



PRESS RELEASE – embargoed until GMT 3pm November 23rd 2011

Amsterdam, November 23rd 2011 – Today at IDFA (International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam) a major new partnership was announced at a panel dedicated to the discussion of new funding. The Bertha Foundation is investing in BRITDOC's future, joining the Board of Directors and launching two new funds worth £1.5 million to filmmakers over the next three years. At the outset, Steve James's award winning *The Interrupters* and Soniya Kirpalani's *We The People* are the first projects to receive support.

Rebecca Lichtenfeld of Bertha Philanthropies which provides philanthropic advisory services to The Bertha Foundation announced, *"The Bertha Foundation supports passionate individuals, strong leadership and activism to create social change. The Foundation believes in the importance of documentary film and its ability to have a positive social impact. We are proud to be partnering with BRITDOC and together launching these two exciting new initiatives."*

BRITDOC CEO Jess Search said *"The Bertha Foundation is a visionary organisation with a track record in supporting social justice causes through documentary film. We believe that by joining forces, we can enable documentary filmmakers globally."*

As result of the partnership, two new funds have been established:

The Bertha BRITDOC Documentary Journalism Fund - for filmmakers from around the world working at the intersection of film and investigative journalism -- films that break the important stories of our time, exposing injustice, bringing attention to unreported issues and cameras into regions previously unseen. £250,000 a year for 3 years is available to filmmakers as a mixture of grants and investments. Soniya Kirpalani's *We The People*, about a miscarriage of justice against migrant workers in Dubai, is announced as the first production grant. Jess Search said, *"This fund is urgently needed. Documentary is becoming an increasingly important medium for breaking stories which require long term investigation and the commitment to gather evidence and amplify voices. 'We The People' is just such a film and we are proud to be supporting it."*

The Bertha BRITDOC Connect Fund – the first outreach and engagement fund in Europe, is open to filmmakers from around the world with smart, strategic outreach campaigns that have the ability to achieve real change on a local, regional or global level. £250,0000 a year for 3 years is available in grants. Steve James's *The Interrupters* is the first grantee. Rebecca Lichtenfeld said, *"The Interrupters' represents the best of contemporary social justice filmmaking. We believe that this film can inform and improve the lives of individuals and communities and we want to help that happen."*

For more information about the funds and to apply: www.britdoc.org/bertha

Media contact: Elise McCave, elise@britdoc.org +44 207 534 9621

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EDITORS' NOTES

The Bertha Foundation

The Bertha Foundation believes that in order to affect positive change in the world, you need activist lawyers, storytellers and social entrepreneurs.

Lawyers: We aim to inspire and enable the work of socially minded lawyers and are committed to strengthening the field of public interest law.

Social Entrepreneurs: When people have the right tools and opportunities, they are best placed to solve their own problems. We support those using business principles and innovation to create sustainable large-scale change.

Storytellers: We believe in the power of visual storytelling to educate, inform and inspire action, and are dedicated to supporting the creation and distribution of social impact media projects. Documentaries are central to this vision.

For more information please visit www.berthafoundation.org

BRITDOC Foundation

The BRITDOC Foundation is a not-for-profit, created in partnership with Channel 4 Television in the UK and supported by a number of organisations in Europe and the USA. Since 2005, our mission has been to build a creatively ambitious and diverse future for documentary. We do this by creating brilliant films and engaging new partners to ensure that those films have lasting global impact in initiatives such as The Good Pitch (in partnership with Sundance Institute Documentary Program). The BRITDOC Foundation has co-funded and produced over sixty documentaries and won awards at Sundance, SXSW, Berlin, Tribeca, and Edinburgh Film Festivals. Titles include: Hell And Back Again, Afghan Star, The End of The Line, We Are Together, Dragonslayer and The Yes Men Fix The World.

For more information please visit www.britdoc.org

The Interrupters

The Interrupters tells the moving and surprising stories of three Violence Interrupters who try to protect their Chicago communities from the violence they once employed. From acclaimed director Steve James and bestselling author Alex Kotlowitz, this film is an unusually intimate journey into the stubborn persistence of violence in our cities. Shot over the course of a year The Interrupters captures a period in Chicago when it became a national symbol for the violence in US cities. During that period, the city was besieged by high-profile incidents, most notably the brutal beating of Derrion Albert, a Chicago High School student, whose death was caught on videotape.

More: <http://interrupters.kartemquin.com/about>

We The People

Director Soniya Kirpalani was born and raised in India and now living in Dubai. Her film tells the story of 17 Indians who were wrongfully sentenced to death for murdering 1 Pakistani in the UAE in 2010. Further investigation reveals 1,785 more Indians languishing behind bars, 200 of whom face capital punishment. As Arab defence teams and India's Lawyers for Human Rights challenge the Sharia Law Processes, We The People highlights the plight of migrant workers and migrant slavery in repressive environments.