



**NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES
SECOND ANNUAL INDUSTRY FORUM**

**FIVE WEEKLY PANELS TO TAKE PLACE APRIL 29 THROUGH MAY 27
WITH FOCUS ON DIVERSE STORYTELLING**

**NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE OF MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT ONCE AGAIN ON BOARD AS
FOUNDING PARTNER**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

NEW YORK, NY (April 8, 2021): New York International Children's Film Festival is once again bringing filmmakers, industry leaders, and artists together to share projects and discuss key issues around representation in entertainment for kids. The series will take place virtually over five Thursdays from April 29 through May 27 and is a no-fee event.

The 2021 forum will place particular emphasis on the importance of diverse representation both on and behind the camera and in all aspects of entertainment for young audiences, from development to marketing and beyond. The Festival has long been at the forefront of the call for dynamic and diverse programming for kids and families and recognizes the significant impact the content they consume can have on their understanding of the world around them.

In addition to the Festival's annual slate of short and feature films from around the world, special programs such as *Breaking the Binary*, *Celebrating Black Stories*, and *Girls' POV* have successfully amplified often underrepresented voices and stories. The Industry Forum initiative, launched in 2020, is an outgrowth of the organization's ongoing commitment to ensuring thought-provoking and intelligent stories are available to all audiences.

"We've long been aware of the necessity for young people to see themselves reflected in the media they consume and the authenticity reflected in the work of creative teams with wide-ranging backgrounds and viewpoints," said Executive Director Nina Guralnick. "After the events of the past year, we are once again proud to offer a platform for thought-provoking discussion and actionable ideas."

NYICFF 2021 Industry Forum Events

- **April 29** — Behind the Curtain: Making Career Pathways Transparent
- **May 6** — Owning Your Story: BIPOC Creators, featuring Elizabeth Ito (Netflix's *City of Ghosts*)
- **May 13** — Beyond Binary Storytelling In Kids' Media, featuring Lindz Amer (Founder and CEO, Queer Kids Creative) and Ernesto Javier Martínez (author, scholar, and award-winning filmmaker, *La Serenata*)
- **May 20** — Going Global: Diverse Storytelling in a Diasporic World, co-presented by Cinekid and featuring Eché Janga (NYICFF 2021 feature *Buladó*) and Nienke Poelsma (Head of Cinekid for Professionals)
- **May 27** — A Solid Foundation: Funding Kids' Media as a Key Investment in Inclusion, featuring Marie Jamora (director, NYICFF 2018 short *Flip the Record*, *Queen Sugar* and founder, Cinema Sala)

"The City of New York is proud to be a founding partner and current supporter of the 2021 New York International Children's Film Festival and Industry Forum," said the Commissioner of NYC Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment Anne del Castillo. "The annual festival brings

together filmmakers, industry leaders and artists to celebrate and honor outstanding work, while also raising awareness about the importance of diverse and dynamic storytelling in children's programming."

The Oscar®-qualifying film festival held its inaugural industry event in 2020 with *Toward an Inclusive Future*, a two-day forum featuring panels, presentations of new work, and speakers. Guests included Karen Rupert Toliver (Oscar®-winning producer, *Hair Love*, and SVP Creative, Sony Pictures Animation), Dice Tsutsumi (Oscar®-nominated co-director, *The Dam Keeper*, and founder of Tonko House), and a keynote address from Julie Ann Crommett (VP of Multicultural Audience Engagement at The Walt Disney Studios and Secretary and Co-Chair of the Inclusion Committee of Women in Animation).

Additional speakers and participants to be announced. To register for events and sign up for event updates, visit nyicff.org/industry

ABOUT NYICFF'S INDUSTRY FORUM

New York International Children's Film Festival launched its inaugural Industry Forum, *Toward an Inclusive Future*, in 2020. An offshoot of the Festival's mission to foster a more diverse and authentic world for kids on screen, the Industry Forum is designed to jumpstart conversations among artists, filmmakers and professionals behind the scenes. Industry veterans, executives, film students, and academics from around the world join panels and presentations to discuss how to create a more inclusive and equitable industry for children's media and entertainment. The Industry Forum is supported by founding partner NYC Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment and co-presenter Cinekid.

ABOUT NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL

New York International Children's Film Festival (NYICFF) is a year-round nonprofit arts organization dedicated to building a dynamic film culture for families and classrooms. Now in its 23rd year, NYICFF delivers impactful programming to children, students, families, educators, filmmakers and media arts professionals through its four core activities: its annual, Oscar®-qualifying NYC film festival; its city-wide media arts and literacy program, Film-Ed; national screening program NYICFF Kid Flicks, serving major regional cultural institutions, cinemas, and museums; and its Industry Forum, bringing together professionals at all stages of their careers to discuss actionable ideas that foster a more equitable and inclusive community both on screen and behind the scenes.

The 2021 Festival took place virtually from March 5-14, drawing viewers from 47 states across the country to over 100 short and feature films, sneak peeks, and filmmaker Q&As from around the world. The rich and dynamic film program—selected from over 1,500 international submissions—provided an opportunity for young audiences around the country to both connect with stories different from their own and to see themselves reflected on screen.

New York International Children's Film Festival is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, supported in part by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and funds from Humanities New York, and an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Supporters include the Japan US Friendship Commission, the Consulate General of Canada, Dutch Culture USA, the Quebec Government Office in New York, and the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment.

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