

## DOC NYC ANNOUNCES AWARDS FOR SEVENTH ANNUAL FESTIVAL

**Features *The Islands and the Whales* and *Off the Rails*  
and Short *Bedside Manner* Win Grand Jury Prizes;  
*Death By a Thousand Cuts* Wins Audience Award**

NEW YORK, Nov. 17, 2016 – On the evening of its final day of programming, **DOC NYC** announced its 2016 award-winners. Concluding its seventh edition, the festival ran from November 10-17 at IFC Center, SVA Theatre and the Cinapolis Chelsea, and featured 111 feature-length documentaries including 19 world premieres, 19 U.S. premieres and 54 New York City premieres, along with 102 short films and 39 panels and masterclasses in the DOC NYC PRO professional development forum.

“DOC NYC started two days after the election and found audiences grateful to take inspiration from films representing multiple perspectives,” said festival artistic director Thom Powers. “The eight days of DOC NYC PRO panels enabled documentary professionals to process the opportunities and challenges ahead. In this time of uncertainty, we’ve never felt more invigorated about the vital role documentary plays in making sense of the world.”

Three juries selected films from each of the festival’s **Viewfinders**, **Metropolis** and **Shorts** sections to recognize for their outstanding achievements in form and content. Festival audiences voted for the DOC NYC **Audience Award**, and a panel of industry professionals voted to select the winner of this year’s new DOC NYC PRO **Pitch Perfect Award**.

**Viewfinders Competition:** The jury selected from among nine films in this section, chosen by the programmers for their distinct directorial visions.

**Grand Jury Prize Winner:** *The Islands and the Whales*, directed by Mike Day, looks at the inhabitants of a remote archipelago who may be forced to abandon their ancient ways after clamor from international animal rights activists.

Jurors’ statement: “The nine films of the Viewfinders competition presented the jury with a rewarding range of artistic and political perspectives, but one film stood out for its potent balance of artistry and message. For its intimate portrait of a global issue, the Viewfinders Competition Winner is *The Islands and the Whales*, directed by Mike Day.”

**Special Mention:** *The Road*, directed by Zhang Zanbo, is an in-depth look at the corruption-plagued construction of a massive highway through a rural Chinese village.

Jurors' statement: "For its astute portrait of the uniquely modern intersection of tradition and progress in its story of rural communities under pressure from a corrupt bureaucracy, the jury awards a Special Mention to *The Road*, directed by Zhang Zanbo."

Jurors: Charlotte Cook, Co-Creator & Executive Producer, Field of Vision; Cara Cusumano, Director of Programming, Tribeca Film Festival; Susan R. Delvalle, President & Executive Director, Creative Capital.

Films featured in the Viewfinders section: *The Age of Consequences*, dir. Jared P. Scott; *The Beekeeper and His Son*, dir. Diedie Weng; *Death By a Thousand Cuts*, dirs. Jake Kheel and Juan Mejia Botero; *Forever Pure*, dir. Maya Zinshtein; *Girl Unbound: The War to Be Her*, dir. Erin Heidenreich; *The Islands and the Whales*, dir. Mike Day; *The Lure*, dir. Tomas Leach; *The Nine*, dir. Katy Grannan; *The Road*, dir. Zhang Zanbo.

**Metropolis Competition:** The jury selected from among nine films in this section, which showcases films that exemplify the diverse range of stories in New York City.

**Grand Jury Prize Winner:** *Off the Rails*, directed by Adam Irving, is the stranger-than-fiction story of serial MTA imposter Darius McCollum, who has been jailed more than 30 times for illegally driving buses and conducting subway trains.

Jurors' statement: "For its imaginative portrait of an indelible New York character, a man for whom the MTA is both a source of love and adversity, the Metropolis Competition winner is *Off the Rails*, directed by Adam Irving."

**Special Mention:** *Winter at Westbeth*, directed by Rohan Spong, a spotlight on three longtime residents of the West Village's Westbeth Artists Housing.

Jurors' statement: "For its poetic capturing of the quintessential New York artist experience, the jury awards a Special Mention to *Winter at Westbeth*, directed by Rohan Spong."

**Special Mention:** *The Incomparable Rose Hartman*, directed by Otis Mass, is a portrait of the photographer and fixture of the NYC nightlife and fashion scenes, who has shot some of the most indelible images of pop culture of the past 40 years.

Jurors' statement: "For its original look at one of New York City's most unique personalities, the DOC NYC Metropolis jury awards a Special Mention to Otis Mass' *The Incomparable Rose Hartman*."

Jurors: Kate Erbland, Film Editor, IndieWire; Leslie Fields-Cruz, Executive Director, National Black Programming Consortium; Scott Macaulay, Editor-in-Chief, Filmmaker magazine, Producer, Forensic Films.

Films featured in the Metropolis section: *All the Rage*, dirs. Michael Galinsky, Suki Hawley, David Beilinson; *Borderline*, dir. Rebbie Ratner; *The Incomparable Rose Hartman*, dir. Otis Mass; *Off the Rails*, dir. Adam Irving; *Rikers*, prods. Marc Levin, Mark Benjamin, Rolake Bamgbose; *Scott's Pizza Tours*, dirs. Shawn Willis, Ryan Jones; *Thy Father's Chair*, dirs. Antonio Tibaldi, Alex Lora; *Winter at Westbeth*, dir. Rohan Spong; *Woman on Fire*, dir. Julie Sokolow.

The winner of the Grand Jury Prize in the Viewfinders competition will receive a one-week theatrical, awards-qualifying run at the IFC Center in 2017. Both the Viewfinders and the Metropolis Grand Jury Prize winners also receive a deliverables package provided by Technicolor-PostWorks New York.

**Shorts Competition:** All short films featured in the festival aside from the specially curated New York Times Op-Docs and FUSION programs and the DOC NYC U section were eligible for this jury prize.

**Grand Jury Prize Winner: *Beside Manner***, directed by Corinne Botz, explores empathy and medical relationships through the practice of using medical actors to train student doctors.

Jurors' statement: "For its unique subject matter and haunting, inventive, female-centric storytelling, the Shorts Competition Winner is *Beside Manner*, directed by Corinne Botz."

**Special Mention: *Bad Dog: A Penitentiary Story***, directed by Sean McCoy, is about a black Labrador retriever named Pep, who in 1924 was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison at Philadelphia's Eastern State Penitentiary.

Jurors' statement: "For being continually surprising, ambitious and deliciously strange, the jury gives a Special Mention to *Bad Dog: A Penitentiary Story*, directed by Sean McCoy."

Jurors: Reva Goldberg, Head of Communications, Cinereach; Aaron Hillis, Manager of Film & Creative Outreach, Indiegogo; Gabi Madsen, Production Manager, Film Society of Lincoln Center/New York Film Festival.

The winning short film qualifies for consideration in the Documentary Short Subject category of the Annual Academy Awards® without the standard theatrical run, provided the film otherwise complies with the Academy rules. The filmmaker also receives a top of the line camera and accessories generously provided by festival partner SONY.

**Audience Award:** Features from both competitive sections were eligible for this award, based on audience balloting at the primary screening of each film.

**Winner: *Death by a Thousand Cuts***, directed by Jake Kheel and Juan Mejia Botero, chronicling the story of a brutal murder in Haiti, which exposes long-simmering tensions that boil over into xenophobia and racism.

The winner of the DOC NYC Audience Award will receive a top of the line camera and accessories generously provided by festival partner SONY.

**DOC NYC PRO Pitch Perfect Award:** A new award this year at DOC NYC recognizing the winner of our Pitch Perfect Day at DOC NYC PRO. Six filmmaking teams pitched their projects to panels of industry professionals, who selected the winner.

**Winner: *Untitled Women Leaders of the First Intifada Project***, directed by Julia Bacha, looks at a clandestine network of Palestinian women who emerged in 1988 to lead a vibrant nonviolent social movement that put the Palestinian people on the map.

The winner of the Pitch Perfect Award will receive a top of the line camera and accessories generously provided by festival partner SONY.

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DOC NYC is produced by **IFC Center**, a division of AMC Networks.

**Complete DOC NYC program information can be found at: [www.docnyc.net](http://www.docnyc.net)**

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