



## AFI DOCS 2019 ANNOUNCES FULL SLATE OF FILMS AND CENTERPIECE SCREENING

### Description

Posted by [Larry Gleeson](#)

**MAY 15, 2019, WASHINGTON, DC** AFI DOCS has revealed its full slate of films for the 2019 festival with AT&T returning as Presenting Sponsor of the American Film Institute's five-day documentary celebration in the nation's capital. Year after year, the festival provides a unique opportunity for audiences, filmmakers and policy leaders to engage and connect through the power of story. The 17th edition will showcase 72 films representing 17 countries including six world premieres, one North American premiere and two U.S. premieres. AFI DOCS 2019 runs June 19-23 in Washington, DC, and Silver Spring, MD. The Washington Post and Meet the Press are the Primary Media Sponsors.

This year's Centerpiece film will be **AMERICAN FACTORY**, directed by Steven Bognar and Julia Reichert, which examines the culture clash resulting from the takeover of a Dayton, OH, factory by a Chinese company. **AMERICAN FACTORY** will screen on Friday, June 21.

Each year, the AFI DOCS slate includes a variety of films exploring topical issues, intriguing personalities and compelling voices," said Michael Lumpkin, Director, AFI Festivals. "This year's festival offers audiences a chance to discover new perspectives on familiar topics and unique stories they may be hearing for the first time demonstrating the power of documentary film to connect and inspire across a diverse range of subjects. We are happy to announce that 48% of this year's slate is directed by women, with 68% produced by women."

The AFI DOCS 2019 lineup will be presented in the following sections: Galas; Special Screenings; Portrait; Truth and Justice; Spectrum; Anthem; Cinema's Legacy; and Short Films. A competitive section, Short Films are eligible for the Grand Jury Prize.

Audience Awards will be given to a feature and a short film based on votes cast by attendees throughout the festival. The winners of the Audience Awards for Best Feature and Best Short will be announced on Tuesday, June 25.

---

As previously announced, the festival will open with the world premiere of TRUE JUSTICE: BRYAN STEVENSON'S FIGHT FOR EQUALITY and will close with RAISE HELL: THE LIFE & TIMES OF MOLLY IVINS. Special Screenings include the world premiere of CHASING THE MOON, RUTH & JUSTICE GINSBURG IN HER OWN WORDS, SEA OF SHADOWS and TONI MORRISON: THE PIECES I AM.

Tickets to AFI DOCS 2019 are now available to AFI members, and will be available to the public on May 15 starting at 1:00 p.m. EDT/10:00 a.m. PDT. Passes are currently on sale to both members (at a discounted rate) and the public at [AFI.com/AFIDOCs](https://AFI.com/AFIDOCs). To become an AFI member, visit [AFI.com/join](https://AFI.com/join).

## **AFI DOCS 2019 PROGRAM**

### **GALAS**

*Opening Night, Closing Night and Centerpiece Gala, featuring high-profile guests and world premieres, these are the hottest tickets at the festival.*

#### **OPENING NIGHT SCREENING** â?? Wednesday, June 19

**TRUE JUSTICE: BRYAN STEVENSON'S FIGHT FOR EQUALITY:** DIRS & PRODS Peter Kunhardt, George Kunhardt, and Teddy Kunhardt. USA. Fighting for equal justice within a system that has allowed slavery, lynching, segregation, and mass incarceration has become lawyer Bryan Stevenson's life work. TRUE JUSTICE features the inspiring story of Stevenson who founded the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama to provide legal services for the poor and is the driving force behind a new national lynching memorial. World Premiere.

#### **CLOSING NIGHT SCREENING** â?? Sunday, June 23

**RAISE HELL: THE LIFE & TIMES OF MOLLY IVINS:** DIR Janice Engel. PRODS James Egan, Janice Engel, and Carlisle Vandervoort. USA. RAISE HELL: THE LIFE & TIMES OF MOLLY IVINS chronicles the life of political commentator and Pulitzer Prize-nominated author Molly Ivins. A maverick voice in journalism, Ivins used humor to speak truth about social inequalities, expose corrupt government and poke at the political elite. Filmmaker Janice Engel crafts a witty and entertaining portrait of Ivins, who died of cancer in 2007, giving life to her words and reminding us to be bold in today's political climate. Presented by The Washington Post Press Freedom Partnership.

#### **CENTERPIECE SCREENING** â?? Friday, June 21

**AMERICAN FACTORY:** DIRS Steven Bognar and Julia Reichert. PRODS Steven Bognar, Julia Reichert, Jeff Reichert and Julie Parker Benello. USA. Seeking no easy answers, directors Steven Bognar and Julia Reichert craft a masterpiece of documentary storytelling by focusing on the fascinating culture clash that ensues when a shuttered GM plant in Dayton, OH, is taken over by a giant Chinese company. Winner of the Sundance U.S. Documentary Prize for Directing.

### **SPECIAL SCREENINGS**

*Unique screening events at special locations.*

---

**CHASING THE MOON: DIR & PROD Robert Stone. USA. Fifty years after Neil Armstrong's one small step, CHASING THE MOON chronicles America's audacious and difficult race to the moon. Using exclusively archival footage with much never before seen in public this exceptional series re-contextualizes the social and historical importance of the Space Age and the sheer wonder of the moon landing itself. World Premiere.**

**RUTH JUSTICE GINSBURG IN HER OWN WORDS: DIR Freida Lee Mock. PRODS Freida Lee Mock and Meghan Hooper. USA. Relying on Ruth Bader Ginsburg's own words, as illuminated by carefully culled archival footage and interviews, Academy Award®-winning filmmaker Freida Lee Mock crafts an intimate profile that covers the full breadth of Ginsburg's life, views and career. Furthermore, Mock succeeds in creating a compelling portrait as authentic, poignant and powerful as the Justice herself. Sneak Preview.**

**SEA OF SHADOWS: DIR Richard Ladkani. PRODS Walter Kähler and Wolfgang Knöpfler. Austria. Featuring everything from Mexican drug cartels to the Chinese Mafia, this environmental thriller is every bit as gripping as any pulp novel but with real world consequences for the imperiled vaquita (the world's smallest whale) and for local fisherman in the Sea of Cortez. With fewer than 10 vaquita left in the world, time is running out.**

**TONI MORRISON: THE PIECES I AM: DIR Timothy Greenfield-Sanders. PRODS Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, Johanna Giebelhaus, Chad Thompson, and Tommy Walker. USA. Timothy Greenfield-Sanders's highly engaging portrait of the brilliant and beloved writer Toni Morrison features interviews with cultural icons and critics, including Oprah Winfrey, Angela Davis, Walter Mosley, Fran Lebowitz, Russell Banks, Hilton Als and, most important, with Morrison herself, sharing a lifetime's worth of riveting stories and compelling insights.**

## FEATURE FILM SELECTIONS

### PORTRAIT

*Original profiles of famous and not-so-famous people doing extraordinary things in our society.*

**17 BLOCKS: DIR Davy Rothbart. PRODS Alex Turtletaub, Michael Clark, Marc Turtletaub and Rachel Dengiz. USA. In 1999, Emmanuel Durant and his family started filming their daily lives. For two decades, the camera recorded ordinary moments, and a cycle of trauma all too familiar with neglected communities in America. Davy Rothbart's film deftly pieces together a loving and complex profile of the Sanford-Durants, who live just 17 blocks from the U.S. Capitol.**

**THE AMAZING JOHNATHAN DOCUMENTARY: DIR Ben Berman. PRODS Miranda Bailey, Ben Berman, Russell Groves, Amanda Marshall and Jacob Perlin. USA. An aging magician is dying. A young filmmaker follows him around, intending to create his debut feature film. A few weeks into filming, it's revealed that there is another crew also filming this same magician, at the same time. What results is a hilarious metatextual work of documentary unlike anything you have ever seen before.**

**CHEZ JOLIE COIFFURE: DIR Rosine Mbakam. PRODS Geoffroy Cernaix and Rosine Mbakam. Belgium. Inside a bustling Brussels hair salon, manager Sabine can be seen braiding hair and lending support to a vibrant group of African migrants. In this lovely observational chamber piece, filmmaker**

Rosine Mbakam offers an affectionate tribute to Sabine and her community. Despite the traumas of migration, their enduring charm and laughter are testament to human resilience.

FOR SAMA: DIRS Waad al-Kateab and Edward Watts. PROD Waad al-Kateab. Syrian Arab Republic. With her home city of Aleppo under constant bombardment, filmmaker Waad al-Kateab, an active resistant against the Assad regime, does the nearly unthinkable: she marries the love of her life and has a baby. This unique video diary documents five years of the Syrian War and tells an unforgettable personal story.

MAIDEN: DIR Alex Holmes. PRODS Victoria Gregory and Alex Holmes. UK. 30 years ago, 24-year-old Tracy Edwards led the first all-female sailing crew to compete in the Whitbread Round the World Race. No one in the male-dominated sailing community gave them a prayer. By race's end, the Maiden's epic journey would make history, and the sailing world would never be the same.

MIDNIGHT FAMILY: DIR Luke Lorentzen. PRODS Kellen Quin, Luke Lorentzen, Daniela Alatorre and Elena Fortes. Mexico, USA. In Mexico City, there are fewer than 45 public ambulances for nine million people. In response, a dysfunctional system of privately-owned ambulances has taken over the city's healthcare system. MIDNIGHT FAMILY intimately follows the Ochoa family as they compete in transporting patients at night. Each trip is a tricky balance of ethics and empathy: they must arrive first to give care for the injured, but also for their financial self-interest.

MIKE WALLACE IS HERE: DIR Avi Belkin. PRODS Rafael Marmor, John Battsek, Peggy Drexler, Christopher Leggett, Avi Belkin and Zoë Morrison. USA. Famed 60 MINUTES journalist Mike Wallace was best known for his confrontational interview style. His work was a major force in pushing the form of journalism to the tipping point we know today. Using exclusively archival footage, MIKE WALLACE IS HERE explores his life and multi-decade career in broadcast television, beginning in the 1950s. Presented by The Washington Post Press Freedom Partnership.

-

RECORDER: THE MARION STOKES PROJECT: DIR Matt Wolf. PRODS Kyle Martin, Andrew Kortschak and Walter Kortschak. USA. Beginning with the Iranian Hostage Crisis in 1979, Marion Stokes secretly recorded television 24 hours a day at a time when the networks did not systematically save the news. A time capsule of America's modern TV age, filmmaker Matt Wolf's brilliantly stylized portrait depicts Stokes' fascinating life as a media activist and her unusual and visionary project.

SEARCHING EVA: DIR Jasmina Vignjevic. PRODS Erik Winker and Martin Roelly. Germany. Meet Eva, a 25-year-old sex worker, drug user and Instagram model. Living with her mom and working on the internet, Eva documents her life in a performative and personal way. What is it like to be a woman in the 21st century? This documentary presents this incredible young woman with heartbreaking honesty. U.S. Premiere.

-

TRUTH AND JUSTICE

---

*Focusing on the most pressing and fascinating issues of the day, these films seek to educate, enlighten and inspire.*

**AFTER PARKLAND:** DIRS Jake Lefferman and Emily Taguchi. PRODS Jake Lefferman, Emily Taguchi, Jeanmarie Condon and Steven Baker. USA. AFTER PARKLAND is a heartfelt portrait of a community using grief and anger as fuel to move forward, heal, and, for some, fight to change the world. The film shares an intimate view of survivors as they navigate their new realities in the blaring limelight and the soft light of home.

**ALWAYS IN SEASON:** DIR Jacqueline Olive. PRODS Jacqueline Olive and Jessica Devaney. USA. Jacqueline Olive's stunning debut documentary depicts the haunting death of 17-year-old Lennon Lacy in the rural community of Bladenboro, North Carolina in 2014. With Lacy's body found hanging from a swing set, his death is ruled a suicide, but his mother, convinced that he was lynched, remains undaunted in her pursuit of justice.

**BORDER SOUTH (FRONTERA SUR):** DIR Raquel O. Paz Pastrana. PRODS Jason De León, Cecilia Girón Pérez and Raquel O. Paz Pastrana. Mexico, USA. Filmmaker Raquel O. Paz Pastrana spent four years following the migrant routes from southern Mexico to the U.S.-Mexico border. The result is a close-up, nuanced, and highly original view of the migrant experience, one fraught with risk and danger but also comradery, ingenuity and humor. North American Premiere.

**COLD CASE HAMMARSKJÖLD:** DIR Mads Brügger. PRODS Peter Engel, Andreas Rocksen and Bjarte M. Tveit. Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Belgium. The brilliant and mischievous Danish documentary filmmaker Mads Brügger investigates the 1961 plane crash that killed UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, uncovering a myriad of conspiracies from Belgian mercenaries to a secret South African militia. Winner of the Sundance World Cinema Documentary Prize for Directing.

**ERNIE & JOE:** DIR & PROD Jenifer McShane. USA. Ernie and Joe are two San Antonio Police Department officers whose comedic rapport seems straight out of a buddy movie. But their innovative approach to policing is nothing short of transformative. Guns tucked away, Ernie and Joe de-escalate confrontations, divert people to desperately needed mental health services, and save lives.

**THE GREAT HACK:** DIRS Karim Amer and Jehane Noujaim. PRODS Karim Amer, GERALYN Dreyfous and Judy Korin. USA. An American professor discovers that his personal data has been hacked, mined to create a digital political profile, and then weaponized. Rinse and repeat 240 million times.

---

Academy Award®-nominated filmmakers Karim Amer and Jehane Noujaim (THE SQUARE) masterfully unravel the Cambridge Analytica/Facebook scandal that rocked the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

HUMAN NATURE: DIR Adam Bolt. PRODS Meredith DeSalazar and Sarah Goodwin. Australia, Spain, Turkey, USA. CRISPR is the biggest revolution of the century, a biological breakthrough that brings with it exciting and provocative implications for the future of science and humanity. A vital and engaging documentary, HUMAN NATURE investigates the complexities of CRISPR and explores the existential questions it raises: how will it affect human evolution or change our relationship with nature?

IN MY BLOOD IT RUNS: DIR Tamara Hardman. PRODS Maya Newell, Sophie Hyde, Rachel Naninaaq Edwardson and Larissa Behrendt. Australia. In this beautifully crafted portrait set in the Northern Territory of Australia, 10-year-old Djuwan, a child healer, hunter and speaker of two Indigenous languages struggles mightily to navigate between two starkly different worlds – his Arrernte family and the white-dominated educational system that may ultimately determine his fate. U.S. Premiere.

ONE CHILD NATION: DIRS Nanfu Wang and Jialing Zhanig. PRODS Nanfu Wang, Jialing Zhang, Christoph Jürg, Julie Goldman, Christopher Clements and Carolyn Hepburn. China, USA. After becoming a first-time mother, filmmaker Nanfu Wang reflects on her childhood in China and investigates the country's one child nation policy. From 1979 to 2015, the government enforced one-child households, favoring male babies and waging a "population war." With co-director Jialing Zhang, Wang thoughtfully examines the multi-generational trauma caused by this tragic social experiment.

SLAY THE DRAGON: DIRS & PRODS Barak Goodman and Chris Durrance. USA. In recent years, Democratic and Republican-controlled legislatures have been one-upping each other to see who can draw the crookedest district lines and, thereby, maximize their electoral majorities. A thoroughly engrossing investigation of partisan gerrymandering, SLAY THE DRAGON dramatizes precisely what is making our political system sick and, possibly, how it can be healed.

WE ARE THE RADICAL MONARCHS: DIR Linda Goldstein Knowlton. PRODS Katie Flint and Linda Goldstein Knowlton. USA. In Oakland, California, tween girls of color meet as a new alternative Scout group called the Radical Monarchs. The Monarchs earn badges not for sewing or selling cookies, but for units on Black Lives Matter, disability justice and Radical Beauty. Set around the 2016 election, the founders, two queer women of color, struggle to grow the organization while empowering the girls to be social justice leaders in their community.

---

WHO KILLED GARRETT PHILLIPS?: DIR Liz Garbus. PRODS Liz Garbus and Kimberly Launier. USA. On October 24, 2011, police officers found the lifeless body of 12-year-old Garrett Phillips alone in his apartment. Featuring jailhouse interrogations, this gripping true crime two-part documentary from Academy Award®-nominated director Liz Garbus (WHAT HAPPENED, MISS SIMONE?) seeks to get to the bottom of the murder. World Premiere.

A WOMAN'S WORK: THE NFL'S CHEERLEADER PROBLEM: DIR Yu Gu. PRODS Yu Gu, Elizabeth Ai and Jin Yoo-Kim. USA. In 2017, the National Football League earned over \$14 billion in revenue. NFL cheerleaders, however, earn less than minimum wage – some paid as low as \$1.50 an hour. Three courageous cheerleaders risk their careers by leading a historic class-action lawsuit against the NFL, alleging gendered wage theft and egregious labor practices.

## SPECTRUM

*A wide selection of exciting nonfiction work, these filmmakers are pushing the boundaries of storytelling and exploring more unconventional subject matter.*

AQUARELA: DIR Victor Kossakovsky. PRODS Aimara Reques, Heino Deckert and Sigrid Dyekjær. Germany, UK. From frozen Lake Baikal in Siberia to hurricane-ravaged Miami, Victor Kossakovsky's visual and aural tour de force puts you face to face with the overwhelmingly raw power of water in all its forms. Before experiencing AQUARELA's eye-popping cinematography and thunderous soundtrack on the big screen, prepare your senses for nothing less than total surrender.

AUTONOMY: DIR Alex Horwitz. PRODS Christopher Boyd, Kevin Mann and Michael Mann. USA. Executive-produced by Malcolm Gladwell, AUTONOMY explores the impact self-driving technology will have on our society. Futurist thinkers, engineers and researchers examine liability and safety concerns to who will benefit most from this technology. By reflecting on the automotive industry's past, AUTONOMY prompts an important discussion of how Silicon Valley approaches automation and the policies we should consider during this mobility revolution.

THE ELEPHANT QUEEN: DIRS Mark Deeble and Victoria Stone. PRODS Lucinda Englehart and Victoria Stone. Kenya, UK. Focusing on a single elephant family and its matriarch over the course of one harrowing season, this film gives us an intimate look at the lives of elephants. Intense emotional twists and stunning photography make this incredible adventure one of the most highly acclaimed and beloved films of the year.

**MADE IN BOISE:** DIR Beth Aala. PRODS Beth Levison and Beth Aala. USA. In Boise, Idaho, a unique business trend is growing â?? literally. The town has become the unofficial surrogacy capital of America. Filmmaker Beth Aala delicately follows four surrogate mothers and the biological parents of the babies they carry. Finding purpose and power in these pregnancies, the surrogate women create life-changing opportunities for those unable to conceive. World Premiere.

**PICTURE CHARACTER:** DIRS Martha Shane and Ian Cheney. PRODS Jennifer 8. Lee, Ian Cheney, Martha Shane. USA. What started in 2010 in the late- 1990s as a 2010 extra has become one of the most popular means of communication in the 2010s. PICTURE CHARACTER follows the proposals of 3i• groups who seek â?? from Unicode Consortium for new emojis, and explores how even with emojis, representation matters.

**WE BELIEVE IN DINOSAURS:** DIRS Monica Long Ross and Clayton Brown. PRODS Amy Ellison, Monica Long Ross, and Clayton Brown. USA. In the heart of Kentucky, a new theme park takes shape: the Ark Encounter, a life-size reproduction of Noahâ??s Ark filled with exhibits of the creatures on board, including dinosaurs. Filmed over three years, the film follows the Ark project from conception to opening day and gives a fascinating range of perspectives on the creationist movement.

## ANTHEM

*A cinematic celebration of music in all its forms.*

**THE APOLLO:** DIR Roger Ross Williams. PRODS Lisa Cortes, Nigel Sinclair, Jeanne Elfant Festa, Cassidy Hartmann and Roger Ross Williams. USA. The historic Apollo Theater is cherished as the platform that launched the careers of countless African-American talents. Its enduring influence on popular culture and commitment to both established and emerging artists in the community is lovingly chronicled in this captivating tribute from Academy Award®-winning filmmaker Roger Ross Williams.

**DAVID CROSBY: REMEMBER MY NAME:** DIR A.J. Eaton. PRODS Cameron Crowe, Michele Farinola and Greg Mariotti. USA. A remarkably candid music portrait documentary, DAVID CROSBY: REMEMBER MY NAME re-examines the life and music of the storied co-founder of The Byrds and Crosby, Stills & Nash through the eyes of the man himself. Still making music and touring, Crosby looks back â?? and forward â?? with equal parts wit and wisdom.

**GAY CHORUS DEEP SOUTH:** DIR David Charles. PRODS Bud Johnston and Jesse Moss. USA. After the 2016 election, the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus toured the south to meet the faith-based communities against LGBTQ rights. The liberal-city folks and the red-state locals speak, confront biases, dine and sing together. GAY CHORUS DEEP SOUTH seeks to sing an elegy to the cultural divide and find some harmony along the journey.

**LINDA RONSTADT: THE SOUND OF MY VOICE:** DIRS Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman. PRODS James Keach, Michele Farinola, Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman. USA. With her dynamic voice, Linda Ronstadt became a superstar pop artist during the male-dominated music industry of the 1970s. Esteemed filmmakers Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman chronicle Ronstadt's trailblazing success in multiple music genres through rocking archival footage and affectionate interviews with Dolly Parton, Bonnie Raitt and Emmylou Harris.

**MILES DAVIS: BIRTH OF THE COOL:** DIR Stanley Nelson. PRODS Stanley Nelson and Nicole London. USA. With his dark shades, stylish clothes and enigmatic personality, jazz trumpeter and composer Miles Davis was the personification of cool. But who was he really? Drawing from a wide range of amazing source material, master filmmaker Stanley Nelson unpacks this complicated artistic genius and reveals the man behind the cool.

**MOONLIGHT SONATA: DEAFNESS IN THREE MOVEMENTS:** DIR Irene Taylor Brodsky. PRODS Irene Taylor Brodsky and Tahria Sheather. USA. MOONLIGHT SONATA tells an intimate and personal multigenerational story of loss and discovery through deafness. Born deaf and receiving cochlear implants as a toddler, Jonas grows up in a world full of sound. His grandparents on the other hand, also born deaf, experienced a childhood of silence. As Jonas turns 11, he learns "Moonlight Sonata," a piece Beethoven wrote while going deaf. It is a beautiful film of love and sound, in all their messy forms.

**SHANGRI-LA:** DIRS Morgan Neville and Jeff Malmberg. USA. From filmmaker Morgan Neville comes a docuseries following legendary music producer Rick Rubin and his minimalist iconic recording studio in Malibu, Shangri-La. Rubin's music career began as co-founder of Def Jam Records where he launched artists like Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys. With appearances from Tyler the Creator, The Avett Brothers and David Lynch, these two episodes explore ideas on meditation, creativity and the pursuit of great artistry.

**CINEMA'S LEGACY**

---

*A cinematic time machine that takes us back to those seminal moments when filmmakers produced works of such originality and brilliance that they redefined the documentary art form. The inaugural Cinema Legacy program at AFI DOCS celebrates the singular role played by public media in fostering and spotlighting innovation and creativity in nonfiction storytelling.*

AN AMERICAN FAMILY: ANNIVERSARY EDITION (2011): DIRS Alan Raymond and Susan Raymond. PROD Craig Gilbert. USA. Before the Kardashians, Bachelors and Bachelorettes, Real Housewives and Survivors came The Louds – the first reality TV family. Debuting on January 11, 1973 on public television, this groundbreaking cinema-critical documentary series drew a record 10 million viewers a week. AN AMERICAN FAMILY: ANNIVERSARY EDITION highlights many historic moments from the most controversial and talked-about television program of its era.

LAW AND ORDER – 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Screening (1969): DIR & PROD Frederick Wiseman. USA.

Throughout a remarkable career that spans more than 50 years, filmmaker Frederick Wiseman has set a benchmark for innovative and distinctive storytelling that is without peer. Celebrating the 50th anniversary broadcast of Wiseman’s extremely timely and relevant LAW AND ORDER (1969), AFI DOCS’s Cinema Legacy program revisits this fascinating immersion into the day-to-day activities of the Kansas City Police Department.

TONGUES UNTIED – 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Screening (1989): DIR Marlon Riggs. PRODS Marlon Riggs and Brian Freeman. USA. Revolutionary in its artistic approach and deeply moving in the intimacy of its storytelling, Marlon Riggs’s TONGUES UNTIED is as dazzling and impactful today as it was 30 years ago when it premiered on public television. A prototypical personal documentary, years ahead of its time, TONGUES UNTIED, broke new ground by mixing poetry, music, performance and Riggs’s autobiographical revelations.

## SHORT FILM SELECTIONS

*The best nonfiction short filmmaking of the year.*

ALL INCLUSIVE: DIR Corina Schwingruber IliÄ?. PROD Stella HÄ¶ndler. Switzerland. Those seeking fun and escape on the high seas fall under the spell of mass entertainment.

THE CLINIC: DIR & PROD Elivia Shaw. USA. Amid a devastating opioid epidemic, a needle exchange program and free clinic operate in the shadows of Fresno, California.

---

**CONCEPTION: MELISSA:** DIRS Margaret Cheatham Williams and Ella Dobson. PROD Margaret Cheatham Williams. USA. How do you calm your child's fears about the bogeyman, when the bogeyman is real?

**CRANNOG:** DIR Isa Rao. PROD Tom van den Hurk. UK. Nobody should have to die alone. An intimate portrait of a Scottish woman who finds a unique and caring way to look after sick and dying animals.

**DEPARTING GESTURE:** DIRS & PRODS Brian Bolster and Jonathan Napolitano. USA. In the American South, Trey Sebrell is one of only a few funeral directors providing full services to unclaimed persons abandoned by their families because of the shame, stigma and miseducation surrounding HIV-related conditions.

**DULCE:** DIRS Guille Isa and Angello Faccini. PRODS Darrell Hartman, Oliver Hartman, and Annie Bush. Colombia, USA. In coastal Colombia, a mother teaches her daughter how to swim, so that she may go to the mangroves and harvest piangua shellfish with other women in the village.

**ENFORCEMENT HOURS:** DIR & PROD Paloma Martinez. USA. In a climate of xenophobia and confusion, a San Francisco hotline aims to provide limited assistance to a targeted population.

**EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SUDDEN BIRTH\* (\*BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK):** DIR & PROD Scott Calonico. Germany. The true story of how the Berkeley police department, the Nazi invasion of the Netherlands, an Academy Award<sup>®</sup> winner and Mr. Spock of STAR TREK fame are all connected by 1966's SUDDEN BIRTH, one of the most unintentionally hilarious and disturbing educational films ever created.

**EXIT 12:** DIR Mohammad Gorjestani. PRODS Taylor Feltner and Erick Kwiecien. USA. After two tours in the Iraq War, U.S. Marine Roman Baca came home a different person. Now, as the founder and artistic director of the Exit12 Dance Company in New York City, Roman, with other veterans and military families, uses dance to tell stories about the effects of war.

**GHOSTS OF SUGAR LAND:** DIR Bassam Tariq. PRODS Fariyah Zaman and Bassam Tariq. USA. In Sugar Land, Texas, a group of young, Muslim-American men ponder the disappearance of their

---

friend â??Mark,â?• who is suspected of joining ISIS.

**IN THE ABSENCE:** DIR Yi Seung-Jun. PROD Gary Byung-Seok Kam. South Korea, USA. When the passenger ferry MV Sewol sank off the coast of South Korea in 2014, more than 300 people lost their lives, most of them schoolchildren. Years later, the victimsâ?? families and survivors are still demanding justice from national authorities.

**ITâ??S GOING TO BE BEAUTIFUL:** DIRS & PRODS Luis Gutierrez Arias and John Henry Theisen. Mexico, USA. The U.S. Border Patrol has been given the task of choosing a winning design for building a wall on the U.S.- Mexico border.

**LIFE IN MINIATURE:** DIR & PROD Ellen Evans. UK. A Yorkshire woman carves a place for herself in the precious world of miniatures by crafting unique and whimsical objects of the everyday world around her.

**LIGHTNING VS THUNDER:** DIRS AJ Schnack and Nathan Truesdell. PRODS Brian Dietzen, AJ Schnack and Nathan Truesdell. USA. An eight-year-old girl and an Afghanistan war veteran develop an unlikely friendship and find inspiration on the softball field. World Premiere.

**A LOVE SONG FOR LATASHA:** DIR Sophia Nahli Allison. PRODS Janice Duncan, Fam Udeorji and Sophia Nahli Allison. USA. Latasha Harlins was 15-years-old when she was killed by Soon Ja Du at Empire Liquor in South Central Los Angeles on March 16, 1991. This dreamlike, hybrid documentary reimagines a more nuanced narrative of Latashaâ??s life.

**MACK WRESTLES:** DIRS Erin Sanger and Taylor Hess. PRODS Erin Sanger, Taylor Hess and Gentry Kirby. USA. Transgender wrestler Mack Beggs broke records and changed history by winning the Texas high school state title two years in a row. With college on the horizon, Beggs must grapple with what comes next.

**QUILT FEVER:** DIR Olivia Loomis Merrion. USA. Quilt Week in Paducah, Kentucky is a major event. QUILT FEVER is a charming portrait of the art and folks who love it. World Premiere.

---

SCENES FROM A DRY CITY: DIRS & PRODS Francois Verster and Simon Wood. South Africa, USA. In South Africa, an impending water crisis grips an entire nation.

THE SEPARATED: DIR Jeremy Raff. PROD Ashley Kenny. USA. On June 13, 2018, Honduran asylum-seeker Anita and her five-year-old son, Jenri, were forcibly separated at the U.S.-Mexico border. Thanks to a pro bono lawyer who aggressively advocates for their release Anita and Jenri are reunited. But the damage has been done.

1. LOUIS SUPERMAN: DIRS Smriti Mundhra and Sami Khan. PRODS Smriti Mundhra, Sami Khan, Poh Si Teng and Cheyenne Tan. USA. Bruce Franks, Jr., is a 33-year-old battle rapper, Ferguson activist and state representative from St. Louis who has overcome unspeakable loss to become one of the most exciting and unapologetic young leaders in the country today.

STAY CLOSE: DIRS Luther Clement and Shuhan Fan. PRODS Ashley Brandon, Nevo Shinaar, Luther Clement and Shuhan Fan. China, USA. The underdog story of a fencer from Brooklyn who overcomes the longest of odds on the road to the Olympics.

SWATTED: DIR Ismaël Joffroy Chandoutis. PROD Luc-Jérôme Bailleul. France. When gamers come face-to-face with the cyber-harassment practice known as "swatting," online gaming suddenly takes on real-life terror.

SWEETHEART DANCERS: DIR Ben-Alex Dupris. USA. Sean and Adrian are a Two-Spirit couple determined to rewrite the rules of Native-American culture through their participation in the Sweetheart Dance. This celebratory contest is held at powwows across the country, primarily for heterosexual couples, until now.

TAKE ME TO PROM: DIR & PROD Andrew Moir. Canada. A colorful, celebratory intergenerational retelling of seven queer people's prom experience.

A TALE OF TWO KITCHENS: DIR Trisha Ziff. PRODS Isabel del Rio and Marta Nájuez Puerto. USA, Mexico. Two countries, two restaurants, one vision. A TALE OF TWO KITCHENS explores how a restaurant is a place of dignity and community across Mexico City and San Francisco.

---

**THE TRIAL:** DIR & PROD Johanna Hamilton. USA. Meet the lawyers tasked with defending 9/11 suspects against the U.S. government.

**A VERY THIN LINE:** DIR Nathan Truesdell. PRODS Nathan Truesdell and J. Gonçalves. USA. A humorous look at alternative currencies used in America, both legal and illicit.

### **About AFI DOCS**

AFI DOCS is the American Film Institute's annual documentary festival in Washington, DC. Presenting the year's best documentaries, AFI DOCS is the only festival in the U.S. dedicated to screenings and events that connect audiences, filmmakers and policy leaders in the heart of our nation's government. The AFI DOCS advisory board includes Ken Burns, Davis Guggenheim, Chris Hegedus, Werner Herzog, Barbara Kopple, Spike Lee, Errol Morris, Stanley Nelson, D A Pennebaker and Frederick Wiseman. Now in its 17th year, the festival will be held June 19-23, 2019, in landmark Washington, DC, venues, Landmark Theatres E Street Cinema and at the historic AFI Silver Theatre in Silver Spring, MD. Visit [AFI.com/AFIDOCS](http://AFI.com/AFIDOCS) and connect on [twitter.com/AFIDOCS](https://twitter.com/AFIDOCS), [facebook.com/AFIDOCS](https://facebook.com/AFIDOCS), [youtube.com/AFI](https://youtube.com/AFI) and [instagram.com/AmericanFilmInstitute](https://instagram.com/AmericanFilmInstitute).

### **About the American Film Institute**

The American Film Institute was established by presidential proclamation in the White House Rose Garden, and launched its national mandate on June 5, 1967 to preserve the heritage of the motion picture, to honor the artists and their work and to educate the next generation of storytellers. AFI's founding Trustees included Chairman Gregory Peck, Vice Chairman Sidney Poitier, Francis Ford Coppola, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Jack Valenti and George Stevens, Jr., as Director.

### **\*About AT&T Communications**

AT&T is proud to be the Presenting Sponsor of the 2019 AFI DOCS.

We help family, friends and neighbors connect in meaningful ways every day. From the first phone call 140+ years ago to mobile video streaming, we innovate to improve lives. We have the nation's fastest wireless network.\*\* And according to America's biggest test, we have the nation's best wireless network.\*\*\* We're building [FirstNet](#) just for first responders and creating next-generation mobile 5G. With [DIRECTV](#), [DIRECTV NOW](#) and [WatchTV](#), we deliver entertainment people love to talk about. Our smart, highly secure solutions serve nearly 3 million global businesses - nearly all of the Fortune 1000. And worldwide, our spirit of service drives employees to give back to their communities. For 10 years, we've supported AFI's commitment to honor the heritage of film and the artists who make them. And through a variety of programs, we're focused on giving amateur and underrepresented filmmakers the support they need to succeed.

---

AT&T Communications is part of AT&T Inc. ([NYSE:T](#)). Learn more at [att.com/CommunicationsNews](http://att.com/CommunicationsNews).

### **About The Washington Post and Washington Post Press Freedom Partnership**

The Washington Post is an award-winning news leader whose mission is to connect, inform, and enlighten local, national and global readers with trustworthy reporting, in-depth analysis and engaging opinions. It combines world-class journalism with the latest technology and tools so readers can interact with The Post anytime, anywhere.

The Washington Post Press Freedom Partnership is an ongoing initiative that aims to highlight organizations working vigilantly to promote press freedom and raise awareness of the rights of journalists worldwide. Learn more at [www.wapo.st/pressfreedom](http://www.wapo.st/pressfreedom).

### **About MEET THE PRESS WITH CHUCK TODD**

[Meet the Press with Chuck Todd](#) is where newsmakers come to make news â?? setting the political agenda and spotlighting the impact Washington decision-making has on Americans across the country. It is the #1 most-watched Sunday public affairs show for the 2017-2018 season, reaching more than three million viewers every Sunday and millions more through social, digital and on-demand platforms. *Meet the Press* brings its authority and influencer interviews to MSNBC with [MTP Daily](#) weekdays at 5 p.m. ET and to the [1947: The Meet the Press Podcast](#). Itâ??s the longest-running show in television history, recently expanding its brand to include a political short-documentary film festival in collaboration with the American Film Institute. Chuck Todd is the political director of NBC News and the moderator of *Meet the Press*; John Reiss is the executive producer.

### **CONTACT:**

Elizabeth Ward, AFI DOCS PR, 202.339.9598, [elizabeth@prcollaborative.com](mailto:elizabeth@prcollaborative.com)

Ryan Lattanzio, American Film Institute, 323.856.7619, [RLattanzio@AFI.com](mailto:RLattanzio@AFI.com)

### **Category**

1. #AFI
2. #AFIDOCs

### **Date Created**

May 15, 2019

### **Author**

hollywoodglee