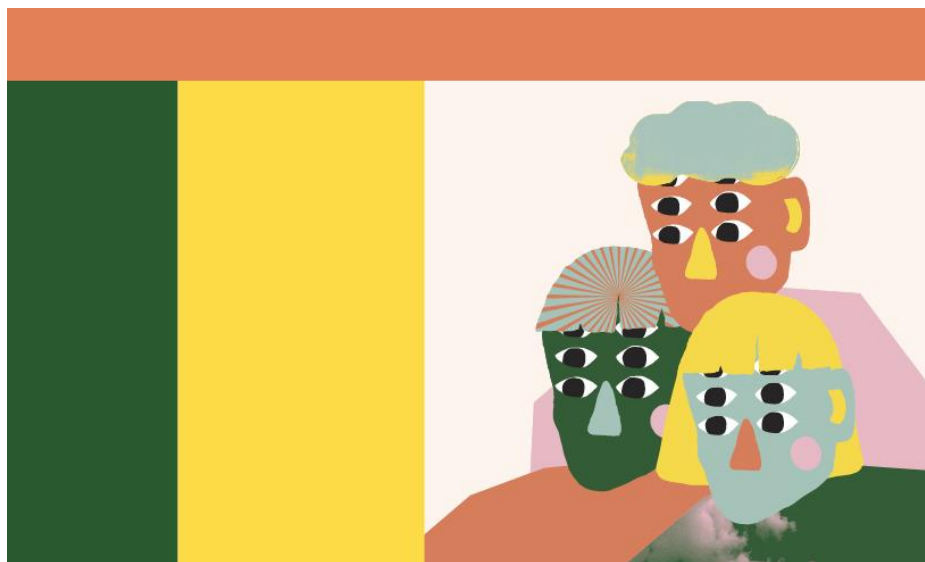


PRESS RELEASE
For immediate distribution

Montreal International Documentary Festival: Reinvented 23rd edition a big success



Montreal, Wednesday, December 9, 2020 – During this pandemic year, a time of great uncertainty for organizers of cultural events, the **Montreal International Documentary Festival (RIDM)** did much more than present its films using an online streaming platform. Running three weeks and divided into 8 thematic sections accompanied by **95 pieces of original content** including discussions, interviews, podcasts and round tables, the festival stood out by creating a completely reinvented format designed for present circumstances, completed with creative and diverse promotional concepts and companion content. The renewal's success was confirmed by audience figures that exceeded expectations, with a record number of passes sold.

In this year's all-online format, the festival presented 109 films from 45 countries. The RIDM continued to support **new talent, parity and diversity**. In addition to the successful **Soirée de la relève Radio-Canada** and a selection of films from **Wapikoni mobile**, the festival took advantage of the virtual format to provide more support than ever for short films, with a record 49 on the program. The festival's commitment to showcasing new talent was also reflected in the impressive **18 first features** selected for the festival.

As a leader in parity issues, the RIDM continues to show the way with **52% of filmmakers being women**. The **diversity of voices** remains one of the festival's strengths, and this year was no exception, including the young filmmakers at the Soirée de la relève, a majority of short films made by members of minority communities, and a special focus on international works by filmmakers who documented their own communities, such as *mañi – towards the ocean, towards the shore* by Sky Hopinka, a look inside the Ho-Chunk culture, or *Dark City Beneath the Beat* by TT The Artist, about the Baltimore club scene.

Designed for accessibility – both geographical (Quebec-wide) and financial (bundled rather than single tickets) – in 2020 the RIDM reached, for the first time, **viewers outside Montreal**, who purchased 11-25% of thematic section tickets. Rejecting the traditional single-film model in favour of thematic groupings, the festival reached two more goals. First, the **removal of hierarchical distinctions** between feature, short and medium-length films gave each work its due, as confirmed by viewing numbers. Second, the festival **chose relevant themes** that audiences appreciated.

Taking the lead from the Grand Prize for Best National Feature, *L'Indien malcommode (Inconvenient Indian)* by Michelle Latimer, the most popular sections in the 2020 edition were *Seeking Communities*, *Becoming Oneself* and *Redefining Intimacy*. All three sections explored new ways of thinking about today's most urgent social and identity questions. Designed to highlight new perspectives, promote creativity in documentary film and spark discussions about major current issues, the 2020 edition of the RIDM not only pursued but improved upon the festival's longstanding mandate. Because most of the original content created for this year's festival is designed to have long-term value after the festival, the significant body of RIDM 2020 companion materials will remain relevant in 2021. These materials will accompany **RIDM Extended**, with some films already available and more to come throughout 2021 thanks to partnerships with La Fabrique culturelle, Festival Scope, Radio-Canada (ICI TOU.TV) and Tënk.

Forum RIDM online

The 16th edition of **Forum RIDM** was also a success, with more than **300 accredited participants** including **127 industry professionals**. In an extended 8-day format, this year's online edition of Forum RIDM overcame several obstacles to provide practical strategic tools. Through the Forum's 16 activities – workshops, discussions and numerous organized and informal networking activities – participants had the opportunity to hone their skills and expand their knowledge.

Forum RIDM 2020's all-online program focused on accessibility and inclusiveness in the industry. With small-group and one-on-one activities, the **Création Plurielle** series presented funding and writing workshops for women, with the financial support of the Bell Fund. The **Funds and Experts round tables** brought together people working in every part of the industry. With the support of the Canada Council for the Arts and DOC Québec, up-and-coming professionals received personalized guidance to help them make the most of the Forum.

Presented by the Alliance des producteurs francophones du Canada (APFC), Forum RIDM's centrepiece, the **One-on-One**, welcomed 72 industry representatives from 13 countries and 66 participants for a total of **592 online business meetings**. New talent was also a focus this year with four forms of support offered to francophone and anglophone filmmakers through the 7th edition of the **Talent Lab**, presented by NETFLIX. For the first time, FranC Doc awarded a project development grant to an emerging filmmaker from a remote area. A total of **\$31,000 in grants and support** were awarded at Forum RIDM 2020.

The 16th edition of Forum RIDM was a clear success. The participants were eager to contribute, industry experts and representatives shared their knowledge freely, and our many partners embraced the new, dynamic and exciting online format.

Thanks to the RIDM and Forum RIDM's partners

At a time when festivals are facing enormous challenges, the RIDM wishes to express its deepest gratitude to its partners for their exceptional support. It is a sign of trust and a testament to the resilience of our cultural communities and institutions. They made it possible to exceed the festival's goals for its 23rd edition. Thanks to the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, SODEC, the Secrétariat à la région métropolitaine, the Canada Council for the Arts, Ville de Montréal, Telefilm Canada, the Conseil des arts de Montréal, the Consulate General of France in Quebec, Bell Media,

Canal D, the Canada Media Fund, Télé-Québec, CSN, TV5, Radio-Canada, Post-Moderne, the Société civile des auteurs multimédia (SCAM), Studios Saint-Antoine, PRIM, BDO, the Cinémathèque québécoise and Chop Chop studio.

Forum RIDM wishes to thank its institutional and primary partners, who made this 16th edition possible: Société de développement des entreprises culturelles (SODEC), Telefilm Canada, the Canada Council for the Arts, Canadian Heritage, Ville de Montréal, Conseil des arts de Montréal, NETFLIX, Bell Fund, Canada Media Fund, Canal D, Office national du film du Canada and the National Film Board of Canada.

About [RIDM](#)

Quebec's only film festival dedicated to documentaries, the Montreal International Documentary Festival presents the best reality-based films, including the works of established directors and new talents.

About [Forum RIDM](#)

Forum RIDM, the documentary forum organized in parallel with the festival, hosts a dozen activities for documentary professionals, including workshops, presentations and business meetings to foster professional development, exchange and partnerships within the documentary industry.

The 24th annual RIDM will take place in November, 2021.

Information: ridm.ca | info@ridm.ca

[Facebook](#) - [Twitter](#) - [Instagram](#)

- 30 -

For interview or visual material requests, please contact:

Caroline Rompré | pixellex communications | 514-778-9294 | caroline@pixellex.ca