



- FILM FESTIVAL
- FEATURE FILM
- DOCUMENTARY
- FILM MUSIC
- THEATRE

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Media Contact:
Casey De La Rosa
310.360.1981
casey_delarosa@sundance.org

Sundance Institute Announces Grants to 27 Documentaries

Films Receive Funding and Creative Support

Los Angeles, CA — Sundance Institute today announced 27 feature-length documentary films that will receive \$490,000 in grants from its Documentary Film Program and Fund (DFP).

Cara Mertes, Director of the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program and Fund said, "The grants announced today represent an incredible array of storytelling. Many of these films examine people, events and movements that tell a story of transformative change. Each film has the potential to bring this experience to viewers around the world."

Awarding grants is a core activity of the DFP, which provides year-round creative support and funding to nonfiction filmmakers globally. Proposals are accepted twice a year, and submissions are reviewed by a jury of creative film professionals and human rights experts, based on their approach to storytelling, artistic treatment and innovation, subject relevance and potential for social engagement. Visit www.sundance.org/documentary for more information.

The DFP celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2012 and since its inception has awarded grants to more than 425 documentary filmmakers in 61 countries, including the projects announced today.

DEVELOPMENT

99 % - The Occupy Wall Street Collaborative Film (U.S.)

Directors: A. Ewell, A. Aites, L. Read, N. Krstic, K. Teague, A. Martin, P. Leeman, K. Kerhwald
The story of the Occupy Wall Street movement is told from many perspectives, but woven into a single, resonant portrait with an unprecedented and innovative collaborative process designed to mirror the movement itself.

The Amichai Film Project (U.S.)

Director: Sandi Dubowski
The Amichai Film Project follows the dramatic life story of Amichai Lau-Lavie, a 21st century humorist and spiritual innovator for our skeptical, secular, digital generation.

Beyond the Wave (Japan)

Director: Kyoko Miyake
Director Kyoko Miyake revisits her mother's hometown in Fukushima to explore the town's complex past of nuclear ambitions and its future beyond the catastrophe.

Guerrilla E.R (Burma, UK)

Producer/Director: Gigi Berardi
In the jungles of Eastern Burma, an emergency surgeon, a medical student and a patient face the consequences of the longest standing civil war in the world. Following their lives, we learn about a forgotten population.

Indian Point (U.S.)

Director: Ivy Meeropol

Thirty miles from New York City, a nuclear power plant known as Indian Point must seek a 20 year license renewal to remain in operation. Yet, the pressure to close the plant is mounting. Who will win this fight and what will it mean for the future of the nuclear industry?

Logs of War (Liberia / Kenya)

Directors: Anjali Nayar and Hawa Essuman

Silas Siakor, winner of the Goldman Environmental Prize, risked everything to cut off warlord Charles Taylor from the illegal timber trade that was helping fund Liberia's 14-year civil war. Now, Siakor tries to kick-start his country's struggling economy through sustainable logging.

Powerless (India)

Directors: Fahad Mustafa and Deepti Kakkar

In a city with 15 hour power outages, a nimble young electrician provides Robin Hood-style services to the poor. Meanwhile, the first female chief of the electricity utility company is on a mission to dismantle the illegal connections, for good.

The Settlers (Israel / Palestinian Territories)

Director: Shimon Dotan

Settlers in the West Bank have been extensively covered in the media, but rarely through the stories of settlers themselves. And never have the foreign influences and international networks that support the settlements been thoroughly explored.

Speed Sisters (Palestinian Territories / UK)

Director: Amber Fares

Brought together by their love of cars and racing, the first ever Palestinian women's motor racing team take on the West Bank streetcar racing circuit, challenging male racers, their naysayers and their own self doubts.

The Square (Egypt / U.S.)

Director: Jehane Noujaim

How far will five determined revolutionaries go in the fight for their nation and their beliefs?

This is America (U.S.)

Director: Amy Berg

This is America tackles the corporate takeover of the American Electoral system and the growing disenfranchisement – and disenchantment – of the American voter. By documenting the upcoming \$3 billion dollar election and the third party groups from across the political spectrum fighting to have their voices heard, we expose the fictions underpinning our system of "free and fair" elections and the high cost of our continued apathy.

Untitled Gay Retiree Project (U.S.)

Director: PJ Raval

Three LGBTQ seniors navigate the adventures, challenges and surprises of life and love in their golden years.

Whose Country? (Egypt / France / Kuwait / US)

Director: Mohamed Siam

Following Mubarak's downfall, long time government loyalists are confronted with burning questions about morality, loyalty and the repressive activities of the former regime.

PRODUCTION

BaddDDD Sonia Sanchez (U.S.)

Directors: Barbara Attie and Janet Goldwater

For 77-year-old Sonia Sanchez, writing is both a personal and political act. She first emerged as a seminal figure in the 1960s Black Arts Movement, going on to raise her voice in the name of black culture, civil rights, and women's liberation as a poet, playwright, teacher, activist and early champion of the spoken word. In *BaddDDD Sonia Sanchez*, a life unfolds in a documentary rich with readings and jazz-accompanied performances of Sanchez's work.

Baglar (Turkey)

Directors: Melis Birder and Berke Bas

An underdog basketball team from hard scrabble Diyarbakir in Southeastern Turkey goes beyond winning games in their mission to rise above prejudice, poverty and political turmoil created by the decades long Turkish-Kurdish conflict.

Best Kept Secret (U.S.)

Director: Samantha Buck

A Newark, NJ public high school teacher races a ticking clock to find a place in the world for her students with autism before they graduate and age out of their rare support system.

The Fire This Time (U.S.)

Director: Blair Doroshwalther

One hot August night, under the neon lights of a gay friendly neighborhood in New York City, four young African American women defended themselves against an attack by an older man. Called a "Lesbian Wolfpack" in the press, these young women became immediate criminals before facing a judge and jury.

The Genius of Marian (U.S.)

Directors: Banker White and Anna Fitch

The Genius of Marian follows Pam White in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease. Her son, the filmmaker, works with her as she attempts to write a book that tributes her mother, the renowned artist Marian Steele. As Pam's family comes together to support her, they must also prepare for the new reality that Alzheimer's disease brings.

Kathleen Cleaver and the Black Panther Symphonies (U.S. / Algeria / France)

Directors: Manthia Diawara and John Akomfrah

Kathleen Cleaver's life story illuminates not only the national history of the Black Panther Party and the American civil rights movements of the 1960s, but also the Algerian Revolution and the liberation struggles in Sub-Saharan Africa. Kathleen Cleaver's untold story will reveal a remarkable life lived at the centre of those many watershed maelstorms.

One Bullet: Afghanistan (U.S.)

Director: Carol Dysinger

One bullet, fired in darkness, hits a teenage boy. A story of one street, one family and one war unfolds as his family grapples with international forces way beyond their control.

Redemption (U.S.)

Directors: Amir Soltani and Chihiro Wimbush

Four marginal garbage recyclers fight for their piece of the American pie--the right to redeem worlds abandoned as trash. Their story paints intimate portraits of souls clinging to dignity, and provides a glimpse into the economic, racial and political winds blowing in Oakland, CA, and beyond.

SELECTION: Who Will Be A Gurkha (Nepal)

Director: Kesang Tseten

Young Nepalis compete for a few coveted position as Gurkhas, soldiers who've famously fought as part of the British Army for 200 years since the days of the Empire.

Stargazing (Denmark)

Director: Berit Madsen

A young Muslim girl dreams of becoming an astronaut. But at her age the nightly stargazing excursions in the desert are a thorn in the side of family and traditions.

Totonei (Romania)

Director: Alexander Nanau

What happens when we discover that we can get more from life than our parents have to offer?

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

Invisible War (U.S.)

Director: Kirby Dick

Invisible War documents the epidemic of rape within the U.S. military, the institutions that perpetuate and cover up its existence, and its profound personal and social consequences. The Audience Engagement grant will help support and evaluate a campaign to engage the U.S. Department of Defense, specifically encouraging measures to radically reduce sexual assault rates, prosecute perpetrators, and support survivors.

The Law In These Parts (Israel)

Director: Ra'anan Alexandrowicz

Can a modern democracy impose a prolonged military occupation on another people while retaining its core democratic values? *The Law in These Parts* tells the story of the Israeli military legal system in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The audience engagement award will support outreach to high school teachers and students (mandatory army service follows high school), as well as to legal professionals and law students who will eventually create, interpret and uphold local laws.

Town Of Runners (U.K.)

Director: Jerry Rothwell

Town Of Runners follows young Ethiopian athletes as they move from school track to national competition and from childhood to adulthood. The Audience Engagement award will support the filmmakers and partners including Running Across Borders, Tesfa Foundation and the Bekoji Youth and Sports Office. Together they will expand the work of the coach by developing three assistant coach positions; developing a 'Visit and Train' program for foreign athletes which might bring income and employment to the town; developing new opportunities for Bekoji's athletes as guides and coaches for foreign athletes; and creating a library resource centre in the town as a focus for this work.

The Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program and Fund is made possible by generous support from Candescent Films, Cinereach, The Charles Engelhard Foundation, ESPN Films, The Ford Foundation, Hilton Worldwide, The James Irvine Foundation, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Open Society Foundations, the Joan and Lewis Platt Foundation, the S.J. and Jessie E. Quinney Foundation, the Skoll Foundation, Time Warner Foundation, Wallace Global Fund, and The J.A. & H.G. Woodruff, Jr. Charitable Trust.

Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program and Fund

The Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program and Fund provides year-round support to nonfiction filmmakers worldwide. The program advances innovative nonfiction storytelling about a broad range of contemporary social issues, and promotes the exhibition of documentary films to audiences. Through the Sundance Documentary Fund, the Documentary Edit and Story Laboratory, Composers + Documentary Laboratory, Creative Producing Lab, as well as the Sundance Film Festival, the Sundance Creative Producing Summit and a variety of partnerships and international initiatives, the program provides a unique, global resource for contemporary independent documentary film.

www.sundance.org/documentary

Sundance Institute

Founded by Robert Redford in 1981, Sundance Institute is a global, nonprofit cultural organization dedicated to nurturing artistic expression in film and theater, and to supporting intercultural dialogue between artists and audiences. The Institute promotes independent storytelling to unite, inform and inspire, regardless of geo-political, social, religious or cultural differences. Internationally recognized for its annual Sundance Film Festival and its artistic development programs for directors, screenwriters, producers, film composers, playwrights and theatre artists, Sundance Institute has nurtured such projects as *Born into Brothels*, *Trouble the Water*, *Son of Babylon*, *Amreeka*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Spring Awakening*, *Light in the Piazza* and *Angels in America*. Join [Sundance Institute](#) on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

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