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CONTACT

Lisa Tawil, ITVS	415-356-8383	lisa_tawil@itvs.org
Mary Lugo	770-623-8190	lugo@negia.net
Cara White	843-881-1480	cara.white@mac.com

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**FREDERICK WISEMAN'S EPIC *AT BERKELEY*
PREMIERES ON *INDEPENDENT LENS*
MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2014 ON PBS**

(San Francisco, CA) — The latest film from legendary filmmaker Frederick Wiseman, *At Berkeley* is a revealing four-hour documentary about the University of California at Berkeley, the oldest and most prestigious member of a ten campus public education system and one of the finest research and teaching facilities in the world. Eschewing narration and standard interviews, the film takes viewers from faculty meetings to classrooms, from financial aid seminars to research laboratories, to show the myriad aspects of university life. Filmed during the fall 2010 semester, Wiseman reveals the administration's struggles as it faces drastic budget cuts imposed by the State of California. Through this wide-ranging approach, both sweeping and intimate, Wiseman shows how a major American university is administered, revealing the complex relationships among its various constituencies — students, faculty, administrators, alumni, the City of Berkeley, the State of California and the federal government. The film also looks closely at Berkeley's intellectual and social mission, its obligation to the state and to the larger ideals of higher education. *At Berkeley* premieres on *Independent Lens*, hosted by Stanley Tucci, on Monday, January 13, 2014, 10:00 p.m. - 2:00 a.m. ET on PBS ([check local listings.](#))

Visit the *At Berkeley* companion website (<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/at-berkeley>) which features information about the film, including an interview with the filmmaker and links and resources pertaining to the film's subject matter. The site also features a Talkback section for viewers to share their ideas and opinions, preview clips of the film and more.

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Frederick Wiseman on *At Berkeley*:

My film about the University of California at Berkeley presents a strong and accomplished administration and faculty working hard to maintain — in the face of a severe financial crisis — the standards and integrity of a great public university, which is

at the service of highly intelligent and diverse students. It was a privilege to film at Berkeley.

The film is consistent with my efforts to make documentaries about as many aspects of human behavior as I can. I think it is just as important for the filmmaker to show people of intelligence, character, tolerance, and goodwill hard at work as it is to make movies about the failures, insensitivities, and cruelties of others. *At Berkeley* is an illustration of this idea.

At Berkeley is the 38th film in my series about contemporary institutions. I spent twelve weeks at Berkeley and shot 250 hours of material. The crew consisted of myself and two others. No events are staged and there is no artificial lighting. The editing of the film took 14 months spread out over a two-and-a-half-year period. The film presented a particularly interesting editing problem since the diversity of material was much greater than in any of my previous films. A public university is a complex organism made up of many parts — students, faculty, administrators, staff, police, alumni, politicians, and the community in which it is located. In the editing I had to try and find a way to suggest these interrelationships, and their complexity, while simultaneously giving a sense of the entire institution.

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CREDITS

Producer, Director, Sound, Editor	Frederick Wiseman
Photography	John Davey

A Production of Berkeley Film, Inc.

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About the Filmmaker

Frederick Wiseman (Producer/Director/Sound/Editor) is an independent documentary filmmaker. Since 1967 he has directed 40 films, 38 of them documentaries that seek to portray ordinary human experience in a wide variety of contemporary social institutions. His subjects have included a state hospital for the criminally insane, a high school, a welfare center, juvenile court, a boxing gym, ballet companies in New York and Paris, Central Park, a racetrack, and a Parisian cabaret theater. *New York Times* film critic Manohla Dargis wrote that “taken together, this is work that presents a sweeping, continuing portrait of modern America, its institutions, social relations, administrative and bureaucratic controls and of course — right at the center of this filmmaker’s unyielding frame — its people.”

Wiseman has directed two fiction features, *Seraphita's Diary* (1982) and *The Last Letter* (*Independent Lens*, 2002). He also works in the theater. In Paris, he directed *The Belle of Amherst*, William Luce's play about the life of Emily Dickinson, and two plays at La Comédie Française — Samuel Beckett's *Oh Les Beaux Jours*, and *La Dernière Lettre*, based on a chapter of Vasily Grossman's novel, *Life and Fate*. He also directed *The Last Letter* (the English version of *La Dernière Lettre*) at the Theater for a New Audience in New York. The French publisher, Gallimard, and the Museum of Modern Art, New York, jointly published the book, *Frederick Wiseman*, which offers a comprehensive overview of his work through a series of original essays by distinguished critics and artists.

Wiseman received his BA from Williams College in 1951 and his LLB from Yale Law School in 1954. He has received honorary doctorates from Bowdoin College, Princeton University, and Williams College, among others. He is a MacArthur Fellow, a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, and an Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He has won numerous awards, including four Emmys. He is also the recipient of the Career Achievement Award from the Los Angeles Film Society (2013), the George Polk Career Award (2006), and the American Society of Cinematographers Distinguished Achievement Award (2006), among many others.

About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by Independent Television Service (ITVS), the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The senior series producer is Lois Vossen. More information at www.pbs.org/independentlens. Join *Independent Lens* on Facebook at www.facebook.com/independentlens.