

presents

ART AND CRAFT

Directed by Sam Cullman and Jennifer Grausman Co-Directed by Mark Becker

OFFICIAL SELECTION – TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL 2014 OFFICIAL SELECTION – HOT DOCS 2014

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ABOUT THE FILM

When one of the most prolific art forgers in US history is finally exposed, he must confront the legacy of his 30-year con.

SYNOPSIS

Mark Landis has been called one of the most prolific art forgers in US history. His impressive body of work spans thirty years, covering a wide range of painting styles and periods that includes 15th Century Icons, Picasso, and even Walt Disney. And while the copies could fetch impressive sums on the open market, Landis isn't in it for money. Posing as a philanthropic donor, a grieving executor of a family member's will, and most recently as a Jesuit priest, Landis has given away hundreds of works over the years to a staggering list of institutions across the United States. But after duping Matthew Leininger, a tenacious registrar who ultimately discovers the decades-long ruse and sets out to expose his philanthropic escapades to the art world, Landis must confront his own legacy and a chorus of professionals clamoring for him to stop.

However, stopping isn't as simple as it might appear. Landis, it turns out, struggles with mental illness and over the years he's developed an outright "addiction to philanthropy" as his elaborate cons offer him the chance to cultivate connection and respect. Art and Craft starts out as a cat-and-mouse art caper, rooted in questions of authorship and authenticity – but what emerges is an intimate story of obsession and the universal need for community, appreciation, and purpose.

DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

Ever since the Dada movement of the early 20th Century coined the term "Readymade," appropriation and authorship have been central themes of modern art. In today's world of Photoshop, HD cell phone cameras and affordable digital reproduction, these questions are as alive as ever — and take on a new meaning as cases of art forgery (from Wolfgang Beltracchi to Ken Perenyi, Pei-Shen Qian and more) continue to pop up in the news. Fakes and forgeries are in the zeitgeist and when discovered, they also

inevitably incite debate over the role of art, artists and the very institutions that drive the industry and determine value.

When *The New York Times* published an article about Mark Landis a few years ago, we were hooked from the start. The piece described a talented art forger who wasn't motivated by money but instead donated his work to institutions across the United States for nearly three decades. But at the time, Landis had avoided full-scale detection and so the story explored his elaborate con through the experiences of the museum directors, curators and registrars who had received his countless forgeries. The man at the center of the storm remained a mystery. We were dying to know more. Who was Mark Landis? What were his motivations? We had to meet him.

Landis it turns out was hiding in plain sight at his mother's house in Mississippi. And he defied our expectations from the start. First and foremost, he was remarkably transparent for a man in his position. He seemed genuinely troubled by the idea that he had caused anyone harm (even if he didn't believe his actions were so problematic). Mark Landis clearly didn't fit the typical profile of a master art forger.

In *The New York Times*, the *Financial Times*, and other publications, the curators he duped wondered aloud: Was Landis a failed artist trying to get back at the art world that had rejected him? Was he a kind of Robin Hood for the arts with dreams of bringing great works to the masses? Or was he some kind of a performance artist, intent on questioning notions of originality and authorship?

Before we knew it, we were filming Landis at work as both forger and "philanthropist." But it was not until Landis began to open up about his past, his family and his struggles with mental illness, that we soon realized this story was in fact bigger than its art world foundation. Diagnosed as a teenager with schizophrenia and multiple behavioral disorders in the 1970's, Landis had endured a lifetime of marginalization as a person living with mental illness — and his elaborate thirty-year con had become a means to change all that, allowing him to regain control and finally be given respect. He found his calling and over time, Landis became "addicted to philanthropy."

Art and Craft uncovers a unique story of obsession that falls at the intersection of authenticity and identity. This intimate character study opens a window onto the disarmingly eccentric world of one man, but in doing so uncovers something much more universal – the search for meaning and purpose.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

In January 2011, director Jennifer Grausman happened upon a story in *The New York Times* about Mark Landis, an unusual art forger who gave away his fakes instead of selling them. The Times reported that numerous attempts to contact Landis had been unsuccessful so she put the article away.

"But I couldn't stop thinking about it," Grausman says. "What kind of art forger donates his work to museums instead of selling it?" She continues: "The story particularly resonated with me since I grew up in the art world – my uncle is a sculptor and my aunt owned a gallery – and I worked as a fundraiser for The Museum of Modern Art before I began making films."

And so a few days later Grausman contacted Matthew Leininger, who The New York Times called: "a kind of Javert to Mr. Landis's Valjean." Around the same time, Grausman met director and cinematographer Sam Cullman through mutual friends and showed him the article. Prior to his work in documentary, Cullman had his own background in the arts as a former printmaker and painter—and equally intrigued, they decided to make the trip to Cincinnati to interview Leininger. It was a promising start, but they knew they had to track down Mark Landis to see the story's full potential. Soon thereafter they made contact, and after several months speaking with Landis on the telephone, they were eventually invited down to Laurel to film with Landis in person in May 2011.

THE FIRST SHOOT

That first shoot with Landis turned out to be incredibly fruitful. As Cullman explains: "Landis was immediately captivating and we found ourselves taken from the start by his Truman Capote-like delivery and lyrical manner. Remarkably open and talkative, Landis gave us a major interview and we also filmed him buying art supplies and making his forgeries." Grausman adds: "those first couple of days of footage had a wealth of great moments. Landis was equal parts charming and disarming and we were emboldened when we came home and showed the material to our eventual co-director

and editor Mark Becker — he was equally intrigued and inspired by what he saw."

POST PRODUCTION

Turning to post-production, the core creative team - Cullman, Grausman and Becker- spent considerable time crafting the film's intricate structure. The most important aspect of the film - the filmmakers all felt - was that it be honest and approach the world of Mark Landis with responsibility and respect. Cullman says: "Superficially, one could interpret Landis' story as inherently sensational, and though the three of us of course wanted to create a compelling film, we could not in good conscience use Landis as a means to just tell a great story." Grausman continues: "Landis has been through a lot of hardship in his life - in terms of his familial circumstances and his mental health issues - these were essential pieces and they had to be addressed. So we chose to enter his subjective experience as much as possible." filmmakers approached the story of Landis' duplicity through his own layers of motivations, his own idiosyncratic worldview, and his many human contradictions.

As production continued, they found that they were telling the story of this man's life just as it was unraveling. The publicity around Landis' donations was damaging his career and his self-described calling to be a "philanthropist." Becker explains: "Art and Craft may have the trappings of an art caper, but ultimately it's a detective inquiry into an individual's perceptions of his own universe. When Landis confronts the legacy of his actions and realizes that his defining purpose in life could be stripped away, the film uncovers some provocative existential questions."

THE PHONE CALL

When Aaron Cowan, Director of the DAAP Galleries at the University of Cincinnati was researching an exhibition that he hoped to mount with Matthew Leininger, he organized a phone interview with Landis. (Despite the fact that Landis was still donating fakes to museums, he had not actually committed a crime and was thus reachable by phone). Knowing this, Cullman and Grausman arranged to be on both sides of this research phone call with cameras.

Cowan's questioning of Landis lasted a couple of hours. His questions – in many ways – were similar to a documentary interviewer's questions and the filmmakers jumped at the chance to

explore material in a new way. Cowan asked about Landis' personal history and how it informed his forgery career. He probed to understand Landis' motivations, covering a wide range of Landis' life and career. Cullman says: "In some ways, Cowan was more direct than we could be as filmmakers in for the long haul. He pushed Landis' buttons, grilling him about ethics and authorship. Landis was up for the challenge and watching them spar was both dramatic and eye-opening." Grausman continues: "what could have been an exhaustive documentary interview (with the imbalanced power dynamic of filmmaker and subject) turned into an energetic scene with two film subjects verbally battling it out. Instead of an interview, we inherited drama."

When the filmmakers got to the editing room with this footage, Becker started to piece the phone call together. And it is in the edit room over many months that Becker says: "We turned what might have been just one scene into a recurring sequence that anchors the structure of the film. Aaron Cowan becomes Landis' provocateur and by the climax of the film, he transcends his researcher role and directly affects both the plot and Landis' life.

THE SCORE AND META-REALITIES

In the world of vérité documentaries, one's observations of both image and sound recorded during production often find their full meaning and place when they meet again in the editing room. Initially inspired by the 40s Big Band music that always played in Landis' red Cadillac, the score of *Art and Craft* eventually transcended its diagetic origins and became a source of narrative meaning.

Landis' love of old movies and television shows are also a huge part of his life and a great example of this dynamic. The blue light from the television in Landis' bedroom is always on and casts an omnipresent glow as he paints his copies. As Grausman says: "Already working within the framework of an art caper narrative, we found inspiration for our score in Landis' obsession with movies and TV (particularly film noir and other genres from the 1930s and 40s), as well as music from that same bygone era."

Becker continues: "In his life, Landis is a character in his own personal movie. He thinks of himself as a 'philanthropist' when he donates his works to museums. He talks about playing the part, like an actor. 'Like those guys on TV.' And this informed our creative choices both in editing and in scoring the film."

Searching through big band songs, Becker placed Artie Shaw's classic *Nightmare* as a temp track at the head of the film. Cullman explains: "we watched Landis walk through a strip mall parking lot and comb through Hobby Lobby looking for frames and painting supplies — an act that without music would play as innocuous and mundane. But Nightmare contextualized his endeavor immediately. Here is a Character with a capital C. He's a man on a mission and we're not sure yet whether he's a hero or villain."

Later on, after scoring this first scene with composer Stephen Ulrich, the filmmakers decided to squash the EQ of this opening track in order to make the cue sound iconic — like it came from a period film noir with the production values of older microphones and recording equipment. The score becomes a meta-score, with the subtle connation that this music was not written for Landis but this is the music of Landis. This cue and its several reprises throughout the film became the sound of Landis' alter ego, "The Philanthropist."

Becker explains: "Before we began working with Stephen, we searched for temp music to carry us through the more intimate scenes with Landis. Sticking with the jazz sensibility, we relied heavily on music from 20's and 30's jazz guitarist Eddie Lang. Lang had a somewhat buttoned up classical sensibility. But there is a rough-around-the-edges quality to the music as well. The sound felt right for the dignified, yet slightly ragged persona of our main subject."

Lang's cues was guitar-based interpretation of Among a Rachmaninoff's *Prelude* in C-Sharp Minor. For Landis' intimate scenes, during the pre-composer phase, Lang's guitar (and Prelude especially) became the perfect soundtrack for Landis' interior life. It's a solitary sound, but unsentimental and full of resolve and strength. Landis is coping with his mental illness, and dealing with loneliness, but he is not a victim: his forgeries and his "philanthropy," though ethically questionable, are both part of a quest for purpose and meaning.

All of the Eddie Lang tracks were eventually replaced by Stephen Ulrich's fine work. And Ulrich brought inspiration, cohesion, and

nuance to *Art and Craft's* score in a way that needle drop songs never could. But there was one exception where the filmmakers stubbornly stuck with the melody and sound of their temp music, working with Ulrich to re-record Prelude in C-Sharp Minor. Cullman explains: "And thus Ulrich adapted the Eddie Lang arrangement of a Rachmaninoff piece. As filmmakers we too had entered the world of appropriation. After all, this is a film about a copy artist."

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Sam Cullman - Director, Producer and Cinematographer

Sam Cullman is a cinematographer, producer and director documentaries with well over a decade of experience. He partnered with director Marshall Curry to co-direct, shoot and produce If a Tree Falls (2011) which won the U.S. Documentary Editing Award at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival and later received an Academy Award® nomination for Best Documentary Feature. More recently, Cullman produced and shot the Sundance Grand Jury Prize winning The House I live In (2012), directed by Eugene Jarecki. Cullman's cinematography has appeared in dozens of documentaries including King Corn (2006), Why We Fight (2005), and most recently in Black Cherokee (2012), a documentary short that he also directed, produced and edited with Benjamin Rosen. A graduate of Brown University (1999) with Honors in Visual Art and a second major in Urban Studies, Cullman currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Jennifer Grausman - Director and Producer

Jennifer Grausman directed and produced the Emmy-nominated feature documentary, *Pressure Cooker* (2008). The film garnered awards from festivals across the country including a Special Jury Commendation at the 2008 Los Angeles Film Festival and Best Documentary at the 2009 Philadelphia Film Festival. It opened theatrically before being broadcast on BET. Grausman also coproduced Eric Mendelsohn's feature, *3 Backyards* (2009), which won Best Director at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival. Previously, she produced six short films, including Suzi Yoonessi's *Dear Lemon Lima* (2007), and Joan Stein's *Solidarity* (2005). In addition to making films, Grausman was Co-Director of The Screenwriters Colony in Nantucket, MA from 2010 to 2012. A graduate of the MFA film

program at Columbia University, Grausman was honored with the 2005 Best Producer Award. Prior to graduate school, she was the Manager of Exhibition and Film Funding at The Museum of Modern Art. She earned her BFA in Art History at Duke University.

Mark Becker - Co-Director and Editor

Becker produced, directed and edited the documentary Mark Romantico (2005), which was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival and received two Independent Spirit Award nominations, including Best Documentary. *Romantico* was released theatrically by Kino International. Becker directed and edited the film *Pressure Cooker* (2008), which was nominated for an Emmy for Nonfiction Filmmaking and won awards at several film festivals before opening theatrically. Becker produced and edited the documentary *Elevate* (2011) and edited the film *Circo* (2010) as well. He was one of two editors on the acclaimed Lost Boys of Sudan (2003), winner of an Independent Spirit Award.

Lisa Kleiner Chanoff - Executive Producer

Lisa Kleiner Chanoff is co-founder with Bonni Cohen of Catapult Film Fund. Catapult's development grants help launch documentary projects on a broad spectrum of issues, perspectives. Catapult grantees include: *E-Team*, Cinematography Award winner at Sundance 2014; The Overnighters, winner of the Special Jury Award for Intuitive Filmmaking at Sundance 2014; Call Me Kuchu, which took top prizes at Berlinale; Oscar-winner Freida Mock's Anita, which premiered at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival; The Genius of Marian, which premiered at the 2013 Tribeca Film Festival; Remote Area Medical, which premiered at the Full Frame Documentary Festival: and The Kill Team. which Documentary Feature at the 2013 Tribeca Film Festival and the Golden Gate Award at the San Francisco International Festival. Lisa is a Co-Executive Producer of *Fruitvale Station*. Executive Producer of the documentary Watchers of the Sky. Before starting Catapult, Lisa practiced law in San Francisco and with the U.S. Department of Justice, and later received a master's degree in Museum Studies and worked with museums in the San Francisco bay area.

Bonni Cohen - Executive Producer

Bonni Cohen is the co-founder of The Catapult Film Fund with Lisa which funds the development of story-driven documentaries. For the last 15 years, Bonni has run Actual Films in San Francisco with her partner, Jon Shenk, an independent production company that produces documentary films theatrical and broadcast release. Bonni recently produced THE Island President, winner of the Audience Award at the 2011 Toronto International Film Festival, which was released theatrically by Sam Goldwyn Films and recently broadcast on PBS' Independent Lens She produced and directed *Inside Guantanamo* for National Geographic, and was nominated for an Emmy for Best Documentary in She produced and directed The Rape of Europa, which was short-listed for the Oscars, and nominated for two Emmy Awards and Best Documentary Screenplay by the Writers Guild of America. Actual Films also produced Lost Boys of Sudan, winner of the Independent Spirit Award for Best Documentary.

Christopher Clements - Executive Producer

Christopher Clements, writer/director of animated short subject, documentary and narrative films, joined Motto Pictures in 2010. Chris has served as production/editorial consultant for Motto Pictures on a wide variety of films including: Beware of Mr. Jay Bulger, *Our Baker* directed by *School* directed Nicoara, Sons of Perdition directed by Jennilyn Merten and Tyler Measom, Gideon's Army directed by Dawn Porter (which won the US Documentary Editing Award at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival), 1971 directed by Johanna Hamilton and Andrea Scott's forthcoming Good Men, Bad Men and a Few Rowdy Ladies. He is the Production Executive for We Are The Giant directed by Greg Barker, which premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival. Chris is currently co-producing Ivy Meeropol's *Indian Point* documentary and *The Punch* directed by Andre Hormann as well as executive producing Fellove, a documentary directed by Matt Dillon; Art and Craft directed by Sam Cullman and Jennifer Grausman and The Yes Men Are Revolting.

Julie Goldman – Executive Producer

Julie Goldman is an Emmy Award-winning producer of documentary feature films. Julie produced We Are The Giant, which premiered at

the 2014 Sundance Film Festival. *The Great Invisible* recently won the SXSW Grand Jury Prize, and two new films, 1971 and Art and Craft, will premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival this spring. In 2013, Julie was Executive Producer of The Kill Team, and produced three films that premiered in the U.S. Documentary Competition at Sundance: Gideon's Army, Manhunt and the Oscar shortlisted God Loves Uganda. She produced Participant Media's A Place at the Table, which won the IDA Pare Lorentz Award and the Oscar shortlisted Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry. Julie produced Buck, winner of the Sundance Documentary Audience Award, shortlisted for an Academy Award and one of 2011's top five grossing documentaries. Julie consulted on the Academy Award-winning The Cove and produced the Oscar shortlisted Sergio.

Carolyn Hepburn – Executive Producer

Carolyn Hepburn began her career producing a wide range of documentary projects for WNET, National Public Radio, the United Nations, Poets House, and The Cooper Union. Before joining Motto Pictures in 2010, Carolyn produced innovative experiential media for Spark Productions that was featured in museums, retail spaces, trade shows and entertainment destinations. Carolyn films for Motto that premiered at the Producer on two 2013 Sundance Film Festival: God Loves Uganda, shortlisted for the 2014 Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature, and Gideon's Army, winner of the Sundance Film Festival's Best Editing Award. was the Production Executive of We Are The Giant, directed by Greg Barker, which premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival and Co-Executive Producer of Art and Craft directed by Sam Cullman and Jennifer Grausman that will premiere at the 2014 Tribeca Film line Carolyn is currently producing documentary *Fellove*, directed by Matt Dillon and 3½ Minutes directed by Marc Silver. She is also co-producing Ivy Meeropol's new documentary *Indian Point* and *The Punch* directed by Andre producing *The* as co-executive Hörmann well Yes Men Are Revolting.

ART AND CRAFT- CREDITS

Directed and Produced by Sam Cullman and Jennifer Grausman

Co-Directed and Edited by Mark Becker

Cinematography by **Sam Cullman**

Executive Producers
Lisa Kleiner Chanoff
Christopher Clements
Bonni Cohen
Julie Goldman
Carolyn Hepburn

Co-Executive Producers
Cathy Greenwold
Thomas Campbell Jackson

Featuring
Mark Landis
Matthew Leininger
Aaron Cowan

Also Featuring
Jill Chancey
Donna English
John Gapper
Patty Hall
Sandra Holifield
Ellen Ruffin
Mark Tullos
Chris Watkins
Robert B. Wittman

Music Composed by **Stephen Ulrich**

Music Editor, additional arrangement, keyboards, and percussion ${f Nick\ Stumpf}$

Score Producer and Engineer **Dean Sharenow**

Arranger

Peter Hess

Musicians:

Stephen Ulrich - guitar Mick Rossi - keyboards Peter Hess - reeds Dean Sharenow - drums Andrew Hall - bass Jean Cook - viola Emily Hope Price - cello Justin Mullens - trumpet John Carlson - trumpet Tim Vaughn – trombone

Music Consultant

Joe Rudge

Creative Consultant Richard Hankin

Assistant Editor Richard Miron

Additional Cinematography
Michael DeGrazier
Pete Ohs
Michael JC "Woo" Wooten

Production Sound
Sam Cullman
Jennifer Grausman

Additional Production Sound Chris Beaudry Mark LeBlanc Chris Valentine

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Ed Pick

Kyle Tieman

Motion Graphics & Design Joe Posner Peter Haas

Will Cox

Still Photography
Sam Cullman

Crowdfunding Producer Vann Alexandra Daly

Post-Production Assistants
Cat Tyc
Jason Yi

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Matt McBrayer

Vincent Welch

Re-Recording Mixer Dominick Tavella

Supervising Sound Editor Craig Kyllonen

FX Editor

Jacob Ribicoff

Re-Recordist **Paul Tyrone**

Post-Production Sound Facility Coordinator **Maegan Hayward**

Post Production Sound Facility Soundtrack, New York

Digital Intermediate Colorist Will Cox

Digital Intermediate Online Editor Sandy Patch

Digital Intermediate Producer Caitlin Tartaro

Post Production Services
Final Frame

Production, Distribution Sales Legal and Advisory Services Cowan, DeBaets, Abrahams & Sheppard LLP Marc H. Simon
Simon Pulman

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Shatzkin and Mayer PC
Karen Shatzkin

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Melvin Ginsberg
Melvin Ginsberg and Associates

Production Insurance Ventura Insurance Brokerage Jessica Brown

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