

# SUNDANCE INSTITUTE

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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **SUNDANCE INSTITUTE DOCUMENTARY FILM PROGRAM ANNOUNCES FALL 2008 GRANTS**

### ***Trans-national Productions Define the Grantee Pool***

**Los Angeles, CA** –Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program announced today the 20 film projects awarded financial and creative support from the Sundance Documentary Fund. In a doubling of the numbers of projects submitted, nearly 800 filmmakers working in more than 70 countries submitted projects. The awardees include six first-time feature documentary filmmakers, complemented by national and international award winners. The Sundance Documentary Film Program supports U.S. and international documentary filmmakers exploring the critical issues of our times in documentaries with cinematic potential.

"The films funded in this round tell stories of perseverance and dignity in the face of our world's greatest contemporary challenges," said Cara Mertes, Director of the Sundance Documentary Film Program. "From journalists and lawyers who take on international war criminals, to a small American town confronting its own homophobia, nonfiction storytellers are leading us down new paths as we search for common ground." Artists in this round are working in the United States, Tibet, The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Palestinian Territories, Ukraine, Nigeria, Iran, Romania, Chile, Senegal Guantanamo Bay Cuba, India and Tanzania.

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 through creative Labs, work-in-progress screenings, Program staff and advisor consultations and artist-to-artist community. Proposals are accepted prior to deadlines twice a year, and submissions are judged on their approach to storytelling, artistic treatment and innovation, subject relevance and potential for social engagement. The Sundance Institute Documentary Program considers projects in the Development and Production/Post-Production phases. The film selection is juried by creative film professionals and human rights experts. Next deadlines are February 9 and July 7, 2009.

### **DEVELOPMENT**

**Priya Giri Desai and Ann S. Kim**

#### **MATCH +: A STORY ABOUT LOVE IN THE TIME OF HIV (U.S./India)**

At the Y.R. Gaitonde Centre for AIDS Research and Education (*YRG CARE*) clinic in Chennai, India, Dr. Solomon and her staff launch a matrimonial matchmaking service for their positive patients.

**Patricio Guzman**

#### **NOSTALGIA DE LA LUZ (Chile/France)**

In the desert of North Chile, astronomers study the ancient universe above, while women search below for signs of their family members disappeared under Pinochet's dictatorship of 1973.

**Marianna Kaat**

#### **THE PIT (Estonia/Ukraine)**

Once prosperous during the Soviet era, the small town of Snezhnoje in East Ukraine now lives in poverty. The town's desperate residents decide to start mining on their own.

**Tina DiFelicianantonio and Jane C. Wagner**

#### **SEEKING REFUGE (U.S.)**

At the Bellevue Hospital Center N.Y.U. Program for Survivors of Torture, three patients from around the world come together in a journey of healing.

- more -

**Elinyisia Mosha**

**TANZANIA PROJECT (Tanzania/U.S.)**

This film explores the impact of foreign direct investment in the filmmakers native Tanzania.

**Mahmoud Al Massad**

**THIS IS MY PICTURE WHEN I WAS DEAD (Jordan)**

This is a film that artfully imagines the future of a four-year old boy who almost died in the assassination of his PLO lieutenant father 25 years ago.

**Macky Alston**

**THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE (U.S.)**

An openly gay bishop from New Hampshire travels to London, where the Anglican Communion will decide to either retain or split gay leadership from their ranks.

**PRODUCTION/POST-PRODUCTION**

**Lynn True and Nelson Walker, with Tsering Perlo**

**A NOMAD'S LIFE (U.S./Tibet)**

In the mountains of Tibet, Locho and Yama struggle to maintain their family and way of life, and to reconcile their nomadic traditions amidst rapid modernization.

**Andrew Berends**

**DELTA BOYS (U.S./Nigeria)**

In the oil rich Niger Delta, Chima is a 21-year-old who is swept into the world of armed militants after a prison break. His story is part of a complex tale of oil, power, poverty and corruption.

**Petr Lom**

**LETTERS TO THE PRESIDENT (U.S./Iran)**

Across Iran, villagers share their hopes and fears through letters to President Ahmadinejad and his Presidential Letter Writing Center.

**Mona Nicoara**

**OUR SCHOOL (Romania)**

Roma children struggle to break the barriers of segregation in a small Transylvanian school. Rejected by teachers, they find strength in the friendship of Romanian classmates.

**Joe Wilson and Dean Hamer**

**OUT IN THE SILENCE (U.S.)**

The filmmaker's same-sex wedding announcement in the local newspaper ignites a firestorm of controversy in his rural Pennsylvania hometown.

**Eric Daniel Metzgar**

**REPORTER (U.S./Congo)**

New York Times journalist Nicholas Kristof journeys into the crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo, inviting a consideration of the future of journalism.

**Danae Elon**

**THE EVIL TONGUE (U.S.)**

In the Orthodox Jewish family, those affected by sexual molestation may be unable to disclose the information to secular authorities.

**Pamela Yates**

**THE RECKONING (U.S.)**

The film chronicles the history and launch of the International Criminal Court in the Hague, the world's first institution created to prosecute individuals for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

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**DISCRETIONARY**

**Edet Belzberg**

**WATCHERS OF THE SKY (U.S.)**

Drawing from Samantha Power's book "A Problem from Hell" four exceptional visionaries traverse time and continents to explore the world's response to genocide.

**Oren Jacoby**

**INJUSTICE (U.S.)**

This film uncovers the backroom maneuvering during the waning days of the Bush Administration which led to the unprecedented and illegal firing of U.S. Attorneys David Iglesias, John McKay and three of their colleagues.

**Samba Gadjigo and Jason Silverman**

**SEMBENE: REVOLUTIONARY ARTIST (U.S./Senegal)**

The story of independent filmmaker Senegal's Ousmane Sembene, providing an alternate history of contemporary Africa and a window into world cinema.

**Thomas Wallner**

**THE GUANTANAMO TRAP (Canada/Germany)**

Murat Kurnaz, born in Germany of Turkish heritage, was detained, tortured at the U.S. military base in Kandahar, Afghanistan and in the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and held for five years. This is his story.

**Thomas Allen Harris**

**THROUGH A LENS DARKLY: BLACK PHOTOGRAPHERS AND THE EMERGENCE OF A PEOPLE (U.S.)**

Using an experimental approach, Harris shows how black communities use photography and imagery to construct political, aesthetic, and cultural representations of themselves in the world.

Sundance Institute's Documentary Program is made possible by generous support from The Ford Foundation, The Charles Engelhard Foundation The Gill Foundation, S.J. and Jessie E. Quinney Foundation, the Woodruff Charitable Memorial Trust and the Skoll 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.

The **Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program** is a core Program of the Sundance Institute, dedicated to supporting 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 Fund has supported over 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*; *Born Into Brothels*; *The Inner Tour*; *The Betrayal (Nerakhoon)*; *Traces of the Trade and Trouble the Water*. In addition to the Fund, The Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program provides year-round support to nurture nonfiction filmmakers worldwide through three Creative Labs, at the Sundance Film Festival and the Sundance Independent Producers Conference, and through collaborative international initiatives. Visit [www.sundance.org/documentary](http://www.sundance.org/documentary) or [www.sundance.org/DocSource](http://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 filmmakers, screenwriters, composers, playwrights and theatre artists, Sundance Institute has nurtured such projects as *Angels in America*, *Spring Awakening*, *Boys Don't Cry*, *Why We Fight* and many others. [www.sundance.org](http://www.sundance.org)

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