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***INDEPENDENT LENS* ON PBS OFFERS AN INTIMATE PORTRAIT OF INCARCERATED MOTHERS IN AMERICA WITH “APART,” PREMIERING FEBRUARY 21**

The Documentary Examines the Impact of America’s War on Drugs Through the Stories of Three Formerly Incarcerated Women as They Prepare to Rejoin Their Families

(San Francisco, CA) December 16, 2021 — Since the beginning of the War on Drugs, the number of women in U.S. prisons has grown over 800 percent, and the majority of those women are mothers. In “Apart,” Academy Award-nominated filmmaker Jennifer Redfearn (“Sun Come Up,” and “Tocando La Luz”) examines this staggering statistic through the lens of three mothers imprisoned in the midwest for drug-related charges. “Apart” depicts their struggles with poverty, addiction, and surging incarceration rates as these women strive to mend familial bonds after years of separation and reestablish their lives once released from prison.

INDEPENDENT LENS, the award-winning PBS documentary anthology series presented by ITVS, will premiere “Apart” for its U.S. broadcast debut on February 21, 2022, at 10:00 p.m. ET ([check local listings](#)). The film will also be available on the PBS Video app.

Filmed over three and a half years, from their lives inside prison to the year following their release, Redfearn follows three young mothers in Cleveland, Ohio—Lydia, Tomika, and Amanda—caught between harsh drug sentencing and rising incarceration for women. This intimate portrait examines the impact of America’s war on drugs through three mothers attempting to rebuild lives derailed by drugs and prison. As Tomika, Lydia, and Amanda prepare to rejoin their families after years of incarceration, they enter an innovative prison program in Cleveland, Ohio, where they lean on each other and on mentors who have also been in prison. With the hope of redemption on the horizon, the women work to regain the trust of their children and combat stigmas associated with people who have been incarcerated.

As they work through the program and reconnect with their children, Lydia, Tomika, and Amanda begin to see the promise of reunion and redemption. An ultimately hopeful portrait, “Apart” not only explores the hardships incarcerated mothers face as they prepare to rejoin their families, but also the obstacles they encounter post-prison as they navigate looking for jobs, finding housing, and reconnecting with their children.

“Women are the fastest-growing population in the U.S. criminal justice system. In this film, we meet Lydia, Tomika, and Amanda, mothers eager to make amends and reclaim their lives,” said



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director Jennifer Redfearn. “With the majority of women imprisoned for drug-related offenses, their journeys to recovery and redemption are more common than you’d think. We hope this film sheds light on how incarceration impacts mothers, children, families, and, as a result, entire communities, and inspires audiences to give second chances.”

“‘Apart’ is a story of the American family, and the willpower it takes to reunite after a prolonged separation and the struggle to mend relationships,” said Lois Vossen, executive producer of INDEPENDENT LENS. “Our hope is that ‘Apart’ touches hearts of families everywhere, to connect with these stories and recognize the impact of prison rehabilitation programs.”

“Apart” is included in INDEPENDENT LENS’s ongoing Stories for Justice initiative, a public media partnership, which spotlights films about systemic racial inequities across America and aims to spark community conversations about justice reform.

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

About the Filmmakers

Jennifer Redfearn

Jennifer Redfearn directed and produced the Oscar-nominated “Sun Come Up.” Her film “Tocando La Luz” (“Touch the Light”) aired on PBS, and she was a field director and consulting producer on SXSW Audience Award-winner “Landfill Harmonic.” She has produced docs for PBS, BBC, National Geographic, CNN, and Discovery, and is director of the documentary program at UC Berkeley’s Graduate School of Journalism.

Tim Metzger

Oscar-nominated producer and Emmy-nominated cinematographer Tim Metzger filmed and produced “Sun Come Up,” as well as “Tocando La Luz” (“Touch the Light”). He was DP for several Emmy-nominated series, including National Geographic’s “The Story of God” with Morgan Freeman and Discovery’s “Rising: Rebuilding Ground Zero.” Tim’s work has also appeared on PBS, BBC, CNN, Al Jazeera, and HBO.

CREDITS

Director	Jennifer Redfearn
Producers	Jennifer Redfearn Tim Metzger
Executive Producers	Sally Jo Fifer Patty Quillin Lois Vossen



About INDEPENDENT LENS

INDEPENDENT LENS is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series, airing on PBS Monday nights at 10:00 p.m. ET. The acclaimed series, with Lois Vossen as executive producer, features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by ITVS, the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS, Action Family Giving, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more visit pbs.org/independentlens. Join the conversation on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram at @independentlens.

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