

AVID Online presents Perspectives from Canadian President of one the largest International Documentary Festivals

*"I am incredibly proud to support filmmakers whose life goal is to tell important stories from all over the world."
– Chris McDonald*

For Immediate Release

We have all watched documentaries on various subjects and from all parts of the world. The genre is a rich and fascinating one that has grown from being a form of reportage to becoming a major entertainment source and impact-driven mode of filmmaking. When it comes to social issue documentaries and their platforms-the question must be asked-do they have any quantifiable impact on those issues? And if so how?

Consulate General of Canada in Mumbai and **Avid Learning** present a fascinating live discussion, **Documentary Film Festivals and Social Change** as part of a virtual week – **From Silver Screen to Your Screen** – that promises to be a multiplex of film appreciation covering diverse aspects from archiving to critiquing, from documentaries for social change to screen writing for digital platforms.

The description of the session is as below:

Based on his 2014 talk, *"Unspoken Role of Documentary Festivals in World Socio-politics"*, and the work the organisation does, *President of HotDocs Festival* **Chris McDonald** in conversation with *Film Journalist* **Nandini Ramnath** will speak on the role of the documentary film festival as a powerful platform to instrument change on ground and expand their reach and impact for the issues they showcase and support.

He will speak about how the platform has evolved from being an exhibitory event to making impact in other ways for filmmakers and audiences. He will also address how documentary film festivals and platforms like Hot Docs help raise money for grants, facilitate on ground change in a socio-cultural context, help local filmmakers to tell their own stories, help facilitate screenings, cinema spaces, and spaces where these documentaries can be seen, showcased and reach target populations through viewership etc.

Addressing how stories tie in with impact strategy and campaigns and how platforms like Hot Docs and documentary festivals in general aid in connecting filmmakers, audiences and active agents for change, Chris will touch upon what documentary films and filmmaking will look like post COVID and how the festival circuit will evolve and adapt to supporting and distributing these films and highlighting their causes.

Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival is North America's largest documentary festival, conference and market. Each year, the Festival presents a selection of approximately 200 cutting-edge documentaries from Canada and around the globe. Hot Docs was founded in 1993 by the Documentary Organization of Canada (formerly the Canadian Independent Film Caucus), a national association of independent documentary filmmakers. In 1996, Hot Docs became a separately incorporated organization with a mandate to showcase and support the work of Canadian and international documentary filmmakers and to promote excellence in documentary production. The Hot Docs mission is to advance and celebrate the art of documentary, and to showcase the work of and create production opportunities for documentary filmmakers.

Join us to understand the evolving role of the documentary festival and how these platforms can powerfully impact change on-ground.

When: Thursday, 27th August 2020 | 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

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About the Speakers

Chris McDonald was appointed executive director of Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival in October of 1998. In 2013, he was named Hot Docs President. A native of Montreal, Chris holds a degree in Film Studies from McGill University. Prior to Hot Docs, Chris was development director for five years at the prestigious Canadian Film Centre, the advanced film, television and new media training centre founded by director Norman Jewison. Prior to his term at the CFC, Chris worked for two national environmental organizations. He sits on several industry advisory boards, and has served on panels and juries at leading film festivals and markets around the world. With a mandate to advance and celebrate the art of documentary and to showcase the work of documentary filmmakers, Hot Docs is now recognized as North America's largest documentary festival, and its flagship Hot Docs Forum, established in 2000, is North America's largest documentary market event. Each year the Festival attracts audiences of over 200,000, including 2,500 registered delegates. Hot Docs also administers an \$8 million portfolio of production funds, and provides free screenings to over 90,000 students each year. The organization also owns and operates the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema in Toronto, one of the only year-round documentary-focused cinemas in the world.

Nandini Ramnath is a film journalist and critic with Scroll.in. She has previously worked with Mint, Time Out Mumbai, NDTV24x7, The Indian Express. Her work covers Indian and foreign cinema and documentary.

About Partners

Consulate General of Canada in Mumbai: In India, Canada is represented by the High Commission of Canada in New Delhi and Canada also has Consulate Generals in Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chandigarh and Kolkata. There are Trade Offices in Ahmedabad, Chennai, Hyderabad and Kolkata. The Consulate General of Canada in Mumbai works together with Indian institutions, organizations and individuals to strengthen relations between both countries by fostering mutual economic prosperity and promoting values of governance, democracy, pluralism and human rights. Canada is a multicultural society and the heart of Canadian multiculturalism is the belief that all citizens are equal, regardless of their race, cultural heritage, ethnicity, religion, ancestry and place of origin. Canada guarantees to all men and women complete freedom of conscience, thought, belief, opinion, expression, association and peaceful assembly.

Avid Learning, the cultural philanthropy arm of the Essar Group founded in 2009 has, over the past decade, grown into one of Mumbai's leading public programming platforms and is firmly entrenched in the country's wider cultural ecosystem. Our thoughtfully curated and diverse events embrace the spirit of collaboration to bring together the best of Indian and international writers, artists, intellectuals, cultural experts, policymakers and industry leaders across Visual Art, Literature, Culture and Heritage, Education, Design & Technology and the Performing Arts through engaging and dynamic formats like panel discussions, workshops & master classes,

roundtables, lecture demonstrations, festival platforms, symposiums & conferences, multidisciplinary performances and walkthroughs. To date, AVID has conducted over 1250 programs and connected with more than 150,000 individuals, a widely eclectic group of life-long learners including students, patrons, practitioners, influencers, thought leaders and cultural & creative enthusiasts in Mumbai, Delhi, Jaipur, Bangalore, Goa and Gujarat. We have also made our mark internationally, with events and collaborations in Dubai and New York. We regularly collaborate and partner with institutions, organisations and initiatives like the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), (CSMVS) Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), one of the apex bodies that impact cultural policy and the creative sector as a whole. We have been at the helm of programming at the Royal Opera House, Mumbai India's only surviving Opera House since its reopening in 2016. We believe in the importance of arts for social change and we regularly offer our support and platforms for Social Advocacy. In April 2020, we launched **AVID Online**, an online further learning campaign on our social media platforms for our followers to engage with a range of varied topics across the breadth of the arts. Our eclectic faculty of experts, thought leaders, practitioners and innovators continue to share their learnings, expertise and knowledge on our social media platforms with tailored content featured weekly for AVID's online community and beyond. In collaboration with long-term and new partners, we have since dimensionalised the campaign by re-introducing our existing offline formats and IPs and enhancing them for digital engagement. We have taken our content live with engaging masterclasses and virtual panel discussions and also built robust tangential campaigns and series in support of worthy causes and highlighting topical issues. To keep updated on our programmes, like us on <https://www.facebook.com/avidlearning/>, follow us on <https://twitter.com/AvidLearning> and Instagram: [@avidlearning](https://www.instagram.com/avidlearning) or log onto <http://www.avidlearning.in> #LearningNeverStops!

Watch all past AVID Online episodes on our dedicated YouTube Playlist:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYt7Q44R5xkd4dRefvV3nFloOHEePgLAZ>
