

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**\$100,000 TO BE AWARDED**  
TO DOCUMENTARY FILM PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT

**DOCPITCH @ DOCLANDS**

**CAFILM'S VIRTUAL DOCPITCH FINALISTS ANNOUNCED**

DOCPITCH IS PART OF THE DOCLANDS DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL

SAN RAFAEL, CA (March 15, 2023) – After a successful and highly enthusiastic response from filmmakers and audience members, the California Film Institute's virtual documentary pitching forum DocPitch is returning for its seventh year to DocLands Documentary Film Festival (May 10-14, 2023); announced Mark Fishkin, Founder of the internationally known Mill Valley Film Festival and Executive Director/Founder of the California Film Institute (CAFILM). With support from the Nancy P. & Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation, and Resonance Philanthropies DocPitch 2023 will award five independent documentary filmmakers cash awards totaling **\$100,000** to aid in the completion of their feature documentary film projects currently in production/development.

- What: **2023 DocPitch Fundraising Forum**
- Voting Opens: **Thursday, April 27, 2023**
- Time: **10:00 AM (PT)**
- Audience Voting Window: **April 27 @ 10:00 AM (PT) – Thursday, May 11 @ 11:59 PM (PT)**
- Awards Announced: **Sunday, May 14**
- Awards: **\$45,000 Audience Award**  
**\$40,000 Jury Award**  
**\$5,000 Award to each of the remaining three films**

The DocPitch selection committee comprised Julie Campfield, Managing Director, ROCO Films Digital; Joni Cooper, Director of Programming, DocLands; Joanne Feinberg, Sr. Programmer, DocLands/Cinema Eye Honors Feature Films Nominating Committee; Keisha Knight, Director, IDA Funds & Enterprise Program, International Documentary Association; Michelle Svenson, Programmer DocLands/Brown Girls Doc Mafia; and Don Young, Director of Programs, Center for Asian American Media (CAAM), have chosen the following five feature-film projects currently in early-to-late stages of completion to participate in DocPitch 2023.



### **COACH EMILY**

**Pitching:** Director Pallavi Somusetty, Producer Debra A. Wilson

*Coach Emily* (w.t.) is a feature documentary that follows Emily Taylor, an Oakland-based Black and queer rock climbing coach, as she battles systemic racism in her professional and personal life. Through her Brown Girls Climbing program, Emily trains young girls of color, including her own daughter, as they resist discrimination in the climbing world and work to define themselves in the outdoors.

### **GET YOUR 10s**

**Pitching:** Directors/Producers Rashaad Newsome and Johnny Symons

A Black queer artist collaborates with global vogue dancers and cutting-edge technologists to transform a historic military building into a space for renewal, innovation, and celebration.

### **MAI AMERICAN**

**Pitching:** Director Kevin Truong

A 70-year-old Vietnamese American refugee living in Oregon writes down her life story, indelibly shaped by the War in Vietnam. As she shares what she has written with her filmmaker son, they begin separate but parallel journeys confronting the traumas of their past and the emotional divide in their present.

### **ORQUÍDEA**

**Pitching:** Writer/Director Emily Cohen Ibañez, Producer Sara Dosa

*Orquídea* is a kaleidoscopic tale of the political and ecological life of orchids in Colombia. The story is told through people who care for orchids in the jungle and the orchid's perspective itself.

### **REMAINING NATIVE**

**Pitching:** Director Paige Bethmann

Ku Stevens dreams of becoming an elite runner, but he struggles to balance the sport's glorified individualism and the values of interconnectedness he was raised with on the reservation. When thousands of Native children's remains are discovered, Ku reckons with his family's dark past while running towards his future.

The filmmaker pitches will be available to view by audiences globally on Thursday, April 27 at 10:00 AM (PT). Voting for the Audience Award will be open through Thursday, May 11 at 11:59 PM (PT). Four Industry Awards and one Audience Award will be announced Sunday, May 14.

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.

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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, networking and pitching events, and engaged conversations, DocLands aims to bring diverse communities together for dialogue and to build an active, inclusive, and fully supportive community around documentary film and is 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 (CAFILM) is a non-profit organization dedicated to celebrating and promoting film and media arts through the presentation of the internationally acclaimed Mill Valley Film Festival, DocLands Documentary Film Festival, and the ongoing cultivation of the next generation of filmmakers and film lovers through CAFILM Education. CAFILM Education features a broad range of activities, including screenings, Q&A sessions, seminars with top international & local filmmakers and industry professionals, and a rich program of classes and hands-on workshops. Additionally, CAFILM acts as a year-round film-centric town hall with a diverse calendar of programming at the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, one of the leading non-profit independent theatres in the country. The art of storytelling through film enables CAFILM to touch 275,000 guests throughout the year with films and events that entertain and address a breadth of social, environmental, and cultural issues. CAFILM is also the majority owner of the Sequoia Theater in Mill Valley, California. CAFILM relies on the generosity of its community to sustain these core programs; the invaluable support of our sponsors, foundations, individual donors, and members ensures our continued success. For more information, visit [cafilm.org](http://cafilm.org).

### **Supporters | DocLands**

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, 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, and Resonance Philanthropies.

The California Film Institute and the DocLands Documentary Film Festival are located in Marin County, California, on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary homelands of the Coast Miwok, Pomo, and Wappo peoples. This includes the Southern Pomo and Graton Rancheria Tribes. These tribes were removed or displaced from their lands. We recognize this history and the harm to present-day Coast Miwok, Pomo, and Wappo peoples and to their ancestors. The California Film Institute commits to moving forward from a place of authenticity and working with present-day tribes to elevate their stories, history, and present-day legacy through film.

### **Supporters | DocPitch**

CAFILM is proud to acknowledge the Nancy P. & Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation and Resonance Philanthropies for their generous support of DocPitch.

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