

Homeroom (2021 film)

Homeroom is a 2021 American documentary film directed and produced by Peter Nicks.^[1] The film, which is the final chapter of Nicks' *Oakland* trilogy (following *The Waiting Room* and *The Force*), follows the lives of the Oakland High School class of 2020 as they try to make the most of their final year in high school amidst district budget cuts and ultimately the COVID-19 pandemic and the George Floyd protests. Ryan Coogler and Davis Guggenheim, the latter of whom made a similar film, *Waiting for "Superman"*, were executive producers on this film.^{[2][3]}

The film was premiered at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival on January 29, 2021, where it was the inaugural winner of the Jonathan Oppenheim Editing Award - U.S. Documentary. It was released on Hulu on August 12, 2021.^[4]

Synopsis

The film follows the students of Oakland High School's Class of 2020 as they face an unprecented year. Anxiety over test scores and college applications is giving way to uncertainty over a rapidly developing pandemic.

Release

The film premiered at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival on January 29, 2021. On April 20, 2021, Hulu acquired the film's U.S. distribution rights and set it for an August 12, 2021 release.^[5]

Reception

Critical response

The review round-up at *Rotten Tomatoes* for *Homeroom* had 85% of critics recommending the film, based on 47 reviews and an average rating of 7 out of 10. The critics consensus reads: "*Homeroom* offers an encouraging -- and engaging -- look at young people preparing to leave high school behind and shape the future."^[6] Metacritic assigned the film a weighted average score of 68 out of 100, based on 12 critics, indicating "generaly favourable reviews".^[7] Daniel Fienberg of *The Hollywood*

<i>Homeroom</i>	
	
Poster	
Directed by	Peter Nicks
Story by	Peter Nicks <div>Sean Havey</div> <div>Kristina Motwani</div>
Produced by	Sean Havey <div>Peter Nicks</div>
Cinematography	Sean Havey
Edited by	Rebecca Adorno <div>Kristina Motwani</div>
Music by	Mike Tuccillo
Production companies	Concordia Studio <div>XTR</div> <div>Open'hood</div>
Distributed by	Hulu
Release dates	<div>January 29, 2021</div> <div>(Sundance)</div> <div>August 12, 2021</div> <div>(United States)</div>
Running time	90 minutes
Country	United States
Language	English

Reporter wrote "You don't need heavy-handed foreshadowing to know that the class of 2020 is the COVID Class, to realize that the prom the bright-faced teens are looking forward to will never happen, that the graduation they're aiming for will be virtual, that the production of *In the Heights* scheduled to open on March 20 is never going to see its curtain raised. *Homeroom* is, in that sense, an inspiring tragedy, a portrait of resilient youth in unprecedented circumstances, the sort of thing that hasn't yet oversaturated Sundance, but probably eventually will."^[8]

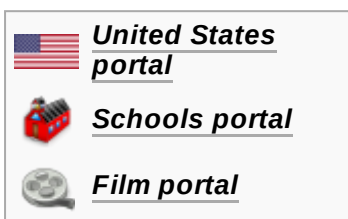
Brian Tallerico of RogerEbert.com wrote:

"Nicks takes a verité approach to his subject, documenting students through the ups and downs of their final year in high school at a distance, letting them tell their own stories. The focus of the first half falls on a debate that would echo “Defund the Police” months later as students and community members fight the board about removing police officers from Oakland High School. Like a bit too much of “*Homeroom*,” I could have watched these board meetings for hours, Wiseman-style. The debate over adults who think that officers keep their kids safe opposite students telling them that uniforms don’t equal safety for a lot of young people is fascinating. And it’s wonderful to hear these young people discuss their concerns so openly, even if a lot of them seem to often fall on deaf ears.”^[9]

Lisa Kennedy of Variety wrote:

"The Oakland students — and director Nicks — rise to the demands of overlapping crises. With its vibrant if abbreviated portraits and final scenes of burgeoning activism, “*Homeroom*” suggest that kids may not be alright, but they are very much on the case.”^[10]

See also



- *Waiting for "Superman"*
- Oakland High School
- Oakland Unified School District
- Education in the United States
- Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education

References

1. "Homeroom" (<https://fpg.festival.sundance.org/film-info/5fd0ea373eb4bb66ad102828>). Sundance. Retrieved February 16, 2021.
2. Ehrlich, David (January 29, 2021). "'Homeroom' Review: Peter Nicks' Doc Trilogy on Oakland's Public Institutions Ends on a Personal Note" (<https://www.indiewire.com/2021/01/homeroom-review-documentary-1234612564/>). *IndieWire*. Retrieved February 16, 2021.

3. Carey, Matthew (January 29, 2021). "'Homeroom' Clip: Sundance Doc Follows Oakland High School Seniors In Tumultuous Year" (<https://deadline.com/video/homeroom-clip-peter-nicks-sundance-film-festival-concordia-studio-news/>). *Deadline Hollywood*. Retrieved February 16, 2021.
4. "Puerto Rican Rebecca Adorno Wins Sundance's Inaugural Jonathan Oppenheim Editing Award" (<https://www.cinematropical.com/cinema-tropical/puerto-rican-rebecca-adorno-wins-sundances-inaugural-jonathan-oppenheim-editing-award>). *Cinema Tropical*. 2 February 2021. Retrieved February 16, 2021.
5. "'Homeroom' Trailer: Peter Nicks' Trilogy-Ending Documentary from EP Ryan Coogler for Hulu" (<https://deadline.com/2021/04/peter-nicks-documentary-homeroom-ryan-coogler-hulu-1234739884/>). 20 July 2021.
6. "Homeroom (2021)" (<https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/homeroom>). *Rotten Tomatoes*. Retrieved 2021-03-08.
7. "Homeroom" (<https://www.metacritic.com/movie/homeroom?ftag=MCD-06-10aaa1c>). *Metacritic*.
8. Fienberg, David (January 29, 2021). "'Homeroom': Film Review" (<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/homeroom-film-review-sundance-2021>). *The Hollywood Reporter*. Retrieved February 16, 2021.
9. Tallerico, Brian (January 31, 2021). "Sundance 2021: Try Harder!, Homeroom, At the Ready" (<https://www.rogerebert.com/festivals/sundance-2021-try-harder-homeroom-at-the-ready>). Roger Ebert. Retrieved April 11, 2021.
10. Kennedy, Lisa (February 9, 2021). "'Homeroom' Review: Doc Embeds Itself in Bay Area High School During Exceptional Year" (<https://variety.com/2021/film/reviews/homeroom-review-1234904359/>). *Variety*. Retrieved February 16, 2021.

External links

- *Homeroom* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt13622168/>) at *IMDb*
 - *Homeroom* (<https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/homeroom>) at *Rotten Tomatoes*
 - *Official website* (<http://openhood.org/homeroom/>)
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