



DOC NYC ANNOUNCES JURY AWARDS FOR 2023

**ONLINE SCREENINGS CONTINUE THROUGH NOVEMBER 26 ACROSS
THE U.S.**

***MEDIHA* AWARDED U.S. COMPETITION GRAND JURY PRIZE;
TOTAL TRUST RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION GRAND JURY PRIZE**

***LUCHA: A WRESTLING TALE* TAKES METROPOLIS GRAND JURY PRIZE;
ZINZINDURRUNKARRATZ WINS KALEIDOSCOPE GRAND JURY PRIZE**

***WHILE WE WATCHED* HONORED WITH TWO AWARDS IN FESTIVAL'S
SHORT LIST: FEATURES SECTION; *THE MOTHER OF ALL LIES*,
GOING TO MARS: THE NIKKI GIOVANNI PROJECT AND *THE
ETERNAL MEMORY* ALSO AWARDED**

***MOUNTAIN MAN* WINS SHORTS JURY AWARD**

***AYENDA* TAKES SHORT LIST: SHORTS DIRECTING PRIZE**

***36 SECONDS: PORTRAIT OF A HATE CRIME* WINS \$20,000 GRANT FROM
SUBJECT MATTER; *BREAKING SILENCE* WINS \$10,000 PRIZE + ODYSSEY
IMPACT® NATIONAL IMPACT CAMPAIGN IN #MYJUSTICE FILM AWARD
COMPETITION**

NEW YORK, November 15, 2023 – DOC NYC, America's largest documentary festival, revealed the 2023 award winners for its juried U.S. Competition, International Competition, Metropolis, Kaleidoscope, Shorts, Short List: Features, and Short List: Shorts sections, as well as the #MyJustice Film Award (complete list below). The festival's Audience Award winner will be announced in the coming days.

The awards announcement comes on the eve of the closing night of the festival's hybrid 14th edition. DOC NYC's online screenings run through November 26, with some 90 features available to stream across the United States, including eight of the festival's award-winners and more than 100 of the festival's short films, including all six shorts award-winners. Many of the award winners also have in-person screenings in the final

two days of the festival. For a full schedule of available films, see www.docnyc.net. Ticket and pass information is below.

For DOC NYC's competitive sections, five juries selected films from the festival's **U.S. Competition**, **International Competition**, and **Kaleidoscope** sections, as well as its long-running **Metropolis** and **Shorts** lineups, to recognize for their outstanding achievements in form and content. The **Short List: Features** program—a selection of nonfiction films that the festival's programming team considers to be among the year's strongest contenders for Oscars and other awards—vied for awards in five categories: **Directing**, **Producing**, **Cinematography**, **Editing**, and **Score**, with a **Directing** prize also awarded in the **Short List: Shorts** section. The Short List awards were voted on by two juries of filmmaker peers. New for 2023, the **DOC NYC U** film student screenings were restyled as a competition.

JURIED AWARDS, FEATURE FILMS

U.S. Competition: The jury selected from among 10 new American nonfiction films in this section.

Grand Jury Prize: *Mediha*, directed by Hasan Oswald and produced by Hasan Oswald, Annelise Mecca, Fahrinisa Campana, Alexander Spiess, and Stephen Nemeth. (World Premiere)

Jurors' statement: "*Mediha* is a person and a film that you will think about long after it ends. Hasan Oswald's portrait of *Mediha*, one of many women and children survivors of the ISIS orchestrated genocide against the Yazidis, is a truly collaborative project in which *Mediha* tells her own harrowing story, and finds her own activist voice in the process. The film shines a light on the trauma of war and the difficult struggle to overcome it, while exploring the psychological complications of captivity of these women and children. This extremely careful and nuanced portrait of the experience of different generations of women resonated deeply with us. We are proud to give the U.S. Competition Grand Jury Prize to *Mediha*, and we sincerely congratulate the talent and courage of the team in bringing this story to the world."

Available online through November 26.

Special Mention: *Happy Campers*, directed/produced by Amy Nicholson. (World Premiere)

Jurors' statement: "Amy Nicholson's *Happy Campers* is a truly cinematic film with a strong directorial sensibility and a genuine auteur's stamp that celebrates, mourns, and memorializes a beloved working-class seaside refuge about to undergo redevelopment. The film beautifully captures the life, spirit, and charm

of the Inlet View Campground. The U.S. Jury chose it for special mention as the film is a genuine delight to watch in today's turbulent times."

Available online through November 26.

Jurors: Violet du Feng (Emmy-winning filmmaker), Meredith Kaulfers (EVP of Current Production, Imagine Documentaries), David Winn (Head of the News & Documentary Emmy Awards)

Films featured in the U.S. Competition section: *36 Seconds: Portrait of a Hate Crime*, *The Cowboy and the Queen*, *Happy Campers*, *How to Come Alive With Norman Mailer*, *Mediha*, *Obsessed With Light*, *The Riot Report*, *Shaken*, *Taking Venice*, and *Tomorrow, Tomorrow, Tomorrow*.

International Competition: The jury selected from among 10 new international productions in this section.

Grand Jury Prize: *Total Trust*, directed by Jialing Zhang, produced by Knut Jäger, Michael Grotenhoff, Saskia Kress, Jialing Zhang. (U.S. Premiere)

Jurors' statement: "Courageously told with spectacular access, *Total Trust* speaks to power in its story of the stifling effect that Chinese government surveillance has on its citizens—while also highlighting the voices of resistance. Though the film provides a wealth of new insight into the regime's policies, the judges were even more captivated by its use of character and emotionally rich scenes to reveal the human consequences of surveillance society. They commended its delicate balancing of the personal and political, notably contrasted in the claustrophobic sense conveyed in the small spaces occupied by its characters and wide shots capturing the massive spectacle of state displays. This is a film that not only explores government's monitoring as an issue, it skillfully demonstrates its repercussions, particularly on the children who will inherit its legacy. Citing its bravery and artistry, the judges bestow *Total Trust* with this year's International Jury Award."

Available online through November 26.

Special Mention: *Al Djanat - The Original Paradise*, directed by Chloé Aïcha Boro, produced by Frédéric Féraud, Aïcha Boro, and Faissol Gnonlonfin. (U.S. Premiere)

Jurors' statement: "Beautifully crafted and edited, *Al Djanat – The Original Paradise*, follows filmmaker Chloé Aïcha Boro as she returns to her homeland, Burkina Faso, after the death of her uncle. The judges praised Boro's engaging and seamless tracing of conflicts—family, political and philosophical—in a story that's both specific and personal yet deeply universal."

Available online through November 26.

Jurors: Michael Graversen (filmmaker), Ruchi Mital (producer and founder of Solani Media), David Siev (filmmaker).

Films featured in the International Competition section: *Al Djanat - The Original Paradise*, *The Caravan*, *Dalton's Dream*, *Dancing On The Edge Of A Volcano*, *The Dmitriev Affair*, *The Home Game*, *Le Spectre de Boko Haram*, *Neirud*, *Someone Lives Here*, and *Total Trust*.

Metropolis: The jury selected from among eight films in this section, which is dedicated to stories about New Yorkers and New York City.

Grand Jury Prize: *Lucha: A Wrestling Tale*, directed/produced by Marco Ricci. (World Premiere)

Jurors' statement: "The story of four members of the Taft High School women's wrestling team, the Bronx-set *Lucha: A Wrestling Tale* landed the Metropolis Award for its compelling characters, sense of community, and intimate, but not imposing, approach to the verite style. The judges were especially impressed with the way the film doesn't shy from the difficult realities faced by the young women, who are allowed to struggle and show their flaws – making them more powerful. Director Marco Rizzi follows the story over the course of three years, which allows us to witness the characters' growth and change, but we never sense intrusiveness, as the film instead bravely lets its moments play out, even the toughest ones."

Available online through Sunday, November 26.

Jurors: Giselle "Hush" Bailey (filmmaker), Julia Solomonoff (filmmaker and chair of NYU Tisch Grad Film), Amanda Spain (VP of Longform Acquisitions, MSNBC Films).

Films featured in the Metropolis section: *Ashima*, *Confessions of a Good Samaritan*, *Diversity Plaza*, *Holding Back The Tide*, *Lucha: A Wrestling Tale*, *Nathan-ism*, *Psychedelicized: The Electric Circus Story*, and *Scooter Laforge: a life of art*.

Kaleidoscope: The jury selected from among five films in this section, which showcases essayistic and formally adventurous documentaries.

Grand Jury Prize: *Zinzindurrunkarratz*, directed/produced by Oskar Alegria. (New York Premiere)

Jurors' statement: "In Oskar Alegria's dreamlike documentary *Zinzindurrunkarratz* (a brilliant onomatopoeia word) we journey with the filmmaker through a Basque countryside that is transformed into a metaphysical landscape as he attempts to retrieve memories using an old camera. Alegria encourages us to contemplate the distinct dichotomies between past and present, rural and urban, haptic and cerebral. In this way, the film comes

together somewhere amidst Alegria's mind, the screen and our consciousness. In the process, we find ourselves in an ecstatic awareness of the way that silence, sound and image can be together and apart, always transforming. Both entrancing and poignant, *Zinzindurrunkarratz* made us ponder what constitutes a film, and closely observe our perception. For all of these reasons, we recognize it as the winning Kaleidoscope film at 2023 DOC NYC."

Available online through November 26.

Jurors: Irena Kovarova (film programmer, producer and writer); José F. Rodriguez (senior film programmer, Tribeca Festival), Lynne Sachs (filmmaker and poet).

Films featured in the Kaleidoscope section: *Grasshopper Republic*, *Megaheartz*, *The Walk*, *A Wolfpack Called Ernesto*, and *Zinzindurrunkarratz*.

SHORT LIST: FEATURES AWARDS

DOC NYC's Short List for Features puts the spotlight on 15 documentaries representing the best of the year.

Directing Award: *While We Watched*, directed by Vinay Shukla.

Jurors' statement: "This superbly crafted story of a broadcast journalist in India who is battling a tide of disinformation uses intimate cinematography to drive a gripping dramatic tension. The story is local and yet completely universal. As the film progresses we are reminded that struggles for freedom and protection of truth are occurring all around the world. For its elegant yet painfully perceptive storytelling, the Directing Award goes to *While We Watched*."

Available online through November 26.

Producing Award: *While We Watched*, produced by Vinay Shukla, Khushboo Ranka, and Luke Moody.

Jurors' statement: "This film seeks the truth behind the veil of politicized ethics, ideology and propaganda. Against the backdrop of a crumbling newsroom, we witness exceptional courage and perseverance day after day. Despite death threats and condemnation, we find a vulnerable and beautiful vision that holds both craft and story close. The Producing Award is presented to *While We Watched*."

Available online through November 26.

Editing Award: *Going to Mars: The Nikki Giovanni Project*, edited by Terra Long and Lawrence Jackman.

Jurors' statement: "To bring the life, times and work of a fearless American original to the big screen, it takes a rich, deep and wild visual language. The unfettered imagination on display in this film's editing beautifully evokes the vision of the woman at its heart. The Editing Award goes to *Going to Mars: The Nikki Giovanni Project*."

Cinematography Award: *The Mother of All Lies*, cinematography by Hatem Nechi.

Jurors' statement: "Shooting a tightly focused personal film about a family is difficult; capturing big political events in a compelling way is just as demanding. But when long-ago public crimes poison the home life of three generations, making the connection visible is a virtuoso achievement. For the evocative image-making—of faces, of memories, of re-created, revised and rebuilt history—that makes the political vividly personal, the Cinematography Award goes to *The Mother of All Lies*."

Available online through November 26.

Score Award: *The Eternal Memory*, music by Miguel Miranda and José Miguel Tobar.

Jurors' statement: "The heart-piercing and unforgettable score for *The Eternal Memory* exhibits the type of playful togetherness we imagine is at the core of all eternal romances. As we journey through this world, the score is one continuous movement and an expressive thread, crafted with intimacy and delicate respect."

Special Mention for Editing: *The Disappearance of Shere Hite*, edited by Eileen Meyer.

Jurors' statement: "This film weaves together a cinematic tapestry that is as elegant as its protagonist. The result is an immersive story that reveals the true story of a woman the patriarchy tried to erase. For its lyrical creativity, a special mention for editing is presented to *The Disappearance of Shere Hite*."

Jurors: Su Kim (producer), Mary Manhardt (editor, professor and consultant), Dawn Porter (filmmaker and founder of Trilogy Films).

SHORT FILM AWARDS

Shorts Competition: All new short films playing at the festival were eligible for the Shorts Grand Jury Prize, with the exception of DOC NYC U showcases and Short List: Shorts selections.

Grand Jury Prize: *Mountain Man*, directed/produced by Arun Bhattarai. (North American Premiere)

Jurors' statement: "The beautifully crafted, observational *Mountain Man* impressed the jury with its intimate and almost fable-like story of a glaciologist in Bhutan who regularly leaves his family behind to trek into the country's sacred mountains to measure the rapidly melting glaciers. With a subtle approach, and an inter-generational lens to this one family's tale, the jury noted how filmmaker Arun Bhattarai thoughtfully brings the audience a story about climate change and our global interconnectedness to this urgent issue."

The 2023 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).

Special Mention: *When a Rocket Sits on the Launch Pad*, directed by Bohao Liu, produced by Bohao Liu and Gene Gallerano. (NYC Premiere)

Jurors' statement: "Exquisitely shot and artistically styled, *When A Rocket Sits On The Launch Pad* earned the judges' admiration for its insightful depiction of the hurdles and challenges that Chinese culture places in front of a typical teenage girl."

Mountain Man screens online as part of the Shorts: Our Climate/Our Crisis program; When a Rocket Sits on the Launch Pad screens online as part of the Shorts: Changing Tides program; both are available through November 26.

Jurors: Aurora Brachman (director/cinematographer), Nick Canfield (filmmaker), Debra McClutchy (filmmaker and archival producer).

Short List: Shorts: DOC NYC's Short List for Shorts highlights 15 documentary shorts that the festival's programming team considers the year's leading awards contenders.

Directing Award: *Ayenda*, directed by Marie Margolius, produced by Marie Margolius and Connor Schell.

Jurors' statement: "Thrilling but never sensationalized, *Ayenda* traces the story of the members of a girls soccer team who flee their home country of Afghanistan—and the Taliban—to continue their pursuit of the sport. The judges praised the filmmaking as elegantly observed and empathetic, commending director Marie Margolius for the intimacy achieved in her interviews, as well as their cinematic execution. The danger feels imminent, and the action unspools humanely, a credit to both the artistry and directive of Margolius and her team in crafting an honest testament to the girls' bravery. "

Available online in the Shortlist Shorts: New Beginnings program, through November 26.

Jurors: Mark Becker (director, story consultant and editor), Katja Esson (filmmaker), Tyler Walk (editor).

DOC NYC U Competition. DOC NYC U features ten short documentaries from students across the five boroughs. Restyled as a competition for the first time this year, this year's program featured finalists from Brooklyn College, Columbia University, Hunter College, The New School, New York Film Academy, Pratt Institute, and the School of Visual Arts.

This year's inaugural competition was adjudicated by veteran documentary and TV series director and producer R.J. Cutler, founder of This Machine.

DOC NYC U Award: *I Told You So*, directed by Malak AlSayyad and Amaan Stewart, produced by Malak AlSayyad, Amaan Stewart, and Loren Townsley. (Columbia University)

R.J. Cutler's statement on the selection of *I Told You So* for the DOC NYC U Award: "For its deep empathy, its boldly personal yet universal honesty, and its unleashing of the power of cinema verite storytelling."

Available online in the Shorts: DOC NYC U - Portraits program, through November 26.

Special Mention: *It Smells Like Springtime*, directed/produced by Mackie Mallison. (Pratt Institute)

R.J. Cutler's statement on the special mention for *It Smells Like Springtime*: "For its poetic cinematic power, as well as its stunning use of visual and aural landscapes."

Available online in the Shorts: DOC NYC U - Rebirth program, through November 26.

Subject Matter: DOC NYC partnered with Subject Matter to present a \$20,000 grant from Subject Matter to **36 Seconds: *Portrait of a Hate Crime***, directed by Tarek Albaba, to support the film's audience outreach and impact efforts, along with a corresponding grant of \$20,000 to Our Three Winners, a nonprofit organization that is addressing the topics featured in the film. DOC NYC audience members joined Subject Matter in supporting Our Three Winners with over \$4,000 in donations at the world premiere of the film.

#MyJustice: DOC NYC partnered with Odyssey Impact® to present the #MyJustice Film Award to ***Breaking Silence***, directed by Amy Bench and Annie Silverstein, and produced by Amy Bench and Monique Walton. The award comes with a \$10,000 cash prize and an Odyssey Impact National Social Impact Campaign, and is made possible with generous support from Paramount/Content for Change Academy.

Odyssey Impact® Statement: "For a female-directed, short documentary

giving viewers, by way of a healed relationship between a deaf father and hearing daughter, a unique insight into the incarcerated deaf community and an inspiring father's quest to help others and reunite his family. The film reverberates with kindness and compassion that drive towards advocacy for the communication challenges faced by prisoners with hearing disabilities, gives hopeful opportunities for prison reform and healing for families and people carrying unresolved trauma. *Breaking Silence's* urgent and uplifting delivery earned it top prize this year for a stand out social justice film with a clear call to action to inspire change."

"Breaking Silence" is available online in the Shorts: Inside and Out program, through November 26.

TICKETS AND PASSES:

Festival tickets and passes may be purchased at docnyc.net/tickets-and-passes.

In-person Screenings:

Closing Night (*South to Black Power*) **screening:** \$30 General Public/\$25 IFC Center Members

Other festival films: \$20 General Admission/\$18 Seniors & Children/\$16 IFC Center Members, unless otherwise noted.

All screenings in the Short List: Features, Short List: Shorts, and DOC NYC U sections, as well as all Monday-Friday screenings starting before 5:00pm: \$13 General Admission/\$10 IFC Center members

Online screenings:

\$13 General Public/\$9 IFC Center Members

Passes and Ticket Packs:

Online Film Pass \$250

Grants access to all the films screening on the festival's virtual platform, November 8-26.

Online Shorts Pass \$49

Grants access to all short films screening on the festival's virtual platform, November 8-26. On sale November 1.

Five-Ticket Package for Online Screenings \$50

Ten-Ticket Package for Online Screenings \$90

A package of 5 or 10 online tickets at a special discount price.

DOC NYC PRO Day Pass \$125

Grants access to a single DOC NYC PRO day-long programming track, plus complimentary access, space permitting, to the Festival Lounge for that day, including the day's Breakfast and Happy Hour.

SPONSORS

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

To inquire about sponsor or partnership opportunities for DOC NYC, contact Executive Director Raphaela Neihausen at raphaela@docnyc.net.

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