



WIFV NEWS

January 2014



President's Message

Dear WIFVland - Happy 2014! I really do love this time of year - the whole idea of a *tabula rasa* and an entire 12 months laid out like fresh snow, just waiting for us to create a new set of footprints that can lead in any direction

we choose.

As I look out across the internet and the airwaves, I see exciting signs of invigoration in the media landscape. In a world that has lately seemed dominated by aggregated content and television and movies heavy on remakes and comic book characters, there are signs that original ideas and fresh perspectives have places to thrive and flourish. I see new sources of original content creation and investigative journalism through exciting new news sites such as [OZYMANDIAS](#) and [First Look Media](#) and new outlets for investigative documentary in the recently launched series [Al Jazeera America Presents](#).

And speaking of places to thrive and flourish, we here at WIFV are hard at work planning events and pulling together resources to help you on your journey. On January 8 we bring award-winning filmmaker Jennifer Steinman to town to talk about alternative funding models for documentary, using her latest project, [Desert Runners](#), as a hands-on and in-depth case study.

On January 15 we take an evening to kick back and celebrate. The annual WIFV Holiday Party is an excellent way to connect and reconnect with friends and colleagues. And this year we're thrilled to be at the brand-new [1776 tech incubator space](#), filled with lots of leading edge start-up energy - perfect fuel to get your own creative juices flowing.

On January 23, we kick off the 2014 Executive Breakfast Series with a private tour of NPR's

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Documentary Funding Models to Start the New Year!



Join award-winning filmmaker [Jennifer Steinman](#) for an in-depth case study on successfully funding your documentary. Jennifer will talk through the lessons she learned making her first film, *Motherland*, and how she applied those insights in the making of *Desert Runners*, which has since won awards

at the Hamptons International Film Festival, Edinburgh Film Festival and the Vancouver Film Festival. This discussion will be moderated by Erin Essenmacher.

Wednesday, January 8, 2014

6:30 networking; 7:00 pm presentation
Interface Media Group, 1233 20th Street, NW
(Dupont South Metro)

\$15 WIFV Members / \$30 Public

[RSVP here](#)

WIFV Holiday Party

new facilities. It will also be a chance to see their digital initiatives up close and meet some of the voices you know.

In March we will commemorate the 35th Anniversary of the first informal gathering of the founding mothers of WIFV with similar intimate gatherings in homes across the region. Stay tuned for more details about that as well as other events in 2014 to start our 35th Anniversary celebrations.

April will once again feature the WIFV Media Job Fair. Last year's was a smashing success with near-record attendance and hirings. Suggestions from last year are being incorporated into this year's plans with the goal of an even better experience for attendees. Anticipated date is April 5, so please mark your calendars!

There are lots of other great programs and initiatives in the works including opportunities for independent filmmakers to find funding and access for their projects - more information on that coming soon.

So here's to a year full of footprints leading you to success, prosperity and magic - whether you continue on great initiatives forged in 2013 or take the opportunity for a fresh beginning to tackle new challenges, new projects and new outlets for all of that amazing creative energy I know we have in our community. And here's wishing you some time along the way to stop and make a few snow angels.

With Gratitude,
Erin Essenmacher



Welcome the New Year with old and new friends, delicious food and door prizes! We will present the Randy Goldman Career



Credit: A3 Entertainment

Development Scholarship, Carolyn's First Decade Fund, the WIFV President's Award and premiere *Lunatic Fringe* from the WIFV Mentoring Project! Great way to celebrate amazing WIFV Members and plan for the future.

Wednesday, January 15, 2014
6:30 to 8:30 pm
1776 Tech Incubator, 1133 15th St. NW, DC (Farragut North or West)
\$25 WIFV Members/ \$40 Public
[RSVP here](#)

Tour NPR Headquarters - WIFV Executive Breakfast - Jan. 23

Join us in the heart of NOMA for a private tour of National Public Radio's new headquarters - a testament to the evolution of digital newsrooms and cross-platform storytelling.

We'll meet at 9:00 a.m. at the main NPR entrance, convene for breakfast, and then take a tour of the facilities, including the 55,000 square foot newsroom and a studio. More details to come - but mark the date and make your reservation now!

Thursday, January 23, 2014
9:00 to 10:30 am
NPR Headquarters, 1111 North Capitol St, NE at the corner of L Street (NOMA/Gallaudet/New York Ave Metro)
\$15 WIFV Executive & Corporate Members;
\$25 other WIFV Members; \$35 Public
RSVP Required to membership@wifv.org

p.h. balanced films Launches Fiscal Sponsorship



p.h. balanced films is delighted to announce the launch of its new fiscal sponsorship program for film projects. Eligible projects need not precisely mirror p.h. balanced films' mission but would share elements, such as a focus on human rights and/or the impact, good or bad, that corporate activity can have on the world. Any stage of development, from pre-

production through distribution, is welcome. [Click here for more information or to apply](#). If you have questions not addressed in the FAQs, please reach out to fiscal@phbalancedfilms.org

Supporter Spotlight - Studio Unknown

The Supporter Spotlight recognizes the work and contributions to the industry of WIFV's supporters. As a 501(c)3 charitable organization, WIFV relies on financial support from companies, individuals, foundations, and government entities. This month the Spotlight shines on Studio Unknown. To find out how your organization can support WIFV, please contact Melissa Houghton at 202-429-9438.

Studio Unknown is not your average Mid-Atlantic audio post facility. Based in Catonsville, MD, this full-service audio post production studio, built and operated by a passionate, creative and client focused team, hosts the only Dolby Tuned and Approved film dubbing stage on the East Coast, south of NY. With clients and Board Members on both coasts and everywhere in between, Studio Unknown is constantly refining a network and process to better serve and support filmmakers locally and abroad.



For 12 years, Studio Unknown has worked on a variety of projects; from regional spots, broadcast, and animation to full sound packages for feature films and documentaries. But when the company built their theatrical dubbing stage in 2010, their path and mission statement became quite clear; "High-end cinematic sound for everyone," claims Studio Unknown's founding partner, Kevin Hill, CAS.

Determined to support the indie film world in creative ways, Studio Unknown puts their money where their mouth is on **January 23, 2014** with their seminar, "**Better Sound on Any Budget: Professional Advice for Independent Filmmakers.**" The seminar is designed to offer filmmakers insight, tips, and tricks for increasing the quality of their projects with better sound, regardless of budget and outsourcing ability. In addition, the evening will include an interview with Eduardo Sanchez (*The Blair Witch Project*) led by Jack Gerbes from the Maryland Film Office, followed by an open panel Q&A. [Click here for more details and to RSVP.](#)

IDFA Impressions



By Jody Sanchez

"If documentaries are the new rock and roll, the broadcasters clearly don't know the steps." This curious insight from BBC Storyville's Nick Fraser was one of many that I scribbled down during my week in Amsterdam at IDFA. Fraser relishes the role of provocateur, taking on everyone from broadcasters to programmers, "There are so many predictable films at festivals - the environment is in danger! Dictators are bad! ... Most films about capitalism are toxic screeds!"

There were indeed films at IDFA about the environment, finances and a dictator or two, but I wasn't about to dismiss entire categories so quickly. One of the many extraordinary

films I saw shamed me into realizing that I'd begun to tune out what has been happening in Syria out of compassion fatigue.

Talal Derki 's *Return to Homs* managed to both break my heart and keep it racing. The pacing of the

edit was masterful, as the scenes devolve from a hopeful Homs where locals demonstrate in the streets to a ghost town where young men with everything and nothing to lose are outgunned by military troops right on the other side of a crumbling wall.

Derki's film and another audience favorite, *#chicagoGirl - The Social Network Takes on a Dictator*, capture what happens to these Syrians who give up on peaceful resistance and opt for weapons. There's something profoundly unsettling about watching this transformation on screen. Young men stand and walk different when a gun is strapped to their shoulder. They caress their rifle cartridges as they clean their weapons and for that one moment, they are invincible.

After sitting through such scenes, it helped to be able to finally exhale along with an entire room of people who have just had their guts wrenched out as well. It was even more heartening to collectively revisit a film over a glass of cheap wine a few hours later. Making my way through the insanely crowded IDFA happy hours was daunting at first. It brought back that "where can I possibly plant myself in the school cafeteria?" anxiety. But it never took more than five minutes to fall into a first-rate chat with someone intriguing.



I opted to forgo one day of screenings to sit through a daylong "Interactive Reality Conference" exploring the future of documentary storytelling. I'm still thinking through the notion of making story-telling becoming more "elastic" as suggested by Jason Brush of UCLA and The Art Center College of Design. Brush described how the production process is evolving beyond the traditional trajectory of development, pre-production, production, post-production and distribution. Instead, "we are seeing more and more a design process that is far more iterative," he said.

The promises of technology proved problematic for part of the daylong event. We were asked to "tweet" our questions to the speakers, which led to radio silence since much of the audience was unable to connect with the wifi!

Actually the only true disappointment of my time at IDFA was being denied a chance to purchase an observer seat at the famed pitching forum. I was told, off the record, that IDFA apportions those seats so to reflect the nationalities of the countries that bring funding to the forum. Although unconfirmed, this makes sense. I happily relied on the regular D-word updates from the amazing Eli Brown who managed to snag a media seat.

After marinating in so many marvelous films made by Scandinavians and witnessing the extraordinary support they receive creatively, educationally and financially, I returned home with a new strategic plan for my next film - researching my family tree to locate whether I have any long lost relatives still living in Finland!

Docs In Progress Receives NEA Art Works Grant

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Acting Chairman Joan Shigekawa announced that Docs In Progress is one of 895 nonprofit organizations nationwide to receive an NEA Art Works grant.



Funding from the NEA will help support *Decade of Docs in DC*, which will include public screenings of films by Washington-area documentarians produced over the past decade and the Docs In Progress Fellowship Program aimed at supporting ten emerging documentary filmmakers.

"As Docs In Progress gets ready to celebrate our tenth year of programming in 2014, " said Executive Director Erica Ginsberg, "we are pleased that the NEA shares our commitment to celebrate the achievements and potential of what has become the nation's third largest documentary community."

Acting Chairman Shigekawa said, "The National Endowment for the Arts is proud to support these exciting and diverse arts projects that will take place throughout the United States. Whether it is through a focus on education, engagement, or innovation, these projects all contribute to vibrant communities and memorable experiences for the public to engage with the arts."

NEA Art Works grants support the creation of art that meets the highest standards of excellence: public engagement with diverse and excellent art, lifelong learning in the arts, and enhancing the livability of communities through the arts. The NEA received 1,528 eligible Art Works applications, requesting more than \$75 million in funding. Of those applications, 895 have been recommended for grants for a total of \$23.4 million.

Docs In Progress is one of only two organizations in the Washington DC Metro area to receive an Art Works grant in the Media Arts discipline (the other being the DC Environmental Film Festival).

WIFTI Summit, May 16-18, 2014



Women In Film and Media Pittsburgh (WIFM) will play host to the 2014 Women In Film and Television International (WIFTI) Summit May 16-18, 2014. The Summit will draw hundreds of women from WIFTI's 40 chapters located throughout the world to discuss filmmaking issues and attend panel discussions and screenings, the Opal Awards presentation and other events. [Early Bird Registration available here.](#)

New and Renewing Members

The following joined or renewed their WIFV membership (November 24 - December 31).

Karen Akerson
Allison Arlotta
Felicia Barlow-Clar
Melvin Bogard
Susan Borke
Donna Brant
Anne Brooker-Grogan
Connie Bransilver
Jon Bunzey
Ryan Burdick
Barbara Burst
Cintia Cabib
Caitlin Carroll
Erika Christie
Natalie Clothier
Tamera Coleman
Marsha Coleman-Adebayo
Faith DeVeaux
Jason Diebler
Maxine Downs

Adam Harris
Janna Hearn
Lynnette Jackson
Jeannie Johnson
Sheila Kennan
Natasha Klauss
Rana Koll-Mandel
Krys Kornmeier
Lance Kramer
Lisa Laden
Nicole Laloggia
Augusta Lehman
Elissa Leonard
Cheryl Lewis-Hawkins
Joan Lanigan
Dominic Mann
Mikael Manoukian
Jessica Marcy
Elizabeth McGraw-Austin
Laurie Miller
Michael Moser

Brian Real
Deborah Redmond
Tanya Roche
Zohar Rom
Betsy Royall
Keith Salkowski
Jennifer Schwed
Chris Sciannella
Aaron Shirley
Tiffany Silver-Tucker
Robin Smith
Sheldon Smith
Dan Sonnett
Carol Swain
Ellen Ternes
Skye Trimble
Jeff Trussell
Emre Tufekgioglu
Kristen Udowitz
Cindy Vaughn
Ben Weinberg

Peter Dowty
Kristin Dyak
Sara Evans
Anne- Marie Fendrick
Renee Fischer
Michael Garvey
Tara Garwood
Tamara Gaskins
Anna Gomez

Marilyn Munder
Malia Murray
William Neveker
Sandy Northrop
Tosha O'Neal
Andrea Palombella
Adam Parr
Laura Possessky

Beverly Westergren
Sherelle Williams

Corporate Members:
Capitol Prompting - John Heikel & Yasmina Redman
Studio Unknown - Jaime Horrigan
VideoTakes Inc. - Sandy Cannon-Brown

About WIFV

WIFV supports women in the industry by promoting equal opportunities, encouraging professional development, serving as an information network, and educating the public about women's creative and technical achievements.

Contact Us

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Send Stories to:

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WIFV is grateful for the annual support of these [companies](#) and our [corporate members](#).