

Media Release

Event: 2024 DOXA Documentary Film Festival

Dates: May 2-12, 2024

Venues: in theatres (SFU Goldcorp Centre, VIFF Centre, The Cinematheque, The Vancouver Playhouse)

Admission: Generous ticket: \$18; General Admission ticket: \$16; Student/Seniors ticket: \$2 discount from general admission; Accessible ticket: \$4 discount from general admission; Special Presentations: \$19; 5 Ticket Pack: \$70; 10 Ticket Pack: \$120; Festival pass (excluding Industry program): \$195; Festival + Industry pass: \$245; Industry ticket: Sliding scale starting at \$13

Tickets: www.doxafestival.ca **Festival Box Office:** support@doxafestival.ca

For information: 604.646.3200 **Media contact:** Marnie Wilson 604.836.2409 or mwilson@theartsbiz.com

DOXA Documentary Film Festival: Local and Canadian Talent to Watch

Vancouver, BC / Wednesday, April 10, 2024 – DOXA is pleased to showcase a diverse and compelling selection of local and Canadian talent at this year's festival. Of particular note is our Opening presentation of Shannon Walsh's ***Adrienne & the Castle***; inventive and whimsical, *Adrienne & the Castle* is the story of Alan St-Georges and the ornate castle he built by hand with his beloved late wife Adrienne, which now stands as a "temple" to their transcendent love. Director Shannon Walsh (*The Gig is Up*, *Illusions of Control*) is an award-winning filmmaker, producer and writer who has created an acclaimed body of documentary work, examining such topics as labour rights, grief and climate change. Walsh will be speaking about her work as part of the DOXA Industry program on Monday, May 6th in an event co-presented by the Directors Guild of Canada and DOC Northwest, and celebrating the launch of her new book, *The Documentary Filmmaker's Intuition*.

As mentioned in last week's release, all Special Presentations at this year's festival are local and/or Canadian works. DOXA is proud to showcase the World Premiere of ***nanekawâsis***, the latest film from DOXA alum Conor McNally. George Littlechild, a celebrated and beloved nêhiyaw (Cree) artist, shares his wisdom, perspectives on social issues and his own personal history in this charming and affecting portrait of an artist's life and work. This Mid-week Gala screening will take place at VIFF Centre on Wednesday, May 8th. As well, DOXA's Closing Presentation gives pride of place not only to Canadian directors but also to a Canadian music legend. Michael Mabbott and Lucah Rosenberg-Lee's ***Any Other Way: The Jackie Shane Story*** is a mesmerizing journey from the R&B of 1950s Nashville to the nightlife of Toronto in the '60s that follows trailblazing transgender performer Jackie Shane, as she fearlessly navigates music and life. The film will screen on Saturday, May 11th at SFU's Djavad Mowafaghian Cinema, following our Closing Awards Ceremony.

Local shorts take a front seat this year, and deliver a wealth of both thematic and formal approaches. Bitu Joudaki's ***Persian Pride***, which takes its name from the Iranian youth gang active in North Vancouver during the early '90s, touches on threads of community, stereotypes and history and recalls the hybrid docu-fiction work of Iranian directors like Abbas Kiarostami and Jafar Panahi. William Brown's ***Cake and Death*** takes a critical look at the role of cake in movies, especially as seen through the lens of the

historically racialized global sugar trade. **As Grey Falls**, from local director Christopher Pavsek, is a cine poem contemplating our relationship to migratory birdlife in the Fraser River delta. Screening together in a micro program are Sandra Ignagni's **Ottu** and Claire Sanford's **Twig**, which explore the ethereal subjects of wind and sand, respectively, and our relationship to these natural elements.

Other Canadian shorts to seek out are: Nour Ouayda's **The Secret Garden**, which follows the strange and mysterious events that start to take place after the sudden appearance of new plant life throughout an unnamed city; Eisha Marjara's **Am I the skinniest person you've ever seen?**, a vulnerable retelling of the director's youth during which she dealt with anorexia; **Here and There** (Chadi Bennani), which follows friends Adam, Ana and Dahlia as they seek a deeper connection with the cultural heritage of their immigrant families; **Holiday Native Land** (Nicolas Renaud and Brian Virostek), a juxtaposition of promotional tourism films of the mid-20th century and a more accurate look at the violence inflicted on the environment and Indigenous peoples; **Let The Red Moon Burn** (Ralitsa Doncheva), which preserves on 16 mm hand-processed film the ancient Bulgarian ritual of fire dancing; Peter Hošták's **Cold and Dark**, which follows a group of loggers from a Slovakian mountain village as they harvest firewood with their draft horse, Kubo; **This Line Connects the Void** (Tram Nghiem), which uses a nonlinear approach to storytelling to explore the complexities of a familial death; Moïa Jobin-Paré's **Families' Albums**, wherein the director uses her signature animation technique to sift through layers of memory; **Don't Let the Sun Catch You Crying** (Natalie Baird and Toby Gillies), the story of an 88-year-old Hungarian-Canadian woman who creates art to help her process grief; and several others.

West Coast and Western-Canadian stories are festival highlights this year, and are thematically wide-ranging and resonant. Directors Jennifer Wickham, Brenda Michell and Michael Toledano chronicle the fight of the Witsuwit'en peoples against Coastal GasLink in **Yintah**; filmed over 10 years, this is a stirring portrait of resistance against government and corporate agencies who collude to build a pipeline through sacred territory. In **Between Pictures: The Lens of Tamio Wakayama**, local artist Cindy Mochizuki explores the life and images of the late Japanese-Canadian photographer Tamio Wakayama, whose camera immortalized simple acts of courage and indomitable spirits in Vancouver and beyond. Rachel Epstein's **The Anarchist Lunch** follows a group of ardent leftists, many of whom are over 70 years old, who for the past 35 years have met weekly in the same Chinese restaurant in Vancouver to discuss the important topics of the moment. In **Tea Creek** (Ryan Dickie), Indigenous entrepreneur Jacob Beaton sets out to turn his family farm into a center for Indigenous food sovereignty and healing. In **The Originals** (Niall Patrick McNeil and Mike McKinlay), artist and filmmaker Niall McNeil ventures back to his hometown to visit the performers and people at the heart of BC's legendary Caravan Farm Theatre, an outdoor theatre company established in 1978. Finally, Julina Brave NoiseCat and Emily Kassie's **Sugarcane** is an investigation into abuse and missing children at St. Joseph's Mission residential school near Williams Lake, which ignites a reckoning on the nearby Sugarcane Reserve.

A slate of outstanding Canadian features will screen at DOXA 2024: Pablo Alvarez-Mesa's **La Laguna del Soldado** immerses us in ethereal realms of mist and the fevered verses of Simón Bolívar, traversing Colombia's social and political geography to eerie and contemplative effect. Alvarez-Mesa's work in documentary filmmaking as an editor, cinematographer and director will be explored in a **Tuesday, May**

7th industry event co-presented with Canadian Cinema Editors. Peter Mettler's ***While the Green Grass Grows*** consists of parts one and six of a seven-part cinematic diary that revolves around the consequences of Mettler's parents' death and the question of how to continue—on a personal and global level. Neil Diamond and Catherine Bainbridge's ***Red Fever*** offers a funny, intriguing and provocative look into the enduring fascination with all things "native", with Cree photographer and filmmaker Neil Diamond leading the way across fashion, sports, politics and the environment. Mustafa Uzuner's ***La Cancha*** is a snapshot of a popular community basketball court in Montreal and the locals who gather there, showcasing camaraderie and conversations both unaffected and intimate. Uzuner will also give a talk on international sales and distribution on Monday, May 6th.

Brian M. Cassidy and Melanie Shatzky's immersive and intimate portrait film, ***A Man Imagined***, follows 67-year-old Lloyd, a man living with schizophrenia who has survived unhoused for decades, as he invites us into a hallucinatory world saturated with dreams and visions. In ***Plastic People***, filmmakers Ben Addelman and Ziya Tong investigate the growing threat of microplastics on human health, venturing far beyond the typical issues of plastic and exploring the human drama of our physiological future. ***Singing Back the Buffalo***, the latest from DOXA alum Tasha Hubbard, is an epic reimagining of North America through the lens of buffalo consciousness and a potent dream of what is within our grasp. In ***The Movie Man*** (Matt Finlin), an eccentric entrepreneur looks back on his life's work—owning and operating an idiosyncratic multiplex in the forest of Northern Ontario. Julian Elie's ***La Guardia Blanca*** explores the mutually beneficial relationship between big corporations, the government, and cartels that is killing off more and more land defenders in Mexico. Lisa Jackson's stunning portrait film ***Wilfred Buck*** follows its titular figure, Cree elder and ceremonial leader Wilfred Buck, who has dedicated most of his life to the reclamation of Indigenous astronomy. Oksana Karpovych's ***Intercepted*** is both a document of war crimes and a cinematic portrait of a country's resilience, combining images of war-torn Ukraine and sounds of Russian soldiers calling home to haunting and poetic effect. Finally, Montreal-based Tunisian director Hejer Charf turns to 50 people for moving images and sounds, crafting a layered video inventory of two trying years in ***Années en parenthèses 2020-2022 (Years in Brackets 2020-2022)***.

Many Canadian and local filmmakers will be **in attendance at their screenings** during festival time; for details on which screenings will feature a live filmmaker Q&A, **please visit the DOXA website**.

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Committed to cultivating curiosity and critical thought, DOXA 2024 delivers some of the very best in contemporary documentary cinema over 11 days. DOXA Documentary Film Festival runs May 2-12, 2024, offering an exceptional selection of films, filmmaker Q+A's and Industry events. Select screenings will include live and pre-recorded filmmaker Q+As and extended discussions. Festival tickets and passes will be available starting Wednesday, April 3rd; for details, check www.doxafestival.ca. For further information, call the DOXA office at 604.646.3200.

DOXA
DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL

MAY 2-12 2024

DOXAFESTIVAL.CA

DOXA is presented by The Documentary Media society, a Vancouver-based non-profit, charitable society. DOXA is presented on unceded xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Selííwítlh (Tseil-Waututh) territory.

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