

A GLOBAL CONVERSATION  
ABOUT YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

# CONNECTING THE DOTS

A FILM BY NOEMÍ WEIS

FILMBLANC PRESENTS A FILM BY NOEMÍ WEIS CINEMATOGRAPHERS NICHOLAOS STAGIAS BRIAN STUART MARK ELLAM  
EDITOR EUGENE WEIS STORY PRODUCER ANDRÉE BAGOSY COMPOSERS SUAD BUSHNAQ LODEWIJK VOS  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS NOEMÍ WEIS TERRY E. MARKUS DAVID GOLDFIELD THOMAS EDDINGTON BRENDAN MCNEILL WRITTEN, DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY NOEMÍ WEIS



CONNECTINGTHEDOTSFILM.COM  
#RAISEYOURHAND



91 Minute Feature, 4K HD

and 55 minute International Version

Produced in association with the TELUS Fund and Ontario Creates

In Association with TV5, The Boeckh Foundation, The Echo Foundation, Private investors  
from Canada and USA plus Canadian Tax Credits

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## SHORT SYNOPSIS

**Connecting the Dots** is the first feature documentary of its kind to offer a raw and intimate look at youth mental health from a global perspective. With heart-felt poignant stories of lived experience, the film exclusively showcases young voices breaking barriers surrounding youth mental health. Through highly cinematic and character driven storytelling, **Connecting the Dots** is emotional, reflective and hopeful. Our future leaders are speaking up. It's time to listen.





# LONG SYNOPSIS

## INTERNATIONAL VERSION

This character-driven and cinematic feature film is the first of its kind to bring the exclusive voices of young people to the forefront talking about youth mental health. It is their personal accounts that drive the film's narrative forward. They are the ones to tell us where we have gone wrong and what needs to change. We call them the experts.

In a highly cinematic mise-en-scène, *Connecting the Dots* reveals why we face a population of young people feeling anxious, depressed and too often ending their own lives. The film sheds light on preventative and inspiring ways to bring light to this global crisis of youth mental health. Traveling the world, the film takes the viewers to such countries as Canada, USA, Brazil, Argentina, Zimbabwe and more.



*Connecting the Dots* opens the conversation about systemic racism, LGBTQ+, lack of medical support, lack of funding for mental health, stigma and shame, and the urgent need for a paradigm shift in a broken system that needs to include the youth to bring transformation.



The film's narrative is woven through Nathan's journey in search of answers to better help the youth. Nathan wants to see things change and learn how to better serve the youth in a world, where technology overrules, the nuclear family is falling apart and there is a desperate need for a paradigm shift in the system.

Nathan is the number one youth mental health speaker in the USA. He has spoken at more than 700 schools and is followed by millions of young people globally. Nathan has travelled through the darkness and has come out the other side representing survival and hope to this young generation. He uses his life experiences, charisma and empathy to connect with children from around the world, in hope of breaking down the stigma of mental health and opening up the conversation.

There are many other young people from around the world who open up and share their personal and poignant stories including Oke in Nigeria, Shellye in New York City, Lindsay in Edmonton and heart felt scores more from Australia, the U.K., Brazil, Argentina, Zimbabwe, and other countries as it unearths a confounding truth. Universal and diverse, first-hand very personal and raw visual diaries are revealed. We hear from young people from all continents who are clear, articulate and voice their opinion with a strong call to action.

In a dynamic editing way, the film follows three acts from darkness to light where we meet a number of young people that share their heartfelt lived experiences as much as they offer a voice of reason to the situation of youth mental health from around the world.

**Connecting the Dots** offers the future world leaders an opportunity to be heard, sparking strong messages and evoking direct action. It is time for everyone to listen.

# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

## INTERNATIONAL VERSION

My work as a Director – guided by a keen sense of compelling storytelling – is driven by a fearless passion to tackle global issues and provoke change within communities.

When reading about the alarming rates in increased youth anxiety, depression and suicide, my heart sank. I knew the subject of youth mental health was one to explore and I dived in.

As a mother and a grandmother, my films have mainly dealt with social issues important to women and children, and this has been a driving force for me, to bring these stories and struggles to light.



There is a youth mental health crisis around the globe. Suicide is the #1 health related cause of death for youth. Mental health is the health issue of this generation. There is an urgent call to action being heard globally asking for an elimination of the stigma and shame surrounding youth mental health struggles and demanding an increase in open dialogue and more accessible, relevant and timely support.

After three years of intense work on research, development and production, **Connecting the Dots** comes to the world at a time when mental health is a universal problem that affects almost everyone in 2020. Under the present situation of COVID-19, atop of growing unrest around systemic racism, sexual orientation, gender discrimination and so much more, the topic of **Connecting the Dots** is more relevant than ever before as it highlights all of these issues as key factors in affecting mental health, especially in young people.





The youth mental health situation is a widespread phenomenon. That's the reason why I decided to take a universal look at this so-called "global epidemic." I focused on the reasons why we are faced with this crisis and what we have done as a society to create this.

After thorough research, I firmly believe that the way to help reduce youth mental illness and bring transformation to the system is by understanding the core issues faced by the youth themselves and that's why **Connecting the Dots** is the first documentary of its kind to exclusively bring forward their stories and lived experiences in an emotional and powerful way.

When planning how to tackle this sensitive film, I paid particular attention to the stories that could symbolize thousands of others; the visual treatment and the creation of situations that will help the audience delve into the lives of our protagonists in their own environment.

I created what I call "visual diaries," offering young people from around the world the opportunity to share their most intimate and personal moments as well as their call to action; using their most precious belonging, their phones. Intercut with a highly cinematic and mise-en-scène approach, these visual diaries are the "voice of reason" that offer the viewer a global look at the situation of youth mental health that clearly has no borders.

Filled with beautiful images, poetry, preventative solutions, a strong call to action and a message of hope, **Connecting the Dots'** mission is to reveal what we can do as a society to change this trend while generating awareness, provoking changes and most importantly, offering a voice to young people.

I hope their stories will open minds and hearts, presenting a model for healing and inclusion globally. It is time for all of us to listen and support them. We must not only think of them as the future, but also involve them in the present. There is nothing about them, without them.

- Noemi Weis

# A GLIMPSE OF SOME OF OUR PARTICIPANTS:





# KEY CREATIVE TEAM - BIOS

## DIRECTOR

**Noemi Weis** is an award-winning Writer, Director and Producer that has spent over 20-years telling stories on the big and small screens, from worldwide advertising projects to award-winning documentaries.

As a humanitarian and an advocate leader Noemí journeys where stories take her to bring voice to the world's most vulnerable. Her films have been sold in more than 50 countries receiving numerous awards globally and making a difference in communities around the world.



Her last film MILK, received a passionate message of support from [Mm. Sophie Trudeau](#) and was honoured with an invitation to meet [Pope Francis at the Vatican](#) in recognition of the impact her films have created in global communities.

Additionally, Noemi has been recognized as one of the top 10 most influential Hispanic-Canadians, an award given by Toronto Mayor John Tory. Noemi is a proud member of the Unesco, Team Canada's Trade Missions and a Business Ambassador of Ontario, promoting the merits of Canadian production abroad. In this capacity, she participates in trade missions and has been honoured with the nomination of "Woman Entrepreneur of the Year" for three years in a row, the last one by Export Development Canada, and nominated as a finalist for "Woman Entrepreneur of the World," as the sole Canadian nominee.

Born in Buenos Aires and educated in Argentina and Canada, Noemi brings her skills and love for humanity to every project. She continues to create and develop films to promote human rights and social justice. She is fluent in English, French, Italian and Spanish with a good proficiency of Portuguese.



## EDITOR

**Eugene Weis** is an award-winning film Editor working with top directors and industry professionals in the Canadian film industry with great success and recognition. His keen sense for storytelling has allowed him to craft films tackling important social issues which have gone on to accrue numerous awards and accolades globally.



In 2019, Eugene Weis was nominated as Best Editor by the Canadian Cinema Editors for his film *Metamorphosis*, Directed by Velcrow Ripper and Nova Ami, produced by the National Film Board Of Canada. Eugene garnered a nomination for Best Picture Editor by the Canadian Academy of Motion Pictures (2015) for *Who The F\*\*K is Arthur Fogel* by Ron Chapman. One of his latest films, *Our dance of Revolution* premiered at Hot Docs, 2019 and one of his latest film, *David Foster: Off the Record* premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival 2019.

Eugene has worked as an Editor for several Filmblanc films, including *Let's Talk About it* by Deepa Metha, *Desert Riders* by Vic Sarin, *The Forgotten Woman*, which won the Best Documentary Award at the Hollywood Film Festival and is part of the Elite Series of the Oscar's Academy, *Teaching the Life of Music* by David New, *Abuelas* by Noemi Weis and *MILK* by Noemi Weis which earned him the nomination of Best Editor at the Madrid International Film Festival. Eugene sits on the Board of Directors for the prestigious AluCine Latin Film and Media Arts Festival, is a voting member of the Canadian Academy of Motion Pictures as well as a member of the Canadian Cinema Editors (C.C.E).

For more information, please visit: <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm2263724/>

## STORY PRODUCER

**Andrée Bagosy** is a member of the Writers Guild of Canada and currently works as a freelance Creative Producer in Toronto. As a French-Canadian, born in Montréal, she brings a unique lens to the projects she takes on. Her career spans over twenty years in the industry and includes work in factual and scripted programs.



For many years, she worked as a Story Editor and Producer in the factual department at the CBC, where she honed her skills as a storyteller. She has since gone on to produce a documentary series for Amazon Prime in the US called *Vacations of the Brave*. Her experience in writing rooms has also led her to be a story consultant on numerous feature length docs.

Andrée is dedicated to creating story driven content that reflects the emotional side of the human condition. She is fluent in English, French

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/andree-bagosy-51338671/?originalSubdomain=ca>





## CINEMATOGRAPHERS

**Nico Stagias** is an award-winning Toronto based Director of Photography who has worked in television for the past 18 years.

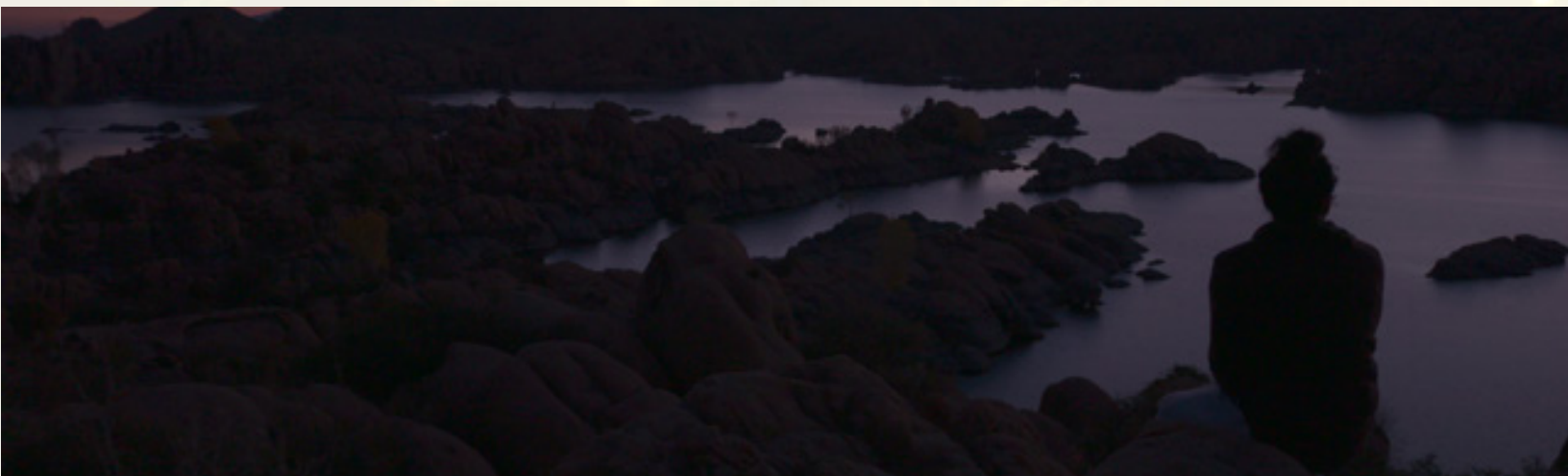
As a filmmaker/ visual creator, Nico's achievements include 2 awards at the *Inside Out Film Festival* for Best Artistic Achievement in a film and Best Audience Choice Award at the *Oregon Queer Film Festival*. In addition, Nico's visual elements for "TimeCode Break" (a Toronto Dance Theatre dance performance) helped garner the show a DORA Award for Best Production.



Nico's work as an editor allows him to use his talent behind the camera with an editorial mind. As an editor, Nico was nominated for a *Canadian Screen Award* for the documentary "Christopher House: Ahead the Curve".

Nico directed, produced, shot and edited over 20 promotional commercials for Nickelodeon TV. This campaign, which was shot in India, Malaysia and the Philippines, won two *Silver ProMax* awards for Best Campaign and Best Comedic Campaign.

DOP and camera credits include work on shows like: *Great Canadian Cottages*, *Bahamas Life*, *Storage Wars*, *Canada's Worst Driver*, *Don't Drive Here*, *Dinner Party Wars*, *Four Weddings*, *Bump!* and *Keeping Canada Alive* as well as TV and documentary stand alone and series like *Drawn this Way* and *Positive Youth*, to name a few.



## CINEMATOGRAPHERS (CONTINUED)

**Brian Allan Stewart** is an award-winning and Canadian Screen Awards nominated Canadian-American Toronto based cinematographer and drone operator working primarily in documentary series and features. He's worked for NBC, BBC America, CBC, Discovery, History, National Geography, and HGTV. Immersing himself in the film and television industry is an amazing journey that has taken him around the world many times, and serves as a constant source of inspiration. His latest projects include *Mister Tachyon* for Vice, and the short film *Föräldraskap: Swedish for Parenthood*. Currently, he's the Director of Photography for History Channel's *Salvage Kings*.



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As director and cinematographer, **Mark Ellam** has spent the last 20 years traveling to over 50 countries to shoot fiction and documentary for theatrical release. He was one of Filmblanc's latest acclaimed film MILK and some of his credits include *The Take* by Avi Lewis and Naomi Klein (AFI Best Feature Documentary), Yung Chang's *Fruit Hunters*, *Big Sugar* (Prix Gemeaux for best documentary) - going undercover to shoot Haitian plantation workers under conditions of slavery, *Empz 4 Life* (Allan King's final film - nominated for Best Cinematography and the Donald Brittain Award - Gemini Awards, and *A Promise To The Dead* (winner of the Gemini award for Best Documentary, shortlisted for the Academy Award for Best Documentary).





## MUSIC COMPOSERS

**Suad Bushnaq** is an award-winning film and concert composer. She is best known for her work on the films *Al Munataf (The Curve)*, *Twice Upon a Time* and *Tight Spot*. Suad is a member of the Screen Composers Guild of Canada and the Alliance for Women Film Composers. In 2018 she was selected as one of six composers from across Canada to participate in the Slight Music Residency at the Canadian Film Centre. Suad won a Silver Medal for Outstanding Achievement in Original Score at the Global Music Awards for her piece *The Road to Jenin*. That same piece is nominated for a Hollywood Music in Media Awards in the world music category, she was nominated for the 2019 Hollywood Music in Media Awards for Best Original Score.



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**Lodewijk Vos** is an award-winning Music composer for film. To date, he has worked on 12 feature films, 4 television series and over 30 short films. He has shared the stage with the likes of Amos Lee, Interpol, N.E.R.D, and KRS-one. After working as an in-house music composer for MTV, Comedy Central, and Nickelodeon he moved to Toronto in 2009 to focus his career on film composing. In Toronto, Lodewijk started collaborating with local music composer Joseph Murray. Together, they worked on many projects under the name "Menalon".

Lodewijk studied under Grammy Award winner Tom Elmhirst in Avignon, France in 2013. In 2014 he did the Slight Music Residency at the Canadian Film Centre, a music residency chaired by Oscar winner Michael Danna. His efforts have been awarded with accolades such as Best Documentary Short (at Sundance) and Best Canadian Feature Documentary at Hot Docs.

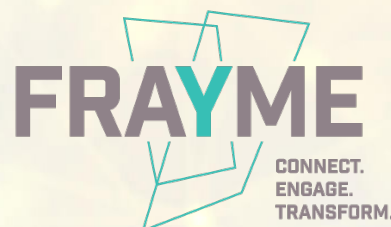






## ABOUT FRAYME

Frayme is a national and international organization that provides a common platform to advance knowledge, best practices, policy, and care for youth mental wellness across Canada and beyond. We help organizations access the evidence, networks, and tools needed to take action. Frayme was created to ensure that young people everywhere benefit from the latest knowledge in youth mental health and substance use. Because healthy young people means a healthy future and a healthy now. The addition of the “Y” represents youth at the centre of the work we do.



Frayme is funded by Health Canada, the Networks of Centres of Excellence program, and generous philanthropic donors. Frayme is hosted by The Royal's Institute of Mental Health Research in Ottawa.

“Presently, Frayme’s focus is to incorporate social-recreational and arts-based expression as a vehicle to bring forward conversations about youth mental health. Having worked with the Filmblanc team during the research and development process, the dissemination of Connecting the Dots presents itself as an excellent opportunity for Frayme to amplify the film as a tool for change.”

# CREDITS

**WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY**

NOEMÍ WEIS

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

BREAK THE SILENCE AND REACH OUT

TO SOMEONE YOU TRUST

PARTICIPANTS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

## **VISUAL DIARIES**

Megan Shinnick

Emilie Leneve

Holly Symmans

Austėja Bazaraitė

Shannon Ackerman

Indiana Payne

Emma Little

Laura Mwangi

Jake Bradshaw

Heavenly Tanner

Oke Ekpaga

Maddy Minaret

Damian Juma

Shellye Echeverria

Lindsay Currie

Myckenzie Kramer

## **FOR YOUR LIFE SPEAKS**

Nathan Harmon

## **FOR FRANKLIN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL**

Alexis Shepard

Jamie Thalheimer

Zach Parkhurst

MaKayla Taylor

Kaylee Miller

Brittney Moulton

Kenny Bruns



**VISUAL DIARIES**

Finty Royle  
Holly Symmans

**FOR STELLA'S PLACE**

Janfari Fraser  
Kester Phillip  
Maryan Issa

**FOR UNITY CHARITY**

Angel Richards  
Rebecca Harrison

**VISUAL DIARY**

Maddy Minaret

**FOR THE JONES-  
GORDON SCHOOL**

Simone Ritchie  
Josh Levine  
Mackenzie Day  
Samantha Wiegers  
Braeden Cross  
Piper Hall  
Dylan Passon  
Nate Passon  
William Strieter  
Emily Feldman  
Zachary Schwartz  
Erica Schwartz  
David Schwartz  
Kayla Schwartz  
Noah Schwartz  
Luke Weiss  
Daniel Church  
Kellen Groesbgek  
Alex Wisea  
Aden Rowley  
Anna Rowley  
Cadence Burke  
Jakob Burke  
Giulia Armato

**FOR COLEGIO  
BANDEREIRANTES-BRAZIL**

Luciana Coen  
Renata Lourenço Pinto  
Sofia Akemi Dias Kayano  
Daphine Caylone Santos Macido  
Lara Rodrigus de Almeida  
Cecilia Viola Ladosky  
Laura Oliveira  
Mary Ann Roizman  
Beatriz Laccava Martins  
Isabela Rosolen  
Rafael Biboncos  
Carmen Laura Rodrigues  
Helena Frudit  
Tatiana Ravache de Oliveira  
Isadora Bicich Martins  
Gabriel Enrico Augusto Rocha  
Helena de Painero

**FOR HORIZONTE AZUL  
SCHOOL-BRAZIL**

The Students of Escola de Resiliência do Núcleo  
Horizonte Azul  
Mariana Politti  
Francisco Laferriere

**FOR FUNDACIÓN FORO  
-BUENOS AIRES**

Marina Sol Moreno  
Manuela Godono  
Valentino Feito  
Mariana Carvalho

**FOR THE FRIENDSHIP  
BENCH ZIMBABWE**

Dr. Dixon Chibanda  
Friendship Bench Grandmothers  
Friendship Bench Buddies

**FOR THE FRIENDSHIP  
BENCH NYC**

Takeesha White  
Kristy Sepulveda  
Brianna Lynn

**FOR BOYS TO MEN**

Ethan Lowe  
Adam Young  
Brandon White  
Larry Levenson  
Bob Moore  
Douglas Eagan  
Robert Abrahamson  
Ed (Gwydion) Winkelmeyer  
David Sorenson  
Anthony Arcaro  
Wyatt Boughner  
Robert Goodwin  
Benji Brinkly-Armstrong  
Brendan Taylor  
Jonah Bryant

**VISUAL DIARY**

Emma Little  
Amy Wang  
Megan Shinnick

**FOR TELUS FUND**

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Will Fulginiti

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Consultant, Industry Initiatives  
Consultant, Industry Initiatives

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Kelly Payne  
Karam Masri

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Director of Original Content  
Director of Programming  
Business Affairs Consultant  
Strategic Consultant  
Production Consultant

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Jérôme Hellio  
Brendan McNeil  
Néstor Gaetán  
Rogerio de Oliveira Soares

**RESEARCHERS**

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Mary Hickman  
Maya Christobel  
Meghan Case



**ADDITIONAL RESEARCHERS**

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Noor Toema  
Sherry Li  
Maryan Haye  
Veronica Rouby  
Matthew Chin  
Blake Horsley  
Meghan Brynne

**PRODUCTION MANAGER -  
DEVELOPMENT**

Christopher Giroux

**PRODUCTION CONSULTANT -  
DEVELOPMENT**

Rachel Punwassie

**PRODUCTION MANAGER -  
PRODUCTION**

Shivani Srivastava

**ADDITIONAL CAMERAS - USA**

Indiana  
Phoenix

Jacob Pierson  
Aiden Chapparone

**LOCATION SOUND**

Scotty Taylor  
Michael Filippov  
Brian Misiewicz

**PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR -  
BRAZIL**

Rogério de Oliveira Soares

**THIRD CAMERA**

Bruno Carneiro

**SOUND RECORDIST**

Victor Arturo Jaramillo Quevedo

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT**

Lucas Gattaz

**LOCAL DRIVER**

Henrique Pereria De Moura

**PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR -  
ZIMBABWE**

Anthony Mutambira

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT**

Tau Kawara Netone

**LOCATION SOUND**

Panashe Ushewokunze

**LOCAL DRIVER**

Moses Goremucheché

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<b>TRAVEL CONSULTANT</b>	Pablo Keselman
<b>ASSISTANT EDITOR</b>	Holden Mohring
<b>POST PRODUCTION FACILITIES</b>	Eggplant Picture and Sound
<b>GRAPHICS</b>	Sam Javanrouh
<b>ON LINE EDITOR</b>	Mark Driver
<b>RECORDING AND MIXING FACILITIES</b>	Eggplant Picture and Sound
<b>SOUND EDITOR, DESIGN AND MIX EFFECTS EDITOR</b>	Daniel Pellerin Deanna Marano
<b>DIALOGUE EDITOR</b>	Jeremy Kessler
<b>PRODUCTION ACCOUNTING</b>	M.Schwab Accounting Services
<b>PRODUCTION ACCOUNTANT</b>	Michael Schwab
<b>PRODUCTION BOOKKEEPER</b>	Sherry Xu
<b>AUDITOR</b>	John Milnes
<b>LEGAL SERVICES</b>	Terry E. Markus
<b>INSURANCE</b>	Arthur J. Gallagher
<b>MARKETING TEAM</b>	Magnify Digital
<b>ASSOCIATE IMPACT PRODUCER</b>	Ring Five

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REPRESENTING THE IMPORTANCE OF ART TO EXPRESS FREEDOM OF  
EXPRESSION.**

Labrona - Troy Lovegates - Amos Danniels - Peru Dyer Jalea- birdO- Fiya Bruxa- Will Gaydos- Kirsten McCrea- Flips BSC- Pua69 Mska & Evro1- Adrian Hayles - Annie Hamel - Lacey and Lala Art- Kalkidan Assefa- Andrew Dixel- Anya Mielniczek - Carlos Delgado- Rob Matejka- Meaghan Claire Kehoe- Al Runt- GAWD- Monique Aura Bedard -Jill Stanton- Ness Lee- Chief Ladybird- Omen- Isaac Weber- Spud- Denial- SKAM- Elicser- FONKi- Christopher Ross

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Dedicated to my grandchildren  
Sebastian, Julien, Mia and Sofia

In loving memory of my mother  
Adela Rebeca Keselman  
January 2nd, 2025- July 22nd, 2020

My grandson Kalel Ramgulam Weis  
November 11th, 2019

And  
Pablo R. Keselman  
Filmblanc's travel consultant and dearest cousin  
July 5, 1954- March 19, 2020

filmblanc  
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WITH THE COLLABORATION OF



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