

HOT DOCS UNVEILS ITS FIRST SLATE OF SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS TO SCREEN IN PERSON DURING 2022 FESTIVAL

- SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS INCLUDE THE WORLD PREMIERE OF THE CHARMING **MILLION DOLLAR PIGEONS**, THE CELEBRATED DOC **FIRE OF LOVE**, THE INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE OF ABIGAIL DISNEY'S EYE-OPENING **THE AMERICAN DREAM AND OTHER FAIRY TALES**, AND MANY MORE

Toronto, March 15, 2022 – Hot Docs announces the first slate of Special Presentation films for the 2022 Festival. The Special Presentations program, renowned for its high-profile films, acclaimed documentaries, urgent subject matters, and provocative film subjects, returns to in person screenings as part of the 2022 Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, running April 28 to May 8 in Toronto and streaming online to audiences across Canada on Hot Docs at Home.

The 2022 Special Presentations program explores an extensive array of newsworthy subjects that will spark a myriad of conversations, from the origins of TikTok to the current state of the American Dream. World premieres include **The Talented Mr. Rosenberg**, a lurid look into the story of infamous Toronto con man Albert Rosenberg, aka the Yorkville Swindler; **Million Dollar Pigeons**, a charming introduction to the wildly competitive world of pigeon racing; and **The Quiet Epidemic**, an explosive investigation into Lyme disease dating back to 1975 that reveals why ticks, and the diseases they carry, have been allowed to spread globally.

This year's Special Presentations will also include the international premieres of **Aftershock**, the powerful story of two bereaved Black fathers seeking justice, legislation and medical accountability in an unspoken US crisis: maternal health care; **The American Dream and Other Fairy Tales**, Walt Disney's great-niece's exploration of the growing inequalities in America while she advocates for better pay for Disneyland "cast members"; **I Didn't See You There**—winner of the Directing Award in Sundance's US Documentary competition—a reflection on how the filmmaker sees himself and his world that was shot from the perspective of his wheelchair; and **A Symphony for a Common Man**, a revisionist look at the 2002 ousting of Brazilian diplomat and head of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, José Bustani, as America marched to war with Iraq.

Making its Canadian Premiere is **Fire of Love**, a 2021 Hot Docs Forum alum project and a first look Pitch Prize winner, the story of two fearless scientists and lovers' expedition to the most dangerous volcanoes on earth. Four young women of colour, including Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and the Sunrise Movement's Varshini Prakash, courageously challenge America's political leadership in their tireless fight for the Green New Deal in **To The End**. These films, and many more, will be presented on the big screen for maximum impact at the first in person Hot Docs Festival in over two years.

The full selection of films to screen at Hot Docs 2022 will be announced on March 30. Ticket packages are now on sale online. Ticket package redemption and single ticket sales for Hot Docs members are available starting March 30. Single ticket sales open to the public on April 5.

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

The first announced slate of Special Presentations include:

AFTERSHOCK

D: Paula Eiselt, Tonya Lewis Lee | P: Paula Eiselt, Tonya Lewis Lee | USA | 2022 | 89 min | International Premiere

Two bereaved Black fathers become activists after the deaths of their partners due to preventable childbirth complications, galvanizing others to seek justice, legislation and medical accountability in an unspoken US crisis: maternal health care.

THE AMERICAN DREAM AND OTHER FAIRY TALES

D: Abigail E. Disney, Kathleen Hughes | P: Aideen Kane, Abigail E. Disney, Kathleen Hughes | USA | 2022 | 87 min | International Premiere

Once "The Happiest Place on Earth," Disneyland and its low-wage workers have become emblematic of America's profound inequality crisis. Through her family's story, filmmaker and activist Abigail Disney explores why the American Dream has worked for the wealthy but not for people born with less.

ANGELS OF SINJAR

D: Hanna Polak | P: Hanna Polak, Simone Baumann | Poland, Germany | 2022 | 109 min | North American Premiere

After surviving an ISIS attack on the Yezidi, a religious and ethnic minority in northern Iraq, Hanifa sets out into one of the most underreported and dangerous places on Earth to find her enslaved sisters and bring them home.

BOYCOTT

D: Julia Bacha | P: Suhad Babaa, Daniel J. Chalfen | USA | 2021 | 74 min | Canadian Premiere
Boycotts have long been accepted as a means of peaceful protest for activists seeking social change, but now in most US states laws penalize everyday citizens who support such actions against Israel. Follow those following their conscience in this shocking free speech battle.

CALENDAR GIRLS

D: Maria Loohevud | P: Maria Loohevud, Love Martinsen | Sweden | 2022 | 84 min | Canadian Premiere

Battling a deeply rooted patriarchal society with unbridled enthusiasm and elaborate routines, a dance troupe of women over 60 give it their all, contributing to their Florida community and bonding in sisterhood while renegotiating their identities in the face of aging and invisibility.

FIRE OF LOVE

D: Sara Dosa | P: Shane Boris, Ina Fichman, Sara Dosa | USA | 2022 | 90 min | Canadian Premiere

Disenchanted with humanity, two intrepid scientists devote themselves to understanding the mysteries of volcanoes and unexpectedly fall in love. A poetic and playful tale of creation and destruction, the ephemeral and the eternal and the pursuit of the unknown.

A HOUSE MADE OF SPLINTERS

D: Simon Lereng Wilmont | P: Monica Hellström | Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Ukraine | 2022 | 87 min | Canadian Premiere

Near Ukraine's frontline, social workers at a special shelter offer refuge to abandoned children. With only nine months to reunite families or find foster placements before having to transfer their wards to orphanages, love tests resilience in this gripping award-winner.

I DIDN'T SEE YOU THERE

D: Reid Davenport | P: Keith Wilson | USA | 2022 | 76 min | International Premiere

When a circus tent goes up outside of his apartment, a disabled filmmaker reflects on the legacy of freak shows. Shot entirely from the perspective of his wheelchair and feet, this Sundance award-winner offers an unflinching commentary on spectacle and (in)visibility.

MILLION DOLLAR PIGEONS

D: Gavin Fitzgerald | P: Samantha Corr | Ireland | 2022 | 98 min | World Premiere

Pigeon masters from across the globe compete in the highest-stakes bird races on the planet. Fame, fortune and livelihoods rest on the wings of these feathered athletes in this hilarious and charming story.

PLEISTOCENE PARK

D: Luke Griswold-Tergis | P: Jed Riffe, Luke Griswold-Tergis, Maureen Gosling | USA | 2022 | 101 min | North American Premiere

An idiosyncratic Russian geophysicist and his son rush to gather large woolly beasts and transport them to remote Siberia to restore the Ice Age "mammoth steppe" ecosystem and help save the planet from the catastrophic effects of global warming.

THE QUIET EPIDEMIC

D: Lindsay Keys, Winslow Crane-Murdoch | P: Daria Lombroso, Lindsay Keys, Chris Hegedus | USA | 2022 | 102 min | World Premiere

A diagnosis of Chronic Lyme disease lands patients in the middle of a contentious medical debate and sparks an explosive investigation dating back to 1975 that shockingly reveals why ticks, and the diseases they carry, have been allowed to spread globally.

A SYMPHONY FOR A COMMON MAN

D: José Joffily | P: Isabel Joffily | Brazil | 2022 | 83 min | International Premiere

As head of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Brazilian diplomat José Bustani became an obstacle in America's march to war with Iraq. Ousted from his position, he now revisits the chilling events that marked a turning point in global power structures.

THE TALENTED MR. ROSENBERG

D: Barry Avrich | P: Courtney Shea, Caitlin Cheddie, Mark Selby, Barry Avrich | Canada | 2022 | 70 min | World Premiere

A lurid and revelatory look into our oh-so-susceptible selves, *The Talented Mr. Rosenberg* is a fascinating investigation into the unfathomable mind, motive and method of Albert Rosenberg, aka the Yorkville Swindler, and the people who fell for his cons over and over again.

TIKTOK, BOOM.

D: Shalini Kantayya | P: Ross Dinerstein, Danni Mynard, Shalini Kantayya | USA | 2022 | 91 min | Canadian Premiere

TikTok took the world by storm during the height of the global lockdowns, but as data and dollars flow back to its founders in China, Western governments, users and TikTok stars are asking how it really works and what free speech means in a hyper-connected world.

TO THE END

D: Rachel Lears | P: Sabrina Schmidt Gordon, Rachel Lears, Robin Blotnick | USA | 2022 | 104 min | Canadian Premiere

As the clock ticks on the climate crisis, four young women of colour (Varshini Prakash, Alexandra Rojas, Rhiana Gunn-Wright and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez) courageously challenge America's political leadership in their fight for the Green New Deal.

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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 29th annual edition from April 28 to May 8, 2022 in cinemas across Toronto as well as offering selection of Festival films online to audiences throughout Canada. A full roster of industry conference sessions, market programs and networking events will be held for Canadian and international delegates, including the renowned Hot Docs Forum, Hot Docs Deal Maker, Distribution Rendezvous and The Doc Shop. Year-round, Hot Docs supports the Canadian and international industry with professional development programs and a multi-million-dollar production 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 Wednesday, March 30, Festival ticket package holders, including Doc Soup subscribers, can redeem their ticket packages, and Hot Docs Members can purchase single tickets. Starting Tuesday, April 5, single tickets will be available to the public. Tickets and ticket packages can be purchased and/or redeemed online 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 screenings). Single tickets are \$19 to regular

Festival screenings and \$22 to Special Presentations and events. A Festival 6-Pack is \$99 (on sale April 5), a Festival 12-Pack is \$189, and a Festival 20-Pack is \$269.

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

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