

# NEWS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Ten NFB premieres and a tribute to Studio D women pioneers coming to the 2019 Hot Docs festival

Opening night film by *Tasha Hubbard*... premieres by *John Walker*; *Nance Ackerman*, *Ariella Pahlke* and *Teresa MacInnes*; *Rogério Soares*; *Baljit Sangra*; *Katerina Cizek*... plus contemporary filmmakers revisit *Five Feminist Minutes*



(Images provided by the NFB)

March 19, 2019 – Toronto – National Film Board of Canada

Ten [National Film Board of Canada](#) (NFB) premieres—including five new feature-length documentaries—are part of a landmark year for the NFB and its co-producers at the 2019 [Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival](#), April 25 to May 5, 2019.

This stellar lineup showcases the NFB's contributions to Canadian documentary past and present, with new NFB works joining a special tribute to the trailblazing [Studio D](#), founded 45 years ago—for a total of 20 confirmed titles to date.

#### Opening Night Film: Tasha Hubbard's [\*nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up\*](#)

Tasha Hubbard's *nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up* ([Downstream Documentary Productions](#)/NFB) makes history as it becomes the first film by an Indigenous filmmaker to open Hot Docs—as well as the first NFB work to open the festival since its inaugural year.

On August 9, 2016, a young Cree man named Colten Boushie died from a gunshot to the back of his head after entering Gerald Stanley's rural property with his friends. The jury's subsequent acquittal of Stanley captured international attention, raising questions about racism embedded within Canada's legal system and propelling Colten's family to national and international stages in their pursuit of justice. In this Canadian Spectrum world premiere, the acclaimed director of [Two Worlds Colliding](#) and [Birth of a Family](#) weaves a profound narrative encompassing the filmmaker's own adoption, the stark history of colonialism on the Prairies, and a transformative vision of a future where Indigenous children can live safely on their homelands.

**nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up** is produced by Tasha Hubbard and George Hupka for Downstream Documentary Productions, and Jon Montes and Bonnie Thompson for the NFB. The executive producers are David Christensen (NFB), Janice Dawe and Kathy Avrich-Johnson ([Bizable Media](#)).

**Two world premieres in Canadian Spectrum: Nance Ackerman, Ariella Pahlke and Teresa MacInnes' [Conviction](#) and Rogério Soares' [River Silence](#)**

Also premiering in Canadian Spectrum are two powerful feature docs about women challenging the status quo.

**Nance Ackerman, Ariella Pahlke and Teresa MacInnes' [Conviction](#)** ([Sea to Sea Productions](#)/NFB) isn't another "broken prison" film. It's a "broken society" film that calls for an ambitious and inspired rebuild of our community, from the inside out—and challenges audiences to consider a radically different approach to women's incarceration. **[Conviction](#)** is produced by Teresa MacInnes for Sea to Sea Productions, and produced and executive produced by Annette Clarke for the NFB.

Rogério Soares' **[River Silence](#)** ([EyeSteelFilm](#)/NFB) explores the human and environmental cost of large-scale hydroelectric development in Brazil's Amazon basin. Returning to his childhood home, Soares crafts a poetic narrative centred on the incredible resilience of four women whose families have been displaced by the dam construction, in a film that reminds us of the powerful instinct for human connection and survival. **[River Silence](#)** is produced by Bob Moore ([EyeSteelFilm](#)) and Annette Clarke (NFB), with executive producers Mila Aung-Thwin and Daniel Cross ([EyeSteelFilm](#)), Jane Jankovic ([TVO](#)) and Annette Clarke (NFB).

**Premiering in Persister: Baljit Sangra's [Because We Are Girls](#)**

In **Baljit Sangra's [Because We Are Girls](#)**, a conservative Indo-Canadian family in small-town British Columbia must come to terms with a devastating secret: three sisters were sexually abused by the same relative throughout their childhood. Weaving together past and present, Bollywood fantasy and reality, the film is a powerful tribute to women's strength in the face of trauma. Produced by Selwyn Jacob and executive produced by Shirley Vercruysse for the NFB, **[Because We Are Girls](#)** is premiering as part of *Persister*, a Hot Docs film series that explores the social norms and institutional failures that perpetuate violence against women and girls, while offering hope for a better future.

**Special Presentation: John Walker's [Assholes: A Theory](#)**

One year after his 2018 Focus On retrospective, **John Walker** is back at Hot Docs with the North American premiere of **[Assholes: A Theory](#)** ([John Walker Productions](#)/NFB), an entertaining and timely feature documentary screening in the festival's Special Presentations program. Inspired by Aaron James' *New York Times* bestseller of the same name, the doc investigates the breeding grounds of contemporary "asshole culture" and locates signs of civility in an otherwise rude-'n-nasty universe. Produced by John Walker and Ann Bernier (John Walker Productions) and Annette Clarke (NFB).

**DocX special event: live look at Katerina Cizek's new interactive doc [Supreme Law](#)**

Presented as a special event in DocX, this first look at Katerina Cizek's interactive doc **[Supreme Law](#)** takes audiences on a fresh and unexpectedly lively journey inside the shaping of the Canadian Constitution. YouTube personalities including Jus Reign guide us through the drama, conflict and high stakes, via five hilarious and powerful videos and highly readable deep dives. An NFB production in partnership with the [Centre for Constitutional Studies](#), **[Supreme Law](#)** is produced for the NFB by Bonnie Thompson and David Christensen.

**[Five Feminist Minutes 2019](#) and a Redux tribute to pioneers in women's filmmaking**

On the heels of the NFB's announcement that it has [achieved its industry-leading gender-parity goals](#), the festival's Redux program for classic documentary works is presenting a tribute to Studio D and pioneering NFB women filmmakers, along with a [reboot of 1990 short-film series \[Five Feminist Minutes\]\(#\)](#).

As part of this special tribute, Hot Docs is premiering **Five Feminist Minutes 2019**, four new NFB short works inspired by the landmark Studio D series, which had brought together emerging and diverse women filmmakers to help mark the studio's 15th anniversary. Premiering at the festival and online at NFB.ca are:

- **Radical**, a profile of Mary Walsh, the Great Warrior Queen of Canadian comedy, directed by **Deanne Foley** and written by **Mary Walsh**;
- **Joyce Wong's Camera Test**, a look at what gets lost when female voices are stymied during the creative process;
- **Lake**, in which Cree director **Alexandra Lazarowich** riffs off classic verité cinema to craft a contemporary portrait of Métis women net fishing in Northern Alberta; and
- One of the original **Five Feminist Minutes** filmmakers, Vancouver's **Ann Marie Fleming**, is back with **Question Period**, in which a group of recently settled Syrian refugee women have questions about life in their new home. Redux will also be presenting Fleming's short film from the original series, **New Shoes**.

### Pioneering works of women's documentary cinema

Redux features three Academy Award-winning classic docs from Studio D, the world's first feminist studio:

- [\*I'll Find a Way\*](#) (1977) by **Beverly Shaffer**;
- [\*If You Love This Planet\*](#) (1982) by **Terre Nash**;
- [\*Flamenco at 5:15\*](#) (1983) by **Cynthia Scott**.

Also featured:

- One of the NFB's earliest works exploring the feminist movement, **Luce Guilbeault, Nicole Brossard and Margaret Wescott's** [\*Some American Feminists\*](#) (1977);
- [\*Doctor, Lawyer, Indian Chief\*](#) (1986) by trailblazing First Nations filmmaker **Carol Geddes**.

Studio D works from two Trinidadian-Canadian film pioneers:

- **Claire Prieto's** [\*Older Stronger Wiser\*](#) (1989), a look at Black history in Canada through the eyes of five women;
- **Dionne Brand's** [\*Long Time Comin'\*](#) (1993), about African-Canadian lesbian artists Faith Nolan and Grace Channer.

**Pepita Ferrari**, a leading member of Canada's documentary community who died in December of 2018, will also be remembered with her 2008 NFB feature about documentary filmmaking, [\*Capturing Reality\*](#).

Additional Redux titles will be confirmed soon.

### Ontario premiere of Julia Ivanova's [\*Limit Is the Sky\*](#)

Winner of the Colin Low Award for Canadian Documentary at the DOXA Documentary Film Festival, **Julia Ivanova's** 2016 feature documentary ***Limit Is the Sky*** focusses on a diverse group of young dreamers trying to jump-start their lives in Fort McMurray—and is screening in Toronto for the first time, as part of the festival's 2019 Focus On retrospective of Ivanova's work. ***Limit Is the Sky*** is produced by Bonnie Thompson and executive produced by David Christensen for the NFB.

### ***My Grierson*, an illustrated talk with Bill Nemtin**

***My Grierson*** features executive producer **Bill Nemtin** reflecting on lessons learned from his mentor, **John Grierson**, who founded the NFB some 80 years ago, and whose philosophy on documentary as a tool for social change influences Canadian identity to this day. Free and open to the public, ***My Grierson*** takes place Wednesday, May 1, from 1:45 to 2:45 p.m. in [TIFF Bell Lightbox 4](#). It's presented in partnership with the NFB and supported by the [Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund](#).

## About the NFB

The NFB is Canada's public producer of award-winning creative documentaries, auteur animation, interactive stories and participatory experiences. NFB producers are embedded in communities across the country, from St. John's to Vancouver, working with talented creators on innovative and socially relevant projects. The NFB is a leader in gender equity in film and digital media production, and is working to strengthen Indigenous-led production, guided by the recommendations of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. NFB productions have won over 7,000 awards, including 20 Canadian Screen Awards, 18 Webbys, 12 Oscars and more than 100 Genies. To access NFB works, visit [NFB.ca](http://NFB.ca) or download its [apps](#) for mobile devices.

-30-

## Related Products

Electronic Press Kit | Images, trailers, synopses: [The NFB at Hot Docs 2019](#) | [Assholes: A Theory](#) | [Because We Are Girls](#) | [Conviction](#) | [Five Feminist Minutes](#) | [Limit Is the Sky](#) | [nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up](#) | [River Silence](#) | [Supreme Law](#)

## Associated Links

[Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival](#)  
[Downstream Documentary Productions](#)  
[Bizable Media](#)  
[Sea to Sea Productions](#)  
[EyeSteelFilm](#)  
[TVO](#)  
[John Walker Productions](#)  
[Centre for Constitutional Studies](#)  
[Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund](#)  
[Studio D](#)  
[NFB - Gender-parity goals](#)  
[Five Feminist Minutes – 1990 short-film series](#)

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