

**NEW FREE FILM SERIES *FOR VIOLA* TO PRESENT STORIES ABOUT
AND CREATED BY BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND PEOPLE OF COLOUR**

Toronto, October 15, 2020 – Hot Docs has added the new monthly film series *For Viola* to its VOD platform Hot Docs at Home. Named in honour of Canadian civil rights icon Viola Desmond, the important documentary series will centre around Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC)-led stories and filmmakers. This fall, the series will feature Charles Officer's 2017 Festival doc *Unarmed Verses* and the 2019 Festival film *In My Blood It Runs*, directed by Maya Newell. The series began this September with Karen Chapman's short film *Lessons Injustice*, which was commissioned as part of Hot Docs' short compilation *In the Name of All Canadians* commemorating Canada's sesquicentennial. To minimize barriers that may prevent audiences from participating, all presentations included in *For Viola* will be free of charge.

For Viola is programmed by Hot Docs' distribution manager Julian Carrington and volunteer coordinator Dawnalda Brennan, in consultation with Hot Docs' Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) anti-racism working group. The series is one of many initiatives the group has undertaken to amplify marginalized voices and create a more diverse and inclusive culture within the organization. To learn more, please see Hot Docs' [anti-racism statement](#).

For Viola is supported by the City of Toronto and the Donner Canadian Foundation.

Official Selection, Hot Docs Festival 2019

IN MY BLOOD IT RUNS

D: Maya Newell | 84 mins | 2019 | Australia

Considered a promising leader by his elders but a failing student by his westernized school teachers, an Aboriginal boy in central Australia must straddle two worlds, coming of age in the midst of a larger cultural battle between colonizers and colonized.

Available October 29

Official Selection, Hot Docs Festival 2017

UNARMED VERSES

D: Charles Officer | 86 mins | 2017 | Canada

A remarkably astute and luminous 12-year-old girl's poignant observations about life, the soul and the power of art give voice to a Toronto community facing imposed relocation, and speak to our universal need for self-expression and belonging.

Now streaming

LESSONS INJUSTICE

D: Karen Chapman | 9 mins | 2017 | Canada

A father sets out on a car ride with his teenage son and reflects on the conversation he knows he will soon have to have: how to conduct himself as a young black man in Canadian society.

Streamed in September 2020

Viola Desmond (1914–1965) was a Black Nova Scotian entrepreneur and pioneer in the struggle against anti-Black racism in Canada. In 1946, Desmond was arrested and jailed when she refused to leave the whites-only seating area of a Nova Scotia cinema and was subsequently convicted and fined. In one of the first known legal challenges to racial segregation in Canada, she fought to overturn her conviction. Though her conviction was not reversed in her lifetime, she received a posthumous pardon from the Nova Scotia government in 2010.

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Owned and operated by [Hot Docs](#), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing and celebrating the art of documentary, Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema is the world's largest documentary cinema. A historic, century-old landmark located in Toronto's vibrant Annex neighbourhood, the Cinema is a year-round home for non-fiction film and storytelling, presenting first-run international and Canadian documentaries, curated film and speakers series, signature events including Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, Hot Docs Podcast Festival and Curious Minds Weekend, as well as hosting for some of the city's premier festivals and events. Since assuming management in 2012, Hot Docs has screened over 1,425 films to audiences of more than 1.3 million. In 2016, a generous \$5-million donation from Rogers Foundation enabled Hot Docs to purchase venue.

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