



## NHdocs: The New Haven Documentary Film Festival is back for its 8<sup>th</sup> year with a return to (almost) normal and more than 100 films to be seen

**NEW HAVEN, CT** – The pandemic, of course, wreaked havoc on everyone last year. Undaunted, Executive Director Gorman Bechard and team found a way to pivot and put on the annual NHdocs: The New Haven Documentary Film Festival in 2020, thanks to many virtual screenings and some (with great caution) presentations in live venues.

Now that that’s (mostly) out of the way, NHdocs returns for its eighth year Aug. 10-15, with more than 100 films – about an even split between live and online showings.

The official Opening Night presentation, Aug. 11 (9 p.m.), will take place rain or shine in the parking lot of Sally’s Apizza, Wooster and Olive streets, and it will be a collector’s paradise. The feature will be ***Vinyl Nation***, Kevin Smokler and Christopher Boone’s dig into the record resurgence of the past decade, where they explore some deep-groove questions: Has the return of vinyl made music fandom more inclusive or divided? What does vinyl say about our past here in the present? And how has the second life of vinyl changed how we hear music and listen to each other? It will be preceded by Bechard’s ***The Matchbox Man***, where he visited the Connecticut home of Charlie Mack, who owns one of the world’s largest and most complete collections of Matchbox cars. Bechard will also host a Q&A with Mack.

Other highlights will include:

- ***5 Funny Films ... 5 Funnier Women*** (Aug. 12, 7:30 p.m., Café Nine, 250 State St.): Presented by NHdocs’s own Haley Copes, a New Haven-based comedy writer, it’s a night of cinema and standup. Five brilliant short films that will make you laugh out loud and maybe even blush: ***Modern Whore*** by Nicole Bauzin and Andrea Werhun; ***Fugazi’s Barber*** by Joe Tropea and Robert A. Emmons Jr.; ***A Poo Film*** by Dean Bosche; ***Mrs. Saltzman Goes to Jail*** by Rebecca Richman; and Bauzin and Werhun’s ***Last Night at the Strip Club***. A Q&A with some of the directors will follow; then comes the comedy live. In addition to Copes, comedians slated to perform will include Mae Planert, Holly Johnston, Kendra Dawsey and Brooke Kelley.
- ***Organ Stops: Saving the King of Instruments*** (Aug. 13, 7 p.m., Episcopal Church of St. Paul & St. James, 57 Olive St.) is a joint presentation by NHdocs, the New Haven Symphony Orchestra and the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. James Dawson’s feature tells the story of Martin, an Englishman who has spent his life playing and building pipe organs; now he dedicates his life to rescuing them, as churches close throughout the country. He and a small band of organ “anoraks” travel the country on rescue missions.
- ***Storkman*** (Aug. 14, 8 p.m., rain or shine, Park of the Arts, Audubon Street) is a presentation of NHdocs and CompassionFest. Croatian filmmaker Tomislav Jelinčić tells the story of Malena and

Klepetan, two storks cared for by Stjepan Vokić, a widowed pensioner. He rescued Malena after she was shot 28 years before by hunters and crippled for life. In 2002, she found the love of her life, Klepetan, up on the roof; together, they've raised 60 storks. But their love is countered by the loneliness she feels when he flies off to Africa every fall. The JP Sanctuary will participate in a post-screening discussion. Bring your own blankets and chairs. There will be vegan food trucks and vendors, including the Hardcore Sweet Bakery truck. Coffee and other drinks will be available at Koffee?

- **A tribute to filmmaker Beth B:** Beth B, an integral figure in New York's underground film scene since the late '70s and one of the key figures in the No Wave scene, will be honored with screenings of four of her works. Three of them will take place Aug. 14 at the New Haven Free Public Library (133 Elm St.). *Breathe In, Breathe Out* (2000) (2:30 p.m.) followed three Vietnam veterans and their children returning to the land where the fathers saw so much carnage, in the hope of bridging their respective generation gaps. *Call Her Applebroog* (2016) (5 p.m.) is as personal a film as one can get – a mischievously reverent portrait of her mother, acclaimed New York-based artist Ida Applebroog. *Exposed* (2013) (7:30 p.m.) profiled eight people who used their nakedness to transport us to the far edge of burlesque, beyond the last sexual and social taboos that society holds dear. (NOTE: No one under 17 will be admitted.) Q&A sessions with Beth B will follow each film.

Beth B also will have the festival's closing slot: *Lydia Lunch: The War Is Never Over* (2017) (Aug. 15, 7 p.m., Café Nine). It's the first career-spanning documentary of the groundbreaking, expectation-defying No Wave singer/performance artist, who first made her name in the late '70s with Teenage Jesus & the Jerks. Following a Q&A with Beth, Lydia will wrap the festival with a performance at 9:30.

And, leading off the festival ...

- ***Where Are You, Jay Bennett?*** (Aug. 10, 7:30 p.m., Café Nine): Bechard will present his sixth music documentary as a sneak-peek work in progress – a look at the multi-instrumentalist who was an integral part of Wilco for its three seminal albums (*Being There*, *Summerteeth* and *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot*), plus the *Mermaid Avenue* sessions with Billy Bragg, and who died suddenly in 2009. It will have its world premiere in Chicago in November. He's planning to ask the audience questions and get feedback, so be prepared. And following the film and Q&A, there will be a local all-star tribute to Jay and Wilco, produced by Dean Falcone.

In addition, NHdocs will do its share to nurture the next generation of filmmakers by presenting its annual student competition online (Aug. 15, 1 p.m.), as well as filmmaking workshops and filmmaker Q&As.

For the complete schedule of both live and online screenings, plus tickets and other information, go to <https://nhdocs2021.eventive.org/schedule>.