FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 30, 2011

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

SUNDANCE INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES
DOCUMENTARY FILMS TO RECEIVE $575,000 IN GRANTS

Grants will Support 29 Documentary Projects, Filmmakers in 9 Countries

Los Angeles, CA — Sundance Institute today announced the 29 feature-length documentary films selected to receive a total of $575,000 in Documentary Film Program (DFP) grants for the Spring 2011 round. The DFP received applications for grants from 650 filmmakers in 80 countries, and submissions were judged on their approach to storytelling, artistic treatment and innovation, subject relevance and potential for social engagement.

Filmmakers selected are working in 9 countries and represent a broad range of experience, including Academy Award-winning documentarians Roger Ross Williams and Frieda Lee Mock as well as first-time feature documentary filmmakers. Documentary subjects include the first Islam-inspired superheroes, a matchmaker for HIV-positive couples in India, the journey of a school bus from America to Guatemala, a courageous human rights lawyer fighting for justice in her native Democratic Republic of Congo, an exploration of Wonder Woman and the evolution of heroic women in popular culture, and Parisian street artist JR, who believes the streets are “the largest art gallery in the world.”

In addition to receiving financial support, these filmmakers are eligible for year-round creative support from Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program, including Creative Labs, Work-in-Progress screenings, and documentary activity at the Sundance Creative Producing Summit and Sundance Film Festival.

“Sundance Institute realizes that independent filmmakers often need a combination of financial resources and artistic support to bring their projects to completion,” said Keri Putnam, executive director of Sundance Institute. “Our commitment to documentary films and filmmakers has been a central component of our Mission since our founding, and these grants will further support the field.”

“The power of documentary storytelling continues to advance across the globe, and the DFP is working with artists year-round,” said Cara Mertes, director of the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program. “Artists and audiences increasingly understand the connective power of exemplary storytelling that expresses contemporary reality in creative and compelling ways.”

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. 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 online application and postmark deadline for the 2011 fall round is July 7, 2011. Please visit www.sundance.org/documentary for more information.
DEVELOPMENT

Documentary projects in the development stage that will receive grants are:

**Anita – Speaking Truth to Power**
Freida Lee Mock (U.S.)
An African-American woman, Anita Hill, charges Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas with sexual harassment in explosive Senate hearings – bringing sexual politics into the national consciousness and fueling 20 years of international debate on the issues.

**Border Town (working title)**
Bill Ross and Turner Ross (U.S.)
*Border Town* (working title) will be a cinematic exploration of the realities of the modern frontier. Filmed in and around the border city of Eagle Pass, Texas, it is a document of the iconic Rio Grande region and the daily struggles of its people.

**How to Survive a Plague**
David France (U.S.)
The surprising and unknown story of an improbable group of mostly HIV-positive men and women who changed HIV from being thought of as a death sentence, and made medical and historic breakthroughs in the process. A story about AIDS survival, not death.

**Inside Out**
Alastair Siddons (France/U.K.)
French artist JR wins the TED Prize 2011. He gives his prize (a wish) and his art back to the people, creating a global participatory art project inviting people to stand up for what they care about through the power of their own image. From Tunisia to the Bronx, Lisbon to Iran, the film follows individuals and communities pasting their portraits in the streets. Now they don’t just see art, they make it.

**The List**
Kirsten Kelly and Anne de Mare (U.S.)
No one expects the homecoming queen to be homeless, but at a local high school on Chicago’s west side, she is. And none of her classmates know it. How do you survive as a teenager with no home and no adult support? A group of surprising homeless youth struggle to build a future in the city they call home.

**The Message**
Avi Lewis (U.S./Canada)
In her new book, Naomi Klein reveals that climate change is more than an issue: it’s a message, one that is telling us that many of our most cherished ideas about our place in the world – the quest for endless economic growth, the assumption of western supremacy, and the human dominance of nature – are no longer viable.

**One Bullet (working title)**
Carol Dysinger (U.S.)
As part two of Carol Dysinger’s Nation Building trilogy, *One Bullet* concerns the rule of law.

**Who is Dayani Cristal?**
Marc Silver (U.K./Mexico)
In a fusion of drama and documentary, made in collaboration with actor Gael García Bernal, this hybrid film follows one man’s journey from his home in Honduras to the border between Mexico and the United States, where he meets his death while attempting to cross into the U.S. An investigation uncovers a tale of family and faith, discovered by tracing his body’s only identifying feature; a tattoo reading ‘Dayani Cristal.’
PRODUCTION / POST-PRODUCTION

Projects in production or post-production that will receive grants are:

**Betting the Farm**  
Cecily Pingree and Jason Mann (U.S.)  
In a desperate attempt to save their farms, a group of Maine farmers launch a new, organic milk company. Will their gamble rescue them – and with them an entire way of life – or will it leave them worse off than when they started?

**La Camioneta**  
Mark Kendall (U.S.)  
In this lyrical film, an out-of-service American school bus travels 3,000 miles with its new owner to Guatemala, where it is repaired, renamed, re-equipped and reborn.

**Democrats**  
Camilla Nielsso (Denmark)  
Democrats is a film about the creation of a new constitution in Zimbabwe. The film follows two top politicians, who have been appointed to lead the country through the reform process. The two men are political opponents, but united in the ambition to make history by giving the nation a new founding document, that can give birth to the future Zimbabwe.

**Free Angela**  
Shola Lynch (U.S.)  
The film explores the story of Angela Davis and the high stakes crime, political movement, and trial in the seventies that catapulted the striking 26-year-old UCLA philosophy professor into a lasting international political icon.

**God Loves Uganda**  
Roger Ross Williams (U.S.)  
In a journey that spans two continents, director Roger Ross Williams, inspired by his own roots in the African American Baptist church, explores the nature of belief – in America, where congregants search for spiritual meaning, and in Uganda, where American missionaries and Ugandan evangelicals struggle for the hearts and souls of a people facing dire poverty and tumultuous social change.

**The History of the Universe as Told by Wonder Woman**  
Kristy Guevara-Flanagan (U.S.)  
This film tracks the evolution of heroic women in pop culture from the comic book superheroines of the 1940s, to TV action chicks of the 60s and 70s and big screen blockbusters of today. Wonder Woman’s unique story provides telling examples in this tale of gender and power.

**Herman’s House**  
Angad Bhalla (Canada/U.S.)  
Herman’s House captures the remarkable creative journey and friendship of Herman Wallace, who was imprisoned in a 6-by-9-foot cell for over 30 years, and artist Jackie Sumell while examining the injustice of prolonged solitary confinement.

**I Dream the Always**  
Kirsten Johnson (U.S.)  
The all-seeing eye of a U.S. military surveillance blimp floats over Kabul, looking down at a one-eyed boy haunted by his loss and a clear-eyed girl staking out her future.
Justice for Sale (working title)
Ilse van Velzen and Femke van Velzen (The Netherlands)
A young, courageous Congolese human rights lawyer refuses to accept that justice is indeed “For Sale” in her country. She fights to end impunity in the Democratic Republic of Congo at great personal risk and against all odds.

Magic Words
Mercedes Moncada Rodríguez (Nicaragua)
Mercedes Moncada returns to her native land to explore memory and identity in a poetic documentary feature.

Match + : Love in the Time of HIV
Ann S. Kim and Priya Giri Desai (U.S.)
In India – where marriage is a must, but AIDS is an unspeakable disease – can you find love and companionship if you're HIV positive?

Through a Lens Darkly: Black Photographers and the Emergence of a People
Thomas Allen Harris (U.S.)
This film explores the role of photography, since its rudimentary beginnings in the 1840s, in shaping the identity, aspirations, and social emergence of African Americans from slavery to the present.

Town of Runners
Jerry Rothwell (U.K.)
Four young Ethiopians try to emulate their local athletic heroes, as they move from school track to national competition and from childhood to adulthood.

Wham! Bam! Islam!
Isaac Solotaroff (U.S.)
Naif Al-Mutawa is on a mission to create THE 99 – the first Islam-inspired superheroes with their own comic books, theme parks and animation series. Conceived with the intention of countering political and religious extremism, THE 99 now find themselves at the center of a debate over shifting definitions of the sacred and the secular that calls THE 99's future into question.

When I Walk
Jason DaSilva (U.S.)
When I Walk is a poignant meditation about a talented filmmaker’s journey after being diagnosed with a degenerative nerve disease (multiple sclerosis) at 25 years old.

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

A grant to further engage audiences will be awarded to:

Camp Victory: Afghanistan
Carol Dysinger (U.S.)
How do National Guard soldiers turn illiterate Afghans into an army? U.S. policy becomes a tangled, trying, alternately funny and tragic reality in this riveting documentary about an unlikely friendship. The Audience Engagement grant award will support significant outreach to stakeholders in both the U.S. and Afghanistan.

Last Train Home
Lixin Fan (China)
Every spring, China's cities are in chaos as 130 million migrant workers form the world's largest human migration. As they journey to their home villages, they reveal a country caught between its rural past and industrial future. Last Train Home will be the first independent feature documentary to be government approved as a theatrical release throughout China. This grant will support that release.
We Still Live Here — Âs Nutayuneân
Anne Makepeace (U.S.)
Spurred on by their indomitable linguist Jessie Little Doe Baird, the Wampanoag Indians of Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard are reviving their long-dead language, marking the first time a language has been revived in a Native American community that had no speakers for many generations. The We Still Live Here Engagement Campaign partners with Cultural Survival and Native American language programs working to create fluent speakers.

DOCUMENTARY FILM INITIATIVE IN CHINA

A Clear Sky
Harhuu (Linping, Hu) (China)
Xilin Gol grassland in Inner-Mongolia is one of few natural grasslands with high-quality pasture in China. When a rich coalfield is discovered under the ground of this beautifully natural scene, the nomadic herdsmen reluctantly migrate into the cities and wave farewell to their grassland. The water levels lower, plants die, and only sandstorms remain on the prairie.

Patriotism, 90
Du Hai-Bin (China)
Patriotism, 90 looks at the recent wave of patriotism among Chinese teenagers. The film raises questions about what nation and patriotism mean to young Chinese citizens.

Weaving
Wang Yang (China)
In Xi'an, China, a weaving factory built in 1953 is soon to be demolished by the local authority. In search of forgotten family memories during the Cultural Revolution, a historian returns to his childhood factory hometown. Digging deeper into this location's past, he finds his own family secrets begin to unravel.

The Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program is made possible by generous support from the Cinereach Foundation, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, The Charles Engelhard Foundation, The Ford Foundation, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Open Society Foundations, the S.J. and Jessie E. Quinney Foundation, the Skoll Foundation, the Woodruff Charitable Memorial Trust, and the Wallace Global Fund.

Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program
The Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program 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
Sundance Institute is a global nonprofit organization founded by Robert Redford in 1981. Through its artistic development programs for directors, screenwriters, producers, composers and playwrights, the Institute seeks to discover and support independent film and theatre artists from the United States and around the world, and to introduce audiences to their new work. The Institute promotes independent storytelling to inform, inspire, and unite diverse populations around the globe. Internationally recognized for its annual Sundance Film Festival, Sundance Institute has nurtured such projects as Born into Brothels, Trouble the Water, Son of Babylon, Amreeka, An Inconvenient Truth, Spring Awakening, I Am My Own Wife, Light in the Piazza and Angels in America. www.sundance.org

# # #