

For Immediate Release: April 22, 2025

**HOT DOCS 2025:  
CAPTIVATING SUBJECTS, FILMMAKERS AND SPECIAL GUESTS CONVERGE IN  
TORONTO APRIL 24 TO MAY 4**

**Toronto, ON** – Hot Docs is thrilled to welcome intriguing film subjects, filmmakers and special guests to its 2025 Festival, taking place in Toronto April 24 to May 4. Special guests include Academy Award-winner **Marlee Matlin**, artist **Rashaad Newsome**, investigative journalist and co-founder of Bellingcat **Christo Grozev**, Israeli stand-up comedian and activist **Noam Shuster-Eliassi**, Head of the NATO Liaison Office to the United Nations **Dylan P White**, Afghanistan Ambassador to Austria **Manizha Bakhtari**, and Olympic luge athlete **Mirza Nikolajev**.

Featured guests are listed below. In most cases, the guests will be present at one or more screenings.

**Christo Grozev** from **ANTIDOTE** (D: James Jones | P: James Jones | United Kingdom | 2024 | 90 min) - investigative journalist and co-founder of Bellingcat.

**Rashaad Newsome** from **ASSEMBLY** (D: Rashaad Newsome, Johnny Symons | P: Rashaad Newsome, Johnny Symons | USA | 2025 | 99 min) - Multidisciplinary artist known for his provocative work exploring representations of race, power, gender, and beauty.

**Noam Shuster-Eliassi** from **COEXISTENCE, MY ASS!** (D: Amber Fares | P: Rachel Leah Jones, Amber Fares, Valérie Montmartin | USA, France | 2025 | 95 min) - Israeli stand-up comedian and activist, who performs in Hebrew, Arabic, and English.

**Dylan P White** from **FACING WAR** (D: Tommy Gulliksen | P: Anne Marte Blindheim, Danielle Turkov Wilson | Norway | 2025 | 100 min) - Head of the NATO Liaison Office to the United Nations.

**Manizha Bakhtari** from **THE LAST AMBASSADOR** (D: Natalie Halla | P: Peter Drössler, Arash T. Riahi, Sabine Gruber, Natalie Halla | Austria | 2025 | 80 min) - Afghanistan Ambassador to Austria, leading one of Afghanistan's most significant diplomatic representations.

**Marlee Matlin** from **MARLEE MATLIN: NOT ALONE ANYMORE** (D: Shoshannah Stern | P: Robyn Kopp, Justine Nagan, Bonni Cohen, Shoshannah Stern | USA | 2025 | 97 min) - Pioneering Deaf performer and Academy Award winner (*Children of a Lesser God*).

**Mirza Nikolajev** from **THE TRACK** (D: Ryan Sidhoo | P: Ryan Sidhoo | Canada | 2025 | 90 min) – Olympic athlete in luge for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The 2025 Festival will also host over 150 of the world's top documentary filmmakers and producers to introduce their films and participate in post-screening audience Q&As. Among those filmmakers in attendance are those listed below.

**Rashaad Newsome** (announced above) and **Johnny Symons**, directors of **ASSEMBLY** (D: Rashaad Newsome, Johnny Symons | P: Rashaad Newsome, Johnny Symons | USA | 2025 | 99 min)

**Amber Fares**, director of **COEXISTENCE, MY ASS!** (D: Amber Fares | P: Rachel Leah Jones, Amber Fares, Valérie Montmartin | USA, France | 2025 | 95 min)

**Ryan White**, director of **COME SEE ME IN THE GOOD LIGHT** (D: Ryan White | P: Jessica Hargrave, Ryan White, Tig Notaro, Stef Willen | USA | 2025 | 104 min)

**Sara Khaki** and **Mohammadreza Eyni**, directors of **CUTTING THROUGH ROCKS (اوزاک یولالر)** (D: Sara Khaki, Mohammadreza Eyni | P: Mohammadreza Eyni, Sara Khaki | Iran, USA, Netherlands, Germany, Canada, Qatar, Chile | 2025 | 95 min)

**Seth Scriver**, director of **ENDLESS COOKIE** (D: Seth Scriver, Peter Scriver | P: Daniel Bekerman, Chris Yurkovich, Alex Ordanis, Jason Ryle, Seth Scriver | Canada | 2024 | 97 min)

**Ried Davenport**, director of **LIFE AFTER** (D: Reid Davenport | P: Colleen Cassingham | USA | 2025 | 99 min)

**Chase Joynt** and **Julietta Singh**, directors of **THE NEST** (D: Chase Joynt, Julietta Singh | P: Alicia Smith, Justine Pimlott | Canada, | 2025 | 89 min)

**Noam Gonick**, director of **PARADE: QUEER ACTS OF LOVE & RESISTANCE** (D: Noam Gonick | P: Justine Pimlott | Canada | 2025 | 96 min)

**Matt Gallagher**, directors of **SHAMED** (D: Matt Gallagher | P: Cornelia Principe | Canada | 2025 | 90 min)

**Julien Elie**, director of **SHIFTING BASELINES** (D: Julien Elie | P: Andreas Mendritzki, Aonan Yang, Julien Elie | Canada | 2025 | 100 min)

**Sinakson Trevor Solway**, director of **SIKSIKAKOWAN: THE BLACKFOOT MAN** (D: Sinakson Trevor Solway | P: Coty Savard | Canada | 2025 | 77 min)

**Najiba Noori**, director of **WRITING HAWA** (D: Najiba Noori, Rasul Noori (co-director) | P: Christian Popp, Hasse van Nunen, Renko Douze | France, Netherlands, Qatar, Afghanistan | 2024 | 85 min)

Tickets and ticket packages can be purchased and/or redeemed [online](#) 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).

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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 32<sup>nd</sup> 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, 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 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](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 \$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>.

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**FILM STILLS AVAILABLE**

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

Password: media2025

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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.