

For Immediate Release: Tuesday, March 19, 2024

**HOT DOCS UNVEILS NEW FESTIVAL FAVOURITES PROGRAM:
THE MOST EXHILARATING FILMS FROM FELLOW GLOBAL FESTIVALS
COME TO TORONTO**

Toronto, ON – Hot Docs is excited to introduce a fun and captivating addition to this year’s Festival lineup, taking place from **April 25 to May 5** in Toronto. The new program, **Festival Favourites**, is a specially curated selection of feature-length documentaries that have made their mark on the festival circuit, proving their mettle with festival audiences and critics alike. It will spotlight some of the most timely, topical and well-crafted docs from fellow global documentary film festivals. In Festival Favourites, Toronto audiences will be able to immerse themselves in these moving and raw cinematic experiences, connecting with important issues and unforgettable stories.

Festival Favourites International premieres include ***Daughter of Genghis***, chronicling seven years in the life of Gerel, a violent neo-nationalist struggling with motherhood and her role leading a gang of women in the underworld of Mongolia’s capital city, and ***Daughters*** (Winner, Sundance Festival 2024 Audience Award in Documentary Competition), capturing the first physical touch four young girls will have with their incarcerated fathers as part of a special Daddy-Daughter Dance in a Washington, D.C. prison.

North American premieres include ***Son of the Mullah***, the story of a journalist risking life and limb in his reporting on Iran in order to expose corruption in the Islamic Regime, and ***This Is Going to Be Big***, a peek behind the curtain as a cast of neurodivergent teens prepare to hit the stage in their school’s time-travelling, John Farnham-themed musical.

Canadian premieres include ***A Band of Dreamers and a Judge***, in which gangs of prospectors scale the mountains of northern Iran in search of buried treasure while a determined judge seeks to end their gold-hunting escapades; ***Every Little Thing***, following a Los Angeles-based woman’s transformative journey as she nurtures wounded hummingbirds, and ***Intercepted*** (Winner, CMF-Hot Docs Forum Canadian Pitch Prize 2023), which layers covertly recorded conversations between Russian soldiers with visible evidence of their destruction in Ukraine.

Film stills of Festival Favourites titles are available at <https://bit.ly/3TJntYA>.

A BAND OF DREAMERS AND A JUDGE

D: Hesam Eslami | P: Etienne De Ricaud, Hesam Eslami | Iran, France | 2023 | 80 min | Canadian Premiere

According to legend, the mountains of northern Iran are full of buried treasure. Gangs of prospectors scale and drill their treacherous slopes in the hopes of discovering ancient gold and pottery, while a local judge is determined to end their illegal looting.

DAUGHTER OF GENGHIS

D: Kristoffer Juel Poulsen, Christian Als | P: Andreas Dalsgaard | Denmark, Sweden, France | 2023 | 85 min | International Premiere

A violent, Mongolian, female nationalist fights for her motherland, conducting sting operations and brothel raids, but in her fight for idealism, she has neglected her son. Can she find redemption by embracing motherhood?

DAUGHTERS

D: Angela Patton, Natalie Rae | P: Lisa Mazzotta, Natalie Rae, Justin Benoliel, Mindy Goldberg, Sam Bisbee, Kathryn Everett, Laura Choi Raycroft, James Cunningham | USA | 2023 | 106 min | International Premiere

Four young girls prepare for a special Daddy-Daughter Dance in a Washington, DC prison. Cameras capture the first physical touch these girls will have with their incarcerated fathers as part of a groundbreaking program in this Sundance Audience Award–winning film.

EVERY LITTLE THING

D: Sally Aitken | P: Bettina Dalton, Anna Godas, Oli Harbottle | Australia | 2024 | 93 min | Canadian Premiere

A woman finds herself on a transformative journey as she nurtures wounded hummingbirds, unravelling a captivating and magical tale of love, fragility and healing amidst the sprawl of Los Angeles.

INTERCEPTED

D: Oksana Karpovych | P: Rocío B. Fuentes, Giacomo Nudi, Pauline Tran Van Lieu, Lucie Rego, Darya Bassel, Olha Beskhnelynsina | Canada, France, Ukraine | 2024 | 93 min | Canadian Premiere

Layered over the visible evidence of their destruction, covertly recorded conversations between Russian soldiers provide a shocking and revealing soundtrack of those who destroy amidst the futility and inhumanity of a prolonged war in Ukraine.

WINNER – CMF-Hot Docs Forum Canadian Pitch Prize 2023

SON OF THE MULLAH

D: Nahid Persson Sarvestani | P: Setareh Lundgren, Monica Hernandez Rejon | Sweden, France | 2023 | 100 min | North American Premiere

Journalist Ruhollah Zam, like many of his colleagues, reports on Iran from abroad. Relying on tips from unreliable and potentially compromised insiders, he risks life and limb to expose the Islamic Regime’s corruption, hypocrisy and money laundering in this all-too-real spy thriller.

THIS IS GOING TO BE BIG

D: Thomas Charles Hyland | P: Josie Mason Campbell, Jim Wright, Catherine Bradbury | Australia | 2023 | 101 min | North American Premiere

Dreams and desires are confronted as a cast of neurodivergent teens prepare to come of age in their school’s time-travelling, John Farnham–themed musical. A funny and heart-warming peek behind the curtain with some banger songs.

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[Hot Docs \(www.hotdocs.ca\)](http://www.hotdocs.ca), North America's largest 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 31st annual edition from April 25 to May 5, 2024, 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 Forum and Hot Docs Deal Maker. Year-round, Hot Docs supports the Canadian and international industry with professional development programs and a multi-million-dollar film fund portfolio, and 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 26, Festival ticket package holders, including Doc Soup subscribers, can redeem their ticket packages, and Hot Docs Members can purchase single tickets. Starting Tuesday, April 2, 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 5:00 p.m. to seniors and students with valid photo I.D., available online the day of the screening, subject to availability. Free screenings for students courtesy of CBC and CBC Gem.

Hot Docs is proud to include Scotia Wealth Management as its Presenting Platinum Partner; Rogers as its Founding Partner; CBC as its Signature Partner; Netflix as its Presenting Partner; and Telefilm Canada, the Government of Ontario, and the Canada Media Fund as its Major Supporters.

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