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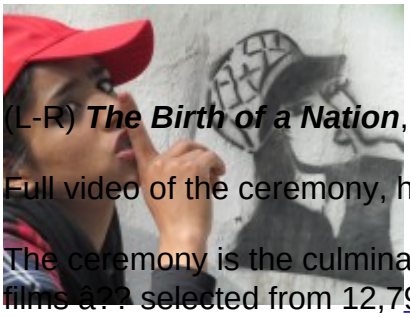
SUNDANCE INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES FEATURE FILM AWARDS FOR 2016 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

Description

Park City, UT â?? Sundance Institute tonight announced the prizes in feature filmmaking at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival, with top awards going to ***Between Sea and Land, The Birth of a Nation, First Girl I Loved, Jim: The James Foley Story, Sand Storm, Sonita*** **and** ***Weiner***. *The Birth of a* [illegible] d Jury Prize and Audience Award for their respective sections.



(L-R) ***The Birth of a Nation***, Credit:Eliot Davis; ***Sonita***, Credit:Rokhsareh Ghaem Maghami

Full video of the ceremony, hosted by director Taika Waititi in Park City, Utah:

The ceremony is the culmination of the 2016 Festival, which presented 123 feature-length and 72 short films â?? selected from 12,793 submissions â?? to independent film-loving audiences in Park City, Salt Lake City, Ogden and Sundance, Utah.

(Credit: Rokhsareh Ghaem Maghami)

Jury prizes were awarded by six groups of film and culture leaders, who screened all films in their respective sections and jointly decided which standout artistic and story elements to recognize. This yearâ??s jurors were: Simon Kilmurry, Jill Lepore, Shola Lynch, Louie Psihoyos, Amy Ziering, Mark Adams, Lena Dunham, Jon Hamm, Avy Kaufman, Franklin Leonard, Randall Poster, Fernanda SolÃ³rzano, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Mila Aung-Thwin, Tine Fischer and Asif Kapadia. In addition, Festival audiences voted for their favorite films to receive five Audience Awards in each of the U.S. and

World Competitions and NEXT.

Feature film award winners in previous years include: *Whiplash, Fruitvale Station, Beasts of the Southern Wild, Twenty Feet from Stardom, Searching for Sugarman, The Square, Me and Earl and the Dying Girl, Cartel Land, The Wolf Pack, The Diary of a Teenage Girl, Dope, Dear White People, The Cove* and *Man on Wire*.

2016 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL FEATURE FILM AWARDS:

The **U.S. Grand Jury Prize: Documentary** was presented by Louis Psihoyos to:
Weiner / U.S.A. (Directors: Josh Kriegman, Elyse Steinberg) â?? With unrestricted access to Anthony Weinerâ??s New York City mayoral campaign, this film reveals the human story behind the scenes of a high-profile political scandal as it unfolds, and offers an unfiltered look at how much todayâ??s politics is driven by an appetite for spectacle.

The **U.S. Grand Jury Prize: Dramatic** was presented by Franklin Leonard to:
The Birth of a Nation / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Nate Parker) â?? Set against the antebellum South, this story follows Nat Turner, a literate slave and preacher whose financially strained owner, Samuel Turner, accepts an offer to use Natâ??s preaching to subdue unruly slaves. After witnessing countless atrocities against fellow slaves, Nat devises a plan to lead his people to freedom. *Cast: Nate Parker, Armie Hammer, Aja Naomi King, Jackie Earle Haley, Gabrielle Union, Mark Boone Jr.*

The **World Cinema Grand Jury Prize: Documentary** was presented by Asif Kapadia to:
Sonita / Germany, Iran, Switzerland (Director: Rokhsareh Ghaem Maghami) â?? If 18-year-old Sonita had a say, Michael Jackson and Rihanna would be her parents and sheâ??d be a rapper who tells the story of Afghan women and their fate as child brides. She finds out that her family plans to sell her to an unknown husband for $9,000.

The **World Cinema Grand Jury Prize: Dramatic** was presented by Apichatpong Weerasethakul to:
Sand Storm / Israel (Director and screenwriter: Elite Zexer) â?? When their entire lives are shattered, two Bedouin women struggle to change the unchangeable rules, each in her own individual way. *Cast: Lamis Ammar, Ruba Blal-Asfour, Hitham Omari, Khadija Alakel, Jalal Masrwa.*

The **Audience Award: U.S. Documentary**, Presented by Acura was presented by Matt Ross to:
Jim: The James Foley Story / U.S.A. (Director: Brian Oakes) â?? The public execution of American conflict journalist James Foley captured the worldâ??s attention, but he was more than just a man in an orange jumpsuit. Seen through the lens of his close childhood friend, *Jim: The James Foley Story* moves from adrenaline-fueled front lines and devastated neighborhoods of Syria into the hands of ISIS.

The **Audience Award: U.S. Dramatic**, Presented by Acura was presented by Matt Ross to:
The Birth of a Nation / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Nate Parker) â?? Set against the antebellum South, this story follows Nat Turner, a literate slave and preacher whose financially strained owner, Samuel Turner, accepts an offer to use Natâ??s preaching to subdue unruly slaves. After witnessing countless atrocities against fellow slaves, Nat devises a plan to lead his people to freedom. *Cast: Nate Parker, Armie Hammer, Aja Naomi King, Jackie Earle Haley, Gabrielle Union, Mark Boone Jr.*

The **Audience Award: World Cinema Documentary** was presented by Rose McGowan to:
Sonita / Germany, Iran, Switzerland (Director: Rokhsareh Ghaem Maghami) â?? If 18-year-old Sonita had a say, Michael Jackson and Rihanna would be her parents and sheâ??d be a rapper who tells the

story of Afghan women and their fate as child brides. She finds out that her family plans to sell her to an unknown husband for $9,000.

The **Audience Award: World Cinema Dramatic** was presented by Rose McGowan to:
Between Sea and Land / Colombia (Director: Carlos del Castillo, Screenwriter: Manolo Cruz) â?? Alberto, who suffers from an illness that binds him into a body that doesnâ??t obey him, lives with his loving mom, who dedicates her life to him. His sickness impedes him from achieving his greatest dream of knowing the sea, despite one being located just across the street. *Cast: Manolo Cruz, Vicky HernandÃ©z, Viviana Serna, Jorge Cao, Mile Vergara, Javier SÃ¡enz.*

The **Audience Award: NEXT,** Presented by Adobe was presented by Taika Waititi to:
First Girl I Loved / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Kerem Sanga) â?? Seventeen-year-old Anne just fell in love with Sasha, the most popular girl at her L.A. public high school. But when Anne tells her best friend, Cliftonâ??who has always harbored a secret crush on herâ??he does his best to get in the way. *Cast: Dylan Gelula, Brianna Hildebrand, Mateo Arias, Jennifer Prediger, Tim Heidecker, Pamela Adlon.*

The **Directing Award: U.S. Documentary** was presented by Amy Ziering to:
Roger Ross Williams for his film ***Life, Animated*** / U.S.A. (Director: Roger Ross Williams) â?? Owen Suskind, an autistic boy who could not speak for years, slowly emerged from his isolation by immersing himself in Disney animated movies. Using these films as a roadmap, he reconnects with his loving family and the wider world in this emotional coming-of-age story.

The **Directing Award: U.S. Dramatic** was presented by Mark Adams to:
Daniel Scheinert and **Daniel Kwan** for their film ***Swiss Army Man*** / U.S.A. (Directors and screenwriters: Daniel Scheinert, Daniel Kwan) â?? Hank, a hopeless man stranded in the wild, discovers a mysterious dead body. Together the two embark on an epic journey to get home. As Hank realizes the body is the key to his survival, this once-suicidal man is forced to convince a dead body that life is worth living. *Cast: Paul Dano, Daniel Radcliffe, Mary Elizabeth Winstead*.

The **Directing Award: World Cinema Documentary** was presented by Mila Aung Thwain to:
Michal Marczak for his film ***All These Sleepless Nights*** / Poland (Director: Michal Marczak) â?? What does it mean to be awake in a world that seems satisfied to be asleep? Kris and Michal push their experiences of life and love to a breaking point as they restlessly roam the city streets in search of answers, adrift in the euphoria and uncertainty of youth.

The **Directing Award: World Cinema Dramatic** was presented by Randall Poster to:
Belgica / Belgium, France, Netherlands (Director: Felix van Groeningen, Screenwriters: Felix van Groeningen, Arne Sierens) â?? In the midst of Belgiumâ??s nightlife scene, two brothers start a bar and get swept up in its success. *Cast: Stef Aerts, Tom Vermeir, Charlotte Vandermeersch, HÃ©lÃ¨ne De Vos.*

The **Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award: U.S. Dramatic** was presented by Lena Dunham to:
Chad Hartigan for ***Morris from America*** / U.S.A., Germany (Director and screenwriter: Chad Hartigan) â?? Thirteen-year-old Morris, a hip-hop loving American, moves to Heidelberg, Germany, with his father. In this completely foreign land, he falls in love with a local girl, befriends his German tutor-turned-confidant, and attempts to navigate the unique trials and tribulations of adolescence. *Cast: Markees Christmas, Craig Robinson, Carla Juri, Lina Keller, Jakub GierszaÅ?, Levin Henning*.

A **U.S. Documentary Special Jury Award for Editing** was presented by Jill Lepore to:
Penny Lane and **Thom Stylinski** for ***NUTS!*** / U.S.A. (Director: Penny Lane) â?? The mostly true story of Dr. John Romulus Brinkley, an eccentric genius who built an empire with his goat-testicle impotence cure and a million-watt radio station. Animated reenactments, interviews, archival footage, and one seriously unreliable narrator trace his rise from poverty to celebrity and influence in 1920s America.

A **U.S. Documentary Special Jury Award for For Social Impact Filmmaking** was presented by Simon Kilmurry to:
Trapped / U.S.A. (Director: Dawn Porter) â?? American abortion clinics are in a fight for survival. Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers (TRAP) laws are increasingly being passed by states that maintain they ensure womenâ??s safety and health, but as clinics continue to shut their doors, opponents believe the real purpose of these laws is to outlaw abortion.

A **U.S. Documentary Special Jury Award for Writing** was presented by Shola Lynch to:
Kate Plays Christine / U.S.A. (Director: Robert Greene) â?? This psychological thriller follows actor Kate Lyn Sheil as she prepares to play the role of Christine Chubbuck, a Florida television host who committed suicide on air in 1974. Christineâ??s tragic death was the inspiration for *Network*, and the mysteries surrounding her final act haunt Kate and the production.

A **U.S. Documentary Special Jury Award for VÃ©ritÃ© Filmmaking** was presented by Shola Lynch to:
The Bad Kids / U.S.A. (Directors: Keith Fulton, Lou Pepe) â?? At a remote Mojave Desert high school, extraordinary educators believe that empathy and life skills, more than academics, give at-risk students command of their own futures. This coming-of-age story watches education combat the crippling effects of poverty in the lives of these so-called â??bad kids.â?•

A **U.S. Dramatic Special Jury Award** was presented by Lena Dunham to:
As You Are / U.S.A. (Director: Miles Joris-Peyrafitte, Screenwriters: Miles Joris-Peyrafitte, Madison Harrison) â?? *As You Are* is the telling and retelling of a relationship between three teenagers as it traces the course of their friendship through a construction of disparate memories prompted by a police investigation. *Cast: Owen Campbell, Charlie Heaton, Amandla Stenberg, John Scurti, Scott Cohen, Mary Stuart Masterson.*

A **U.S. Dramatic Special Jury Award for Breakthrough Performance** was presented by Avy Kaufman to:
Joe Seo for ***Spa Night*** / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Andrew Ahn) â?? Los Angelesâ??s Korean spas serve not only as meeting places but also as a bridge between past and future for generations of immigrant families. *Spa Night* explores one Korean American familyâ??s dreams and realities as each member struggles with the overlap of personal desire, disillusionment, and sense of tradition. *Cast: Joe Seo, Haerry Kim, Youn Ho Cho, Tae Song, Ho Young Chung, Linda Han.*

A **U.S. Dramatic Special Jury Award for Individual Performance** was presented by Jon Hamm to:
Melanie Lynskey in ***The Intervention*** / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Clea DuVall) â?? A weekend getaway for four couples takes a sharp turn when one of the couples discovers the entire trip was orchestrated to host an intervention on their marriage. *Cast: Melanie Lynskey, Cobie Smulders, Alia Shawkat, Clea DuVall, Natasha Lyonne, Ben Schwartz.*

A **U.S. Dramatic Special Jury Award for Individual Performance** was presented by Jon Hamm to:
Craig Robinson in ***Morris from America*** / U.S.A., Germany (Director and screenwriter: Chad

Hartigan) â?? Thirteen-year-old Morris, a hip-hop loving American, moves to Heidelberg, Germany, with his father. In this completely foreign land, he falls in love with a local girl, befriends his German tutor-turned-confidant, and attempts to navigate the unique trials and tribulations of adolescence. *Cast: Markees Christmas, Craig Robinson, Carla Juri, Lina Keller, Jakub GierszaÅ?, Levin Henning*.

A **World Cinema Documentary Special Jury Award for Debut Feature** was presented by Asif Kapadia to: **Heidi Brandenburg** and **Mathew Orzel** for their film ***When Two Worlds Collide*** / Peru (Directors: Heidi Brandenburg, Mathew Orzel) â?? An indigenous leader resists the environmental ruin of Amazonian lands by big business. As he is forced into exile and faces 20 years in prison, his quest reveals conflicting visions that shape the fate of the Amazon and the climate future of our world.

A **World Cinema Documentary Special Jury Award for Cinematography** was presented by Mila Aung Thwain to: Director and cinematographer **Pieter-Jan De Pue** for his film ***The Land of the Enlightened*** / Belgium (Director: Pieter-Jan De Pue) â?? A group of Kuchi children in Afghanistan dig out old Soviet mines and sell the explosives to child workers in a lapis lazuli mine. When not dreaming of an Afghanistan after the American withdrawal, Gholam Nasir and his gang control the mountains where caravans are smuggling the blue gemstones.

A **World Cinema Documentary Special Jury Award for Editing** was presented by Asif Kapadia to: **Mako Kamitsuna** and **John Maringouin** for ***We Are X*** / United Kingdom, U.S.A., Japan (Director: Stephen Kijak) â?? As glam rockâ??s most flamboyant survivors, X Japan ignited a musical revolution in Japan during the late â??80s with their melodic metal. Twenty years after their tragic dissolution, X Japanâ??s leader, Yoshiki, battles with physical and spiritual demons alongside prejudices of the West to bring their music to the world.

A **World Cinema Dramatic Special Jury Award for Acting** was presented by Fernanda SolÃ³rzano to:
Vicky HernandÃ©z and **Manolo Cruz** in ***Between Sea and Land*** / Colombia (Director: Carlos del Castillo, Screenwriter: Manolo Cruz) â?? Alberto, who suffers from an illness that binds him into a body that doesnâ??t obey him, lives with his loving mom, who dedicates her life to him. His sickness impedes him from achieving his greatest dream of knowing the sea, despite one being located just across the street. *Cast: Manolo Cruz, Vicky HernandÃ©z, Viviana Serna, Jorge Cao, Mile Vergara, Javier SÃ¡enz.*

A **World Cinema Dramatic Special Jury Award for Screenwriting** was presented by Randall Poster to:
Ana Katz and **InÃ©s Bortagaray** in ***Mi Amiga del Parque*** / Argentina, Uruguay (Director: Ana Katz, Screenwriters: Ana Katz, InÃ©s Bortagaray) â?? Running away from a bar without paying the bill is just the first adventure for Liz (mother to newborn Nicanor) and Rosa (supposed mother to newborn Clarisa). This budding friendship between nursing mothers starts with the promise of liberation but soon ends up being a dangerous business. *Cast: Julieta Zylberberg, Ana Katz, Maricel Ã•lvarez, Mirella Pascual, Malena FigÃ³, Daniel Hendler.*

A **World Cinema Dramatic Special Jury Award for Unique Vision and Design** was presented by Fernanda SolÃ³rzano to: **Agnieszka SmoczyÅ?ska** for ***The Lure*** / Poland (Director: Agnieszka Smoczynska, Screenwriter: Robert Bolesto) â?? Two mermaid sisters, who end up performing at a nightclub, face cruel and bloody choices when one of them falls in love with a beautiful young man. *Cast: Marta Mazurek, Michalina Olszanska, Jakub Gierszal, Kinga Preis, Andrzej Konopka, Zygmunt*

Malanowicz.

The following awards were presented at separate ceremonies at the Festival:

SHORT FILM AWARDS:
Jury prizes and honorable mentions in short filmmaking were presented at a ceremony in Park City, Utah on January 27. The Short Film Grand Jury Prize was awarded to: ***Thunder Road*** / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Jim Cummings). The Short Film Jury Award: U.S. Fiction was presented to: ***The Procedure*** / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Calvin Lee Reeder). The Short Film Jury Award: International Fiction was presented to: ***Maman(s)*** / France (Director and screenwriter: MaÃ¯mouna DoucourÃ©). The Short Film Jury Award: Non-fiction was presented to: ***Bacon & Godâ??s Wrath*** / Canada (Director: Sol Friedman). The Short Film Jury Award: Animation was presented to: ***Edmond*** / United Kingdom (Director and screenwriter: Nina Gantz). A Short Film Special Jury Award for Outstanding Performance was presented to: Grace Glowicki for her performance in ***Her Friend Adam***. A Short Film Special Jury Award for Best Direction was presented to: ***Peacock*** / Czech Republic (Director: OndÅ?ej HudeÄ•ek, Screenwriters: Jan Smutny, OndÅ?ej HudeÄ•ek).

The Short Film jurors were star and co-creator of Comedy Centralâ??s Key & Peele, Keegan-Michael Key; development executive at Amazon Studios, Gina Kwon; and chief film critic for MTV, Amy Nicholson. The Short Film program is presented by YouTube.

GLOBAL FILMMAKING AWARDS:
The winning directors and projects of the 2016 Sundance Institute Global Filmmaking Awards in recognition and support of emerging independent filmmakers from around the world, are:

August (Cuba) / Writer-Director: Armando Capo
In August 1994, Carlos comes of age during the Cuban Raft Exodus. He loses his first love, his friends leave the country, he discovers sex, and for the first time feels afraid about his future.

Inshaâ?? Allah (India) / Writer-Director: Geetu Mohandas
11 year old Mullakoya, tired of living in the shadow of the colorful, magical-realist folklore that surrounds his missing older brother, sets off on a treacherous journey from the Lakshadweep Islands in the Arabian Sea to the Indian mainland to search for him.

Sicilian Ghost Story (Italy) / Writer-Directors: Antonio Piazza, Fabio Grassadonia
When a local Mafia donâ??s son is kidnapped, a young Sicilian girl refuses to accept the sudden disappearance of the boy she loves. Based on real life events at the height of the Mafiaâ??s reign in Palermo, *Sicilian Ghost Story* is a striking and unique look at the power that love has to survive in the darkest of worlds.

The Treasure (Morocco) / Writer-Director: Abdellah Taia
Janine, a French woman born in Morocco, accompanied by her building manager, Mohamed, set out on an adventure in search of a hidden treasure in the mountains of Atlas. The journey into her past becomes an exploration of post-colonial identity in Morocco.

SLOAN SCIENCE IN FILM AWARDS:
The 2016 Alfred P. Sloan Feature Film Prize, presented to an outstanding feature film about science or technology, was presented to *Embrace of the Serpent* directed by Ciro Guerra. The film received a $20,000 cash award from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

SUNDANCE INSTITUTE | AMAZON STUDIOS PRODUCERS AWARDS:
The recipients of the the 2016 Sundance Institute **|** Amazon Studios Producers Awards are Sara Murphy and Adele Romanski, producers of *Morris From America* and Julie Goldman, executive producer of *Weiner* and *Life, Animated*. Through the Sundance Institute Feature Film Program and Documentary Film Program, the awards grant money to emerging producers of films at the Sundance Film Festival. The award recognizes bold vision and a commitment to continuing work as a creative producer in the independent space.

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