



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES



AFI PROJECT: 20/20 2009

AFI Project: 20/20 is an American Film Institute (AFI) international initiative designed to enhance cultural exchange, understanding and collaboration through filmmakers and their films from the US and abroad. It is an unprecedented cultural diplomacy effort that is the only international filmmaker exchange supported by all of America's cultural agencies—National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)—and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

Participation in AFI Project: 20/20 is by invitation based on an artist's filmmaking excellence and their potential for positively interrelating with film professionals, filmmaking peers, cultural officials and audiences, particularly in foreign countries. AFI FEST, which is debut festival for the program, and the other venues and countries participating in AFI Project: 20/20 provide an arena for American and International cultural voices to be heard and seen, creating learning opportunities for audiences and artists alike. Through workshops, seminars and appearances at film festivals, cultural centers, museums and other community, educational and cultural venues in the US and abroad, AFI Project: 20/20 filmmakers will promote mutual understanding, while nurturing filmmaking excellence.

Now in its third year, the program continues to support and advocate the use of film in cultural diplomacy. Representing various countries, AFI Project: 20/20's multicultural roster of films challenges its audiences to examine, reflect and celebrate diversity. In 2008-2009, 13 filmmakers from 8 countries and their films are planning to visit China, Peru, South Africa, France and Great Britain, as well as St. Louis, Santa Fe, Washington, D.C, Honolulu, Dallas and Waterville, Maine. The U.S. cultural agencies (NEA, NEH, IMLS) and the President's Committee continue their support of the program, which now works with closely U.S. Embassies overseas in developing screenings and activities.

ALONE IN FOUR WALLS

Country: Germany

Language: Russian

Genre: Documentary

2008, 85 min., 35MM

DIR: Alexandra Westmeier

SCR: Alexandra Westmeier

PROD: Alexandra Westmeier,
Inigo Westmeier

DP: Inigo Westmeier

ED: Alexandra Westmeier



Synopsis

Adolescent boys struggle to grow up in a home for juvenile delinquents in rural Russia, where life behind bars may be better than the release to freedom. Filmmaker Alexandra Westmeier provides an intimate glimpse at a society from the inside out, where boys under the age of 14 are held for crimes ranging from theft to rape to multiple murders. They receive food and clothing. They go to school and engage in sports. For the first time in their young lives, they no longer have to fight for their daily existence; they can simply be what they are--children.

Biography

Alexandra Westmeier, was born in Chelyabinsk, Russia. She studied as a stage and film actress at the St Petersburg State Academy of the Theatrical Arts (1990–1995). She later studied stage direction at the Russian Academy of the Theatrical Arts in Moscow (1996–2000). Westmeier has lived in Berlin, Germany, since 2001. In 2006, together with her husband, Inigo Westmeier, she founded Linger On Film productions.

AMAL

Country: Canada
Language: Hindi/English
Genre: Narrative
2007, 101min., 35MM

DIR: Richie Mehta
SCR: Richie Mehta, Shaun Mehta
PROD: David Miller, Steven Bray
DP: Mitch Ness
ED: Stuart McIntyre
MUSIC: Dr. Shiva



Synopsis

A multi-layered portrait of contemporary India, follows Amal, a humble auto-rickshaw driver in New Delhi, who is content with the small but vital role he plays — to drive his customers throughout the city as efficiently and safely as possible.

One day, Amal drives an eccentric old billionaire, G.K. JAYARAM, disguised as a vagabond, is searching to find the two things his money has never brought him – hope for humanity and peace for his soul. After their fateful meeting, both of their lives are changed forever.

Biography

Richie Mehta has been solidifying his role as a serious up-and-coming filmmaker for years, and been mentored by industry legends such as Wim Wenders, Shekhar Kapur and Brian DePalma. Mehta's films to date - AMAL (the short film) and SYSTEM OF UNITS - have screened and garnered him much acclaim and numerous awards around the world at film festivals such as Telluride, Palm Springs International Film Festival, Montreal International Film Festival, and the London International Film Festival. These experiences, along with his travels to India and afar, have granted him access to a global filmmaking community and assisted in further nurturing his independent spirit and international perspectives.

2008 AFI DALLAS International Film Festival, Audience Narrative Feature Winner

KASSIM THE DREAM

Country: US/Uganda
Film Language: English
Genre: Documentary
2008, 87 min., video

DIR: Kief Davidson
PROD: Kief Davidson, Liz Silver
EXEC PROD: Joshua A. Green,
Luke Thornton, Forest Whitaker,
Keisha Whitaker
DP: Tony Molina Jr.
ED: Kief Davidson, Tony Breuer
MUS: Leonardo Heiblum,
Jacobo Lieberman, Andres Solis



Synopsis

This is the story of World Champion Boxer, Kassim "The Dream" Ouma - born in Uganda, kidnapped by the rebel army and trained to be a child soldier at the age of 6. When the rebels took over the government, Kassim became an army soldier who was forced to commit many horrific atrocities, making him both a victim and perpetrator. He soon discovered the army's boxing team and realized the sport was his ticket to freedom. After 12 years of warfare, Kassim defected from Africa and arrived in the United States. Homeless and culture shocked, he quickly rose through the boxing ranks and became Junior Middleweight Champion of the World.

Kassim, 27 seems to have obtained the American Dream with his jovial nature, fame and hip hop lifestyle. As Kassim trains for his next world title fight against Jermain Taylor in Little Rock Arkansas, keeping his demons out of the ring becomes increasingly difficult. His desires to reunite with family in Uganda intensify when Kassim's only hope for a safe return is a military pardon from the president and government responsible for his abduction.

Biography

Kief Davidson is an award-winning feature film and documentary director born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. His previous film, THE DEVIL'S MINER, made its world premiere at the Rotterdam Film Festival in 2005 and won over a dozen awards at International Film Festivals including Tribeca, Hot Docs, Chicago, Woodstock, Jerusalem and Mexico City. He received the prestigious DGA Award nomination for Outstanding Achievement in Documentary Directing, won the coveted FIPRESCI- Film Critics Award and the PBS Independent Lens Audience Award.

Kief has also directed and produced documentaries for The Discovery Channel, ABC News, PBS, ARTE and A&E. As a narrative filmmaker, Kief wrote and directed the dark comedy, MINOR DETAILS, an independent feature film starring Peter Sarsgaard and Larry Pine. He began his filmmaking career in 1993 as editor on the Academy Award-nominated documentary, BLOOD TIES: THE LIFE AND WORK OF SALLY MANN. He is the recipient of two Emmy nominations for his work with National Geographic and earned the International Monitor Award for Best Editing on the journalistic film, WHAT'S NEWS?

2008 American Film Market/SILVERDOCS Award

IRON LADIES OF LIBERIA

Country: US/ Liberia
Film Language: English
Genre: Documentary
2007, 77 min., video

DIR: Siatta Scott Johnson and Daniel Junge
Producer: Henry Ansbacher
Executive Producer: Jonathan Stack
Cinematographer: Daniel Junge
Editor: Davis Coombe
Music: Gunnard Doboze



Synopsis

After nearly two decades of civil war, Liberia is a nation ready for change. On January 16 2006, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was inaugurated President. She is the first ever freely elected female head of state in Africa. Winning a hotly contested election with the overwhelming support of women across Liberia, since taking office she has appointed other extraordinary women to leadership positions in all areas of government. Can the first female Liberian president bring sustainable democracy and peace to such a devastated country?

With the exclusive access, African director Siatta Scott Johnson and American director Daniel Junge follow President Sirleaf and her closest aides behind the scenes during their first year in office.

Biography

Daniel Junge was named by Filmmaker magazine as one of 25 up-and-coming filmmakers in 2003. Junge had his feature-length directorial debut with CHIEFS, which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival, where it won the award for Best Documentary, and subsequently received national airing on PBS. He also won four regional Emmy's for COMMON GOOD (2005), a six-part series on social entrepreneurs.

Co-Director Siatta Scott-Johnson was born in Buchanan, Liberia, 1974, and raised in rural Grand Bassa County. She has five years of experience as a reporter and producer at DCTV, one of Liberia's few broadcast television stations, and is a founding member of Omuahtee Africa Media.

2008 AFI DALLAS International Film Festival, Target Documentary Award

OF ALL THE THINGS

Country: US

Film Language: English

Genre: Documentary

2008, 83 min., video

DIR: Jody Lambert

PROD: Taylor Williams

EXEC PROD: Joel Wilson, Suzi Wilson

DP: P.H. O'Brien

ED: Haines Hall



Synopsis

Dennis Lambert was one of the most successful and diverse songwriter/producers of the '70s and '80s, with hits like "Ain't No Woman Like The One I've Got", "Rhinestone Cowboy", "Don't Pull Your Love", "Baby Come Back" and "Nightshift". He had chart-toppers in almost every genre of music, and at one point four of his songs were simultaneously on the Billboard Hot 100 chart, a feat previously accomplished only by The Beatles. That was then. Today, he's a 60-year-old family man selling real estate in Florida. But it turns out his obscure 1972 solo album is still huge... in the Philippines. A Filipino concert promoter has been begging Dennis to tour for decades, and in 2007 - thirty-five years after the release of his album - he finally agreed. "Of All The Things" is a hilarious and touching pop/rock/country/R&B documentary that follows Dennis on his whirlwind tour as he rediscovers his passion for music -- a two-week adventure that takes him from the comforts of Boca Raton, through the remote outer islands of the Philippines, to a sold-out show at Manila's famous Araneta Coliseum for thousands of fans he never knew he had.

Biography

Jody Lambert was born and raised in Los Angeles. He was a child actor and musician before moving to NYC to attend NYU film school. He switched majors to acting, where he studied at the Atlantic Theater Company. For the past 15 years, he's lived in New York's East Village and has worked at some of downtown's best theaters, including ps122, the Ohio, HERE and the Atlantic Theater Company. He also helped in the creation of the New York International Fringe Festival and traveled to the Edinburgh Fringe with several award-winning productions. OF ALL THE THINGS is his directorial debut.

SKIN

Country: UK/South Africa
Language: English
Genre: Narrative
2008, 107 min., 35MM

DIR: Anthony Fabian
SCR: Helena Kriel, Johann Potgieter,
Jessie Keyt, Anthony Fabian, Judith Stone
PROD: Margaret Matheson,
Genevieve Hofmeyr,
Anthony Fabian, Phumi Mashigo
EXEC PROD: Simon Fawcett, Robbie Little, Laurence Paltiel,
Alasdair MacCuish, Moses Silinda, Hellen Kalenga
DP: Dewald Aukema, Jonathan Partridge
ED: St. John O'Rorke
MUS: Helene Muddiman



Synopsis

SKIN is the true story of fair complexioned, Sandra Laing who has distinctive African features, even though both parents are white Afrikaners. Despite Sandra's mixed-race appearance, her parents had to legally take their case to the South African Supreme Court to classify her as white. Painfully aware of being different during apartheid, as an adult, Sandra reclassifies herself as 'colored', which causes her family to sever all ties. Not long after the first free elections in 1994, she hears of her father's death, and decides to reunite with her mother before it's too late.

Biography

Anthony Fabian is a UCLA Film and Television School graduate. Fabian film career has led to work as a producer, writer and music supervisor on numerous feature films. SKIN is Anthony Fabian's directorial debut.

THROW DOWN YOUR HEART

Country: USA

Film Language: Bambara, English, French, Jola, Swahili with English subtitles

Genre: Documentary

2008, 98 min., video

DIR: Sascha Paladino

PROD: Sascha Paladino, Bela Fleck

DP: Kirsten Johnson

ED: Joe Bini, Johnson

MUSIC: Bela Fleck



Synopsis

THROW DOWN YOUR HEART follows American banjo virtuoso Bela Fleck on his journey to Africa to explore the little known African roots of the banjo and record an album. Bela's boundary-breaking musical adventure takes him to Uganda, Tanzania, The Gambia and Mali, and provides a glimpse of the beauty and complexity of Africa.

Biography

Sascha Paladino is a filmmaker and writer. His documentary short, OBSTINATO: MAKING MUSIC FOR TWO (2004), about the musicians Bela Fleck and Edgar Meyer, premiered at the Film Society of Lincoln Center, played at festivals including the Full Frame Film Festival and Nashville Film festival, won the Best Documentary Short Award at the Woodstock Film Festival, the Audience Award at the Newport Film Festival, and was released on DVD by Sony Classical. Sascha's other documentary shorts include PARTY FOR THE PEOPLE (2005), about a communist rockabilly band in Northern Italy, (Woodstock Film Festival, Newport Film Festival), and 'THE SUBWAY LINE' (2002), about a guerilla subway artist in New York City (Mill Valley Film Festival, Florida Film Festival). Sascha is also an Emmy-nominated writer for children's television, and has served variously as writer, head writer, and producer on a number of programs, including 'Blue's Clues,' 'Wonder Pets,' 'Ni Hao, Kai-lan,' 'Todd World,' and many others. Sascha is also involved in many facets of arts education, and has taught and developed workshops for arts organizations, public schools and prisons.

2008 AFI SILVERDOCS Music Documentary Award

MENTORS

AFGHAN MUSCLES

2007 - 2008 AFI PROJECT: 20/20 Filmmaker

Language: Farsi

Genre: Documentary

2007, 68 min., video

DIR: Andreas Mol Dalsgaard

SCR: Andreas Mol Dalsgaard,

Oliver Winding

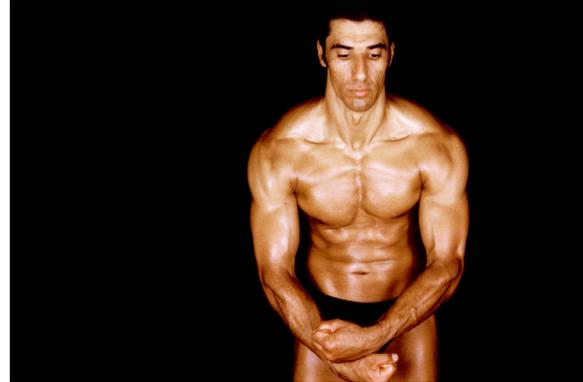
PROD: Jesper Morthorst,

Michael Haslund-Christensen

DP: Frederik Jacobi, Andreas Møl Dalsgaard

ED: My Thordal

MUS: Fridolin Tai Nordsø Schjoldan



Synopsis

In a country ravished by war AFGHAN MUSCLE, a sports documentary, follow Noor and Hamid, two Afghanistan young men who have discovered the art of bodybuilding. They try their best to hold on to their dreams of muscle, honor and fame in a world of chaos.

Biography

Andreas M. Dalsgaard studied Ethnography at Århus Universitet in Denmark and at Université Denis Diderot in Paris, France. He has directed numerous films for television in France, Denmark, Afghanistan, US and China. Currently Dalsgaard is studying at The Danish Film School.

2007 AFI FEST Best Documentary

AMERICAN FORK

2007 - 2008 AFI PROJECT: 20/20 Filmmakers

Country: US

Film Language: English

Genre: Narrative

2007, 94 min., 35MM

DIR: Chris Bowman

SCR: Hubbel Palmer

PROD: Derek Beumer, Maya Browne,
Jeremy Coon, Shannon Gardner

EXEC PROD: Derek Ferguson

DP: Doug Chamberlain

ED: Cary Gries

PROD DES: Anne K. Black

MUS: Bobby Johnston

CAST: Hubbel Palmer, William Baldwin, Mary Lynn Rajskub, Kathleen
Quinlan



Synopsis

It's hard not to like Tracy Orbison. A dopey midwestern guy who excels in the food-stocking profession, Tracy politely and passively lives out his days scribbling poems in a notebook during shift breaks and dreaming of making something more of himself. Thinking he may have found the answer, he enrolls in an acting class taught by a pompous Z-list has-been (played by a hilarious William Baldwin). Though things don't quite go according to plan, a tragically comic chain of events is set off that leads Tracy to take a more active role in his life, mentoring a young thug, fending off his obnoxious mother and sister, attempting to pass his driver's exam and trying to lose "about ten pounds."

Biography

Hubbel Palmer hails from Salt Lake City, UT. After completing undergraduate studies at Brigham Young University, he pursued a Masters of Fine Arts in Film and Television Writing at the University of Southern California, graduating in 2006. As an actor, Hubbel has appeared in the films MOVING MCALLISTER and THE SASQUATCH DUMPLING GANG. He also had a guest role on the Comedy Central series *Halfway Home*. Hubbel wrote and starred in the 2007 film AMERICAN FORK, for which he has won multiple awards including Best Actor, Best Screenplay and Best in Show at the Bend Film Festival in Oregon, among others. The film has screened at numerous festivals around the country including the U.S. Comedy Arts Festival, AFI Fest, Starz Denver and the Sidewalk Film Festival, where it won the Audience Choice Award. Hubbel is currently developing projects for Cartoon Network and various independent producers.

BIG RIG

2007 - 2008 AFI PROJECT: 20/20 Filmmaker

Country: US

Film Language: English

Genre: Documentary

2007, 95 min., video

DIR: Doug Pray

SCR: Doug Pray

Brad Blondheim

PROD: Brad Blondheim

EXEC PROD: Kirt Eftekhari, Randy Wooten

DP: Doug Pray

MUS: Buck 65



Synopsis

BIG RIG is a broad portrait of modern America as seen through the eyes of long-haul truck drivers. Spanning 21,000 miles, 45 states, and dozens of truck stops, director Doug Pray and producer Brad Blondheim (the team who created SCRATCH) went far beyond just the chrome and coffee culture and made a film that delves deeply into the lives and personal struggles of these working-class heroes, who are, literally, carrying the nation upon their backs.

Biography

BIG RIG director, cinematographer and editor Doug Pray has made a wide variety of documentary films, music videos and commercials, but he is best known for his feature films that have explored popular American subcultures. Pray's films include, HYPE!, RED DIAPER BABY, ALL THE WAY LIVE: SCRATCH TOUR, SUNDANCE20, the first-ever behind-the-scenes look at the Sundance filmmakers' lab (with Robert Redford, Sigourney Weaver, and others) and SURFWISE, his most recent film.

In the world of branded entertainment and commercials, Pray recently won an Emmy for 2006 Best Public Service Announcement for an advocacy campaign he directed in El Salvador about HIV-AIDS awareness for Kaiser Permanente and Viacom. Other ads include work for Adidas, Sprite, Ford, AT&T, and Dr. Martens and he won a Bronze Clio and a Bronze Lion at the Cannes Advertising Festival with a national television campaign for gay rights in the workplace for the Gill Foundation (DDB).

Doug has directed numerous music videos and dozens of live concert performances, and has edited music videos for everyone from Eazy-E to Steve Earle. He was also the editor of the cult-hit feature AMERICAN PIMP for directors Albert and Allen Hughes.

After majoring in Sociology at the Colorado College, Doug received an MFA from UCLA's Graduate School of Film and Television. He is a member of the DGA. Pray was born in Denver, Colorado, grew up in Madison, Wisconsin, and lives in Los Angeles.

FARO, GODDESS OF THE WATERS

2007 - 2008 AFI PROJECT: 20/20 Filmmaker

Film Language: French

Genre: Narrative

2007, 96 min., 35MM

DIR: Salif Traore

SCR: Salif Traore,

Olivier Lorelle

PROD: Philippe Quinsac, Daniel Morin,
Bärbel Mauch, Salif Traoré, Ismaël Oueadrogo

DP: Jean-Pierre Gauthier

ED: Laure Budin

MUS: Bassékou Kouyaté

CAST: Sotigui Kouyate, Fili Traore, Michel Mpambara, Habib Dembele,
Helene M. Diarra



Synopsis

After a long absence, in the course of which he has built a sophisticated city life for himself, engineer Zan returns to the village of his birth, a closed Malinese community on the Niger River. His arrival is greeted with fascination and suspicion: because his mother has never revealed the identity of his father, the villagers regard him as cursed. As Zan tries to persuade his mother to name the man responsible, the dynamic of the village becomes increasingly disturbed - and the locals agree that Faro, the spirit who rules the waters, is angry. Thoroughly modern Zan intellectually rejects this notion, but the power of a shared belief is redoubtable.

Biography

Salif Traoré studied film and theater art at the Institut Africain du Cinéma of the University of Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, the filmmaking center on the African continent. He has made several short films and documentaries for African television. FARO, GODDESS OF THE WATERS is Traorés' debut feature film.