



2026 HOT DOCS FESTIVAL MEDIA KIT



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Hot Docs is a charitable, not-for-profit organization committed to advancing the art of documentary and supporting opportunities for independent filmmakers.

For Immediate Release: Tuesday, March 24, 2026

HOT DOCS FESTIVAL IS BACK FOR 2026 EDITION APRIL 23-MAY 3 WITH 115 FILMS FROM 51 COUNTRIES THAT AMPLIFY VITAL HUMAN STORIES, EXPAND URGENT GLOBAL ISSUES AND SHOWCASE THE ENDURING TALENT OF THE DOCUMENTARY COMMUNITY IN CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD

Toronto, Canada – The highly anticipated **Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival** returns to Toronto for its 33rd edition **April 23 to May 3, 2026**, sharing the finest in global non-fiction storytelling. From 2820 film submissions, this year’s slate will present 115 documentaries representing 51 countries across nine diverse programs and will feature 52 world and international premieres. Furthermore, alongside the premieres of remarkable Canadian and international documentaries, the 2026 Festival will offer an extensive lineup of industry programs and events, including the return of the popular Hot Docs Forum international industry pitch event.

“Documentary filmmaking offers a way to engage more deeply with the world around us—through stories that are thoughtful, complex and deeply human,” said Diana Sanchez, Executive Director of Hot Docs. “This year’s Hot Docs Festival celebrates documentary filmmaking through 115 globe-spanning films, connecting this important work to audiences and bringing us together in ways that deepen our understanding of the world we share.”

This year’s lineup of 80 features and 35 shorts will share stories of humanity’s struggles, courage, and ambition, as well as the increasingly evolving world of technology. A total of 30 Canadian films will screen as official selections, and 14 films received support from Hot Docs’ film funds and market programs, including the Hot Docs Forum and Deal Maker. Hot Docs will welcome several filmmakers and guests to the Festival to participate in post-screening Q&As.

The 2026 Hot Docs Festival will open with the world premiere of ***Antidiva: The Carole Pope Confessions***, directed by Canadian filmmaker **Michelle Mama**, on **Thursday, April 23** at **Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema**. The Canadian film spotlights queer rock icon Carole Pope as she reclaims her rightful place in music history and received funding in 2023 from the Hot Docs-Slaight Family Fund to support the project in its development stage.

The **Big Ideas** series will once again spark insightful conversations with notable guests, including *Love Aptually* director **Shalini Kantayya**, *Myspace* director **Tommy Avallone**, *A War on Women* director **Raha Shirazi**, and *Steal This Story, Please!* director **Tia Lessin**.

The **Special Presentations** program, showcasing high-profile films, festival circuit heavy hitters, and renowned subjects, includes the world premieres of director Shalini Kantayya’s ***Love Aptually***, about a journalist’s exploration of dating app algorithms; director Dori Berinstein’s ***Kenny Loggins: Conviction of the Heart***, which traces the life and career of the multi-award-winning singer-songwriter who soundtracked some of Hollywood’s most unforgettable movie moments; director Tommy Avallone’s

Myspace, a portrait of the pioneering social networking platform; director Mark Myers's **The Tower That Built a City**, celebrating the 50th anniversary of Toronto's skyline-defining CN Tower; and director Raha Shirazi's **A War on Women**, which traces 40 years of feminist resistance by Iranian women against the Islamic Republic.

Canadian Spectrum Competition, a competitive program showcasing bold new works by Canadian directors, includes the world premieres of director Sébastien Trahan's **Code of Misconduct**, in which an investigative journalist's duty to follow the facts leads to the trial of five Canadian professional hockey players charged with sexual assault; Ryan Ermacora and Jessica Johnson's **Concrete Turned to Sand**, in which local oyster farmers ply their trade amidst a rapidly changing environment; Ree Wright and Meaghan Wright's **The Last Days of April**, the courageous journey of a determined disabled advocate living with a tethered spinal cord and chronic pain; director Rico King's **Nekai Walks**, in which Nekai Foster defies all medical odds and relearns to walk after being shot while walking home in Toronto's Jane and Finch neighbourhood; Oscar-nominated director Kim Nguyen's **Saigon Story: Two Shootings in the Forest Kingdom**, which reveals the elusive connection between two families and photojournalist Eddie Adams's iconic photo in the wake of the Vietnam War; and Evan Adams and Eileen Francis's **təm kʷaθ nan Namesake**, in which a request from the Tla'amin Nation to change the name of Powell River, B.C ignites a heated debate about whose history is told and respected. The Canadian Spectrum Competition is sponsored by DGC National and DGC Ontario.

International Spectrum Competition, a competitive program spotlighting engaging stories from around the globe, includes a compelling lineup of world premieres: **The 49th Year** directed by Heidrun Holzfeind tells the story of an anarchist incarcerated since 1980 as he reflects on his radical past; **A Distant Call** directed by Andrea Suwito captures a rare, meditative struggle between local tradition and modern faith in a remote Indonesian community with ancient traditions; **LandStone** directed by Faraz Fadaian takes viewers into the Iranian desert where an elderly man and his wife face mortality and fading bonds while seeking solace in a handmade cave; **Parasisi** directed by Zaïde Bil and Sébastien Segers traces how mining, missionaries and medicine ripple through daily life along the Lawa River; **Stories for Sandro** directed by Giacomo Boeri brings to life the memories of the filmmaker's father after he is diagnosed with Alzheimer's; **Vanishing Tracks** directed by Hamed Zolfaghari follows a family in Iran's remote nomadic landscape as they navigate their traditional existence in a modern world, and **Vegapolis** directed by Micha Barban Dangerfield brings audiences inside a Montpellier rink where teens gather each week, forging friendships, dissecting crushes and dreaming amidst laser lights and thumping bass. The International Spectrum Competition program is supported by the Donner Canadian Foundation.

The **World Showcase** program features revelatory stories that span the globe, including the world premieres of Simon Ennis and Brad Abrahams's **Gimme Truth**, which follows truth-seekers and ex-believers into the gravitational pull of conspiracy culture; Jevan Crittenden and Nate Slaco's **In Tye Country**, in which a century-old fishing club on Canada's west coast faces an existential crisis as salmon populations dwindle; and Alisher Balfanbayev's **Searching for Drug Peace**, in which a daring activist risks everything to fund a non-profit drug testing centre and provide life-saving harm reduction amidst a deadly overdose crisis in Vancouver.

Made In Brazil will showcase new documentaries from Brazil including the world premiere of *Solar Shadow* from directors Hugo Haddad and Isadora Canela, a beautiful exploration of ancestral Indigenous astronomy in Brazil, and the international premiere of *Dona Onete – This Tiny Piece of My Heart* from director Mini Kerti, a colour-filled and spirit-lifting portrait of singer and composer Dona Onete who, in her seventies, emerged as Brazil’s “Queen of Carimbó.”

Persist amplifies the voices of strong, inspirational women who are speaking up and being heard, including the world premieres of director Nance Ackerman’s *The Delivery Line*, which brings into sharp focus the gravity of the extraordinary and lifesaving work of fearless midwives who risk everything to help mothers in dangerous circumstances, and director Katia Café-Fébrissy *INDIVISUM: Legacies Adrift*, in which a Canadian filmmaker returns to her ancestral home of Guadeloupe to discover families torn apart over land inheritance.

The new **Digital Witnesses** program features stories of tech and surveillance and includes the international premieres of *Ghost in the Machine* by director Valerie Veatch, an interrogation of who builds AI, who benefits from it and who bears the cost of a technology that continues to surround us, and *Virtual Girlfriends* by director Barbora Chalupová, in which three women—navigating careers as sexual-content creators on OnlyFans—reveal the tantalizing, transactional and ultimately fragile dynamics of digital intimacy.

Artsapes features creative minds, artistic pursuits and inventive filmmaking, and includes the world premiere of *This Above All: The Theatrical Life of Antoni Cimolino* from director Barry Avrich, in which the longest serving Artistic Director of the iconic Stratford Festival, Antoni Cimolino, prepares for his final season while reflecting on the 40 years he’s devoted to the theatrical repertory company. Receiving its international premiere is *Gealtra* from director Brendan Canty, in which teenagers on the north side of Cork grow from shy beginners into viral sensations as they write and perform infectious Irish-language rap. Artsapes is supported by the Kololian Family.

Hot Docs will present a selection of 35 Canadian and international short films from 21 countries across various programs and as part of the Festival’s four curated **Shorts Programs**.

The festival will close with a free encore screening where the winner of this year’s **Rogers Audience Award for Best Canadian Documentary** will be announced. The winner will receive a \$50,000 cash prize courtesy of Rogers.

For a complete list of 2026 Hot Docs Festival films, download the Festival Media Kit at hotdocs.ca/news/media

For more information on Hot Docs, visit hotdocs.ca

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Hot Docs (hotdocs.ca) is North America's leading documentary festival, conference and market. A not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing and celebrating the art of documentary and to creating production opportunities for documentary filmmakers, Hot Docs will present its 33rd annual edition in Toronto from April 23 to May 3, 2026. Hot Docs will also mount a dynamic series of knowledge sessions, networking opportunities and market programs for documentary practitioners and industry delegates, including the renowned Hot Docs Forum and Hot Docs Deal Maker. Since its inception in 1993, Hot Docs has supported the Canadian and international industry with professional development programs, production fund portfolio, and valuable professional development programs. The organization fosters education through documentaries with its popular free program Docs For Schools. Hot Docs also operates the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, a century-old landmark located in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood and the world's first and largest documentary cinema.

Starting Tuesday, March 24, Festival ticket package holders, including Doc Soup subscribers, can use their ticket packages, and Hot Docs Members can purchase single tickets. Starting Tuesday, March 31, single tickets will be available to the public. Tickets and ticket packages can be purchased and used [online](http://www.hotdocs.ca) at www.hotdocs.ca or in person at Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema Box Office, located at 506 Bloor Street West (hours vary daily in accordance with cinema screenings). Single tickets are \$22 (\$20 member) for regular screenings, and \$27 (\$24 member) for Opening Night and Big Ideas screenings. A Festival 12-Pack is \$228 and a Festival 20-Pack is \$340 (\$216 and \$320 members). Hot Docs offers free tickets for regular screenings before 4:00 p.m. to patrons 60+ and students with valid photo I.D., available in-person at the venue on the day of the screening, subject to availability.

Hot Docs is proud to include Rogers as its Founding Partner and Telefilm Canada, the Government of Ontario, and the Canada Media Fund as its Major Supporters.

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**HOT DOCS ANNOUNCES WORLD PREMIERE OF
ANTIDIVA: THE CAROLE POPE CONFESSIONS
FROM DIRECTOR MICHELLE MAMA AND PRODUCERS BILL TAYLOR AND ALLISON
GRACE WILL KICK OFF 2026 FESTIVAL AS OPENING NIGHT FILM
A LOVE LETTER TO THE POWER OF DEFIANCE, CANADIAN DOC SPOTLIGHTS THE QUEER
ROCK ICON RECLAIMING HER RIGHTFUL PLACE IN MUSIC HISTORY**

Toronto, March 24, 2026 – Hot Docs announced today that *Antidiva: The Carole Pope Confessions* (Canada | 2025 | 89 min), directed by Canadian filmmaker **Michelle Mama** and produced by **Allison Grace** and **Bill Taylor**, will receive its world premiere as the 2026 Hot Docs Festival **Opening Night Film** on **Thursday, April 23** at **Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema**. The 2026 Hot Docs Festival will take place April 23 to May 3 in Toronto. Described by the filmmakers as a love letter to the power of defiance, the film spotlights queer rock icon Carole Pope as she reclaims her rightful place in music history—not as a footnote, but as a godmother of punk glam, queer pride, and radical authenticity. Commissioned by *documentary Channel*, *Antidiva: The Carole Pope Confessions*, which will be distributed in Canada by Motion 58, received funding in 2023 from the Hot Docs-Slaight Family Fund to support the project in its development stage.

In Toronto’s vibrant music, art and fashion scene of the 1970s and 1980s, Carole Pope made her mark with the new wave band Rough Trade, which produced bold, boundary-breaking music delivered with a sexy punk edge. “High School Confidential,” the band’s breakthrough hit, did something not many had done before: it featured an openly queer performer fearlessly expressing lesbian desire on daytime radio. Now in her 70s, Pope continues to channel her creativity into new forms. Her latest project is a musical that draws on her life and career with Rough Trade, as well as the story of her beloved late brother Howard, himself a celebrated musician and AIDS activist. Told with refreshing candour and drawn in part from Pope’s autobiography, her story pulses with backstage seductions and on-stage swagger. Featuring interviews with celebrity friends like Peaches, k.d. Lang, Jann Arden, Rufus Wainwright and Jeanne Beker, *Antidiva: The Carole Pope Confessions* is a long overdue cinematic tribute to a fierce and talented queer maverick.

“The 2026 Hot Docs Festival opens with a celebration of an extraordinary Canadian artist and a distinctly Toronto story,” said Diana Sanchez, Executive Director of Hot Docs. “Carole Pope is a trailblazer, and Michelle Mama’s film captures her voice, influence and cultural impact with real energy and insight. We’re proud to launch the Festival with the world premiere of a Canadian film that honours a bold artist and sets the stage for 11 days of remarkable documentary storytelling.”

“Carole Pope arrived on the music scene like a meteor, writing about love and lust and queerness in ways nobody had ever seen,” said Michelle Mama. “A film about her life is long overdue and it was my honour to be the one to bring it to the screen.”

Michelle Mama is an award-winning, five-time Canadian Screen Award nominee who has been producing and directing in the factual and doc space for over two decades. Her most recent credits

include executive producing doc feature *Summer Qamp*, *Canada's Drag Race* Season 3 and "Canada vs. The World" (Crave), directing the trans makeover series *Shine True* (VICE), and show-running two seasons of the award-winning arts documentary series *In The Making* (CBC). Michelle most recently directed celebrated comic Mae Martin hosting a special episode of *The Nature of Things* "Fluid: Beyond the Binary" (CBC) and had the pleasure of directing two 2024 Governor General Award films, produced by the National Film Board, honouring comedy icon Andrea Martin and puppeteering legend Ronnie Burkett.

Bill Taylor is an award-winning Toronto-based writer, director and producer. His work includes feature documentaries, doc series, and scripted film and television. He began his career as a writer-director, with films screening at festivals worldwide, including *Silver Road* and *Don't Get Killed in Alaska*, before expanding into producing. Blending a sharp producing sensibility with a writer-director's creative vision, he is committed to telling emotionally resonant, socially conscious stories across genres and platforms.

Allison Grace is an award-winning producer with five Canadian Screen Awards and a reputation for developing exceptional talent and non-fiction formats and doc series that sell globally. With more than 25 years of experience, she has served as executive producer for hundreds of hours of television aired in Canada, the U.S., and international markets. She previously held the position of VP of Content at Proper Television (Boat Rocker) for over a decade producing high rated hit documentary and unscripted series. Through her company, Here's The Thing Productions Inc., Allison supports bold female led scripted and unscripted content and works with up-and-coming creators to showcase new and original voices on screen.

Commissioned by *documentary* Channel, *Antidiva: The Carole Pope Confessions* is a co-production between GAY AGENDA and Here's The Thing Productions, with distribution by Motion 58. The film was made possible with the support of the Canada Media Fund POV Program, the Ontario Creates Film Fund, the Hot Docs-Slaight Family Fund, Telefilm Canada Theatrical Documentary Program and the Rogers Documentary Fund, in association with CBC and *documentary* Channel. The film will premiere on *documentary* Channel, Sunday, July 19 at 9 PM ET, and on CBC Gem Friday, July 24.

Carole Pope, director Michelle Mama, producers Bill Taylor and Allison Grace and special guests will attend the Hot Docs Festival 2026 Opening Night screening at the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema (506 Bloor Street West) to introduce the film and participate in a post-screening audience Q&A.

In addition to its opening night screening on April 23, the film will also screen on Sunday, April 26 at Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema.

For more information on Hot Docs, visit hotdocs.ca

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**HOT DOCS SHARES FULL LINEUP OF 80 FEATURES FROM 47 COUNTRIES TO
SCREEN AS PART OF 2026 FESTIVAL
19 FILMS WILL SCREEN IN COMPETITION**

Toronto, March 24, 2026 – Hot Docs announced today the full lineup of features set to premiere at the 2026 Hot Docs Festival, running April 23 to May 3 in Toronto. The 63 films announced today join previously announced titles as the full lineup of 80 feature titles from 47 countries that will screen as part of nine film programs, including the Festival’s two competition programs, Canadian Spectrum Competition and International Spectrum Competition. Of these official selections, 25 will receive their world premiere, 13 their international premiere and 13 their North American premiere.

“The art and craft put into this year’s feature films opens up fascinating insights from all across the planet,” said Gabor Petic, Lead Programmer, Hot Docs Festival. “Humanity’s struggles, courage, and ambition are all on display, as is the increasingly evolving world of technology. With films from 47 countries, our programming team has done an incredible job of assembling a lineup of features that is as global as possible, showcasing both Canadian and international filmmaking talent at its finest. Supporting our community of documentary makers is essential, now more than ever, in order to help their stories reach audiences and achieve the impact they deserve.”

Below is the full list of features screening as part of the 2026 Hot Docs Festival, listed as part of their respective programs.

Titles announced today:

OPENING NIGHT FILM

ANTIDIVA: THE CAROLE POPE CONFESSIONS

D: Michelle Mama | P: Bill Taylor | Canada | 2025 | 89 min | World Premiere

Singer-songwriter Carole Pope shattered taboos with raw, unapologetic music and defiant sexuality. *Antidiva* tells the story of a queer rock icon reclaiming her rightful place in music history, with insights from k.d. lang, Peaches, Jann Arden, Rufus Wainwright and Jeanne Beker. *Also screening as part of Special Presentations*

CANADIAN SPECTRUM COMPETITION

Sponsored by DGC National and DGC Ontario

A competitive program of compelling Canadian stories and perspectives

CEREMONY

D: Banchi Hanuse | P: Banchi Hanuse | Canada | 2026 | 84 min | Canadian Premiere

At Nuxalk Radio, a ramshackled station on the edge of the world, an inquiry into the vanished ooligan fish uncovers a chilling history rooted in the attempted erasure of the Nuxalk people and their enduring resilience.

CODE OF MISCONDUCT

D: Sébastien Trahan | P: Annie Bourdeau | Canada | 2026 | 88 min | World Premiere

An investigative journalist's duty to follow the facts leads to the trial of five Canadian professional hockey players charged with sexual assault, unravelling our national pastime and questioning the institutions that hold the sport accountable.

CONCRETE TURNED TO SAND

D: Ryan Ermacora, Jessica Johnson | P: Jessica Johnson, Ryan Ermacora | Canada | 2026 | 73 min | World Premiere

"To see a World in a Grain of Sand / And a Heaven in a Wild Flower" William Blake's poetry comes to life in Cortes Island, B.C., as local oyster farmers ply their trade amidst a rapidly changing environment in this spellbinding photo essay.

A FIRE THERE

D: Marlene Edoyan | P: Dominique Dussault | Canada | 2026 | 95 min | North American Premiere

In a remote Georgian village bordering Armenia, three friends struggle with the tension between inherited destiny and the desire to forge one's own path, torn between obligation and desire, tradition and change, the world they know and the one they dream of.

KINDERGARTEN

D: Jean-François Caissy | P: Jean-François Caissy | Canada | 2025 | 84 min | Ontario Premiere

Enter a world of adorable toddlers, where the wee ones are forming their first social relationships outside their homes, with this charming and honest slice-of-life look at daycare through the eyes of children.

THE LAST DAYS OF APRIL

D: Ree Wright, Meaghan Wright | P: Ree Wright, Meaghan Wright, Melani Wood | Canada | 2026 | 75 min | World Premiere

The courageous journey of a determined disabled advocate living with a tethered spinal cord and chronic pain, while balancing love, legacy and the fight for bodily autonomy as she chooses how she wants to leave the world: on her own terms.

NEKAI WALKS

D: Rico King | P: David Mcilvrde | Canada | 2026 | 90 min | World Premiere

At 16, Nekai Foster was shot while walking home in Toronto's Jane and Finch neighbourhood. His journey of survival and recovery—defying all medical odds as he relearns to walk—exposes how gun violence shapes bodies, families and communities.

SAIGON STORY: TWO SHOOTINGS IN THE FOREST KINGDOM

D: Kim Nguyen | P: Nabil Mehchi, Robert Vroom, Ariel Nasr | Canada | 2026 | 91 min | World Premiere

Oscar-nominated director Kim Nguyen reveals the elusive connection between two families and photojournalist Eddie Adams's iconic photo, *Saigon Execution*, confronting family secrets left in the wake of the Vietnam War, exposing the resilience of survivors and blurred legacy of wartime memory.

TƏM K'AAΘ NAN NAMESAKE

D: Evan Adams, Eileen Francis | P: Peg Campbell | Canada | 2026 | 76 min | World Premiere
When the Tla'amin Nation requests a name change for the city of Powell River, B.C.—named for Israel Wood Powell, a key figure in the creation of the Indian residential school system—it ignites a heated debate about whose history is told and respected.

INTERNATIONAL SPECTRUM COMPETITION

Supported by the Donner Canadian Foundation

A curated competition of world and international premieres from around the globe

THE 49TH YEAR

D: Heidrun Holzfeind | P: Heidrun Holzfeind | Austria, Germany, Japan | 2026 | 88 min | World Premiere

Through thoughtful letters from prison, an anarchist incarcerated since 1980 reflects on his radical past. This meditative portrait pairs humane narration with contemporary Japanese landscapes, exploring the quiet tensions between aging, political militancy and time itself.

BABY JACKFRUIT BABY GUAVA

D: Nhật Quang Nông | P: Trang Đào Thị Minh, Sarah Kang, Heejung Oh | Vietnam, South Korea, Switzerland | 2026 | 105 min | International Premiere

A queer filmmaker creates an intimate time capsule for his unborn nephew as his sister, who lives with schizophrenia, unexpectedly becomes pregnant. Spanning five years of home archives, the film documents a Vietnamese family's journey to overcome traditional expectations and heal old wounds.

A DISTANT CALL

D: Andrea Suwito | P: Finbar Somers, Xavier Rocher, Mandy Marahimin | Indonesia, UK, France | 2026 | 99 min | World Premiere

In a remote Indonesian community with ancient traditions, a former spiritual leader faces a difficult choice between their unique gender identity and the expectations of an Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca. This vivid film captures a rare, meditative struggle between local tradition and modern faith.

HOUSE OF HOPE

D: Marjolein Busstra | P: Ruby Deelen, Olivia Sophie van Leeuwen, May Jabareen, Ossama Bawardi | Netherlands, Palestine | 2025 | 91 min | International Premiere

In the West Bank lies an elementary school organized and run by a couple set on teaching their young Palestinian students non-violent resistance, offering a refuge from the escalating uncertainty that surrounds them.

LANDSTONE

D: Faraz Fadaian | P: Farshad Fadaian, Elaheh Nobakht, Saeed Sheidi Tekmedash | Iran, Switzerland | 2026 | 64 min | World Premiere

In the Iranian desert, an elderly man and his wife face mortality and fading bonds. Seeking solace in a

handmade cave, the man struggles to reconnect with his past in this lyrical and visually striking study of a vanishing way of life.

PAIKAR

D: Dawood Hilmandi | P: Frank Hoeve, Katja Draaijer | Netherlands | 2025 | 97 min | International Premiere

From exile in Amsterdam, filmmaker Dawood Hilmandi reflects on his family nickname, Paikar, the Persian word for warrior. Returning to Iran to reconcile with his authoritarian father, their journey to Afghanistan during a pandemic transforms a lifetime of displacement into a story of survival.

PARASISI

D: Zaïde Bil, Sébastien Segers | P: Sébastien Segers, Zaïde Bil | Belgium | 2025 | 61 min | World Premiere

Along the Lawa River, Wayana families live with the quiet aftershocks of intrusion. In luminous black-and-white, this lyrical film traces how mining, missionaries and medicine ripple through daily life, revealing colonial histories etched into lands and bodies.

STORIES FOR SANDRO

D: Giacomo Boeri | P: Giacomo Boeri, Domenico Procacci | Italy | 2025 | 81 min | World Premiere
After being diagnosed with Alzheimer's, Sandro begins writing down his memories—credible tales previously unknown to his family. His son, the filmmaker, delves deeper, bringing to life colourful and carefully crafted episodes filled with irony, drama and comedy.

VANISHING TRACKS

D: Hamed Zolfaghari | P: Hamed Zolfaghari, Valérienne Boué, Verona Meier, Wonil Lee | Iran, France, Norway, South Korea, Qatar | 2026 | 93 min | World Premiere

In Iran's remote nomadic landscape, a family navigates their traditional existence in a modern world. When their sheep vanish overnight, tensions rise between the three sons and their parents. Surreal and dreamlike, this richly textured portrait captures a disappearing way of life.

VEGAPOLIS

D: Micha Barban Dangerfield | P: Romain Rampillon, Benjamin Costes | France | 2025 | 71 min | World Premiere

Laser lights, thumping bass and blades on ice. Inside a Montpellier rink, teens gather each week, forging friendships, dissecting crushes and dreaming. With big life changes on the horizon, this kaleidoscopic coming-of-age portrait captures the joy, intensity and fragile magic of youth.

WORLD SHOWCASE

A popular global selection of the year's finest docs

32 METERS

D: Morteza Atabaki | P: Morteza Atabaki, Murat Ones | Turkey, Iran, Qatar | 2025 | 83 min | North American Premiere

Growing up in rural Turkey, Halime is a woman who has always defied tradition. Now, she rallies friends to stage a women's shooting competition, igniting lively debates and unexpected alliances in this funny and quietly subversive film about claiming space on your own terms.

BETTER GO MAD IN THE WILD

D: Miro Remo | P: Miro Remo, Tomáš Hrubý | Czech Republic, Slovakia | 2025 | 83 min | Canadian Premiere

A talking cow narrates the lives of twin brothers living alone on a remote Czech farm. Surreal, cinematic and darkly funny, this wildly original film presents a portrait of unconventional familial love inside a world that feels half real, half dream.

BIRDS OF WAR

D: Janay Boulos, Abd Alkader Habak | P: Sonja Henrici, Janay Boulos, Abd Alkader Habak | UK, Syria, Lebanon | 2026 | 85 min | Canadian Premiere

A love story blossoms between a London-based Lebanese journalist and her on-the-ground contact, a Syrian-based cameraman, through 13 years of war, revolutions and exile. But can two people from such disparate worlds make a life together?

GIMME TRUTH

D: Simon Ennis, Brad Abrahams | P: Aeschylus Poulos, John Galway | Canada | 2026 | 89 min | World Premiere

Evil aliens. False flags. Fake pandemics. Chemtrails. For a number of truth seekers, the pull of conspiracies has given them purpose and validated their skepticism of the systems that have let them down. But what is the cost when the search for truth becomes your identity?

IN TYEE COUNTRY

D: Jevan Crittenden, Nate Slaco | P: Nate Slaco, Jevan Crittenden | Canada | 2025 | 71 min | World Premiere

A century-old fishing club on Canada's west coast faces an existential crisis as salmon populations dwindle and members wrestle with their legacy, realizing that their biggest catches might be a thing of the past.

JARIPEO

D: Efraín Mojica, Rebecca Zweig | P: Sarah Strunin | Mexico, USA, France | 2026 | 71 min | Canadian Premiere

Against the immersive backdrop of the annual Christmas *jaripeo*—a Mexican rodeo-style festival—the notion of cowboys and hypermasculinity is put under a lens, revealing intimate memories and desires in a celebration of queer self-expression and belonging.

LES HABITANTS

D: Maureen Fazendeiro | P: Filipa Reis, Valentina Novati | Portugal, France | 2025 | 42 min | Canadian Premiere

On the outskirts of Paris, a collective of women assists a travelling group of Roma against the wishes of

their neighbours. A beautifully contemplative film that considers the day-to-day lives of migrants without a safe place to live.

LET OUR MOUNTAINS LIVE

D: Håvard Bustnes | P: Håvard Bustnes, Johannes Vang | Norway, Finland | 2026 | 100 min | North American Premiere

Should renewable energy come at the cost of Indigenous rights? In Norway's mountainous Fosen region, Sámi reindeer herders and youth activists win a Supreme Court victory against a large wind farm but face a bigger battle when economic interests stall political action.

MY BENJAMIN

D: Victoria Clay Mendoza | P: Marion d'Ornano, Victoria Clay Mendoza | Mexico, France | 2025 | 75 min | International Premiere

As a danseur étoile at the Paris Opera Ballet, Benjamin Pech has built his life around dance. But a hip injury and mandatory retirement age of 42 mean coming to terms with the end of an illustrious career.

MY FATHER AND QADDAFI

D: Jihan K | P: Jihan K, Valentina Castellani-Quinn | Libya, USA | 2025 | 88 min | Canadian Premiere

A daughter traces the disappearance of her beloved father—Libyan Foreign Minister and peaceful opposition leader to dictator Muammar Gaddafi—intimately exploring how authoritarian power has reverberated through her family and country amidst a two-decade long search.

ON MY OWN TERMS

D: Tadeusz Chudy | P: Marta Wierzbicka, Dominika Palka | Poland | 2025 | 67 min | International Premiere

In an orphanage, two half-siblings dream of living on their own after one achieves success as a boxer and the other inherits her own apartment. But the road to adulthood grows thorny as the teenagers quickly learn the price of independence.

PUBLIC ACCESS

D: David Shadrack Smith | P: Anne-Marcelle Ngabirano, Sara Crow | USA | 2025 | 108 min | International Premiere

The revolutionary rise of a New York City public-access station, featuring provocative shows and early performances from musicians like Debbie Harry and Bob Marley, reveals how boundary-pushing programming reshaped free expression long before the internet.

SCARLET GIRLS

D: Paula Cury | P: Samuel Didonato | Dominican Republic, Germany, Mexico | 2026 | 70 min | Canadian Premiere

What does it mean to exist as a woman in a country where abortion is illegal without exception? Through intimate narration and evocative cinematography, women across the Dominican Republic reflect on their experiences with forced motherhood and clandestine abortion.

SEARCHING FOR DRUG PEACE

D: Alisher Balfanbayev | P: Max Joelson, Alisher Balfanbayev | Canada | 2026 | 89 min | World Premiere

Amidst a deadly overdose crisis in Vancouver, a daring activist funds a non-profit drug testing centre by operating the illicit Coca Leaf Café and Medicinal Mushroom Dispensary, risking everything to provide life-saving harm reduction and advocate for drug reform.

THE SEOUL GUARDIANS

D: Chul Young Cho, Shin Wan Kim, Jong Woo Kim | P: Sona Jo, Shin Wan Kim | South Korea | 2026 | 71 min | North American Premiere

When martial law was shockingly declared in 2024, the people of Seoul took to the streets to protect their democracy. Driven by memories of past dictatorships, this urgent reportage-style film captures a night of chaos and powerful, collective citizen resistance.

SILENT FLOOD

D: Dmytro Sukholytkyy-Sobchuk | P: Karina Kostyna, Eugene Rachkovsky, Tanja Georgieva-Waldhauer | Ukraine, Germany | 2025 | 90 min | North American Premiere

Along the Dniester River, a pacifist farming community maintains a centuries-old way of life. As the Russian invasion nears, these traditional isolationists must find their own way to support the front, bridging the gap between their peaceful faith and a nation at war.

TRACES

D: Alisa Kovalenko, Marysia Nikitiuk | P: Olha Bregman, Natalia Libet, Violetta Kamińska, Izabela Wójcik, Dariusz Jabłoński | Ukraine, Poland | 2026 | 82 min | North American Premiere

Activist Iryna Dovhan documents the testimonies of Ukrainian women who survived conflict-related violence following the Russian invasion. By gathering survivors into a “circle of courage,” the film portrays a defiant collective, transforming their shared trauma into a powerful force for truth and justice.

WHAT COMES FROM SITTING IN SILENCE?

D: Sophie Schrago | P: Pauline Tran Van Lieu, Lucie Rego, Heejung Oh, Sarah Kang | France, South Korea | 2026 | 76 min | Canadian Premiere

From a cramped Mumbai storefront, Khatoon leads Mumbai's first women-led Islamic court. Amidst heated arguments and raw testimony, these female judges settle cases of domestic conflict, reclaiming religious law from male dominance to offer a new path toward grassroots justice.

WHISPERS IN MAY

D: Dongnan Chen | P: Jia Zhao, Kay Xu | Hong Kong, Netherlands, Sweden, South Korea | 2026 | 95 min | Canadian Premiere

In the rural Liangshan Mountains, 14-year-old Qihuo and her friends embark on a road trip to find a skirt for her traditional menarche rite of passage. This poetic film blends documentary and fiction to capture a fleeting, final moment of childhood innocence.

WHO IS STILL ALIVE

D: Nicolas Wadimoff | P: Nadia Turincev | Switzerland, France, Palestine | 2025 | 115 min | Toronto Premiere

Nine Palestinians revisit the events that forced them to flee Gaza in 2024. With white chalk on a black stage, they map towns, camps and neighbourhoods, while recounting the painful losses of war and powerful memories of their lives before.

MADE IN BRAZIL

Recent documentaries from Brazil

APOLO

D: Tainá Müller, Isis Broken | P: Bianca Villar, Eduardo Capuri, Karen Castanho, Tainá Müller, Henrique Sauer, Fernando Fraiha, Thiago Mascarenhas | Brazil | 2025 | 77 min | Canadian Premiere

In Brazil, a trans couple go on an emotional pregnancy journey after conceiving naturally. Intimate moments and dreamlike sequences reveal a relationship sustained by tenderness, care and trust, despite institutions around them challenging their right to respectful medical care.

DONA ONETE – THIS TINY PIECE OF MY HEART

D: Mini Kerti | P: Renata Brandão, Luísa Barbosa | Brazil | 2025 | 90 min | International Premiere

Emerging as Brazil's "Queen of Carimbó" in her seventies, singer and composer Dona Onete brings humour, sensuality and contagious joy to every performance. A colour-filled and spirit-lifting portrait of an artist whose music carries a lifetime of lived culture, inspiring a new generation.

MY FOREIGN LAND

D: Lakapoy Collective, Louise Botkay, João Moreira Salles | P: Maria Carlota Bruno, João Moreira Salles | Brazil | 2025 | 99 min | Canadian Premiere

In the lead up to Brazil's pivotal 2022 election, an Indigenous tribal leader runs for office while his activist daughter fights from beyond their rainforest territory. This collaborative, multi-perspective film reveals the hope and heartbreak of a family navigating politics, legacy and the future of their homeland.

SOLAR SHADOW

D: Hugo Haddad, Isadora Canela | P: Victoria Mazzia | Brazil | 2026 | 75 min | World Premiere

How do we read the sky—and who taught us? This beautiful exploration of ancestral Indigenous astronomy in Brazil weaves lectures, conversations and community memory into a poetic meditation on knowledge, loss and the many ways humans understand the cosmos.

PERSISTER

Films about women speaking up and being heard

THE DELIVERY LINE

D: Nance Ackerman | P: Sergio Kirby, Nance Ackerman | Canada | 2026 | 87 min | World Premiere

In all corners of the world, on the front lines of war, amidst climate catastrophes and on perilous

migratory journeys, women are still giving birth. As fearless midwives risk everything to help mothers in dangerous circumstances, the gravity of their extraordinary and lifesaving work comes into sharp focus.

FATNA, A WOMAN NAMED RACHID

D: Hélène Harder | P: Ilham Raouf, Nadège Labé, Delphine Duez, Jean-David Lefebvre, Valentin Leblanc | Morocco, France, Belgium | 2025 | 93 min | International Premiere

Forcibly disappeared as a student in 1970s Morocco, activist Fatna El Bouih examines her life thus far, the work still left to do and her dream of change.

INDIVISUM: LEGACIES ADRIFT

D: Katia Café-Fébrissy | P: Katia Café-Fébrissy | Canada | 2026 | 75 min | World Premiere

In a brave effort to reconnect with her family, a Canadian filmmaker returns to her ancestral home of Guadeloupe to discover families torn apart over land inheritance—a relic of French colonial legacy that continues to fracture Guadeloupean families today.

THE SECRET READING CLUB OF KABUL

D: Shakiba Adil, Elina Hirvonen | P: Pauliina Piipponen, Johanna Raita | Finland, Norway | 2026 | 90 min | North American Premiere

When the Taliban bars girls from secondary school, a group of friends form a secret book club. Inspired by the story of Anne Frank, they film their hidden lives, tracing a path of resistance that leads from Kabul to exile in Tehran and Germany.

TRUCK MAMA

D: Zippy Nyaruri | P: Zippy Nyaruri, Portia Cele, | Kenya, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Netherlands | 2025 | 85 min | North American Premiere

Wildly charismatic and determined to seize her own economic independence, Kenyan truck driver Eva drives long-haul routes across East Africa—even through pregnancy and early single motherhood. This moving road story follows a life lived between border crossings and phone calls home, mile after mile.

WHERE THE WAVES TOOK HER

D: Jana Stallein | P: Charlotte Peters, Levin Hübner | Germany | 2025 | 83 min | International Premiere
Interspersed with recollections of multiple migrant women, this chronicle of a humanitarian crisis is told through the journey of a remarkable German midwife, who joins a rescue ship to provide care to women and children fleeing to Europe across the Mediterranean.

THE WOMAN WHO POKED THE LEOPARD

D: Patience Nitumwesiga | P: Rosie Motene, Patience Nitumwesiga, Phil Wilmot, Natalia Imaz, Menzi Mhlongo | Uganda, South Africa, Germany, USA | 2025 | 108 min | North American Premiere
Outspoken and unapologetic, Ugandan dissident Stella Nyanzi confronts authority using insults, nudity and fearless protest. Beyond her activism, this intimate portrait explores the emotional toll of resistance, revealing a complex woman negotiating public struggles alongside the expectations of family life.

DIGITAL WITNESSES

How our relationships with and through tech are defining our lives.

#WHILEBLACK

D: Sidney Fussell, Jennifer Holness | P: Ann Shin, Mariam Bastani, Sidney Fussell | USA, Canada | 2026
| 80 min | Canadian Premiere

How are acts of witnessing transformed in the digital age when memory, justice and spectacle collide? Centred on Darnella Frazier, who filmed George Floyd's murder, and many others, this urgent examination exposes the cost of going viral while Black.

GHOST IN THE MACHINE

D: Valerie Veatch | P: Valerie Veatch | USA | 2025 | 110 min | International Premiere

This is not a film about machines. It is a film about power. An interrogation of who builds AI, who benefits from it and who bears the cost of a technology that continues to surround us, shaping the way we see the world.

REPLICA

D: Chouwa Liang | P: Andy Huang, Christilla Huillard-Kann | Australia, France | 2026 | 92 min | North American Premiere

Love in the modern world can be tricky. For three Chinese women, AI companions bring the comfort and love they need, but are these artificial relationships preventing them from connecting in the real world?

THE SANDBOX

D: Kenya-Jade Pinto | P: Shasha Nakhai, Kenya-Jade Pinto | Canada | 2026 | 90 min | North American Premiere

A rare and cinematic investigation into the global black box of migration surveillance, control and the caretakers fighting to keep these worlds in check.

VIRTUAL GIRLFRIENDS

D: Barbora Chalupová | P: Pavla Klimešová, Monika Lošťáková, Tonislav Hristov | Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Slovakia | 2025 | 90 min | International Premiere

As three women navigate careers as sexual-content creators on OnlyFans, they reveal the tantalizing, transactional and ultimately fragile dynamics of digital intimacy. Raw and unflinching, this fly-on-the-wall film investigates self-worth, validation and the human cost of the gig economy.

ARTSCAPES

Supported by the Kololian Family

Art on film, featuring creative minds, artistic pursuits and inventive filmmaking

AANIKOBIJIGAN [ANCESTOR/GREAT-GRANDPARENT/GREAT-GRANDCHILD]

D: Adam Khalil, Zachary Khalil | P: Steve Holmgren, Grace Remington, Jacque Clark | USA, Denmark | 2026 | 81 min | Ontario Premiere

Ancestors trapped in museum archives demand a reckoning, and it's time we listen. Guided by defiant

Indigenous voices—past, present and future—and shaped with a bold artistic vision, this urgent film confronts entrenched practices and calls for the rightful return of Indigenous human remains to their community.

BARBARA FOREVER

D: Brydie O'Connor | P: Elijah Stevens, Brydie O'Connor, Claire Edelman | USA | 2026 | 102 min | Canadian Premiere

With unprecedented access to pioneering feminist experimental filmmaker Barbara Hammer and her extraordinary archive, this powerfully crafted portrait lets Hammer claim authorship of her own legacy, honouring and celebrating her as a trailblazer who transformed lesbian cinema.

ELEPHANTS & SQUIRRELS

D: Gregor Brändli | P: Frank Matter | Switzerland | 2025 | 114 min | Ontario Premiere

When Sri Lankan artist Deneth Piumakshi Veda Arachchige discovers her ancestors' stolen remains tucked away in Swiss museum cabinets, she investigates the dark legacy of colonial explorers. With the aid of Indigenous leaders, she demands the return of these sacred artifacts, challenging the ethics of modern collections.

GEALTRA

D: Brendan Canty | P: Maire Dineen | Ireland | 2025 | 70 min | International Premiere

The Kabin Studio on the north side of Cork gives teenagers the mic and the confidence to use it. Writing and performing infectious Irish-language rap, they grow from shy beginners into viral sensations—their lyrics pulsing with pride, heritage and the joy of being heard.

HEX

D: Maja Holand | P: Mari Nilsen Neira | Norway | 2026 | 93 min | North American Premiere

In the heart of Norway's black metal music scene, a new force emerges. Three young women enter a pact to start screaming, devoting their entire lives to awakening the world, each other and themselves as witches.

MAINTENANCE ARTIST

D: Toby Perl Freilich | P: Toby Perl Freilich, Judith Mizrachy | USA | 2025 | 95 min | Canadian Premiere

Meet Mierle Laderman Ukeles—an artist whose name should be better known. Her groundbreaking performance art and manifesto on maintenance art led her to become NYC's Department of Sanitation's first artist-in-residence. Through exclusive access and rare archival materials, celebrate her radical artistic vision that brings attention to the invisible.

THIS ABOVE ALL: THE THEATRICAL LIFE OF ANTONI CIMOLINO

D: Barry Avrich | P: Mark Selby, Barry Avrich | Canada | 2026 | 78 min | World Premiere

As his final season approaches, the longest serving Artistic Director of the iconic Stratford Festival, Antoni Cimolino, prepares for his exit while reflecting on the 40 years he's devoted to the theatrical repertory company.

Previously announced titles:

BIG IDEAS (PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED)

Hear from notable subjects and experts on the issues featured in thought-provoking documentaries

LOVE APPTUALLY

D: Shalini Kantayya | P: Elizabeth Woodward | USA, Australia | 2026 | 81 min | World Premiere
Tired of swiping without results? Follow one journalist's quest to unpack the dating app algorithms shaping modern romance as she reveals how, in an already lonely world, technology, bias and profit are increasingly influencing who we meet and why. *Also screening as part of Digital Witnesses*

MYSPLACE

D: Tommy Avallone | P: Van Toffler, Trent Johnson | USA | 2025 | 96 min | World Premiere
What is the legacy of Myspace? Pulling at the heartstrings of millennials and curious newcomers alike, this nostalgic portrait traces how this pioneering social networking platform shaped the digital world we now inhabit, from online fame to social media overload. *Also screening as part of Special Presentations*

STEAL THIS STORY, PLEASE!

D: Carl Deal, Tia Lessin | P: Carl Deal, Tia Lessin, Karen Ranucci, Diana Cohn, Caren Spruch | USA | 2026 | 102 min | Canadian Premiere
Fiercely independent journalist Amy Goodman has spent three decades holding the powerful to account, reporting from conflict zones and the *Democracy Now!* newsroom as an essential voice highlighting global issues and pursuing truth in an era of "alternative" facts. *Also screening as part of Special Presentations*

A WAR ON WOMEN

D: Raha Shirazi | P: Marco Serrecchia, Marica Stocchi, Beatrice Bordone Bulgari, Gianluca Curti, Daniele Occhipinti, Luca Bradamante | Italy | 2026 | 102 min | North American Premiere
Long before the world chanted "Woman, Life, Freedom," Iranian women have been rising up. Intimate interviews and archival footage trace 40 years of feminist resistance against the Islamic Republic, culminating in a revolution led by the very women the regime tried to silence. *Also screening as part of Special Presentations*

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS (PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED)

Award-winning films, celebrated filmmakers, high-profile subjects and special screenings

AMERICAN DOCTOR

D: Poh Si Teng | P: Poh Si Teng, Kirstine Barfod, Reem Haddad | USA, Palestine, Denmark, Malaysia, Qatar | 2026 | 93 min | Canadian Premiere
Three American physicians—Palestinian, Jewish and Zoroastrian—risk everything to save lives in besieged Gaza and expose political truths while navigating a collapsing medical infrastructure and global indifference.

THE BALLAD OF JUDAS PRIEST

D: Tom Morello, Sam Dunn | P: Sam Dunn, Scot McFadyen | USA | 2026 | 98 min | Canadian Premiere
From working-class origins in Birmingham to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, the genre-defining heavy metal band's five-decade journey is chronicled through exclusive interviews with Judas Priest, previously unpublished personal archives and appearances by Ozzy Osbourne, Jack Black, Metallica and more.

BLACK ZOMBIE

D: Maya Annik Bedward | P: Maya Annik Bedward, Kate Fraser, Hannah Donegan | Canada | 2026 | 90 min | Canadian Premiere

From colonial Haiti's haunted cane fields to the flickering screens of Hollywood horror, the living dead's buried origins are unearthed and reclaimed as a symbol of survival and spiritual resistance.

A FOX UNDER A PINK MOON

D: Mehrdad Oskouei, Soraya Akhalaghi | P: Mehrdad Oskouei | Iran, Denmark, France | 2026 | 77 min | Canadian Premiere

Filmed entirely on her phone over five years, 16-year-old Soraya documents her harrowing attempts to flee Iran for Austria. Through surreal animations and sculptures, the young Afghan artist transforms her experiences of domestic violence and displacement into a powerful, self-narrated testament to survival.

IT'S DOROTHY!

D: Jeffrey McHale | P: Ariana Garfinkel, Zel McCarthy, Suzanne Zions | USA | 2025 | 97 min | Canadian Premiere

Dorothy's journey to Oz continues to inspire audiences united by their search for belonging. This vibrant, imaginative portrait celebrates her cultural legacy and the diverse communities who claim her as their own, reminding us that no matter how hard things get, we must never stop looking over the rainbow.

KENNY LOGGINS: CONVICTION OF THE HEART

D: Dori Berinstein | P: Dori Berinstein | USA | 2025 | 96 min | World Premiere

Everybody cut footloose! From chart-topping anthems to movie soundtracks, multi-award-winning singer songwriter Kenny Loggins reflects on a career that defined a generation, tracing his life on and off stage across decades of reinvention.

THE OLDEST PERSON IN THE WORLD

D: Sam Green | P: Alison Byrne Fields, Josh Penn | USA | 2026 | 87 min | Canadian Premiere

For over a decade, filmmaker Sam Green has chronicled the ever-changing Guinness World Record holder of "Oldest Person in the World." Weaving together his personal experiences of fatherhood, ageing and loss, Green offers a poignant meditation on family, mortality and the meaning of life.

SENTIENT

D: Tony Jones | P: Ivan O'Mahoney | Australia | 2026 | 105 min | Canadian Premiere

This investigative look at the highly controversial practice of animal testing—centred on the story of

primate scientist turned animal rights activist Dr. Lisa Jones-Engel—questions if the harm to animals and the human scientists who care for them is justified by the pursuit of scientific advancement.

TCB – THE TONI CADE BAMBARA SCHOOL OF ORGANIZING

D: Louis Massiah, Monica Henriquez | P: Louis Massiah | USA, UK, Canada, France, Senegal | 2025 | 105 min | International Premiere

This dynamic portrait of Toni Cade Bambara, the visionary Black feminist writer, filmmaker and activist, celebrates her life with power and urgency. Through rare archives and intimate reflections from those she inspired, we learn lessons in agency, community resilience and the transformative impact of cultural organizing.

TIME AND WATER

D: Sara Dosa | P: Shane Boris, Elijah Stevens, Jameka Autry, Sara Dosa | USA, Iceland | 2026 | 90 min | Canadian Premiere

Following the loss of his beloved grandparents and facing the death of his country's glaciers, renowned Icelandic writer Andri Snær Magnason constructs a cinematic time capsule in this beautifully crafted meditation on family, memory and epochal change from Academy Award nominee Sara Dosa (*Fire of Love*).

TO HOLD A MOUNTAIN

D: Biljana Tutorov, Petar Glomazić | P: Biljana Tutorov, Petar Glomazić, Quentin Laurent, Rok Biček | Serbia, France, Slovenia, Montenegro, Croatia | 2026 | 105 min | Canadian Premiere

In the quiet mountain lands of Montenegro, a mother and daughter strive to protect their ancestral home from the threat of becoming a NATO military training facility, awakening memories of the violence that shattered their family.

THE TOWER THAT BUILT A CITY

D: Mark Myers | P: Mark Myers, Luke Myers | Canada | 2026 | 92 min | World Premiere

Toronto's skyline-defining CN Tower launched a five-decade transformation of the Big Smoke into the 6ix. Celebrate its 50th anniversary as it continues to symbolize a city that's become a world-class cultural force in sports, music and global identity.

WHEN A WITNESS RECANTS

D: Dawn Porter | P: Dawn Porter, Jennifer Oko, Miriam Weintraub | 2026 | USA | 117 min | Canadian Premiere

Author, journalist and activist Ta-Nehisi Coates investigates the case of a young student who was murdered in Baltimore, uncovering layers of false accusations, wrongful convictions and how the justice system can fail those caught in the crossfire.

For more information on Hot Docs, visit hotdocs.ca

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Hot Docs (hotdocs.ca) is North America's leading documentary festival, conference and market. A not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing and celebrating the art of documentary and to creating production opportunities for documentary filmmakers, Hot Docs will present its 33rd annual edition in Toronto from April 23 to May 3, 2026. Hot Docs will also mount a dynamic series of knowledge sessions, networking opportunities and market programs for documentary practitioners and industry delegates, including the renowned Hot Docs Forum and Hot Docs Deal Maker. Since its inception in 1993, Hot Docs has supported the Canadian and international industry with professional development programs, production fund portfolio, and valuable professional development programs. The organization fosters education through documentaries with its popular free program Docs For Schools. Hot Docs also operates the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, a century-old landmark located in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood and the world's first and largest documentary cinema.

Starting Tuesday, March 24, Festival ticket package holders, including Doc Soup subscribers, can use their ticket packages, and Hot Docs Members can purchase single tickets. Starting Tuesday, March 31, single tickets will be available to the public. Tickets and ticket packages can be purchased and used [online](http://www.hotdocs.ca) at www.hotdocs.ca or in person at Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema Box Office, located at 506 Bloor Street West (hours vary daily in accordance with cinema screenings). Single tickets are \$22 (\$20 member) for regular screenings, and \$27 (\$24 member) for Opening Night and Big Ideas screenings. A Festival 12-Pack is \$228 and a Festival 20-Pack is \$340 (\$216 and \$320 members). Hot Docs offers free tickets for regular screenings before 4:00 p.m. to patrons 60+ and students with valid photo I.D., available in-person at the venue on the day of the screening, subject to availability.

Hot Docs is proud to include Rogers as its Founding Partner and Telefilm Canada, the Government of Ontario, and the Canada Media Fund as its Major Supporters.

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**HOT DOCS SHARES 2026 FESTIVAL LINEUP OF 35 SHORT FILM SELECTIONS
FROM 21 COUNTRIES**

SHORTS TO SCREEN ACROSS FESTIVAL PROGRAMS INCLUDING
FOUR THEMED SHORTS PROGRAMS

Toronto, March 24, 2026 – Hot Docs will present a selection of 35 Canadian and international short films as part of the 2026 Hot Docs Festival, taking place April 23 to May 3 in Toronto. Shorts from 21 countries will screen in programs across the Festival, with several screening as part of one of four themed Shorts Programs.

Short films from Canada are eligible for the Hot Docs Best Canadian Short Documentary, awarded to an exceptional Canadian documentary up to 40 minutes in length. Hot Docs will present the winner with a \$3,000 cash prize.

International shorts are eligible for the award for Hot Docs Best International Short Documentary, supported by TVO, and awarded to an exceptional international documentary up to 40 minutes in length.

“This year’s collection of 35 international shorts films speaks to the power of community and collective action, but also to the major ripple effects that can result from one individual’s passion and tenacity,” said Gabor Petic, Lead Programmer, Hot Docs Festival. “We look forward to sharing with audiences this selection of documentary shorts that is commanding and at times unflinching, but also incredibly full of hope.”

Below is a list of all short films screening at the 2026 Hot Docs Festival. In many cases, filmmakers will be in attendance for post-screening discussions. For specific program information and screening times, please visit hotdocs.ca

0004NGEL

D: Eli Jean Tahchi | P: Vincent Champagne, Simon Bertrand, Yannick Chapdelaine | Canada | 2025 | 12 min | Ontario Premiere

4937 KILOWATTS A YEAR

D: Ellie Delvaux, Madeleine Faburel-Dumail | P: Manon Ledune | Belgium, Morocco | 2025 | 23 min | World Premiere

AEROBIC CORRIDOR

D: Jennifer Law-Smith | P: Mick Robertson, Evan Dubinsky | Canada | 2025 | 20 min | World Premiere

AIMÉE & SAMIR

D: Catherine van Campen | P: Floor Krooi, Elbe Stevens | Netherlands | 2025 | 30 min | World Premiere

Hot Docs is a charitable, not-for-profit organization committed to advancing the art of documentary and supporting opportunities for independent filmmakers.

ANOTHER DAY SHALL COME

D: Aida Kaadan | P: Carol Mezher | Palestine, Qatar, Lebanon, France | 2026 | 20 min | World Premiere

AT THE STAGE WHEN

D: Hao Zhou | P: Hao Zhou, Tyler Hill | USA, China | 2026 | 16 min | International Premiere

BAEA

D: Terra Long | P: Mike Paterson, Heidi Fleisher | USA | 2025 | 18 min | Canadian Premiere

THE BAKER'S HOTLINE

D: Emily Schuman, David Schuman | P: Emily Schuman | USA | 2025 | 13 min | Canadian Premiere

THE BIRDS ARE SILENT

D: Leo Dzhyshyashvili | P: Luisa Nöllke | Germany, Ukraine | 2025 | 8 min | North American Premiere

THE CONTINUOUS MACHINE

D: Ruben Gagliardini | P: Mattia Fiumani | Italy | 2025 | 20 min | International Premiere

CONSTANT BATTLES

D: Mackenzie Stannard | P: Sina Nazarian, Mackenzie Stannard, Sepideh Yadegar, Sepehr Samimi | Canada | 2025 | 38 min | World Premiere

ELEPHANT FAMILIES

D: Elena Escalante | P: Elena Escalante, Maurice Banerjee Palmer, Emiliana Ammirata | UK, Spain | 2025 | 15 min | North American Premiere

FLETCHER STREET

D: Jannat Gargi, David Darg | P: Jannat Gargi | USA | 2025 | 35 min | World Premiere

THE GLACIER WEDDING

D: Amin Muhammad, Thomas Sawano | P: Thomas Sawano, Amin Muhammad, Thomas Sawano | USA | 2025 | 26 min | World Premiere

I SEE MYSELF IN YOU

D: Amreen Kullar | P: | Canada | 2025 | 9 min | Toronto Premiere

IN THE MORNING SUN

D: Serville Poblete | P: Nicole Dane, Serville Poblete | Canada | 2025 | 21 min | Canadian Premiere

L'MINA

D: Randa Maroufi | P: Randa Maroufi, Oumayma Zekri Ajarrai | Morocco, France, Italy, Qatar | 2025 | 26 min | Ontario Premiere

MANDZARSOA

D: Germain Le Carpentier | P: Murielle Thierrin, Orana Larthomas | France, Mayotte | 2025 | 15 min | North American Premiere

MY BODY GOES TO WORK

D: Fernanda Molina | P: Daria Lavrova, Fernanda Molina | Canada | 2025 | 12 min | World Premiere

MÚSICAS

D: Lila Áviles | P: Nicolas Celis | Mexico | 2025 | 33 min | Canadian Premiere

OH WHALE

D: Winslow Crane-Murdoch | P: Luke Terrell, Cecilia Brown, Rachel Gardell | USA | 2025 | 26 min | International Premiere

PAPER HOUSES AND HORSES

D: An Chu | P: An Chu, Tzu-Yuan Wang | Taiwan | 2025 | 19 min | North American Premiere

THE PARK (DANCING ON THE RUBBLE OF EMPIRE)

D: Arwa Aburawa, Turab Shah | P: Turab Shah, Arwa Aburawa | UK | 2025 | 34 min | International Premiere

A QUIET STORM

D: Benjamin Nicolas | P: Benjamin Nicolas, Janie Chartier, Xavier Terra | Japan, Canada | 2025 | 29 min | Ontario Premiere

REPLIKKA

D: Piratá Waurá, Heloisa Passos | P: Mark Slagle, Heloisa Passos, Yula Rocha | Brazil, USA, UK | 2025 | 16 min | North American Premiere

SANYI THE ROOSTER

D: Lotte Salomons | P: Kes Raven, Raphael Hogers, Nova Nagel | Netherlands | 2025 | 20 min | North American Premiere

SCENES FROM THE DIVIDE

D: Alison Klayman | P: Courtney Powell, Alison Klayman, Courtney Powell | USA | 2026 | 32 min | International Premiere

SOME KIND OF REFUGE

D: Alexandra Kern | P: Colin Cadarette | USA | 2026 | 16 min | International Premiere

STILL PLAYING

D: Mohamed Mesbah | P: Yannick Beauquis, Quentin Brayer | France | 2025 | 37 min | Canadian

Premiere

THAT NIGHT

D: Hoda Sobhani | P: Elle Toussi, Hoda Sobhani | USA | 2025 | 11 min | Canadian Premiere

THE THIRD CHILD

D: Serna Amini | P: Serna Amini | Iran | 2025 | 25 min | Canadian Premiere

THIS IS YOUR CAPTAIN SPEAKING

D: Nienke Deutz, Digna Van der Put | P: Brecht van Elslande, Koert Davidse, Marc Thelosen | Netherlands, Belgium | 2026 | 15 min | Canadian Premiere

TIME OF PLENTY

D: Robin Jensen | P: Lise Fearnley, Tonje Skar Reiersen | Norway | 2026 | 19 min | World Premiere

TUKTUIT : CARIBOU

D: Lindsay McIntyre | P: Lindsay McIntyre | Canada | 2025 | 15 min | Toronto Premiere

A WOLF IN THE SUBURBS

D: Amélie Hardy | P: Rosalie Chicoine Perreault | Canada | 2026 | 18 min | Ontario Premiere

For a complete list of 2026 Hot Docs Festival films and events, download the Festival Media Kit at hotdocs.ca/news/media

For more information on Hot Docs, visit hotdocs.ca

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Password: HD26Media

Media Contact

Bill Alexander

balexander@hotdocs.ca

HOT DOCS 2026 TO AWARD OVER \$130,000 IN CASH AND PRIZES

Toronto, March 24, 2026 – Hot Docs announced today that over \$130,000 in cash will be awarded to filmmakers at the 2026 Festival. These encompass a variety of accolades, including juried awards for films in competition, audience awards determined by ballot, industry prizes recognizing top works-in-progress projects and other special awards categories. The 2026 Hot Docs Festival will take place April 23 to May 3 in Toronto.

All awards for films in competition will be decided by Hot Docs Festival Juries, with the winners set to be unveiled during the Hot Docs Awards Presentation on Friday, May 1.

Hot Docs is an Academy Award-qualifying Festival. The winner of the Best International Feature Documentary Award and the winners of the Best Canadian Short Documentary Award and the Best International Short Documentary Award at this year's Festival will qualify for consideration in the documentary feature and documentary short subject categories of the annual Academy Awards®, respectively, without the standard theatrical run, provided the film otherwise complies with the Academy rules.

Unless otherwise noted, all prizes are awarded to the director of the winning film.

2026 FILM AWARDS AND PRIZES

FILMS IN COMPETITION:

HOT DOCS BEST CANADIAN FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

Awarded to an exceptional feature-length documentary in the Canadian Spectrum Competition program.

Hot Docs is pleased to present the winner with a \$10,000 cash prize.

Supported by Telefilm Canada

HOT DOCS BEST INTERNATIONAL FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

Awarded to an exceptional feature-length documentary in the International Competition program.

Hot Docs is pleased to present the winner with a \$10,000 cash prize.

Supported by Donner Canadian Foundation

HOT DOCS JOAN VANDUZER SPECIAL JURY PRIZE-INTERNATIONAL FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

Awarded to a feature-length documentary in the International Spectrum Competition program that the jury feels is deserving of special recognition.

Hot Docs is pleased to present the winner with a \$5,000 cash prize.

Supported by Makeway Foundation-Harbinger Fund in memory of Joan VanDuzer

HOT DOCS DGC SPECIAL JURY PRIZE-CANADIAN FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

Awarded to a feature-length documentary in the Canadian Spectrum Competition program that the jury feels is deserving of special recognition.

The award comes with a \$5,000 cash prize.

Sponsored by DGC National and DGC Ontario

HOT DOCS EMERGING INTERNATIONAL FILMMAKER AWARD

Given to a first or second-time international filmmaker with a feature film in the International Competition program. The award includes a \$3,000 cash prize.

Supported by the R&M Lang Foundation

HOT DOCS EARL A. GLICK EMERGING CANADIAN FILMMAKER AWARD

Given to a first- or second-time Canadian filmmaker with a feature film in the Canadian Spectrum Competition program. The award includes a \$3,000 cash prize.

Supported by the Earl A. Glick Family

HOT DOCS BILL NEMTIN AWARD FOR BEST SOCIAL IMPACT DOCUMENTARY

The Award will recognize the producers of a film from the Canadian and International features program that has the greatest potential to create social impact, in other words to change attitudes, behaviours and/or policy. The nominees include *Nekai Walks*, *Code of Misconduct*, *The Sandbox*, *The Seoul Guardians*, and *American Doctor*. A \$10,000 cash prize accompanies the award.

Supported by the Bill Nemtin Legacy Fund

HOT DOCS BEST INTERNATIONAL SHORT DOCUMENTARY

Awarded to an exceptional international documentary up to 40 minutes in length.

Hot Docs is pleased to present the winner with a \$3,000 cash prize.

Sponsored by TVO Docs

HOT DOCS BEST CANADIAN SHORT DOCUMENTARY

Awarded to an exceptional Canadian documentary up to 40 minutes in length.

Hot Docs is pleased to present the winner with a \$3,000 cash prize.

AUDIENCE AWARDS:

HOT DOCS AUDIENCE AWARDS

Awarded to the feature documentary and the short documentary that receive the highest rating in an audience poll. Announced after the close of the Festival.

HOT DOCS ROGERS AUDIENCE AWARD FOR BEST CANADIAN DOCUMENTARY

Awarded to the top Canadian feature documentary in an audience poll. The winner will receive a \$50,000 cash prize courtesy of Rogers, announced at a special encore screening on the Festival's final night.

HOT DOCS DOCS FOR SCHOOLS STUDENT CHOICE AWARD

Awarded to the documentary that receives the highest rating in the student audience poll. Announced at the end of the Docs for Schools program. The winner will receive a \$5,000 cash prize.

SPECIAL AWARD CATEGORIES:

HOT DOCS DON HAIG AWARD

The Don Haig Award will be awarded annually to an outstanding Canadian independent producer with a film in the Festival. The Award recognizes creative vision and entrepreneurship as reflected in the work being showcased at Hot Docs, as well as a track record for nurturing emerging Canadian filmmakers. The winner will receive a \$5,000 cash prize courtesy of the Don Haig Foundation.

LINDALEE TRACEY AWARD

The award honours an emerging Canadian filmmaker working in the spirit of Lindalee Tracey, whose films reflect a passionate point of view, a strong sense of social justice and “a joie de vivre.” The winner will be awarded \$5,000 from the Lindalee Tracey Fund.

2026 INDUSTRY PITCH PRIZES:

HOT DOCS *first look*

Hot Docs *first look* is a curated access program for a group of philanthropic doc lovers that grants them behind-the-scenes access to the world of documentary pitching and financing. Hot Docs first look participants attend the Hot Docs Forum and award the Hot Docs first look prize to up to three of the best pitches. *first look* prize amount to be announced after Festival.

CMF-HOT DOCS FORUM CANADIAN PITCH PRIZE

The CMF-Hot Docs Forum Canadian Pitch Prize, presented in partnership with the Canada Media Fund, is a \$10,000 cash prize that will be awarded to the best Canadian pitch at the Hot Docs Forum. The prize money is intended to go towards the production and completion of the winning project.

THE HOT DOCS–CHICKEN & EGG SPECIAL PITCH FORUM PRIZE

The Hot Docs–Chicken & Egg Special Pitch Forum Prize, presented in partnership with Chicken & Egg, a \$5,000 cash prize awarded to a top Forum pitch team representing an outstanding documentary project directed by a woman or gender-expansive filmmaker.

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Media Contact

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baalexander@hotdocs.ca

14 FILMS SUPPORTED BY HOT DOCS' FUNDS AND MARKET PROGRAMS TO SCREEN AT 2026 FESTIVAL

Toronto, March 24, 2026 – Hot Docs is proud to present 14 films developed with support from its film funds and market programs, including the Hot Docs Forum and Deal Maker. These projects will screen as part of the 2026 Hot Docs Festival, running April 23 to May 3 in Toronto.

Grant recipients and alumni projects are listed below.

#WHILEBLACK

Participated in Hot Docs Forum 2023

D: Sidney Fussell, Jennifer Holness | P: Ann Shin, Mariam Bastani, Sidney Fussell | USA, Canada | 2026 | 80 min | Canadian Premiere

How are acts of witnessing transformed in the digital age when memory, justice and spectacle collide? Centred on Darnella Frazier, who filmed George Floyd's murder, and many others, this urgent examination exposes the cost of going viral while Black.

ANTIDIVA: THE CAROLE POPE CONFESSIONS

Hot Docs-Slaight Family Fund recipient 2023

D: Michelle Mama | P: Bill Taylor | Canada | 2025 | 89 min | World Premiere

Singer-songwriter Carole Pope shattered taboos with raw, unapologetic music and defiant sexuality. *Antidiva* tells the story of a queer rock icon reclaiming her rightful place in music history, with insights from k.d. lang, Peaches, Jann Arden, Rufus Wainwright and Jeanne Beker.

BARBARA FOREVER

Participated in Hot Docs Deal Maker 2024

D: Brydie O'Connor | P: Elijah Stevens, Brydie O'Connor, Claire Edelman | USA | 2026 | 102 min | Canadian Premiere

With unprecedented access to pioneering feminist experimental filmmaker Barbara Hammer and her extraordinary archive, this powerfully crafted portrait lets Hammer claim authorship of her own legacy, honouring and celebrating her as a trailblazer who transformed lesbian cinema.

BIRDS OF WAR

Participated in Hot Docs Deal Maker 2024

D: Janay Boulos, Abd Alkader Habak | P: Sonja Henrici, Janay Boulos, Abd Alkader Habak | UK, Syria, Lebanon | 2026 | 85 min | Canadian Premiere

A love story blossoms between a London-based Lebanese journalist and her on-the-ground contact, a Syrian-based cameraman, through 13 years of war, revolutions and exile. But can two people from such disparate worlds make a life together?

BLACK ZOMBIE

CrossCurrents International Doc Fund 2019 recipient

Participated in Hot Docs Deal Maker 2018

D: Maya Annik Bedward | P: Maya Annik Bedward, Kate Fraser, Hannah Donegan | Canada | 2026 | 90 min | Canadian Premiere

From colonial Haiti's haunted cane fields to the flickering screens of Hollywood horror, the living dead's buried origins are unearthed and reclaimed as a symbol of survival and spiritual resistance.

CEREMONY

CrossCurrents International Doc Fund 2021 recipient

D: Banchi Hanuse | P: Banchi Hanuse | Canada | 2026 | 84 min | Canadian Premiere

At Nuxalk Radio, a ramshackled station on the edge of the world, an inquiry into the vanished ooligan fish uncovers a chilling history rooted in the attempted erasure of the Nuxalk people and their enduring resilience.

THE DELIVERY LINE

Participated in Hot Docs Deal Maker 2019

D: Nance Ackerman | P: Sergeo Kirby, Nance Ackerman | Canada | 2026 | 87 min | World Premiere

In all corners of the world, on the front lines of war, amidst climate catastrophes and on perilous migratory journeys, women are still giving birth. As fearless midwives risk everything to help mothers in dangerous circumstances, the gravity of their extraordinary and lifesaving work comes into sharp focus.

A FIRE THERE

CrossCurrents International Doc Fund 2022 recipient

D: Marlene Edoyan | P: Dominique Dussault | Canada | 2026 | 95 min | North American Premiere

In a remote Georgian village bordering Armenia, three friends struggle with the tension between inherited destiny and the desire to forge one's own path, torn between obligation and desire, tradition and change, the world they know and the one they dream of.

INDIVISUM: LEGACIES ADRIFT

Participated in Doc Accelerator 2021

D: Katia Café-Fébrissy | P: Katia Café-Fébrissy | Canada | 2026 | 75 min | World Premiere

In a brave effort to reconnect with her family, a Canadian filmmaker returns to her ancestral home of Guadeloupe to discover families torn apart over land inheritance—a relic of French colonial legacy that continues to fracture Guadeloupean families today.

JARIPEO

Participated in Hot Docs Forum 2024

D: Efraín Mojica, Rebecca Zweig | P: Sarah Strunin | Mexico, USA, France | 2026 | 71 min | Canadian Premiere

Against the immersive backdrop of the annual Christmas *jaripeo*—a Mexican rodeo-style festival—the notion of cowboys and hypermasculinity is put under a lens, revealing intimate memories and desires in a celebration of queer self-expression and belonging.

MY FATHER AND QADDAFI

Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund 2018 recipient

Participated in Hot Docs Deal Maker 2018

D: Jihan K | P: Jihan K, Valentina Castellani-Quinn | Libya, USA | 2025 | 88 min | Canadian Premiere

A daughter traces the disappearance of her beloved father—Libyan Foreign Minister and peaceful opposition leader to dictator Muammar Gaddafi—intimately exploring how authoritarian power has reverberated through her family and country amidst a two-decade long search.

THE SANDBOX

CrossCurrents International Doc Fund 2024 recipient

Hot Docs Ted Rogers Fund 2022 recipient

Participated in Hot Docs Forum 2023

D: Kenya-Jade Pinto | P: Shasha Nakhai, Kenya-Jade Pinto | Canada | 2026 | 90 min | North American Premiere

A rare and cinematic investigation into the global black box of migration surveillance, control and the caretakers fighting to keep these worlds in check.

TO HOLD A MOUNTAIN

Participated in Hot Docs Deal Maker 2021

D: Biljana Tutorov, Petar Glomazić | P: Biljana Tutorov, Petar Glomazić, Quentin Laurent, Rok Biček | Serbia, France, Slovenia, Montenegro, Croatia | 2026 | 105 min | Canadian Premiere

In the quiet mountain lands of Montenegro, a mother and daughter strive to protect their ancestral home from the threat of becoming a NATO military training facility, awakening memories of the violence that shattered their family.

TRUCK MAMA

Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund 2015 recipient

D: Zippy Nyaruri | P: Zippy Nyaruri, Portia Cele, | Kenya, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Netherlands | 2025 | 85 min | North American Premiere

Wildly charismatic and determined to seize her own economic independence, Kenyan truck driver Eva drives long-haul routes across East Africa—even through pregnancy and early single motherhood. This moving road story follows a life lived between border crossings and phone calls home, mile after mile.

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Hot Docs is a charitable, not-for-profit organization committed to advancing the art of documentary and supporting opportunities for independent filmmakers.

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HOT DOCS'S POPULAR DOCS FOR SCHOOLS PROGRAM BRINGS TOGETHER STUDENTS FROM ACROSS GTA FOR FREE SCREENINGS OF FESTIVAL FILMS

Toronto, March 24, 2026 – Hot Docs will once again provide free documentary screenings to school groups during this year's Festival, April 23 to May 3 in Toronto. The Hot Docs **Docs For Schools** Festival program connects students from across Toronto and the GTA with issues-based Festival films and guest filmmaker and subject Q&As, providing impactful opportunities for young people to be amongst the earliest audiences to see new documentaries from around the world and to engage meaningfully with important global stories and perspectives.

Hot Docs connects students to a carefully curated selection of thought-provoking documentaries that link to course subjects and current or historical events, with the goal of enriching classroom learning and igniting deep discussion that can inspire young minds. In turn, the Docs For Schools program offers a unique opportunity for filmmakers to engage directly with young people and better understand the impact their work can have on this important audience.

"Docs For Schools is really about the power of a shared experience," said Diana Sanchez, Executive Director, Hot Docs. "Students come together at the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema to encounter documentary as a group—watching, reflecting and talking through what they're seeing with one another, while also engaging directly with the filmmakers behind the work. In a media landscape that can feel fragmented, that collective experience helps young people engage more deeply with stories and build a stronger understanding of the world around them."

The Docs For Schools Festival program invites teachers and students to the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema for special screenings of five selected films premiering at the 2026 Hot Docs Festival. Films in this program are eligible for the **Docs For Schools Student Choice Award**, which will award the winning film's director with a \$5000 cash prize, made possible through the generous support of our program partners.

Support for Docs For Schools comes from Lead Partners Rogers, the Rossy Foundation and the Slaight-Family Foundation. Additional Supporters include: the Donner Canadian Foundation, Makeway Foundation - Harbinger Fund in memory of Joan Vanduzer the National Film Board of Canada, the Pitblado Family Foundation and Hot Docs Founders Circle Executive Producer-level members.

2026 Hot Docs Festival films participating as Docs For Schools screenings appear below.

IT'S DOROTHY!

D: Jeffrey McHale | USA | 2025 | 97 min | Canadian Premiere

Dorothy's journey to Oz continues to inspire audiences united by their search for belonging. This vibrant, imaginative portrait celebrates her cultural legacy and the diverse communities who claim her as their own, reminding us that no matter how hard things get, we must never stop looking over the rainbow.

təm kʷaθ nan NAMESAKE

D: Evan Adams, Eileen Francis | Canada | 2026 | 76 min | World Premiere

When the Tla'amin Nation requests a name change for the city of Powell River, B.C.—named for Israel Wood Powell, a key figure in the creation of the Indian residential school system—it ignites a heated debate about whose history is told and respected.

THE TOWER THAT BUILT A CITY

D: Mark Myers | Canada | 2026 | 92 min | World Premiere

Toronto's skyline-defining CN Tower launched a five-decade transformation of the Big Smoke into the 6ix. Celebrate its 50th anniversary as it continues to symbolize a city that's become a world-class cultural force in sports, music and global identity.

NEKAI WALKS

D: Rico King | Canada | 2026 | 90 min | World Premiere

At 16, Nekai Foster was shot while walking home in Toronto's Jane and Finch neighbourhood. His journey of survival and recovery—defying all medical odds as he relearns to walk—exposes how gun violence shapes bodies, families and communities.

HOUSE OF HOPE

D: Marjolein Busstra | P: Ruby Deelen, Olivia Sophie van Leeuwen, May Jabareen, Ossama Bawardi | Netherlands, Palestine | 2025 | 91 min | International Premiere

In the West Bank lies an elementary school organized and run by a couple set on teaching their young Palestinian students non-violent resistance, offering a refuge from the escalating uncertainty that surrounds them.

For more information on Docs For Schools programs, please visit: hotdocs.ca/docs-for-schools

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HOT DOCS BY NUMBERS: QUICK FACTS ON THE 2026 FESTIVAL

- Hot Docs received a total of 2820 submissions for the 2026 Festival
- 2026 official selection includes 115 documentary films in the following nine film programs:
 - Special Presentations
 - Canadian Spectrum Competition
 - International Spectrum Competition
 - World Showcase
 - Made In Brazil
 - Persister
 - Digital Witnesses
 - Artscapes
 - Shorts Program
- Hot Docs 2026 includes:
 - 34 world premieres (25 features, 9 shorts)
 - 18 international premieres (13 features, 5 shorts)
 - 19 North American premieres (13 features, 6 shorts)
 - 33 Canadian premieres (25 features, 8 shorts)
 - 7 Ontario premieres (3 features, 4 shorts)
 - 3 Toronto premieres (1 feature, 2 shorts)
- Hot Docs drew selections for its film programs from 51 countries. Documentaries and projects were produced and/or co-produced by the following countries:
 - 30 from Canada; USA
 - 17 from France
 - 7 from Netherlands
 - 6 from Germany; UK
 - 5 from Brazil; Iran; Norway; Qatar; South Korea;
 - 4 from Belgium; Italy; Mexico; Switzerland
 - 3 from Australia; Denmark; Morocco; Palestine; Ukraine;
 - 2 from Czech Republic; Finland; Japan; Lebanon; Poland; Slovakia; South Africa;
 - 1 from Austria; Bulgaria; China; Croatia; Dominican Republic; Hong Kong; Iceland; Indonesia; Ireland; Kenya; Libya; Malaysia; Mayotte; Montenegro; Portugal; Saudi Arabia; Senegal; Serbia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Taiwan; Turkey; Uganda;

FESTIVAL BOX OFFICE

Online at hotdocs.ca or the **Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema** Box Office at 506 Bloor Street West.

FESTIVAL SCREENING VENUES

- Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, 506 Bloor Street West
- TIFF Lightbox, Reitman Square, 350 King Street West

Activism & Resistance

32 Meters
The 49th Year
Aanikoobijigan [ancestor / great-grandparent / great-grandchild]
Black Zombie
Elephants & Squirrels
Fatna, a Woman Named Rachid
The Last Days of April
Let Our Mountains Live
Maintenance Artist
My Foreign Land
Nekai Walks
Searching for Drug Peace
The Secret Reading Club of Kabul
Sentient
The Seoul Guardians
təm kʷaθ nan Namesake
To Hold a Mountain
A War on Women
What Comes from Sitting in Silence?
The Woman Who Poked the Leopard

African Cultures & Issues

Truck Mama
The Woman Who Poked the Leopard

Aging & the Elderly

Dona Onete – This Tiny Piece of My Heart
Fatna, a Woman Named Rachid
My Benjamin
The Oldest Person in the World

Animals

Ceremony
Let Our Mountains Live
Sentient

Art & Artists

Barbara Forever
Maintenance Artist
This Above All: The Theatrical Life of Antoni

Asian Cultures & Issues

A Distant Call
The Seoul Guardians
Whispers in May

Black Cultures & Issues

#WhileBlack
Black Zombie
TCB – The Toni Cade Bambara School of Organizing

Brazilian Cultures & Issues

Apolo
Dona Onete – This Tiny Piece of My Heart
My Foreign Land
Solar Shadow

Canadian Cultures & Issues

Ceremony
Code of Misconduct
Concrete Turned to Sand
In Tye Country
Nekai Walks
Searching for Drug Peace
təm kʷaθ nan Namesake
The Tower That Built a City

Caribbean Cultures & Issues

Black Zombie
INDIVISUM: Legacies Adrift
Scarlet Girls

Childbirth & Midwifery

Apolo
Baby Jackfruit Baby Guava
The Delivery Line
Scarlet Girls
Where the Waves Took Her

Children & Youth

Gealra
House of Hope
Kindergarten
Vegapolis

Coming of Age

A Fire There
On My Own Terms
Vegapolis
Whispers in May

Crime & the Justice System

#WhileBlack
The 49th Year
Code of Misconduct
Fatna, a Woman Named Rachid
Nekai Walks
What Comes from Sitting in Silence?
When A Witness Recants

Disability

The Last Days of April

Ecology & the Environment

Ceremony
Concrete Turned to Sand
In Tye Country
Let Our Mountains Live
Parasisi
Solar Shadow
Time and Water
To Hold a Mountain

Education

House of Hope
Kindergarten
The Secret Reading Club of Kabul

Faith & Spirituality

Aanikoobijigan [ancestor / great-grandparent / great-grandchild]
Black Zombie
A Distant Call
Hex
Silent Flood

Families & Family Stories

Apolo
Baby Jackfruit Baby Guava
Better Go Mad in the Wild
INDIVISUM: Legacies Adrift
Kindergarten
LandStone
My Father and Qaddafi
My Foreign Land
On My Own Terms
Paikar
Stories for Sandro
Truck Mama

Vanishing Tracks

Film & Filmmakers

Barbara Forever

Food & Agriculture

Concrete Turned to Sand
In Tye Country
Silent Flood

Health & Mental Health

American Doctor
Apolo
Baby Jackfruit Baby Guava
Nekai Walks
Searching for Drug Peace
Stories for Sandro

Immigration, Migration & Refugees

A Fox Under a Pink Moon
Les Habitants
Paikar
The Sandbox
Vanishing Tracks
Where the Waves Took Her
Who Is Still Alive

Indigenous Cultures & Issues

Aanikoobijigan [ancestor / great-grandparent / great-grandchild]
Ceremony
Elephants & Squirrels
Let Our Mountains Live
Solar Shadow
təm k^waθ nan Namesake

Latin American Cultures & Issues

Apolo
Dona Onete – This Tiny Piece of My Heart
Jaripeo
My Foreign Land
Solar Shadow

LGBTQIA+ Cultures & Issues

Antidiva: The Carole Pope Confessions
Apolo
Baby Jackfruit Baby Guava
Barbara Forever

A Distant Call
It's Dorothy!
Jaripeo
Love Apptually
The Woman Who Poked the Leopard

Love & Relationships

Birds of War
Love Apptually
Replica
Virtual Girlfriends

Media & Journalism

Birds of War
Gimme Truth
Public Access
Saigon Story: Two Shootings in the Forest Kingdom
Steal This Story, Please!
When A Witness Recants

Middle Eastern Cultures & Issues

Constant Battles
House of Hope
LandStone
My Father and Qaddafi
Paikar
Vanishing Tracks
A War on Women

Mortality & Loss

Aanikoobijigan [ancestor / great-grandparent / great-grandchild]
LandStone
The Last Days of April
Time and Water

Music & Musicians

Antidiva: The Carole Pope Confessions
The Ballad of Judas Priest
Dona Onete – This Tiny Piece of My Heart
Gealtra
Hex
Kenny Loggins: Conviction of the Heart

Performers & Performance

Antidiva: The Carole Pope Confessions
My Benjamin

This Above All: The Theatrical Life of Antoni Cimolino

Personal Histories

The 49th Year
Antidiva: The Carole Pope Confessions
Dona Onete – This Tiny Piece of My Heart
A Fire There
Kenny Loggins: Conviction of the Heart
My Benjamin
Steal This Story, Please!
Stories for Sandro
TCB – The Toni Cade Bambara School of Organizing
This Above All: The Theatrical Life of Antoni Cimolino
The Woman Who Poked The Leopard

Politics & Political Intrigue

The 49th Year
My Father and Qaddafi
My Foreign Land
The Woman Who Poked The Leopard

Popular Culture

It's Dorothy!
Kenny Loggins: Conviction of the Heart
Myspace
Public Access

Postcolonial Cultures & Issues

River of Grass
Aanikoobijigan [ancestor / great-grandparent / great-grandchild]
Black Zombie
Ceremony
Elephants & Squirrels
INDIVISUM: Legacies Adrift
Parasisi
təm k^waθ nan Namesake

Science & Technology

Ghost in the Machine
Love Apptually
Replica
The Sandbox
Sentient

Social Media and the Internet

#WhileBlack
Ghost in the Machine
Gimme Truth
Love Apptually
Myspace
Replica
The Sandbox
Virtual Girlfriends

Sports & Recreation

32 Meters
Code of Misconduct
Constant Battles
Jaripeo
On My Own Terms
Vegapolis

Ukrainian Cultures & Issues

Silent Flood
Traces

War & Conflict

American Doctor
Birds of War
House of Hope

Saigon Story: Two Shootings in the Forest
Kingdom
Silent Flood
To Hold a Mountain
Traces
Who Is Still Alive

Women & Women's Stories

32 Meters
Barbara Forever
Constant Battles
The Delivery Line
A Fox Under a Pink Moon
Hex
The Last Days of April
Les Habitants
Scarlet Girls
The Secret Reading Club of Kabul
Traces
Truck Mama
Virtual Girlfriends
A War on Women
What Comes from Sitting in Silence?
Where the Waves Took Her
Whispers in May