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NEW AND RETURNING SERIES, LEGENDARY SUBJECTS, OSCAR-NOMINATED FESTIVAL AUDIENCE FAVOURITES AND HIGHLY ANTICIPATED CANADIAN AND INTERNATIONAL FILMS AT HOT DOCS CINEMA THIS FEBRUARY

FOR VIOLA RETURNS WITH FREE SCREENINGS CENTERING BIPOC-LED STORIES AND FILMMAKERS

NEW SERIES MIDTOWN MATINEES A TRIBUTE TO HOLLYWOOD'S GOLDEN AGE AND OUR CINEMA'S HISTORIC LEGACY AS THE MIDTOWN FROM 1941-1966 OSCAR NOMINEES COME SEE ME IN THE GOOD LIGHT AND CUTTING THROUGH ROCKS RETURN

Toronto, Canada – Hot Docs Cinema has released its lineup of programming for February, offering a breadth of new release and classic titles that showcase the best in documentary filmmaking and storytelling from Canada and around the world. Highlights of February's programming include the return of popular free screening series *For Viola*, the launch of new series *Midtown Matinees*, Oscar nominees, screenings celebrating history-making lives and legacies, and films that dig deep into compelling stories and subjects.

One of Hot Docs Cinema's most popular series, **For Viola** returns on **Wednesday, February 25, at 6:30 PM**, with a free screening of *Khartoum* (D: Ibrahim Snoopy Ahmad, Timeea Mohamed Ahmed, Rawia Alhag, Philip Cox & Anas Saeed), winner of the Hot Docs Bill Nemtin Award for Best Social Impact Documentary at the 2025 Hot Docs Festival. Five stories from Sudan weave together in search of freedom through animated dreams, street revolutions and a war from the metropolis of Khartoum to escape in East Africa. Named in honour of Canadian civil rights icon Viola Desmond, For Viola centres Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC)-led stories and filmmakers, with screenings offered free of charge. For more information on For Viola, visit hotdocs.ca/whats-on/cinema-series/for-viola

Hot Docs is excited to launch a new series celebrating Hollywood's Golden Age and our cinema's historic legacy. Named in recognition of 506 Bloor Street West's enduring history as a neighbourhood cinema, **Midtown Matinees** harks back to the years 1941-1966, when the iconic Midtown Theatre offered a state-of-the-art movie going experience that beckoned Torontonians from across the city. The series launches on **Sunday, February 15 at 3:30 PM** with an afternoon screening of one of cinema's most celebrated releases of all time, Michael Curtiz's 1942 classic *Casablanca*. A monthly series, Midtown Matinees highlights iconic movies and movie stars the way they were meant to be seen: on our glorious big screen. Join us for an afternoon at the picture palace!

In addition to these two series, two Oscar nominated documentaries that premiered at Hot Docs Festival 2025 and were voted as top ten audience favourites will return for screenings in advance of this year's Academy Awards.

Winner of the Hot Docs Festival 2025 Audience Award and nominated for Best Documentary Feature at the upcoming Academy Awards, Ryan White's *Come See Me in the Good Light* is one of the most celebrated and well-reviewed documentaries of the past year. After receiving an incurable cancer diagnosis, spoken word artist and poet laureate of Colorado Andrea Gibson, alongside their partner and fellow poet Megan Falley, embarks on a poignant journey filled with humour and love that culminates in a final career defining performance. The film screens on **Friday, February 27 at 6:30 PM**.

Also nominated for Best Documentary Feature at the upcoming Academy Awards and a top ten audience favourite from Hot Docs Festival 2025, Mohammadreza Eyni and Sara Khaki's *Cutting Through Rocks* took home the World Cinema Grand Jury Prize: Documentary at the 2025 Sundance Film Festival. When Sara Shahverdi becomes the first woman elected to office in her remote Iranian village, the pressure of the role becomes a weighted reality. *Cutting Through Rocks* was a 2020 recipient of the Hot Docs CrossCurrents International Doc Fund and participated in the 2020 Hot Docs Forum. The film screens on **Sunday, March 1 at 6:30 PM**.

Hot Docs Cinema welcomes several special guests in attendance for screenings and events at the cinema in February.

On Wednesday, February 4 at 7:00 PM, writer **E.Lockhart** arrives at Hot Docs Cinema to unveil *We Fell Apart*, a razor-sharp story of family secrets, seaside mysteries, and the lies we tell to survive, as part of the Author Talks series.

On Saturday, February 7 at 7:00 PM, producer/director **Peter Thurling** and producer **Joan Schafer** will be in attendance for a post-screening discussion following the Canadian premiere of their film *Rubin Hurricane Carter: Forever a Fighter*, about the legendary Black fighter who overcame his life sentence as a triple murderer and freed others wrongly convicted.

On Saturday, February 21 at 7:00 PM, director **Lisa Rideout** will be in attendance for a post-screening discussion following *Degrassi: Whatever It Takes*, which goes behind-the-scenes of the Degrassi franchise, celebrating the legacy of a show that made teens everywhere feel seen.

On Saturday, February 22 at 6:30 PM, director **Jereme Watt** will be in attendance for a post-screening discussion following *Everest Dark*, in which a famed Nepalese mountaineer risks everything to bring home a fallen climber's body.

On Thursday, February 26 at 6:30 PM, film subject **Fred Isseks** will be in attendance for a post-screening discussion following a screening of Amanda McBaine and Jesse Moss's *Teenage Wasteland*. In 1991 in Upstate New York, a group of teenage misfits, inspired by a renegade English teacher, embark on a student film project and uncover a vast conspiracy that is poisoning the ground beneath their feet. The film will also screen earlier in the day as part of Hot Docs **Docs For Schools** program, a series of free programs to help educators and students engage with current issues, raise critical questions, and interact with new perspectives.

Additional programming highlights for February include *Runa Simi* (D: Augusto Zegarra), screening as part of the **Doc Soup** monthly series, in which a Peruvian voice actor tries to persuade Disney to dub *The Lion King* into Quechua, hoping to save his native language; *The King of Color* (D: Patrick Creadon), the story of 96-year-old Lawrence Herbert, visionary behind the revolutionary Pantone Matching System; *My Undesirable Friends: Part I - Last Air in Moscow* (D: Julia Loktev), in which independent journalists struggle to counter Russian propaganda in Moscow during week one of the Ukraine invasion; *Sketches of Frank Gehry* (D: Sydney Pollack), screening in memory of the late Toronto-born architect; *Holding Liat* (D: Brandon Kramer), in which—in the weeks after his daughter is kidnapped—a father resists efforts to use her captivity to justify escalating violence in Gaza; *True North* (D: Michèle Stephenson), which shares the pivotal 1960s Montreal events that impacted the global movement for Black liberation (screening will include a virtual Q&A with the filmmaker); and *A Band Called Death* (D: Mark Christopher Covino, Jeff Howlett), the second installment in our new monthly series **Jukedocs** curated by Niko Stratis, which tells the story of three Detroit brothers, sons of a preacher, who formed an all-Black punk rock band called Death.

The above films join the full line-up of screenings and events taking place at Hot Docs Cinema.

For more of what's on at Hot Docs Cinema, visit hotdocs.ca/whats-on/watch-cinema

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Operated by Hot Docs, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing and celebrating the art of documentary, Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema is the world's largest documentary cinema. A historic, century-old landmark located in Toronto's vibrant Annex neighbourhood, the Cinema is a year-round home for non-fiction film and storytelling, presenting first-run international and Canadian documentaries, curated film and speakers series, signature events including Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, as well as hosting for some of the city's premier festivals and events.

Hot Docs (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 33rd Hot Docs Festival April 23 to May 3, 2026, in Toronto. Festival Packages are now on sale at hotdocs.ca. Since its inception in 1993, Hot Docs has supported the Canadian and international industry with professional development programs and production fund portfolio, including the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Fund, CrossCurrents Doc Funds, Hot Docs-Slaight Family Fund, Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund and Hot Docs Partners, and valuable professional development programs, including Doc Ignite and Hot Docs Incubator.

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