

**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE****CONTACT**

Adrianna Paidas
646-762-8704
adrianna.paidas
@beckmedia.com

Aisha Almada, ITVS
415-356-8383
aisha.almada@itvs.org

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NEW DOCUMENTARY “EL EQUIPO” CENTERS THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE- NOMINATED TEAM THAT CHANGED THE COURSE OF FORENSIC SCIENCE, UPHOLDING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS AFTER ARGENTINA’S 1976 DICTATORSHIP AND BEYOND, PREMIERING ON PBS’S INDEPENDENT LENS OCTOBER 9, 2023

AUGUST 14, 2023

*Emmy Award-Nominated Filmmaker Bernardo Ruiz Traces
the Team’s Unlikely Journey Over Four Decades, Trained by
Legendary Anthropologist Dr. Clyde Snow, As They Bring
International Governments to Justice*

(San Francisco, CA) August 14, 2023— In 1984, legendary U.S. anthropologist Dr. Clyde Snow got a call to go to Argentina and investigate “los desaparecidos,”—or “the disappeared”—the term given to those who went missing under the country’s military dictatorship from 1976 to 1983. Armed with a young group of Latin American students, his team’s stunning findings would soon set off reactions internationally, making them a beacon of hope for families of human rights victims around the globe.

Directed by Emmy® Award-nominated filmmaker Bernardo Ruiz (“The Infinite Race,” “Kingdom of Shadows”), “El Equipo” premieres October 9, 2023, at 10:00 p.m. ET (check local listings) as part INDEPENDENT LENS, on PBS and the PBS App.

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1435 FOLSOM STREET
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94103
T. 415 356 8383
F. 415 356 8391
[PBS.ORG/INDEPENDENTLENS](https://pbs.org/independentlens)

This INDEPENDENT LENS and VOCES co-presentation unearths the life's work of Dr. Snow, an esteemed anthropologist from Texas known for his work identifying the remains of Auschwitz physician Josef Mengele and victims of serial killer John Wayne Gacy. Dr. Snow traveled to Argentina to uncover the fates of the estimated 30,000 people who were victims of enforced disappearance during the country's 1970s military dictatorship. Unwilling to work with many of the established scientists who had collaborated with the military dictatorship, Snow set about training a group of students—some as young as 19 years old—in the use of forensic anthropology to investigate the fate of those missing, provide answers to thousands of families, and hold the government accountable for the crimes committed.

Dr. Snow's team became a target only a year after the fall of Argentina's military regime, receiving death threats and intimidation for their investigation of the country's atrocities. Still, the group, which included Mercedes (Mimi) Doretti, Patricia Bernardi, and Luis Fondebriber, would go on to help establish accountability for the crimes committed under the Argentine military junta.

With unprecedented access to the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team and its archives, "El Equipo" spotlights systemic political and human rights abuses and deftly creates a direct link between state atrocities from the past and present. The documentary delves into some of the most high-profile cases of the team's history, including the El Mozote massacre in El Salvador, and the later case of the missing 43 students in Mexico, where upon investigation, members of the forensic team have faced threats, surveillance, and official attempts to discredit their work. Dr. Snow's legacy is also examined in countries like Guatemala, where he mentored forensic scientist Fredy Peccerelli and helped create a Guatemalan forensic team.

"Dr. Clyde Snow was a shrewd forensic investigator and understood that the public tends to lavish coverage on 'lone wolf' serial killers," said Ruiz. "Famously he said, 'It's too bad Jeffrey Dahmer didn't come to Guatemala 'cause he'd be a general by now.' In 'El Equipo' we use the grammar of the true crime serial in order to delve into a real-life drama spanning four decades, about the unlikely partnership between Snow, a larger-than-life Texan, and a group of Latin American and Central American students who would go on to change the course of forensic science and human rights."

"We're proud to be part of the 'El Equipo' team, our sixth film with director Bernardo Ruiz," said Sandie Viquez Pedlow, executive director of Latino

Public Broadcasting. “Like the best of Bernardo’s work, this film has a quiet, haunting power that stays with you long after the lights come up. It’s a fascinating yet heartbreaking story, beautifully told.”

“El Equipo” was awarded the Jury Prize for best documentary feature at the 2023 Sebastopol Documentary Film Festival, and was named a “Top 20 Audience Favorite” at the Hot Docs Canadian International Film Festival. The film was produced in partnership with VOCES and Latino Public Broadcasting, and received funding through ITVS’s Open Call funding initiative.

Visit the [“El Equipo”](#) page on INDEPENDENT LENS for more information about the film.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS:

Bernardo Ruiz, Director

Bernardo Ruiz is a two-time Emmy Award-nominated documentary filmmaker. He has directed and produced four feature documentaries, including “The Infinite Race” (ESPN’s 30 for 30, 2020), “Harvest Season” (INDEPENDENT LENS, 2019), “Kingdom of Shadows” (Participant Media, 2015), and “Reportero” (POV, 2013), as well as a host of nonfiction programming, including the 2020 election special, “Latino Vote: Dispatches From the Battleground” (PBS).

Gabriela Alcalde, Producer

Gabriela Alcalde is a documentary filmmaker and journalist. She has worked on the producing teams of the Emmy Award-nominated documentaries “The Forever Prisoner” (HBO, 2021) and “Divide and Conquer: The Story of Roger Ailes” (A&E, 2017). She collaborated with Ruiz on “Latino Vote: Dispatches from the Battleground” (PBS, 2020).

Fabián Caballero, Editor/Co-Producer

Fabián Caballero is an Argentine-Bolivian documentary filmmaker based outside of Los Angeles, California. He co-edited the Emmy-nominated “The Interpreters” (INDEPENDENT LENS, 2019) and also co-edited Barbara Kopple’s Emmy-nominated “Desert One” (TIFF, 2019).

CREDITS

Director and Producer
Producer
Editor and Co-Producer
Executive Producers

Bernardo Ruiz
Gabriela Alcalde
Fabián Caballero
Sally Jo Fifer
Lois Vossen
James Costa
Simon Kilmurry
Sandie Viquez Pedlow

Visit the INDEPENDENT LENS [website](#) for more information.

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, Wyncote Foundation, and National Endowment for the Arts. Stream anytime on the PBS App. For more visit pbs.org/independentlens.

ABOUT VOCES

Produced by Latino Public Broadcasting, the acclaimed PBS documentary series [VOCES](#) features the best of Latino arts, culture, and history, and shines a light on current issues that impact Latino Americans. Devoted to exploring the rich diversity of the Latino experience, VOCES presents new and established filmmakers and brings their powerful and illuminating stories to a national audience—on TV, online, and on the PBS App. VOCES is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. Luis Ortiz is series producer; Sandie Viquez Pedlow is executive producer. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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 nonprofit 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, and Wyncote Foundation. For more information, visit itvs.org.

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