

ARTSCAPES PROGRAM CELEBRATES ARTISTS, MUSIC AND RESISTANCE WITH FOUR DOC PREMIERES

Toronto, March 25, 2025 – Hot Docs announced today that four features will screen at this year's Festival as part of the 2025 **ArtsCAPES** program, featuring creative minds, artistic pursuits and inventive filmmaking. The 2025 Hot Docs Festival will take place April 24 to May 4 in Toronto.

"Each of these films pays tribute to the creativity and resilience of artists whose work has become a powerful tool for resistance and social change," shared **Heather Haynes**, Hot Docs Director of Programming. "In this year's ArtsCAPES, we will showcase bold films that celebrate the transformative power of art and push boundaries in exciting ways."

This year's North American premieres include ***Queer as Punk***, following the trans-fronted Muslim punk band Shh...Diam!, whose electrifying performances in Kuala Lumpur defy the harsh criminal penalties faced by Malaysia's LGBTQ community. Brash, fearless, and wickedly funny, the band's members put their safety on the line in the fight for visibility and queer rights. Also making its North American premiere is ***The Flamenco Guitar of Yerai Cortés***, shot on richly textured 16mm. This evocative portrait of Spanish guitarist Yerai Cortés explores the spiritual power of flamenco, as he uses his music to reconcile the past and present, healing his family and Gypsy community through the sound of the "music of the pained heart."

Ai Weiwei's Turandot, a Canadian premiere, sees the renowned dissident artist reimagine Puccini's opera as a bold critique of modern totalitarianism. Set against the backdrop of Rome, the film transforms this century-old tale of power and prejudice into a mirror reflecting today's global crises.

Rounding out the lineup is ***At All Costs***, an Ontario premiere, in which a fearless group of Haitian theatre artists resist political instability and gang violence through live performance. As Haiti navigates a period of intense turmoil, the film captures the resilience of its people and the power of art to challenge fear and oppression.

The full lineup of 2025 ArtsCAPES films appear below with screening information. In many cases, filmmakers will be in attendance for post-screening discussions. For more information on the program please visit www.hotdocs.ca/whats-on.

AI WEIWEI'S TURANDOT

D: Maxim Derevianko | P: Marta Zaccaron, Christine La Monte, Andrew Cohen | Italy, USA | 2025 | 78 min | Canadian Premiere

Dissident artist Ai Weiwei confronts modern totalitarianism through an unlikely canvas: directing Puccini's controversial opera *Turandot* in Rome. He transforms this century-old tale of power and prejudice into a mirror reflecting today's global crises, from pandemic politics to war.

Friday, April 25, 6:30 PM - Hot Docs Cinema

Sunday, April 27, 1:45 PM - TLB1

AT ALL KOSTS

D: Joseph Hillel | P: Joseph Hillel | Canada | 2024 | 84 min | Ontario Premiere

Responding to a particularly turbulent chapter in Haiti's history, marked with political unrest and gang violence, a group of fearless theatre artists choose to resist the climate of insecurity around them through live performance, showcasing the courage and resilience of the Haitian people.

Sunday, April 27, 2:45 PM - TLB3

Tuesday, April 29, 5:30 PM - TLB4

THE FLAMENCO GUITAR OF YERAI CORTÉS

D: Antón Álvarez | P: Cris Trenas, Antón Álvarez, Santos Bacana | Spain | 2024 | 95 min | North American Premiere

Shot in richly textured 16mm cinematography, this musical séance follows the Spanish guitarist Yeraí Cortés, who uses his talent to reconcile the past and present, healing his family and Gypsy community through the spiritual power of the "music of the pained heart."

Saturday, April 26, 5:30 PM - TLB3

Monday, April 28, 1:45 PM - TLB2

QUEER AS PUNK

D: Yihwen Chen | P: Yihwen Chen | Malaysia | 2024 | 88 min | North American Premiere

Brash, fearless and wickedly funny, the trans-fronted Muslim punk band Shh...Diam! are a cult sensation in Kuala Lumpur. But given the harsh criminal penalties faced by Malaysia's LGBTQ community, the band's defiant calls for queer rights put its members at risk of state persecution.

Thursday, May 1, 8:30 PM - TLB1

Saturday, May 3, 10:45 AM - Hot Docs Cinema

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[Hot Docs \(www.hotdocs.ca\)](http://www.hotdocs.ca), North America's leading documentary festival, conference and market, is 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 32nd annual edition from April 24 to May 4, 2025, in cinemas across Toronto. 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 Deal Maker and Works-in-Progress screenings. Year-round, Hot Docs supports the Canadian and international industry with professional development programs and a multi-million-dollar film fund portfolio. Additionally, it fosters education through documentaries with its popular free program Docs For Schools. Hot Docs owns and

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

programs 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 25, Festival ticket package holders, including Doc Soup subscribers, can redeem their ticket packages, and Hot Docs Members can purchase single tickets. Starting Tuesday, April 1, single tickets will be available to the public. Tickets and ticket packages can be purchased and/or redeemed [online](#) 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 \$20 to regular Festival screenings and \$23 to Special Presentations screenings (\$18-\$20 members). Special events vary in price. A Festival 12-Pack is \$209 and a Festival 20-Pack is \$299. Hot Docs offers free tickets for all screenings before 4:00 p.m. to seniors and students with valid photo I.D., available online the day of the screening, subject to availability.

Hot Docs is proud to include Rogers as its Founding Partner; Netflix as its Presenting Partner; and Telefilm Canada, the Government of Ontario, and the Canada Media Fund as its Major Supporters. Full list of sponsors and partners: <https://hotdocs.ca/about/partners>

FILM STILLS AVAILABLE

Media Download Site: <https://downloads.hotdocs.ca/downloads>
Password: media2025

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