POV Acquires *Children of the Mist*, the Arresting Documentary Delves Into the Tradition of Bride Kidnapping; Will Debut as Part of the POV’s 36th Season Launching Summer 2023

New York, N.Y. – February 2, 2023 – POV announced today the acquisition of the feature documentary, *Children of the Mist*, directed by Vietnamese filmmaker Hà Lê Diễm and produced by Trần Phương Thảo. *Children of the Mist* delves into the tradition of bride kidnapping still practiced by the Hmong, one of Vietnam’s largest ethnic groups. Diễm’s directorial feature-length debut, is a tender portrait of a community on the cusp between tradition and modernity, and one girl tragically stuck in the middle. *Children of the Mist* will make its national broadcast premiere on PBS as part of POV’s upcoming 36th season launching summer 2023.

“The care and sensitivity of the director shines through in this remarkable film,” said POV’s executive producer Chris White. “Through Diễm’s intimate lens you can’t help but embrace the vibrant Di, and fear for her future as the Hmong’s traditions put her independence at risk.”

"*Children of the Mist* is a deeply personal film, and it is also my first feature-length,” said Director Hà Lê Diễm. “The fact that it has been selected to stand alongside the other films of the prestigious POV broadcast series is hardly imaginable to me. Therefore, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for all the love and recognition".
In *Children of the Mist*, a village hidden in the mist-shrouded Northwest Vietnamese mountains resides an indigenous Hmong community, home to 12-year-old Di, part of the first generation of her people with access to formal education. A free spirit, Di happily recounts her experiences to Vietnamese filmmaker Hà Lệ Diễm who planted herself within Di’s family over the course of three years to document this unique coming of age. As Di grows older, her carefree childhood gives way to an impulsive and sensitive adolescence, a dangerous temperament for what will happen next; in this insular community, girls must still endure the controversial but accepted tradition of "bride kidnapping." One night, when the young girl’s parents return home from celebrating the Lunar New Year, they are shocked to find their house is silent: Di has disappeared.

Hà Lệ Diễm’s *Children of the Mist*, made the Documentary Feature Film shortlist for the 95th Academy Awards®. The film had its world premiere at the 2021 International Documentary Filmfestival Amsterdam where Diễm won the Award for Best Directing and the First Appearance Award - Special Mention. The film garnered the Best International Film at DocAvivin 2022, and the Documentary Jury Prize at the 2022 Hong Kong International Film Festival.

The *Children of the Mist* deal was negotiated by Chris White and Erika Dilday for American Documentary | POV and Demetri Makoulis, Vice President of Sales for Film Movement.

### Credits

**Children of the Mist**  
**Director:** Hà Lệ Diễm  
**Producers:** Swann Dubus, Trần Phương Thảo  
**Executive Producers:** Erika Dilday and Chris White for American Documentary | POV  
**Editor:** Swann Dubus  
**Running Time:** 92min  
**Country:** Vietnam  
**Year:** 2021

**About the Filmmakers**

Hà Lệ Diễm, Director, *Children of the Mist*  
Hà Lệ Diễm was born in 1991 in the Tay ethnic minority group living in the mountains of Northeast Vietnam. She left her hometown to study journalism at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Hanoi, where she graduated in 2013. *Children of the Mist* is her first feature documentary film project. She is a Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program Grantee.

Swann Dubus, Producer, *Children of the Mist*
After obtaining a Masters of Literature, Swann Dubus (b.1977) completed a PhD about intimacy in cinema at Paris III University in 2006. At the same time, he worked as a DoP and directed several documentary features in Europe, Africa and Asia. He moved to Hanoi in 2007 and has worked alongside Trần Phuong Thao since then.

Trần Phượng Thảo, Producer, *Children of the Mist*
Trần Phượng Thảo (b. 1977 in Hanoi, Vietnam) moved to France in 2000 to complete her dream of being a documentary filmmaker. After graduating with a degree in Political Science in Paris, she studied documentary film techniques and writing at Poitiers University. Back in Vietnam, she directed *Workers Dream* an official selection at many international festivals and was awarded at Cinéma du Réel 2007 (P. Perrault Award). Since 2011, she directed several documentary films in collaboration with Swann Dubus including *With or Without Me* winner of the White Goose Award at DMZ Docs 2012 and *Finding Phong* (Grand Prix Nanook - Jean Rou IFF Paris, 2016.

### About POV
Produced by American Documentary, POV is the longest-running independent documentary showcase on American television. Since 1988, POV has presented films on PBS that capture the full spectrum of the human experience, with a long commitment to centering women and people of color in front of, and behind, the camera. The series is known for introducing generations of viewers to groundbreaking works like *Tongues Untied, American Promise* and *Minding The Gap* and innovative filmmakers including Jonathan Demme, Laura Poitras and Nanfu Wang. In 2018, POV Shorts launched as one of the first PBS series dedicated to bold and timely short-form documentaries. All POV programs are available for streaming concurrent with broadcast on all station-branded PBS platforms, including PBS.org and the PBS Video app, available on iOS, Android, Roku streaming devices, Apple TV, Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO. For more information about PBS Passport, visit the PBS Passport FAQ website.

POV goes “beyond the broadcast” to bring powerful nonfiction storytelling to viewers wherever they are. Free educational resources accompany every film and a community network of thousands of partners nationwide work with POV to spark dialogue around today’s most pressing issues. POV continues to explore the future of documentary through innovative productions with partners such as *The New York Times* and The National Film Board of Canada and on platforms including Snapchat and Instagram.

POV films and projects have won 46 Emmy Awards, 27 George Foster Peabody Awards, 15 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards, three Academy Awards and the first-ever George Polk Documentary Film Award. Learn more at pbs.org/pov and follow @povdocs on social media.
About American Documentary, Inc.
American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.

Major funding for POV is provided by PBS, the Open Society Foundations, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Wyncote Foundation, Reva & David Logan Foundation, Park Foundation, and Perspective Fund. Additional funding comes from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, Sage Foundation, Nancy Blachman and David desJardins, Chris and Nancy Plaut, Abby Pucker, Ann Tenenbaum and Thomas H. Lee and public television viewers. POV is presented by a consortium of public television stations, including KQED San Francisco, WGBH Boston and THIRTEEN in association with WNET.ORG.

About PBS
PBS, with more than 330 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and digital content. Each month, PBS reaches over 120 million people through television and 26 million people online, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS’s broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry’s most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. Decades of research confirms that PBS’s premier children’s media service, PBS KIDS, helps children build critical literacy, math and social-emotional skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. Delivered through member stations, PBS KIDS offers high-quality educational content on TV — including a 24/7 channel — online at pbskids.org, via an array of mobile apps and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, or by following PBS on Twitter, Facebook or through our apps for mobile and connected devices. Specific program information and updates for press are available at pbs.org/pressroom or by following PBS Communications on Twitter.