

# WELCOME TO CHECHNYA

A Film by David France



**SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2020**  
U.S. Documentary Competition

**BERLINALE 2020**  
Panorama Dokumente

**Screening Schedule**

Sunday, 23.02.2020 10:00 Cubix 7 (Press Screening)  
Wednesday, 26.02.2020 09:00 CinemaxX 6 (Press Screening)  
Wednesday, 26.02.2020 16:30 International (Premiere)  
Thursday, 27.02.2020 11:15 CinemaxX 6  
Friday, 28.02.2020 14:30 Colosseum 1  
Saturday, 29.02.2020 21:30 Cubix 9

Running Time: 107 min

***DEBUTS JUNE 2020 ON HBO***

**Press Contact**

**Cinetic**

Charlie Olsky  
Ryan Werner  
charlie@cineticmedia.com  
ryan@cineticmedia.com

**International and German**

**Press in Berlin**

Claudia Tomassini,  
claudiatomassini + associates  
claudia@claudiatomassini.com

## **LOGLINE**

The searing documentary WELCOME TO CHECHNYA chronicles the current anti-LGBTQ persecution raging in the Russian republic of Chechnya and shadows the LGBTQ activists who risk unimaginable peril to rescue victims from a targeted campaign of torture and brutality.

## **SHORT SYNOPSIS**

WELCOME TO CHECHNYA, directed by acclaimed writer and Oscar<sup>®</sup> nominated director David France, shadows a group of brave activists risking their lives to confront the ongoing anti-LGBTQ campaign in the Russian republic of Chechnya. With unfettered access and a commitment to protecting anonymity, this documentary exposes these underreported atrocities, while highlighting an extraordinary group of people confronting deadly brutality.

## **LONG SYNOPSIS**

Award winning writer and Oscar<sup>®</sup> nominated director David France (“How to Survive a Plague,” “The Death and Life of Marsha P. Johnson”) continues to bring important LGBTQ issues to the fore in WELCOME TO CHECHNYA, his searing documentary about an ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Russian republic of Chechnya.

Employing a guerilla filmmaking style, France takes us inside the fraught, day-to-day workings of an underground pipeline of activists who face unimaginable risks to rescue LGBTQ victims from Chechnya’s brutal government-directed campaign. In a republic where being gay or transgender is unspeakable, the LGBTQ community lives in the utmost secrecy and fear, under threat of detention, torture and death, often at the hands of the authorities. Extensive access to a remarkable group of activists – from the Russian LGBT Network and the Moscow Community Center for LGBTI+ Initiatives – and alarmingly brutal footage of abuse, bring to light the underreported atrocities and the dangers of exposing them.

Since 2016, Chechnya’s leader, Ramzan Kadyrov, has waged a depraved campaign to “cleanse the blood” of LGBTQ+ Chechens, overseeing a government-sanctioned effort to detain, torture, and execute them. With only faint global condemnation and no action from the Kremlin, a vast and secretive network of activists takes matters into its own hands. Countless numbers of victims have been killed, and hundreds more are missing.

In this environment of prejudice and hate, an ill-equipped and underfunded coalition of LGBTQ activists mobilizes into action despite having little experience in such dangerous work. Offering a secure hotline to call for help and a wide-reaching network of support, the activists provide temporary shelter, safe houses and urgent safe passage. They risk their own safety by meeting with survivors, smuggling them through checkpoints and out of the country.

The film features several gay men and women who come forward in need of aid and tells their stories with astounding candor and bravery. To protect the identities of those fleeing for their lives, France alters their voices and uses adopted pseudonyms. He also deploys a groundbreaking new digital “face double” technique that has never been used before in documentary filmmaking. Visceral and haunting, the survivors can talk without fear of reprisal, and their ordeals can be heard first-hand.

By the close of the film, 151 people have been located with the help of the LGBTQ pipeline. Yet 40,000 others remain in hiding, in need of protection.

### **DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT**

In my work as a journalist and author over many years, I have focused closely on the stories of outsiders and people who society has pushed to its margins – the disregarded, the ignored, the hated.

When I turned to documentary filmmaking, I chose outsider activism as my subject. My first film, HOW TO SURVIVE A PLAGUE, documented the work of early AIDS activists, ordinary people with no training who marshalled the intricate details of virology to change the course of the epidemic. Next, I opened up the story of early gender radicals in THE DEATH AND LIFE OF MARSHA P. JOHNSON, which chronicled not only the founding of the modern LGBTQ movement but also the founding of the first transgender rights organization in 1970.

WELCOME TO CHECHNYA completes this trilogy. It follows a group of ordinary humans who have done something extraordinary, and asks the question that has long preoccupied me: What makes a person assume enormous risk and responsibility when others might turn the other way? What does it take, in other words, to be a hero?

When I left their underground pipeline for the last time, knowing I could never go back once it became known I was reporting on their work, I wept with gratitude for the work they are doing. And for the opportunity they gave me to witness bravery of the most unvarnished kind: selfless, humane, and entirely queer.

### **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

“If they don’t kill you, you’re a winner” David Isteev, LGBTQ activist, Russia.

In early 2017, filmmaker and investigative journalist David France read frightening news accounts revealing a campaign of torture and murder targeting gay men and women under the direction of leaders in Chechnya, a republic of Russia. The story quickly disappeared from the headlines. But that July, The New Yorker published an article by Masha Gessen (“The Gay Men who fled Chechnya’s Purge”) which revealed that this campaign was ongoing, a government-directed effort to “cleanse the Chechen bloodlines.” France explains, “What Masha revealed was that it was a coordinated, top-down campaign to identify and then exterminate LGBTQ Chechens.” The

Kremlin was not intervening with Chechen leaders and international condemnations were going unheeded. Local activists, meanwhile, were left to take matters into their own hands.

Only a few days later, with Masha Gessen onboard as Executive Producer and with the help of Russian producer Askold Kurov, France arrived in Moscow on an initial fact-finding mission: set to stay a weekend, he instead stayed a month. “It was such a frenetic time and people were so deeply engaged in the work of saving peoples’ lives that we just started filming the first day and kept going,” he says.

He gained the trust of David Isteev, crisis intervention coordinator for the country’s largest gay-rights group The Russian LGBT Network, and Olga Baranova, director of the Moscow Community Center for LGBTI+ Initiatives, who brought him into the workings of their covert operations helping the victims of abuse in Chechnya. Members of their groups operate a string of secret safehouses and provide security as well as psychological and financial support, sometimes even new identities and lives outside of Russia. The work is dangerous and highly secretive.

France was impressed with the fearlessness he witnessed, “This is a film about incredibly heroic activism being carried out by the community itself, people who felt called upon to respond because the larger mechanisms of society were doing nothing. None of those people had any reason to believe that they would be brave enough to carry this out, yet they took it on at great risk to themselves.”

Producer Alice Henty joined France’s team later in 2017 and felt strongly about the material. “I also was aware of the purge and I was horrified by it, and shocked that there was so little out there about it. Initially, we had no idea who the characters were going to be, but it just sounded like it had the making of a really strong piece of advocacy filmmaking.”

France returned to Russia several times over the next eighteen months to meet with the survivors as they made their way through the underground pipeline. With the permission of all involved, France and Kurov filmed nonstop. They spoke to several men and women who endured unimaginable violence as well as those who had escaped. But they participated on condition of anonymity because of threats against (and sometimes from) their family back home. France didn’t want to film the survivors in shadow, or with their faces obscured, as he felt this risked detracting from their humanity. “What I proposed to them, and what they were brave enough to accept, is that they let me shoot them without restriction, with a promise that I would find some way to disguise them afterward. I wanted to see what it’s like to be them at this terrible time... to convey the tragedy and the bravery and the perseverance of their lives,” he explains

France and Henty spent months researching and developing possible approaches to protecting their identities without obscuring the emotional truth of their experiences. After numerous failed attempts, they felt they had discovered two possible solutions. To test them, they approached Dr. Thalia Wheatley, an expert in human empathy and the ways that humans connect. She put the VFX images into a study involving 109 students at Dartmouth College and reported a clear winner. Developed by Ryan Laney at digital effects company 300 Ninjas, Inc., that approach involves

digitally masking the many subjects in the film using A.I. and deep machine learning. It is like DeepFake but turned on its head: rather than manipulating someone's image to appear to be saying something they didn't, this approach allows the victims of this terror to speak their truths – while wearing someone else's face. France and his team recruited people in the US – mostly New York-based LGBTQ activists fighting the rise of global anti-LGBTQ sentiments – and asked them to lend their faces *as an act of activism* to shield 22 people from grievous danger. They filmed the “face doubles” on a blue-screen stage, turned the footage into algorithms that through machine learning have been digitally stretched over the film's subjects. Likewise, “voice doubles” joined to make the subjects entirely untraceable.

By turning the sinister DeepFake A.I. on its head, the filmmakers allow these individuals who have been silenced to speak their truth. “Without this,” adds France, “they would still be shapeless forms in the shadows speaking with machine voices”.

The dangers in participating in the project were great, and the filmmakers took the utmost care to ensure everyone's comfort level with being part of a film that will be met with controversy and hostility in many parts of the world. Henty adds, “We gave everyone a choice as to whether they wanted to be hidden or not and most of the activists said they didn't. We continued to check back in to make sure that still stood, their logic being that they want the visibility, that actually protects them.”

Filming such sensitive material in Russia and Chechnya also brought about huge personal risks for France and his team. They were careful not to draw attention to themselves in any way, operating inconspicuously with crews no larger than two. “We selected a tourist camera, an over the counter consumer Sony that we beat up the way a tourist camera would look beat up. We put tape on it, we covered all the lights so that no one could see the thing blinking and we wandered across the country appearing to be sightseers. In addition, we left cameras in the various safehouses for people to film themselves. For extremely dangerous shoots, we used GoPros and cellphones,” says France. Footage was triplicated and moved out of the country on multiple encrypted drives. No images traveled over the internet, and no footage remained in the country.

France knew he had incendiary material in his hands. But he felt strongly about getting these underreported stories out to the world. One such story is that of “Grisha,” a 30-year-old Russian who was working in Chechnya when he was detained and tortured over a period of 12 days. With the help of the LGBTQ underground pipeline, he escaped to Moscow, where he has tried to bring the anti-gay campaign to light before the Russian authorities. Met with delays and stonewalling by the courts, Grisha, along with his boyfriend and several family members, has been relocated to another (undisclosed) country. He continues to fight for justice in the European court system.

Not all the people that France met with have been so lucky. “Anya” is the daughter of a high-ranking Chechen government official and was being blackmailed by an uncle about her sexual orientation. Staying would be extremely dangerous. Her only recourse was to escape the republic, but the journey proved insurmountable. The network moved her from shelter to shelter, parking her temporarily in a neighboring country, in an apartment she could not leave, not even to shop

for groceries, because Russian authorities were hot in pursuit. As distant countries were being petitioned to take her, members of the local LGBTQ community covertly saw to her daily needs. But after no visas had materialized almost six months into her holding pattern, they returned to her secret apartment to find her missing. Her whereabouts are unknown. The news is sobering but producer Henty recognizes the importance of not backing down from the harsh realities of the fight. She notes, "It's a serious crime to be gay in 70 countries and in eight of them it is punishable by death. Totalitarianism is trending and it's a hard thing to face but this is part of it."

To drive home the extent of the atrocities, France and his team made the difficult decision to include horrifying video footage of torture and murder in their film. France comments, "It's important to look at what's happening. This is footage made by the people conducting these crimes for the purpose of either reporting their crimes to their superiors or to keep as trophy videos of their despicable acts. I want the footage to expose them as well." (The victims in these scenes have also been disguised.)

Once the film is released, the filmmakers hope that it can reach the people it seeks to help. Says Henty, "I hope that as many people as possible get to see it. I want world leaders to be moved to take action and I want the people in Russia who are enduring this atrocity to know that we hear their suffering." France adds: "That's why we want to show the power and strength of gay men and lesbians and transgender people and the lessons they can show all of humanity about what it takes to triumph."

Ultimately, France is grateful to the fearless participants who trusted him with this urgent, timely story. His hope is that the film will shine a light on the ongoing persecution. But he also says it depicts what it takes to be a true champion of liberty. "It's a movie about heroes, really, people who are called upon to do heroic acts. It shows how no problem is so towering that it can't be approached, and solutions can't be found. It's about what it takes to affect change."

WELCOME TO CHECHNYA is a production of HBO Documentary Films and Public Square Films. It is making its world premiere in the U.S. Documentary Film competition of the 2020 Sundance Film Festival in January and will air on HBO later in 2020.

### **FEATURED SUBJECTS**

"AKHMAD" - One of the many people dwelling in the main shelter who makes his way to Canada, where the government opened its arms to those fleeing Chechen persecution.

"ANYA" - Daughter of a Chechen official. Never unsupervised, under constant scrutiny of her male relatives, she lived as a captive in her home. When her sexual orientation was discovered, escape was her only option.

DAVID ISTEEV - Crisis Response Coordinator for the Russian LGBT Network. A former journalist based in St. Petersburg, he took on and led the response to the crisis in Chechnya.

“GRISHA” - A survivor of Chechen abduction and torture. Although he is not himself of Chechen origin, he traveled to the southern republic for work. When his ethnicity was established, he was released on condition of remaining silent, but was nonetheless pursued by agents of the Chechnyan government — as were his family members. Eventually they were forced to flee Russia altogether. His boyfriend “Bogdan” also went into exile.

OLGA BARANOVA - Founding director of the Moscow Community Center for LGBT+ Initiatives. She set up and operates the largest secret shelter in the country for community members fleeing peril.

ZELIM BAKAEV - A well-known pop star from Chechnya but living in Moscow, he returned to Chechnya for a week in August 2017. He was last seen being taken into custody by local security agents. He has not been seen since.

## **BIOS**

**DAVID FRANCE, Director**, is an Oscar<sup>®</sup> nominated filmmaker, bestselling author, and award-winning investigative journalist. His directorial debut, HOW TO SURVIVE A PLAGUE, is hailed as an innovative and influential piece of storytelling and is regularly screened in university classrooms, and by community groups and AIDS service organizations. Appearing on over 20 “Best of the Year” lists, including Time and Entertainment Weekly, the documentary earned a GLAAD Award and top honors from the Gotham Awards, the International Documentary Association, the New York Film Critics Circle, the Boston Society of Film Critics, and the Provincetown Film Festival, among many others. HOW TO SURVIVE A PLAGUE also garnered Oscar<sup>®</sup> and Emmy<sup>®</sup> nominations and a Peabody Award. His 2017 film, THE DEATH & LIFE OF MARSHA P. JOHNSON, received rave reviews and won numerous festival prizes including the Outfest “Freedom Award” and special jury recognition from Sheffield International Documentary Festival. David’s latest book, also titled HOW TO SURVIVE A PLAGUE (Knopf, 2016), received multiple awards including the Baillie Gifford Prize for best nonfiction book published in the English Language, and was named by Entertainment Weekly, Slate, and LitHub as one of the top books of the 2010s. In addition, France has seen his journalistic work inspire several films, including the Peabody-winning Showtime film SOLDIER’S GIRL, based on his New York Times Magazine story of the transgender girlfriend of a soldier killed in an anti-gay attack.

**JOY TOMCHIN, Executive Producer**, Producer and co-founder of Public Square Films. Joy’s first film, “How To Survive a Plague,” was nominated for an Oscar<sup>®</sup>, an Independent Spirit and a Director’s Guild Award, and won a Gotham Award for Best Documentary. Her most recent documentary, “The Death & Life Of Marsha P. Johnson,” won numerous festival prizes and was awarded the Outfest “Freedom Award” and a special jury recognition from Sheffield International Documentary Festival. She is a nationally recognized activist in the AIDS, lesbian and gay, transgender, women’s, and children’s rights movements. She has received the Victory Award in recognition of her service as co-chair for the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund (1992-1996) and the Judith Peabody Award for service to Gay Men’s Health Crisis (1985-1991).

**ALICE HENTY, Producer.** ALICE HENTY's career in producing feature documentaries started with the Academy Award®-winning "One Day in September" (2000). More recently, she produced "The Work" (2017), which won the Grand Jury prize at SXSW, the Audience Award at Sheffield and was a Gotham nominee. Prior credits include "Skyladder" (2016), "Happy Valley" (2014), "Citizen Koch" (2013), "Beware of Mr Baker" (2012), "Buck" (2011) and "The Tillman Story" (2010). She is a Sundance Creative Producing Fellow and an active member of the DPA. She co-founded Maylo Films in 2016 specifically to produce character-led, premium documentary content.

**TYLER H. WALK, Editor** is a Cinema Eye award winning and Emmy®-nominated editor whose most recent projects include Michael Moore's "Where To Invade Next," David France's Oscar®-nominated documentary "How To Survive a Plague" and follow up "The Death and Life of Marsha P. Johnson," Sara Taksler's "Tickling Giants" and Eric Weinrib's "Roseanne For President!" A graduate from Penn State University and The Edit Center, Tyler is also an amateur pinballer and pretend rock star by night. In addition to cutting feature films, Tyler is directing his first feature about the Small-World Phenomenon.

**ASKOLD KUROV, Producer & Cinematographer.** Born in Uzbekistan in 1974, Askold has lived in Russia since 1991. After studying philology, theatre and theology, he took a degree in documentary filmmaking at the Marina Razbezhkina Film School in Moscow. In 2012 he was one of the directors of the award-winning documentary Winter, Go Away! His next films Leninland and Children 404 also won critical acclaim and screened at numerous festivals. His work focuses on human rights issues and social conflicts in contemporary Russia.

**RYAN LANEY, Visual Effects,** has a long career using technology to support storytelling for blockbuster movies and special interest projects. He developed effects for Manex Entertainment, Industrial Light and Magic, Digital Domain, and Sony Pictures Imageworks before founding his own company. For Manex, he developed swarming sentinels and an efficient rendering workflow for the Matrix franchise. At ILM, he wrote a custom cloud renderer and animation tools for "Hidalgo," worked on crowd and rendering pipeline for a Harry Potter film, and effects animation tools for "Men In Black II." At Digital Domain, he liaised between software and effects departments to shepherd NYC flooding work for "The Day After Tomorrow." At Sony, he developed realistic water system for "The Aviator," built cross department tools for "Green Lantern" and "G-Force," and was involved with the design of what are now industry standard tools and workflows. He authored a master class based on a modular destruction system he wrote for Zathura and was nominated for an Annie Award for his groundbreaking development of an interdisciplinary suite of tools to build, animate, and render goo in "Spider-Man 3." His visual effects company designs bespoke software that removes technical limitations for filmmakers and storytellers.

**IGOR MYAKOTIN, Co-Producer** is a documentary filmmaker from the Russian Far East who searches for cinematic authenticity and character-driven stories. Igor's latest short documentary "Swan Song" was invited to premiere at Big Sky Documentary Film Festival '18 and received an award for Outstanding Documentary Filmmaking at the 38th FINE



CUTS at The New School in New York City. He worked as a cinematographer on Melody Gilbert's feature documentary "Silicone Soul" (DOC NYC '18, Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival '18). Igor is an alumnus of NextDoc, a year-long fellowship that brings together emerging documentary storytellers from diverse backgrounds across the country with award-winning documentary filmmakers to learn, share, and build their skills. He is directing his first feature-length documentary.

**EVGUENI GALPERINE AND SACHA GALPERINE, Composers.** In 1990, brothers Evgueni and Sacha Galperine relocated to France, from their native Russia, to complete the classical music training they'd begun in Moscow. Soon after arriving in Paris, Evgueni was drawn to composing film scores while still studying symphonic composition and electro-acoustic music at the National Conservatory (CNSM) in Paris. Sacha turned to rock and electronic music after receiving a first prize for violin performance at the Conservatory of Versailles. For several years, Evgueni and Sacha have pooled their respective talents and experience to create music for cinema. Their exceptionally broad musical palette, knowledge of cinema and distinctive sound, forged by a unique fraternal bond, has rapidly won the duo the notice of directors from diverse origins and genres.

***WELCOME TO CHECHNYA***  
**CREDITS**

**01/13/2020**

**FRONT CREDITS:**

1

HBO Documentary Films presents

---

2

a Public Square Films production

---

3

a David France & Joy A. Tomchin film

---

4

in association with Ninety Thousand Words, Maylo Films and BBC Storyville

---

**END OF FRONT CREDITS**

**MAIN ON END CREDITS:**

1

directed by  
DAVID FRANCE

---

2

executive producer  
JOY A. TOMCHIN

---

3

produced by  
ALICE HENTY

---

4

produced by  
JOY A.TOMCHIN  
ASKOLD KUROV  
DAVID FRANCE

---

5

written by  
DAVID FRANCE  
TYLER H. WALK

---

6

edited by

TYLER H. WALK

---

7

co-producers  
IGOR MYAKOTIN  
TYLER H. WALK

---

8

cinematography  
ASKOLD KUROV

cinematography - studio interviews  
DEREK WIESEHAHN

---

9

executive producers  
NEAL BAER  
KEVIN JENNINGS

---

10

executive producers  
MASHA GESSEN  
JONATHAN LOGAN  
JESS SEARCH  
LEKHA SINGH

---

11

executive producers  
JESSE TYLER FERGUSON  
ALAN GETZ  
JUSTIN MIKITA  
STAN TOMCHIN

---

12

executive producers for home box office  
NANCY ABRAHAM  
LISA HELLER

---

13

co-executive producers  
JON MURRAY & HARVEY REESE  
TED SNOWDON & DUFFY VIOLANTE

---

14

co-produced by  
BERTHA DOC SOCIETY  
JAMES COSTA  
KENNETH B. MEHLMAN  
THE PALETTE FUND  
ANDY TOBIAS

---

15  
associate producers  
KATYA KUMKOVA  
DAN SILVER

---

16  
music by  
EVGUENI GALPERINE & SACHA GALPERINE

---

17  
music editor  
SUZANA PERIĆ

re-recording mixer  
LORA HIRSCHBERG

---

18  
visual effects supervisor  
RYAN LANEY

---

19  
Inspired by the New Yorker article “Forbidden Lives: The Gay Men Who Fled  
Chechnya’s Purge” by  
MASHA GESSEN

---

## **END OF MAIN ON END CREDITS**

---

20  
special thanks  
OLGA BARANOVA  
DAVID ISTEEV  
MAXIM LAPUNOV & HIS FAMILY  
THE RUSSIAN LGBT NETWORK  
MOSCOW COMMUNITY CENTER FOR LGBT+ INITIATIVES  
THE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER NOVAYA GAZETA

AND ALL THE SUBJECTS IN THIS FILM WHOSE NAMES CANNOT BE KNOWN

---

21

the filmmakers are grateful to the following people for protecting the subjects in the film

face doubles

ANONYMOUS  
MATIAS ALVIAL  
ANONYMOUS  
ANNA ELVIRA BRODSKAYA  
ZACHARY CLARENCE  
JE'JAE CLEOPATRA DANIELS  
ANONYMOUS  
TIMOTHY GERARD GIBBONS  
ALONZO HELLERBACH  
KOSTA KRAKASHYAN  
CAROLINE MCGINNIS  
PAUL MCGUIRE  
ROBERT MONTELEONE  
SARA ROTH  
MIGUEL SANTIAGO  
ANONYMOUS  
JOY A. TOMCHIN  
VLADISLAV VERHOTUROV

voice doubles

ANONYMOUS  
MICHAEL DOYLE  
ANONYMOUS  
ANONYMOUS  
KATYA KUMKOVA  
ANASTASIIA KOZINA  
ANDREY SHREDDER

---

22

additional editing

MAXWELL ANDERSON

post-production supervisor

MAXWELL ANDERSON

assistant editors

VICTOR ILYUKHIN  
IGOR MYAKOTIN

editorial consultant  
DAVID TEAGUE

archival producer  
KATYA KUMKOVA

researcher  
TOMAS NAGLIS

security consultants  
RORY BYRNE, *SECURITY FIRST*  
SHAUNA DILLAVOU

additional cinematography  
JASON BLALOCK  
ANONYMOUS  
DAVID FRANCE  
ANONYMOUS  
ALEXANDRA IVANOVA  
MAXIM LAPUNOV  
IGOR MYAKOTIN  
ZOSYA RODKEVICH

---

23

location sound mixers  
RAMSAY DAVILA  
BRIAN FISH  
KATYA KUMKOVA

gaffer  
STEVEN GRAY

second camera  
STEVEN GRAY  
ELIE KHADRA

digital imaging technicians  
VICTOR ILYUKHIN  
DANIEL PAZDERKA  
ANONYMOUS  
EVGENY ABAEV-GILDEBRAND

EKATERINA VORONOVA

production assistants

EVGENY ABAEV-GILDEBRAND

TOMAS NAGLIS

RICARDO PRIVA

EMILY THOMAS

production intern

YOLKA GESSEN

---

24

lead translator

TOMAS NAGLIS

additional translators

ALEKSANDER BEREZKIN

ELIZABETH BLACK

LEON CHALDRANIAN

MANSUR K1ONAH

ANTON "TONY" KUZMIN

RACHEL LAZAR

EKATERINA MOSKALYUK

KATIA SHRAGA

ALAN ZEBEK

interpreters

ANTON "TONY" KUZMIN

ELANA PICK

SERGEY PISKUNOV

titles & graphic design

GRANT NELLESSEN

copy editor

SUSAN THAMES

---

25

face doubles department

research and development

RYAN LANEY

face doubles producer

EUGEN BRÄUNIG

digital artists  
ERIC DEINZER  
JACOB KUHNE  
DAWN WELLS

additional visual effects

additional visual effects producer  
TRENT SMITH

digital artists  
DAVID ALEXANDER  
MATT COLLORAFICE  
TAKASHI TAKEOKA

additional visual effects by atomic arts

additional visual effects supervisors  
JUSTIN CORNISH  
BROOKE LYNDON-STANFORD

compositing supervisor  
REYFFER SOUSA

composers  
SAPNA THAKUR  
JAY SADHWANI  
SWAPNIL AMBERKAR  
SANTU BISWAS

---

**26**

face doubles data acquisition

face capture studio  
BE ELECTRIC STUDIO

face capture producers  
JOHNNY HAN  
DIONI VASQUEZ

face capture director



JOHNNY HAN

face capture assistant director  
ZACH BUCHNER

face capture supervisor  
RYAN LANEY

face capture coordinator  
PIERS DENNIS

face capture director of photography  
RAY HUANG

face capture assistant camera  
MAGAERA STEPHENS

face capture key grip  
ALEXA HARRIS

face capture best boy grip  
BRANDON J. BARRON

face capture grips  
TIM CURTIN  
CHELSEA SOBY  
COLBY SMITH

---

27

face capture grip & electric swing  
GREGORY AHLFELD

face capture gaffer  
JIMI JONES

face capture best boy electric  
JON ROEMER

face capture electricians  
ERIC A. FLORITO  
TOM LANDY

face capture hair & make up

LIBBY ROSE

face capture digital imaging technician

BRIAN JENSEN

face capture production assistant

MARGARITA RAMIREZ

STEPHEN "AKIR" WOODS

face capture catering

NICHOLAS RUBINO

---

28

post-production services

Final Frame

digital intermediate colorist

WILL COX

digital intermediate online editor

KEVIN ALLEN CABY

digital intermediate producer

CAITLIN TARTARO

digital intermediate manager

DREW KILGORE

dartmouth college empathy lab tests for visual effects

associate professor of psychological and brain sciences

DR. THALIA WHEATLEY

lab Manager

CHRISTOPHER WELKER

---

29

post-production sound services by

SKYWALKER SOUND

A LUCASFILM LTD. COMPANY

MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

supervising sound editor

LORA HIRSCHBERG

assistant re-recording mixer  
DANIELLE ADAMS

engineering services  
JIM AUSTIN

scheduling  
CARRIE PERRY

adr editor  
KATE BILINSKI

---

30  
studio manager  
TOMAS NAGLIS

bookkeeper  
DAVID HARRISON

production accountants  
*LUTZ & CARR*  
PATRICK SMITH

insurance services  
*REIFF & ASSOCIATES, LLC*  
OTTO PORRAZZO

fiscal sponsor  
*THE FILM COLLABORATIVE*  
LYNNETTE GRYSEELS

impact producer  
*AGGREGATE*  
ALISON BYRNE FIELDS

---

31  
legal counsel  
*DONALDSON + CALLIF, LLP*  
KATHRYN ALIMOHAMMADI, ESQ.  
CHRIS PEREZ, ESQ.

*MEMORIAL HUMAN RIGHTS SOCIETY*  
DIMITRI DINZE

TATIANA GLUSHKOVA

*AGORA INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS  
GROUP SVETLANA SIDORKINA*

sales representation

*SUBMARINE ENTERTAINMENT*

JOSH BRAUN

DAN BRAUN

BEN BRAUN

MATT BURKE

BEN SCHWARTZ

publicists

*CINETIC MARKETING*

CHARLIE OLSKY

RYAN WERNER

---

32

footage courtesy of

AP NEWS

GETTY IMAGES

RICARDO MARQUINA MONTAÑANA

RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY

SCREENOCEAN/REUTERS

TV RAIN

FOOTAGE FROM "HBO - REAL SPORTS WITH BRYANT GUMBEL" COURTESY OF  
HOME BOX OFFICE, INC.

song credits

"AUTUMN ROSE"

WRITTEN BY ERNESTO CORTAZAR

ADMINISTERED BY TUNECORE PUBLISHING

PERFORMED BY MAXIM LAPUNOV

"ROLLING STONER"

WRITTEN BY

PERFORMED BY THOMAS MRAZ

COURTESY OF BOOKING MACHINE

---

33

funding provided by

THE JONATHAN LOGAN FAMILY FOUNDATION - EMPOWERING WORLD-CHANGING  
WORK  
JUST FILMS | FORD FOUNDATION  
IDA ENTERPRISE DOCUMENTARY FUND  
THE PALETTE FUND  
BERTHA DOC SOCIETY  
SUNDANCE INSTITUTE DOCUMENTARY FILM PROGRAM  
WITH SUPPORT FROM  
OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS  
JUSTFILMS | FORD FOUNDATION  
THRESHOLD FOUNDATION'S HIGH IMPACT DOCUMENTARY FUNDING  
CIRCLE CATAPULT FILM FUND

---

34

with generous support from

NEAL BAER

ANONYMOUS

ANONYMOUS

ANONYMOUS

MARK CORTALE

MARJORIE CHARNEY

DARRYL A. FORMAN

DAVID DE LA GARZA

*THE QUEER CONSCIOUSNESS FUND*, ADVISED BY CRAIG HARWOOD

ANONYMOUS

ANONYMOUS

ANONYMOUS

STEVEN KLEIN

ANONYMOUS

ANONYMOUS

*PROMISING YOUNG PEOPLE*

GERRIE SMITH

EVAN TOMCHIN

ANONYMOUS

ANONYMOUS

ANONYMOUS

---

35

Thanks

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME
Iyad Idris	Abdi

Thanks

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME
Andrew	Alden
Judy	Appel
	ArtDocfest
Anne	Aslett
Joe	Augustine
Dave	Ayers
Michael	Battista
Matt	Beard
Nika	Belianina
Charly	Bivona
Rachel	Bozich
	Brick Oven Studios
Joan	Briggs
Keith	Calder
David	Cale
Rose	Castro
Andrew	Catauro
Lisa Kleiner	Chanoff
Fangge	<u>Chen</u>
Sally	Chew
Steph	Ching
Bonnie	Cohen
Adrian	Coman
Sydney	Combs

Thanks

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME
	Committee Against Torture
Charlotte	Cook
Joyce	Cox
Jeff	Davis
Lauren	Defilippo
Carlos	del Rosario
Boris	Dittrich
Julie	Dorf
Roger	Doughty
Stevie	Dranitsaris
Max	Emerson
Kurt	Engfehr
Rob	Epstein
Penny	Falk
Imke	Fehrmann
Alden	Feldon
	Field of Vision
Silas	<u>Fischer</u>
Betsy	Fisher
Julian	Fleisher
Logan	Fletcher
Maxyne	Franklin
Jeffrey	Friedman
Cheryl	Furjanic

### Thanks

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME
Rick	Gerritts
Howard	Gertler
Isa	Ghaffari
Gordon	Gilbert
Julie	Goldman
Yoni	Golijov
Lyosha	Gorshkov
	Great City Post Studio
Xavier	Griette
Neil	Grungras
Kevin	Hagar
	Harlem
Lucien	<u>Harriot</u>
Mattie	Hart
Jennifer	Hatch
Michael	Heflin
Suzanne	Hillner
Fabrice	Houdart
Laura	Husti-Radulet
Cara	Jobson
Kirsten	Johnson
Connor	Kalista
Igor	Kalyapin
Sergey	Khazov-Cassia



Thanks

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME
Simon	Kilmurry
Allison	Klayman
Laurel	Ladevich
Mike	Lerner
	LGBT World Beside
Michelle Moretta	Lightner
Jonathan	Logan
Tanya	Lokshina
Pavel	Loparev
Carrie	Lozano
Victor	Madrigal-Borloz
Angela & James	Malley
Pam	Marsden-Siragusa
Teresa	Martinez-Chavez
Paul	McGuire
Ryan	McIntyre
Mike	McLaughlin
Matt	McTighe
Terrence	Meck
Cara	Mertes
Dana	Merwin
Mark	Minnig
Ruchi	Mital
Robert	Monteleone

## Thanks

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME
Michelle	Moretta
Sarah	Morton
Adam	Moss & Daniel Kaizer
Laura	Nix
Sarah	Noerenberg
Cathy & Mike	O'Connor
	Parabolic Studio
Andrew	Park
Brice	Parker
Ilze	Pelnēna
Gayane	Petrosyan
Kimahli	Powell
Barbara	Raab
Patrick	Reed
Gabriel	Rhodes
Alix L.L.	Ritchie
Eliana	Ritts
Oliver	Rivers
Clara A.	Rodriguez
Mary Margaret	Rogers
Leah	Roh
Justin	Romanov
Stephanie	Samberg
Sandy	Sanchez

### Thanks

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME
Stephanie	Schiavenato
Andrea	Schmidt
Katy	Scoggin
David	Scott
Marina	Selyakova
Toby	Shimin
Dave	Sitek
Bill	Smith
Brandon	Smith
Alex	Spence
Morgan	Spurlock
Steph	Starch & Sara Parra
Lauren	Stetz
Cat	Stewart
Ken	Storer
Paul	Sturtz
Glenda	Testone
	The 519
	The Intercept
Augusta	Thomson
Mark	Thurstlic
Valentin	Tkach
Nadya	Tolokonnikova
Betsy	Tsai

Thanks

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME
Urvashi	Vaid
Bjorn	van Roozendaal
Ali	Vil
The	Walk Family
Darren	Walker
Eric	Weinrib
Sandra	Whipham
Reid	Williams
Karlene	Williams-Clarke
Alex	Winter
Evan	Wolfson
Jessica	Wu
Chi-hui	Yang
Christopher	Yapp

sundance lab advisors  
RA'ANAN ALEXANDROWICZ  
JOSLYN BARNES  
JESSICA DEVANEY  
BRIAN A. KATES  
ANDREA MEDITCH  
BOB MOORE

LAURA POITRAS

sundance institute staff

BRENDA COUGHLIN

MARIA CLEMENT

KRISTIN FEELEY

TABITHA JACKSON

HAJNAL MOLNAR-SZAKAS

ENRIQUE PEDRÁZA BOTERA

this film was supported by the sundance institute documentary film creative producing fellowship

---

37

LOGOS [FUNDERS]

The Jonathan Logan Family Foundation

Just Films | Ford Foundation

IDA Enterprise Documentary Fund

The Palette Fund

Bertha DOC SOCIETY

Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program

Catapult Film Fund

Threshold Foundation

---

38

LOGOS [OTHER]

Final Frame

Skywalker

Submarine

---

39

WELCOME TO CHECHNYA

COPYRIGHT © 2020 PSF UNDERGROUND, LLC

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

PSF UNDERGROUND, LLC IS THE AUTHOR OF THIS MOTION PICTURE FOR PURPOSES OF COPYRIGHT AND OTHER LAWS.

OWNERSHIP OF THIS MOTION PICTURE IS PROTECTED PURSUANT TO THE COPYRIGHT LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND OTHER COUNTRIES AND OTHER APPLICABLE LAWS. ANY UNAUTHORIZED DUPLICATION, DISTRIBUTION OR

EXHIBITION OF THIS MOTION PICTURE MAY RESULT IN CIVIL AND CRIMINAL LIABILITY  
AND CRIMINAL PROSECUTION.  
EXCEPT IN RUSSIA.

---

Public Square Films Logo

---