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LEF New England Moving Image Fund Awards \$190,000 in 2019 Production and Post-Production Grants to Independent Documentary Filmmakers

CAMBRIDGE, MA — Today, the LEF Foundation announced **10 Moving Image Fund grants totaling \$190,000** in support for New England-based independent documentary filmmakers.

The **LEF Moving Image Fund** invests in artful, feature-length documentary films that demonstrate excellence in technique, strong storytelling ability, and originality of artistic vision and voice. The most recent round of awards includes six grants of \$15,000 to projects at the production stage, and four grants of \$25,000 to projects at the post-production stage.

LEF Executive Director Lyda Kuth wrote, **“These recently funded documentary projects demonstrate once again the extraordinary pool of talent that resides here and that continues to characterize New England as a place to look to for exciting work.”**

The selected films take on a variety of artistic approaches – experimental, essayistic, observational, personal, and poetic – and bring new critical perspectives to an array of subjects including addiction and recovery, aging, the art world, capitalism, immigration, incarceration, families, gender bias, technology, tourism, and trans identities.

“There is a singular vision to each of these projects,” wrote Kuth, **“both in what has captured the imagination of the filmmaker and in what motivates them to share and to have an impact on the world around them.”**

Production Grants



***Adam’s Apple* (\$15,000)**

Directed by Amy Jenkins (New Hampshire). “Adam’s Apple” is a divergent coming-of-age documentary from the perspectives of Director Amy Jenkins and her teenage transgender son, Adam. Collaboratively they will trace the transition of Adam from pre-pubescent Audrey to evolving-young-man Adam in an exploration of what characterizes “maleness” for today’s gender-redefining youth.



***The Star of Hope (w.t.)* (\$15,000)**

Directed & Produced by Jason Mann (Maine). When an American art legend dies, he leaves behind a bitter legal fight over copyrights and money, a complicated legacy in his small town, and a final challenge: the restoration of his historic home before it falls apart.



Third River Film (w.t.) (\$15,000)

Directed and Produced by Robb Moss (Massachusetts). The film is the third of a trilogy that began in 1978. By closely filming a group of friends every twenty years and intercutting the various time frames, the film will enact time-portraits of the various characters and closely observe the act of aging.



Reentry (\$15,000)

Directed by Jennifer Redfearn; Produced by Jennifer Redfearn & Tim Metzger (Massachusetts). In a midwestern state, battered by both the opioid crisis and high incarceration rates, three young mothers prepare to return from prison to their communities and families. As they struggle to mend relationships with their children after years of separation, their stories expose how poverty, drugs, and incarceration are destroying family ties and show how women working together can help each other rebuild their lives.



In the Holocene (\$15,000)

Directed by Ben Rivers & Anocha Suwichakornpong (Massachusetts). This documentary film will be a forensic look into the landscape, work, and stories of the community of Krabi, Southern Thailand. A major tourist destination in Thailand, the filmmakers want to capture the town in this specific moment where the pre-historic, the more recent past and the contemporary capitalist world collide, sometimes uneasily.



Joonam (\$15,000)

Directed by Sierra Urich (Vermont). A filmmaker searches to uncover her family's Iranian past. Excavating the formative memories of her grandmother, mother, and self, the film explores the evolving shape of girlhood and with it the complex relationships between mother and daughter, Iran and America, and the immigrant experience as it ripples over time.

Post-Production Grants



***Almost Human* (\$25,000)**

Directed by Abigail Child; Produced by Jennifer Burton

(Massachusetts). Exploring the science, ethics, and cultural valences of human-machine interaction, ALMOST HUMAN follows five cutting-edge laboratories in Japan and the US to discover competing approaches to how we conceive a “human.” The film focuses on androids, gender, and the ethical implications of this research, engaging viewers with the marvels of contemporary technology while raising important and often troubling questions about our future.



***Recovery High* (\$25,000)**

Directed by Steve Liss (Massachusetts); Produced by Steve

Liss and Zak Piper. "Recovery High" chronicles an entire year at an innovative public school, where students study English, math, art, science and music and earn a diploma while working to recover from drug addictions. The documentary showcases a new model of education and offers new hope for troubled teenagers and their families.



***North By Current* (\$25,000)**

Directed by D'Angelo Madsen Minax (Vermont); Produced by

Felix Endara. Trans filmmaker, D'Angelo Madsen Minax, returns to his rural Michigan hometown following the death of his infant niece and the wrongful arrest of his brother-in-law for her murder. As he navigates a town steeped in addiction, economic depression, and religious fervor, "Madsen" rebuilds familial bonds as he creates a relentless portrait of an enduring pastoral family.



***Girl Talk* (\$25,000)**

Directed by Lucia Small (Massachusetts); Produced by Lucia

Small & Dia Sokol-Savage. Filmed over four years, GIRL TALK follows five teenage girls as they learn to navigate and challenge sexist double standards in high school debate, a highly competitive, male-dominated activity where boys disproportionately win. How does gender bias impact the female debaters in realizing their full potential? Will these girls break through barriers, beat the odds, and follow in the footsteps of Sonia Sotomayor, Kamala Harris, Ayanna Pressley and Elizabeth Warren — all high school debate champions?

In addition to this group of grantees, LEF also awarded \$30,000 to 6 projects in pre-production earlier in the fiscal year. **In total, LEF will be distributing \$220,000 in funding to documentary production over the course of its 2019 fiscal year.**

The next grant deadline is **Friday, June 7, 2019** for projects seeking pre-production support. Please check www.lef-foundation.org for details regarding LEF Moving Image Fund guidelines and eligibility. For more information on the Foundation or its funded projects, please contact Program Officer Genevieve Carmel: 617.492.5333 or gen@lef-foundation.org.

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