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Contact: Sara Archambault | 617.492.5333 | sara@lef-foundation.org

LEF New England Moving Image Fund Awards \$190,000 in 2017 Production and Post-Production Grants to Independent Documentary Filmmakers

CAMBRIDGE, MA — The LEF Foundation is excited to announce **10 Moving Image Fund grants totaling \$190,000** in production and post-production support to New England-based independent documentary filmmakers.

The **LEF Moving Image Fund** invests in innovative feature-length documentary films that demonstrate excellence in technique, strong storytelling ability, and originality of artistic vision and voice.

“When announcing our grants,” says LEF Executive Director Lyda Kuth, **“It can be bittersweet, because we’re keenly aware of the strong work that we haven’t been able to fund due to limited resources. While we can’t guarantee financial support, we can provide a sense of opportunity and support, and I think filmmakers appreciate this consistency.”**

The selected projects address a broad range of topics and represent a variety of approaches to the documentary form. All of these filmmakers bring a strong creative eye to their work and share a unique intimacy with their subjects. Additionally, the grantees represent a group of filmmakers at different stages in their artistic careers, from emerging to established artists.

“Through the Moving Image Fund, our screening and discussion series The DocYard, and our ongoing collaboration with national and regional partners, we’re part of a rich ecosystem of support for independent filmmakers that is essential for a creative community to thrive,” writes Kuth.

Production Grants



Bridget Besaw & Ben Severance

The Mountain and the Magic City (\$15,000)

In the shadow of a mountain, a place once known as the Magic City stands as a symbol of the American heartland, abandoned by industry and disappearing back into the forest. **THE MOUNTAIN AND THE MAGIC CITY** is an intimate portrait of neighbors forced to confront the issues dividing America today when a controversial national park comes to town.



Ellen Brodsky

Bringing It Home (\$15,000)

BRINGING IT HOME tells the tale of two treks, 170 years apart, of young people in neighboring democracies. In 1846, Illinois soldiers journey south to fight in the US-Mexican war, bringing home 52% of its land as well as the wooden leg of President Santa Anna. In 2016, 25 predominantly Mexican-American students journey 1,000 miles north from Texas to Illinois to honor Lincoln's opposition to the US-Mexican War and request that Santa Anna's leg be returned to Mexico.



Jenifer McShane

Ernie & Joe (\$15,000)

ERNIE & JOE follows two police officers with the San Antonio Texas Police Department who are diverting people away from jail and into mental health treatment, one 911 call at a time. In the process, they are redefining not only policing and its mandate to "keep people safe," but also helping transform the ways in which law enforcement agencies across the U.S. think about, approach and help those who suffer from a mental health diagnosis.



Kavita Pillay

Stalin, Lenin, & Other Tales from South India (\$15,000)

Set in the communist stronghold of Kerala, India, this film profiles people named after Stalin and Lenin to explore the enduring mythology of political strongmen. Structured as a series of vignettes, the lives of Kerala's Stalins and Lenins present a tragicomic and heretofore unseen look at a society grappling with communism, capitalism, democracy, demagoguery, mythology and reality.



Jeff Silva & Ramona Badescu

The Order of Things (\$15,000)

THE ORDER OF THINGS is a film that attempts to grasp for traces of the history of the Romanian dictatorship through the ephemeral memories of an incredible old man who continues to defy the laws of time. Alexandru Badescu is a former political prisoner and communist resistance survivor now 90 years old, who patiently gardens and continues his works as a clockmaker as his own time slowly slips away.



Halil Deniz Tortum

Hospital with One Entrance and Two Exits (\$15,000)

The corridors and denizens of a state-run hospital in Istanbul create a portrait of labor, life, anesthesia, and death. The hospital becomes an accidental microcosm of Turkish society. From waiting room to surgical theater to morgue, the human body is entered by technology, bureaucracy, and gossip.

Post-Production Grants



Margo Guernsey

Councilwoman (\$25,000)

Carmen Castillo, a Dominican housekeeper in a downtown Providence hotel, wins a seat in City Council, taking her advocacy for low-income workers from the margins to city politics.



Nicole Teeny

Bulletproof Stockings For Women Only (\$25,000)

Perl and Dalia are on a mission from God. They plan on making it big as "Bulletproof Stockings", the first all-female Chasidic rock band. They play for cheering audiences of women only (as inspired by their faith) and the press can't seem to get enough of them. But will pressure from their community—as well as the financial and spiritual compromises of the rock and roll lifestyle—ultimately tear them apart?



Denali Tiller

Sons and Daughters of the Incarcerated (wt) (\$25,000)

SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE INCARCERATED is a feature documentary that explores parental incarceration through the eyes of three boys - Tre, Maison and Dasan. Following their interweaving trajectories through boyhood marked by the criminal justice system, and told directly through the child's perspective, the film unveils the challenges of growing up and what it means to become a man in America.



Sally Wu

If She Leaves (\$25,000)

Why are tens of thousands of young women sent away from home to marry foreigners they barely know? Why are mothers across Asia abandoning their children in the middle of the night? IF SHE LEAVES examines the repercussions from international brokered marriages in Asia by following one Vietnamese migrant bride and her Taiwanese husband as they struggle to keep their family together.

In addition to this group of grantees, LEF also awarded \$30,000 to 6 projects in pre-production earlier in the fiscal year. **In total, LEF will be distributing \$220,000 in funding to documentary production over the course of our 2017 fiscal year.**

The next grant deadline is **Friday, June 2, 2017** for projects seeking pre-production support. Please check www.lef-foundation.org for details regarding LEF Moving Image Fund guidelines and eligibility. For more information on the Foundation or its funded projects, please contact Program Director Sara Archambault: 617.492.5333 or sara@lef-foundation.org.

We extend our warmest congratulations to this group of grantees and our best wishes for success to all the projects reviewed for this deadline.

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