

ITVS ANNOUNCES SIX NEW PROJECTS SELECTED FOR FUNDING THROUGH ITVS INTERNATIONAL CALL 2009

International Documentarians from Around the World, Chosen from Competitive Applicant Pool of Submissions

Upcoming ITVS International Call Deadline is February 5, 2010

(San Francisco, CA)—The Independent Television Service (ITVS) announced that it has contracted with six international documentary projects from its 2009 International Call, providing them with production funding and eventual U.S. television broadcast. The newly selected projects span the globe and offer rare insights into countries as far away as Chile, Kenya, Vietnam and Jordan. The projects were selected through a competitive application process, drawing in 482 submissions from 82 countries representing 65 languages. The submission deadline for projects to be considered in the next ITVS International Call is February 5, 2010.

“With the selection of these new projects, ITVS International continues its commitment to bringing the best in diverse documentary films by independent filmmakers from around the world,” said Claire Aguilar, vice president of programming for ITVS. “These films help provide a rare opportunity for U.S audiences to learn from and about our global community.”

All six documentary projects are slated for eventual broadcast, including primetime slots on the Emmy® Award-winning PBS series *Independent Lens* and PBS World’s *Global Voices* series. The programs may also be distributed on commercial outlets, including the Sundance Channel, the National Geographic Channel and HBO, and on online video sites, such as, Jaman and SnagFilms.

Since the launch of the Call in 2005, nearly 91 International documentary projects have been supported through ITVS International’s Global Perspectives Project and its International Media Development Fund. The submission deadline for projects to be considered for the next ITVS International Call is February 5, 2010. More information and guidelines for application can be found online at itvs.org/international.

The six, newly funded projects from the 2009 International Call are as follows:

74 SQUARE METERS (Chile)

by Tiziana Panizza and Paola Castillo

Iselsa, Kathy and tribal leader Iván will accomplish a dream. Along with 150 other marginalized families from Valparaíso, Chile, they were chosen for a social experiment, which moves them from their precarious homes to a middle-class neighborhood. But their new neighbors consider them criminals who put their homes at risk. Here’s a story about the conflictive meeting of two worlds.

THE LAST WHITE MAN STANDING (Kenya)

by director Justin Webster and producers Mette Heide and Don Edkins

Tom Cholmondeley, heir to the largest, white-owned estate in Kenya, stands accused of murdering a black poacher on his land. The film follows the ongoing case and describes its sociopolitical context.

-More-

THE TEAM (Kenya)

by Patrick Reed

Kenyans scramble to produce a dramatic TV soap opera series, hoping controversial storylines can bridge ethnic divisions. Can they captivate an audience and help transform a nation? Can one of the lowliest of art forms contribute to the loftiest of ideals—real social change?

TEACHER (Vietnam)

by Leslie Wiener

For the past 15 years, Nguyen Van Hung, once a homeless drug addict, has dedicated his life to helping street children survive AIDS in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. TEACHER is the story of one man's fight against an epidemic that claims its victims by the millions, and the innocent children and teenagers struck by the reality of a global nightmare.

THIS IS MY PICTURE WHEN I WAS DEAD (Jordan)

by Mahmoud Al Massad

What if one's death was not the end of his journey? Four-year-old Bashir was killed in the assassination of his father, a top PLO lieutenant. What if Bashir was brought back to life, to dig through his past only to learn that the dream that he and his father died for is becoming a nation turned against itself?

THE RODRIGUEZ PROJECT (South Africa)

by Malik Bendjelloul

American music artist Rodriguez releases an album in 1970 and fails completely. He lives his whole life working as a manual laborer without learning that his album becomes massive in South Africa. Twenty-five years later, a Johannesburg detective finds Rodriguez; as he travels to South Africa, Rodriguez discovers that there he is more famous than the Rolling Stones.

More information about these new projects and all ITVS International programs can be found online at www.itvs.org/international.

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. ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people.

-More-

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. **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, the Ford Foundation and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Contact:

Voleine Amilcar
Voleine_amilcar@itvs.org
415-356-8383 ex 244