

SUNDANCE INSTITUTE

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For More Information Contact:
Irene Cho, irene_cho@sundance.org
435.658.3456

SUNDANCE INSTITUTE DOCUMENTARY FILM SERIES PRESENTS RARE PREVIEW OF WORK IN PROGRESS ON APRIL 2

***WHATEVER IT TAKES* Profiles High School Principal Who Gave New Life to South Bronx Students** **Filmmaker, Principal and Students to Discuss the Documentary with Audience**

Park City, Utah — Sundance Institute announced today it will host a free presentation on Wednesday, April 2 of the film **WHATEVER IT TAKES**, a work in progress from the Institute's Documentary Film Program. An exciting new feature of the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Series, the special screening provides the audience a rare "behind the scenes" glimpse into the creative process and the opportunity to provide valuable feedback to the film's director. Through work in progress screenings, a film becomes a live, interactive and improvisational event that can reveal the anatomy of a documentary in the making. Hosted by Cara Mertes, Director of the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program, the screening starts at 7 p.m. at the Jim Santy Auditorium in the Park City Library, 1255 Park Avenue. The film's director, Christopher Wong, along with special guests from the film will be attending this inaugural event. The screening is presented in association with the Park City Film Series.

Directed by Christopher Wong, **WHATEVER IT TAKES** chronicles the struggles and triumphs of the first year of a small, innovative public high school set in New York's South Bronx. Through the school's principal and several students unfolds a compelling portrait of a community born into hardship, but rising to excellence.

This evening will give the audience a look at a documentary from the inside out, including a chance to meet the remarkable people the film follows. With peeks at highlighted portions of the film, audience members will hear first hand about the journey of the artist, the challenges facing filmmaker and film subject respectively, and spark intimate conversations about education in America. Meet Edward Tom, Principal of the Bronx Center for Science and Mathematics and central character in the film, who will be in attendance personally to talk about his philosophy of education and why he is fighting for his school and his students. Her will introduce one of his students, Sharifea Baskerville who will speak from the heart about the stories the film reveals. Filmmaker Christopher Wong, making his first feature as a director, will answer questions from the audience about the moments in the film that inspire viewer imagination.

WHATEVER IT TAKES marks Wong's debut as both a director and producer. A relative latecomer to the world of film and video, Christopher has worked as a camera operator, editor, and production manager on a wide variety of projects (independent feature films, documentary shorts, national commercials, etc.). Currently, he is also working on a new documentary about television game show enthusiasts. Christopher received his B.A. in Economics from Princeton University in 1992. He resides in Los Angeles with his wife and daughter.

More than 350 films to date have been supported through the development process with creative and financial assistance from the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program. Films supported by the Sundance Documentary Fund and the Documentary Edit and Story Labs have received widespread distribution to their intended audiences via broadcast and theatrical release, and many have garnered a number of awards and exceptional industry recognition. Among the impressive list of films supported by the Fund are: Tia Lessin and Carl Deal's, *TROUBLE THE WATER*, winner of the 2008 Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize: Documentary, Annie Sundberg and Ricki Stern's, *THE DEVIL CAME ON HORSEBACK*, James Longley's, *IRAQ IN FRAGMENTS*, winner of the 2006 Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize: Documentary, Ross Kauffman and Zana Briski's *BORN INTO BROTHELS*, winner of the 2004 Sundance Film Festival Audience Award: Documentary and the 2004 Academy Award® for Best Documentary Feature; Catherine Tambini and Carlos Sandoval's *FARMINGVILLE*, winner of a Special Jury Prize at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival; Gail Dolgin and Vicente Franco's *DAUGHTER FROM DANANG*, winner of the 2002 Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize: Documentary and an Academy Award® nominee; Kate Davis's *SOUTHERN COMFORT*, winner the 2001 Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize: Documentary; Edet Belzberg's *CHILDREN UNDERGROUND*, winner of a Special Jury Prize at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival and an Academy Award® nominee; and *LONG NIGHT'S JOURNEY INTO DAY*, winner of the 2000 Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize: Documentary and an Academy Award® nominee.

The Sundance Institute Documentary Film Series is a free monthly screening series that presents some of the most compelling nonfiction films to come out of the previous year's Sundance Film Festival, and is a part of Sundance Institute's community programming presented in association with the Park City Film Series.

The Sundance Institute Documentary Film Series is supported by Principal Sponsor Zions Bank, Major Sponsor Summit County Recreation, Arts, and Parks Tax Program, and In Kind Supporters *City Weekly*, Park City Film Series, Park City Marriott, Rocky Mountain Power's Blue Sky Program and *Salt Lake* magazine.

Upcoming Films in the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Series:

May 7, 2008	7:00 p.m.	MANUFACTURED LANDSCAPES, Directed by Jennifer Baichwal
June 4, 2008	7:00 p.m.	MY KID COULD PAINT THAT, Directed by Amir Bar -Lev

Visit www.sundance.org for the entire series lineup.

Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program

The Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program provides year-round support to nonfiction contemporary-issue filmmakers internationally. The program encourages the exploration of innovative nonfiction storytelling, and promotes the exhibition of documentary films to a broader audience. It supports independent artists both domestically and internationally through the Sundance Documentary Fund, the Documentary Composers Laboratory and Edit and Story Laboratory, panels at the Filmmakers Lodge at the Sundance Film Festival and the Sundance Independent Producers Conference, and a variety of collaborative international documentary initiatives.

Documentary Fund grants are announced twice a year and since its inception at the Institute, the Fund has disbursed almost \$4.5 million to over 450 projects in 52 countries. A committee of human rights experts and film professionals made recommendations from projects submitted by filmmakers from around the world. In supporting such work, the Sundance Institute Documentary Fund encourages the diverse exchange of ideas crucial to developing an open society, raising public consciousness about human rights abuses and restrictions of civil liberties, and fostering an ongoing dialogue about these issues.

Sundance Institute

Dedicated to the year-round development of artists of independent vision and to the exhibition of their new work, Sundance Institute celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2006. Founded by Robert Redford in 1981, the Institute has grown into an internationally recognized resource for thousands of independent artists through its Sundance Film Festival and artistic development programs for filmmakers, screenwriters, composers, playwrights and theatre artists. The original values of independence, creative risk-taking, and discovery continue to define and guide the work of Sundance Institute, both with US artists and, increasingly, with artists from other regions of the world.

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