

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**FIVE ITVS DOCUMENTARIES TO SCREEN AT THE WORLD RENOWNED INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL (IDFA) IN AMSTERDAM**

*ITVS to Host Annual IDFA “Guests Meet Guests Reception,” Monday, November 23*

(San Francisco)—The Independent Television Service (ITVS) has announced that five of its productions have been chosen as official selections for the 22nd International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA). Running from November 19-29, 2009, the prestigious festival is the largest showcase of documentary film in the world. Many ITVS films have screened to great audience and critical acclaim at IDFA, including last year’s features, **MILKING THE RHINO**, directed by David Simpson, and **SEA POINT DAYS** directed by Francois Verster. Both films competed in the Joris Ivens (feature) competition.

The four ITVS International productions and domestic production to be featured at IDFA 2009 are as follows:

**BANANAS!** (Sweden, Director: Fredrik Gertten., Producers: Fredrik Gertten, Margarete Jangard, Bart Simpson, 2009, 54 minutes)

Co-production with WG Films, ITVS International, SVT, ARTE/ZDF, VPRO

Juan “Accidentes” Dominguez is on his biggest case ever. On behalf of 12 Nicaraguan banana workers he is tackling Dole Food in a groundbreaking legal battle for their use of a banned pesticide that sterilized workers. Can he beat the giant, or will the corporation get away with it? In the suspenseful documentary **BANANAS!** filmmaker Fredrik Gertten sheds new light on the global politics of food.

**COWBOYS IN INDIA** (England, Director: Simon Chambers, Producers: Teddy Leifer, Paul Taylor, 2009, 79 minutes)

Co-production with ITVS International, Channel 4 UK

Aided by two inept locals, director Simon Chambers goes to the poorest area in India where a tribe is fighting to save a sacred mountain from multinational mining moguls who say its resources will bring prosperity to the people. **COWBOYS IN INDIA** explores accusations of murder and whether the company-built hospitals and schools actually exist—landing these investigators in bigger trouble than expected.

**LAST TRAIN HOME** (China/Canada, Director: Lixin Fan, Producers: Daniel Cross, Mila Aung-Thwin, 2009, 84 minutes)

Co-production of EyeSteel Films in association with ITVS International, Sundance Documentary Fund, TV5, Super Channel, Channel 4 UK

China experiences the largest internal migration in the world as rural workers travel to cities looking for employment. In **LAST TRAIN HOME**, filmmaker Lixin Fan follows the Zhang family who save all year to travel home for Chinese New Year, along with over 100 million other migrant workers, hoping to salvage the relationship with their teenage daughter.

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**THE LAST TIGHTROPE DANCER IN ARMENIA** (Armenia, Directors: Arman Yeritsyan, Inna Sahakyan, Producer: Vardan Hovhannisyan 2009, 54 minutes)  
Co-production with ITVS International, NHK, SVT, TVP, Estonian Television, YLE

Zhora, 78-years-old, and Knyaz, 77-years-old, were once the most celebrated masters of tightrope dancers in Armenia. With Zhora's health deteriorating and Knyaz struggling to find a student to succeed him, **THE LAST TIGHTROPE DANCER IN ARMENIA** looks at how these two men put their rivalry aside to train Hovsep, a 16-year-old orphan, who holds the fate of this ancient art in his hands.

**THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN IN AMERICA** (USA, Directors/Producers: Judith Ehrlich, Rick Goldsmith, 2009, 94 minutes)  
Co-production with ITVS, ARTE/ZDF

In 1971, Dr. Daniel Ellsberg, a top war planner, leaked top-secret documents to *The New York Times* that lead to what many consider the toppling of President Nixon and the end of the Vietnam War. **THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN IN AMERICA** looks at how one man risked it all and transformed the American political landscape.

In addition to the five films, screening at the festival, ITVS will host a "Guests Meet Guests Reception" to celebrate all participating filmmakers and highlight the ITVS International Call and the approaching 2010 deadline. The event will be held on Monday, November 23, 2009 from 18.00 to 19.00 at the central festival venue Escape DeLux on Rembrandt Square. The event is open to all credentialed festival attendees and filmmakers.

#### **ABOUT ITVS**

The Independent Television Service (ITVS) funds and presents award-winning documentaries and dramas on public television, innovative new media projects on the Web and the Emmy® Award-winning weekly PBS series *Independent Lens*. ITVS was established by a historic mandate of Congress to champion independently produced programs that take creative risks, spark public dialogue and serve underserved audiences. Since its inception in 1991, ITVS programs have revitalized the relationship between the public and public television, bringing TV audiences face-to-face with the lives and concerns of their fellow Americans. More information can be found at [itvs.org](http://itvs.org). ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people.

#### **ABOUT ITVS INTERNATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CALL**

ITVS International promotes the exchange of compelling documentary films between the United States and other nations, going beyond stereotypes and headline news to provide television audiences around the world with new insight into the cultures and people that comprise our global community. ITVS International Call enables independent producers from outside the United States to create documentaries for U.S. television. Through the Call, storytellers from other countries introduce U.S. audiences to their global neighbors, opening a window into unfamiliar lives, experiences and perspectives from around the world. ITVS International Call seeks films in the production or post-production phase and encourages independent producers to submit their projects for consideration. For more information about guidelines, eligibility and how to apply, please visit [www.itvs.org/producers/international\\_guidelines](http://www.itvs.org/producers/international_guidelines). **The deadline to apply is February 5, 2010.**

ITVS International Call is an initiative of ITVS and funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Ford Foundation and John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

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