***Press Release***

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***Real to Reel Film Festival Announces Transition to Fully Virtual Format***

*44 Documentaries, Feature Films, Animations, and Film Shorts to be Screened Online in September/October*

KINGS MOUNTAIN, N.C. - The Cleveland County Arts Council is excited to begin another decade of offering amazing cinema to film festival goers. Originally slated as an in-person festival this year, the 21st annual International Real to Reel Film Fest has been modified to be an online-exclusive platform, from September 9 – October 9 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even with the unexpected changes, the filmmakersandevent planners for Real to Reel are looking forward to what this new version of the festival will offer.

“We are excited to work with Seed and Spark (a virtual film festival provider) to bring Real to Reel Film Festival into the virtual festival space via their platform,” commented Festival Director Violet Dukes. Tickets will be available at the end of August, and festival attendees will have an entire month to explore documentaries, short films, animation, and films made by children at their convenience. Offering the online-exclusive version the festival will provide a wider audience reach, and more details are forthcoming in regard to this online element of screenings including ticket pricing.

“One highlight for audience members will be the chance to hear behind the scenes details about select films,” says Noel T. Manning II, Real to Reel co-founder, and selection committee member. “Several international filmmakers will share interviews on their craft, their film, and the impact of film festivals on independent cinema,” added Manning. These Q&A sessions will be available for the duration of the Real to Reel Film Festival.

The selection committee screened nearly 150 film submissions, from amateur and professional filmmakers, including animated shorts, live-action shorts, documentaries (shorts and feature-length), feature-length narrativefilms, and films made by children ages 14 years and younger. International countries of origin for submissions include India, Japan, Iran, Russia, and Slovakia, among others. The festival will screen 44 films based on the selections made by the committee. Awards categories will be classified by their student/amateur or professional submission status.

Last year’s Real to Reel Film Festival saw an attendance of approximately 300 people. “While this year’s festival will certainly have a different feel, we’re excited to once again bring diverse, educational and entertaining independent films to our community and beyond,” said Shearra Miller, President of the Cleveland County Arts Council.

 For more information about this year’s festival, contact Violet Dukes at the Cleveland County Arts Council by email violet.arth@ccartscouncil.org or phone 704-484-2787. You can also visit the film festival website at realtoreelfest.com.

*The mission of the Real to Reel International Film Festival is to offer a forum for independent film, video and multimedia artists from around the world to showcase their talents and expose the works of these artists to our region.*