

For Immediate Release
December 9, 2010

Press Contact:
Amy McGee 310.360.1981
Amy_McGee@sundance.org

**SUNDANCE INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES
\$550,000 IN GRANTS FOR CONTEMPORARY ISSUE DOCUMENTARY FILMS**

The Sundance Institute | Cinereach Fund Awards Two Films for 'Urgent Need'

Los Angeles, CA – Sundance Institute today announced the twenty two Documentary Film Program grant recipients for Fall 2010. Selected feature-length documentary films, chosen from nearly 450 projects from 80 countries, will receive \$550,000 in support. Two of the 22 projects listed below are to receive a grant from the Sundance | Cinereach Project at Sundance Institute, part of a \$1.5 million three-year grant funded by Cinereach. A portion of the grant is for emergency or discretionary grants and support for risk-taking documentaries on pressing global issues, as well as support.

In addition to financial assistance, all of the filmmakers awarded grants are eligible for a range of year-round creative support services from Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program, including Creative Labs and Fellows Programs, Work-in-Progress screenings, and documentary activity at the annual Sundance Creative Producing Summit and Sundance Film Festival.

“Since its inception, Sundance Institute has championed emerging and established documentary filmmakers from around the world, by providing a continuum of support ranging from early funding to production,” said Keri Putnam, Executive Director, Sundance Institute. “We are especially grateful to Cinereach and other Foundation partners for embracing this critical work.”

“Sundance Institute’s Documentary Film Program seeks to increase resources for the independent documentary field and opportunities for impact with non-fiction storytelling,” said Cara Mertes, Director of the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program. “We know that artists are key to creating the new paradigms in storytelling and engagement which will strengthen community around the world, and we are honored to be able to contribute to these important efforts.”

The Sundance Institute Documentary Fund is a core activity of Sundance Institute’s Documentary Film Program, which provides year-round creative support to nonfiction filmmakers globally. Proposals are accepted twice a year, and submissions are judged on their approach to storytelling, artistic treatment and innovation, subject relevance and potential for social engagement. Sundance Institute considers projects in the Development, Production/Post-Production and Audience Engagement phases. The film selection is juried by creative film professionals and human rights experts. The next postmarked deadline is February 9, 2011. Please visit www.sundance.org/documentary or www.sundance.org/DocSource for more information.

DEVELOPMENT

A Bear Over My Head (Georgia)
Zaza Rusadze

Two photographs were taken on the same spot in Georgia's breakaway region Abkhazia, in 1982 and 2007 - before and after the war between Georgian and Abkhazian people. The photos allow a timely re-examination of the effects of nationalistic tendencies on the lives of everyday people.

The E-Team (U.S.)

Katy Chevigny and Ross Kauffman

Three intrepid, global human rights workers, known as The E-Team, are on the front lines of identifying international human rights abuses.

Haiti, Billions For a Refoundation (Haiti/France/U.S.)

Raoul Peck

This film reveals the power struggles, contradictions and conflicts at work in the reconstruction of Haiti after the January 12th 2010 earthquake.

Nuclear Underground (U.S.)

Peter Galison and Robb Moss

Deep beneath Carlsbad, New Mexico, lies the world's only licensed, operating radioactive waste site. Savior of the town? Bulwark against global warming? Or a nuclear gamble for 10,000 years?

PRODUCTION / POST-PRODUCTION

Arizona Project (U.S.)

Carlos Sandoval and Catherine Tambini

This film offers a wrenching examination of a state's struggle with immigration, and of its hard-line response that is testing the edges of our democratic values, told through the personal stories of those on all sides of the issue.

The Bully Project (U.S.)

Lee Hirsch

This year, 18 million American kids will be bullied, making it the most common form of violence young people in this country experience. Catalyzing a "call to action" moment, *The Bully Project* is the first feature documentary film to explore a year in the life of America's bullying crisis.

China Heavyweight

Yung Chang (China/Canada)

A Chinese Master boxing coach recruits poor rural teenagers, fills them with Olympic dreams, and turns them into amateur champions. Chinese and U.S. promoters see China as pro-boxing's last frontier, so the boxers must choose to fight for their nation or themselves.

El Jardin (working title) (U.S./Mexico)

Natalia Almada

Since Mexico's war on drugs began in 2007, El Jardin cemetery has doubled in size and the mausoleums have doubled in height.

A Fierce Green Fire (U.S.)

Mark Kitchell

A Fierce Green Fire tells stories of environmental activism – people trying to save the planet, their homes, their lives, the future. The film chronicles grassroots, global social movements building over the last five decades. It explores how we got here and where we're going.

Higher Ground (working title) (U.S.)

Jon Shenk

Mohammed Nasheed, the first-ever democratically elected President of the The Maldives, is fighting to save his Islamic country from impending sea level rise. This drama pits an activist for human rights against the nasty realities of the growing climate debate.

More Than A Month (U.S.)

Shukree Tilghman

Shukree Hassan Tilghman is a 30 year old African American filmmaker on a cross-country campaign to end Black History Month. Through this challenging and often comedic journey, the film explores what the treatment of history tells us about race and equality in the US.

Oscar's Comeback (U.S.)

Lisa Collins and Mark Schwartzburt

Two worlds collide when an unlikely all-white town champions its unlikely black native son, known to some as the 'godfather of independent cinema. Witness the melodrama fueling the annual Oscar Micheaux Film Festival held in Gregory, South Dakota.

Planet of Snail (South Korea)

Seung-Jun Yi

A deaf-blind man who once thought he could do nothing in this world, learns to communicate with the world and starts loving his life in his own way.

SEMBENE! (U.S./Senegal)

Samba Gadjigo and Jason Silverman

Meet a freedom fighter who used stories as his weapon: Ousmane Sembene, the father of African cinema. This documentary weaves animation and archival footage into a tale about contemporary Africa and the power of storytelling in the media age.

Sun Kissed (U.S.)

Maya Stark and Adi Lavy

After both their children are born with a rare genetic disorder, a Navajo couple bravely examines their culture, history and identities to discover why the disorder has come into their family. *Sun Kissed* reveals a new angle on the ways colonization continues to affect many aspects of Navajo life.

Watchers of the Sky (U.S.)

Edet Belzberg

Watchers of the Sky exposes the uncanny parallels of genocides across time and culture by telling the stories of five remarkable individuals trying to end the international community's political paralysis and prevent future genocides.

When the Drum is Beating (U.S.)

Whitney Dow

Journey through Haiti's tortured history with the music and memories of 'Septentrional', the country's oldest and most celebrated big band.

When Two Worlds Collide (Peru)

Heidi Brandenburg and Mathew Orzel

An indigenous leader resists the environmental ruin of Amazonian lands by big business. Forced into exile and facing 20 years in prison his quest reveals conflicting visions shaping the fate of the Amazon and the climate future of our world.

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

A Small Act (U.S.)

Jennifer Arnold

A young Kenyan's life is changed dramatically when his education is sponsored by a Swedish stranger. Years later, he founds his own scholarship program to replicate the kindness he once received.

Soldiers of Conscience (U.S.)

Gary Weimberg and Catherine Ryan

Eight U.S. soldiers in Iraq today face the most difficult moral decision of their lives: to kill or not to kill. This is a film about war, peace, and the transformative power of the human conscience.

CINEREACH PROJECT AT SUNDANCE INSTITUTE AWARDS

God Loves Uganda (U.S.)

Roger Ross Williams

Journey into the heart of east Africa, where a new breed of religious leaders and their American evangelical counterparts save souls and wage war against immorality.

If A Tree Falls (U.S.)

Marshall Curry

Daniel McGowan was arrested for being part of the Earth Liberation Front, a group responsible for arsons against timber company and SUV dealerships. Through his story the film sheds light on two of our most important and timely issues--terrorism and environmentalism.

Sundance Institute's Documentary Film Program is made possible by generous support from The Ford Foundation, Open Society Institute, the Skoll Foundation, The Charles Engelhard Foundation, Cinereach, the MacArthur Foundation, the S.J. and Jessie E. Quinney Foundation, the Woodruff Charitable Memorial Trust and the Bastian Foundation. Sundance Institute also gratefully acknowledges the generous assistance provided by the following organizations: Alesis Corporation, Apple Computer, Avid Technology, Inc., Hewlett-Packard Company, HP Marketing, JBL Professional, LaCie Limited, Mackie, Mark of the Unicorn, Sony Business and Professional Products, Sony Media, Sony SXR and Soundcraft.

Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program

The Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program supports U.S. and international feature documentary films that focus on current human rights issues, social justice, civil liberties, and other contemporary issues. Since 1996, the Sundance Documentary Fund has supported more than 450 artists in 52 countries, providing a continuum of support throughout the life of a project. Films supported by the Fund have received widespread distribution to their intended audiences via broadcast and theatrical release, and many have garnered a number of awards and exceptional industry recognition. Films have included *My Country, My Country*; *Iraq In Fragments*; *Why We Fight*; *The Inner Tour*; *The Betrayal (Nerakhoon)*; and *Traces of the Trade*. Please visit www.sundance.org/documentary or www.sundance.org/DocSource for more information.

Sundance Institute

Founded by Robert Redford in 1981, Sundance Institute is a not-for-profit organization that fosters the development of original storytelling in film and theatre, and presents the annual Sundance Film Festival. Internationally recognized for its artistic development programs for directors, screenwriters, producers, film composers, playwrights and theatre artists, Sundance Institute has nurtured such projects as *Angels in America*, *Spring Awakening*, *Boys Don't Cry*, *Sin Nombre*, *Born into Brothels* and *Trouble the Water*. www.sundance.org.