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For downloadable images, visit pbs.org/pressroom/

For the program companion website, visit pbs.org/independentlens/young-at-heart

**AUDIENCE SENSATION YOUNG@HEART
TO PREMIERE ON THE EMMY® AWARD-WINNING PBS DOCUMENTARY SERIES
INDEPENDENT LENS**

“A crowd-pleaser in the best sense, this alternately hilarious and heartbreaking movie will send you out of the theatre with a new lease on life.” —David Ansen, Newsweek

(San Francisco, CA)—Prepare to be surprised, delighted and entertained by the inspiring members of the Young@Heart Chorus, a New England senior citizens chorus that has delighted audiences worldwide with their renditions of songs by everyone from The Clash to Coldplay. As Stephen Walker’s critically acclaimed documentary begins, the retirees, led by their demanding musical director, are rehearsing their new show, struggling with Sonic Youth’s dissonant rock anthem “Schizophrenia” and giving new meaning to James Brown’s “I Feel Good.” What ultimately emerges is a funny and unexpectedly moving testament to friendship, creative inspiration and expectations defied. **YOUNG@HEART** will premiere on the Emmy® Award-winning PBS series *Independent Lens* on Tuesday, January 12th at 9 PM (check local listings).

YOUNG@HEART chronicles seven unforgettable weeks in the lives of the members of the Young@Heart Chorus as they prepare for a one-night-only concert in their hometown of Northampton, Massachusetts. Guided by longtime director Bob Cilman, the group is made up of two dozen spirited seniors—former schoolteachers, executives, doctors and food service workers—who specialize in reinterpreting rock, punk and R&B classics from their unique perspective.



Scenes from YOUNG@HEART, coming to Independent Lens January 2010.

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With less than two months to go until the concert, the performers struggle with the new lyrics and unfamiliar melodies of seven new songs. During their thrice-weekly rehearsals, they gradually take possession of music ranging from R&B classics like Allen Toussaint's "Yes We Can Can" to Coldplay's emotionally powerful ballad "Fix You," upending assumptions about old age, love, sex and death.

Starting out as a lighthearted look at a quirky musical group, the film gains unexpected gravitas when two members of the chorus die within days of each other and the lyrics of the group's repertoire take on powerful new significance. From 92-year-old war bride Eileen Hall's rousing rendition of The Clash's "Should I Stay or Should I Go?" to Pat Linderme's moving interpretation of Prince's "Nothing Compares 2 U," each performance responds to the ravages of age with startling emotional depth. And after almost two months of shooting, the Young@Heart Chorus delivers a triumphant performance that celebrates the joy of music and the lives of their lost friends. The end result is an inspirational journey with a singular group of people who may be old in body, but refuse to grow old in spirit.

YOUNG@HEART was directed and is narrated by Stephen Walker and was produced by Sally George. Hannah Beckerman was executive producer. Eddie Marritz was director of photography, and Chris King was editor.

To learn more about the film, and the issues involved, visit the companion website for **YOUNG@HEART** at www.pbs.org/independentlens/young-at-heart. Get detailed information on the film, watch preview clips, read an interview with the filmmaker, and explore the subject in depth with links and resources. The site also features a Talkback section where viewers can share their ideas and opinions.

About the Filmmaker

Stephen Walker (director) has directed 23 films for the BBC and Channel Four, including *Hiroshima—A Day That Shook the World*, which was nominated for three Emmys®, including Best Director and Best Cinematography, was winner of the Emmy® for Best Music and Sound, and winner of the National Geographic Cine Golden Eagle Award, and the critically acclaimed *Faking It: Punk to Conductor*, winner of the 2003 Montreux Rose d'Or and International Press Prize awards and a BAFTA®. Walker also directed *Hardcore*, a film about the Los Angeles porn industry, nominated for the Grierson Award for Best Documentary 2001, and *Waiting for Harvey*. Walker has directed drama for BBC TV, including *Prisoners in Time*, starring John Hurt and winner of the Writer's Guild of Great Britain Award for Best Television Drama. Walker has also written two books, most recently *Shockwave: Countdown to Hiroshima* (Harper Collins 2005), which made *The New York Times* best-seller list, and *King of Cannes*, a riotous account of his two weeks at the famous film festival. He lives in London, England, with his wife, Sally George, and their daughter, Kitty.

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 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. Further information about the series is available at www.pbs.org/independentlens.