Nonfiction’s Cutting Edge: Sundance Institute Selects Eight Projects for Documentary Edit and Story Lab

Projects Creatively Explore Modern Day Lynchings, Dakota Access Pipeline, Impeachment, Immigration Detention Centers and More

Los Angeles, CA — Sundance Institute today announced the eight projects selected for its annual Documentary Edit and Story Labs, taking place in two sessions at the Sundance Resort in Utah from June 23-July 1 and July 7-15. An anchor point of the nonprofit Institute’s year-round work with filmmakers, the Documentary Edit and Story Lab creates an incubation space for nonfiction storytellers to creatively interrogate their projects during the later stages of post-production. Among the breathtaking scenery of the Sundance Mountain Resort, filmmakers take advantage of the Lab’s creative environment to intensively explore story, dramatic structure and character development, centering their work around their own original motivation and intention.

Overseen by Documentary Film Program Director Tabitha Jackson and Labs Director Kristin Feeley, each Lab brings together independent director and editor teams with world-renowned documentary filmmakers acting as advisors. For the second year the Lab will host writers-in-residence Eric Hynes and Logan Hill in a program designed to bring film critics and nonfiction filmmakers together to forge a deeper understanding of nonfiction film through immersion in the creative process.

“This vibrant array of projects illustrates the power of documentary filmmakers to use the language of cinema to tell untold stories, challenge and change perspectives and use their independent voice to speak truth to power,” said Jackson. “Convening these directors and editors, to refine and hone their craft with the help of our creative advisors, will we hope fuel their bold and pivotal work at this critical moment.”
Recent projects that have participated in the Documentary Edit and Story Lab include *Unrest*, *Whose Streets?*, *Newtown*, *Strong Island* and *Cameraperson*. The Lab is part of the 26 residential Labs the Institute hosts each year to discover and foster the talent of emerging independent artists in film, theatre, new media and episodic content.

The selected projects for the Documentary Edit and Story Lab are:

**Jacqueline Olive (director) / *Always in Season* (USA):** As the trauma of more than a century of lynching African Americans bleeds into the present, *Always in Season* follows relatives of the perpetrators and victims seeking justice and reconciliation – all in the midst of police shootings, church burnings and heated national debate about the value of black lives.

**Marilyn Ness (director), Don Bernier (editor) / *Charm City* (USA):** During three years of unparalleled violence in Baltimore, *Charm City* delivers an unexpectedly candid, observational portrait of those left on the frontlines. With grit, fury and compassion, a group of police, citizens and government officials grapple with the consequences of violence and try to reclaim their future.

**Sedika Mojadidi (director), Sinead Kinnane (editor) / *Facing the Dragon* (Afghanistan/USA):** Filmmaker Sedika Mojadidi follows two compelling Afghan women, a Member of Parliament and a journalist, as the international community withdraws from Afghanistan, threatening its fragile democracy.

**Naziha Arebi (director), Alice Powell (editor) / *Freedom Fields* (UK/Libya):** In post-revolution Libya, a group of women are brought together by one dream: to play football for their nation. But as the country descends into civil war, their personal stories of aspirations, love and struggle collide with history.

**Petra Costa (director), Jordana Berg (editor) / *Impeachment* (Brazil):** An epic tragedy of corruption and betrayal, *Impeachment* is a behind-the-scenes look at the ousting of Brazil’s first female president. With unique access to the president and other key politicians, the film unravels like a political thriller as Brazil falls into disarray, echoing the undoing of so many democracies throughout the world.

**Cristina Ibarra (co-director), Alex Rivera (co-director) / *The Infiltrators* (USA):** When two young immigrant-activists get detained by Border Patrol, on purpose, their mission to expose the abuses inside a detention center becomes much more complex and dangerous than they imagined.

**Hao Wu (director), Nanfu Wang (editor) / *People’s Republic of Desire* (China/USA):** In China's popular live-streaming showrooms, three millennials seek fame, fortune and human connection, ultimately finding the same promises and perils online as in their real lives.

**Christina D. King (co-director), Elizabeth Castle (co-director), Kristen Nutilte (editor) / *Warrior Women* (USA):** Chronicling the lifelong struggle of a Lakota mother and daughter in the American Indian Movement’s fight for Native liberation from the 1970s to today, where they are protesting the Dakota Access Pipeline in Standing Rock, North Dakota.
Creative advisors for the first session include Robb Moss (*Containment*), Carol Dysinger (*Camp Victory, Afghanistan*), Andrea Chignoli (No), Carla Gutierrez (*Chavela*), Mary Lampson (*The Bad Kids*), Bill Ross (*Western*), and writer-in-residence Eric Hynes. Creative advisors for the second session include Kate Amend (*The Case Against 8*), Erin Casper (*Risk*), Lewis Erskine (*The Murder of Emmett Till*), Jonathan Oppenheim (*The Oath*), and writer-in-residence Logan Hill.

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**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 *Boyhood, Swiss Army Man, Manchester By the Sea, Brooklyn, Little Miss Sunshine, Life, Animated, Sonita, 20 Feet From Stardom, Beasts of the Southern Wild, Fruitvale Station, Sin Nombre, Spring Awakening, A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder and Fun Home*. Join Sundance Institute on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/sundance), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/sundance), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/sundance) and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/user/sundance).

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