



FILM

Sloan-Developed Film *To Dust* Wins Tribeca Audience Award and Best New Narrative Director Award



Shawn Snyder's *To Dust*, one of two Sloan-supported films to premiere at this year's Tribeca Film Festival, won the prestigious Audience Award and the juried Best New Narrative Director Award. The off-beat and poignant film follows Shmuel (Géza Röhrig), a Hasidic cantor in Upstate New York, who is distraught by the untimely death of his wife. He becomes obsessed with understanding the physical processes of the body's decay and teams up with a local community college biology professor (Matthew Broderick) to delve more deeply into the science of decomposition. The film was developed by a NYU/Sloan \$100,000 First Feature Award in 2015 and a TFI/Sloan Student Grand Jury Prize in 2016. The premiere screening featured a panel (pictured at left) with Snyder; Producers Emily Mortimer, Alessandro Nivolo, and Ron Perlman; stars Broderick and Röhrig, and science advisor and forensic anthropologist Dawnie Steadman. *Radium Girls*, winner of a Sloan/NYU First Feature Award and directed by

GINNY MOHLER and LYDIA PILCHER (*The Talented Mr. Ripley*), also premiered at Tribeca, with a post-screening panel featuring Pilcher and Mohler along with former EPA official Betsy Southerland.

As part of the Festival each year, Sloan and Tribeca Film Institute host a reading of prize-winning selected works-in-progress. This year's reading featured four screenplays: the 2017 Sloan Student Grand Jury Prize winner *The Glowing Gene* (scene at right), about genetically engineered mosquitoes; the 2018 Student Grand Jury Prize winner *The Valley of Dry Bones*, about Dr. Fredrick Banting and the development of insulin; and the 2018 Sloan Filmmaker Fund winners *The New Miracle*, about in vitro fertilization, and *The Spark*, about an electricity thief in India. The cast included working film and television actors such as Eshan Bay (*House of Cards*), DJ Wilson (*Manchester by the Sea*), and Rene Ifrah (*Homeland*). A reception after the reading celebrated this year's Sloan-TFI Filmmaker Fund and Student Grand Jury Prize winners.



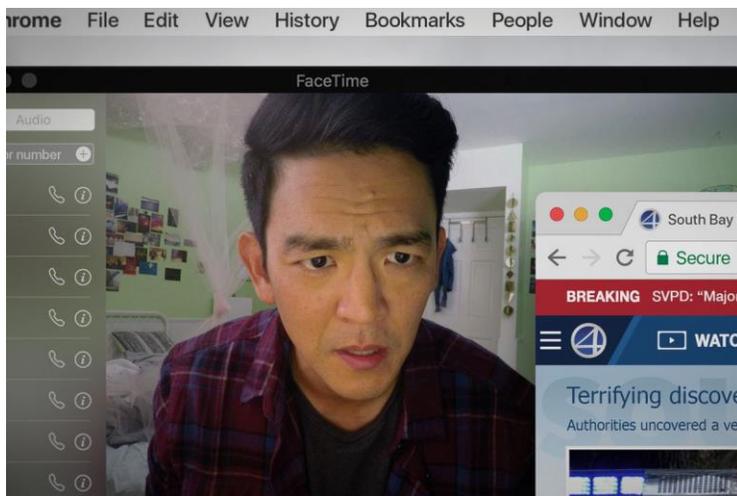


Sloan and TFI- Developed *Burning Season* Casts Naomi Watts



The Sloan and Tribeca Film Institute-supported screenplay *The Burning Season* [recently cast](#) actresses Naomi Watts (at left) and Sophia Lillis (*It*) in the lead roles. The film follows a female scientist studying lemurs in drought-stricken Madagascar while navigating her relationship with her teenage daughter. The screenplay, based on a short story by Laura Van Den Berg and co-written and co-produced by Jenny Halper, will be directed by Claire McCarthy. The film will begin production soon in South Africa and Madagascar.

Two Sloan-Supported Films in Theaters This Summer after Premiering at Sundance



Two Sloan films that debuted at Sundance, *The Catcher Was a Spy* and *Searching*, will premiere in theaters this summer. *The Catcher Was a Spy*, developed via a Sloan and Tribeca grant, will be released on June 22. Starring Paul Rudd, Jeff Daniels, Sienna Miller and Paul Giamatti and produced by Jim Young (*The Man Who Knew Infinity*), the film tells the true story of Moe Berg an enigmatic professional baseball player and top-secret spy for the OSS who was sent to meet Werner Heisenberg during WWII and helped the U.S. win the race against Germany to build the atomic

bomb. *Searching*, which won the Sloan Feature Film Prize and the Next Audience Award at this year's Sundance Film Festival, will be widely released on August 3. The thriller stars John Cho and Debra Messing and is told entirely on screens. Both films were included in several summer must-see movie lists, including in *The New York Times*, NPR, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *Vogue*. Cho is pictured at left in a scene from *Searching*.



Sloan Showcases Science and Technology at San Francisco International Film Festival



For three years, Sloan has partnered with San Francisco Film Society (SFFS) to highlight films with science and technology themes and characters at its annual film festival. At this year's festival in April, Sloan and SFFS co-hosted several special [science-themed](#) programs. A screening of the Sloan-awarded film *Searching* was followed by a panel with filmmakers Aneesh Chaganty, Sev Ohanian, and Natalie Qasabian with digital privacy expert Serge Egelman and McKinsey & Company digital partner Mahin Samadani. Sloan also presented a screening of [Mercury 13](#), a documentary about women

breaking barriers at NASA, followed by a panel discussion with directors David Sington and Heather Walsh, astronaut trainee Gene Nora Stumbough Jessen, and NASA/JPL Engineer Nagin Cox. Additionally, there was a screening of [Salyut-7](#), a Russian film set in the 1980s about a cosmonaut and an engineer who must rescue an unmanned Russian space station that goes mysteriously offline. Finally, Sloan co-presented a conversation between acclaimed filmmaker [Alex Garland](#) (*Ex Machina* and *Annihilation*) and USC Professor Tara McPherson about integrating science and technology into film. Garland and computer scientist Jaron Lanier, who also spoke at the Festival, are pictured at left. Photo by Terry Dudley.

THEATER

EST/Sloan-Commissioned Play *Bump* Premieres in New York City

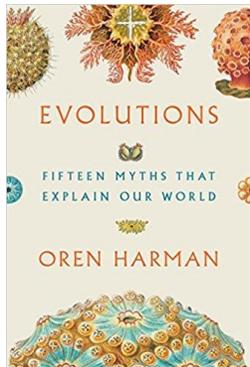


Bump, a new Sloan-commissioned play by Chiara Atik, opened on May 17 at Ensemble Studio Theatre as part of the Sloan/EST First Light Festival. Starring Lucy DeVito and Ana Nogueira and directed by Claudia Weil, the play tells the unlikely story of a car mechanic who invented a new birthing device, based on the real story of Jorge Odon (pictured at left with Atik). The three-stranded plot follows a girl in colonial New England, expectant mothers on a pregnancy message board, and a mechanic about to become a grandfather, all attempting to better understand the miracle of childbirth. The premiere was covered in major outlets such as *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker*. For two decades, the pioneering [EST/Sloan partnership](#) has commissioned, developed, and produced hundreds of new plays that explore science and technology and challenge existing stereotypes of scientists and engineers.



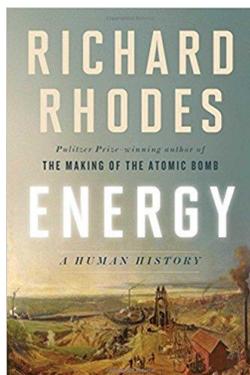
BOOKS

Evolutions, by Oren Harman, Is Published



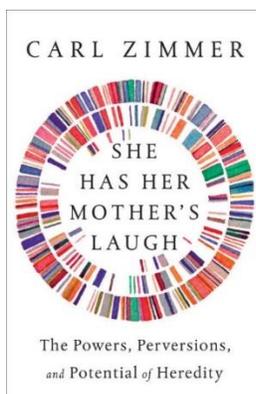
[Evolutions: Fifteen Myths That Explain Our World](#), by Oren Harman, Professor and Chair of the Program in Science Technology and Society at Israel's Bar Ilan University, was published in June by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. This unique book with original illustrations uses modern science to create new and original mythologies. Harman connects the latest scientific findings to enduring themes such as motherhood, death, loneliness, language, and truth. The work reminds readers that science may not solve all humankind's existential puzzles and that storytelling can be an equally powerful tool to help us understand our own humanity.

Energy: A Human History, by Richard Rhodes, Is Published



[Energy: A Human History](#), a new book by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Richard Rhodes about the fascinating 500-year history behind energy transitions, was published by Simon & Schuster in May. Rhodes traces the history that led to innovations such as waterpower, the steam engine, internal combustion, and the electric motor. He also addresses contemporary issues such as global warming and a growing population and considers how our energy history can inform our decision making today. The book, which received a starred review in *Kirkus*, garnered coverage in *Time Magazine*, *Science Magazine*, and other outlets. Sloan has supported several of Rhodes's previous works, going back to the award-winning *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*.

She Has Her Mother's Laugh, on Heredity, Is Published



[She Has Her Mother's Laugh: The Powers, Perversions, and Potential of Heredity](#), by *New York Times* science columnist [Carl Zimmer](#), was published in May by Penguin Random House. Zimmer presents a history of our understanding of heredity, from the birth of genetics in the early 1900s to at-home genetic tests today. Drawing on historical and current scientific research, his own experience with his two daughters, and original reporting, Zimmer unpacks urgent bioethical quandaries arising from new technologies, as well as long-standing presumptions about who we really are and what we can pass on to future generations. The book has received very positive reviews from *The New York Times*, *Nature*, *Science*, and *Publishers Weekly*.



NEW MEDIA

World Science Festival Features Four Sloan Events



The eleventh annual [World Science Festival](#) (WSF), which took place from May 30 to June 3 throughout New York City, featured four Sloan-related events. On Wednesday, May 30, Sloan co-hosted a [performance](#) of the Sloan-commissioned Ensemble Studio Theatre play *Bump*, followed by a panel discussion on technology and invention. On Thursday, May 31, Sloan partnered with the Museum of the Moving Image to host a [screening](#) of *Searching*, which won the Sloan Feature Film Prize at Sundance this year. The screening was followed by a panel with neuroscientist and TV host Heather Berlin, writer/director Aneesh Chaganty, producer and co-writer Sev Ohanian, and NYU Professor Adam Alter (pictured at left

with Sloan VP Doron Weber). Two science writers also participated in events during the festival to discuss their new Sloan-supported books: [Carl Zimmer](#) for *She Has Her Mother's Laugh* and [Oren Harman](#) for *Evolutions*. Sloan has supported WSF since its founding in 2008.

Science Festival Alliance Hosts 2018 Summit



The Science Festival Alliance (SFA), an MIT-based association that fosters a professional community dedicated to more and better science festivals, recently held its annual two-day [Science Events Summit](#) in St. Petersburg, Florida. The event drew over 120 attendees from science festivals, museums, science centers, universities, and science public event series. Panels addressed topics such as diversity and inclusion, using comedy to communicate

science, and recent scientific developments. The Sloan-funded SFA Accelerator program seeds science festivals in underdeveloped communities. Representatives from these festivals participated in the Summit, sharing their experiences and learning from peers who lead more established festivals. Attendees from the Bogota Science Festival and the Seattle-based Portal to the Public are pictured at left.



Sloan-Funded Interactive Digital Edition of *Frankenstein* Marks Bicentennial



To celebrate the 200th anniversary of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Sloan supported a project from Arizona State University and MIT Press to create an open source, interactive, [digital edition](#) of *Frankenstein: Annotated for Scientists, Engineers and Creators of All Kinds*. The digital edition, which bridges the sciences and humanities and fosters an engaged community of readers, has attracted tens of thousands of visits from users in 50 countries. It has been featured on [Science Friday](#), [Smithsonian Magazine](#), and WBUR Radio's [On Point](#), and included in reviews of the print edition in [Science](#) and the [New York Review of Books](#). Seven animation teams worked with scientists, engineers, and writers to create animated [short films](#) that explore the lasting impact of the book and were shown during a special event at Pioneer Works in Brooklyn this month.

TELEVISION

Bombshell: The Hedy Lamarr Story Continues to Raise Public Awareness of Lamarr's Contributions



The Sloan-funded documentary *Bombshell* aired on *American Masters* last month after opening at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2017 and playing in theaters across the world. The film has generated widespread, positive coverage, won multiple awards, and continues to raise public awareness of Lamarr's pioneering invention that enables Wi-Fi and cell phone technology today. Most recently, Lamarr was [inducted](#) into the Wi-Fi NOW [Hall of Fame](#), which "celebrates exceptional contributions to the Wi-Fi industry." The documentary is available to stream on Netflix and can be streamed for free via [American Masters](#) until June 15.



Sloan-Developed Silicon Valley Doc Airs on the *Science Channel*



[*Silicon Valley: The Untold Story*](#), a three-part Sloan-supported documentary series from the award-winning team at Kikim Media premiered on the Science Channel in March. The documentary includes interviews with key Valley figures such as Steve Wozniak, WhatsApp co-founder Jan Koum, and former Alphabet chairman Eric Schmidt, as well as leading scholars and historians. The premiere reached over 1 million viewers, and rebroadcasts are expected to reach millions more, including international audiences. Related Facebook videos

garnered over 320,000 views and tens of thousands more were engaged via Twitter. The production team partnered with The Exponential Center at the Computer History Museum to create three lesson plans for K-12 students that are available via Discovery Education’s Community Blog, which reaches over 4.5 million educators.

RADIO

Sloan-Supported WNYC Health Unit to Host Annual Experts Convening



WNYC’s Sloan-supported healthcare reporting unit will hold its annual experts convening later this month, focusing on the Affordable Care Act in the Age of Trump. Leading economists, practitioners, and health administrators will discuss emerging issues at the state level with insurance exchanges and publicly funded coverage options. They will consider the impact on the mental, physical and economic health of patients who depend on publicly funded insurance and share innovative solutions they are bringing to the field. Sloan has supported WNYC’s

healthcare coverage—which encompasses healthcare policy and economics, medical science and discovery, and personal health—since 2013. WNYC Health Reporter and co-host of the Sloan-supported *Only Human* podcast Mary Harris is pictured at left (photo by Matthew Septimus).



UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE

Colorado and Wyoming Collections Join National DPLA Network



Earlier this month, the Plains to Peaks Collective, representing Colorado and Wyoming, contributed 46,000 materials to the [Digital Public Library of America](#) (DPLA). The Collective is led by Colorado State Library with partners including Denver Public Library, the University of Wyoming, American Heritage Center, Marmot Library Network, and others. This collection is now part of a regional hub network supporting institutions in sharing their stories through the DPLA. Items in the newly available collection document the history of the American West, Native American culture, and the region's unique landscape. The World War II-era [poster](#) from the collection (pictured at left) shows three 10th Mountain Division soldiers on skis. The DPLA is the recipient of current Sloan grants to complete its Nationwide Service Hub Network and to pilot an eBooks distribution platform.

SLOAN IN THE NEWS

Chronicle of Philanthropy Highlights Sloan's Approach to Arts Funding for Science



The Chronicle of Philanthropy's June issue [profiled](#) Sloan's Public Understanding Program and its unique multimedia approach to integrating science and the arts. The article, pegged to the *American Masters* premiere of the Sloan-supported *Bombshell*, uses the Hedy Lamarr story as a case study of Sloan's support for plays, books, film, television and other media to advance public understanding of science and technology. Sloan VP and Program Director Doron Weber told the *Chronicle* that the real impact of the program has been achieved over time. "You can't

always immediately see the impact of a work of art, but it may open your mind to some of the things science and technology are concerned with....I think art can do that in a way that's more powerful and more integrated than any other medium or form." Vincent Stehle, executive director of Media Impact Funders, noted that while Sloan had little company at first in engaging with popular culture, "other foundations have watched Sloan's accomplishments and are starting to follow its lead."

Program Team: Doron Weber, *Vice President, Programs and Program Director* | Eliza French, *Program Associate* | Delia DiBiasi, *Senior Program and Investments Assistant*