A film by David France

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HOW TO SURVIVE A PANDEMIC, directed by acclaimed journalist and Academy Award®-nominated filmmaker David France (HBO’s “Welcome to Chechnya” and “How to Survive a Plague”) debuts TUESDAY, MARCH 29 (9:00-10:50 p.m. ET/PT). The documentary will debut on HBO and will be available to stream on HBO Max.

Synopsis:
HOW TO SURVIVE A PANDEMIC takes an inside look at the historic, multi-national race to research, develop, regulate, and roll out COVID-19 vaccines in the war against the coronavirus pandemic. The documentary began filming in early 2020 as the largest public health effort in history got underway and followed those efforts over the next 18 months, exploring in real time the hard work and collaboration of health agencies worldwide, as well as the political and moral failures of governments to act impartially and equitably.

HOW TO SURVIVE A PANDEMIC details the work of researchers in their labs, scientists conducting volunteer trials and science journalists working to stay abreast of the fast-shifting landscape as the coronavirus continued its deadly onslaught. With unparalleled access to world-renowned scientists, the heads of pharmaceutical companies, government agencies and frontline workers, HOW TO SURVIVE A PANDEMIC is the definitive chronicle of the most consequential undertaking of the 21st century. It is where towering achievements in science collide with the geopolitical realities of desperation, greed, and nationalism.

Featured interviews:
Jon Cohen, senior correspondent for Science Magazine; Dr. Peter Marks, Director of the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration; Dr. Dan Barouch, lead scientist behind the Johnson & Johnson vaccine; Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett, the former scientific lead of the National Institutes of Health's Vaccine Research Center who co-developed Moderna’s mRNA vaccine; Dr. Adrian Hill, who led the research for the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine; Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization; Adar Poonawalla, CEO of the Serum Institute of India, the world’s largest vaccine manufacturer; Dr. Seth Berkley, CEO of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and head of the global COVAX initiative (in partnership with the World Health Organization); Dr. Glenda Gray, President and CEO of the South African Medical Research Council, the face of South Africa’s Covid-19 response; Rev. Paul Abernathy of Pittsburgh, PA, who tries to address vaccine hesitancy and access to healthcare in his community; and more.

Credits:

Recent Press:
DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT
In early 2020, I had been meeting daily with the crew from my previous film – we had just begun its rollout through festivals when the dark pandemic clouds sent us home. In daily zooms, we obsessed about our families’ health and our own. Outside our windows, we heard the orchestras of sirens tearing through the city, and on our televisions the images of mass graves. We prayed for a vaccine, knowing it alone would let us get back to ordinary life. As a team, for our sanity, we began a deep dive into the vaccine development world, hoping for answers. That’s when we realized that the most critical action going on in the world at that moment was taking place behind closed doors in research laboratories, unseen by the world’s population depending on that work. We had found our next project.

Covid-19 is my second pandemic – third, if you also count polio, which was conquered just before I was born but whose victims were all around in my early years, their injuries haunting my dreams. HIV is my first and most formative pandemic. That viral thug hit the streets of New York the same year I did, 1981, which was also the year I came out, putting us on a collision course. The disease stole away friends and lovers but somehow I outmaneuvered it. Yet I was fully engaged with AIDS – not as a frontline activist but as an investigative journalist looking for answers, looking for hope. It is scarcely possible to convey what it was like over the 15 years between 1981 and 1996 – 15 years! – when there was not one effective medication against HIV. Then, finally, pharmaceutical breakthroughs stopped the dying. But not for everybody. Horribly, it took another decade for those drugs to reach sub-Saharan Africa, the pandemic’s white-hot epicenter. This is the worst horror of the AIDS pandemic – worse than the virus was the indifference and greed. We allowed tens of millions of people to die of what was suddenly a survivable infection.

I thought of this immediately when I turned to study our new pandemic. I know many of the scientists, as most were veterans of HIV research. Their confidence was comforting – and not misplaced: In just 11 months they accomplished the most remarkable scientific achievement in history, propelling a transnational vaccine “moon shot” program that produced multiple highly effective vaccines. I got to work covering them, my second pandemic. And I hoped against hope that this time their scientific accomplishment would be matched by the political and corporate will to do the right thing globally.

How would history judge us now? How would we survive *this* pandemic? What have we learned?
PRODUCTION NOTES
Every documentary made in the pandemic has complex stories of Covid protocols and strategies, but most productions did not begin as early as ours. Our first filming came in early April 2020, just weeks after the pandemic was declared. And because we were filming the vaccine researchers on the very front lines, the last thing we wanted was to expose them to anything. Too much was carried on their shoulders. Luckily many were eager to let our cameras in, knowing the historic importance of this work, and worked with us to find ways to minimize risks.

Our first thought was to use robotic camera setups. We spent months developing various gizmos to send into the research facilities, but never arrived at a practical prototype. Filming one day in a research lab, driving the contraption from outside the sterile boundaries, the camera kept bumping into walls and research assistants. There would never be a vaccine if the researchers would have to put up with this.

So instead we went with thick layers of PPE and a strict dedication to social distancing. The square footage of every room was measured in advance; crew movements were as choreographed as ballet. Where possible, we filmed from the sidewalks outside – through open windows. And we avoided traveling long distances, not wanting to be responsible for moving variants around the globe. Instead, we hired local collaborators, concocting a way to direct and produce the looks over live feeds. Mira and I made appearances in African and South America via an iPad – disembodied heads greeting our protagonists from the toting arms of a local PA.

This film was not shot entirely like this. In those few promising weeks between early vaccines and the arrival of the Delta variant, when it seemed the worst of the pandemic had passed, we did return to air travel and traditional filming. But that luxury didn’t last, thanks to Omicron, and we finished the film remotely, the way we started it. Most cumbersomely, this included editing, sound mixing and color grading – all done from scattered corners of the world. This slowed our work down dramatically, but allowed us to dodge the worst of Covid. Of our 16-member full time crew, only 2 were infected – and they recovered quickly, thanks to the vaccines.
BIOS

DAVID FRANCE (Director) is an Oscar-nominated filmmaker, New York Times bestselling author, and award-winning investigative journalist. His directorial debut, HOW TO SURVIVE A PLAGUE, is hailed as an innovative and influential piece of storytelling and is regularly screened in university classrooms, and by community groups and AIDS service organizations. After a theatrical run in over 30 cities, HOW TO SURVIVE A PLAGUE was aired on PBS’ Independent Lens, reaching an audience of millions and garnering Academy and Emmy nominations and a Peabody Award. His 2017 film, THE DEATH & LIFE OF MARSHA P. JOHNSON, a Netflix Original Documentary, won numerous festival prizes and was awarded the Outfest “Freedom Award” and a special jury recognition from Sheffield International Documentary Festival. Critics put it on multiple “Best of the Year” lists. David premiered his newest documentary, WELCOME TO CHECHNYA (HBO Max 2020), at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, where it won the special jury award for documentary editing, and it received the Panorama Audience Award and Amnesty International Film Prize at 2020 Berlinale. The film was further recognized with a Peabody Award, a BAFTA Award, and the Seigenthaler Prize from RFK Human Rights. It was nominated for the Primetime Emmy Award for Exceptional Merit in Documentary Filmmaking.

MIRA CHANG (Producer) has over two decades of experience in documentary filmmaking, covering an array of topics from international socio political issues, science and history. Her work has taken her around the planet, and has been featured across outlets like PBS, CNN, HBO, Netflix, Amazon, National Geographic, Discovery, A&E, ABC, MTV, VH1 and Sundance. She was a cinematographer for award winning feature documentaries, several Emmy award winning programs for ABC’s long-form news division, and co-directed photography for the Academy Award nominated film JESUS CAMP. As VP of Development and Production at the Emmy and Peabody award-winning company, Show of Force, she developed and produced a slate of film, television, digital and social impact campaigns for issues surrounding girls and women, voting and democracy, climate change and the international refugee crisis. Chang is faculty at the School of Visual Arts MFA program in Social Documentary.
**JON COHEN** (Science Consultant, Advisor) is an award winning magazine writer and author of four nonfiction books on scientific topics and one of the world's leading journalists covering Covid-19 vaccine research today. Cohen is a senior correspondent with *Science*, and also has written for the New Yorker, Atlantic Monthly, the New York Times Magazine, BuzzFeed, Smithsonian, Technology Review, Outside, Slate and many other publications including Surfer. He specializes in biomedicine, and is widely known for his coverage of epidemics (HIV/AIDS, Covid-19, Ebola, influenza), immunology, vaccines, and global health. He also has reported extensively on genetics, primate research, evolution, bioterrorism, research funding, ethics, reproductive biology, credit battles, and the media itself. Cohen's books have covered a wide range of topics for a lay audience, including the search for an AIDS vaccine, the science of miscarriage, the scientific differences between humans and chimpanzees, and a critical analysis of Tijuana, Mexico's faltering response to its HIV/AIDS epidemic. His work has received awards from the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, the National Association of Science Writers, the American Society for Microbiology, the American Society for Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, the Treatment Action Group, the Pan American Health Organization, the Council for the Advancement of Science Writing, the Global Health Council and the National Institute of Healthcare Management.

**TYLER H. WALK** (Editor) is recognized with a Sundance Special Jury Award for Editing, a Cinema Eye Award, and an Emmy nomination. Named to DOC NYC's 40 Under 40, his films include David France's Welcome to Chechnya, the Oscar-Nominated How to Survive a Plague, and Michael Moore's Where to Invade Next. A graduate from Penn State University ('06) and The Edit Center, Tyler is also an amateur pinballer and pretend rock star by night. His Bacon number is 2.

**ADAM EVANS** (Editor) is a British filmmaker who has worked in the post-production world for over ten years on series and features for broadcasters such as HBO, BBC and Netflix. His most recent work as an editor includes 'Tasmania: Weird and Wonderful' and 'Super Pigs' and, as an assistant editor, 'David Attenborough’s Natural Curiosities', 'Earth From Space' and 'The Loneliest Whale: The Search for 52'. He has also directed several short films, including the upcoming 'The Ballad Of Tombstone, AZ'. He is a graduate of the School Of Visual Arts and The Edit Center.

Ira Sachs, David France, JC Chandor and Greta Gerwig. Composer alliances include Ennio Morricone, Rachel Portman, Philip Glass, Howard Shore, and Alexandre Desplat.

Perić holds a degree in English and Italian Literature and Language from the University of Zagreb, and a BA in Film Studies from Columbia College, Chicago. She has lectured and given master classes throughout the world — at the Film University of Stockholm, Sweden; Cinematographer Film Festival, São Paulo, Brazil; University of Rome, Cinecittá, Italy; Berklee School of Music in Boston. She has served as an Artist Faculty at the Film Academy Zagreb, Croatia; and currently, in New York University’s Screen Scoring program in its Steinhardt School.

OSEI ESSED (Composer) is a multi-platform artist, performing and writing for screen and stage. Recent credits include: Amend: The Fight for America (Netflix), High on the Hog (Netflix), Farewell Amor (IFC), As well as the forthcoming docuseries: Lincoln’s Dilemma (Apple) and documentary How to Survive a Pandemic (HBO). Essed performs with the Brooklyn-based bands The Woes and Big Hands Rhythm and Blues Band.
ADVISORS

- **Chris Beyrer**
  - Dr. Chris Beyrer is the Desmond M. Tutu Professor of Public Health and Human Rights at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. He is a Professor of Epidemiology, International Health, Health, Behavior and Society, and Nursing. He was president of the International AIDS Society from 2014 to 2016.

- **Risha Irvin**
  - Dr. Risha Irvin is an Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases and Associate Vice Chair for Diversity and Inclusion in the Department of Medicine at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. She has been working with the Covid-19 Prevention Trials Network on community engagement both locally and nationally.

- **Gagandeep Kang**
  - Dr. Gagandeep Kang is a Professor of Microbiology at the Wellcome Trust Research Laboratory, Division of Gastrointestinal Sciences at the Christian Medical College (CMC) in Vellore, India. Her work focuses on enteric infections in children and the development and use of vaccines.

- **Ruth Karron**
  - Dr. Ruth Karron is a Professor of International Health in the Division of Global Disease Epidemiology and Control at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She is Co-Director of the Johns Hopkins Vaccine Initiative.

- **John P. Moore**
  - Dr. John P. Moore is a Professor of Microbiology and Immunology at Weill Cornell Medical College. A former section editor of the *Journal of General Virology*, he is known for his research on HIV/AIDS.
Public Square Films, a New York-based film production company, is dedicated to lifting up untold stories of unsung heroes, including those working on LGBTQ causes, and to producing films that celebrate progressive social change in politics, law, and science.

PARTNERS

IMPACT PARTNERS
Impact Partners is dedicated to funding independent documentary storytelling that entertains audiences, engages with pressing social issues, and propels the art of cinema forward. Over the span of 14 years, Impact Partners has been involved in the financing of over 100 films, including: ICARUS, which won the 2018 Academy Award® for Best Documentary Feature; WON’T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?, which won the 2019 Independent Spirit Award for Best Documentary; DiNA, which won the Grand Jury Prize at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival and was named Best Feature by the International Documentary Association; THE EAGLE HUNTERESS, which was nominated for the BAFTA Award for Best Documentary; HOW TO SURVIVE A PLAGUE, which was nominated for the Academy Award® for Best Documentary Feature; THE QUEEN OF VERSAILLES, which won the U.S. Directing Award at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival; and HELL AND BACK AGAIN, which won the Documentary Grand Jury Prize and Cinematography Award at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival and was nominated for the Academy Award® for Best Documentary Feature.

SANDBOX FILMS
Sandbox Films is a mission-driven film company that specializes in creative and boundary-breaking documentaries rooted in scientific ideas that inform society and culture. We collaborate with production partners and visionary filmmakers, providing co-production and financing opportunities for bold, artist-driven ideas. Our films have premiered at top-tier festivals around the world — including Sundance (winning the Special Jury Prize for Nonfiction Experimentation), SXSW, Telluride, TIFF, and CPH:DOX; and our films have been acquired by Netflix, Apple Original Films, NEON, National Geographic Documentary Films, BBC, and PBS, among others.

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About the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation:
The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation is a New York-based, philanthropic institution that makes grants to support original research and education in science and technology. The Foundation’s program in Public Understanding of Science and Technology, directed by Doron Weber, supports books, radio, film, television, theater, and new media to reach a wide, non-specialized audience and to bridge the two cultures of science and the humanities. Sloan has partnered with a dozen of the top film schools in the country and established annual awards in screenwriting and film production. The Foundation also supports screenplay development programs with the Sundance Institute, Film Independent, SFFILM, the Black List, the Athena
Film Festival, and the North Fork TV Festival. The Foundation has helped develop over 30 feature films and feature documentaries such as Werner Herzog's upcoming Theater of Thought, Father of the Cyborgs, Picture a Scientist, Coded Bias, In Silico, Oliver Sacks: His Own Life, The Bit Player, Bombshell: The Hedy Lamarr Story, Particle Fever, and Oceans. For more information, visit www.sloan.org or follow @SloanPublic on Twitter and Facebook.

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Wellcome supports science to solve the urgent health challenges facing everyone. We support discovery research into life, health and wellbeing, and we’re taking on three worldwide health challenges: mental health, infectious disease and climate. Wellcome is a politically and financially independent global charitable foundation, funded by a £38.2 billion investment portfolio.
CREDITS [NORTH AMERICA]

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LOGO ANIMATION HBO Click On
LOGO ANIMATION HBO Documentary Films
LOGO ANIMATION HBO Documentary Films Presents
1 a Public Square Films production
2 a David France film
3 in association with Impact Partners
4 in association with Sandbox Films
MAIN TITLE HOW TO SURVIVE A PANDEMIC

END CREDITS

5 directed by David France
6 produced by Mira Chang
7 executive produced by Joy Tomchin
8 written by David France Tyler H. Walk
9 consulting producer Jon Cohen
edited by
Adam Evans
Tyler H. Walk

directors of photography
Tom Bergmann
Wolfgang Held
John Pope

music by
Osei Essed

music editing by
Suzana Perić

for HBO

executive producers
Nancy Abraham
Lisa Heller

senior producer
Sara Rodriguez

executive producers
Jenny Raskin
Geralyn White Dreyfous

executive producers
Jim & Susan Swartz
Nina & David Fialkow

executive producers
Greg Boustead
Jessica Harrop

co- executive producers
Scott & Molly Forstall
Marni E.J. Grossman
Lauren & John Driscoll
supervising producer
Yuna Ma

co-producer
Samuel Lieberman

consulting editor
Carla Gutierrez

senior story producer
Gretchen Goetz

story producer
Ann Tyler Moses

field producer
Micah Fink

production managers
Sam Blye
Caitlin Smith

production coordinator
Olivia Miner

assistant production coordinator
Tomas Naglis

production assistant
Molly Baxter

archival producers
Shanti Avirgan
Olivia Streisand

archival assistant / researcher
Jamie Deradorian-Delia

post production supervisor
John Torrani

assistant editors
Steve Gieseke
Anthony Coppola
development and pre-production producers
Alice Henty
Paul McGuire

supervising producer
Andrea Berman

production manager
Libby Phillips

coordinating producer
Marc Zahakos

production coordinator
Robyn Dannerbeck

editor
Amy Foote

assistant editor
Igor Myakotin
ADDITIONAL UNITS - UNITED STATES

California
additional cinematography
Ulli Bonnekamp
Jon Cohen
Jonathan Furmanski
Guy Mossman

field producers
Giorgi Angelini
Arthur Jones

location sound mixers
Mike Kool
Daniel S. McCoy

assistant cameras
Daniel Fredrickson
Elli Thornburg

Massachusetts
additional cinematography
Stephen McCarthy
Igor Myakotin
Daniel A. Nelson
Josh Weinhaus

location sound mixers
Mark Gardner
Buck St. Thomas
assistant cameras
Benjamin Pflum

Michigan
additional cinematography
Sean Mouton

location sound mixer
Andre Bottesi

New York
additional cinematography
Adam Evans
Bryant Fisher
Martina Radwan

location sound mixers
Nikola Chapelle
Robert La Rosa
Taylor Roy

assistant cameras
John Arturo
Jaime Medrano Jr.
Mustafa Mirza
Edwin Shimko
Rhys Stevenson

Ohio
additional cinematography
Max Miller
Kameron Mogadam
Dave Morrison

location sound mixers
Zach Huber
Geoff Maxwell
Jon Wermuth

assistant camera
Roger Holliday

field coordinator
Josh Kellinghaus

Pennsylvania
location sound mixers
Chad Djubek
Nathaniel Robinson
Chris Strollo

assistant cameras
Ralph Dilullo
Luke Keibler

production assistants
Nicholas Ozorak

Texas
additional cinematography
Andrew Cagle

location sound mixers
John Lance

assistant cameras
Nico Paprota

field producer
Dax Stringer

Washington, DC
additional cinematography
Jon Cohen
Brett Wiley

location sound mixers
Greg Breazeale
Brian Buckley
ADDITIONAL UNITS - INTERNATIONAL

Brazil
Additional Production Services Provided By
Story Productions LTD

additional cinematography
Gustavo Almeida
Paulo Ramos Hermida
Francisco Olandi

field producers
Aarón Fernández
Adriano Rocha

location sound mixers
Ana Luiza Penna
Daniel Maciel Martins
Douglas Silva

assistant cameras
Fernando Augusto Arruzzo
Yale Oliveira
Viva Silvia Valença Varjão
Danilo Saraiva

field associate producer
Gisela Regis Stangl

production assistant
João Gabriel Torgano Brito

England
additional cinematography
William Edwards
Jon Sayers

field producers
Johnny Crockett
Nada-Mai Issa

location sound mixers
Simon Forrester
Chris Gibbons
Tim Hodge

assistant cameras
Alex Kirkwood
Pedro Uviedo

India
Additional Production Services Provided By
Angles Unlimited India Productions

additional cinematography
Jon Cohen
Rameshwar Ramakrishnan
Akshay Singh

field producers
Monica Raheja
Kanika Raheja
graphics and visual effects provided by

design studio
Elastic

creative director
Olga Midlenko

design
Ethem Cem
Peter Sickbert-Bennett
Ilya Tselyutin

animation
Alex Silver
James Hurlburt

associate Producer
Mitchell Fraser

deputy Head of Production
Zach Wakefield

executive Producer
Luke Colson

executive producer / head of production
Kate Berry

managing director
Jennifer Sofio Hall
post-production services provided by Final Frame

digital Intermediate Colorist -
Will Cox

digital Intermediate Online Editor
Ben Kiviat

digital Intermediate Producers
Kate Albers
Veronica Webb

digital Intermediate Manager
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Dr. Jason McLellan, UT Austin
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Katlego Nkala, South African Medical Research Council
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Dr. Andrew Pollard, Oxford University
Dr. Helen Rees, University of Witwatersrand
Alyssa Richardson, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
Zain Rizvi, Public Citizen
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Sally Susman, Pfizer
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