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## HOT DOCS 30<sup>TH</sup>-ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL TO FEATURE WORLD PREMIERES OF HIGHLY ANTICIPATED CANADIAN AND INTERNATIONAL DOCS AS PART OF SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS PROGRAM

**Toronto, ON** – Hot Docs announced today a slate of 12 additional films to screen at the 2023 Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival as part of the **Special Presentations** program, exhibiting a selection of high-profile world and international feature-length documentary premieres. Hot Docs Festival returns to live screenings in Toronto from April 27 to May 7.

The 2023 Special Presentations program will unveil hidden stories of the past, explore critical current issues from Canada and around the world, and feature bold storytelling featuring noteworthy names. World Premieres include celebrated Canadian journalist Michelle Shephard's *The Man Who Stole Einstein's Brain*, the uncovering of the explosive story behind the pathologist who stole the genius' brain in 1955; *The Rise of Wagner*, a chilling exposé on the collusion between Wagner Group mercenaries and the Kremlin, which has resulted in secret killings and countless human rights violations; *We Are Guardians*, the story of the Indigenous guardians of the Brazilian Amazon, struggling to protect their territories from the ravages of extractive industries, deforestation, corrupt politicians and profit-hungry global corporations; *Who's Afraid of Nathan Law?*, a chronicle of dissident Hong Kong politician and activist Nathan Law's fight for democracy; and Director Barry Avrich's *Without Precedent: The Supreme Life of Rosalie Abella*, a portrait of Canada's first female Jewish Supreme Court Judge, a passionate advocate for the disabled community and visible minorities.

Director Nicole Newnham tells the inside story of an American-born German sex educator and feminist whose 1976 bestselling book, *The Hite Report*, liberated the female orgasm by revealing the private experiences of thousands of anonymous women in *The Disappearance of Shere Hite*, a Festival International Premiere.

*Total Trust*, making its North American Premiere, reveals China's creation of a digitally controlled state using Big Data, biometrics and voice recognition technology to track its citizens, while considering the transformation of social behaviours under an all-seeing eye and how people are fighting against its abuse.

Making their Canadian Premiere are: *El Equipo*, a harrowing 40-year journey through the work of a resilient team of forensic scientists as they uncover and identify the victims of authoritarian regimes across Latin America and the world; *Is There Anybody Out There?*, a filmmaker's search for others with the same rare disability as her, never having seen anyone with a body like hers before; *It's Only Life After All*, a poignant look at the iconic folk-rock duo Indigo Girls, offering a timely look into the obstacles, activism and life lessons of two queer friends who never expected to make it big; *Joan Baez I Am Noise*, a searingly honest look at the legendary musician on and off the stage—from lifelong

emotional struggles to her civil rights work with MLK and a heartbreaking romance with Bob Dylan; and *Time Bomb Y2K*, a revisionist look at the rising hysteria ignited by the discovery of a computer flaw that could have ignited the largest technological disaster in human history as the new millennium approached.

The full selection of films to screen at Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival 2023 will be announced at a press conference on March 28. Ticket packages are now on sale online. Ticket package redemption and single ticket sales for Hot Docs members are available starting March 28. Single ticket sales open to the public on April 4.

This year's Special Presentations program is sponsored by CRAVE.

Hot Docs 2023 Special Presentations include:

### THE DISAPPEARANCE OF SHERE HITE

D: Nicole Newnham | P: Nicole Newnham, Molly O'Brien, R.J. Cutler, Elise Pearlstein, Kimberley Ferdinando, Trevor Smith | USA | 2023 | 118 min | International Premiere

Shere Hite's 1976 bestseller, *The Hite Report*, liberated the female orgasm by revealing the private experiences of thousands of anonymous women. While her findings rocked the patriarchy, they also ignited an unforgiving backlash that led to her erasure from history.

### EL EQUIPO

D: Bernardo Ruiz | P: Bernardo Ruiz, Gabriela Alcalde, Fabian Caballero | USA | 2023 | 80 min | Canadian Premiere

Follow an epic and harrowing 40-year journey through the work of a resilient team of forensic scientists led by the legendary Dr. Clyde Snow as they uncover and identify the victims of authoritarian regimes across Latin America and the world.

### IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE?

D: Ella Glendining | P: Janine Marmot | UK | 2023 | 87 min | Canadian Premiere

While navigating daily discrimination, a filmmaker who loves her unusual body searches the world for another person like her, as she explores what it takes to love oneself fiercely despite the pervasiveness of ableism.

### IT'S ONLY LIFE AFTER ALL

D: Alexandria Bombach | P: Kathlyn Horan, Jessica Devaney, Anya Rous, Alexandria Bombach | USA | 2023 | 123 min | Canadian Premiere

In this poignant reflection from Amy Ray and Emily Saliers, the iconic folk-rock duo Indigo Girls offer a timely look into the obstacles, activism and life lessons of two queer friends who never expected to make it big.

### JOAN BAEZ I AM A NOISE

D: Karen O'Connor, Miri Navasky, Maeve O'Boyle | P: Miri Navasky, Karen O'Connor | USA | 2023 | 113

min | Canadian Premiere

In this searingly honest and intimate look at a living legend, Joan Baez brings us into her world both on and off the stage—from lifelong emotional struggles to her civil rights work with MLK and a heartbreaking romance with Bob Dylan.

### THE MAN WHO STOLE EINSTEIN'S BRAIN

D: Michelle Shephard | P: Bryn Hughes | Canada | 2022 | 78 min | World Premiere

On April 18, 1955, the pathologist performing the autopsy on Albert Einstein covertly steals the genius's brain, hoping to uncover the secret of brilliance. His good intentions and scientific ambitions collide with harsh realities as his world crumbles.

### THE RISE OF WAGNER

D: Benoît Bringer | P: Laurent Richard | France | 2022 | 104 min | World Premiere

Wagner Group mercenaries contracted to fight Russia's proxy wars have never been prosecuted for suspected human rights violations—until now. In this chilling expose, journalists crack open secret killings and Kremlin collusion that have kept the business of dirty wars above the law.

### TIME BOMB Y2K

D: Marley McDonald, Brian Becker | P: Brian Becker | USA | 2023 | 80 min | Canadian Premiere

As the year 2000 approaches, the tech industry discovers a computer flaw that could ignite the largest technological disaster in human history. Crafted entirely through archival footage, the film examines the rising hysteria and concerning fragility of the technological world we have created.

### TOTAL TRUST

D: Jialing Zhang | P: Knut Jäger, Jialing Zhang | Germany, Netherlands, China | 2023 | 97 min | North American Premiere

China is creating a comprehensive, digitally controlled state using Big Data, biometrics and voice recognition technology to track its citizens. *Total Trust* explores the transformation of social behaviours under an all-seeing eye and how people are fighting against its abuse.

### WE ARE GUARDIANS

D: Edivan Guajajara, Chelsea Greene, Rob Grobman | P: Maura Anderson, Zak Kilberg, Fisher Stevens, Chelsea Greene | Brazil, USA | 2023 | 85 min | World Premiere

In this expansive character-driven exposé, Indigenous guardians of the Amazon rainforest in Brazil fight to protect their territories from the ravages of extractive industries, confronting deforestation by illegal loggers, corrupt politicians and profit hungry global corporations.

### WHO'S AFRAID OF NATHAN LAW?

D: Joe Piscatella | P: Matthew Torne, Mark Rinehart, Joe Piscatella | USA, Hong Kong, UK | 2023 | 90 min | World Premiere

Revolutionary at 21. Lawmaker at 23. Most Wanted at 26. With intimate access to the leaders of Hong Kong's Umbrella Revolution, *Who is Afraid of Nathan Law?* chronicles one of the world's most famous dissidents in his fight for democracy against a superpower.

## **WITHOUT PRECEDENT: THE SUPREME LIFE OF ROSALIE ABELLA**

D: Barry Avrich | P: Mark Selby, Barry Avrich, Rosemary Sadlier, Jonas Prince | Canada | 2023 | 84 min  
| World Premiere

Canada's first female Jewish Supreme Court Judge reflects on a career that made her a human rights hero. As a passionate advocate for the disabled community and visible minorities, she commands respect across the political spectrum.

Film stills of Special Presentation titles are available at <https://bit.ly/3SWIHQI>

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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 30th annual edition from April 27 to May 7, 2023, in cinemas across Toronto, with a selection of films available online to audiences throughout Canada. 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, Hot Docs Deal Maker and The Doc Shop. In celebration of its 30th anniversary and a dedication to excellence in non-fiction storytelling, Hot Docs will present the Podcast Festival Showcase, featuring a slate of today's hottest podcasts live on stage; along with a dynamic line-up of industry panels and master classes featuring podcast game-changers. 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, and operates Hot Docs at Home streaming platform.

Starting Tuesday, March 28, Festival ticket package holders, including Doc Soup subscribers, can redeem their ticket packages, and Hot Docs Members can purchase single tickets. Starting Tuesday, April 4, 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](http://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 \$19 to regular Festival screenings and \$22 to Special Presentations screenings (\$17-19 members). Special events vary in price. A Festival 12-Pack is \$199 and a Festival 20-Pack is \$279. Hot Docs offers free tickets for all screenings before 5:00 p.m. to those 60+ 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.



**30** | CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL  
YEARS | DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL  
**APRIL 27-MAY 7, 2023**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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

**Media Contact:**

Juan M. Gonzalez-Calcano  
Media Relations Manager  
Hot Docs  
[jgonzalezcalcano@hotdocs.ca](mailto:jgonzalezcalcano@hotdocs.ca)

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

HOT DOCS CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL  
720 Spadina Avenue, Suite 402, Toronto On, Canada M5S 2T9 416.203.2155

[WWW.HOTDOCS.CA](http://WWW.HOTDOCS.CA)