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HOT DOCS TED ROGERS CINEMA TO TEMPORARILY CLOSE ON JUNE 12

THE THREE-MONTH SUMMER CLOSURE WILL ALLOW THE ORGANIZATION TO REGROUP, REIMAGINE AND ENGAGE IN CRITICAL STRATEGIC THINKING TO ADDRESS URGENT FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

Toronto, ON – Hot Docs announced today the temporary closure of the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema starting June 12 for approximately three months. During this period, the organization’s leadership team will conduct an extensive review of the Cinema—its mission, programming and operations—to determine a path back to profitability. The closure will necessitate temporary layoffs for a portion of staff.

"This has been an incredibly difficult decision to make, but it’s crucial for us to take this step now. This temporary closure will enable us to pause, recalibrate, and strategically plan a sustainable future for this beloved organization," shared **Robin Mirsky**, Co-Chair of Hot Docs’ Board of Directors. "We are grateful for the overwhelming support that we’ve received from our community since we vocalized our operating deficit in March. We’ve made significant progress since then, but there is still important work to do to ensure that we emerge stronger and more resilient, and that Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema continues to be a vibrant cultural hub for Toronto."

The recent Hot Docs Festival was a great success, offering 168 films, including 38 Canadian films from six provinces, in 274 screenings and welcoming 290 filmmakers and special guests to participate in Q&As. Enthusiastic audiences joined in ever growing numbers, with average Festival per screening attendance nearing pre-pandemic capacity levels and box office revenue exceeding target by 12%.

The Festival’s success caps a year of steady post-pandemic rebuilding.

Docs For School, one of Hot Docs’ most impactful programs which serves students in grades 5-12, concluded another successful year, bringing free documentary screenings and educational resources to 98,000 students across Canada, a 12% increase over last year.

The organization’s critical support for filmmakers continues, with early indicators from market events and initiatives at this year’s Festival suggesting stronger than average sales over recent comparable international market. Additionally, Hot Docs’ portfolio of film funds, underwritten by foundations and private benefactors, have supported 29 projects with grants totalling \$392.5k this year.

This successful rebuilding extends to Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema where key metrics for this fiscal year are currently tracking far ahead of FY23, with box office up 59%, annual membership sales up 21% and concession sales up 38%. Unfortunately, given the slow post-pandemic recovery and the operating deficit brought about by it, a temporary closure is still necessary, even with these encouraging figures.

Over the coming months, the Hot Docs development team, along with the board of directors, will continue key conversations with its industry supporters, donors and government partners to further seek solutions to the operating deficit. Hot Docs is optimistic about reopening the Cinema in the fall, featuring the type of engaging and captivating cultural programming that its renowned for, supported by a sustainable and strategic operating plan.

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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. 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.

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