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A POWERFUL STORY OF PROTEST AND THE CALIFORNIA INCARCERATION SYSTEM, “THE STRIKE” PREMIERES ON INDEPENDENT LENS ON FEBRUARY 3

Told by Those Who Survived Decades of Solitary Confinement, “The Strike” Illuminates the Power of Unity and the Unprecedented Story of How 30,000 Incarcerated People Changed California

(San Francisco, CA) November 19, 2024—The moving feature documentary “The Strike” premieres February 3, 2025, on INDEPENDENT LENS. The film illuminates the power of organizing through the story of 30,000 incarcerated people in California protesting decades-long practices of inhumane solitary confinement. Weaving together the personal stories of the men who bore the brunt of this practice, “The Strike” follows the journeys of a cast of solitary survivors, from their secretly-recorded meetings with prison administrators to the personal ramifications of decades in confinement.

By 2013, California had nearly 4,000 people in long-term solitary confinement. One day that year, 30,000 people who were incarcerated went on a hunger strike in a protest that began as a whisper in the corridors of Pelican Bay and spread into a feat of unity across California prisons. The film reveals the panic that gripped the highest echelons of state government, with unprecedented access to prison officials and never-before-seen footage from inside Pelican Bay.

“We found that the story of how incarcerated people, facing impossible odds inside solitary confinement, managed to orchestrate a statewide protest, to be an inspiring example of what’s possible when people come together for change. We hope our film speaks to the strength of the human spirit and the power of collective solidarity,” said Co-directors JoeBill Muñoz and Lucas Guilkey.

“Human contact is essential to human existence, including inside prisons,” said Lois Vossen, INDEPENDENT LENS executive producer. “At its heart,

‘The Strike’ reveals the struggle for basic human rights within the criminal justice system.”

“The Strike” is a co-presentation of INDEPENDENT LENS and Latino Public Broadcasting. “The Strike” premieres on PBS’s INDEPENDENT LENS on February 3, 2025, at 10 p.m. (check local listings). The film will also be available to stream on the [PBS app](#).

Visit the [“The Strike”](#) page on INDEPENDENT LENS to learn more about the series.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

JoeBill Muñoz, Director

JoeBill Muñoz is a documentary filmmaker working at the nexus of investigative journalism and cinematic storytelling. He is the director and producer of “The Strike,” an award-winning feature documentary about the protests against indefinite solitary confinement in California prisons. “The Strike” premiered at Hot Docs and will be broadcast on PBS in February 2025. He has directed short films for INDEPENDENT LENS (“Maletero” and “Evidence Lost”) and NBC (“Follow the Sun”), and produced feature films and television series, including “The Grab” (Hulu), “The Circus” (Showtime), “The New York Times Presents” (Hulu) and “Celtics City” (HBO). His work has been supported through fellowships from the Sundance Institute, New America, Firelight Media, and Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma. JoeBill was recently named to DOC NYC’s 40 Under 40 list of emerging filmmakers. Originally from Texas, he resides in New York City.

Lucas Guilkey, Director

Lucas Guilkey is an award-winning filmmaker who investigates systems of power and tells stories of those on the frontlines of fighting oppression. His work is rooted in empathy and shaped by a commitment to racial justice and grassroots social movements. He recently directed and produced “The Strike,” a film about the largest hunger strike in U.S. history, which premiered at Hot Docs and will be airing on PBS’s INDEPENDENT LENS. Before that he was story producer for “Aftershock,” a feature documentary about racism in the U.S. maternal healthcare system, which won the Special Jury “Impact for Change” Award at Sundance and is now streaming on Hulu. His directorial debut, “What Happened to Dujuan Armstrong?”, a short documentary about

the coverup of a young man's death in county jail, won best documentary at the BAFTA student film awards. He lives in Oakland, California.

Directors	JoeBill Muñoz Lucas Guilkey
Producers	JoeBill Muñoz Lucas Guilkey
Executive Producers	Lois Vossen David Menschel Robina Riccitiello Sandie Viquez Pedlow

ABOUT INDEPENDENT LENS

INDEPENDENT LENS is an Emmy® Award-winning PBS documentary series. With founding executive producer Lois Vossen, the series has been honored with 10 Academy Award nominations and features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by ITVS, INDEPENDENT LENS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Acton Family Giving, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, Park Foundation, Wyncote Foundation, and National Endowment for the Arts. Stream anytime on the PBS app. For more visit pbs.org/independentlens

ABOUT ITVS

Independent Television Services (ITVS) is the largest co-producer of independent documentaries in the United States. For more than 30 years the San Francisco non-profit has funded and partnered with documentary filmmakers to produce and distribute untold stories. ITVS incubates and co-produces these award-winning titles and premieres them on our Emmy® Award-winning PBS series, INDEPENDENT LENS. ITVS titles appear on PBS, WORLD, NETA, and can be streamed on various digital platforms including the PBS app. ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Acton Family Giving, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, The Park Foundation, Wyncote Foundation. For more information, visit itvs.org



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