

**HOT DOCS BREAKS ATTENDANCE RECORDS WITH AUDIENCES OF 136,000 AT
2010 FESTIVAL**
THUNDER SOUL WINS AUDIENCE AWARD; AUDIENCE TOP TEN ANNOUNCED
AUTUMN GOLD WINS INAUGURAL FILMMAKERS AWARD

Toronto, May 10 2010 – Hot Docs has wrapped its most successful festival to date with audience numbers reaching an estimated 136,000. The 11-day event, April 29 to May 9, featured 275 public screenings of 170+ films on 10 screens across Toronto, three Critical Mass speaker series events, two Rooftop Docs screenings, an internationally renowned conference and market for documentary professionals, and Docs for Schools, a phenomenally popular education program for youth. A record 170 screenings went rush, and the box office saw a 10 per cent increase in overall sales. The Festival brought in more than 150 filmmakers and special guest subjects from across Canada and around the world to present their films and take part in special post-screening Q&A sessions with audiences. Official film selections were chosen from a total 2088 films submitted to the Festival.

"This was by far our most successful Hot Docs to date," says Hot Docs executive director, Chris McDonald. "Our job is to source the best documentaries in the world, then pack local cinemas with eager film fans. We've accomplished both of these goals again this year, and, in the process, have seen larger audiences and more sold out screenings than ever before."

After the final screening yesterday, votes were tallied for the Hot Docs Audience Award. The winner is **THUNDER SOUL** (D: Mark Landsman, USA), chronicling the reunion of the Kashmere High School Band – 35 years after their initial success – in honour of their mentor, Conrad "Prof" Johnson.

The top ten audience favourites as determined by audience vote are:

1. **THUNDER SOUL** (D: Mark Landsman; USA)
2. **A DRUMMER'S DREAM** (D: John Walker; Canada)
3. **MY LIFE WITH CARLOS** (D: German Berger; Chile, Spain, Germany)
4. **AUTUMN GOLD** (D: Jan Tenhaven; Austria, Germany)
5. **LEAVE THEM LAUGHING** (D: John Zaritsky; Canada, USA)
6. **RUSH: BEYOND THE LIGHTED STAGE** (D: Scot McFadyen, Sam Dunn; Canada)
7. **LISTEN TO THIS** (D: Juan Baquero; Canada)
8. **A SMALL ACT** (D: Jennifer Arnold; USA)
9. **WASTE LAND** (D: Lucy Walker; UK, Brazil)
10. **MARWENCOL** (D: Jeff Malmberg; USA)

New this year is the Filmmakers Award, for which Hot Docs invited attending filmmakers with official selections in the 2010 Festival to vote for their favourite film. The winner of the inaugural Filmmakers Award is **AUTUMN GOLD** (D: Jan Tenhaven; Austria, Germany), which also ranked fourth amongst the audience top ten favourites.

Doc for Schools, Hot Docs' education program that runs during the Festival and offers free in-theatre and in-school screenings of select Festival films, reached a record number of students in 2010. An estimated 58,000 students from 252 schools participated in the program, including schools in Toronto, Hamilton, Kitchener, London, Thunder Bay, Barrie, Ottawa, and Windsor.

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Hot Docs is North America's largest documentary festival, conference and market. From April 29 to May 9, 2010, Hot Docs presented an outstanding selection of 170+ documentaries from Canada and around the world to Toronto audiences and international delegates. Hot Docs also mounted a full roster of conference sessions, market events and services for documentary practitioners, including the renowned Toronto Documentary Forum, May 5-6, and The Doc Shop.

Hot Docs is proud to include Rogers, Telefilm Canada and *documentary* as its Presenting Partners, with special support from the Government of Ontario.

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