

### **DocPitch Finalist Information**

***Brief Tender Light***, director Arthur Musah  
*At America's elite MIT, four African students strive to graduate into agents of change for their home countries. But what changes come from living in two different worlds?*

***Brigidy Bram***, directors Kareem Mortimer, Laura Gamse  
*In this wild rag-to-riches tale circling psychosis and genius, the story of prolific painter Kendal Hanna reveals a case study of how we institutionalize difference.*

**Chewed Gum**, director Alana Maiello

*15 years after her rape drove her to seek solace in the Mormon Church, filmmaker Alana Maiello returns to Utah to confront her unresolved trauma and to connect with other LDS sexual violence survivors. Discovering a buried epidemic of sexual violence in Utah, she experiences the power of religion to suppress personal truth, and faces her own history in the community she left behind.*

**SheChange**, director Sachi Cunningham

SheChange is an intimate journey with four of the best female big wave surfers in the world as they fight for equal access and equal pay in one of the most dangerous sports on earth. Their surprising, history-making victory is only the beginning of what becomes their ultimate mission: equity for women in the world of professional sports - and beyond.

**Standing Above the Clouds**, director Jalena Keane-Lee

*When the world's largest telescope is set to be built on their sacred mountain, Mauna Kea, three Native Hawaiian families dedicate their lives to defending it. Through the lens of mothers and daughters, Standing Above the Clouds explores intergenerational healing and the social and emotional labor of retaining ancient ceremonies while putting your body on the line to protect a sacred mountain.*

"Since we launched DocPitch six years ago, it brought to fruition something we had long wanted to accomplish, to have the means to support documentary filmmaking in a substantial way. The importance of truth through storytelling is more critical than ever, and the integrity of this year's DocPitch films are outstanding. The ability to support these worthy projects is a privilege and aligns with the mission of the California Film Institute," said CFI Founder / Executive Director Mark Fishkin. "The fact that a worldwide audience can weigh in and vote on these projects is extraordinary. Our deepest appreciation to our generous DocPitch supporters and the filmmakers sharing their incredible stories."

"Demonstrated by a near doubling of the number of DocPitch submissions this year, the word - and need - for DocLands' pitching initiative is being discovered by filmmakers everywhere. And the fruits of the probing work from past DocPitch forums are being seen during DocLands and other major film festivals this year," said DocLands Director of Programming Joni Cooper. "DocLands will present premieres of two 2018 DocPitch Finalists this year: *Scrap*, directed by Canadian Stacey Tenenbaum, will see its US Premiere, and *The Sanctity of Space*, directed by Renan Ozturk and Freddie Wilkinson, will see its California premiere in advance of its US theatrical release through Greenwich Entertainment. *The Thief Collector*, which was pitched as *The Heist* at DocPitch 2019 by director Allison Otto, is also part of the film program. These three films alone are an amazing taste of how diverse the documentary genre has become. We're incredibly grateful that our DocPitch funders and sponsors recognize the importance of impactful projects that documentary filmmakers present year after year and are pleased to provide the vehicle that brings them together to produce films that enlighten, enrich, and entertain audiences worldwide."

Designed to connect filmmakers and their ideas to funders, distributors, philanthropic organizations, philanthropists, fellow filmmakers, and future audiences, the 2022 DocPitch fundraising forum will launch with a virtual conversation on Friday, April 29 at 10:00 AM (PT) moderated by DocLands Director of Programming Joni Cooper. The selection committee comprised of Julie Campfield, ROCO Films; Joni Cooper, DocLands; Denae Peters, Perspective Fund; Eric Johnson, Trailblazer Studios; and Ken Jacobson, DocLands, have chosen five feature-film projects currently in early-to-late stages of completion to participate in DocPitch 2022.

The filmmaker pitches will be available to view by audiences globally on Friday, April 29 at 10:00 AM (PT). Voting for the Audience Award will be open through Sunday, May 8 at 11:59 PM (PT). Four Industry Awards and one Audience Award will be announced Wednesday, May 11 at 10:00 AM (PT) during a virtual conversation with all five filmmaking teams.

Through viewing the pitches and casting their vote, the audience will decide which project will receive the \$45,000 Audience Award. The additional \$55,000 will be awarded to the remaining four film teams through a juried selection.

Funding for this project is made possible with support from the Nancy P. & Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation, Project No. 9, and Resonance Philanthropies.

This year's jury of industry professionals includes – **Paola Mottura**, Director, Film Fund, Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program; **Jeffrey Winter**, Co-executive Director, The Film Collaborative; and **Chi-hui Yang**, Senior Program Officer, JustFilms, Creativity and Free Expression, Ford Foundation.

The five previous DocPitch Audience Award winners include Theo Rigby's **Sanctuary Rising** (2017), now available online; James LeBrecht & Nicole Newnham's 2020 Independent Spirit Award winning documentary **Crip Camp** (2018), which Netflix acquired, and was nominated in the Best Documentary Feature category at the 2020 Academy Awards®; Chris Temple & Zach Ingrasci's **Five Years North** (2019), which screened at many film festivals, including DocLands 2020; Dianne Whelan's **500 Days in the Wild** (2020) completion scheduled for 2024; and Maren Poitras' **Finding the Money** (2021) completion planned for 2023.

Please join us on April 29 to become a member of the first audience to view these new projects in development and cast your vote to support documentary filmmakers!

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#### **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. Expanding upon the exchange of ideas and inspiration through public screenings and engaged conversations, DocLands aims to bring diverse communities together for dialogue and build an active, inclusive, and 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 Film Strands**

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

#### **About California Film Institute**

The California Film Institute (CFI) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to celebrating and promoting film as art and education with a diverse series of annual programs, including the presentation of the internationally acclaimed Mill Valley Film Festival, celebrating its 45th year in 2022 and the documentary film festival DocLands; building the next generation of young filmmakers and audiences through CFI Education, featuring a broad range of activities, 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 for all Bay Area students and lifetime learners. Year-round, CFI acts as a film-centric town hall with a varied calendar of programming at the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, one of the leading non-profit independent theaters in the U.S., celebrating and promoting the art of storytelling through film. CFI is also the majority owner of the Sequoia Theater in Mill Valley, California. CFI Releasing, a national non-profit film distribution initiative, enables filmmakers and sales agents to collaborate with U.S. independent exhibitors, giving nationwide audiences access to quality independent film and promoting this work as a valuable artistic and educational medium conveying different visions, viewpoints, and cultural perspectives. CFI relies on the generosity of its community to sustain these core programs. The invaluable support of our members, sponsors, foundations, and individual donors ensures our continued success. For more information, visit [cafilm.org](http://cafilm.org).

#### **Supporters | DocPitch**

CFI is proud to acknowledge the Nancy P. and Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation, Project No. 9, Jennifer Coslett MacCready, Vickie Soulier, Bellam Self Storage and Boxes, Jackson Square Partners, Jim Boyce Trust and Kris Otis, Make it Better Media, Community Action Marin, AC San Rafael Marriott, and the Academy of Integrated Humanities and New Media for their generous support of DOCLANDS. We are also fortunate to have the contributions of the following DocPitch supporters Nancy P. & Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation, Project No. 9, Resonance Philanthropies, and Jackson Square Partners.