



hotdocs

OUTSPOKEN.OUTSTANDING.

YEAR IN REVIEW

JUNE 2025 – MAY 2026

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A Message From

DIANA SANCHEZ

Hot Docs Executive Director



HEIDI TAO YANG

Hot Docs Managing Director



Thank you for showing up for Hot Docs this year. The past 12 months have been monumental, and we stand stronger today because of your collective support.

We began the year on steadier financial footing as a result of a meticulous and successful deficit reduction effort, which included securing a favourable leaseback at our beloved Hot Docs Cinema property, with the sale finalized in August 2025.

With this increased stability, we were able to revitalize our popular Curious Minds programming at the Cinema, and increase the number of free Docs For Schools screenings offered to GTA teachers and students. Our ever-popular Doc Soup series boasted sold-out monthly screenings and our Founders Circle membership more than doubled in size over the previous year. We strengthened our partnerships at all three levels of government, most notably with the federal Department of Heritage, and in March we ushered in a fresh nine-person Board of Directors who will help guide and define Hot Docs' future strategic vision.

The year culminated with the 33rd annual Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival where we showcased the work of the best and bravest Canadian and international storytellers. We saw increases in both ticket revenue and average attendance over last year, and the positive energy and buzz (at the cinemas and in the media) were hard to miss! At our Industry Conference & Market, we bolstered filmmaker projects through the return of the globally renowned Hot Docs Forum, Hot Docs Deal Maker, and our *first look* pitch prize program. And we watched proudly as many Hot Docs Festival and industry program alumni took center stage at this year's Academy Awards!

Throughout this past year the Hot Docs team maintained its commitment to curatorial excellence in our role as exhibitor and worked passionately to feed the insatiable curiosity of longtime doc lovers and to build new audiences for the genre. We embraced our role as a welcoming space for important social justice issues and underrepresented stories to be safely shared and discussed, proud to know that by convening people to watch docs in collective spaces we are building community, fostering empathy and strengthening civic engagement. It is a privilege and honour to carry out this work.

Thank you again for being part of Hot Docs' successful journey this year. A standing ovation for you all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Sanchez'.

Diana Sanchez

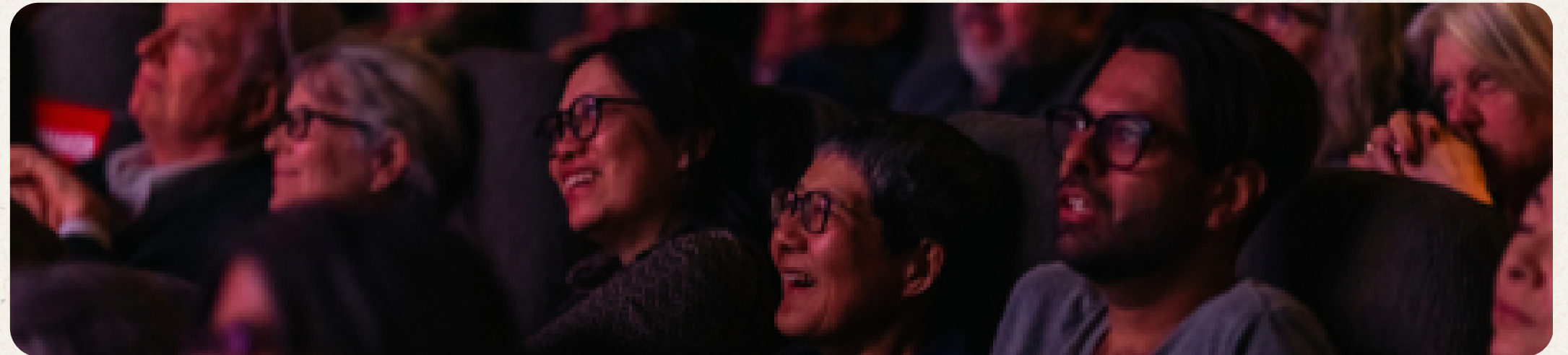
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Heidi Tao Yang'.

Heidi Tao Yang

2026 Hot Docs Festival

April 23 – May 3

The 2026 Hot Docs Festival was an inspiring 11-day celebration of documentary storytelling. As an Academy Award-qualifying festival, Hot Docs brought bold, urgent films to screens across Toronto, connecting powerful stories with passionate and engaged audiences.



This year, we proudly showcased

115 exceptional documentaries from 51 countries,

amplifying diverse perspectives and illuminating the most pressing issues of our time.



Rock legend Carole Pope at the world premiere of
ANTIDIVA: THE CAROLE POPE CONFESSIONS

2026 Hot Docs Festival

The 33rd edition of the Festival featured



**168 public screenings
across five screens at two Toronto venues,
with more than 160 filmmaker Q&As
that created rich opportunities for dialogue.**

Highlights included four extended conversations as part of the Big Ideas series, alongside programming streams that deepened the Festival's thematic scope: MADE IN BRAZIL celebrated contemporary Brazilian documentary storytelling, while DIGITAL WITNESSES explored the evolving relationship between technology, media, truth, and accountability in the digital age.



The Nuxalk film team at the Q&A for CEREMONY

Special guests brought remarkable depth to the programming. Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter Kenny Loggins, acclaimed investigative journalist Amy Goodman, legendary queer rock icon Carole Pope, and gun violence prevention advocate Nekai Foster each joined the Festival for candid conversations that enhanced audience engagement and enriched our collective exploration of the ideas, stories, and issues shaping our world. Members of the Nuxalk Nation travelled from their territory in Nuxalk (Bella Coola), British Columbia, to take part in a moving Q&A following CEREMONY, bringing an irreplaceable presence and lived connection to the film. After a screening of GEALTRA, the Kabin Crew, a youth dance group from Cork, Ireland, took to the stage for a joyful and electrifying performance.





2026 Hot Docs Festival

"TORONTO'S HOT DOCS FESTIVAL RETURNS FOR ITS 33rd EDITION WITH A RENEWED SENSE OF ENERGY AND PURPOSE."

—Barry Hertz, The Globe & Mail



Opening night party at the El Mocambo



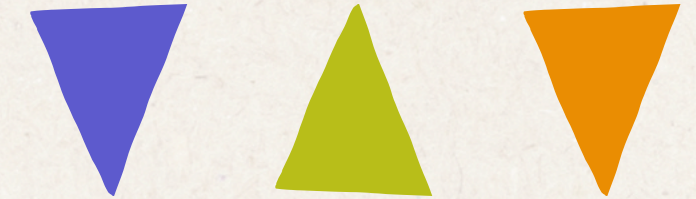
"SAVOUR SENSATIONAL CINEMA AT TORONTO'S RENOWNED DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL."

—Toronto Life



NEKAI WALKS director Rico King, winner of the 2026 Rogers Audience Award

2026 Hot Docs Festival



Former Governor General, Adrienne Clarkson, participates in Q&A

"AFTER CONFIDENTLY REBOUNDING IN 2025, HOT DOCS CONTINUES TO CLIMB UPWARD LITTLE BY LITTLE. THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL MOSTLY PROVES THAT THE AUDIENCE IS BACK AND HERE TO STAY."

—Pat Mullen, POV Magazine

"AS HOT DOCS MARKS 33 YEARS... THE SUPPORT OF PATRONS KEEPS MANY OF TORONTO'S FILM FESTIVALS RUNNING."
—CTV News



Live Performance from the Kabin Crew band after GEALTRA



Award-winning reporter Michelle Shephard, moderator of Big Ideas Q&A with Amy Goodman from STEAL THIS STORY, PLEASE!



Return of the Hot Docs Forum for pitching works-in-progress and securing financing

2026 Hot Docs Festival

By The Numbers



168 Public Screenings	160+ Live Q&As	30 Canadian Docs
42,050 Tickets Distributed	3338 Free Student & Senior Tickets Claimed*	14% Increase in single-ticket revenue compared to 2025
26 World Premieres 13 International Premieres 13 North American Premieres	3% Increase in average attendance per screening compared to 2025	35% Of Festival screenings going into "rush" status

**Free Screenings generously supported by Diane Blake and Stephen Smith*



Hot Docs Festival Industry Programs

Return of the Hot Docs Forum

After a one-year hiatus, Hot Docs was proud to welcome back the Hot Docs Forum, reaffirming its place as one of the world's leading documentary markets. For more than two decades, the Forum has connected filmmakers with broadcasters, distributors, foundations, streamers, and philanthropic supporters, helping bring ambitious documentary projects to life. This year, 15 projects from around the world were selected to pitch to an international audience of industry decision makers and funders, and a Wild Card pitch was selected at the event. Beyond financing opportunities, the Forum fostered meaningful connections, creative collaboration, and global visibility for documentary storytellers at a time when support for independent filmmaking is more important than ever. Its successful return marked a significant milestone for Hot Docs and the international documentary community.



Hot Docs *first look* Program

Through the *first look* program, a group of philanthropists gained exclusive access to the Hot Docs Forum, where 16 documentary projects from around the world pitched to leading industry decision makers. Participants experienced the documentary financing process firsthand and engaged directly with the stories and filmmakers. Together, *first look* participants awarded \$33,000 in pitch prizes to three film teams. These awards provide prestige and critical support to independent filmmakers as they work to get their projects completed.

Catalyst Circles

This new Hot Docs pilot partnership with Story Money Impact aims to encourage the use of documentary film as a catalyst for social change. Through intimate, issue-focused gatherings, filmmakers, philanthropists, researchers, advocates, and community leaders come together to explore complex topics and identify opportunities for collaboration and action. This year's Catalyst Circles events inspired meaningful dialogue and new cross-sector connections around issues including menopause, political polarization, and urban wild spaces. The program helped filmmakers connect with different active distribution venues for their work and introduced them to leading stakeholders who might license their films to advance their cause. Screening pledges and other pledges of support were made to filmmakers and all participants made valuable and lasting contacts.





Hot Docs Festival Industry Programs



Deal Maker

Hot Docs Deal Maker is a one-on-one pitch meeting program for producers seeking financing and distribution from the international marketplace. This year's Deal Maker facilitated over 300 curated meetings in an incredibly focused and productive environment. The new industry hub fostered a collaborative atmosphere that resonated with participants, who shared overwhelmingly positive feedback about the experience.

Hot Docs Deal Maker at The Tranzac Club



The Tranzac Club

New Industry Hub

In 2026, we brought our industry conference home. For the first time, several of our industry programs were hosted at The Tranzac Club in the Annex, the same neighbourhood as Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, creating a true hub for festival delegates. Conference sessions, Deal Maker, and other programs unfolded across these Annex spaces, with the beautiful neighbouring restaurant, Rafaella, providing an inviting space for connection. Rooting the conference in the Annex allowed filmmakers, industry guests, and our team to gather, collaborate, and celebrate in a space that felt genuinely ours.



Hot Docs Deal Maker meetings



Luncheon at Rafaella



Industry Happy Hour

Supporting Filmmakers

Hot Docs Industry Programs



\$175K

Awarded to Filmmakers

300+

Curated Meetings

65

Decision Makers

954

Industry Delegates from 47
Countries



Docs For Schools



At the 2026 Festival, we presented four free Docs For Schools screenings:

- IT'S DOROTHY!
- NEKAI WALKS
- təm kʷaθ nan (NAMESAKE)
- THE TOWER THAT BUILT A CITY

36 Participating Schools	1649 Students Served
---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

Demand was immediate, with all screenings reaching capacity shortly after registration opened. In total, more than 1600 middle and high school students attended these festival events.

Every Docs For Schools screening is accompanied by an engaging post-screening Q&A with filmmakers and special guests, providing students with the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the films and the issues they explore. Teachers also receive curriculum-aligned Educator's Guides in advance, featuring discussion questions and classroom activities designed to encourage critical thinking, meaningful dialogue, and collective reflection.

NEKAI WALKS was the recipient of the 2026 Docs For Schools Student Choice Award, a distinction chosen entirely by student votes. (**see slide 18 for year round Docs for Schools*)



Nekai Foster & director Rico King from NEKAI WALKS



Hot Docs Volunteers

Our volunteer program is one of the most celebrated in the Canadian arts community. Each year, hundreds of dedicated individuals contribute their time and passion across every corner of the Festival, from screenings and filmmaker Q&As to industry events and beyond. Their work is foundational to what we do and our festival would not be possible without them.

In return, we are committed to making the volunteer experience genuinely rewarding. Volunteers gain behind-the-scenes access to North America's leading documentary festival, meaningful connections with fellow film lovers, and a true sense of belonging within a community that shares their passion. We are deeply grateful to each and every volunteer who helps bring the Festival to life, and proud to offer a program worthy of their dedication.

The Hot Docs Festival volunteer program was generously supported by Michael MacMillan and Cathy Spoel.

314

Festival Volunteers

6,639

Volunteer Hours



YEAR ROUND AT HOT DOCS

JUNE 2025 – MAY 2026

Curious Minds Is Back

This year, Hot Docs revived the Curious Minds program in a dynamic new festival format, bringing together audiences for a weekend of thought-provoking conversations, live podcast recordings, and talks with leading authors, journalists, artists, and experts. The program created space for audiences to engage deeply with the stories, ideas, and issues shaping our world, extending Hot Docs' commitment to fostering curiosity, dialogue, and lifelong learning.

Building on the success of the festival, Hot Docs is reintroducing the Curious Minds Speaker Series this summer, marking the return of the popular lecture program that has engaged thousands of lifelong learners over the years. Together, these initiatives reaffirm Hot Docs' role as a cultural gathering place where audiences can connect with new ideas both on screen and through live experiences.

Clockwise from top: Astrologer and author Chani Nicholas; co-hosts of The Munk Debates podcast; and author, policy expert, and technologist Tim Wu, featured speakers at the 2025 Curious Minds Festival.



For Viola

Free Screening Series

Named in honour of Canadian civil rights icon Viola Desmond, the For Viola series centres BIPOC filmmakers, stories, and audiences, and seeks to affirm Hot Docs as a space of inclusion. To minimize barriers to audience participation, all screenings are free of charge.

The 2025–26 edition of this celebrated series featured two free screenings curated by Kourtney Jackson, reflecting a dynamic and contemporary vision for inclusive programming and community engagement. This year's program included *CETTE MAISON*, Miryam Charles' evocative exploration of grief, memory, and diasporic identity, shaped by her signature fusion of fiction and documentary storytelling; and *KHARTOUM*, a collaborative documentary capturing the lived experiences and resilience of Sudanese communities through a blend of personal testimony and observational filmmaking. Each screening was followed by post-film conversations that deepened audience engagement with the films' urgent themes and artistic approaches.

Hot Docs hopes to bring this program back in a more abundant way in the coming year.



CETTE MAISON (D: Miryam Charles)



For Viola Curator, Kourtney Jackson



KHARTOUM (D: Ibrahim Snoopy Ahmad, Timeea Mohamed Ahmed, Rawia Alhag, Philip Cox, Anas Saeed)

Stories We Told & Jukedocs

New Screening Series

STORIES WE TOLD is a new monthly cinema series inviting audiences to rediscover celebrated and award-winning Canadian documentaries on the big screen. Curated by Hot Docs Cinema lead programmer Vivian Belik, each edition brings a beloved Canadian documentary gem back to the theatre, offering both longtime fans and new audiences a chance to experience landmark films as they were meant to be seen: on the big screen.

**program generously supported by Diane Blake & Stephen Smith*

The JUKEDOCS series, curated by award-winning writer and podcaster Niko Stratis, brought boundary-pushing music documentaries to the Hot Docs Cinema screen. It exemplified our commitment to expanding our programming voice and reaching new audiences through bold, distinctive curatorial perspectives. The limited series drew in music lovers and documentary fans alike for experiences that were equal parts concert and film culture.



Vivian Belik,
Hot Docs Lead Cinema Programmer



Niko Stratis,
Jukedocs Curator

Docs For Schools

During the School Year

Beyond the Festival, we hosted 10 free Docs For Schools screenings at the Cinema this year, reflecting the enduring popularity of this long-standing program and the strong appetite for documentary storytelling among young audiences.

The documentaries shown were:

- CBC's BLACK LIFE: UNTOLD STORIES, NORTHERN BEATS (two screenings)
- TEENAGE WASTELAND
- THE PITCH
- CITIZEN MINUTES SERIES 3 (two screenings)
- KING'S COURT
- MAYBE ELEPHANTS
- təm kʷaθ nan (NAMESAKE)
- TOWER THAT BUILT A CITY

75

Participating
Schools

4627

Students Served



From the archives: Jeremy Hansen, Canadian Astronaut, on stage at Docs for Schools, October 2023



Cinema Access & Community Partnerships



Global Centre for Pluralism, Screening & Awards

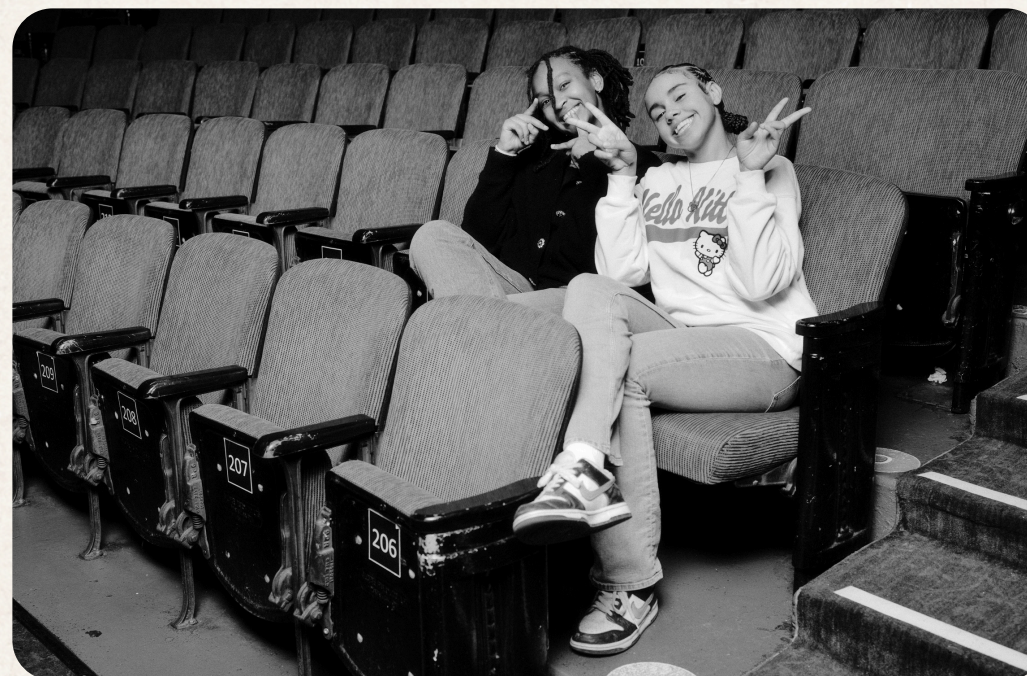


Kids Up Front, Toronto Blue Jays Home Opener

Hot Docs has built strong relationships with non-profits, cultural film festivals and charitable organizations across the GTA who call the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema home, and we hope to continue that connection with more future support. Recent examples include:

Youth-focused

- Kickback Foundation, graduation ceremony
- Kids Up Front, 20th anniversary event with live stream of Blue Jays game
- Humber Grad Showcase
- Canadian Film Centre Grad Showcase



Kickback Graduation Ceremony 2026

Cultural & Interest-Based Film Festivals

- Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival
- ImagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival
- Rendezvous with Madness Film Festival (Mental Health)
- South African Film Festival
- Toronto Arab Orchestra Festival
- Toronto Jewish Film Festival
- Cinefranco
- Female Eye Film Festival
- Ageless Film Festival
- Regent Park Film Festival

Civic Engagement

- Global Centre for Pluralism
- Jayu Sharing Human Rights Through the Arts



\$135M+

Our market programs have generated an estimated \$135 million in investment and deals for documentary filmmakers in the past decade.

Year Round Industry Funds

Hot Docs-Slaight Family Fund

This Fund is dedicated to filmmakers telling engaging, high-quality stories that embrace musicians and music in all its forms and that demonstrate Canadian music's role in the world. It also welcomes international music stories told through the lens of Canadian filmmakers. The Hot Docs-Slaight Family Fund financially supports three to five documentary projects each year with amounts ranging from \$15,000 to \$60,000 CAD.

Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund

This year, the Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund, a landmark partnership supporting documentary filmmakers across Africa and the African diaspora, concluded after 15 years of transformative impact. Through development and production grants, mentorship opportunities, and access to international markets and networks, the Fund helped documentary storytellers bring important stories to audiences around the world. The Fund also collaborated with The New York Times—Op-Docs to commission shorts from African filmmakers that showcased on The Times' Emmy® Award-winning online forum.

Over its lifetime, the Fund supported more than 100 projects from 26 countries, fostering a vibrant community of filmmakers and strengthening the global documentary ecosystem. This remarkable legacy was celebrated during the Festival at a special reception, "Celebrating 15 Years with Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund", which brought together filmmakers, funders, partners, and industry leaders to honour the achievements and lasting impact of the partnership.



Hot Docs Alumni at The Oscars & The Emmys



Mohammadreza Eyni & Sara Khaki,
Directors of Oscar-Nominated CUTTING THROUGH ROCKS

Hot Docs is proud to celebrate the remarkable achievements of our alumni on the world's biggest stages. This year, three films with deep ties to Hot Docs earned Academy Award nominations for Documentary Feature Film, including CUTTING THROUGH ROCKS, a CrossCurrents International Doc Fund recipient and Hot Docs Forum alum.

Seven Hot Docs alumni received Emmy nominations, a testament to the breadth and lasting impact of the documentary community we help nurture. From early-stage funding and industry connections to festival premieres and beyond, Hot Docs is with filmmakers every step of the way, and moments like these show exactly where that journey can lead.

Congratulations to the documentaries nominated for the Academy Award for Documentary Feature Film, including CrossCurrents International Doc Fund recipient, Hot Docs Forum alum, and 2025 official selection CUTTING THROUGH ROCKS, as well as 2025 official selections COME SEE ME IN THE GOOD LIGHT and MR. NOBODY AGAINST PUTIN.

Congratulations to the Hot Docs alumni who have been nominated for Emmy Awards, including:
2000 METERS TO ANDRIIVKA, ANTIDOTE, APOCALYPSE IN THE TROPICS, CHASING TIME, LIFE AFTER, MADE IN ETHIOPIA (Hot Docs Forum alum), and UNION (Hot Docs Forum alum).

Citizen Minutes

The Citizen Minutes initiative supports emerging and early career filmmakers by commissioning short documentaries that highlight civic engagement and community impact. For Series 3, participants received funding, mentorship, and professional training including, for the first time, dedicated media training to help filmmakers confidently engage with press and public audiences. The six completed films premiered to a sold-out crowd at the 2025 Hot Docs Festival and have since screened in 37 cities across nine provinces, reaching schools, community organizations, film festivals, and broadcast audiences nationwide.

Highlights include BECOMING RUBY winning Best Short Documentary at the FascinAsian Film Festival, RED GIRL RISING as a centrepiece for National Truth and Reconciliation Day events, and A STOP GAP MEASURE being incorporated into York University's Osgoode Disability Law Program. Series 3 also screened at Hot Docs Cinema as part of Doors Open Toronto, introducing new audiences to the series free of charge.



[Click here to visit the Citizen Minutes website!](#)

25,000 people watched Citizen Minutes Series 3	37 cities or towns hosted an in-person screening
91% of impact survey respondents would recommend Citizen Minutes	96% of respondents agree or strongly agree that storytelling can inspire civic engagement & social change

The Citizen Minutes project is made possible through support by



Hot Docs works with the filmmakers and seasoned impact producers to activate an engagement strategy that uses the films as tools for positive change in educational, community, and professional settings, with a particular focus on youth-led civic engagement. Building on this momentum, Series 4 is now in development and scheduled to premiere at the 2027 Hot Docs Festival, which will continue to grow Citizen Minutes as a national platform for community voices and social change.

Citizen Minutes Educational Outreach Campaign



The Citizen Minutes project is made possible through support by



The Citizen Minutes short films are a cornerstone of our Docs For Schools program and currently the only program available for teachers to use in classrooms across the country, as it is online and completely free to stream. From January to May 2026, our Citizen Minutes impact team embarked on a national outreach campaign and significantly expanded educator engagement across Canada, reaching all 10 provinces and three territories. More than 775 educators participated in presentations and workshops promoting the Citizen Minutes series while targeted outreach, and newsletters extended visibility to over 10,000 educators nationwide.



"THAT [WORKSHOP] WAS SO GOOD. I LOVE CITIZEN MINUTES."
—Nikki Pun, Teacher, Calgary Catholic School District

10,000+ educators reached in 13 provinces and territories	775+ educators attended presentations
36 presentations	214% increase in curriculum downloads

This program plays an important role in bringing high-quality Canadian films to smaller and underserved communities where access to film programming can be limited. As a free online resource, Citizen Minutes allows teachers to easily stream films and connect them directly to classroom learning through curriculum guides that provide discussion questions and additional reading materials.



Official Meetings and Engagements

Cinema Visit with Minister of Canadian Identity & Culture

Shortly after the 2026 Festival, we were pleased to welcome the Honorable Marc Miller, Minister of Canadian Identity & Culture, for a meeting at the Hot Docs Cinema. The Minister's visit underscored the importance of Hot Docs as a cornerstone national cultural organization and reflected the Government of Canada's interest in supporting institutions that foster Canadian storytelling and civic engagement, as well as their interest in ensuring our stories and films get exported, sold and seen around the world.



Blue Jays First Pitch

Hot Docs executive director Diana Sanchez threw the ceremonial first pitch before the Toronto Blue Jays played against the Milwaukee Brewers at the Rogers Centre on Friday, August 29, 2025.



Photo by Bailey McLean / Toronto Blue Jays Baseball Club

Hot Docs Represented in Banff & Mexico

As a recognized name in the film sector, Diana Sanchez represented Hot Docs at the ShowCanada Conference in Banff, at the CMPA PrimeTime conference in Ottawa, and was selected to travel to Mexico with other cultural leaders from Canada as part of the country's official delegation. By sharing insights and participating in discussions with filmmakers, funders, and cultural leaders from around the world, Diana strengthened Hot Docs' presence on both the Canadian and international stage.

Friends of Hot Docs Campaign



For our 33rd Festival, we set an ambitious goal of \$330,000 for the Friends of Hot Docs campaign.

From June 2025 through May 2026, the many Friends of Hot Docs raised over \$174,000. Thanks to the very generous contribution of The Bennett Family Foundation, the first \$165,000 of donations were matched, and raised over \$339,000.

We sincerely thank each and every one of the Friends of Hot Docs who have donated. We are so grateful that you are a part of our community.



\$330,000+
Raised

2000+
Individual Donations

[Click here for the full list of Friends!](#)

Special thanks to The Bennett Family Foundation



Founders Circle Events

Part membership, part donation. Founders Circle members make a meaningful charitable impact while receiving unique access to Hot Docs events & programming.

Doc Soup Receptions & Screenings

Founders Circle members gathered for a lively cocktail reception before each Doc Soup screening. For the 2025-26 season, the well-loved monthly series ran from October to April, featuring the hottest documentaries fresh off the international Festival circuit, followed by Q&As with directors and other special guests.



October: THE LIBRARIANS with director Kim A. Snyder

November: ROADS OF FIRE with director Nathaniel Lezra

December: STREET SMART: LESSONS FROM A TV ICON

with director Ernie Bustamante & Sonia Manzano aka "Maria" from Sesame Street

January: 76 DAYS ADRIFT with director Joe Wein

February: RUNA SIMI with director Augusto Zegarra

March: THE THEFT with director Aisha Jamal

April: THE ART OF ADVENTURE with director Alison Reid & protagonist Bristol Foster

Founders Circle Festival Events



Insiders Night

At Insiders Night, Founders Circle members got the inside scoop on the best docs to see at this year's Festival through curated recommendations from Hot Docs staff and programmers.



Sneak Peek

Founders Circle members previewed a feature-length Hot Docs official selection before its premiere at the Festival. The 2026 Sneak Peek screening selection was **MAINTENANCE ARTIST**.



First Friday

On the First Friday night of the Festival, Founders Circle members enjoyed a private screening of **IT'S DOROTHY!** followed by a cocktail reception.

Hot Docs Board of Directors

We extend a heartfelt thank you to our outgoing board members for their exceptional guidance and dedication over the past several years.



Nicholas de Pencier



Lydia Luckevich



Kevin Wong

We are also delighted to share that nine new members have been appointed to the Hot Docs Board of Directors, ready to take on the growth and challenges ahead.



Doug Allison, CEO, The Northpine Foundation



Julie Bristow, Founder, CEO, Catalyst



Caroline Harvey, Senior Communications Strategist



Merit Jensen Carr, Executive Producer/ President,
Merit Motion Pictures



Lea Marin, Manager of Content, Netflix Canada



Habiba Nosheen, Co-Founder, Akelo Media



Noah Segal, Co-President, Elevation
Pictures



Marc Serpa Francouer, Co-Founder,
Lost Time Media / Better Together Films



Aaron Zeghers, Filmmaker/Educator &
Founder, The Infinite Image

Executive & Leadership Team



Diana Sanchez
Executive Director



Heidi Tao Yang
Managing Director



Jackie Garrow
Director, Philanthropy & Impact



Kaitlin Knyf
Director, Marketing & Communications



Crystal MacDonell
Director, Production

Programming Leads & Year-Round Team

María José Arauz, Manager, Industry Programs
Vivian Belik, Lead Programmer Hot Docs Cinema
Gabor Pertic, Lead Programmer, Hot Docs Festival

Zoe Burke, Manager, Festival Programming

Megan MacLaurin, Manager, Public Sector & Foundations
Erika Serodio, Manager, Philanthropy & Engagement
Caterina Capizzano, Coordinator, Partnerships
Jo-Ann Bui, Coordinator, Public Sector & Foundations

Kristal Cooper, Cinema Manager

Michael Robinson, Senior Technical Manager
Alicia Corbiere-McNutt, Manager, Rental Events
Rob McPherson, Lead Projectionist

Michael Bodalski, Manager, Web & Online
Zabadee Lee, Manager, Digital Systems

Bill Alexander, Manager, Marketing & Communications
Alex MacGillivray, Sr. Coordinator, Marketing & Communications
Dwayne Tang, Coordinator, Social Media

Prescott Morin, Manager, Audience Experience
Jasmine Wang, Manager, Customer Support

Alicks Girowski, Manager, Volunteers

Taylor Sentineal, Manager, HR
Elena Romanova, Consultant, HR

Marc Feifer, CPA-US
Vlasta Jolic, Manager, Accounting
Milena Damiano, Accounting Clerk

Hot Docs Founders Circle

With sincere thanks, we recognize the individuals and organizations who support the Hot Docs Founders Circle

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Diane Blake & Stephen Smith
Gloria Epstein
Maria Martin-Stanley
K. Milborne

DIRECTOR

Linda Chu & John Donald
Karen Gordon*
Peter Goring*
Lorraine Greey
Julia & Gilles Ouellette
Andrew Talpash
Two Anonymous Donors

BENEFACTOR

Colette Barber
Joseph Castrilli
Intuitive Pictures & Ina Fichman
Michelle Gage*
Dianne Gartley
Susan Gerhard
The Earl A Glick Family
Richard Gotlib
Di Hardacre
Natalie Herbert & Ed Robertson
Kris Heshka & Roman Stoykewych
Jan Innes*
Michael MacMillan*

Chris McDonald & Jim Beninger*
Robin Mirsky*
Jane Perdue
Perry Orestes & Tim Giguere
Jennifer Parkin & David George
Michina Pope
Paul Rainsberry
Beth & Jeff Richmond
Avis & Brad Sokol
Richard Sugarman
Maia-Mari Sutnik*
Benita Warmbold
Two Anonymous Donors

*Founding Member

Members as of June 1, 2026

Hot Docs Founders Circle

With sincere thanks, we recognize the individuals and organizations who support the Hot Docs Founders Circle

ADVOCATE

Alice Abbott & Desmond Brown
Robin Anthony
Jennifer Baichwal & Nicholas de Pencier
Libby & Ian Bandeen*
Paul Bennett & Catherine Olsen
Rosalyn Black & the late Joseph Black
Melissa Brizuela
Virginia Brooks
The Bulger-Honderich Family*
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Francesca Colussi, CD
Laurelea Conrad
Heather Conway
Janice Dawe

Robert Desjardins & Pamela Dinsmore
Leith Drury
Diana Dunlap & Paul Duckett
Thomas & Anne Evers
Marc Feifer
Laura Finch & Tom Hannam
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David & Allison Fortier
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Nancy Garrow
John & Catherine Grant
Colin Haig
Gordon Henderson

Brett Hendrie & Sarah Wilson
Julia Holland & David Crawford
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Intuitive Pictures | Ina Fichman
Janese Kane
Miriam Kagan
Charlie Keil & Cathy Vine
Nancy Kennedy
Susan Kololian
Nancy Lang
Linda Lewis & Lorie Cappe
Janet L'Heureux
Christine Lucyk
Karen Lynch
Hilary McLeod
Michelle & Pat Meneley

Mary-Ann Metrick
Pauline G Morris
Jordan Nahmias & Lisa Steele*
Linda Netten Hodgson
Susan Oppenheim
Julie Osborne
Susan Paul & Ken Engelhart
Michael & Honor de Pencier
Nadine Pequenez & JP Arcand
Michael Peterson & Virginia Rae
J. Puncher
Peter Raymont*
Susan Reisler
John Rider & Karim Karsan
Lindsay Rogan
Tim Ross & Erin Wright

Deborah Rotta-Loria
Jill Schoolenberg
Karen Schucher
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We are grateful to our major partners who help sustain our festival and year-round activities.

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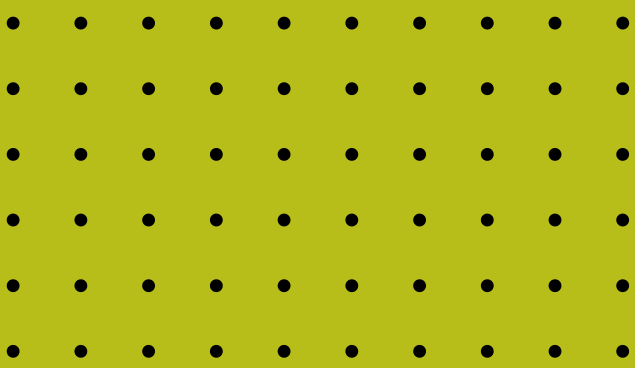
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