

HOT DOCS 2024 PERSISTER PROGRAM SHARES STORIES OF WOMEN SPEAKING UP AND BEING HEARD

Toronto, March 26, 2024 – Hot Docs is pleased to announce eight features, one mid-length, and one short documentary screening as part of the popular **Persist** program during the 2024 Festival. The films included in this program shine a light on the voices of strong, inspirational women who are speaking up and being heard. The 2024 Hot Docs Festival will take place April 25 to May 5 in Toronto.

The **Persist** program will feature the world premieres of ***The Day Iceland Stood Still***, the true story of how Iceland became a world leader in gender equality when, in 1975, 90% of Iceland’s women walked off their jobs and out of their homes; ***A Mother Apart***, an emotional tale of healing and forgiveness that follows powerhouse Jamaican American poet and LGBTQ+ activist Staceyann Chin as she embarks on an international journey to re-imagine the art of mothering; and ***Synchrony***, in which, isolated on an island, an elderly woman embraces freedom by open-sea swimming with sea lions, while a champion swimmer tests her endurance in the world’s iciest of waters.

The program will feature the international premieres of ***Mexican Dream***, which sees Malena struggle to unite her family in her still unfinished home amidst tensions of launching her own business, reconnecting with her estranged children, and undergoing IVF with her new partner; and ***A Photographic Memory***, in which—after the filmmaker discovers more than 50 hours of audio interviews by her deceased mother, journalist Sheila Turner-Seed—she seeks to connect with her while unveiling an invaluable archive of conversations with some of the greatest photographers of the 20th century.

North American premieres include ***My Stolen Planet***, following an Iranian woman forced to emigrate “inwards” by creating an alternate joyful history of Iran through her collection of vintage Super 8 films and recordings of her own life, and ***An Unfinished Journey***, in which four women—forced to flee their country after risking their lives to rebuild it—struggle to focus the world’s attention on the crisis in Afghanistan.

Canadian premieres include ***A New Kind of Wilderness***, which sees a family forced to integrate into the modern world and abandon their idyllic life deep in a Norwegian forest after tragedy strikes, and ***The Silence of Reason***, an essential investigation of the Foča rape camps during the mid-90s war in Bosnia and Herzegovina that combines victim testimony and archival footage to produce profound disturbance and intense resolve.

Screening times and descriptions for films in the **Persist** 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.

THE DAY ICELAND STOOD STILL

D: Pamela Hogan | P: Hrafnhildur Gunnarsdóttir, Pamela Hogan, Jeffrey Kimball, Sam Jinishian | Iceland, USA | 2024 | 70 min | World Premiere

In 1975, 90% of Iceland's women walked off their jobs and out of their homes. The nation stopped. Unexpectedly funny and laced with evocative animation, this is the true story of how Iceland became a world leader in gender equality.

Monday, April 29, 2:15 PM - TLB1
Wednesday, May 1, 4:30 PM - SCOTIA 5

MEXICAN DREAM

D: Laura Plancarte | P: Laura Plancarte | Mexico, UK | 2023 | 90 min | International Premiere
After escaping an abusive past, Malena fights for her dream life. Amidst the tensions of launching her own business, reconnecting with her estranged children, and undergoing IVF with her new partner, she struggles to unite her family in her still unfinished home.

Monday, April 29, 5:15 PM - SCOTIA 6
Wednesday, May 1, 10:00 AM - SCOTIA 7

A MOTHER APART

D: Laurie Townshend | P: Alison Duke, Ngardy Conteh George, Justine Pimlott | Canada | 2024 | 89 min
| World Premiere
In this emotional, sweeping tale of healing and forgiveness, powerhouse Jamaican American poet and LGBTQ+ activist Staceyann Chin embarks on an international journey to re-imagine the art of mothering—having been abandoned by her own mother as a young child.

Friday, April 26, 7:45 PM - SCOTIA 5
Sunday, April 28, 11:15 AM - TLB2

MY STOLEN PLANET

D: Farahnaz Sharifi | P: Anke Petersen, Lilian Tietjen, Farzad Pak | Iran, Germany | 2024 | 82 min |
North American Premiere
Able to find freedom only in her own home, an Iranian woman is forced to emigrate "inwards." Collecting vintage Super 8 films and recording her own life, she creates an alternate history of Iran, one where joy exists.

Saturday, April 27, 5:00 PM - SCOTIA 5
Sunday, April 28, 1:45 PM - SCOTIA 6

A NEW KIND OF WILDERNESS

D: Silje Evensmo Jacobsen | P: Mari Bakke Riise, Silje Evensmo Jacobsen | Norway | 2024 | 84 min |
Canadian Premiere
When tragedy strikes, a family must abandon their idyllic life deep in a Norwegian forest. Leaving the freedom that comes with isolation, self-sufficiency and harmonious living with nature, they struggle with loss while learning to integrate into the modern world.

Friday, May 3, 5:00 PM - TLB2
Sunday, May 5, 4:30 PM - SCOTIA 7

A PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY

D: Rachel Elizabeth Seed | P: Rachel Elizabeth Seed, Sigrid Dyekjaer, Michael Sherman, Matt Perniciaro, Danielle Varga, Beth Levison | USA | 2024 | 87 min | International Premiere

After the filmmaker discovers more than 50 hours of audio interviews by her deceased mother, journalist Sheila Turner-Seed, she seeks to connect with her mother while unveiling an invaluable archive of conversations with some of the greatest photographers of the 20th century.

Friday, May 3, 7:45 PM - TLB3
Sunday, May 5, 3:00 PM - TLB2

THE SILENCE OF REASON

D: Kumjana Novakova | P: Kumjana Novakova | Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina | 2023 | 63 min | Canadian Premiere

Truth finds terror that fiction never could in this essential investigation of the Foča rape camps during the mid-90s war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Victim testimony and archival footage combine to produce profound disturbance and intense resolve.

Screening with

THE POEM WE SANG

D: Annie Sakkab | Canada, Palestine, Jordan | 20 min

Friday, May 3, 10:45 AM - TLB3
Sunday, May 5, 1:45 PM - SCOTIA 6

SYNCHRONY

D: Caro Bloj | P: Claudia Leon | Chile | 2024 | 75 min | World Premiere

Isolated on an island, an elderly woman embraces freedom by open-sea swimming with sea lions, while a champion swimmer tests her endurance in the world's iciest of waters. Stunning cinematography captures their pristine but charged aquatic landscapes, which are both tender and brutal.

Thursday, May 2, 7:30 PM - SCOTIA 7
Saturday, May 4, 3:00 PM - TLB3

AN UNFINISHED JOURNEY

D: Aeyliya Husain, Amie Williams | P: Nadine Pequenezza, Charlotte Uzu | Canada, France | 2024 | 75 min | North American Premiere

Forced to flee their country after risking their lives to rebuild it, four women struggle to focus the world's attention on the crisis in Afghanistan, while coming to terms with having their power usurped and two decades of progress dismantled.

Friday, April 26, 2:00 PM - TLB2

Saturday, April 27, 10:00 AM - Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema

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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.

FILM STILLS AVAILABLE

Media Download Site: <https://downloads.hotdocs.ca/downloads>

Password: media2024

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