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## **Sundance Institute Brings *Sundance Film Forward* to Denver Feb 22 - 25**

**Programmed in Collaboration with Denver Film Society, Filmmakers Ilinca Calugareanu (*Chuck Norris vs Communism*) and Bryan Carberry (*Finders Keepers*) to Travel with the Program**

### **Touring Program of Film Screenings and Discussions Focuses on Students and Artists**

**Los Angeles, CA** — Sundance Institute announced today the free public screenings of award-winning independent films as well as special events and student programs in Denver as part of *Sundance Film Forward*, taking place February 22-25 with the Denver Film Society. Filmmakers Ilinca Calugareanu (*Chuck Norris vs Communism*) and Bryan Carberry (*Finders Keepers*) will travel to Denver with the program to lead guided discussions around their films.

Sundance Film Forward is a touring program designed for students and artists (18 - 24 years old) that offers film screenings and discussions to excite and cultivate new audiences for independent film. It uses the power of cinema to promote broader cultural understanding, inspire curiosity and enhance awareness of shared stories and values across generations, religion, ethnicity and borders. Screenings are often in schools, arts organizations, museums and libraries and programmed in partnership with local organizations who value film as a tool for education and enlightenment. Over the last five years, the program has completed 94 trips with 44 films and 66 filmmakers that have reached 64,503 people. The power of the program is illustrated in written and video blogs from past trips featuring filmmakers and audience members and can be found on the [Sundance Film Forward website](http://www.sundance.org/film-forward).

Events in Denver include a free public screening of *Finders Keepers* at 7:00 p.m. on February 22 at the Sie FilmCenter, a free public screening of *Chuck Norris vs. Communism* at 7:00 p.m. on February 23 at the Sie FilmCenter and a filmmaker round table at the Clyfford Still Museum on February 24 for local filmmakers to join Film Forward filmmakers in attendance, in addition to several private screenings and workshops for college, university and high school students. Schools participating in the program include: Colorado Film School, University of Colorado Denver, and East High School.

After the program in Denver, Sundance Film Forward will travel to Atlanta, GA March 28-31; Omaha, NE April 11-14; and London June 6-10. Updates on the program will be posted on the [Sundance Film Forward website](http://www.sundance.org/film-forward).

### **Sundance Film Forward year six films are:**

#### ***A Borrowed Identity***

**Director: Eran Riklis**

Gifted Eyad, a Palestinian Israeli boy, is given the chance to go to a prestigious Jewish boarding school in Jerusalem. As he desperately tries to fit in with his Jewish schoolmates and within Israeli society, Eyad develops

a friendship with another outsider, Jonathan, a boy suffering from muscular dystrophy, and gradually becomes part of the home Jonathan shares with his mother, Edna. After falling in love with Naomi, a Jewish girl, he leaves school when their relationship is uncovered, and he discovers that he will have to sacrifice his identity in order to be accepted. Faced with a choice, Eyad will have to make a decision that will change his life forever.

### ***Amy***

**Director: Asif Kapadia**

*Amy* tells the incredible story of six-time Grammy-winner Amy Winehouse and the meteoric rise to fame she had never sought nor expected in her own words. This strikingly modern, moving and vital film invites audiences to remember and celebrate Amy as a brilliant artist while asking ourselves how it was that we watched her disappear in front of our eyes.

### ***Chuck Norris vs Communism***

**Director: Ilinca Calugareanu**

In 1980s Romania, thousands of Western films smashed through the Iron Curtain opening a window into the free world for those who dared to look. A black-market VHS racketeer and a courageous female translator brought the magic of film to the people and sparked a revolution.

### ***Dope***

**Director: Rick Famuyiwa**

Malcolm is carefully surviving life in a tough neighborhood in Los Angeles while juggling college applications, academic interviews, and the SAT. A chance invitation to an underground party leads him into an adventure that could allow him to go from being a geek, to being dope, to ultimately being himself. *Won US Dramatic Special Jury Award for Excellence in Editing at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival.*

### ***Finders Keepers***

**Directors: Bryan Carberry, Clay Tweel**

Recovering addict and amputee John Wood finds himself in a stranger-than-fiction battle to reclaim his mummified leg from Southern entrepreneur Shannon Whisnant, who found it in a grill he bought at an auction and believes it therefore to be his rightful property.

### ***Me and Earl and the Dying Girl***

**Director: Alfonso Gomez-Rejon**

*Me and Earl and the Dying Girl* is the uniquely funny, moving story of Greg, a high school senior who is trying to blend in, avoiding deeper relationships as a survival strategy for navigating high school. He even describes his constant companion Earl, with whom he makes short film parodies of classic movies, as a "co-worker" rather than a friend. When Greg's mom insists he spend time with Rachel – a classmate recently diagnosed with cancer - he discovers how worthwhile the true bonds of friendship can be. *Won the U.S. Dramatic Grand Jury Prize at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival.*

### ***Meru***

**Directors: Jimmy Chin, Chai Vasarhelyi**

After suffering dramatic set backs in their lives, three close friends who are among the world's best professional climbers battle their complicated pasts, inner demons and nature's harshest elements in an attempt to confront the Shark's Fin on Mount Meru, the most technically complicated and dangerous peak in the Himalayas, one that has never been scaled to completion. *Won the Audience Award: US Documentary at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival*

### ***The Speed Sisters***

**Director: Amber Fares**

The Speed Sisters are the first all-woman race car driving team in the Middle East. Grabbing headlines and turning heads at improvised tracks across the West Bank, these five women have sped their way into the heart of the gritty, male-dominated Palestinian street car-racing scene. Weaving together their lives on and off the track, *The Speed Sisters* takes you on a surprising journey into the drive to go further and faster than anyone thought you could.

**Tig****Directors: Kristina Goolsby, Ashley York**

After receiving devastating news, comedian Tig Notaro put her life together on stage in a single legendary stand-up performance. This film provides an intimate, funny and illuminating look at one woman determined to find humor, life and love in the places we all fear the most.

**Umrika****Director: Prashant Nair**

A small village in India is invigorated when one of their own travels to America (aka *Umrika*) and details his adventures through letters home, sparking community debate and inspiring hope. But when the letters mysteriously stop coming, his younger brother Rama sets out on a journey to find him. With the help of his best friend Lalu, Rama retraces his brother's path to find himself charting one of his own. *Won the Audience Award: World Cinema Dramatic at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival.*

For more information on Sundance Film Forward events and the films visit: [sundance.org/FilmForward](http://sundance.org/FilmForward).

**Sundance Institute**

Founded in 1981 by Robert Redford, Sundance Institute is a nonprofit organization that provides and preserves the space for artists in film, theatre, and new media to create and thrive. The Institute's signature Labs, granting, and mentorship programs, dedicated to developing new work, take place throughout the year in the U.S. and internationally. The Sundance Film Festival and other public programs connect audiences to artists in igniting new ideas, discovering original voices, and building a community dedicated to independent storytelling. Sundance Institute has supported such projects as *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Fruitvale Station*, *Sin Nombre*, *The Invisible War*, *The Square*, *Dirty Wars*, *Spring Awakening*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* and *Fun Home*. Join [Sundance Institute](http://SundanceInstitute) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

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**Editor's note:** For images, visit [sundance.org/images](http://sundance.org/images)