

The National Endowment for the Arts & International Documentary Association present

The Documentary Sustainability Summit

February 10, 2017



**National
Endowment
for the Arts**
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Special Notes for the Day

WIFI ACCESS

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RESTROOMS

Located across the hall, next to the Auditorium

FOOD, BEVERAGE, & SNACKS

Light breakfast, coffee/tea, and snacks are adjacent to the registration table through 3:00pm. Lunch and additional items are available for purchase at the Cafeteria located in the building.

Cafeteria Hours

Open for breakfast through 11am / Lunch served from 11:30am-2:30pm

Welcome Notes

from the National Endowment for the Arts & International Documentary Association

We are grateful for this opportunity to bring people together to enlighten, educate, and inform public understanding and knowledge about pressing issues facing the documentary community. As you are aware, we are in the midst of a remarkable era of transition. Advances in technology are completely reshaping the way that non-fiction films and videos are created, distributed and viewed. These advancements are redefining the field as an explosion of filmmakers are utilizing these tools to tell critical stories and engage the public in a dizzying array of topic areas.

At the same time, the underlying revenue structures and business relationships in the community are also in flux. As the marketplace for creating and accessing non fiction film evolves, serious questions are being asked about the sustainability of the sector.

Last year's *Getting Real* conference brought together dozens of community leaders—filmmakers, industry leaders, researchers, producers, journalists, festival curators, policy experts and other stakeholders—into a three day exploration of how the documentary community can assert agency over its future. While there are no easy answers or a simple five point plan, what we can agree on is that strengthening professional networks, increasing research and pursuit of best practices, effective partnerships with the public and philanthropic sectors and direct engagement with industry leaders can all contribute to a more sustainable future.

These issues are hard and complicated. But they are discussions that are critically important for the future of the community and we are very glad to host these conversations today at the National Endowment for the Arts. We'd also like to gratefully acknowledge the Ford Foundation for their generous support. Thank you for taking the time to join us and we look forward to a day of thought-provoking discussion and collaborative problem solving.

Sincerely,



Jax Deluca
Media Arts Director
National Endowment for the Arts



Simon Kilmurry
Executive Director
International Documentary Association

AGENDA

8:30 – 9:15 **Registration** - Allow at least 15 minutes to get through security.
Light Breakfast - Bagels, coffee/tea, and pastries available. Additional items available for purchase in the ground level cafeteria.

9:30 AM **Welcome remarks**
Jax Deluca (Media Arts Director, National Endowment for the Arts)
Simon Kilmurry (Executive Director, International Documentary Association)

9:45 - 10:00 **Conference overview: The Question of Sustainability**
The Sustainability track at the *Getting Real* conference was the product of months of planning by filmmakers and other stakeholders. IDA consultants Michael Bracy and Cynthia Lopez will review the day's agenda, discuss the thinking behind the sustainability conversation and outline goals and objectives for today's convening. Presented by facilitators, Michael Bracy and Cynthia Lopez.

10:00 - 10:45 **Roundtable conversation: The State of the Documentary Union**
The documentary field is at a moment of terrific opportunity and upheaval. New technologies and business models are transforming how non fiction film and video is created, distributed and viewed. At the same time, the traditional funding and compensation structures are evolving to keep pace with these changes. The result is an incredibly fluid landscape where documentary film is more vibrant than ever but many feel pressures of sustaining a career in this transformative time. Stakeholders from across the community share their perspectives on the documentary field as we move into 2017.

Moderator

Wendy Levy (The Alliance for Media Arts and Culture)

Panelists

Maria Agui Carter (Writer/Director, Rebel - WGA Diversity)

Simon Kilmurry (International Documentary Association)

Caroline Libresco (Director, Catalyst & Women's Initiative, Sundance)

Mimi Pickering (Director, Appalshop's Community Media Initiative)

Gordon Quinn (Artistic Director, Kartemquin Films)

10:45 - 11:30 Filmmaker perspectives: What does sustainability look like?

In September's *Getting Real* conference, the International Documentary Association paid particular attention to the concept of "sustainability." In this session, filmmakers discuss their take on the current industry with a particular eye on what kinds of initiatives, partnerships and best practices could create a more stable and sustainable industry for working filmmakers.

Moderator

Marjan Safinia (International Documentary Association)

Panelists

Byron Hurt (Filmmaker)

Shola Lynch (Filmmaker)

Laura Nix (Filmmaker)

Marilyn Ness (Filmmaker)

Esther Robinson (Filmmaker)

11:30 - 12:00 Effective Public Sector Partnerships

There is a strong overlap between the public sector at all levels and the documentary film community. Many states and localities value the economic impact of a thriving production scene and have established incentive programs and tax rebates to provide support. In other communities, local leaders are building apprenticeship and job training programs to provide opportunities for young people looking for opportunities to work in the field. Finally, agencies at all level of government recognize the utility of non fiction film and video as a way of articulating issues and engaging with citizens. This session will explore specific examples of how these kinds of partnerships are effective for all parties involved.

Moderator

Cynthia Lopez (Former NYC Film Commissioner)

Panelists

Lance Kramer (Meridian Hill Pictures)

Justine Nagan (Executive Director, American Documentary/POV)

Herbert Niles (Dist. of Columbia Office of Cable TV, Film, Music, Entertainment)

12:00 - 12:10 Moving Into Action: Advancing the cause of sustainability

Discussions about sustainability are useful, but what does this mean in practicality? In our afternoon sessions we will begin exploring how these concepts can be advanced not as conversations, but as specific, actionable initiatives. As we prepare to break for lunch, we will synthesize some of the themes that are emerging from our morning sessions to provide insight into how the community can develop a universe of specific, actionable strategies. Discussion led by facilitators, Michael Bracy and Cynthia Lopez.

12:10 - 1:00 Lunch

Participants are encouraged to grab lunch at the NEA cafeteria and make new friends!

1:10 - 2:00 Small Group Session #1 (Rooms A & B)

Participants are breaking out into two smaller groups (Room A & Room B) to explore currently existing models that address specific sustainability topics.

Room A**Workforce Development & Empowering the Next Generation of Filmmakers**

This group will gain insight on existing strategies to align public sector and industry goals by highlighting shared goals of local government and established documentary filmmakers. One such intersection is around the questions of workforce development and job training. From the standpoint of local governments, it is critical to provide opportunities for new entrants in the workforce to be supported as they begin to establish their careers. On the other hand, many documentary filmmakers are eager to welcome new, ambitious, creative and diverse voices into the field. In some communities, these agendas have overlapped in job training and apprenticeship programs that are creating the kinds of paid positions that simply could not exist without public support. This working group examines existing models from various standpoints and explores how these kinds of initiatives could be scaled.

Presenters include:

Wendy Levy (Executive Director, The Alliance for Media Arts & Culture)

Herbert Niles (Dist. of Columbia Office of Cable TV, Film, Music, Entertainment)

Gordon Quinn (Artistic Director, Kartemquin Films)

Room B**The State of the Documentary Field's Essential Data and Research**

What do we know in order to advance the case for documentary production and careers and funding? What do we need to know? And how do we move forward as a field?

In all industries, particularly artistic ones, there is a need for data, research and insights to help make the case for all kinds of angles in advancement - this is especially true in this fluid and evolving documentary landscape. From filmmakers trying to make informed decisions about their career to policymakers seeking a deeper understanding of the marketplace to new funders to understand the essential role documentary plays in the culture and even the economy, research and data provide valuable insight into the realities of the community. Research does not have to be simply quantitative - often, qualitative analysis can help identify and promote best practices and opportunities to learn from others innovative strategies. This discussion takes a look at the needed data

and research in the field with a strong focus on what we already know, what we need to know and how to move forward.

Presenters include:

Caty Borum Chatoo (Director, Center for Media and Social Impact,
American University)

2:00 - 2:10 Break

2:10 - 3:00 Small Group Session #2 (Rooms A & B)

Room A

The Shifting Educational Marketplace: This Isn't Your Parents' Filmstrip

Digital technology is paving the way for an explosion of nonfiction film, as documentaries and videos are increasingly integrated into K-12 and university curricula. Filmmakers also see this as an opportunity for their film's to reach a larger audience over a longer period of time - while also instigating conversations and actions that transcend the viewing of the film itself. What are the implications of this dynamic marketplace? How are filmmakers compensated for their films' integration into the classroom? And how are educators responding to these new opportunities spurred by broadband deployment, integration of laptops and tablets and low-cost, high tech projection platforms?

Presenters include:

Alice Apley (Documentary Educational Resources)

Katie Dellamaggiore (Director, Brooklyn Castle)

Room B

The Exploding Short Documentary Field: New Tools, New Platforms, New Audiences

We know technology is transforming how nonfiction film and videos are made, distributed and viewed. Social media and other platforms are also creating unprecedented opportunities to share short videos, directly engage with audiences and elevate important perspectives. In particular, new business models are emerging around short-form documentaries, creating new opportunities for working filmmakers and organizations that are eager to showcase this content. What is the status of short-form documentaries? What's working and what isn't? How does the move toward shorter works impact filmmakers that prefer to work on feature length projects? And how are philanthropic organizations and the public sector integrating these kinds of short-form documentaries into their overarching communications and outreach strategies?

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Presenters include

Whitney Dow (Multimedia Storyteller)

Marjan Safinia (International Documentary Association)

3:00 - 3:10 Break

3:10 - 4:00 Group Discussions, Reflection and Closing

Throughout the day we have heard many perspectives and explored many issues. To close the day we will self-organize into tables of eight to reflect on the day and discuss next steps. What has inspired us? Where do we feel challenged? What other sectors have done a good job addressing these issues? And how can we turn today's conversations into action?



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