



NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL

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

THREE VIRTUAL PANELS TO TAKE PLACE IN JUNE, WITH FOCUS ON CREATING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE; NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE OF MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT ONCE AGAIN ON BOARD AS FOUNDING PARTNER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

NEW YORK, NY (May 25, 2022): New York International Children's Film Festival (NYICFF) is inviting filmmakers, industry leaders, and emerging artists to share insights and address issues around representation in kids' entertainment for its third annual industry forum, *Toward a More Inclusive Future*. The series of three free and public panels will take place virtually on June 14, 21, and 28. Panels in this year's series will place particular focus on the business of kids' media and the inherent value of engaging historically excluded voices in all aspects of the production of media for young people, from idea to audience.

Toward a More Inclusive Future launched in 2020 as an outgrowth of the organization's ongoing commitment to providing thought-provoking, intelligent stories to all audiences. Now celebrating its 25th anniversary year, NYICFF has amplified countless often underrepresented voices and stories through its annual slate of short and feature films from around the world. In addition to its regular programs, NYICFF's special programs including *Celebrating Black Voices*, *¡Hola NYICFF!*, and *Breaking the Binary* have further highlighted these voices both within the context of the Festival programming and on their own.

"We know the impact seeing yourself authentically reflected on screen can have on young people," said Executive Director Nina Guralnick. "And we know that more of those stories can be told authentically if those voices are in writers' rooms, leading productions, and even designing marketing campaigns."

"We're thrilled to see more awareness and intentionality around supporting diverse stories and creators in children's media," added Maria-Christina Villaseñor, NYICFF Programming Director. "We want to devise more onramps for emerging creators, share ways to mindfully support their ongoing development and success. With over 25 years of identifying talented filmmakers and partnering with industry producers, platforms, and educators, we're doing what we can to connect the dots with honest conversation, inspiration, and actionable ideas."

2022 Industry Forum Events

- June 14 — *Small is Mighty: Women Forging Paths in Animation*, featuring Mascha Halberstad (director of NYICFF 2022 feature *OINK*), Marleen Slot (producer, Viking Film), and Marieke Baauw (Oscar-nominated filmmaker, *Job, Joris, & Marieke*)



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- June 21 — Fostering a Diverse Workforce, featuring NYICFF Award-winning filmmakers Camrus Johnson and Huda Razzak, Priya Giri Desai (talent recruiter and NYICFF board member); moderated by Common Sense Media's Laura Ordoñez
- June 28 — Science and STEM on Screen, featuring Kerri Grant (Executive producer, Netflix's *Ada Twist, Scientist*), Nic Yulo (award-winning writer and filmmaker, director of NYICFF 2022's *Knights in Newark* and *Horizon*), Liam Cohen (PhD candidate in experimental condensed matter physics, NYICFF attendee), and Scott Cohen (actor, NYICFF board member, parent to Liam)

Toward an Inclusive Future launched in February 2020 and took place over two days in New York City. The 2021 edition was held virtually over five weeks in April and May. Previous guests and participants have included Karen Rupert Toliver (*Hair Love*), Elizabeth Ito (Netflix's *City of Ghosts*), Lindz Amer (Queer Kid Creative), Madeline Di Nonno (Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media), Frank Abney (*Canvas*), Halima Lucas (Nickelodeon Writing Fellow, *Amelia's Closet*), Reginald De Guillebon (President, Folimage), Miguel Puga (*The Casagrandes*), and many more. All 2021 panels are available to watch for free at nyicff.org/industry/#watch.

Additional speakers and participants to be announced. For complete panel descriptions and to register, visit nyicff.org/industry

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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, Dutch Culture USA, Unifrance, Netflix, and Silvergate.

ABOUT NYICFF

Established in 1997, and celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2022, NYICFF's mission is rooted in the belief of film as a path for young people to understand themselves and others. All programs are designed to celebrate the beauty and power of film, spark the inherent capacity of children to connect with complex, nuanced art, and encourage the creation of intelligent films that represent and celebrate unique, diverse, and historically excluded voices. NYICFF serves children, students, families, educators, filmmakers, and media arts professionals through its three core activities: the annual, Oscar®-qualifying NYC film festival and national touring program; FilmEd, a media arts and literacy program; and *Toward an Inclusive Future*, an annual industry forum. New York International Children's Film Festival is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts; public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, with support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature; and public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. NYICFF is additionally supported by Humanities New York. Funding support for FilmEd Classroom is provided in part by Audible and SONY USA Foundation.