

## BIG IDEAS SERIES RETURNS TO HOT DOCS FESTIVAL IN 2025

**Toronto, March 25, 2025** - Hot Docs announced today the return of the staple Festival series **Big Ideas**. The popular series—now entering its 12<sup>th</sup> year—is part of the 2025 Hot Docs Festival, April 25 to May 5 in Toronto. Big Ideas offers audiences the opportunity to experience four thought-provoking documentaries and then hear, first-hand, from the notable subjects and experts on the issues featured in the films.

The 2025 Big Ideas series presents a compelling lineup of inspiring and compelling stories, from the politically charged artistry of Ai Weiwei through a reimagining of Puccini's *Turandot* to the dangerous world of investigative journalism in today's volatile landscape. The series will also explore Oscar-winning actor Marlee Matlin's trailblazing career, her advocacy for the Deaf community and women's rights—and examine the complexities of dating in modern-day China.

"We are thrilled about this year's Big Ideas lineup," shared **Heather Haynes**, Hot Docs' Director of Programming. "It is an honour to welcome such visionary filmmakers and captivating subjects to the Hot Docs stage. This year's program promises to ignite an exciting exchange of bold ideas, powerful stories and diverse perspectives. The series continues to be a cornerstone of the Festival and an audience favourite, and with guests like these, it's easy to see why."

Screening times and film descriptions appear below. Tickets for each presentation are \$27.00.

### AI WEIWEI'S TURANDOT

Director Maxim Derevianko and special guests of *Ai Weiwei's Turandot* explore the complexities of Weiwei's politically visionary art in the current global landscape and his powerful vision behind the operatic reimagining of Giacomo Puccini's *Turandot*.

Guests: Director Maxim Derevianko and special guests  
Moderator: Journalist Glenn Sumi

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

### ANTIDOTE

Director James Jones is joined by *Antidote* protagonist, investigative journalist Christo Grozev of Bellingcat, in a gripping conversation about his groundbreaking work exposing a Russian government assassination squad targeting opposition figures, as well as the high-stakes challenges and dangers of investigative journalism in today's volatile landscape.

Guests: Director James Jones and journalist Christo Grozev  
Moderator: Journalist, author, filmmaker and podcaster Michelle Shephard

Saturday, April 26, 6:00 PM - Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema

### **MARLEE MATLIN: NOT ALONE ANYMORE**

Join legendary actress Marlee Matlin and director Shoshannah Stern for an engaging post-screening conversation about Marlee's rise to stardom, the challenges she faced and her advocacy for the Deaf community and women's issues. They'll share insights into the making of the film, which celebrates her groundbreaking career and activism.

Guests: Director Shoshannah Stern and actress Marlee Matlin

Moderator: Journalist and television personality Johanna Schneller

Sunday, April 27, 6:00 PM - Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema

### **THE DATING GAME**

Join director Violet Du Feng for a conversation about the complex and often challenging world of dating in modern-day China—where eligible men significantly outnumber women—including the role of technology in shaping romantic connections, shifting societal expectations, and the pressures individuals face in the search for love.

Guest: Director Violet Du Feng

Wednesday, April 30, 6:30 PM - Hot Docs Ted Rogers 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 32<sup>nd</sup> 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 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](http://www.hotdocs.ca) at [www.hotdocs.ca](http://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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