

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT**

Voleine Amilcar, ITVS

415-356-8383 x 244

voleine\_amilcar@itvs.org

Mary Lugo

770-623-8190

lugo@negia.net

Cara White

843-881-1480

cara.white@mac.com

For downloadable images, visit <http://pressroom.pbs.org>

**INDEPENDENT LENS ANNOUNCES FALL 2012 SEASON**

**Series Moves to New Time Slot - Monday Nights at 10 PM**

**Season Premieres on Monday, October 29, 2012 with Macky Alston's *Love Free or Die***

(San Francisco, CA) — The Emmy® Award-winning documentary series [Independent Lens](#) announced the launch of its 11th season on PBS today. The series moves to the coveted time slot of Monday night at 10 PM (check local listings) starting October 29, 2012 with Macky Alston's [Love Free or Die](#).

“We are extremely excited to open the *Independent Lens* 2012-13 season with Macky Alston's *Love Free or Die*,” said Lois Vossen, senior series producer. “We presented Macky's previous film, *Hard Road Home*, and are pleased to welcome him back to PBS. *Love Free or Die* documents the remarkable struggles and triumphs of Episcopal Bishop Gene Robinson who, in 2003, became the first openly gay person to become a bishop in the historic traditions of Christendom. This film is emblematic of the kinds of stories coming this season, on what is our most extraordinary slate of *Independent Lens* films ever.”

Filmmaker Alston added, “*Independent Lens* is such a great supporter of independent filmmakers and such an ideal venue for documentaries; I'm delighted to be back.”

In addition, *Independent Lens* will present the two-night, prime time special, [Half the Sky: Turning Oppression Into Opportunity for Women Worldwide](#) by Maro Chermayeff, airing on Monday and Tuesday, October 1 and 2, at 9 PM. A landmark event based on the bestselling book of the same name by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, the miniseries follows six actress-advocates — America Ferrera, Diane Lane, Eva Mendes, Meg Ryan, Gabrielle Union, and Olivia Wilde — as they travel to Africa and Asia and meet inspiring, courageous individuals who are confronting oppression and developing real, meaningful solutions through health care, education, and economic empowerment for women and girls.

Additionally, this fall *Independent Lens* veteran Brad Lichtenstein (*Almost Home*) returns with [As Goes Janesville](#), premiering on November 5. *As Goes Janesville* follows three years in the lives of several residents of Janesville, Wisconsin, a once-prosperous town fighting to redefine itself in the face of the closing of the country's oldest GM plant.

*Independent Lens* will premiere two films from the WHY POVERTY? Project, a unique opportunity to kick-start national and global debates about poverty in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Be more



Premiering on November 12 is Academy Award winner Alex Gibney's [\*Park Avenue: Money, Power & the American Dream\*](#). *Park Avenue* looks at the top one percent of "the one percent" of the richest Americans, many of whom live in one Park Avenue apartment building and wield extraordinary influence on American politics and economics. [\*Solar Mamas\*](#) (premiering December 17) introduces the women of India's Barefoot College, which provides rural women living in poverty with an education that empowers them to make their communities self reliant and sustainable.

Other films coming to the second half of the season include four 2012 Sundance Film Festival award winners: *The Invisible War* by Kirby Dick, *The House I Live In* by Eugene Jarecki, *Detropia* by Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady, and *Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry* by Alison Klayman, and SXSW favorite *Beauty Is Embarrassing* by Neil Berkeley, along with 12 other festival favorites and acclaimed films. A complete list of all the films coming to the *Independent Lens* 2012-13 season will be announced after Labor Day.

## **Independent Lens - Fall 2012**

### **Special Presentation: *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression Into Opportunity for Women Worldwide***

October 1-2, 2012 at 9 PM

A landmark series based on the book by *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression Into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* follows six actress-advocates including America Ferrera, Diane Lane, Eva Mendes, Meg Ryan, Gabrielle Union, and Olivia Wilde as they travel to Africa and Asia and meet inspiring, courageous individuals who are confronting oppression and developing real, meaningful solutions through health care, education, and economic empowerment for women and girls. *Half the Sky* aims to amplify the central message of the book — that women are not the problem, but the solution — and to bolster the broad and growing movement for change.

### ***Love Free or Die***

#### **Directed by Macky Alston**

Monday, October 29, 2012 at 10 PM (check local listings)

***Love Free or Die*** is about a man whose two defining passions the world cannot reconcile: his love for God and for his partner Mark. The film is about church and state, love and marriage, faith and identity — and one man's struggle to dispel the notion that God's love has limits. Gene Robinson became the first openly gay elected bishop in the high church traditions of Christendom. His 2003 elevation in the New Hampshire diocese ignited a worldwide firestorm in the Anglican Communion that has threatened schism. In the face of it all, Robinson confronts those who use religion as a means of oppression, and claims a place in the church and society for everyone.

***As Goes Janesville***

**Directed by Brad Lichtenstein**

Monday, November 5, 2012 at 10 PM (check local listings)

*As Goes Janesville* catapults viewers to the front lines of America's debate over the future of its middle class — a debate that has become a pitched battle over unions in the normally tranquil state of Wisconsin. First, General Motors shuts down Janesville's century-old plant, causing mass layoffs and exiling residents who must leave in search of work. Then newly elected governor Scott Walker ignites a firestorm by introducing a bill to end collective bargaining, unleashing a fury of protest and sparking a recall election. Spend three years in the lives of laid-off workers trying to reinvent themselves; business leaders aligned with the Governor to promote a pro-business agenda they believe will woo new companies to town; and a state senator caught in the middle, trying to bring peace to his warring state and protect workers' rights. *As Goes Janesville*, so goes America, a polarized nation losing its grasp on the American Dream.

***Park Avenue: Money, Power & the American Dream***

**Directed by Alex Gibney**

Monday, November 12, 2012 at 10 PM (check local listings)

If income inequality were a sport, the residents of 740 Park Avenue in Manhattan would all be medalists. This address boasts the highest number of billionaires in the United States, many of whom actively lobby and finance political campaigns to lower taxes on the wealthy. Less than four miles away, Park Avenue runs through New York's 16th Congressional District in the South Bronx, which has the highest poverty rate in the U.S. Minutes away from one another as the crow flies, these New Yorkers face dramatically different economic realities.

***Solar Mamas***

**Directed by Jehane Noujaim and Mona Eldaief and produced by Mette Heide**

Monday, December 17, 2012 at 10 PM (check local listings)

Welcome to India's Barefoot College, founded by Bunker Roy to provide rural women living in poverty with an education that empowers them to make their communities self-reliant and sustainable. Rafea, a 30-year-old Jordanian mother of four, is traveling outside of her village for the first time to attend Barefoot's solar engineering program. Once there, she will join women from Guatemala, Kenya, Burkina Faso, and Colombia in learning concrete skills to change their communities.

***About Independent Lens***

*Independent Lens* is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of their independent producers.

*Independent Lens* features unforgettable stories about unique individuals, communities, and moments in history. Presented by the Independent Television Service (ITVS), the series is supported by interactive companion websites and national publicity and community engagement campaigns. *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series producer is Lois Vossen.