

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL



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2009 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL EXPANDS CINEMATIC STORYTELLING BEYOND ITS THEATRES WITH NEW FRONTIER

Cinematic Art and Media Technology Breakthrough Showcased in the Heart of Park City

Park City, UT—The 2009 Sundance Film Festival announced today the selection of artists and scientists whose work will be presented at the 2009 edition of **New Frontier**. Fifteen artists, artist collectives, and scientists from around the world will showcase their cinematic installations and presentations to Festival crowds at **New Frontier on Main**. Curated by Shari Frilot, Sundance Film Festival Senior Programmer, New Frontier opens to the public on Friday, January 16 and remains open through January 24, 2009.

"New Frontier is best understood both as a physical space and a metaphor for discovery," said Frilot. "It is a convergence of art, film, and technology where creative alliances are formed around innovative methods of cinematic storytelling, and where audiences are drawn in to a story through visual, aural, and tactile stimuli."

To keep pace with a rapidly evolving media landscape, New Frontier champions the expansion of the craft of cinematic storytelling beyond what is traditionally found in theatres. The artists and scientists featured in New Frontier were chosen for their exceptional artistic merit and their unique engagements with cinematic innovation, from designing cinema for the smallest screens to using multiple screens to convey a story, to revolutionizing the way we edit films. New Frontier will also feature live panels, discussions with artists, microcinema, and live performances in a comfortable and creative lounge environment.

Executive Director of the Sundance Institute, Ken Brecher said, "What excites me most about New Frontier is the constant sense of surprise, sexuality, discovery, and storytelling. It is totally alive in the most timely and engaging way. This year's New Frontier could be the magnetic north of the 2009 Festival."

A sneak peak of the innovative works featured at New Frontier will be available on the Sundance Film Festival website <http://festival.sundance.org/page/-/Docs/2008-12-02-new-frontier-peek.pdf> and feature links to the virtual worlds of New Frontier artists and scientists.

New Frontier is presented by HP and Sony Electronics, Inc.

This year, New Frontier will present the following participating artists and collaborations:

Candice Breitz, Omer Fast, Jonathan Harris and Sep Kamvar, Cory McAbee, Lunchfilm, Maria Marshall, Nasty Nets, Leighton Pierce, Michael Portnoy, Kelly Richardson, Gingger Shankar and //a73 (A.J. Lara and Arthur Hyde), John Underkoffler and Oblong Industries, Lynette Wallworth, Nova Jiang and Michael Kontopoulos, and a special presentation by The Bay Area Video Coalition's Producers Institute, featuring multimedia projects by Thomas Allen Harris, Deanne Liam, and Paco De Onis.

New Frontier will feature the following works:

AGENCY OF TIME, PART 1B (Artist: Leighton Pierce)

Mesmerizing and transporting, Leighton Pierce's installation work employs film, video, photography, and sound to create experiences in transformative time. In his multichannel installation, *Agency of Time*, painterly animations are created from long exposure photography. The animations are then projected onto various surfaces that engage with the architecture of the space to create a moving image environment that evokes the awareness of perception, point of view, time, desire, and memory.

THE CASTING (Artist: Omer Fast)

In Israeli born artist Omer Fast's emotionally moving four channel installation, *The Casting*, a U.S. Army sergeant recounts two incidents: a romantic liaison with a young German woman who mutilates herself and the accidental shooting of an Iraqi. The two tales are seamlessly woven together into a script which was given to actors to perform in silent tableaux. *The Casting*, which won the 2008 Whitney Biennial prize, artfully reveals how both memory and cinema arbitrarily remix emotions, images, and words to create our connection to a moment and how the remix might serve to orient, or disorient us in our lives.

"endless pot of gold cd-rs" (Artists: Nasty Nets)

Nasty Nets is an international ensemble representing 25 of the most active artists working online today. Their work both celebrates and critiques the Internet by employing original and appropriated imagery and audio, animated gifs, YouTube hacks, html cheat codes, and other found/edited material. Each of these elements offers a humorous and poignant take on contemporary, digital visual culture. The public is invited to this event to create visual mischief on the internet at *Nasty Nets: Night of a Thousand Megabytes*, a Saturday late night digital art making jam at New Frontier on Main (RSVP by 8 pm Friday, Jan. 16 to NewFrontierRSVP@sundance.org).

Nasty Nets includes artists John Michael Boling, Joel Holmberg, Guthrie Lonergan, and Marisa Olson, members include: Peter Baldes, Michael Bell-Smith, Camille Paloque Bergés, Kevin Bewersdorf, Brian Blomerth, Charles Broskoski, Petra Cortright, Chris Coy, Paul B. Davis, Michael Guidetti, Britta Gustafson, Travis Hallenbeck, Chance Jackson, Lektrogirl, Tom Moody, Javier Morales, Paul Slocum, James Whipple, Robert Wodzinski, and Damon Zucconi.

EVOLUTION OF FEARLESSNESS (Artist: Lynette Wallworth)

In this profoundly evocative work, the viewer enters a dark room to learn about the stories of women who have survived war zones. The viewer can walk up to a threshold in the room where a moment of video meeting is made possible. In creating *Evolution of Fearlessness*, Australian artist Lynette Wallworth filmed portraits of several women residing in Australia but originating from countries such as Afghanistan, Sudan, Iraq, and El Salvador. They are women who have lived through wars, survived concentration camps, or extreme acts of violence. Built around the importance of gesture, *Evolution of Fearlessness* enlists its interactive structure to link us to the living women contained in the piece.

EXILES OF THE SHATTERED STAR; TWILIGHT AVENGER; WAGONS ROLL (Artist: Kelly Richardson)

UK based artist Kelly Richardson uses cinematic language to create part real/part imagined landscapes which offers a wavering hybrid of fact and fiction that are visual metaphors for our modern reality. A daily rotation of three single channel works encourages the viewer to fill in the blanks of each story. In *Twilight Avenger*, a stag radiates in the dark and in *Wagon's Roll* the viewer is presented with a suspended car mid flight off of a cliff's edge. In *Exiles of the Shattered Star*, a bucolic countryside is disrupted by other worldly elements showering down from a distant place.

IJ CENTRAL; ADOPT LINKS; DIGITAL DIASPORA (Artists: The Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC) Producers Institute Fellows, Paco De Onis, Deane Liam, and Thomas Allen Harris)

The Producers Institute for New Media Technologies at BAVC is a residency program for independent producers to develop and prototype a multiplatform, interactive project informed by a social justice documentary. The participants adapt their content for video game applications, media rich maps, interactive timelines, mobile streaming, virtual communities, and social media networks. This special presentation will spotlight three works: *IJ Central*, by Paco De Onis, producer of *The Reckoning: The*

Battle for the International Criminal Court, *AdoptLinks*, by filmmaker Deanne Liam, which is based on her upcoming feature, *Precious Objects of Desire*; and *Digital Diaspora Family Reunion*, by Thomas Allen Harris which is based on his upcoming feature documentary, *Through A Lens Darkly: Black Photographers and the Emergence of a People*.

LUNCHFILM: FILM BEFORE FOOD (Filmmakers: Various independent filmmakers)

Truly independent films are made from the gut. Mike Plante's Lunchfilm concept is basic: a filmmaker is taken out to lunch and in exchange, the filmmaker agrees to make a short film. The budget-- the same cost as the lunch. A contract is drawn up on a napkin and includes both rules and ideas for inspiration. At times poetically real or languidly artistic, the resulting Lunchfilms offer a variety of stunning tastes.

The participating filmmakers are Tom Barndt, Martha Colburn, Sean Conway, David Fenster and David Nordstrom, Jim Finn, Mike Gibisser, Bobcat Goldthwait, Brent Green, Sam Green, Braden King, George Kuchar, Lee Lynch and Naomi Uman, Jake Mahaffy, Nicolas McCarthy, Sarah Soquel Morhaim, Ricardo Rivera, Kelly Sears, Jennifer Shainin and Randy Walker, and Anonymous.

THE WORKS OF MARIA MARSHALL (Artist: Maria Marshall)

London based artist, Maria Marshall's disturbing and gorgeously composed video projections provoke the psychological dimensions of cinema. Often violent and always visually charming, Marshall has made more than 35 installations and frequently uses her two sons in the main roles. Marshall's work tackles the fundamental subjects of motherhood, socialization, and life experience and takes us back to the world of childhood as a pretext in order to evoke the anxiety of adults. Hypnotic in effect, Marshall's films employ digital technology to create disturbing images such as a video portrait of her young son smoking, or a piece in which Marshall's skin literally crawls.

THE COMPOSERS LAB EXPERIMENTS: METAMORPHOSES (Artists: Gingger Shankar and //a73)

The Composer's Lab Experiments at New Frontier feature collaboration between musician, Gingger Shankar and filmmakers A.J. Lara and Arthur Hyde. In their multimedia performance, *Metamorphoses*, Gingger Shankar and special guest musicians will elegantly score the walls of time and space. The musicians will test the boundaries of organic versus electronic music, in search of where the two meet.

MICHAEL PORTNOY:PROVOCATEUR (Artists: Michael Portnoy)

Performance artist Michael Portnoy's long standing investigation of social exchange, along with the rules of communication and play, has led him to create the television show *Provocateur* for Ovation TV. It is there that art, performance, and conversation collide. Guests will be chosen from the Festival community for their capacity to challenge status quo-- pushing work and perception to the edge. Episodes of *Provocateur* will be filmed daily at 4:30 pm January 16-21, in front of a live audience at New Frontier on Main.

MOON THEATER (Artists: Nova Jiang and Michael Kontopoulos)

Nova Jiang and Michael Kontopoulos have created a playful interactive work that allows audiences to get their hands on the moon! *Moon Theater* uses interactive shadow-play and high tech magic to transform hand shadow puppets which are then projected onto a large floating moon. *Moon Theater* is designed to address issues of scale and social performance in a public setting.

MOTHER + FATHER (Artist: Candice Breitz)

Candice Breitz's media installation, *Mother + Father*, appropriates a cast of iconic actors from Hollywood blockbusters in the service of examining our popular notions of parenthood. In an energetic and insightful orchestration of gestures, tears, laughter, and guffaws, twelve actors passionately perform the rites of motherhood and fatherhood across a twelve channel plasma installation. Breitz offers us parenthood as a metaphor for the relationship between star and fan, and invites us to reflect on the formative role that cinema increasingly plays in our lives.

STINGRAY SAM (Filmmaker: Cory McAbee)

Cory McAbee is a well known Sundance alumnus having written and directed *The American Astronaut*, which screened in the Dramatic Competition of the 2001 Sundance Film Festival. This year's film *Stingray Sam* presented at New Frontier on Main reunites Stingray Sam (McAbee's alter ego) on a

dangerous mission with his long lost accomplice, The Quasar Kid. Follow these two space-convicts as they earn their freedom in exchange for the rescue of a young girl who is being held captive by the genetically designed figurehead of a very wealthy planet. Featuring music by American Astronaut and narrated by David Hyde Pierce, this musical space-western is a 6 part mini series designed for screens of all sizes.

TAMPER (Scientists: John Underkoffler and Oblong Industries)

In the film *Minority Report* Tom Cruise wears gloves that grab and move computer images in space. The consulting scientist who invented the technology for the production has now developed it into a full fledged operating system. New Frontier is proud to unveil this new media technology that may very well revolutionize the way we edit film. *TAMPER* provides an editing room of mild derangement where visitors become cinema collage artists, using their hands directly to grab and recompose film elements such as characters, props, architecture, captured from different movies.

WE FEEL FINE and UNIVERSE (Artist/Computer Scientists: Jonathan Harris and Sep Kamvar)

Jonathan Harris and Sep Kamvar's work combines elements of computer science, anthropology, visual art, and storytelling. Using the metaphor of an interactive night sky, *Universe* presents an immersive environment for navigating the world's contemporary mythology as found online in global news and information. Each person's path through *Universe* is different, allowing each of us to find our own constellations, based on our own interests and curiosities. *We Feel Fine* is an exploration of human emotion on a global scale. Every few minutes, *We Feel Fine* takes sentences that include the words "I feel" or "I am feeling" from all blogs that have been published in the last few minutes, and visualizes them in six different movements that allows viewers to see what any part of the world is feeling at any given moment.

2009 Sundance Film Festival Sponsors

The 2009 Sundance Film Festival Sponsors help sustain not only the Festival but also the year-round programs of the non-profit Sundance Institute. Their support is crucial to the Institute's mission of nurturing independent artists, inspiring risk-taking, and encouraging diversity in the arts. This year's Festival Sponsors include: Presenting Sponsors - *Entertainment Weekly*, HP and Honda; Leadership Sponsors - American Express, Delta Air Lines, DIRECTV, Google, Microsoft Corporation and; Sustaining Sponsors - Blockbuster Inc., FilterForGoodSM, a partnership between Brita® and Nalgene®, The National Milk Mustache "got milk?"® Campaign, L'Oréal Paris, The New York Times, Ray-Ban, Sony Electronics, Inc., Stella Artois® and Utah Film Commission. Sundance Channel is the Official Television Network of the 2009 Sundance Film Festival.

Sundance Film Festival

The Sundance Film Festival is the premier showcase for U.S. and international independent film, held each January in and around Park City, Utah. Presenting 120 dramatic and documentary feature-length films in seven distinct categories, and 80 short films each year, the Sundance Film Festival has introduced American audiences to some of the most ground-breaking films of the past two decades, including *sex lies and videotape*, *Maria Full of Grace*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Trouble the Water* and *Central Station*. www.sundance.org/festival

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* and *Born into Brothels*. www.sundance.org

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For images, please visit: <ftp://ftp.sundance.org>; Login ID: press; password: SFF09! (all caps).