

Independent Filmmaker Project Selects 10 Documentaries for 2017 IFP Filmmaker Labs



First-time feature directors awarded an annual yearlong fellowship include Lucas Millard and Juliane Dressner

[Beatrice Verhoeven](#) | Last Updated: May 23, 2017 @ 9:32 AM



IFP

The Independent Filmmaker Project (IFP) announced the 10 documentaries selected for the 2017 IFP Filmmaker Labs, which will include Lucas Millard's "Baato" and Juliane Dressner's "Personal Statement."

The IFP Filmmakers Labs is IFP's annual yearlong fellowship for first-time feature directors. The creative teams of the selected films are currently attending the first week's session taking place through May 26 at the Made in New York Media Center by IFP in Brooklyn.

The IFP Filmmaker Labs support first-time feature directors with projects in post-production, helping them complete, market and distribute their films. IFP Filmmaker Labs is now in its 13th year. The Documentary Lab is part of the suite of IFP Labs, including the Screen Forward Lab (for serialized content) and Narrative Feature Lab, which took place in April and May.

ADVERTISING

Also Read:

[5 Things Every Indie Filmmaker Should Know: Beware of Crowdfunding and Free Tickets for Grandma \(Guest Blog\)](#)

“The wide and continuing success of documentaries on multiple platforms demonstrate they are no longer for niche audiences nor uniform in style or format,” said Joana Vicente, Executive Director of IFP and the Made in NY Media Center. “Emerging non-fiction filmmakers need to be more prepared than ever to understand and compete in this expanding marketplace, and the Labs exist to help them build that foundation.”

Recent alumni of the IFP Documentary Labs include Jonathan Olshefski’s “Quest,” Jennifer Brea’s “Unrest” and Nanfu Wang’s “Hooligan Sparrow.”

The 2017 Lab Leaders include Jennifer MacArthur — producer on “Whose Streets?” — Jon Reiss, director and producer, and Jessica Wolfson, producer on “A Girl and a Gun.”

Also Read:

[Sundance Institute Launches Distribution Fellowship for Filmmakers](#)

See below for the selected projects for the 2017 IFP Documentary Lab:

“The Area”

On the South Side of Chicago, an activist and a former gang member negotiate the meaning of community as a rail yard engulfs their neighborhood. David Schalliol (Director, Producer, DP), Brian Ashby (Producer, Editor), Peter Galassi (Editor)

“Baato”

Deep in the Himalayan mountains the first road is coming, and this new highway to China will forever change daily life for these Nepalis who live along its path. Lucas Millard (Director, Writer, Producer, DP), Kate Stryker (Director, Writer, 2nd Camera)

“¡Las Sandinistas!”

This feature documentary tells the disappearing story of the women who fought on the front lines in Nicaragua’s Sandinista Revolution and traces their continuing struggle for justice. Jenny Murray (Director, Writer), Sarah Winshall (Producer)

“Leave the Bus Through the Broken Window”

You went to Hong Kong to make a film about art — instead you made one about heartbreak, politics and getting lost in a shopping mall. Andrew Hevia (Director, Writer, Producer, DP), Carlos Rivera (Editor)

“Personal Statement”

Karoline, Christine and Enoch are high school seniors who want to go to college, and they are determined to bring their friends with them. They work as college counselors in their schools because many of their peers don't have anyone else to turn to for help. Karoline, Christine and Enoch are fighting for the right to a better future, for themselves and for every single one of their classmates. Juliane Dressner (Director, Producer, DP), Edwin Martinez (Co-Director, DP, Editor), Beth Levison (Co-Producer)

“A Photographic Memory”

A daughter attempts to piece together a portrait of her mother, an avant-garde journalist and a woman she never knew. Uncovering the vast audio-visual archive Sheila Turner-Seed produced, including lost interviews with iconic photographers, the film explores memory, legacy and stories left untold. Rachel Elizabeth Seed (Director, Producer, DP), Danielle Varga (Producer)

“Shadow of His Wings”

“Shadow of His Wings” is a personal documentary about filmmaker Lucas' love story with a young Ethiopian man in Addis Ababa before and after he must flee homophobic threats to become France's first LGBT refugee from Ethiopia. Meanwhile, in the hopes of reconciling with his son, Lucas' estranged Ethiopian father returns to Addis after nearly 45 years of exile. Against a backdrop of the global refugee crisis, the film intersects a departure and a return home through a distinctly intimate lens. Lucas Habte (Director, Producer, DP), Isidore Bethel (Writer, Producer, Editor), Tigist Schmidt (Producer)

Shirkers

In 1992, a mysterious American named Georges Cardona shot Singapore's first indie road movie with a clique of teenage female film geeks, including Sandi Tan, then absconded with all the footage! 20 years later, the 16mm cans are discovered in New Orleans, sending Sandi, now a novelist in Los Angeles, on an odyssey in search of Georges' vanishing footprints...and her own. Sandi Tan (Director, Writer, Producer, Co-Editor)

TransMilitary

Four transgender troops fight to change discriminatory policies banning their service while navigating societal stigma both before and after the ban is lifted. Gabe Silverman (Director, DP, Editor), Fiona Dawson (Director, Executive Producer), Jamie Coughlin (Writer, Producer)

We Are Not Princesses

In Beirut's refugee camps, Syrian mothers, sisters, and wives process and express their circumstance by to standing up to patriarchal authority and performing an adaptation of Sophocles' “Antigone.” Bridgette Auger (Director, DP), Itab Azzam (Director, Producer, DP), Sara Maamouri (Editor)