

14 FILMS SUPPORTED BY HOT DOCS' FUNDS AND MARKET PROGRAMS TO SCREEN AT 2025 FESTIVAL

Toronto, March 25, 2025 – Hot Docs is proud to present 14 films developed with support from its film fund portfolio and market programs, including the Hot Docs Forum and Deal Maker. These projects will screen as part of the 2025 Hot Docs Festival, running April 24 to May 4 in Toronto.

Grant recipients and alumni projects are listed below.

BETRAYAL

Hot Docs Ted Rogers Fund recipient

D: Lena Macdonald | Canada | 90 min

The brother-in-law of Liberian dictator Charles Taylor becomes a courageous whistleblower against the dictator's regime. Risking everything, including his own family, he fights to bring Taylor to justice, confronting the legacy of fear and corruption that has shaped his life.

COEXISTENCE, MY ASS!

Participated in Hot Docs Deal Maker

D: Amber Fares | USA, France | 95 min

Mixing the personal with the political, comedian Noam Shuster Eliassi boldly confronts the Israel-Palestine conflict in her one-woman how. Skillfully navigating massive social and political divides with wit and humour, she challenges audiences with hard truths that are no laughing matter.

CUTTING THROUGH ROCKS (اوزاک یوللار)

CrossCurrents International Doc Fund recipient

D: Sara Khaki, Mohammadreza Eyni | Iran, USA, Germany, Netherlands, Canada, Qatar, Chile | 95 min

As the first elected councilwoman of her Iranian village, Sara Shahverdi battles strict patriarchal traditions by halting child marriages and training young women to ride motorcycles—in the process, becoming a powerful symbol inspiring others to rise up.

THE GARDENER AND THE DICTATOR

CrossCurrents Canada Doc Fund recipient

D: Hui Wang | Canada | 98 min

This profoundly intimate and quirky love story features the filmmaker's elderly grandparents as they care for each other in their final years while revisiting both joyous and painful memories that offer a unique glimpse into China's tumultuous last century.

GHOSTS OF THE SEA

Hot Docs Ted Rogers Fund recipient

D: Virginia Tangvald | Canada, France | 97 min

When the daughter of renowned sailor Peter Tangvald investigates her brother's mysterious death at sea, her search evolves into a gripping quest to uncover dark family secrets and confront the complex legacy of her infamous father.

HOLLOWAY

Participated in Hot Docs Deal Maker

D: Sophie Compton, Daisy-May Hudson | UK | 87 min

Within the decaying walls of England's soon to-be demolished Holloway Prison, six women gather for a deeply cathartic journey. Unearthing memories and sharing personal experiences, they unflinchingly reveal the hidden traumas underlying women's imprisonment and the healing that comes through sisterhood.

I, POPPY

Participated in Hot Docs Deal Maker

D: Vivek Chaudhary | India | 81 min

A son fights corrupt officials while his mother tends their poppy farm in India. As authorities strike back at their lower-caste family, they must choose between keeping food on the table and standing up for what's right.

I DREAMED HIS NAME

Participated in Hot Docs Deal Maker

D: Angela Carabali | Colombia | 86 min

Thirty years after his forced disappearance, the filmmaker's Afro Colombian father comes to her in a dream, asking her to find him. With her sister, she sets out on a journey of discovery across Colombia's painful history, reconnecting with their father and his activism.

LIFE AFTER

Participated in Hot Docs Forum

D: Reid Davenport | USA | 99 min

Disability cinema auteur Reid Davenport takes on assisted suicide, exploring how a practice intended to empower end-of-life decision-making has exposed the long-standing devaluation of disabled life.

MARRIAGE COPS

Participated in Hot Docs Forum

D: Shashwati Talukdar, Cheryl Hess | India, Taiwan, USA | 90 min

In northern India's Dehradun, an all-women police unit tackles troubled marriages with unexpected wisdom and authority. Inside the bustling station, couples confront domestic turmoil while the officers balance tough love with surprising moments of humour.

MY MISSING AUNT

CrossCurrents International Doc Fund recipient

D: Juyeon Yang | South Korea | 78 min

A South Korean filmmaker uncovers the erased existence of her aunt who died by suicide before graduating college. As she confronts family secrets and dating violence, she exposes generations of patriarchal damage inflicted on women expected to live as “good daughters.”

QUEER AS PUNK

CrossCurrents International Doc Fund recipient

D: Yihwen Chen | Malaysia | 88 min

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

RIVER OF GRASS

Participated in Hot Docs Deal Maker

D: Sasha Wortzel | USA | 83 min

An ode to the Florida Everglades, this immersive essay explores its historical and ongoing challenges through the writings of environmentalist Marjory Stoneman Douglas and testimonies of Miccosukee educator Betty Osceola and current denizens who contend with past colonial violence and its current ecological impact.

SAINTS AND WARRIORS

CrossCurrents Canada Doc Fund recipient

D: Patrick Shannon | Canada | 97 min

For over sixty years, teams have gathered on the Pacific west coast for the All Native Basketball Tournament. As the defending champions, the Skidegate Saints, battle to keep their title, it's clear the event has become a symbol of resilience, community and culture.

SHIFTING BASELINES

Participated in Hot Docs Forum

D: Julien Elie | Canada | 100 min

Where the Rio Grande meets the Gulf of Mexico, SpaceX rockets blast skyward, astronomers gaze upon stars and satellites, hawkers sell their wares and environmentalists survey the damage. Welcome to Boca Chica, USA.

WIDOW CHAMPION

Hot Docs Blue Ice Documentary Prize recipient

D: Zippy Kimundu | Kenya | 95 min

In rural Kenya where women lose their homes after their husband's death, a widow rises as a fierce advocate to help other widows reclaim their rightful property and provide a home for their children.

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[Hot Docs](http://www.hotdocs.ca) (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 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 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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