



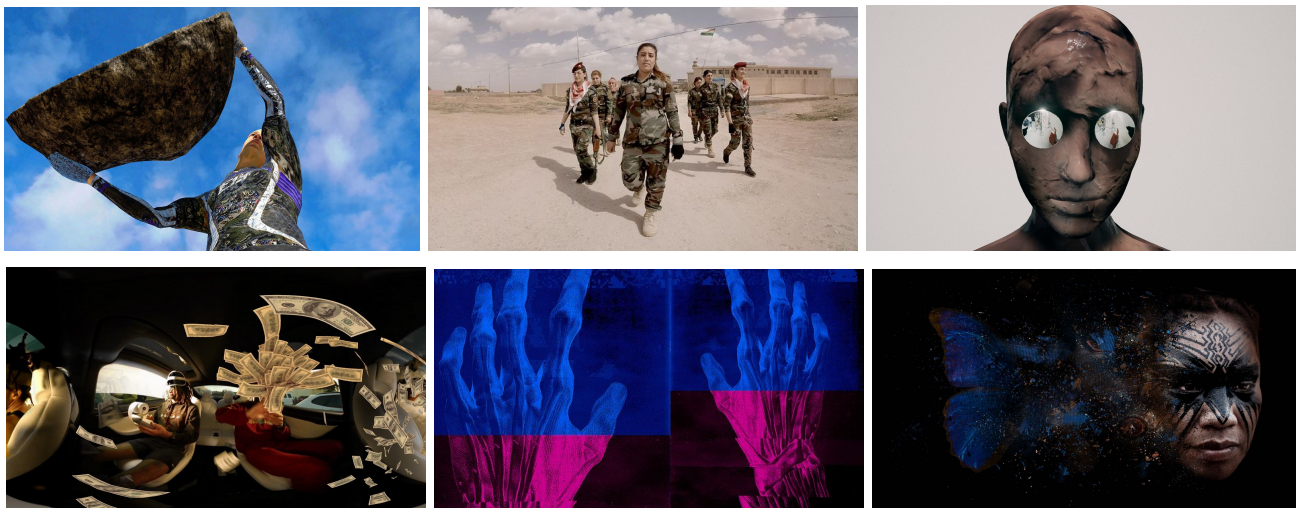
5900 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 800, Los Angeles, CA 90036  
1825 Three Kings Dr., Park City, UT 84060  
321 W 44th Street, Suite 805, New York, NY 10036

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**December 6, 2017**

**Media Contact:**  
Spencer Alcorn  
310.360.1981  
[spencer\\_alcorn@sundance.org](mailto:spencer_alcorn@sundance.org)

## 2018 Sundance Film Festival's New Frontier: Crossroads of Film, Art and Technology

**Innovative Independent and Experimental Work to Premiere, Including Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality Storytelling, Site-Specific Installations, Films and Live Performances**



(Top, L-R) *VR\_I*, Credit: Courtesy of Sundance Institute; *The Sun Ladies VR*, Credit: Lucid Dreams Productions; *DICKGIRL 3D(X)*, Credit: Cinesaurus.  
(Bottom, L-R) *On My Way*, Credit: Courtesy of Sundance Institute; *Frankenstein AI: A Monster Made by Many*, Credit: Courtesy of Sundance Institute;  
*Awavena*, Credit: Tashka Yawawnawa/Lance Troxel.

**Park City, UT** — As the intersection of art and technology grows more crowded, Sundance Institute showcases a curated collection of cutting-edge independent experimental media works by creators who are pushing the artistic development of the new mediums of VR, AR, mixed reality (MR) and AI. The 2018 edition of New Frontier at the Sundance Film Festival offers some of the most innovative independent production and experimentation at the crossroads of film, art and technology that is being created today. Programmers assembled an international slate of VR, MR, and AI from a mix of invitations and submissions to an open call for VR work earlier this year.

New Frontier's footprint at the Festival has continued to evolve, responsive to increased demand. This year, New Frontier programming encompasses three venues:

- **The New Frontier Exhibition at Kimball Art Center** will host immersive dance and cutting edge VR & MR works as well as works involving Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- **New Frontier at The Ray**, where works will range from VR, MR, and AR to AI and new media technologies. **The Box at New Frontier at The Ray**, a 40-seat mobile VR cinema, will showcase four different mobile VR programs over the course of the Festival.

- **The VR Bar at Music Cafe** offers a selection of The New Frontier **mobile VR program**, plus world premieres of hot, late-breaking VR content created by some of the most exciting companies in the field.

**Robert Redford**, President and Founder of Sundance Institute, said, “Technology-enabled storytelling continues to develop into a thriving industry. It’s essential to protect the creative spaces where creators can develop work and reach audiences independent of commercial pressures. The work that we showcase at New Frontier sets the agenda for the year in creative cross-media storytelling.”

**Shari Frilot**, Sundance Film Festival Senior Programmer and Chief Curator, New Frontier, said, “This year’s artists push the boundaries of a host of new technologies in powerful and surprising ways. The story creates the body and the corpus takes on new meaning, offering a new framework for personal interactions in modern society.”

New Frontier alumni include Doug Aitken, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Chris Milk, Nonny de la Peña, Pipilotti Rist and Jennifer Steinkamp. The Institute’s support extends well beyond its curated slate of Festival projects, and includes the annual New Frontier Story Lab, which offers mentorship and development opportunities for new media storytellers, New Frontier Day Labs in cities nationwide and the New Frontier Residency Program, which combines the might of partners such as MIT Media Lab’s Social Computing Group and Jaunt Studios to drive groundbreaking data-visualization and VR storytelling tools, training and resources to independent artists.

In addition to the New Frontier program announced today, films across all categories, including works in the Shorts, Special Events and new-this-year Indie Episodic sections, have been announced and are listed at [sundance.org/festival](http://sundance.org/festival).

## **FILMS AND PERFORMANCE**

★ / Austria (Lead Artist: Johann Lurf) — This film, compiling shots of clear night-time skies from throughout film history in chronological order, reveals that what humans may regard as an absolute image is actually quite unstable. This instability occurs not only of evolving technological parameters, but also as a result of period-specific trends in culture.

***A Thousand Thoughts*** / U.S.A. (Directors and screenwriters: Sam Green, Joe Bini, Producers: Janet Cowperthwaite, Sam Green, Josh Penn) — A live cinema portrait of the legendary classical music group the Kronos Quartet. Green narrates the film and Kronos performs the soundtrack live. A meditation on music itself – the act of listening closely to music, the experience of feeling music deeply, and the power of music to change the world. *Cast: David Harrington, John Sherba, Hank Dutt, Sunny Yang.*

***Deep Astronomy and the Romantic Sciences*** / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Cory McAbee, Producers: Cory McAbee, Daryle Conners, Steve Holmgren, Richard Cole) — A live sci-fi event, presented in the form of two master’s classes, featuring music, animation and artwork. Topics include the colonization of other planets, sentimentality reform, transdimensional drifting, the proper way to view the universe and the reason that humans exist. *Cast: Cory McAbee.*

***Organ Player*** / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Narcissister) — This hybrid performance/documentary film explores how ancestral data is stored in our bodies, impacting the lives we lead. On the personal level, the film

investigates how the artist's complex family history compelled them to create the masked, erotic performance character Narcissister. *Cast: Narcissister, Sarah Lumpkin, Oscar Lumpkin, Bernard Lumpkin, Carmine Boccuzzi.*

## **NEW TECHNOLOGIES**

***Experience Realistic Touch in Virtual Reality*** / U.S.A. (Lead Artists: Andrew Mitrak, Greg Bilsland, Joe Michaels, Jake Rubin, Key Collaborator: Dr. Bob Crockett) — HaptX brings realistic touch to virtual reality for the first time. The innovative technology lets VR users feel the shape, movement, texture and temperature of digital objects. By providing advanced haptic feedback and natural interaction, HaptX enables unprecedented levels of realism in virtual experiences.

***Awavena*** / U.S.A, Australia, Brazil (Lead Artist: Lynette Wallworth, Key Collaborators: Nicole Newnham, Tashka Yawanawa, Laura Soriano de Yawanawa) The Yawanawa, an indigenous Amazonian people, see immersive technologies as tools they can co-opt to share their connected worldview. Inviting artist Lynette Wallworth to their community, the Yawanawa share the visions of Hushahu, their first woman Shaman, and our technology renders visible the luminous world they have always known. *Cast: Hushahu Yawanawa, Tata Yawanawa, Mutum Community.*

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

***Frankenstein AI: A Monster Made by Many*** / U.S.A. (Lead Artists: Lance Weiler, Nick Fortugno, Rachel Ginsberg, Key Collaborators: Nick Childs, Hunter Owens, Brandon Powers) — By challenging dystopian perspectives around Artificial Intelligence, this immersive experience reimagines Shelley's seminal work to examine the cultural ramifications of pervasive, ubiquitous technology. Participants interact with an artificial intelligence, co-creating a shared narrative around the implications of unleashing this naive, intelligent "monster," both mythical and imminent, into the world.

***TendAR*** / U.S.A. (Lead Artists: Samantha Gorman, Danny Cannizzaro) — A humorous and provocative installation that combines interactive storytelling, AR and emotion/face recognition technology to promote discussion about current topics in biometric data and artificial intelligence. Your guide: a fish-like creature who amusingly analyzes the partners collaborating in the experience, their emotions and the world around them.

## **VIRTUAL/MIXED REALITY INSTALLATIONS**

***Zikr: A Sufi Revival*** / U.S.A. (Lead Artists: Gabo Arora, John Fitzgerald, Matthew Niederhauser, Key Collaborators: Selim Bensedrine, Igal Nassima, Jennifer Tiexiera, Wilson Brown) — This interactive social VR experience uses song and dance to transport four participants into ecstatic Sufi rituals, while also exploring the motivations behind followers of this mystical Islamic tradition, still observed by millions around the world.

***Elastic Time*** / Switzerland (Lead Artist: Mark Boulos, Key Collaborators: Robin Mange, Javier Bello Ruiz) — A mixed reality interactive documentary about space-time, narrated by astronomer Tony Stark (Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics). A real-time hologram of your body is integrated into the observatory room; using the controllers, you bend space and time to your will, creating black holes, wormholes and time portals. *Cast: Tony Stark.*

**Hero** / U.S.A. (Lead Artists: Navid Khonsari, Vassiliki Khonsari, Key Collaborators: Brooks Brown, Mark Harwood, Sinclair Fleming) — An immersive, large-scale installation that explores humanity in our modern era of civilian warfare. In this vérité VR experience with multi-sensory engagement, participants embark upon their own primal journey. When everyday life is disrupted by profound crisis only human connection can inspire hope. *Cast: Masoume Khonsari, Perla Daoud, Samer Sakka, Sam Sako, Said Faraj, Sue Shaheen.*

**VR\_I** / Switzerland (Lead Artists: Gilles Jobin, Caecilia Charbonnier, Sylvain Chagué, Key Collaborators: Jean-Paul Lespagnard, Carla Scaletti, Camilo De Martino) — Blending art with technology, *VR\_I* resulted from the encounter between Swiss choreographer Gilles Jobin and the founders of Artanim, Caecilia Charbonnier and Sylvain Chagué. In this contemplative virtual dance piece, five spectators, immersed together and in real time, use avatars to investigate a performance among surprising effects of scale. *Cast: Susana Panadés Diaz, Victoria Chiu, Diya Naidu, Gilles Jobin, Tidiani N'Diaye.*

**BattleScar** / U.S.A., France (Lead Artists: Martin Allais, Nico Casavecchia, Key Collaborators: Arnaud Colinart, Raphael Penasa, Andrew Geller, René Pinell) — New York City, 1978: When Lupe, a Puerto Rican-American teen, meets fellow runaway Debbie, the Bowery's punk scene and the Lower East Side are their playground. This coming-of-age narrative explores identity through animation and immersive environments as Lupe's handwritten journals guide users through her year. *Cast: Rosario Dawson.*

**DICKGIRL 3D(X)** / United Kingdom (Lead Artist: Sidsel Meineche Hansen, Key Collaborator: James B Stringer) — DICKGIRL 3D(X) is the non-binary version of EVA v3.0, an avatar purchased online and appropriated by the artist. Through DICKGIRL 3D(X), the viewer becomes a post-human pleasure-seeker in an encounter with a submissive clay-like sculpture.

**SPHERES: Songs of Spacetime** / U.S.A. (Lead Artist: Eliza McNitt, Key Collaborators: Darren Aronofsky, Ari Handel, Jess Engel, Arnaud Colinart) — Dive into the heart of a black hole and uncover the hidden songs of the cosmos. In this interactive VR experience, the breakthrough discovery of gravitational waves transforms how we see the Universe. Fall into the darkness, and you will find the light.

**Wolves in the Walls (Chapter 1)** / U.S.A. (Lead Artists: Pete Billington, Jessica Shamash, Key Collaborators: Edward Saatchi, Saschka Unseld, Jennine Willett, Zach Morris) — All is not as it seems when 8-year-old Lucy's imagination proves to be reality. Help her discover what's hiding inside the walls of her house in this immersive fable, based on the work by Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean, and choreographed by acclaimed immersive-theater company, Third Rail. *Cast: Elisa Davis, Elizabeth Carena, Cadence Goblirsch*

**Chorus** / U.S.A. (Lead Artist: Tyler Hurd, Key Collaborators: Chris Milk, Megan Ellison, Justice) — — Crystals, lasers, monsters, heroines. Transform into fantastical female warriors in this social virtual reality experience. Six people can band together to battle evil in this epic journey of empowerment, all orchestrated to the song "Chorus" by Justice.

## **MOBILE VR LINEUP**

**Dinner Party** / U.S.A. (Lead Artists: Charlotte Stoudt, Laura Wexler, Angel Manuel Soto, Key Collaborators: Rachel Skidmore, Bryn Mooser, Erik Donley) — A short virtual reality thriller that dramatizes the incredible story of

Betty and Barney Hill, who in the 1960's reported the first nationally known UFO abduction case in America. *Cast: Malcolm Barrett, Sarah Sokolovic.*

**Dispatch** / U.S.A. (Lead Artist: Edward Robles) — A small-town police dispatcher faces the greatest challenge of his career during an all-night crime spree. *Cast: Martin Starr, Julianna Guill, Graham Shiels, Beth Grant, Samuel Stricklen, Kelly Jenrette.*

**Eyes in the Red Wind** / South Korea (Lead Artists: Sngmoo Lee, Jongmin kim, Youngsam Jung, Key Collaborators: Jaehyun Park, Myuonggoo Ji, Youngsik Yu) — Friends and family members gather to throw a 'soul scooping' ritual, to pacify the soul of a drowned man. When a possessed shaman reveals the murderous truth behind the death on the table, lust and secrets come to the fore. *Cast: Sungmi Kim, Jaehyun Kim, Jeongmi Lee, Nara Kim.*

**Masters of the Sun** / U.S.A. (Lead Artists: will.i.am, apl de ap, Taboo, Key Collaborators: Pasha Shapiro, Ernst Weber, Sara Ramaker, Eddie Axley) — In 1983, Los Angeles was spared from utter destruction driven by an ancient evil. The ghetto became ground zero for drug epidemic that transformed citizens into soul-sucking zombies through Z-Drops, until a ragtag crew used one weapon to take their city back: hip-hop. *Cast: Rakim, Queen Latifah, Jason Isaacs, Stan Lee, KRS-One, Slick Rick.*

**Micro Giants** / China (Lead Artist: Yifu Zhou, Key Collaborators: Teng Wang, Shuyi Qiao, Jia Zhang) — A computer-generated VR experience that gives an unprecedented and highly engaging perspective of insect life. When participants enter into the micro world, tiny flowers and insects in normal life now become mighty trees and beasts. *Cast: Pantawit Kiangsiri.*

**On My Way** / U.S.A. (Lead Artist: Yung Jake, Key Collaborators: Mike Rosenstien, Ari Kuschner, Andrew Schwartz) — In a Tesla, multiple Yung Jakes rap about money, cars, drugs and things of that nature, among interactive elements. *Cast: Yung Jake.*

**Space Explorers: A New Dawn** / Canada, U.S.A. (Lead Artists: Paul Raphaël, Felix Lajeunesse, Key Collaborators: Morgan Spurlock, Ryan Horrigan, Stéphane Rituit) Experience the journey of NASA astronauts as they navigate the trials and sacrifices of their training and missions. An immersive VR experience that shines a light on mankind's most ambitious endeavor to understand our planet, our universe and our origins. *Cast: Jessica Chastain, Jeanette Epps, Jessica Meir, Victor Glover, Michael Gernhardt.*

**The Sun Ladies VR** / U.S.A. (Lead Artists: Maria Bello, Celine Tricart, Christian Stephen, Key Collaborators: Wesley Allsbrook, Tim Gedemer, Mark Simpson) An in-depth look at the personal journey of Xate Singali: from her roots as a famous singer in Kurdistan, through ISIS sex slavery, and to her new life as a soldier on the front lines as she starts a female-only Iraqi fighting unit called the Sun Ladies. *Cast: Maria Bello.*

**The Summation of Force** / Australia (Lead Artists: Narelle Autio, Trent Parke, Matthew Bate, Key Collaborator: Anton Andreacchio) — In a moonlit suburban yard, two brothers battle one another in a mythic game of cricket. A study of the motion, physics and psychology of elite sport; a cosmic, dreamlike and darkly beautiful metaphor for life. *Cast: Jem Autio Parke, Dash Autio Parke.*

**Your Spiritual Temple Sucks** / Taiwan (Lead Artist: John Hsu) — Mr. Chang arrives to his "Spiritual Temple," a place that represents one's destiny. To solve his marital crisis and financial problems, he summons his guardian -

