

HOT DOCS UNVEILS INTERNATIONAL SPECTRUM COMPETITION STRAND FOR 2025 FESTIVAL

Toronto, March 25, 2025— Hot Docs, North America's premier documentary festival, proudly unveiled today the lineup of 10 feature and two short documentaries, together spanning 14 countries, set to screen at this year's Festival as part of the 2025 **International Spectrum Competition** (previously International Competition). This program is renowned for showcasing captivating stories and innovative filmmaking, while offering audiences unique perspectives from around the world. The 2025 Hot Docs Festival will take place April 24 to May 4 in Toronto.

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.

The 2025 edition of the International Spectrum Competition program includes a compelling lineup of world premieres: ***Heritage*** is a meticulously crafted family snapshot in which two siblings alternate shifts caring for their elderly parents; ***I Dreamed His Name*** follows the filmmaker and her sister on a journey of discovery across Colombia's painful history, thirty years after their Afro-Colombian father's forced disappearance; ***I, Poppy*** follows a son's fight against corrupt officials while his mother tends their poppy farm in India; ***King Matt the First*** takes us on an enchanting journey into the inner world of young Polish sisters as they grapple with impending adulthood; and ***Unwelcomed*** examines contrasting perspectives around the migrant crisis in Chile following its most violent anti-immigrant protest in late 2021, sparked by an unprecedented influx of migrants from Venezuela.

International premieres include ***Holloway***, in which six women gather for a deeply cathartic journey within the decaying walls of England's soon-to-be demolished Holloway Prison; ***Neshoma***, a Jewish woman's story that through vibrant archival footage of 1920s Amsterdam and intimate letters to her distant brother, captures her community's rich cultural and artistic life before its heartbreaking transformation under Nazi occupation; ***River of Grass***, an ode to the Florida Everglades that explores its historical and ongoing challenges, past colonial violence and its current ecological impact; ***The Secret Lives of My Three Men***, in which the filmmaker explores the legacies of her grandfather, father and godfather and how they are intertwined with Brazil's unique history; and ***Walls – Akinni Inuk***, in which a project to document life inside a Greenlandic prison evolves into an intimate journey of healing for a filmmaker and a convicted murderer.

The International Spectrum Competition program is supported by the Donner Canadian Foundation.

All feature-length titles in the program are eligible for the Best International Feature Documentary Award and the Special Jury Prize – International Feature Documentary. Emerging directors in the International Spectrum Competition with two or fewer previous feature film credits are also eligible for the Emerging International Filmmaker Award, supported by the Donner Canadian Foundation.

Hot Docs is an Academy Award® qualifying festival for feature documentaries. The recipient of Hot Docs' Best International Feature Documentary Award will qualify for consideration in the Documentary Feature Subject category of the Annual Academy Awards® without the standard theatrical run, provided the film otherwise complies with the Academy rules.

Screening times and descriptions for films in the International Spectrum Competition program appear below. 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.

HERITAGE

D: Mir Mohammad Najafi | P: Mohsen Ostad Ali | Iran | 2025 | 73 min | World Premiere

Every day like clockwork, two siblings alternate shifts caring for their elderly parents: one with Alzheimer's, the other diminishing with age. This meticulously crafted family snapshot asks how we can reconcile the needs of those we love with the pursuit a life true to ourselves.

Wednesday, April 30, 5:00 PM - TLB3

Friday, May 2, 2:30 PM – TLB4

HOLLOWAY

D: Sophie Compton, Daisy-May Hudson | P: Alice Hughes, Polly Creed, Sophie Compton, Tarquin Ramsay | UK | 2024 | 87 min | International Premiere

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.

Sunday, April 27, 8:45 PM - TLB3

Monday, April 29, 10:45 AM - TLB3

I DREAMED HIS NAME

D: Angela Carabali | P: Sandra Tabares Duque, Angela Carabali | Colombia | 2025 | 86 min | World Premiere

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.

Friday, April 25, 4:15 PM - TLB3

Saturday, April 26, 10:45 AM – TLB4

I, POPPY

D: Vivek Chaudhary | P: Vivek Chaudhary, Xavier Rocher | India | 2024 | 81 min | World Premiere

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.

Thursday, May 1, 8:00 PM - TLB2

Sunday, May 4, 1:30 PM – TLB2

KING MATT THE FIRST

D: Jaśmina Wójcik | P: Marta Duźbabeł, Agnieszka Rostropowicz | Poland | 2025 | 75 min | World Premiere

Do you remember what it feels like to be a child? This enchanting documentary takes us on a journey into the inner world of young Polish sisters as they grapple with impending adulthood. Filled with whimsical games and unrestrained curiosity, it is the perfect remedy for whatever ails you.

Screening with

BALANCE

D: Luiza Cocora | Canada | 21 min

Tuesday, April 29, 5:00 PM – TLB2

Thursday, May 1, 10:45 AM - TLB4

NESHOMA

D: Sandra Beerends | P: Floor Onrust | Netherlands | 2024 | 85 min | International Premiere

Through intimate letters to her distant brother, a Jewish woman's story unfolds through vibrant archival footage of 1920s Amsterdam, capturing her community's rich cultural and artistic life before its heartbreaking transformation under Nazi occupation.

Wednesday, April 30, 4:30 PM - TLB2

Friday, May 2, 2:15 PM – TLB3

RIVER OF GRASS

D: Sasha Wortzel | P: Danielle Varga, Sasha Wortzel | USA | 2025 | 83 min | International Premiere

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.

Monday, April 28, 4:45 PM - TLB2

Wednesday, April 30, 10:45 AM – TLB3

THE SECRET LIVES OF MY THREE MEN

D: Letícia Simões | P: João Vieira Jr., Nara Aragão, Letícia Simões | Brazil | 2025 | 75 min | International Premiere

Summoning three ghosts from her past—her grandfather, father and godfather—each of whom played a unique role in Brazil’s history, the director explores how their legacies intertwined with the country’s violent history reflect on its modern-day identity.

Thursday, May 1, 7:30 PM - TLB4

Saturday, May 3, 3:00 PM - TLB4

UNWELCOMED

D: Amilcar Infante, Sebastian Gonzalez Mendez | P: Sebastian Gonzalez Mendez | Chile | 2025 | 68 min
| World Premiere

In late 2021, Chile experienced its most violent anti-immigrant protest, sparked by an unprecedented influx of migrants from Venezuela. This evocative cinematic experience examines contrasting perspectives around the migrant crisis that is driving anger and violence towards the migrants.

Screening with

LOOKING FOR A DONKEY

D: Juan Vicente Manrique | Mexico, Venezuela | 17 min

Wednesday, April 30, 7:45 PM - TLB3

Saturday, May 3, 1:45 PM - TLB2

WALLS – AKINNI INUK

D: Sofie Rørdam, Nina Paninnguaq Skydsbjerg | P: Emile Hertling Péronard | Greenland, Denmark | 2025
| 84 min | International Premiere

A project to document life inside a Greenlandic prison evolves into an intimate journey of healing as two women united by trauma—a filmmaker and a convicted murderer—discover how small acts of compassion can lead to the profound release they desperately seek.

Saturday, April 26, 8:45 PM - TLB3

Monday, April 28, 3:00 PM - TLB3

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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

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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