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## **INDEPENDENT LENS UNVEILS FALL SLATE OF POWERFUL DOCUMENTARIES FROM AWARD-WINNING FILMMAKERS, NEW SEASON BEGINS SEPTEMBER 12**

*Films Making Their Television Debut Include Byron Hurt's "Hazing" and Shalini Kantayya's Sundance Favorite "TikTok, Boom."; Films Will Also Be Available to Stream on PBS.org and the PBS Video app*

(San Francisco, CA) July 27, 2022 — Emmy® Award-winning PBS anthology series INDEPENDENT LENS returns for a new season September 12th, starting with three documentaries making their television debuts. These films will also be available to stream on PBS.org and the PBS Video app. Presented by ITVS, the film lineup features timely topics, including hazing culture in the United States, the power of technology and social media platforms like TikTok, and more.

The fall slate spans from September to November and kicks off with award-winning filmmaker Byron Hurt's "Hazing," which takes a close look at the hazing culture that engulfs educational institutions across the U.S. Then comes "TikTok, Boom." from "Coded Bias" filmmaker Shalini Kantayya, which examines the power and complexity of technology through the lens of one of the most influential platforms of the contemporary social media landscape, TikTok. Closing out the fall season is "Move Me," which follows filmmaker Kelsey Peterson along her recovery journey after a diving incident leaves her paralyzed and strips her of her former identity as a dancer and athlete.

"For our upcoming INDEPENDENT LENS slate, we've chosen to begin with documentaries that focus on persistent, timely topics in the United States, but are told through the lens of very personal experiences," said Lois Vossen, executive producer of INDEPENDENT LENS. "With honest and vulnerable storytellers at the center of our films, we're grateful to bring these documentaries to a national audience."

"Hazing," will open the new season after premiering at the Tribeca Film Festival earlier this summer. Building on years of countless hazing-related tragedies and grappling with his own experiences, Hurt ("Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes," "Soul Food Junkies") explores the function, politics, and consequences of pledging rituals at universities and colleges across the U.S. Through a series of intimate interviews with victims' families, survivors, and his fellow



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fraternity brothers, Hurt and the film's participants reflect on the realities of hazing, and question the purpose of these ongoing rite-of-passage rituals in sororities, fraternities, and other groups.

Described as a "lively, handy TikTok primer," for all audiences by *Variety*, Shalini Kantayya's "TikTok, Boom." makes its broadcast debut on INDEPENDENT LENS October 24, 2022. Kantayya once again explores the complexities of technology, this time through the impact of popular social media platform, TikTok. The Sundance favorite dissects the platform along myriad cross-sections—algorithmic, socio-political, economic, and cultural—in order to explore its impact. A cast of Gen Z subjects, helmed by influencer Feroza Aziz, is central to the film, balancing a genuine interest in the TikTok community and its innovative mechanics with a healthy skepticism around the security issues, global political challenges, and racial biases behind the platform.

Finally, closing out the fall slate of films is "Move Me," an intimate and honest film starring and directed by Kelsey Peterson and co-directed by Daniel Klein. It follows Peterson's journey towards recovery following a life-altering spinal cord injury that takes away both function and sensation from the chest down, essentially robbing her of her self-identities as an athlete and dancer. Alongside peers and allies in the Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) community, she seeks to answer: Who am I now? When a cutting-edge clinical trial surfaces, it tests her expectations and her faith in the possibility of a cure, forcing her to evaluate the limits of her recovery—in body and in spirit. "Move Me" premieres on INDEPENDENT LENS November 11, 2022

For two decades, INDEPENDENT LENS has delivered timely and engaging films that magnify the greatest topics and issues affecting the U.S. and beyond, including its Peabody® Award-winning docuseries "Philly D.A.," the Academy Award®-nominated "Writing With Fire," and Emmy® Award-winning "Belly of the Beast." Many of these documentaries and docuseries are co-funded or co-produced by ITVS, the leading documentary co-producer and distributor for public media that also helms the series.

Most recently, INDEPENDENT LENS published its first [Stories for Justice Impact Report](#), revealing how documentaries may move the needle on criminal justice issues. Through its Stories for Justice initiative, which launched in 2019, INDEPENDENT LENS has partnered with 48 independent filmmakers to date, producing films and docuseries on racial inequities in systems across America. By measuring audience engagement via [DocSCALE](#), a tool created by ITVS, it was able to measure the direct impact these films had on audiences watching. Future Stories for Justice films in the upcoming season will be announced at a later date.

Visit the INDEPENDENT LENS [website](#) for more information.



### **About INDEPENDENT LENS**

INDEPENDENT LENS is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series, airing on PBS Monday nights at 10:00 p.m. ET. The acclaimed series, with Lois Vossen as executive producer, features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by ITVS, the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS, Acton Family Giving, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more visit [pbs.org/independentlens](https://pbs.org/independentlens). Join the conversation on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram at @independentlens.

### **About ITVS:**

ITVS is a San Francisco-based nonprofit organization that has, for over 25 years, funded and partnered with a diverse range of documentary filmmakers to produce and distribute untold stories. ITVS incubates and co-produces these award-winning films, and then airs them for free on PBS via our weekly series, INDEPENDENT LENS, as well as on other PBS series, and through our digital platform, OVEE. ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, The National Endowment for the Humanities: American Rescue Plan, Acton Family Giving, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and Wyncote Foundation. For more information, visit [itvs.org](https://itvs.org).

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