

PRESS KIT

WE THE ANIMALS

Based on a book by Justin Torres

Director : Jeremiah Zagar

Producer : Jeremy Yaches

Writers : Dan Kitrosser & Jeremiah Zagar

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BOOK PRESS

“First-time novelist Justin Torres unleashes *We the Animals*, a gorgeous, howling coming-of-age novel that will devour your heart.”

—Vanity Fair

“*We the Animals* is a dark jewel of a book. It’s heartbreaking. It’s beautiful. It resembles no other book I’ve read. We should all be grateful for Justin Torres, a brilliant, ferocious new voice.”

—Michael Cunningham

“A novel so honest, poetic, and tough that it makes you reexamine what it means to love and to hurt. In stark prose, Torres shows us how one family grapples with a dangerous and chaotic love for each other, as well as what it means to become a man.”

—O, the Oprah Magazine

DIRECTOR PRESS

Sundance Institute Announces 12 Projects for Screenwriters Lab

Filmmakermagazine.com — by Michael Murie — December 17, 2013

This afternoon the Sundance Institute unveiled the 12 projects that will be participating next month in its Screenwriters Lab. Among the filmmakers whose scripts were chosen are documentarian Jeremiah Zagar (*In a Dream*), whose first narrative script *We the Animals* (based on a book by Justin Torres) was also in IFP’s Emerging Storytellers, while another alum of that program (from 2011) selected here is Ryan Koo, with his project *Manchild*. Other notable participants this year include Jordana Spiro, the former TV actress whose short *Skin* played at Sundance 2012; uber inventive and wacky pop promo directors Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert, who are better known as DANIELS; Oorlagh George, the daughter of veteran Irish director Terry George, who won an Academy Award for Best Live Action Short last year for producing *The Shore*, helmed by her father; and Marcella Said, the Chilean writer/director whose debut feature *The Summer of Flying Fish* premiered in the Directors’ Fortnight at Cannes this year.

[Excerpt]



FAMILY FILM — A dysfunctional household in crisis - his own - is the focus of Jeremiah Zagar's documentary, "In a Dream."

Philadelphia Inquirer — by Steven Rea INQUIRER MOVIE CRITIC — April 22, 2009

NEW YORK — When Jeremiah Zagar was a chubby, awkward kid (his description - he's neither anymore), he and his father, Isaiah, marched from their house on South Street to the Ritz to watch Terry Gilliam's eye-popping fabulist fantasy, *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*.

Afterward, Jeremiah insisted they stay and watch it again. And again. Two decades and innumerable movie marathons later, Zagar has applied that same obsessive passion to his own films. *In a Dream*, his documentary feature debut, opens tomorrow at the Ritz at the Bourse after spending a year on the festival circuit, nabbing prizes from San Francisco to Woodstock, N.Y., Austin, Texas, to Philadelphia. In August, it premieres on HBO.

In a Dream is about Isaiah - the Philadelphia artist whose giant coruscating mosaics adorn walls and buildings up and down South Street, through Bella Vista, Queen Village, and Society Hill. The film even landed on the short list for 2009 Oscar consideration. There was Jeremiah Zagar, jostling shoulders with 14 other candidates, including doc gods Werner Herzog and Errol Morris.

Jeremy Yaches, Zagar's producing partner and friend since high school (Akiba Hebrew Academy in Merion), called him that November day with the news.

"I was shaking," remembers Zagar, 27. "I was in the TLA video store on Locust Street, with my girlfriend... and I bought movies to celebrate. I bought the Criterion Collection of *Down by Law*, which I'd always wanted, and I bought *Fiddler on the Roof*, which I've never seen . . . and I bought [the graffiti documentary] *Style Wars*, and I bought an Ernst Lubitsch box set right there."

It should be noted that *In a Dream* is considerably more than a portrait of the engagingly eccentric, doggedly creative Isaiah Zagar. Begun when Jeremiah was a student at Emerson College, and going through numerous permutations over the eight years it's taken to get to the screen, *In a Dream* offers a close-up view of a family in crisis.

[Excerpt]

BIOGRAPHIES

Jeremiah Zagar (director & co-writer) is the co-founder of Public Record. He grew up in Philadelphia as a latchkey kid, spending most afternoons in a dark movie theater or wandering the aisles of his local TLA video store.

On trips home from college, he started filming his parents and after seven years premiered the resulting documentary “In a Dream” at the SXSW Film Festival. The movie screened theatrically across the United States and in film festivals around the world. It was broadcast on HBO, shortlisted for an Academy Award and received two Emmy nominations, including for Best Documentary.

His newest feature-length documentary “Captivated: The Trials of Pamela Smart” premiered in competition at the Sundance Film Festival and aired on HBO to much fanfare in August of 2014.

Other notable work includes the pilot episode for 7 Deadly Sins—a new series for Showtime and a three spot campaign for GE Capital which premiered during the 2014 Kentucky Derby, both of which he co-directed with Nathan Caswell.

Jeremiah’s next project is the feature film “We the Animals”, for which he was selected as a Sundance Directing & Screenwriting Lab fellow. When he’s not making movies and commercials, he spends his time swimming in New York City’s finest public pools.

Dan Kitrosser (co-writer) is a playwright, screenwriter and storyteller, working in the independent and Off-Broadway theatre world for the last eight years.

His play “Tar Baby,” which he co-wrote with Desiree Burch, played Off-Broadway at The Daryl Roth Theatre in 2013 and is currently on a national tour. “Tar Baby” was nominated for a 2013 New York Innovative Theatre Award and was hailed by The New Yorker as “smart, funny, and maybe even necessary.”

He wrote the screenplay for “The Night Witch,” a short animated film about female Russian Fighter Pilot Nadja Popova, directed by Alison Klayman. The film was produced by New York Time’s “The Lives they Lived” series and will play for ten weeks at the IFC Center in New York.

Dan is also a children’s storyteller, and has been the resident storyteller for both Central Park and Bryant Park. In May of 2014, he will complete his MFA in Playwriting at the New School for Drama, where he studies under Jon Robin Baitz, Christopher Shinn and Michael Weller and is the Harold and Mimi Steinberg Fellow.

Jeremy Yaches (producer) is an Emmy-nominated producer and co-founder of Public Record, a production company that specializes in film, TV, branded content, and commercials. He produced the award-winning documentary “In a Dream” which has screened all over the world and was broadcast on HBO.

Jeremy’s short films include Heart Stop Beating which premiered at Sundance, Remains at SXSW & El Último Hielero at Tribeca. “Always a Fire”, a short documentary which he produced and released straight to the web, was a viral sensation, racking up over a million views in its first week.

More recently, Jeremy produced the pilot episode for “7 Deadly Sins”, which premiered on Showtime this summer, and he is currently producing an adaptation of Justin Torres’ best-selling novel “We the Animals.”