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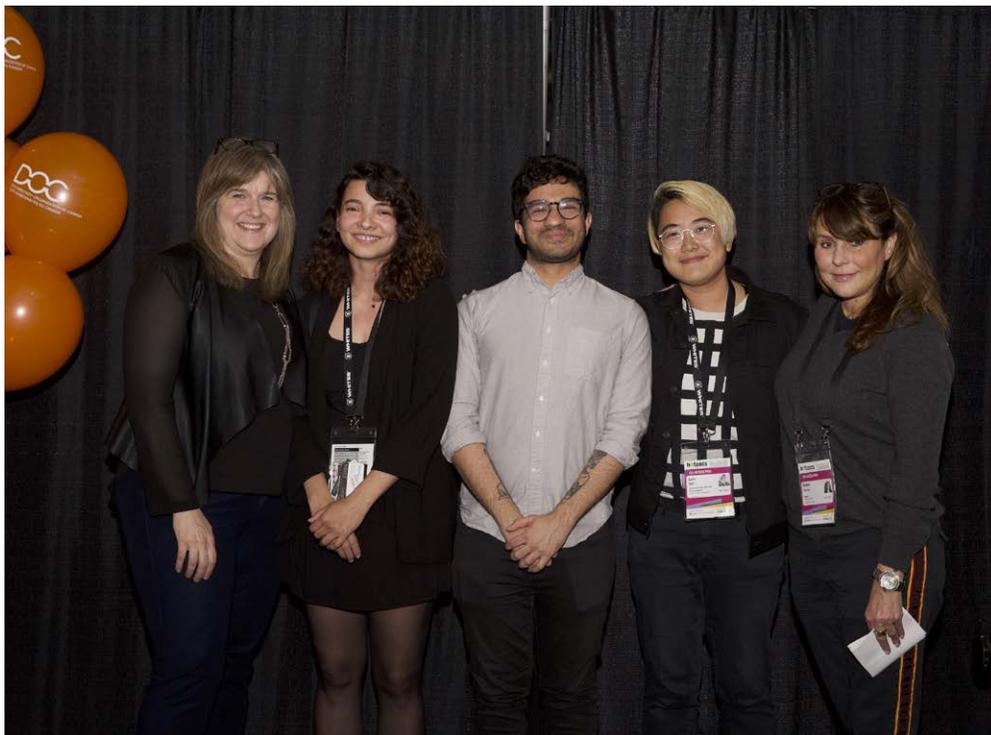
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## INAUGURAL BREAKTHROUGH DEVELOPMENT AWARD WINNERS AND ALLAN KING MEMORIAL AWARD RECIPIENT ANNOUNCED

**TORONTO (May 2, 2019)** – The [Documentary Organization of Canada](#) is pleased to announce the winners of the inaugural [Doc Institute Breakthrough Development Award](#), sponsored by the [Rogers Group of Funds](#) and **CBC**, as well as the recipient of the **Allan King Memorial Award**.



(L-R): CBC's Jennifer Dettman, Polina Teif, Qais Pasha, Lulu Wei, Rogers Group of Funds' Robin Mirsky

The **Breakthrough Development Award** was presented to emerging producers **Polina Teif** and **Qais Pasha** at tonight's [DOC Fête](#) at the Centre for Social Innovation. Selected by a jury of industry experts, Teif and Pasha each receive:

- \$20,000 cash prize from the Rogers Group of Funds
- Development deal from CBC
- Mentorship and professional development support from the DOC Institute

In addition to the Breakthrough Development Award winners, CBC also directly commissioned a submission from **Lulu Wei – *There's No Place Like This Place, Anyplace*** for [CBC Docs POV](#).



**Polina Teif – *Eulogy for the Dead Sea***

*Eulogy for the Dead Sea* is a meditative feature-length documentary which parallels regional conflict in Jordan, Israel, and Palestine's West Bank with the severe environmental degradation around the Dead Sea, which is estimated to disappear by 2050. In a land ravaged by war, loss is commonplace. *Eulogy for the Dead Sea* is a meditation on ecological grief that transcends borders.

Teif (director/cinematographer) is a Belarus-born multi-disciplinary artist raised in Israel and based in Toronto. She received her BFA from the University of Toronto with an emphasis on Visual Studies and Semiotics, and completed an MFA in Film Production at York University. Specializing in auteur-driven documentary film, her work largely stems from observational and experimental video practice woven in with sociopolitical and environmental undercurrents.



**Qais Pasha – *The Horror in Quebec City***

In 1933, the reclusive writer H.P. Lovecraft visited Quebec City. Afterwards, Lovecraft would change horror literature forever. *The Horror in Quebec City* retraces his footsteps and uncovers his influence and dark legacy.

Pasha is an artist and media specialist based in Toronto. He grew up in Pakistan and immigrated to Ontario as a teenager. He is a graduate of Carleton University and Ryerson University. He is currently employed as a Senior Ad Operations Specialist for Corus Entertainment. Pasha was one of 12 filmmakers selected for the CBC Development Workshop for Diverse Creators in 2016, received the Corus Diverse Voices Scholarship at Hot Docs 2017, and was one of the Emerging 20 (E20) program participants chosen for Reelworld Film Festival 2017. He received Ontario Arts Council funding to complete his first feature film in 2018.



**Lulu Wei – *There's No Place Like This Place, Anyplace***

*There's No Place Like This Place, Anyplace* follows the community of the historic Honest Ed's block who are forced to relocate after the block is sold to developers. Through their eyes, we learn about waves of immigration, a housing crisis, and the power that brick and mortar buildings can have on our hearts.

Wei is a Toronto-based director and cinematographer. She holds an MFA in Documentary Media from Ryerson University. Her work explores

themes of urbanization, cultural identity, and queerness. In 2017, she was a fellow at the RIDM Talent Lab and a part of the E20 program at Reelworld Film Festival. She was a Hot Docs 2018 Doc Accelerator fellow and is part of the 2019 DOC Breakthrough Program.

After completing the Breakthrough Program's rigorous market-preparation course, Teif, Pasha, and Wei were among the [eight high-potential filmmakers](#) who pitched their projects to jury members, **Robin Mirsky** (Executive Director, Rogers Group of Funds), **Jennifer Dettman** (Executive Director, Unscripted Content, CBC), and **Alex Hryniewicz** (Head of Owned Channels, Little Dot Studios).

### **Jury Statement**

*Polina Teif's **Eulogy for the Dead Sea** captivated us with its visual and poetic imagery. This universal story addresses the ecological impact of border wars.*

*We are pleased to award Qais Pasha for **The Horror in Quebec City**, with its distinct and creative storytelling style, and personal yet powerful examination of artistic legacy in a modern context.*

Made possible by the generous support of [Ontario Creates](#), the Breakthrough Program has directly impacted the career trajectory of its alumni. Participants have gone on to successfully launch their careers and have been associated with prestigious accolades, winning Canadian Screen Awards, landing on the Academy Award shortlist, and receiving the Rogers Best Canadian Feature from the TFCA, the richest film prize in Canada. These exceptional filmmakers include **Hugh Gibson** (*The Stairs*), **Shasha Nakhai** (*Take Light*) and **Sherien Barsoum** (*Babe, I Hate to Go*).

### **Sonia Sakamoto-Jog, Interim Director, DOC Institute**

"We are immensely proud of the Breakthrough Program and the many talented filmmakers it has shepherded in its 15-year history. We're grateful to Rogers Group of Funds and CBC for their ongoing support of documentary filmmakers, and for their recognition of these exceptional projects."

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DOC also recognized director **Tiffany Hsiung** (*The Apology*) as the recipient of the [Allan King Memorial Award](#). The award marks the 10th anniversary of Allan's passing and recognizes a documentary filmmaker who embodies Allan's philosophy that filmmakers should be fearless, free-thinking, and independent. Hsiung receives \$4,000, made possible by a donation from Allan's widow, Colleen Murphy.

Allan King was a pioneer with a vision, who forged a new path in the field of documentary film and became one of Canada's most beloved filmmakers. His work sat deeply with audiences, exposing them to the rawness of the human condition. He explored intimate connections between people; uncovering what makes us unique and what binds us together in the spaces and experiences we share.



**Tiffany Hsiung** is an international award-winning filmmaker based in Toronto. She is a graduate of Ryerson University, where she studied film production. Her award-winning short film, *Binding Borders* (2007), screened in film festivals internationally and propelled her to direct the RCI/CBC six-part mini-series on Beijing's first-ever Olympic Games, "A New Face for Beijing" (2008).

Hsiung was nominated for an Allan King Award for Excellence in Documentary by the Director's Guild of Canada, and her digital interactive documentary she co-created, *The Space We Hold* based on *The Apology*, was a recipient of a Peabody - Futures of Media Award, as well as a Canadian Screen Award for Best Original Digital Production.

Tiffany Hsiung: "Allan King's groundbreaking approach to storytelling has always inspired me to capture the human condition through cinéma vérité. When I first met these resilient women who survived military sexual slavery during WWII for our film *The Apology*, it was their everyday life that captured my heart and made me better understand the impact of the atrocities that took place. It is a tremendous honour to receive the Allan King Memorial Award, as it symbolizes the power of the human story and how it ultimately connects us all."

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### **About the Documentary Organization of Canada and DOC Institute**

The [Documentary Organization of Canada](#) (DOC) is the collective voice of independent documentary creators across Canada and the premier organization for Canadian documentary advocacy. We analyze policy, conduct insightful research, and speak up at all orders of government to help our distinctly Canadian genre flourish.

The DOC Institute is an initiative of the Documentary Organization of Canada. With the aim of supporting doc-makers' creative journeys, the DOC Institute is a hub for established and emerging voices in the non-fiction world. Through its program streams – [the Masters Series, the Producers Exchange, and DOC Connects](#) – the DOC Institute offers essential professional development for documentary media artists of all levels.

### **About the Rogers Group of Funds**

The Rogers Group of Funds offers support to Canadian independent producers with three different types of funding: Rogers Telefund offers loans to Canadian independent producers; Rogers Documentary Fund, Canada's premier source of funding for documentary films and Rogers Cable Network Fund, an equity investor in Canadian programs with a first play on a Canadian cable channel. Three different types of financing. Three different funds. All from one source – Rogers.

### **About CBC**

CBC/Radio-Canada is Canada's national public broadcaster. Through our mandate to inform, enlighten and entertain, we play a central role in strengthening Canadian culture. As Canada's trusted news source, we offer a uniquely Canadian perspective on news, current affairs and world affairs. Our distinctively homegrown entertainment programming draws audiences from across the country. Deeply rooted in communities, CBC/Radio-Canada offers diverse content in

English, French and eight Indigenous languages. We also deliver content in Spanish, Arabic and Chinese, as well as both official languages, through Radio Canada International (RCI). We are leading the transformation to meet the needs of Canadians in a digital world.

### **About Ontario Creates**

Ontario Creates (formerly OMDC) is a provincial agency that facilitates economic development, investment and collaboration in Ontario's creative industries including the music, book, magazine, film, television and interactive digital media sectors. [ontariocreates.ca](http://ontariocreates.ca)

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