



OFFICIAL SELECTION  
**AIFVF**  
51<sup>ST</sup> ATHENS INTERNATIONAL  
FILM + VIDEO FESTIVAL

JURY AWARD  
BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE  
2024 SLAMDANCE  
FILM FESTIVAL

# INHERITANCE

*"I'm gonna be different"*

MILLROCK PRODUCTIONS AND CALLIOPE PICTURES IN ASSOCIATION WITH LIUCRATIVE MEDIA  
PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY MATT MOYER & AMY TOENSING  
EDITOR CURTIS WHITEAR COMPOSER KYLE SCOTT WILSON CINEMATOGRAPHER MATT MOYER  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY MORGAN PEHME DANIEL DIMAURO SAM CULLMAN DAVE A. LIU AND ERIK & LESLIE HEYER

OHIO PREMIERE

**ATHENS INTERNATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL**

**The Athena Cinema**  
**20 South Court Street, Athens, Ohio 45701**  
April 9, 2024, 5:15 PM EST

**INHERITANCE Trailer:** <https://vimeo.com/924645235>

**FILM INFO**

**CATEGORY:** Feature Documentary

**TOTAL RUN TIME:** 83 minutes

**COMPLETION DATE:** JAN. 2024

**COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION:** USA

**LANGUAGE:** English

**PRESS & FILMMAKERS CONTACT**

**M ROCK PRODUCTIONS**  
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**WEBSITE:**

<https://www.inheritancethefilm.com>

**Social Media**

**IG** @inheritance\_thefilm

**FB** @Inheritance the film



*"Possibly the best portrait of addiction and the toll it takes on families I've ever seen." — Steve Kopian, Unseen Films*

## LOGLINE

Filmed over 11 years, INHERITANCE follows Curtis, a young boy, as he grows up in rural Appalachia in a family and community surrounded by substance use disorder and poverty. Can Curtis break the cycle of addiction that has plagued his family for generations?



## SYNOPSIS

INHERITANCE explores the underlying causes of the opioid epidemic in America through the life of one boy and five generations of his extended family over 11 years. Curtis, a bright and hopeful boy, grows up from age 12 to 18 surrounded by love and struggle while every adult in his family – parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins – battles addiction. Curtis' America is an America where people and communities are struggling with an epidemic of substance use disorder, joblessness and a deteriorating sense of belonging.

# FILM PARTICIPANTS



**CURTIS, MAIN CHARACTER**



**CHERYL, CURTIS' GRANDMOTHER**



**JOHN, CURTIS' GRANDFATHER**



**J.P., CURTIS' COUSIN**



**EUVA, CURTIS' MOM**



**GEORGE, CURTIS' DAD**



**DONALD, CURTIS' COUSIN**



**TIA, CURTIS' COUSIN**



**GRANDPA BEAN,  
CURTIS' GREAT-GRANDFATHER**



**GRANDMA BEAN,  
CURTIS' GREAT-GRANDMOTHER**

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The film began in 2012 without us knowing it. Matt took time away from his successful career in photojournalism to study filmmaking as a Knight Fellow at Ohio University. While filming food distribution at a church, he was approached by J.P. – a key character in INHERITANCE – eager to tell his story. After listening to J.P. talk about his heroin addiction, trauma, prison, and a search for redemption, Matt made a short film telling his story. Amy was the second camera on the project.

We found ourselves on the frontlines of the opioid crisis in America.

As we spent time with J.P., his family, and his community, we realized the issue was far more complex than the devastation wrought by one drug. Here was a troubled America, one where communities that bore the brunt of economic decline now faced inherited poverty, joblessness, abuse, addiction, and hopelessness. At the core, it seemed, was a cycle of intergenerational trauma and mental health problems underlying America's substance use disorder crisis.

In 2016, we met J.P.'s 12-year-old cousin Curtis – bright, captivating, and hopeful in a family where every adult battled addiction. His six-year journey to adulthood became ours as filmmakers, to let viewers ask themselves: What if I were Curtis? Could I forge a path different from my parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, – and cousins like J.P.? Is it realistic, let alone fair, to expect a kid like Curtis to “pull themselves up by the bootstraps?”

We kept our focus on Curtis' story, with a belief that audiences would view him as representative of millions of kids in America. We interviewed a local police officer who has known his family for 30 years and he estimated that Curtis's situation represents up to 30% of all kids in the region. The National Institute on Drug Abuse reports that about one out of every eight kids in America grows up in homes with a substance use problem. INHERITANCE does not suggest policy changes but we passionately believe that empathy and understanding are the first spark toward change.

The deeper we delved into this story, the more we began to look at the impact substance use disorder has had on our own family histories. Although Curtis has faced many more difficult struggles than we ever did, we felt a deepening connection with him and his family, and a belief that audiences could be led to feel the same connection, empathy, and hope toward Curtis.

- Matt Moyer and Amy Toensing, Directors, Producers & Cinematographers

## FILMMAKER BIOS



### **MATT MOYER**

#### ***PRODUCER • DIRECTOR • CINEMATOGRAPHER***

Matt Moyer is a photographer and filmmaker dedicated to telling stories that raise awareness and work to improve our world. Matt covered 9/11 in NYC, the Iraq war for The New York Times, and has photographed multiple feature stories for National Geographic magazine. As a National Geographic Explorer, Matt has photographed the looming water crisis in Egypt. He has directed short documentaries that have been featured by a number of outlets including the National Geographic Society and PBS. Matt was named a Knight Wallace Journalism Fellow at the University of Michigan in 2008 and also received a Knight Fellowship at Ohio University in 2012. He teaches regularly for National Geographic Photo Camps, an organization that teaches photography to underserved youth throughout the world. Matt also sits on the Board of Advisors for The Siena School, a school for students with language-based learning differences, headquartered in Washington, DC.



### **AMY TOENSING**

#### ***PRODUCER • DIRECTOR***

Amy Toensing is a visual journalist committed to telling stories with sensitivity and depth. A regular contributor to National Geographic magazine for over twenty years, Toensing has photographed and reported on cultures and topics around the world, including indigenous communities and their connection to land, the impact of drought on communities in Australia and land and social rights for women in Uganda and India. Her recent projects have centered around the human relationship to conservation efforts in the United States including a rewilding project in Montana and The Northern Forest Canoe Trail, a 740 mile protected paddling path that runs from New York to Maine. Toensing has also co-directed two short documentary films, one about urban refugee children in Nairobi and the other on women's land rights in Uganda. In 2018 Toensing was named the Mike Wallace Fellow in Investigative Reporting at University of Michigan. She is currently a National Geographic Explorer, and FUJIFILM Creator.



### **CURTIS WHITEAR**

#### ***EDITOR***

Curtis Whitear is a documentary filmmaker and editor from Bountiful, Utah, now living in New York City. His films have been supported by grants from the American Documentary Fund, National Public Radio, and The Davey Foundation, among others. His feature documentary *Delusions of Grandeur*, following the artist Dustin Yellin's attempt to repurpose a supertanker and build the largest sculpture in history, is in production. He also works as an editor for Alison Roman's Home Movies, and for art institutions including Pioneer Works and the Museum of Modern Art.

# FILMMAKER BIOS

## **KYLE SCOTT WILSON**

### ***COMPOSER***

Kyle is a composer, songwriter, singer and multi-instrumentalist based in NYC. Kyle has written pieces for a wide variety of instrumentation and performed in master classes with the likes of Wynton Marsalis and Fabio Zanon. Kyle found his first notable foothold as the songwriting front person of the critically acclaimed band Milagres, earning accolades from NPR, BBC, KEXP and KCRW. Kyle started his career collaborating with filmmakers in 2015 by scoring an ITVS/PBS feature documentary, *Denial*. Since then he has worked on a multitude of film projects, including the Netflix Original Feature Documentary *Get Me Roger Stone*, HBO Docs' feature documentary *The Swamp*, Discovery+'s series, *The Men Who Sold the World Cup*, as well as several web-series and shorts for *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *TIME*, *Independent Lens* and *The Atlantic*. Kyle also acted as the music editor for the 6 episode series *The Clinton Affair* on A&E, working with composer Gary Lionelli. Most recently Kyle has scored numerous short narrative films which are currently running on the festival circuit.

## **MORGAN PEHME & DANIEL DIMAURO**

### ***EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS***

Daniel DiMauro and Morgan Pehme are critically acclaimed documentary directors, writers, and producers and the co-founders of the New York City-based production company Calliope Pictures, along with Fredrik Stanton. Most recently, they directed and produced *The Men Who Sold the World Cup*, a two-part documentary series for Discovery+ about the FIFA corruption scandal, which premiered worldwide in October 2021. In 2020, they released three projects, the first of which was *Slumlord Millionaire*, an episode of Netflix's *Dirty Money* series. The episode, which they co-directed and produced, is about former White House senior advisor Jared Kushner and was executive produced by Academy Award-winning documentarian Alex Gibney. Next they directed, wrote and produced the HBO Documentaries feature film *The Swamp*, behind-the-scenes exploration of the systemic corruption plaguing the U.S. Congress. Wrapping up the year, they directed, wrote and produced the short film *Trump A.C./D.C.*, which was a Best of 2020 Vimeo Staff Pick. Previously, Morgan and Daniel directed, wrote and produced the critically acclaimed Netflix Original documentary *Get Me Roger Stone* (2017), which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival before being released in theaters in New York and Los Angeles. *Variety* called the film "lively, fun, sickening, and essential." Morgan has written for the *New York Daily News*, *New York Post*, *The Hill*, and *HuffPost*. Daniel's passion for both filmmaking and social justice has guided him throughout his career and led him to work as an editor and producer on multiple award-winning political and social issue-oriented documentaries for outlets such as HBO, PBS and BBC.

## **SAM CULLMAN**

### ***EXECUTIVE PRODUCER***

Sam Cullman is a critically-acclaimed, award-winning filmmaker and the founder of Yellow Cake Films. Cullman shot and directed *THE LION'S SHARE* (2019), an episode of the Netflix *REMASTERED* series, which received an Emmy in 2020. *ART AND CRAFT* (2014), which Cullman shot, produced and directed, won the National Board of Review Top 5 Documentaries in 2014, was shortlisted for the 2015 Academy Awards and was nominated for an Emmy in 2016. Cullman also produced and shot the Peabody and Sundance Grand Jury prize-winning *THE HOUSE I LIVE IN* (2012), directed by Eugene Jarecki. Cullman's first film, *IF A TREE FALLS* (2011), which he co-directed, produced and shot, won the U.S. Documentary Editing Award at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival and later received an Oscar nomination for Best Documentary Feature. Cullman has also shot, produced and directed two short documentaries: *BLACK CHEROKEE* (2012), released in the shorts compilation *TRUE NEW YORK* by First Run, and *OUR LEAGUE* (2022) which was distributed by PBS/ Independent Lens. In addition to camerawork on his own films, Cullman's cinematography has also appeared in dozens of other documentaries including *LENOX HILL* (2020), *GET ME ROGER STONE* (2017), *ABACUS: SMALL ENOUGH TO JAIL* (2016), *A CLASS DIVIDE* (2015) and *KING CORN* (2006).

# FILMMAKER BIOS

## **DAVE A. LIU**

### ***EXECUTIVE PRODUCER***

Dave Liu is a 30-year veteran of Wall Street, Silicon Valley, and Hollywood, and is an advisor, author, entrepreneur, investor, and philanthropist. As CEO of Liucrative Media, he is focused on creating, producing, and financing Asian American and other underrepresented voices. He is a producer and investor in several film, TV, and live entertainment production companies including Stampede Ventures, founded by Greg Silverman, TEG+, founded by Vivek Tiwary, and Utopia, founded by Robert Coppola Schwartzman and Cole Harper. Films that he has produced have premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and have qualified for the Oscars. He is a member of Sundance Catalyst and SF Film Invest, two of the leading communities of independent film financiers. He was previously CEO advisor to ProSiebenSat.1 Media, one of the largest media companies in Europe. He is a graduate of Harvard Business School and the University of Pennsylvania.

## **ERIK HEYER & LESLIE HEYER**

### ***EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS***

Erik & Leslie Heyer are respected social impact entrepreneurs and investors. Over nearly three decades, they have played key roles building, managing, funding, and advising leading social enterprises including educational institutions, healthcare organizations, technology companies, non-profits, and investment firms with a special focus on education, healthcare and social impact. Erik's roles in finance included work at Goldman Sachs, New Mountain Capital, and Bridges Fund Management, a pioneer in social-impact investing. Leslie is the founder of Cycle Technologies, a leader in reproductive health technologies. She previously was on the founding management team of two software companies and managed advertising accounts for global brands. They have served as trustees, directors, investors or otherwise supported numerous non-profits and socially motivated companies.





# CREDITS

PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY  
**MATT MOYER AND AMY TOENSING**

EDITED BY  
**CURTIS WHITEAR**

CINEMATOGRAPHY BY  
**MATT MOYER**

MUSIC BY  
**KYLE SCOTT WILSON**

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS  
**MORGAN PEHME AND DANIEL DIMAURO**

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER  
**SAM CULLMAN**

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS  
**ERIK AND LESLIE HEYER**

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER  
**DAVE A. LIU**

CO-EXECUTIVE PRODUCER  
**FREDRIK STANTON**

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER  
**KAYLA BREEN**

AUDIO POST PRODUCTION  
**HEART PUNCH STUDIOS**

SOUND DESIGN / RE-RECORDING MIX BY  
**GREG MCGLEARY**

COLOR BY  
**CHRISTOPHER YOUNG**

POST PRODUCTION FINISHING BY  
**SEE WHY COLOR**

PRODUCTION COMPANIES  
**MILLROCK PRODUCTIONS**  
**CALLIOPE PICTURES**

*IN ASSOCIATION WITH* **LIUCRATIVE MEDIA**

