

The Museum of Modern Art

MoMA ANNOUNCES LINEUP FOR *DOC FORTNIGHT 2021*, THE CELEBRATORY 20TH YEAR OF THE ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF INTERNATIONAL NONFICTION FILM AND MEDIA

Doc Fortnight 2021: MoMA's International Festival of Nonfiction Film and Media

March 18–April 5, 2021

Virtual Cinema

NEW YORK, February 22, 2021—The Museum of Modern Art announces the festival lineup for ***Doc Fortnight 2021***, the 20th edition of its annual showcase of innovative nonfiction film. This year's festival, which runs exclusively on MoMA's Virtual Cinema from March 18 to April 5, 2021, includes over 18 documentary features, four short films, and special projects centered on artists' cinema. In addition to two world premieres, many of the selected films are being shown for the first time in North America—several following prize-winning international festival runs. *Doc Fortnight 2021* is organized by Sophie Cavoulacos, Assistant Curator, Department of Film.

In its 20th year, Doc Fortnight continues the tradition of introducing the most significant, adventurous new nonfiction works by established and emerging filmmakers. Cinematic voices from around the world boldly attest to the continued vitality of the documentary art form through local dispatches and individual portraits exploring urgent topics in an interconnected world. The festival's engagement with hybrid filmmaking continues with visual experimentation and expansive strategies that push nonfiction practices to new heights.

Opening the festival on March 18 is the New York premiere of Nanfu Wang's *In the Same Breath*. Wang's deeply personal film recounts the origin and spread of the novel coronavirus from the earliest days of the outbreak in Wuhan to its rampage across the United States. Closing this year's festival is the North American premiere of Julien Faraut's *Les sorcières de l'Orient (The Witches of the Orient)*, a lively account of a historic Japanese women's volleyball team and their meteoric ascent to the Tokyo Olympics in 1964.

Throughout the slate, collective and individual portraits channel Hong Kong, Beirut, and rural Cameroon (Hong Kong Documentary Filmmakers' *Inside the Brick Wall*; Mohamed Soueid's *The Insomnia of a Serial Dreamer*; Rosine Mbakam's *Delphine's Prayers*), while music, cinema, and cultural history open up vital alternative histories onscreen (Anthony Banua-Simon's *Cane Fire*; Ali Essafi's *Before the Dying of the Light*; Luke Fowler's *Patrick*; Elise Florenty and Marcel Turkowsky's *Don't Rush*; Courtney Stephen's *Perfect Fifths*). A sense of place reigns in Thomas Imbach's formally striking *Nemesis*, shown with Ayo Akingbade's *Deadphant*, and runs through ingenious studies of the Kazakh steppes, early travelogues by women, and historical reenactment in Columbia (Emma Charles and Ben Evans James's *On a Clear Day You Can See the Revolution from Here*; Stephen's *Terra Femme*; Pablo Alvarez-Mesa's *Bicentenario*). Latin America is further represented in a double bill exploring family history, filmmaking, and language (Mercedes Gaviria's *The Calm after the Storm*; Richard Shpuntoff's *Everything that is forgotten in an instant*).

Among the many films directed by women, these boldly straddle the line between documentary and fiction in some of the year's most daring hybrid titles: Sabrina Zhao's *The Good Women of Sichuan*, screening with Pom Bunsermvicha's *Lemongrass Girl*; Isabel Lamberti's *Last Days of Spring*; and Moara Passon's *Êxtase*. Artist-filmmakers showing new work, engaging critical ideas, and pushing the documentary art form include Jordan Lord

(*Shared Resources*), Tiffany Sia (*Crisis news is a genre film*), and COUSIN Collective, in a guest-curated double bill of emerging and leading Indigenous moving-image artists.

This year's festival will be accompanied by a revival run of Mostafa Derkaoui's rediscovered masterwork of Moroccan cinema *About Some Meaningless Events* (itself the subject of Ali Essafi's *Before the Dying of the Light*) and by a selected survey of highlights from Doc Fortnight's wide-ranging 20-year history, organized by Brittany Shaw and Olivia Priedite.

SPONSORSHIP:

Film at MoMA is made possible by CHANEL.

Additional support is provided by the Annual Film Fund. Leadership support for the Annual Film Fund is provided by Debra and Leon D. Black and by Steven Tisch, with major contributions from The Contemporary Arts Council of The Museum of Modern Art, Jo Carole and Ronald S. Lauder, MoMA's Wallis Annenberg Fund for Innovation in Contemporary Art through the Annenberg Foundation, the Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP), The Junior Associates of The Museum of Modern Art, the Samuel I. Newhouse Foundation, Karen and Gary Winnick, and The Brown Foundation, Inc., of Houston.

PRESS CONTACTS:

Maureen Masters, maureen_masters@moma.org
Press Office, pressoffice@moma.org

For downloadable high-resolution images, visit moma.org/press.