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## **Independent Lens Opens 14th Season with Debra Granik's *Stray Dog* Monday, November 9, 2015 on PBS**

**Other Highlights Include *India's Daughter, Mimi and Dona, Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution, Meet the Patels, and In Football We Trust***



(San Francisco, CA) August 26, 2015 — **Independent Lens** returns this fall with a new season of documentaries that tell unforgettable stories of courage and resilience, explore the most pressing issues of our time, and take viewers on journeys around the world. Having recently received 11 News & Documentary Emmy nominations and one Primetime Emmy nomination, *Independent Lens* opens its 14th season on Monday, November 9, with **Stray Dog**, acclaimed director Debra Granik's stereotype-shattering portrait of Vietnam veteran Ron Hall.



"We are delighted to return this fall with an exciting new slate of films that tackle fundamental issues with rich, character-driven storytelling," said Lois Vossen, newly elevated Executive Producer of *Independent Lens*. "The work of documentary filmmakers on *Independent Lens* continues to receive wide recognition for its merit and journalistic excellence, contributing greatly to the number of News and Documentary Emmy nominations PBS receives. And this season we're looking forward to additional support from PBS, which has renewed its commitment to independent film by increasing social media marketing and more funding to acquire streaming rights, allowing us to compete more effectively in the marketplace."



Additional films premiering in the 2015-16 season include Stanley Nelson's **Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution**, the first feature-length documentary to showcase the Black Panther Party and its significance to the broader American culture, which PBS Distribution will open theatrically in September 2015; **East of Salinas**, the inspiring story of a bright young student and his teacher, both sons of migrant

Credits: Top: Eric Phillips-Horst. Center: Courtesy of Getty. Bottom: Tony Vainuku.



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farm workers; and ***Autism in Love***, which explores the lives of four adults with autism as they pursue and manage romantic relationships. Also premiering in 2016 is the real-life romantic comedy ***Meet the Patels***, and ***In Football We Trust***, which explores the remarkable story behind the Polynesian pipeline to the NFL.

“Our upcoming *Independent Lens* slate features more diversity — both in terms of subject matter and directors — than documentary series on commercial television,” said Vossen. “Diversity is absolutely essential to public media and goes to the heart of public television’s mission. This was recognized by a recent study from American University, which pointed out that *Independent Lens* and *POV* bring greater racial and gender diversity to public television than other programs.”

*Independent Lens* also announced today that its neighborhood film screening series and community engagement program has been rebranded as **Indie Lens Pop-Up**. “We wanted to strengthen the bonds between our series and the local screenings that are taking place in communities around the country,” Vossen stated. “Indie Lens Pop-Up reflects the energy going on around these events, which take place at public libraries, coffee houses and university campuses, and are driven by the desire of people everywhere to come together to watch a film and be drawn into these rich conversations.” Indie Lens Pop-Up selections from the upcoming *Independent Lens* season include *Stray Dog*, *Mimi and Dona*, *Autism in Love*, *The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution* and *In Football We Trust*.

Below is the schedule for *Independent Lens* through December 2015.

**Monday, November 9, 2015 at 10 p.m. ET**

***Stray Dog*** director Debra Granik met Ron Hall while making her Academy Award-nominated feature *Winter’s Bone*. The film follows Hall, known as “Stray Dog,” as he caravans on his motorcycle from his rural Missouri home to Washington, D.C. with fellow vets to pay tribute to their fallen brothers at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Back home, he forges a new life of domesticity with his Mexican wife Alicia and her two sons, who are also struggling to find their place in the ever-changing hardscrabble heartland of America.

**Monday, November 16, 2015 at 10 p.m. ET**

***India’s Daughter***, directed by Leslee Udwin, pays tribute to the remarkable short life of Jyoti Singh and documents the brutality of her gang rape and murder in Delhi in December 2012. Her horrifying ordeal and tragic death sparked riots in the streets of Indian cities, leading to changes in the country’s law and what activists hope will be widespread change in the way women are allowed to live their lives in India’s patriarchal society. Recently in the headlines for being banned in India, this powerful film explores the compelling human stories behind the incident and examines the root causes of violence against women in India.

**Monday, November 23, 2015 at 10:30 p.m. ET**

***Mimi and Dona*** explores an unforgettable story of familial love and heartbreaking choices. What happens when love runs out of time? For 92-year-old Mimi, who has spent her life caring for 64-year-old Dona, a daughter with an intellectual disability, it means facing the inevitable — the likelihood that she will not outlive her daughter and the need to find her a new home. This





poignant and sometimes humorous documentary traces the story of a wonderfully quirky and deeply connected mother-daughter duo — filmmaker Sophie Sartain’s grandmother and aunt.

**About Lois Vossen, *Independent Lens* Executive Producer**

Lois Vossen, founder and executive producer of *Independent Lens*, is responsible for commissioning new work, curating the series, and working closely with filmmakers during editorial through broadcast. She works with the communications team on series marketing and branding. *Independent Lens* films have received eight News & Documentary Emmy Awards, two Primetime Emmys, 15 George Foster Peabody Awards, five Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Journalism Awards, seven Academy Award nominations, and the series won the 2013 and 2014 IDA Award for Best Curated Series. Previously, Vossen was Associate Managing Director of the Sundance Film Festival and Sundance Labs. She has served on the jury at SXSW, DOC New Zealand, Toronto International Film Festival, and New Orleans Film Festival, among others.

**About *Independent Lens***

*Independent Lens* is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS Monday nights at 10:00 PM. The acclaimed series features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by Independent Television Service, the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. For more visit [pbs.org/independentlens](http://pbs.org/independentlens). Join the conversation: [facebook.com/independentlens](https://www.facebook.com/independentlens) and on Twitter [@IndependentLens](https://twitter.com/IndependentLens).

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