Sundance 2021 Reveals Its Lineup, Pandemic Plans

Thanks to the coronavirus, this year's Sundance Film Festival—featuring new films from Rebecca Hall and Jerrod Carmichael—will be more inclusive than ever.

By Christopher Rosen December 15, 2020





Photo by Fred Hayes/WireImage.

When the Sundance Film Festival kicks off on January 28, 2021, in Park City, Utah, there won't be a long line of people standing outside the Eccles Theater, watching their breath catch in the cold winter air—and Main Street surely won't be packed with revelers and sponsor activations, either.

Instead, on account of the coronavirus pandemic, next year's Sundance will actually expand amid the contraction of live events. Rather than relying solely on in-person experiences, the festival has plans that extend far beyond the theater: a digital platform where patrons around the world can watch this year's lineup; drive-in screenings at venues around the country; in-person showings at independent art houses nationwide where indoor events can happen safely and in accordance with public health guidelines; and even a virtual reality space that includes live performances and a lobby where people can digitally congregate.

"Someone once said, to be truly independent you need a lot of people around you. That's what we're doing," Sundance Festival director **Tabitha Jackson** told *Vanity Fair* in an interview on Monday. "This is a collective endeavor, a grand experiment."

This marks the first Sundance Film Festival with Jackson at the helm. According to her, organizers started figuring out the logistics of the 2021 event in March, when the early stages of the coronavirus pandemic forced South by Southwest to cancel its annual festival in Austin, Texas. The adversity created by the global health crisis allowed Jackson and her collaborators to deconstruct how the Sundance Film Festival has operated for the last 36 years, and build anew from scratch. "What we've ended up with is a robust, secure, vibrant festival platform *and* drive-ins for as many feature films as we can manage, *and* an incredible network of independent art houses around the country, *and* a virtual cinema in the New Frontier space that has a V.R. experience of what it's like to be in a cinema and watch films on the big screen.

"This is a celebration of cinema and optimism of how we gather and an absolute commitment to the work," she added late Monday night. "We're a bit tired."

Next year's Sundance Film Festival lineup includes 72 feature films and documentaries, 50 short films, 4 independent series, and 14 technology-expanding projects in the New Frontier section. Among the filmmakers who will screen movies at Sundance are actors turned directors like **Rebecca Hall, Robin Wright,** and **Jerrod Carmichael,** musician and producer **Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson,** and indie faves such as **Ben Wheatley** and **Daryl Wein** and **Zoe Lister-Jones.**

"What we really intended to do was put together a program with a lot of energy that explores the ideas that we care about and that we want to have be in the public conversation. Because we know Sundance occupies this very unique place in the year, at the beginning of the year where we set the tone for a lot of the conversations around films," **Kim Yutani,** Sundance's director of programming, told *Vanity Fair*. "It's definitely a position we don't take lightly, and the films we choose reflect that."

This year's lineup includes films that touch on a number of timely and urgent

issues, such as racism and inequality.

“One of the things that really struck us this year was how unapologetic the work we saw this year was,” Yutani said. “The way honesty and truthfulness have been expressed this year, it feels special.”

Certain films selected—like Wheatley’s thriller about a deadly virus and Wein and Lister-Jones’s film about a party on the last night on Earth—also speak to the coronavirus pandemic, either directly or inadvertently.

“For us, there were many films that we saw which looked to the pandemic in a way that was powerful and strong but that would quickly date,” Jackson explained. “One of the things we were looking for were films that spoke to the moment, met the moment, but could live beyond the moment with something more timeless within them too. What we weren’t doing was thinking, Are there films that speak to COVID-19? That wasn’t the process. But the films that bubble up—some films were made before COVID-19 and had nothing to do with COVID-19 and actually still resonate with where we are as the people seeing them.”

With the festival still weeks away, and set to take place during the early stages of President-Elect **Joe Biden**’s administration as coronavirus vaccines are rolled out around the country, Jackson noted the films could have a different “resonance” by the time Sundance begins.

“Which is another exciting thing about programming for a future state. I can’t wait to see how this work is received and what meaning is made from it,” she said.

Beyond the pandemic, the Sundance Film Festival will unfold amid a transformational time for the film industry as a whole. Theater companies are strapped, and some major institutions could have trouble surviving through 2021 if consumer confidence doesn’t quickly recover as the pandemic begins to subside. This month, Warner Bros. announced its 2021 slate would

debut simultaneously in theaters and via the streaming platform HBO Max. In its investor call last week, Disney executives announced a slew of upcoming projects for Disney+ and paid scant attention to the company's theatrical projects.

"I think it's a necessary and urgent moment for us all to consider the ways in which we work, the habits we have formed, and what that has meant for cinema for the last 120 years. And what it means for equity and parity and how the world is expressed through these narratives that are funded and how the world is not expressed in the ones that are not funded—who is being included, and who is being left out," Jackson said. "All those questions are part of the moment we're in, and the hopefulness is wonderful and necessary. But what we can't do—or what I would not wish to see us do—is go back to business as usual without making the change that this rupture and fracture has provided us the opportunity to make. We would not have wished for this pandemic to happen. But it has had a liberating effect on how we think about the festival, and an explosive effect on the form of the festival, which allows us to see how we double down on our values as we go forward—to what we hold tight and what we let go."

The one person most responsible for the values expressed by the festival through its lifetime is Sundance Institute founder and president, **Robert Redford.** "Togetherness has been an animating principle here at the Sundance Institute as we've worked to reimagine the Festival for 2021, because there is no Sundance without our community," Redford said in a statement.

Like so many others during this tragic year, however, the Sundance community is grieving the loss of one of its own: Redford's son, James Redford, who died in October from complications due to bile duct cancer.

"The grief is immeasurable with the loss of a child," a representative for Robert Redford said in a statement released at the time. "Jamie was a loving son, husband, and father. His legacy lives on through his children, art,

filmmaking, and devoted passion to conservation and the environment. Robert Redford is mourning with his family during this difficult time and asks for privacy."

When he died, James Redford was working on a documentary about author **Amy Tan.** In what Jackson called a "bittersweet" moment for Sundance, the film will premiere at next year's festival.

"Jamie had applied with the film, so it was already in the works. It was his last film. He got almost all the way to the end with it. So it's meaningful because it's the film that he wanted to show to audiences," she said. "He's been such a force in the filmmaking world. He had such a commitment to what cinema can do in terms of making a change—and obviously was very important to Sundance. We get to show his film, but we don't get any more films from him. So we will take that responsibility very seriously, and we know audiences will come to it."

Below, find the projects confirmed for the 2021 Sundance Film Festival thus far:

U.S. DRAMATIC COMPETITION

CODA / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Siân Heder, Producers: Philippe Rousselet, Fabrice Gianfermi, Patrick Wachsberger) — As a CODA—Child of Deaf Adults—Ruby is the only hearing person in her deaf family. When the family's fishing business is threatened, Ruby finds herself torn between pursuing her love of music and her fear of abandoning her parents. *Cast: Emilia Jones, Eugenio Derbez, Troy Kotsur, Ferdia Walsh-Peelo, Daniel Durant, and Marlee Matlin. World Premiere.* **DAY ONE**

I Was a Simple Man / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Christopher Makoto Yogi, Producers: Sarah S. Kim, Christopher Makoto Yogi, Matthew Petock, Yamato Cibulka) — As a family in Hawai'i faces the imminent death of their

eldest, the ghosts of the past haunt the countryside. *Cast: Steve Iwamoto, Constance Wu, Kanoa Goo, Chanel Akiko Hirai, Tim Chiou, Boonyanudh Jiyarom. World Premiere*

Jockey / USA (Director: Clint Bentley, Screenwriters: Clint Bentley, Greg Kwedar, Producers: Clint Bentley, Greg Kwedar, Nancy Schafer) — An aging jockey is determined to win one last championship, but his dream is complicated when a young rookie shows up claiming to be his son. *Cast: Clifton Collins Jr., Molly Parker, Moises Arias. World Premiere*

John and the Hole / USA (Director: Pascual Sisto, Screenwriter: Nicolás Giacobone, Producers: Elika Portnoy, Alex Orlovsky, Mike Bowes) — A nontraditional coming-of-age story, set in the unsettling reality of John, a kid who holds his family captive in a hole in the ground. *Cast: Charlie Shotwell, Michael C. Hall, Jennifer Ehle, Taissa Farmiga. World Premiere*

Mayday / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Karen Cinorre, Producers: Jonah Disend, Lucas Joaquin, Karen Cinorre, Sam Levy) — Ana is transported to a dreamlike and dangerous land where she joins a team of female soldiers engaged in a never-ending war along a rugged coast. Though she finds strength in this exhilarating world, she comes to realize that she's not the killer they want her to be. *Cast: Grace Van Patten, Mia Goth, Havana Rose Liu, Soko, Théodore Pellerin, Juliette Lewis. World Premiere*

On the Count of Three / USA (Director: Jerrod Carmichael, Screenwriters: Ari Katcher, Ryan Welch, Producers: David Carrico, Adam Paulsen, Tom Werner, Jake Densen, Ari Katcher, Jimmy Price) — Two guns. Two best friends. And a pact to end their lives when the day is done. *Cast: Jerrod Carmichael, Christopher Abbott, Tiffany Haddish, J.B. Smoove, Lavell Crawford, Henry Winkler. World Premiere*

Passing / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Rebecca Hall, Producers: Forest

Whitaker, Nina Yang Bongiovi, Margot Hand, Rebecca Hall) — Two African American women who can "pass" as white choose to live on opposite sides of the color line in 1929 New York in an exploration of racial and gender identity, performance, obsession and repression. Based on the novella by Nella Larsen. *Cast: Tessa Thompson, Ruth Negga, André Holland, Alexander Skarsgård, Bill Camp. World Premiere*

Superior / USA (Director: Erin Vassilopoulos, Screenwriters: Erin Vassilopoulos, Alessandra Mesa, Producers: Benjamin Cohen, Grant Curatola, Patrick Donovan) — On the run, Marian returns to her hometown in upstate New York to hide out with her estranged identical twin sister, Vivian. Struggling to put the past behind her, Marian lies about the reason for her return, leaving her sister in the dark until their two worlds begin to collide. *Cast: Alessandra Mesa, Ani Mesa, Pico Alexander, Jake Hoffman, Stanley Simons. World Premiere*

Together Together / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Nikole Beckwith, Producers: Anthony Brandonisio, Daniela Taplin Lundberg, Tim Headington) — When young loner Anna is hired as the surrogate for Matt, a single man in his 40s, the two strangers come to realize this unexpected relationship will quickly challenge their perceptions of connection, boundaries and the particulars of love. *Cast: Ed Helms, Patti Harrison, Tig Notaro, Julio Torres, Anna Konkle. World Premiere*

Wild Indian / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Lyle Mitchell Corbine Jr., Producers: Lyle Mitchell Corbine Jr., Thomas Mahoney, Eric Tavitian) — Two men are inextricably bound together after covering up the savage murder of a schoolmate. After years of separation following wildly divergent paths, they must finally confront how their traumatic secret has irrevocably shaped their lives. *Cast: Michael Greyeyes, Chaske Spencer, Jesse Eisenberg, Kate Bosworth, Phoenix Wilson, Julian Gopal. World Premiere*

U.S. DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION

Ailey / USA (Director: Jamila Wignot, Producer: Lauren DeFilippo) — Alvin Ailey was a visionary artist who found salvation through dance. Told in his own words and through the creation of a dance inspired by his life, this immersive portrait follows a man who, when confronted by a world that refused to embrace him, determined to build one that would. *World Premiere*

All Light, Everywhere / USA (Director: Theo Anthony, Producers: Riel Roch-Decter, Sebastian Pardo, Jonna McKone) — An exploration of the shared histories of cameras, weapons, policing and justice. As surveillance technologies become a fixture in everyday life, the film interrogates the complexity of an objective point of view, probing the biases inherent in both human perception and the lens. *World Premiere*

At the Ready / USA (Director: Maisie Crow, Producers: Hillary Pierce, Maisie Crow, Abbie Perrault) — Home to one of the region's largest law enforcement education program, students at Horizon High School in El Paso train to become police officers and Border Patrol agents as they discover the realities of their dream jobs may be at odds with the truths and people they hold most dear. *World Premiere*

Cusp / USA (Directors: Parker Hill, Isabel Bethencourt, Producers: Zachary Luke Kislevitz, Parker Hill, Isabel Bethencourt) — In a Texas military town, three teenage girls confront the dark corners of adolescence at the end of a fever dream summer. *World Premiere*

Homeroom / USA (Director: Peter Nicks, Producers: Peter Nicks, Sean Havey) — Following the class of 2020 at Oakland High School in a year marked by seismic change, exploring the emotional world of teenagers coming of age against the backdrop of a rapidly changing world. *World Premiere*

Rebel Hearts / USA (Director: Pedro Kos, Producers: Kira Carstensen, Shawnee Isaac-Smith, Judy Korin) — A group of pioneering nuns bravely stand up to the Catholic Church patriarchy, fighting for their livelihoods, convictions and equality against an all-powerful Cardinal. From marching in Selma in 1965 to the Women's March in 2018, these women have reshaped our society with their bold acts of defiance. *World Premiere*

Rita Moreno: Just a Girl Who Decided to Go for It / USA (Director: Mariem Pérez Riera, Producers: Brent Miller, Mariem Pérez Riera, Ilia J. Vélez-Dávila) — Rita Moreno defied both her humble upbringing and relentless racism to become one of a select group who have won an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony Award. Over a 70-year career, she has paved the way for Hispanic American performers by refusing to be pigeonholed into one-dimensional stereotypes. *World Premiere*

Summer Of Soul (...Or, When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised) / USA (Director: Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson, Producers: David Dinerstein, Robert Fyvolent, Joseph Patel) — During the same summer as Woodstock, over 300,000 people attended the Harlem Cultural Festival, celebrating African American music and culture, and promoting Black pride and unity. The footage from the festival sat in a basement, unseen for over 50 years, keeping this incredible event in America's history lost – until now. *World Premiere*. **DAY ONE**

Try Harder! / USA (Director: Debbie Lum, Producers: Debbie Lum, Lou Nakasako, Nico Opper) — In a universe where cool kids are nerds, the orchestra is world class and being Asian American is the norm, seniors at Lowell High School compete for the top prize: admission to the college of their dreams. *World Premiere*

Users / USA, Mexico (Director: Natalia Almada, Producers: Elizabeth Lodge Stepp, Josh Penn) — A mother wonders, will my children love their perfect machines more than they love me, their imperfect mother? She switches on

a smart-crib lulling her crying baby to sleep. This perfect mother is everywhere. She watches over us, takes care of us. We listen to her. We trust her. *World Premiere*

WORLD CINEMA DRAMATIC COMPETITION

The Dog Who Wouldn't Be Quiet / Argentina (Director: Ana Katz, Screenwriters: Ana Katz, Gonzalo Delgado, Producers: Laura Huberman, Ana Katz) — Sebastian, a man in his 30s, works a series of temporary jobs and he embraces love at every opportunity. He transforms, through a series of short encounters, as the world flirts with possible apocalypse. *Cast: Daniel Katz, Julieta Zylberberg, Valeria Lois, Mirella Pascual, Carlos Portaluppi. World Premiere*

El Planeta / USA, Spain (Director and Screenwriter: Amalia Ulman, Producers: Amalia Ulman, Kathleen Heffernan, Kweku Mandela) — Amidst the devastation of postcrisis Spain, mother and daughter bluff and grift to keep up the lifestyle they think they deserve, bonding over common tragedy and an impending eviction. *Cast: Amalia Ulman, Ale Ulman, Nacho Vigalondo, Zhou Chen, Saoirse Bertram. World Premiere*

Fire in the Mountains / India (Director and Screenwriter: Ajitpal Singh, Producers: Ajay Rai, Alan McAlex) — A mother toils to save money to build a road in a Himalayan village to take her wheelchair-bound son for physiotherapy, but her husband, who believes that an expensive religious ritual is the remedy, steals her savings. *Cast: Vinamrata Rai, Chandan Bisht, Mayank Singh Jaira, Harshita Tewari, Sonal Jha. World Premiere*

Hive / Kosovo, Switzerland, Macedonia, Albania (Director and Screenwriter: Blerta Basholli, Producers: Yll Uka, Valon Bajgora, Agon Uka) — Fahrije's husband has been missing since the war in Kosovo. She sets up her own small business to provide for her kids, but as she fights against a patriarchal

society that does not support her, she faces a crucial decision: to wait for his return, or to continue to persevere. *Cast: Yllka Gashi, Çun Lajçi, Aurita Agushi, Kumrije Hoxha, Adriana Matoshi, Kaona Sylejmani. World Premiere*

Human Factors / Germany, Italy, Denmark (Director and Screenwriter: Ronny Trocker, Producers: Susanne Mann, Paul Zischler, Martin Rehbock) — A mysterious housebreaking exposes the agony of an exemplary middle-class family. *Cast: Sabine Timoteo, Mark Waschke, Jule Hermann, Wanja Valentin Kube, Hannes Perkmann, Daniel Séjourné. World Premiere*

Luzzu / Malta (Director and Screenwriter: Alex Camilleri, Producers: Rebecca Anastasi, Ramin Bahrani, Alex Camilleri, Oliver Mallia) — Jesmark, a struggling fisherman on the island of Malta, is forced to turn his back on generations of tradition and risk everything by entering the world of black market fishing to provide for his girlfriend and newborn baby. *Cast: Jesmark Scicluna, Michela Farrugia, David Scicluna. World Premiere*

One for the Road / China, Hong Kong, Thailand (Director: Baz Poonpiriya, Screenwriters: Baz Poonpiriya, Nottapon Boonprakob, Puangsoi Aksornsawang, Producer: Wong Kar Wai) — Boss is a consummate ladies' man, a free spirit and a bar owner in NYC. One day, he gets a surprise call from Aood, an estranged friend who has returned home to Thailand. Dying of cancer, Aood enlists Boss' help to complete a bucket list—but both are hiding something. *Cast: Tor Thanapob, Ice Natara, Violette Wautier, Aokbab Chutimon, Ploi Horwang, Noon Siraphun. World Premiere.* **DAY ONE**

The Pink Cloud / Brazil (Director and Screenwriter: Iuli Gerbase, Producer: Patricia Barbieri) — A mysterious and deadly pink cloud appears across the globe, forcing everyone to stay home. Strangers at the outset, Giovana and Yago try to invent themselves as a couple as years of shared lockdown pass. While Yago is living in his own utopia, Giovana feels trapped deep inside. *Cast: Renata de Lélis, Eduardo Mendonça. World Premiere*

Pleasure / Sweden, Netherlands, France (Director and Screenwriter: Ninja Thyberg, Producers: Eliza Jones, Markus Waltå, Erik Hemmendorff) — A 20-year-old girl moves from her small town in Sweden to L.A. for a shot at a career in the adult film industry. *Cast: Sofia Kappel, Revika Anne Reustle, Evelyn Claire, Chris Cock, Dana DeArmond, Kendra Spade*. *World Premiere*

Prime Time / Poland (Director: Jakub Piątek, Screenwriters: Jakub Piątek, Łukasz Czapski, Producer: Jakub Razowski) — On the last day of 1999, 20-year-old Sebastian locks himself in a TV studio. He has two hostages, a gun, and an important message for the world. The story of the attack explores a rebel's extreme measures and last resort. *Cast: Bartosz Bielenia, Magdalena Popławska, Andrzej Kłak, Małgorzata Hajewska-Krzysztofik, Dobromir Dymecki, Monika Frajczyk*. *World Premiere*

WORLD CINEMA DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION

Faya Dayi / Ethiopia, USA (Director, Screenwriter and Producer: Jessica Beshir) — A spiritual journey into the highlands of Harar, immersed in the rituals of khat, a leaf Sufi Muslims chewed for centuries for religious meditations—and Ethiopia's most lucrative cash crop today. A tapestry of intimate stories offers a window into the dreams of youth under a repressive regime. *World Premiere*

Flee / Denmark, France, Sweden, Norway (Director: Jonas Poher Rasmussen, Producers: Monica Hellström, Signe Byrge Sørensen) — Amin arrived as an unaccompanied minor in Denmark from Afghanistan. Today, he is a successful academic and is getting married to his long-time boyfriend. A secret he has been hiding for 20 years threatens to ruin the life he has built. *World Premiere*. **DAY ONE**

Inconvenient Indian / Canada (Director and Screenwriter: Michelle Latimer, Producers: Stuart Henderson, Justine Pimlott, Jesse Wente) — An examination of Thomas King's brilliant dismantling of North America's

colonial narrative, which reframes history with the powerful voices of those continuing the tradition of Indigenous resistance. *International Premiere*

Misha and the Wolves / United Kingdom, Belgium (Director and Screenwriter: Sam Hobkinson, Producers: Poppy Dixon, Al Morrow, Matthew Wells, Gregory Zalcman, Jürgen Buedts) — A woman's Holocaust memoir takes the world by storm, but a fallout with her publisher turned detective reveals her story as an audacious deception created to hide a darker truth. *World Premiere*

The Most Beautiful Boy in the World / Sweden (Directors: Kristina Lindström, Kristian Petri, Producer: Stina Gardell) — Swedish actor/musician Björn Andresen's life was forever changed at the age of 15, when he played Tadzio, the object of Dirk Bogarde's obsession in *Death in Venice*—a role which led Italian maestro Luchino Visconti to dub him "the world's most beautiful boy." *World Premiere*

Playing With Sharks / Australia (Director and Screenwriter: Sally Aitken, Producer: Bettina Dalton) — Valerie Taylor is a shark fanatic and an Australian icon—a marine maverick who forged her way as a fearless diver, cinematographer and conservationist. She filmed the real sharks for *Jaws* and famously wore a chainmail suit, using herself as shark bait, changing our scientific understanding of sharks forever. *World Premiere*

President / Denmark, USA, Norway (Director: Camilla Nielsson, Producers: Signe Byrge Sørensen, Joslyn Barnes) — Zimbabwe is at a crossroads. The leader of the opposition MDC party, Nelson Chamisa, challenges the old guard ZANU-PF led by Emmerson Mnangagwa, known as "The Crocodile." The election tests both the ruling party and the opposition—how do they interpret principles of democracy in discourse and in practice? *World Premiere*

Sabaya / Sweden (Director and Screenwriter: Hogir Hirori, Producers:

Antonio Russo Merenda, Hogir Hirori) — With just a mobile phone and a gun, Mahmud, Ziyad and their group risk their lives trying to save Yazidi women and girls being held by ISIS as Sabaya (abducted sex slaves) in the most dangerous camp in the Middle East, Al-Hol in Syria. *World Premiere*

Taming the Garden / Switzerland, Germany, Georgia (Director Salomé Jashi, Producers: Vadim Jendreyko, Erik Winker, Martin Roelly, Salomé Jashi) — A poetic ode to the rivalry between men and nature. *World Premiere*

Writing With Fire / India (Directors and Producers: Rintu Thomas, Sushmit Ghosh) — In a cluttered news landscape dominated by men, emerges India's only newspaper run by Dalit women. Armed with smartphones, Chief Reporter Meera and her journalists break traditions on the front lines of India's biggest issues and within the confines of their own homes, redefining what it means to be powerful. *World Premiere*

NEXT

The Blazing World / U.S.A. (Director: Carlson Young, Screenwriters: Carlson Young, Pierce Brown, Producers: Brinton Bryan, Elizabeth Avellán) — Decades after the accidental drowning of her twin sister, a self-destructive young woman returns to her family home, finding herself drawn to an alternate dimension where her sister may still be alive. *Cast: Udo Kier, Carlson Young, Dermot Mulroney, Vinessa Shaw, John Karna, Soko. World Premiere*

Cryptozoo / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Dash Shaw, Producers: Kyle Martin, Jane Samborski, Bill Way, Tyler Davidson) — As cryptozookeepers struggle to capture a Baku (a legendary dream-eating hybrid creature) they begin to wonder if they should display these rare beasts in the confines of a cryptozoo, or if these mythical creatures should remain hidden and unknown. *Cast: Lake Bell, Michael Cera, Angeliki Papoulia, Zoe Kazan, Peter Stormare, Grace Zabriskie. World Premiere*

First Date / USA (Directors and Screenwriters: Manuel Crosby, Darren Knapp, Producers: Brandon Kraus, Manuel Crosby, Darren Knapp, Lucky McKee, Charles Horak) — Conned into buying a shady '65 Chrysler, Mike's first date with the girl-next-door, Kelsey, implodes as he finds himself targeted by criminals, cops, and a crazy cat lady. A night fueled by desire, bullets and burning rubber makes any other first date seem like a walk in the park. *Cast: Tyson Brown, Shelby Duclos, Jesse Janzen, Nicole Berry, Ryan Quinn Adams, Brandon Kraus. World Premiere*

Ma Belle, My Beauty / USA, France (Director and Screenwriter: Marion Hill, Producers: Ben Matheny, Kelsey Scult, Marion Hill) — A surprise reunion in southern France reignites passions and jealousies between two women who were formerly polyamorous lovers. *Cast: Idella Johnson, Hannah Pepper, Lucien Guignard, Sivan Noam Shimon. World Premiere*

R#J / USA (Director: Carey Williams, Screenwriters: Carey Williams, Rickie Castaneda, Alex Sobolev, Producers: Timur Bekmambetov, Igor Tsay, John J. Kelly, Alex Sobolev, Anna Soboleva) — A re-imagining of Romeo and Juliet, taking place through their cell phones, in a mash-up of Shakespearean dialogue with current social media communication. *Cast: Camaron Engels, Francesca Noel, David Zayas, Diego Tinoco, Siddiq Saunderson, Russell Hornsby. World Premiere*

Searchers / USA (Director: Pacho Velez, Producers: Pacho Velez, Joe Poletto, Cathy Tankosic, Sam Roseme) — In encounters alternately humorous and touching, a diverse set of New Yorkers navigate their preferred dating apps in search of their special someone. *World Premiere*

Son of Monarchs / Mexico, USA (Director and Screenwriter: Alexis Gambis, Producers: Abraham Dayan, Maria Altamirano) — After his grandmother's death, a Mexican biologist living in New York returns to his hometown,

nestled in the majestic monarch butterfly forests of Michoacán. The journey forces him to confront past traumas and reflect on his hybrid identity, sparking a personal and spiritual metamorphosis. *Cast: Tenoch Huerta Mejía, Alexia Rasmussen, Lázaro Gabino Rodríguez, Noé Hernández, Paulina Gaitán, William Mapother.* **Alfred P. Sloan Feature Film Prize**

Strawberry Mansion / USA (Directors and Screenwriters: Albert Birney, Kentucker Audley, Producers: Taylor Shung, Sarah Winshall, Emma Hannaway, Matisse Rifai) — In a world where the government records and taxes dreams, an unassuming dream auditor gets swept up in a cosmic journey through the life and dreams of an aging eccentric named Bella. Together, they must find a way back home. *Cast: Penny Fuller, Kentucker Audley, Grace Glowicki, Reed Birney, Linas Phillips, Constance Shulman. World Premiere*

We're All Going to the World's Fair / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Jane Schoenbrun, Producers: Sarah Winshall, Carlos Zozaya) — A teenage girl becomes immersed in an online role-playing game. *Cast: Anna Cobb, Michael J. Rogers. World Premiere*

PREMIERES

Amy Tan: Unintended Memoir / USA (Director: James Redford, Producers: Karen Pritzker, Cassandra Jabola) — Amy Tan has established herself as one of America's most respected literary voices. Born to Chinese immigrant parents, it would be decades before the author of *The Joy Luck Club* would fully understand the inherited trauma rooted in the legacies of women who survived the Chinese tradition of concubinage. *World Premiere, Documentary*

Bring Your Own Brigade / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Lucy Walker, Producers: Lucy Walker, Julian Cautherley, Holly Becker, Lyn Lear) — A character-driven vérité and revelatory investigation takes us on a journey

embedded with firefighters and residents on a mission to understand the causes of historically large wildfires and how to survive them, discovering that the solution has been here all along. *World Premiere, Documentary*

Eight for Silver / USA, France (Director and Screenwriter: Sean Ellis, Producers: Mickey Liddell, Pete Shilaimon, Sean Ellis) — In the late 1800s, a man arrives in a remote country village to investigate an attack by a wild animal but discovers a much deeper, sinister force that has both the manor and the townspeople in its grip. *Cast: Boyd Holbrook, Kelly Reilly, Alistair Petrie, Roxane Duran, Aine Rose Daly. World Premiere, Narrative*

How It Ends / USA (Directors, Screenwriters and Producers: Daryl Wein, Zoe Lister-Jones) — On the last day on Earth, one woman goes on a journey through L.A. to make it to her last party before the world ends, running into an eclectic cast of characters along the way. *Cast: Zoe Lister-Jones, Cailee Spaeny, Olivia Wilde, Fred Armisen, Helen Hunt, Lamorne Morris. World Premiere, Narrative*

In the Earth / United Kingdom (Director and Screenwriter: Ben Wheatley, Producer: Andy Starke) — As a disastrous virus grips the planet, a scientist and a park scout venture deep into the forest for a routine equipment run. Through the night, their journey becomes a terrifying voyage through the heart of darkness as the forest comes to life around them. *Cast: Joel Fry, Ellora Torchia, Hayley Squires, Reece Shearsmith. World Premiere, Narrative*

In the Same Breath / U.S.A. (Director: Nanfu Wang, Producers: Nanfu Wang, Jialing Zhang, Julie Goldman, Christopher Clements, Carolyn Hepburn) — How did the Chinese government turn pandemic coverups in Wuhan into a triumph for the Communist party? An essential narrative of firsthand accounts of the coronavirus, and a revelatory examination of how propaganda and patriotism shaped the outbreak's course—both in China and in the U.S. *World Premiere, Documentary.* **DAY ONE**

Land / USA (Director: Robin Wright, Screenwriters: Jesse Chatham, Erin Dignam, Producers: Allyn Stewart, Lora Kennedy, Leah Holzer, Peter Saraf) – The poignant story of one woman's search, in the aftermath of an unfathomable event, for meaning in the vast and harsh American wilderness. *Cast: Robin Wright, Demián Bichir, Kim Dickens. World Premiere, Narrative*

Marvelous and the Black Hole / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Kate Tsang, Producer: Carolyn Mao) — A teenage delinquent befriends a surly magician who helps her navigate her inner demons and dysfunctional family with sleight of hand magic, in a coming-of-age comedy that touches on unlikely friendships, grief, and finding hope in the darkest moments. *Cast: Miya Cech, Rhea Perlman, Leonardo Nam, Kannon Omachi, Paulina Lule, Keith Powell. World Premiere, Narrative*

Mass / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Fran Kranz, Producers: Fran Kranz, Casey Wilder Mott, JP Ouellette, Dylan Matlock) — Years after a tragic shooting, the parents of both the victim and the perpetrator meet face-to-face. *Cast: Jason Isaacs, Ann Dowd, Martha Plimpton, Reed Birney. World Premiere, Narrative*

My Name Is Pauli Murray / USA (Directors: Betsy West, Julie Cohen, Producer: Talleah Bridges McMahon) — Overlooked by history, Pauli Murray was a legal trailblazer whose ideas influenced RBG's fight for gender equality and Thurgood Marshall's landmark civil rights arguments. Featuring never-before-seen footage and audio recordings, a portrait of Murray's impact as a nonbinary Black luminary: lawyer, activist, poet, and priest who transformed our world. *World Premiere, Documentary*

Philly D.A. / USA (Created By: Ted Passon, Yoni Brook, Nicole Salazar, Producers: Ted Passon, Yoni Brook, Nicole Salazar, Josh Penn, Michael Gottwald) — A groundbreaking inside look at the long shot election and tumultuous first term of Larry Krasner, Philadelphia's unapologetic District Attorney, and his experiment to upend the criminal justice system from the

inside out. *World Premiere, Episodic Documentary*

Prisoners of the Ghostland / USA (Director: Sion Sono, Screenwriters: Aaron Hendry, Reza Sixo Safai, Producers: Michael Mendelsohn, Laura Rister, Ko Mori, Reza Sixo Safai, Nate Bolotin) — A notorious criminal is sent to rescue an abducted woman who has disappeared into a dark supernatural universe. They must break the evil curse that binds them and escape the mysterious revenants that rule the Ghostland, an East-meets-West vortex of beauty and violence. *Cast: Nicolas Cage, Sofia Boutella, Nick Cassavetes, Bill Moseley, Tak Sakaguchi, Yuzuka Nakaya. World Premiere, Narrative*

The Sparks Brothers / United Kingdom (Director: Edgar Wright, Producers: Nira Park, Edgar Wright, George Hencken, Laura Richardson) — How can one rock band be successful, underrated, hugely influential, and criminally overlooked all at the same time? Take a musical odyssey through five weird and wonderful decades with brothers Ron & Russell Mael, celebrating the inspiring legacy of Sparks: your favorite band's favorite band. *World Premiere, Documentary*

Street Gang: How We Got to Sesame Street / USA (Director: Marilyn Agrelo, Producers: Trevor Crafts, Ellen Scherer Crafts, Lisa Diamond) — How did a group of rebels create the world’s most famous street? In 1969 New York, this “gang” of mission-driven artists, writers and educators catalyzed a moment of civil awakening, transforming it into *Sesame Street*, one of the most influential and impactful television programs in history. *World Premiere, Documentary*

MIDNIGHT

Censor / United Kingdom (Director: Prano Bailey-Bond, Screenwriters: Prano Bailey-Bond, Anthony Fletcher, Producer: Helen Jones) — When film censor Enid discovers an eerie horror that speaks directly to her sister’s

mysterious disappearance, she resolves to unravel the puzzle behind the film and its enigmatic director—a quest blurring the lines between fiction and reality in terrifying ways. *Cast: Niamh Algar, Nicholas Burns, Vincent Franklin, Sophia La Porta, Adrian Schiller, Michael Smiley. World Premiere.* **DAY ONE**

Coming Home in the Dark / New Zealand (Director: James Ashcroft, Screenwriters: Eli Kent, James Ashcroft, Producers: Mike Minogue, Catherine Fitzgerald, Desray Armstrong) — A family's outing descends into terror when teacher Alan Hoaganraad, his wife Jill and stepsons Maika and Jordon explore an isolated coastline. An unexpected meeting with a pair of drifters, the enigmatic psychopath Mandrake and his accomplice Tubs, thrusts the family into a nightmare when they find themselves captured. *Cast: Daniel Gillies, Erik Thomson, Miriama McDowell, Matthias Luafutu. World Premiere*

A Glitch in the Matrix / USA (Director: Rodney Ascher, Producer: Ross M. Dinerstein) — A multimedia exploration of simulation theory—an idea as old as Plato's Republic and as current as Elon Musk's Twitter feed—through the eyes of those who suspect our world isn't real. Part sci-fi mind-scrambler, part horror story, this is a digital journey to the limits of radical doubt. *World Premiere*

Knocking / Sweden (Director: Frida Kempff, Screenwriter: Emma Broström, Producer: Erik Andersson) — When Molly moves into her new apartment after a tragic accident, a strange noise from upstairs begins to unnerve her. As its intensity grows, she confronts her neighbors —but no one seems to hear what she is hearing. *Cast: Cecilia Milocco. World Premiere*

Mother Schmuckers / Belgium (Directors and Screenwriters: Lenny Guit, Harpo Guit, Producers: David Borgeaud, Erika Meda) — Issachar & Zabulon, two brothers in their twenties, are supremely stupid and never bored, as madness is part of their daily lives. When they lose their mother's beloved dog, they have 24 hours to find it—or she will kick them out. *Cast: Harpo*

Guit, Maxi Delmelle, Claire Bodson, Mathieu Amalric, Habib Ben Tanfous. World Premiere

Violation / Canada (Directors, Screenwriters and Producers: Madeleine Sims-Fewer, Dusty Mancinelli) — A troubled woman on the edge of divorce returns home to her younger sister after years apart. But when her sister and brother-in-law betray her trust, she embarks on a vicious crusade of revenge. *Cast: Madeleine Sims-Fewer, Anna Maguire, Jesse LaVercombe, Obi Abili, Jasmin Geljo, Cynthia Ashperger. International Premiere*

SPOTLIGHT

Night of the Kings / France, Ivory Coast, Canada, Senegal (Director and Screenwriter: Philippe Lacôte, Producers: Delphine Jaquet, Yanick Létourneau, Ernest Konan, Yoro Mbaye) — A young man is sent to La Maca, a prison on the Ivory Coast in the middle of the forest ruled by its prisoners. With the red moon rising, he is designated by the Boss to be the new "Roman" and must tell a story to the other prisoners. *Cast: Koné Bakary, Steve Tientcheu, Digbeu Jean Cyrille, Rasmané Ouédraogo, Issaka Sawadogo, Denis Lavant.*

The World to Come / USA (Director: Mona Fastvold, Screenwriters: Ron Hansen, Jim Shepard, Producers: Casey Affleck, Whitaker Lader, Pamela Koffler, David Hinojosa, Margarethe Baillou) — Somewhere along the mid-19th century American East Coast frontier, two neighboring couples battle hardship and isolation, witnessed by a splendid yet testing landscape, challenging them both physically and psychologically. *Cast: Katherine Waterston, Vanessa Kirby, Casey Affleck, Christopher Abbott. North American Premiere*

SPECIAL SCREENINGS

Life in a Day 2020 / United Kingdom, USA (Director: Kevin Macdonald,

Producers: Jack Arbuthnott, Tim Partridge) — An extraordinary, intimate, global portrait of life on our planet, filmed by thousands of people across the world, on a single day: 25th July 2020. *World Premiere*

NEW FRONTIER

4 Feet High VR / Argentina, France (Lead Artists: María Belén Poncio, Rosario Perazolo Masjoan, Damian Turkieh, Ezequiel Lenardón, Key Collaborators: Marie Blondiaux, Marcos Rostagno, Eugenia Foguel, Matias Benedetti, Manuel Yeri, Martin Lopez Funes, Guillermo Mena) — Juana, a 17-year-old wheelchair user, aims to explore her sexuality but is ashamed of her body. Trying to find her place in a new high school, she will go through failure, friendship, fear, and politics until she builds her own pride. *Cast: Marisol Agostina Irigoyen, Florencia Licera, Marcio Ramses, Natalia Di Cienzo, Francisca Spinotti*.

7 Sounds / USA (Lead Artist: Sam Green, Key Collaborator: JD Samson) — An immersive live-streamed audio-video work exploring the universal influence of sound, weaving seven specific audio recordings into a meditation on the power of sound to bend time, cross borders, and profoundly shape our perception.

Beyond the Breakdown / USA (Lead Artists: Tony Patrick, Lauren Lee McCarthy, Grace Lee, Key Collaborators: Jesse Cahn Thompson, Aldo Velasco) — Imagining alternate narratives for our near-future reality, inside a browser designed to hack our normal online behaviors and cultivate collaborative spaces for self-reflection and renewal.

The Changing Same: Episode 1 / USA (Lead Artists: Michèle Stephenson, Joe Brewster, Yasmin Elayat, Key Collaborators: James George, Alexander Porter, Rad Mora, Elliott Mitchell) — An immersive, episodic virtual reality experience where the participant travels through time and space to witness the connected historical experiences of racial injustice in America. A respectful, haunting story infused with magical realism and Afrofuturism

about the uninterrupted cycle of the 400-year history of racial terror—past and present.

Fortune! / France, Canada (Lead Artists: Brett Gaylor, Nicolas Bourniquel, Arnaud Colinart, Key Collaborators: Marianne Lévy-Leblond, Rob McLaughlin, Dash Spielgeman, Rolito, Clement Chériot) — Money, from bills to coins, has no intrinsic value beyond what we've collectively agreed to grant it. However, there's no denying that money governs our lives. This series of animated documentary shorts in A.R. for smartphones, tablets and social media platforms, explores that relationship. *Cast: Frank Bourassa*.

Namoo / U.S.A. (Lead Artist: Erick Oh, Key Collaborators: Maureen Fan, Larry Cutler, Eric Darnell, Kane Lee, David Kahn) — A narrative poem brought to life as an animated V.R. film, and an ode to a grandfather's passing, this story follows the journey of a budding artist—and his tree of life—from beginning to end.

Nightsss / Poland (Lead Artists: Weronika Lewandowska, Sandra Frydrysiak, Key Collaborators: Marcin Macuk, Piotr Apostel, Kaya Kołodziejczyk, Marek Straszak, Arek Zub, Przemek Danowski) — A virtual erotic poem created in artistic animation with ASMR and interactive elements, immersing the viewer in the sensual experience of poetry and dance.

Prison X - Chapter 1 : The Devil and The Sun / Australia, Bolivia, India (Lead Artists: Violeta Ayala, Alap Parikh, Maria Corvera Vargas, Roly Elias, Key Collaborators: Daniel Fallshaw, Rilda Paco Alvarado, Alberto Santiago) — Heavy doors open and you are swept into an infamous Bolivian jail, where you live among devils, saints, wicked characters, corrupt prison guards and even a Western filmmaker. In Prison X, inhabit the dreams and nightmares of the Neo-Andean underworld. *Cast: Violeta Ayala, Genesis Owusu, Celina Debassey, Anamaria Gómez Jaramillo, Jesse Odom, Nicole Ukelele*.

Rich Kids: A History of Shopping Malls in Tehran / United Kingdom, Iran (Lead Artists: Javaad Alipoor, Kirsty Housley, Key Collaborator: Nick

Sweeting) — A darkly comedic, urgent new play about entitlement, consumption and digital technology, exploring the ubiquitous feeling that our societies are falling apart through the story of two young members of the Iranian elite, asking what their deaths tell us about climate change, social collapse and Instagram. *Cast: Javaad Alipoor, Peyvand Sadeghian*.

Secret Garden / USA (Lead Artist: Stephanie Dinkins, Key Collaborators: Ethan Edwards, John Fitzgerald, Matthew Niederhauser, Danielle McPhatter, Sidney San Martín, Kate Stevenson, Adaora Udoji, Chris White) — An immersive web experience and installation, illuminating the power and resilience in Black women's stories. Interactive audio vignettes generate a multigenerational narrative that collapses past, present, and future. *Cast: Dayne Board, Erlene Curry, Tianna Mendez, Melissa Moore, Brandi Porter, Lisa Sainville*.

Tinker / USA (Lead Artist: Lou Ward, Key Collaborators: Shimon Alkon, Lara Bucarey, Avril Martinez, Aileen Paron, Anthony Alan Garcia, Roberto Tan, Cristopher David, Neil Realubit, Anton Arcega, David Conklin, Evan Chavez) — What happens when the memories we spend a lifetime creating begin to disappear? Step inside the Grandfather's workshop to discover this answer for yourself. In this live, bespoke unscripted performance, reimagine what it means to play, to connect and to hold fast to the memories we create. *Cast: Randy Dixon*.

To Miss the Ending / United Kingdom (Lead Artists: Anna West, David Callanan, Key Collaborators: Jamie Finlay, Steph Clarke, Dan Tucker) — A V.R. cubicle of cardboard boxes begins to glitch, revealing an empty dark space in front of you—until something glimmers in the distance, a wave of blue flooding toward you. A chorus of real memories and imagined futures expands, until only the largest memories are left. *Cast: Charlotte Berry, Michael Dodds, Houmi Miura, Ben Kulvichit, Anna West*.

Traveling the Interstitium with Octavia Butler / USA (Lead Artists: Sophia Nahli Allison, idris brewster, Stephanie Dinkins, Ari Melenciano, Terence

Nance, Key Collaborators: Yance Ford, Sharon Chang, Kamal Sinclair) — Inspired by the ideas of Octavia Butler, voyaging into the interstitium: a liminal space, a cultural memory, containing the remnants of our ancestors, a place of refuge, a place of recentering, a portal into an alternate dimension.

Weirdo Night / USA (Lead Artists: Jibz Cameron, Mariah Garnett) — A filmed edition, hosted by Dynasty Handbag, of the wildly popular, underground, eponymous live performance and comedy event that, until COVID-19, was held monthly in Los Angeles. *Cast: Patti Harrison, Smiling Beth, Morgan Bassichis, Sarah Squirm, Hedia Maron, Blasia Discoteca*.

SHORTS

U.S. Fiction

Ava From My Class / USA, South Korea (Director: Youmin Kang, Screenwriters: Youmin Kang, Soomin Kang) — Anna thinks Ava is the best actress in her class. *International Premiere*

Bambirak / USA, Germany (Director and Screenwriter: Zamarin Wahdat) — When Kati stows away in her father's truck, Faruk must juggle his responsibilities as a single dad while holding down his first job in a new country. As their relationship deepens, a brush with covert racism tests their bond. *North American Premiere*

BJ's Mobile Gift Shop / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Jason Park) — A young Korean American hustler runs throughout the city of Chicago making sales out of his "mobile gift shop." *World Premiere*

Bruiser / USA (Director: Miles Warren, Screenwriters: Miles Warren, Ben Medina) — After his father gets into a fight at a bowling alley, Darious begins to investigate the limitations of his own manhood. *World Premiere*

Don't Go Tellin' Your Momma / USA, Germany, France, Italy (Directors and Screenwriters: Topaz Jones, rubberband.) — In 1970, Black educators in

Chicago developed an alphabet flashcard set to provide Black-centered teaching materials to the vastly white educational landscape and the Black ABCs were born. Fifty years later, 26 scenes provide an update to their meanings. *World Premiere*

Doublespeak / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Hazel McKibbin) — A young woman grapples with the aftermath of reporting sexual harassment in the workplace.

i ran from it and was still in it / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Darol Olu Kae) — A poetic meditation on familial loss and separation, and the love that endures against dispersion.

In the Air Tonight / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Andrew Norman Wilson) — An insider's take on the meaning behind Phil Collins's 1980 single "In the Air Tonight."

LATA / USA, India (Director: Alisha Mehta, Screenwriters: Alisha Mehta, Mireya Martinez) — Lata, a 23-year-old domestic worker, navigates her way through an upper class home in South Mumbai. Doors consistently open and close, giving Lata selective access to the various contending realities that occupy this space.

Raspberry / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Julian Doan) — A son struggles to say goodbye to his dead father. *World Premiere*

The Touch of the Master's Hand / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Gregory Barnes) — Troubled by an unnatural temptation, a young Mormon missionary must confess the humiliating depths of his pornography addiction. *World Premiere*

White Wedding / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Melody C Roscher) — Amidst a racially tense Southern wedding, a biracial bride has the chance to confront her estranged Black father after accidentally hiring his wedding

band to perform. *World Premiere*

Wiggle Room / USA (Directors and Screenwriters: Sam Guest, Julia Baylis) — Determined to save her wheelchair ramp from repossession, Daisy confronts the shady insurance agent who owes her money. *World Premiere*

Yoruga / USA, Colombia (Director and Screenwriter: Federico Torrado Tobón) — A lonely old man pays a visit to Yoruga, one of the last animals on Earth. *World Premiere*

You Wouldn't Understand / USA (Director: Trish Harnetiaux, Screenwriters: Trish Harnetiaux, Jacob A. Ware) — An idyllic picnic of one is upended after the arrival of a stranger.

International Fiction

The Affected / Norway (Director: Rikke Gregersen, Screenwriters: Rikke Gregersen, Trond Arntzen) — Minutes before takeoff, a situation occurs, preventing an airplane from departing: in an attempt to prevent the deportation of one passenger, another refuses to sit down—forcing the pilot to take a political stand.

Black Bodies / Canada (Director and Screenwriter: Kelly Fyffe-Marshall) — A Black man laments as he comes face-to-face with the realities of being Black in the 21st century. *International Premiere*

The Criminals / France, Romania, Turkey (Director and Screenwriter: Serhat Karaaslan) — In a town in Turkey, a young couple is looking for some privacy. They are rejected from the hotels because they do not have a marriage certificate. When they think they found a way, the situation gets out of hand. *World Premiere*

Excuse Me, Miss, Miss, Miss / Philippines (Director: Sonny Calvento, Screenwriter: Arden Rod Condez) — Vangie, a miserable contractual sales lady, is about to lose her job. But in her desperate attempt to convince her

boss not to sack her, Vangie uncovers the ultimate jaw-dropping secret to regularization.

Five Tiger / South Africa (Director and Screenwriter: Nomawonga Khumalo) — A god-fearing woman in present-day South Africa finds herself in a transactional relationship as she tries to support her sick husband and daughter. *North American Premiere*

Flex / Sweden (Directors and Screenwriters: Josefin Malmen, David Strindberg) — He may be god enough, but is he good enough? A slightly surreal comedic exploration of the fine line between a bodybuilder's self-loathing and self-loving.

Like the Ones I Used to Know / Canada (Director and Screenwriter: Annie St-Pierre) — December 24, 1983, 10:50 p.m.: Julie and her cousins ate too much sugar, Santa Claus is late. Denis, alone in his car, is anxious at the idea of setting foot in his ex-in-law's house to pick up his children. *World Premiere*

Lizard / United Kingdom (Director: Akinola Davies, Jr., Screenwriter: The Davies Brothers) — Juwon, an eight-year-old girl with an ability to sense danger, gets ejected from Sunday school service. She unwittingly witnesses the underbelly in and around a megachurch in Lagos. *International Premiere*

The Longest Dream I Remember / Mexico (Director: Carlos Lenin, Screenwriters: Carlos Lenin, Isa Mora Vera) — As Tania leaves her hometown, she must confront what her absence will mean in the search for her disappeared father. *World Premiere*

Mountain Cat / Mongolia, United Kingdom (Director and Screenwriter: Lkhagvadulam Purev-Ochir) — A troubled girl is coerced into seeing a shaman. Trapped by the ancient beliefs that pacify her mother, she finds peace in the physical realm, unleashing her repressed, youthful spirit on the shaman when she realizes his true identity. *U.S. Premiere*

Unliveable / Brazil (Directors and Screenwriters: Matheus Farias, Enock Carvalho) — In Brazil, where a trans person is murdered every three days, Marilene searches for her daughter Roberta, a trans woman who is missing. While running out of time, she discovers one hope for the future. *North American Premiere*

The Unseen River / Vietnam, Laos (Director and Screenwriter: Phạm Ngọc Lân) — Stories told along the river: a woman reunites with her ex-lover at a hydroelectric plant; meanwhile, a young man travels downstream to a temple in search of a cure for his insomnia.

We're Not Animals / France (Director and Screenwriter: Noé Debré) — His ex Marie became an Instagram star (thanks to an activist group focused on the female orgasm). Depressed, Igor believes this is a deliberate campaign to prevent him from finding someone else. *World Premiere*

Nonfiction

A Concerto Is a Conversation / USA (Directors: Ben Proudfoot, Kris Bowers) — A virtuoso jazz pianist and film composer tracks his family's lineage through his 91-year-old grandfather from Jim Crow Florida to the Walt Disney Concert Hall.

Dear Philadelphia / USA, United Kingdom (Director: Renee Osubu) — With the help of their family, friends, and faith, three fathers unravel the incomparable partnership of forgiveness and community in North Philadelphia. *International Premiere*

The Field Trip / USA (Directors: Meghan O'Hara, Mike Attie, Rodrigo Ojeda-Beck) — A group of fifth graders learn what it takes to get ahead in the modern American workplace. *World Premiere*

My Own Landscapes / France (Director: Antoine Chapon) — Before going to war, a former military game designer made video game scenarios that

prepared soldiers for cultural shocks and healed trauma. Once back from the war, his relationship with his identity, with life and with the video game changed.

The Rifleman / USA (Director: Sierra Pettengill, Screenwriters: Daniel Garber, Sierra Pettengill) — Told entirely through archival material, tracing Harlon Carter, considered the "father of the modern NRA," across the decades, revealing the links between the National Rifle Association, the U.S. Border Patrol, and gun culture.

Snowy / USA (Directors: Kaitlyn Schwalje, Alex Wolf Lewis) — Snowy, a four-inch-long pet turtle, has lived an isolated life in the family basement. With help from a team of experts and his caretaker, Uncle Larry, we ask: Can Snowy be happy and what would it take? *World Premiere*

Spirits and Rocks: an Azorean Myth / Switzerland, Portugal (Director: Aylin Gökmen) — On a volcanic island, inhabitants are caught in an unending cycle: the threat of impending eruptions, and the burden of past traumas, loom over them. Some draw upon myth and religious beliefs to interpret their precarious situation; others demonstrate resilience. *International Premiere*

Tears Teacher / Japan (Director: Noemie Nakai) — Yoshida is a self-proclaimed "tears teacher." A firm believer that regular crying promotes healthier living, he's made it his mission to make more people weep.

This Is the Way We Rise / USA (Director: Ciara Lacy) — An exploration into the creative process, following Native Hawaiian slam poet Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio, as her art is reinvigorated by her calling to protect sacred sites atop Maunakea, Hawaii.

To Know Her / USA, Hong Kong (Director: Natalie Chao) — A poetic exploration of the camera's gaze and a family's relationship with the filmmaker's mother. *International Premiere*

When We Were Bullies / USA, Germany (Director and Screenwriter: Jay Rosenblatt) — A mind-boggling "coincidence" leads the filmmaker to track down his fifth grade class—and fifth-grade teacher—to examine their memory of and complicity in a bullying incident 50 years ago. *World Premiere*

Up at Night / Democratic Republic of the Congo, Belgium (Director and Screenwriter: Nelson Makengo) — As dusk fades and another night without electricity falls, Kinshasa's neighborhoods reveal an unstable environment of violence, political conflict and uncertainty over the building of the Grand Inga 3 hydroelectric dam, promising a permanent source of energy to the Congo. *U.S. Premiere*

Animation

The Fire Next Time / United Kingdom (Director: Renaldho Pelle, Screenwriter: Kerry Jade Kolbe) — Rioting spreads as social inequality causes tempers in a struggling community to flare, but the oppressive environment takes on a life of its own as the shadows of the housing estate close in.

Forever / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Mitch McGlocklin) — A life insurance company uses an AI algorithm to determine the risk of a new applicant. The subsequent denial sparks a period of introspection for the individual in question.

The Fourfold / Canada (Director and Screenwriter: Alisi Telengut) — An exploration of the indigenous worldview and wisdom based on ancient shamanistic traditions and animistic beliefs in Siberia and Mongolia. With hand-crafted animation, a testament of reclaiming animism for environmental ethics and non-human materialities.

Ghost Dogs / USA (Director: Joe Cappa, Screenwriters: Joe Cappa, J.W. Hallford) — A family's new rescue pup is terrorized by deceased pets in this

mind-bending horror.

GNT / Australia (Directors and Screenwriters: Sara Hirner, Rosemary Vasquez-Brown) — Glenn is a woman on an unwholesome mission, but just how far will she go to conquer the clique—and social media at large?

KKUM / South Korea, USA (Director and Screenwriter: Kang-min Kim) — My mother's dreams have always been strong premonitions for important moments in my life. I rely on her dreams more than any religion.

Little Miss Fate / Switzerland (Director and Screenwriter: Joder von Rotz) — When the opportunity arises, Little Miss Fate slips into the role of the world leader. Unintentionally she creates a monster, which greedily wants to suck up all the love of the world. Overwhelmed by the rapid development, she loses control.

Misery Loves Company / USA, South Korea (Director: Sasha Lee, Screenwriters: Sasha Lee, Yejin Choi) — As Seolgi is lying on a grass field with friends, a shooting star falls, and dark, intrusive thoughts hit her. Her melancholy blooms into bright and colorful "flower people," dancing and wishing for a meteorite to end the world.

Souvenir Souvenir / France (Director and Screenwriter: Bastien Dubois) — For 10 years, I've pretended to make a movie out of my grandfather's Algerian war souvenirs. Today, I'm not sure I want to hear what he has to say.

Trepanation / USA (Director: Nick Flaherty) — What was once familiar is now unrecognizable. All previous desires are overshadowed by the need to disappear completely.

INDIE SERIES PROGRAM

4 Feet High / Argentina, France (Directors: María Belén Poncio, Rosario Perazolo Masjoan, Executive Producers: Ezequiel Lenardón, Marie Blondiaux) — Juana, a 17-year-old wheelchair user, aims to explore her sexuality but is

ashamed of her body. Trying to find her place in a new high school, she will go through failure, friendship, fear and politics until she builds her own pride. *Cast: Marisol Agostina Irigoyen, Florencia Licera, Marcio Ramses, Natalia Di Cienzo, Francisca Spinotti. World Premiere*

Seeds of Deceit / Netherlands (Director: Miriam Guttmann, Executive Producers: Monique Busman, Michiel van Erp, Judith Reuten) — The revelation that Dr. Karbaat clandestinely used his own semen to inseminate more than 65 of his patients shocked the world. A vivid portrayal of how that happened and all the ways it haunts those affected: the emotional trauma of coming to terms with a changed life, a new identity. *World Premiere*

These Days / USA (Director and Screenwriter: Adam Brooks) — Mae, lonely and self-isolating, navigates the world of online dating during the early days of quarantine. Her first attempt is a comic disaster; then, she meets Will and her world begins to change in unexpected ways. *Cast: Marianne Rendón, William Jackson Harper, Amy Brenneman, Parker Young. World Premiere*

Would You Rather / France, Germany (Creators: Lise Akoka, Romane Guéret, Executive Producer: Pierre Grimaus, Jean Dathanat) — Sixteen-year-olds Shaï, Djeneba, Aladi, and Ismaël grew up in a working-class Paris neighborhood. Together, they watch hours drift by, cracking jokes, and playing their favorite game, "Would you rather?" As the group's equilibrium suddenly shifts, they have to start making choices—in their lives and their game. *Cast: Fanta Kebe, Shirel Nataf, Zakaria Lazab, Mouctar Diawara. North American Premiere*

More Great Stories From *Vanity Fair*

— Cover Story: Stephen Colbert on Trump Trauma, Love, and Loss
— Rosario Dawson Tells All About *The Mandalorian*'s Ahsoka Tano
— The 20 Best TV Shows and Movies of 2020
— Why *The Crown* Season Four's Prince Charles Appalled Royal Experts
— This Documentary Is the Real-World Version of *The Undoing,* but Better

— How Hero Worship Turned to Scorn in the Star Wars Fandom
— In Light of *The Crown,* Is Prince Harry's Netflix Deal a Conflict of Interest?
— From the Archive: An Empire Rebooted, the Genesis of *The Force Awakens*
— Not a subscriber? Join *Vanity Fair* to receive full access to VF.com and the complete online archive now.