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MEDIA RELEASE

Reelworld Continues to Build Communities, Stories and Films

Another innovative program to increase diversity in youth filmmaking at a grassroots level.

Toronto - Reelworld kicked off January 2019 with another installment of their Reelworld Reelyouth workshop series: an exciting initiative to spark discussion and generate a sense of community in the St. Jamestown area made possible with the support of the Government of Canada. In-line with Reelworld Film Festival's mandate to increase diversity in filmmaking, young BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) filmmakers and the community gathered together to share the telling of heartfelt, personal, and diverse community stories through film and lively discussion.

The "Reelyouth Program" increases diversity by making filmmaking more accessible to diverse groups; engaging youth in filmmaking, imparting knowledge, teaching skills to de-mystify the filmmaking process, and educating diverse youth on the many career options available in Canadian filmmaking..

The program launched with two workshops held January 22nd & 29th 2019, titled "Your Cellphone, Your Story", at the St. Jamestown Community Center, and was facilitated by Loveleen Kaur (Documentary Filmmaker & Artist Educator) and Colin Akoon (Cinematographer & Camera Operator). Youth aged 12-17 learned about storytelling, the role and impact of technology, and gained the technical skills to create their own films using only their cell phones. Out of the lives and hearts of participants came stories highlighting issues such as single motherhood, everyday racism, and overcoming physical injury. Participants then worked on individual film projects which were screened and live-streamed alongside a lively Community Panel at Regent Park Focus March 26th 2019.

Prevailing themes in audience discussion - including the prevalence of societal prejudice, authentic identity, opportunity, and overwhelmingly overcoming challenges - brought the audience and filmmakers together, sparked discussion about experiences, and highlighted hopes for the future.

The films "[225](#)", by Daeim Mohammed, "[Single Motherhood](#)" by Jamelia Brooks, and "[Breaking Boundaries](#)" by Layla Berih are available to view for free on Reelworld's [YouTube](#), check them out!

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