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**EMMY® AWARD-WINNING PBS DOCUMENTARY SERIES
INDEPENDENT LENS ANNOUNCES WINTER/SPRING 2011 SEASON LINEUP**

*Series Presents Programs on Black History, the Arts, Street Children of Haiti,
Powerful Women Changing the World, and More*

(San Francisco, CA)—PBS's award winning, critically heralded weekly series *Independent Lens* returns with a winter/spring 2011 lineup. Hosted by acclaimed actress America Ferrera, the winter/spring season kicks off on Tuesday, January 4, 2010 with Dylan Williams's *Men who Swim*, a humorous and poignant look at a group of middle-aged men who have found unlikely success as members of Sweden's all-male synchronized swimming team.

In *Children of Haiti*, (January 11) producer/director Alexandria Hammond takes viewers to Haiti before the devastating 7.0 earthquake struck the country. The documentary provides insight into Haiti's ongoing problem with abandoned youth. In the voices of the street boys themselves, the film examines a complicated issue, one which has plagued the country for decades and grows more severe by the day.

In February, *Independent Lens* celebrates Black History month with Mat Hames's *When I Rise* (February 8), the uplifting story of Barbara Smith Conrad, a gifted University of Texas music student who finds herself at the epicenter of racial controversy, struggling against the odds and ultimately ascending to the heights of international opera.

In March, the series features two portraits of extraordinary women in honor of Women's History month. *Me Facing Life* (March 1) unravels the story of Cyntoia Brown, a 16-year-old girl who was arrested for murder. Filmmaker Daniel Birman wondered what led this girl — who grew up in a reasonable home environment — to this tragic end? Cyntoia is stunningly articulate, and spends the time to put the pieces of this puzzle together. *Pushing the Elephant* (March 29), a film by Beth Davenport and Elizabeth Mandel, tells the courageous story of Rose Mapendo, a woman who escaped the ethnic violence of the Democratic Republic of Congo to become a vital voice in the mending of her divided country. Her harrowing experience included the nighttime arrest of her entire family by government agents, the execution of her husband, the birth of their twin sons in prison, and grim negotiations with prison guards to save the lives of her children.

Building on the system-wide arts programming initiative led by PBS, four art-related films will premiere in April on *Independent Lens* as part of Artist Month. Amanda Pope and Tchavdar Georgiev's *Desert of Forbidden Art* (April 5) is a sweeping look at decades of Soviet repression of the arts, and Igor Savitsky's
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one-man campaign to rescue the work of a legion of forgotten politically volatile artists. In doing so, he created one of the most important collections of Western art ever amassed. From Tamra Davis (*Billy Madison, Guncrazy*) comes **Jean-Michel Basquiat: The Radiant Child** (April 12) the definitive portrait of the New York art world *enfant terrible*, who went from graffiti artist to commercial success, only to succumb to death from an overdose in 1988.

We catch up with Brazilian artist Vik Muniz (the subject of the 2003 *Independent Lens* film *Worst Possible Illusion: The Curiosity Cabinet of Vik Muniz*) in Lucy Walker's **Waste Land** (April 19), which follows Muniz as he embarks on a new project in a landfill on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro, finding stirring evidence of the transformative power of art.

April comes to a close with Jeff Malmberg's **Marwencol** (April 26), a fascinating look at the fantasy world of Mark Hogancamp. After being beaten into a brain-damaging coma, Mark builds a small scale World War II-era town with dolls in his upstate New York backyard. Discovered by the downtown art world, Mark must choose between the safety of his fantasy life in Marwencol and the real world he's avoided since his attack.

Independent Lens continues its tradition of shedding light on sometimes forgotten history with **A Film Unfinished** (May 3) by Yael Hersonski. The documentary—to air in honor of Holocaust Remembrance Day—presents a 60-minute unfinished propaganda film, shot by the Nazis in the Warsaw Ghetto in May 1942, which until now sat undisturbed in an East German archive.

To learn more about *Independent Lens* and the complete winter/spring 2011 line-up visit pbs.org/independentlens

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