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**DOCLANDS DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL COMES TO A CLOSE
WITH ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD
EXPOSURE**

DOCLANDS EDUCATION REACHES 2,500+ STUDENTS NATIONWIDE

**DOCLANDS DOCPITCH AWARDS \$100,000 TO
DOCUMENTARY FILMS CURRENTLY IN DEVELOPMENT**



Photo by Powderkeg Studios

San Rafael, CA – DocLands Documentary Film Festival concluded Wednesday, May 11, after four days of in-person screenings at the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center and seven days of virtual screenings on the CAFILM streaming platform. The 2022 edition of DocLands featured a robust slate of 38 feature-length and short films, from 9 countries, with over 50 filmmakers and subjects from around the globe participating in pre-recorded and in-person conversations.

“For the first time in two years we were able to invite filmmakers from all over the globe back to Northern California. What an exhilarating feeling it was to have these filmmakers in person at the Smith Rafael Film Center as part of DocLands,” said Mark Fishkin, Executive Director and Founder of the California Film Institute. “The audience response and in-person discussions around their films felt so overdue and reinforced moviegoing as a communal experience. An experience that not only entertains and serves as an educational tool but also creates a common bond, with the unique characteristic of being able to place oneself in another’s shoes.”

“Nearly every screening had an in-person conversation and considering the state of the world this seems a huge step forward - an incremental step in reinforcing the importance of theatrical film going and our culture,” Fishkin continued. “‘Dinner and a movie’ will continue to be an iconic phrase that is one example of how filmgoing will continue to give meaning to our lives.”

The 2022 DocLands Audience Choice Award went to Holly Morris for the very intimate and thought-provoking feature-length documentary ***Exposure*** which depicts human resilience and an up-close look at climate change.

Throughout the seven days, there were many highlights, including four days of in-person screenings, with live conversations at the Smith Rafael Film Center. The [US Premieres](#) of ***Scrap*** followed by a live on-stage discussion with filmmaker Stacey Tenenbaum and subject John Lopez and ***Carbon: The Unauthorised Biography*** with director Niobe Thompson; the [North American Premiere](#) of ***Everything Will Change*** with director Marten Persiel and graphic art director Thekla Priebst; the [World Premieres](#) of ***Savage Waters*** followed by an on-stage conversation with director Mikey Corker and subjects Taz Knight & Ed Smith, and ***Living Wine*** with director Lori Miller and subjects/winemakers Darek Trowbridge, Gideon Beinstock, and Megan Bell on stage at the Rafael. With audiences returning to theaters, DocLands was thrilled to be able to include live Q&As with many filmmakers and film subjects including ***The Territory*** director Alex Pritz; ***A Woman on the Outside*** directors Lisa Riordan Seville & Zara Katz, with film subject Kristal Bush; ***Crows are White*** filmmaker Ahsen Nadeem; ***Exposing Muybridge*** director Marc Shaffer with producer Serginho Roosblad; ***Navalny*** director Daniel Roher with producer Melanie Miller; ***Fire of Love*** director Sara Dosa; ***The Long Breakup*** director Katya Soldak; and ***The Sound of Us*** director Chris Gero with a musical performance by film subject Mercy Bell, to name just a few. Also included in the Festival program were three previous DocPitch finalists, ***Scrap*** (2018), directed by Canadian Stacey Tenenbaum; ***The Sanctity of Space*** (2018), directed by Renan Ozturk and Freddie Wilkinson; and ***The Thief Collector*** (2019, pitched as “The Heist”), directed by Allison Otto.

The CFI Education team excitedly welcomed school groups back to the second annual DocLands Education program, featuring in-person screenings and filmmaker and film subject conversations at the Smith Rafael Film Center in San Rafael. DocLands Education also continued its virtual program offering online screenings nationwide, paired with pre-recorded filmmaker conversations, discussion guides, lesson plans, and film analysis toolkits to help integrate the films into classroom curriculum. With students back in the classroom, DocLands Education also included the popular Filmmakers Go to School program, taking festival filmmakers out into the community to Bay Area schools to meet with students to show and discuss their films and the art and craft of filmmaking.

“We were overjoyed to welcome hundreds of students back to the theater for the first time since the fall of 2019, and to see young people directly engaging with films and filmmakers once again—building their cultural awareness and asking insightful questions on everything from education policy to climate justice, female empowerment, falconry, and wild cats,” said Joanne Parsont, CFI Director of Education. “At the same time, some of our festival guests got to visit local schools to engage with students in their classrooms and auditoriums, while nearly 2,000 more students nationwide took advantage of our online screenings. Whether live or virtual, it was a great sophomore year for DocLands Education!”

DocLands 2022 closed with the live online announcement of four juried industry awards totaling \$55,000 and a \$45,000 Audience Award. The awards were distributed Wednesday morning, May 11, 2022, through the CFI fundraising initiative **DocPitch**, designed to aid filmmakers in completing their feature documentary film projects currently in production/development, with support from the Nancy P. & Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation, Project No. 9, and Resonance Philanthropies.



DocPitch Award Recipients

- \$45,000** Audience Award ***Chewed Gum***, director Alana Maiello
- \$40,000** Industry Award ***Standing Above the Clouds***, director Jalena Keane-Lee
- \$5,000** Industry Award ***Brief Tender Light***, director Arthur Musah
- \$5,000** Industry Award ***Brigidy Bram***, directors Kareem Mortimer, Laura Gamse
- \$5,000** Industry Award ***SheChange***, director Sachi Cunningham

“It’s not often there’s something positive to say about the pandemic, but it was certainly the driving force behind taking DocPitch into a virtual space for the first time in 2020. And although it’s thrilling for the projects to be pitched in-person in the theatre, a virtual DocPitch is here to stay because in cyberspace there is no ‘home team’ and none of the filmmakers are required to have the ability to travel physically or financially,” commented Joni Cooper, DocLands Director of Programming. “Taking DocPitch online has rendered both pitching and voting more accessible and equitable in terms of the Audience Award - for filmmakers, their teams, and the myriad of their supporters. It also allows the film projects to be discovered by so many more potential advocates.”

After the audience votes were carefully verified and tallied, we’re delighted to announce that the \$45,000 Audience Award went to director Alana Maiello for her explosive project ***Chewed Gum***.

“The Chewed Gum team is incredibly grateful, humbled, and honored by the incredible outpouring of support our film received with DocPitch at DocLands!” commented Alana Maiello, Director *Chewed Gum*. “This experience empowered our filmmaking team to connect with our audience all around the world, for the very first time. DocPitch was the first time we ever made our film public, and the momentum, support, and hundreds of survivors and supporters who reached out to us during this process has entirely changed the course of our film,” Maiello continued. “Our team is filled with gratitude to Joni Cooper, to DocLands and the California Film Institute, to the incredible filmmakers in our DocPitch cohort, and to the survivors and supporters who reached out to share their stories and experiences during the voting. We are thrilled to be connecting with the audience for Chewed Gum, excited to continue the momentum towards finishing and releasing our film. Joni made that possible.”

An industry jury comprised of Paola Mottura of the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Fund, Jeffrey Winter of The Film Collaborative, and Chi-hui Yang of Ford Foundation presented the \$40,000 Industry Award to director Jalena Keane-Lee for her intergenerational project ***Standing Above the Clouds***. The remaining three finalists each receive \$5,000, with all funds going toward the continued development and production of the films.

The DocPitch Industry Jury would like to congratulate all the filmmakers for presenting us with a diverse and ambitious set of projects that reflect the true spirit of exploration of provocative subjects, as well as particular emphasis on creating new visual language to translate themes into cinematic art.

“We are so grateful and appreciative of this platform and the exposure and support our project has received through it!” said the *Standing Above the Clouds* filmmakers, Jalena Keane-Lee, director/producer, Amber Espinosa-Jones, producer, and Erin Lau, producer. The statement from the jury made our entire week. We can't wait to share our film and show the power of the women protecting Mauna Kea. We dedicate this to all of the water protectors across the world.”

The jury was moved by this beautiful and inspiring collective pitch. We were impressed by how each member of the core creative team effectively highlighted not only the importance of the issues in question, characters, storyline, and artistic approach; but also the core values of the team, from self-care to community care, stressing how these in fact reflect the core values of the indigenous movement itself.

We were drawn to the nuanced exploration of intergenerational activism, delving into what it means to stand for your land, culture, and identity in modern day Hawai'i and beyond. We were excited to hear how their cinematic language combines intimacy with spaciousness reflecting how the personal is political and vice-versa—and elegantly braids complex themes of family, land stewardship, and indigenous traditions together into a powerful, unified story that will move and mobilize audiences across the country and around the globe.

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.

Supporters

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.