

Dear Sundance Institute:

We are deeply disturbed to learn that several women survivors of sexual slavery appearing in “Sabaya” did not provide their consent to the filmmaking team as reported in [The New York Times](#) on September 26, 2021. The continued harm to women who have suffered sexual abuse and now face disempowerment and additional trauma through the unauthorized use of their images and stories is highly unethical. The recognition of this film through the Sundance Film Festival’s Directing Award: World Cinema Documentary encourages other filmmakers to minimize these harms and continue such exploitative practices.

Because many film industry institutions look to Sundance Institute as a leader in the field, we are urgently calling upon Sundance to take the following actions in order to censure the behavior of Sabaya’s filmmaking team and to support the Yazidi women harmed by this process.

- Revoke the Sundance Film Festival’s Directing Award: World Cinema Documentary to Hogir Hirori for Sabaya
- Make a formal statement recognizing the harm done through support of this film and through screenings of this film (past and future), and the need for reparations
- Contribute all past ticket sales from Sabaya screenings directly to the women who have been harmed
- Train staff in issues related to consent in films whose subject matter involves sexual trafficking and slavery

We believe that in taking a strong stand against this type of exploitation in documentary filmmaking, the Sundance Institute can demonstrate its leadership and set an important precedent in promoting the highest ethical standards in the production of films for social change.

Signed:

A.K. Sandhu, Filmmaker - Fellow, Re-Present Media

Alessandra Pasquino, Producer - IDA, DPA

Alexandra Lily Kather, Lawyer (International Criminal Law) - Visiting Fellow, Goldsmiths University London

Alix Blair, Director/Cinematographer - Maailma, LLC

Alyna Farooqui, Filmmaker - Geo entertainment

Ameena Din, Production Accountant

Amritpal Kaur, Director - Undocumented Filmmaker Collective

Amy Martinez, Producer

Anayansi Prado, Filmmaker

Andrea Arauz, Producer - Brown Girls Doc Mafia
Anne Checler, Editor
Ashley O'Shay, Director/DP - Unapologetic
Augusta Palmer, Director/Associate Professor - Cultural Animal, St. Francis College
Awaz Khaleel Simo, Chief Executive Director - Dak Organization for Ezidi Women Development
Azza Cohen, Filmmaker
Bedatri Datta Choudhury, Managing Editor - IDA
Benjamin Abrams, Filmmaker
Benson Gardner, Filmmaker/Communications Professional - Benson Gardner Productions
Bianca Beyrouti, Filmmaker/Producer - Brown Girls Doc Mafia
Blanche Chase, Archival Researcher - Rights By Design
Brea Baker, Activist and Writer
Cathy Otten, Journalist/Author
CB Smith-Dahl, Director/Cinematographer - Together Pictures, Brown Girls Doc Mafia, Women of Cinematic Arts, Collective of Documentary Women Cinematographers
Christen Marquez, Producer
Christy Denes, Editor - Alliance of Documentary Editors
Consuelo Alba, Executive Director/Co Founder - Watsonville Film Festival
Corinne Cueva, Filmmaker - Re-Present Media
Cozette Ellis, Student
Craig Ryan, Producer
Dan Rybicky, Filmmaker/Educator
Dante Roa Alencastre, Executive Director - California LGBT Arts Alliance
Daria Price, Director/Producer - Ida, wage
David Felix Sutcliffe, Filmmaker
David L. Brown, Producer/Director - David L. Brown Productions
Dawn Valadez, Director/Producer/ Educator - Valadez Productions
Deepa Nair, Filmmaker - The Nangiarkoothu Artist
Dolissa Medina, Filmmaker - Brown Girls Doc Mafia
Dolores McCrorey, Filmmaker
Dorian Gomez, Producer/Filmmaker
Drew de Pinto, Filmmaker - Documentary Film MFA Student, Stanford University
Emily Fraser, Filmmaker - Pinecone Pictures

Erin Gerber, Student
Erin Turney, Filmmaker - Bearfish Productions
Eurie Chung, Producer - Flash Cuts
Fitoon Yaldo, Doctor from Kurdistan Region
Gabriel Diamond, Filmmaker - Outside Films
Güley Bor, Lawyer/Researcher
Heather Merrill, Archival Producer
Hsuan Yu Pan, Filmmaker - Alone / Together
Ina Adele Ray, Producer/Director/Editor/Educator - Board Member, Re-Present Media
Inaya Yusuf, Director/Editor
Isis Frias, Student Filmmaker
Itir Yakar, Filmmaker / Civil Rights Lawyer
James Martone, Reporter
Jamie Boyle, Director/Producer/Editor
Jen Gilomen, Director/Producer/Cinematographer - Forward Films LLC, Film Fatales, Collective of Documentary Women Cinematographers, New Day Films
Jennifer Crystal Chien, Director - Re-Present Media
Jennifer Huang, Filmmaker - Treeclimber Media
Jesse Drew, Filmmaker - UC Davis
Jessica Estelle Huggins, Creative Producer and Impact Strategist - Brown Girls Doc Mafia
Jim McSilver, Director/Editor
Joan Sekler, Filmmaker - Alternavisionfilms.com
Joanna White-Oldham, Producer/Director - JWO Media
Johanna E. Foster, Associate Professor of Sociology/Helen Bennett McMurray Endowed Chair of Social Ethics - Monmouth University
Judith Vogelsang, Director/Producer - Stone Harbor Films
Judy Branfman, Filmmaker
Juhi Sharma, Filmmaker - Brown Girls Doc Mafia
Karen Rodriguez, Filmmaker - Wind-up Pictures LLC
Kate Vigneswaran, Lawyer (International Criminal Law)
Kathy Huang, Filmmaker
Kelly Andersen, Archival Producer - Doculink
Kelly Creedon, Editor/Filmmaker
Kevin McKiernan, Filmmaker - Access Productions

Kim Garcia, Filmmaker / Film Programmer
Kirthi Nath, Filmmaker
Laila Kazmi, Director - Kazbar Media
Laquie Campbell, Filmmaker - ElleC Films
Lauren Chavez-Myers, Producer - Room of Req Productions
Leslie Thomas, Filmmaker - MIRA
Luna x Moya, Director/Editor - What The Pier Gave Us
Lyntoria Newton, Filmmaker/Educator - Brown Girls Doc Mafia
Mabel Valdiviezo, Director/Producer - Haiku Films
Mai Spurlock Sykes, Filmmaker - Galactic Sloth
Malkia K. Lydia, Filmmaker - Kuyamba Media
Marga Zambrana, News Producer/Filmmaker
Maria Fortiz-Morse, Filmmaker
Maria Luisa Gambale, Director/Producer/DP - Vera Donna Films
Maria Moreno, Filmmaker
Marla Ulloa, Filmmaker/Faculty - Cal State LA
Marlene McCurtis, Filmmaker - Wednesdays in Mississippi
Mary Riley, Producer - Natural Women
Maxwell Mueller, Filmmaker - Stanford
Melody Quevedo, Filmmaker
Michael Singh, Filmmaker
Michaëlle McGaraghan, Editor - Alliance of Documentary Editors
Michal Aviad, Director - Working Woman
Myra Paci, Writer/Director/DP - Storiasoul, SLAP Agency
Nadine Tunasi, Survivor Champion
Nat Ruiz Tofano, Producer/Grants Coordinator/Artist Development Manager - BGDM, IDA
Natalie Bullock Brown, Producer/Professor - Documentary Accountability Working Group
Nazdar Ghafouri, MD. Phd. Consultant Pain and Rehabilitation
Niam Itani, Filmmaker - placeless films / Brown Girls Doc Mafia
Nicole Docta, Producer - BGDM, A-Doc, DPA, IDA
Pallavi Somusetty, Director/DP
Pearl Park, Producer - Light Fish Arts LLC
Ray Whitehouse, Director / DP
Richie Reseda, Producer - Question Culture LLC

Riham Ezzaldeen, Head of Original Content / Producer - What Took You So Long?
Rivkah Beth Medow, Filmmaker - Frankly Speaking Films
Robert Lang, Filmmaker - Kensington Communications
Robert M. Horsting, Oral Historian/Author/Filmmaker - Citizen Tanouye, Witness: American Heroes
Robin Lung, Producer/Director - Nested Egg Productions
Roxanna Denise Stevens Ibarra, Filmmaker - Brown Girls Doc Mafia, Tesoro
Sabereh Kashi, Director/Producer/Filmmaker - Woven Multimedia
Sabrina Oertle, Producer - Blue Chair Productions
Sam Huff, Filmmaker - Bearfish Productions
Sara Noori, Filmmaker
Selina Lewis-Davidson, Producer - Greenhouse Pictures
Set Hernandez Rongkilyo, Director
Shaheen Nazerali, Post Supervisor
Shane Denson, Associate Professor of Film & Media Studies - Department of Art & Art History, Stanford University
Shari Due, Director/Producer - Be Reel Pictures
Sharonda Harris-Marshall, Filmmaker
Shashwati Talukdar, Filmmaker
Sherizaan Minwalla, Human Rights Lawyer
Soumyaa Behrens, Director/Producer/Educator - DocFilm Institute
Sozan Safar Ismail, President - Dak Organization for Ezidi Women Development
Stephanie May, Volunteer
Susana Barron, MFA Candidate in Documentary Film - Stanford University
Tareq Ahmed, Filmmaker - Dhaka DocLab
Teale Failla, Director/Producer - tealescope
Tiffany Judkins, Filmmaker - Kinship Filmworks
Tijana Petrovic, Filmmaker/Cinematographer - Collective of Documentary Women Cinematographers
Todd Drezner, Director
Toni Bell, Documentary Consultant
Tracey Quezada, Director - Tracey Quezada Productions
Victoria Chalk, Editor