



## World's Premiere Museum Dedicated to Film Opened in September with Sloan Support

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which hosts the annual Academy Awards and is home to a membership organization of 10,000 preeminent film professionals, opened the brand-new [Academy Museum of Motion Pictures](#) in September. The \$482 million museum is the largest institution in the United States devoted to the art, science, and artists of moviemaking. The state of the art structure occupies 300,000 square feet of space in two distinct buildings in Los Angeles, including six floors of exhibition galleries and public spaces and two theaters. Sloan is a founding sponsor of the museum, with a 2020 grant to support



science and film programming. This includes screenings of Oscar-nominated and winning films focused on scientific themes and characters; screenings, speakers, and panels that will explore meaningful breakthroughs in the science and technology of filmmaking; panel discussions that look at breakthrough scientific and technical filmmaking achievements; and a special pre-opening virtual exhibit exploring the accomplishments of six Black visual effects professionals, “The Work of Black VFX Artists,” in July.

## BOOKS

### Disney Developing New Musical Based on Sloan-Supported *Hidden Figures*

Earlier this year, it was announced that [Disney is developing a stage musical based on \*Hidden Figures\*](#), the acclaimed Sloan-supported book by Margot Lee Shetterly about Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson, and Christine Darden, four Black women mathematicians who participated in some of NASA’s greatest successes during the Space Race. The musical [will be directed by Schele Williams](#), associate director of *Mowtown: The Musical* and the European tour of *Porgy and Bess*, as well as the associate choreographer of the North American and international tours of *Rent*. Noted film critic Elvis Mitchell will be



serving as a creative consultant for the project. *Hidden Figures* was supported by a seminal Sloan book grant, which became the Oscar-nominated, Sloan-awarded film of the same title and a cultural milestone (pictured above). The Foundation also worked with lawmakers to award a rare Congressional Gold Medal to the real-life women scientists portrayed in the book in 2019.



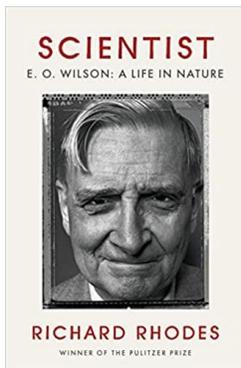
### Christopher Nolan to Direct New Film Based on Sloan Book on J. Robert Oppenheimer

*Oppenheimer*, a newly announced film by Academy Award-winning director Christopher Nolan (pictured below, left, *Interstellar*, *Inception*, *The Dark Knight*), [is set to be released in July 2023](#). The film will be based on the Sloan-supported, Pulitzer Prize-winning 2006 book [American Prometheus](#) by Kai Bird and Martin J. Sherwin, which tells the life story of American



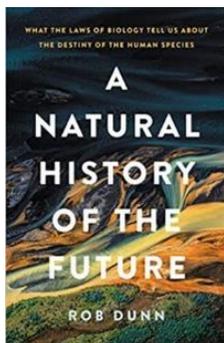
theoretical physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, the head of Los Alamos Laboratory known as “the father of the atomic bomb” for his role in the Manhattan Project during WWII. Award-winning Irish actor Cillian Murphy (pictured below, right, *28 Days Later*, *Inception*, *The Dark Knight*) has been cast in the title role and [Matt Damon, Robert Downey Jr., and Emily Blunt have been reported as joining the cast as well](#).

### Scientist: E. O. Wilson: A Life in Nature by Richard Rhodes Published



[Scientist: E. O. Wilson: A Life in Nature](#) by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Richard Rhodes was published on November 9. The book is the first full biography of the influential entomologist and evolutionary biologist E.O. Wilson. Rhodes had access to Wilson, his associates, and his papers, and covers topics from Wilson’s early interest in the natural world, to his 1975 book *Sociobiology*, to his impact and influence on science. The book was on the *New York Times*’ [“16 New Books Coming in November”](#) list and has received positive press from [The Wall Street Journal](#), [Publisher’s Weekly](#), and [The New Yorker](#). Rhodes received a 2020 Sloan grant to support the research and writing of this book.

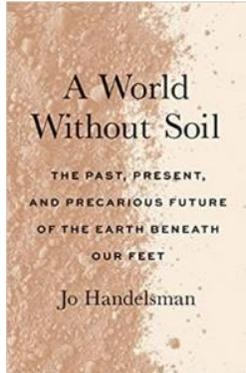
### A Natural History of the Future: What the Laws of Biology Tell Us about the Destiny of the Human Species by Rob Dunn Published



[A Natural History of the Future: What the Laws of Biology Tell Us about the Destiny of the Human Species](#) by North Carolina State University biologist Rob Dunn was published on November 9. The book argues that humans try to control nature, but they are ultimately at its mercy, examining topics from the surprising hidden life of the London Underground to antibiotics. The book has received positive press from [Scientific American](#) and [The Atlantic](#). Dunn received a 2019 Sloan grant to support the research and writing of this book.

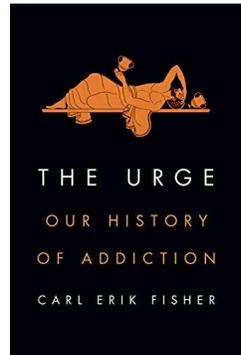


***A World Without Soil: The Past, Present, and Precarious Future of the Earth Beneath Our Feet* by Jo Handelsman Published**



[\*A World Without Soil: The Past, Present, and Precarious Future of the Earth Beneath Our Feet\*](#) by University of Wisconsin-Madison biologist Jo Handelsman was published on November 23. The book looks at the connections between climate change, soil erosion, food and water security, and drug discovery. It covers topics from the sustainable farming of indigenous people to the repercussions and possible solutions of soil erosion worldwide. Sloan grantee *Science Friday* [interviewed Handelsman](#) and [published an excerpt of the book](#) on its website. Handelsman received a 2020 Sloan grant to support the research and writing of this book.

***The Urge: Our History of Addiction* by Carl Erik Fisher to be Published on January 18**



[\*The Urge: Our History of Addiction\*](#), by Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at Columbia University Carl Erik Fisher, will be published on January 18. Drawing on his own experience as a clinician, researcher, and recovering alcoholic, Fisher recounts the centuries-old story of addiction and examines the controversy of the nature of addiction and the best way to treat it. Fisher received a 2019 Sloan grant to support the research and writing of this book.

***Vagina Obscura: An Anatomical Voyage* by Rachel E. Gross to be Published on March 1**

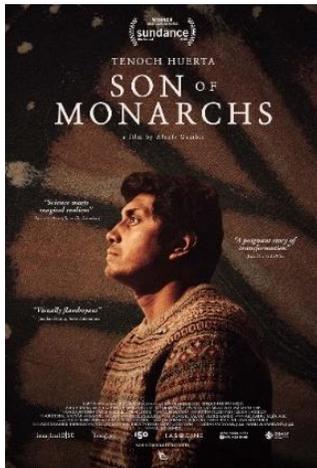


[\*Vagina Obscura: An Anatomical Voyage\*](#) by award-winning science journalist Rachel E. Gross will be published on March 1. The book looks at how a new generation of women and LGBTQ scientists are seeing a new biology of change and resilience within the organs of reproduction – the uterus, ovaries, and vagina. Gross received a 2020 Sloan grant to support the research and writing of this book.



FILM

Sloan/Sundance-Awarded *Son of Monarchs* Released in Theaters and via HBOMax



[Son of Monarchs](#), directed and written by filmmaker and biologist Alexis Gambis, opened in theaters on October 15, followed by an HBOMax premiere on November 2. The film tells the story of a Mexican biologist (Tenoch Huerta, pictured left, *Narcos*) who studies butterflies at a NYC lab as he returns home to the Monarch forests of Michoacán. The film was a [New York Times Critic's Pick](#) and has also received positive coverage from [New Scientist](#), [Screen Rant](#), and [Film Threat](#), among other outlets. The Sloan-supported Science and Entertainment Exchange hosted a virtual pre-release screening and talk-back event with Gambis and scientists, which is available to [watch via YouTube](#). *Son of Monarchs* was the winner of the 2021 Alfred P. Sloan Feature Film Prize at the Sundance Film Festival and screened at the SFFILM Festival as part of the Sloan Science in Cinema programming.

Sloan-Supported *Adventures of a Mathematician* Released in Theaters and VOD



The Sloan-supported film [Adventures of a Mathematician](#) was released in theaters on October 1. Directed by Thor Klein (*Lost Place*), the film stars Philippe Tlokin (pictured left, *The Resistance Fighter, Strazacy*) as Stanislaw Ulam, a Polish mathematician who made major contributions to the development of nuclear weapons through the Manhattan Project. The film explores Ulam's relationship with his younger brother Adam, his courtship of his future wife Françoise Aron Ulam, and his friendships with other distinguished scientists of the time, including John von Neumann. The film has received positive coverage from [Script](#), [Ars Technica](#), and other outlets. It has received several Sloan awards, including a 2017 Development Award and 2019 Discretionary Fund Award from the Tribeca Film Institute and a 2017 Producer's Grant from Film Independent.



### **Picture a Scientist Wins 2021 AAAS Kavli Science Journalism Award**

[Picture a Scientist](#), a Sloan-funded documentary about the sexual harassment of women in science, was the recipient of a prestigious Gold AAAS Kavli Science Journalism Award for video in-depth reporting (more than 20 minutes). The film, directed by Sharon Shattuck and Ian Cheney, follows three women scientists: MIT biologist Nancy Hopkins, American University chemist Raychelle Burks, and Stanford University geologist Jane Willenbring. The powerful documentary has been screened at hundreds of universities and women and science-focused organizations around the world. It aired on PBS in April and is currently available to stream via [Netflix](#).



### **Father of the Cyborgs Continues Successful Festival Run**

[Father of the Cyborgs](#), a Sloan-supported documentary by award-winning filmmaker David Burke about neurologist Phil Kennedy, has continued screening on the festival circuit. After a premiere at the 2021 Tribeca Film Festival, it has gone on to screen at the Denver Film Festival, the Imagine Science Festival, and the Dublin International Film Festival, among others. A pioneer in brain-computer interface, Kennedy (pictured left) made global headlines twice: in the 1990s when he invented the first electrode implanted in a human brain and thus the “world’s first human cyborg,” and in 2014, when he failed to gain approval from the FDA for his risky implantation surgery and flew to South America to have the electrodes implanted inside his own brain. The film has received positive press from [Irish Examiner](#), [Irish Times](#), and other outlets.

*Father of the Cyborgs* was supported by a 2019 Sloan grant to Women Make Movies.

### **In Silico Screening at Institutions Worldwide**

[In Silico](#), a Sloan-backed documentary about efforts to create a simulation of the human brain, continues its successful virtual release at academic and film venues around the world, including UT Austin, Mount Sinai, the Swiss National Science Institute, and many others. The film, directed by Noah Hutton and shot over 10 years, documents the work done by neuroscientist Henry Markram to fulfill his bold promise of mapping and simulating the brain for the first time. *In Silico* has received positive press from both science and film media, such as [Scientific American](#), [Nature](#), and [The Boston Globe](#). The film was supported by a 2018 Sloan grant to the filmmakers via the Jacob Burns Film Center.





## RADIO

### Electronic Frontier Foundation Launches New Podcast on Problems of the Modern Web



*How to Fix the Internet*, a new podcast from the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) that tackles the thorniest issues of the modern web, [launched in November](#). The show, hosted by EFF's Executive Director Cindy Cohn and Special Advisor Danny O'Brien, will feature guests such as comedian Marc Maron, who will discuss how he fended off a troll claiming to own the patent for podcasting, and cybersecurity expert Tarah Wheeler, who will discuss how companies can better protect our data by partnering with researchers who report vulnerabilities. *How to Fix the Internet* is supported by a 2021 grant to EFF.

### New Radiolab Miniseries *Mixtape* Debuts with Sloan Support



*Mixtape: How the Cassette Changed the World*, a new miniseries by the widely acclaimed, Peabody award-winning podcast *Radiolab*, released its first episode in October. The five-episode miniseries looks at the history and impact of the cassette tape, examining the science, history, and geopolitics of the technology. *Mixtape* includes stories such as how celebrated actor and musician Bing Crosby used stolen Nazi technology to regain his audience and change media forever and how salvaged cassette tapes from a plastic recycling center in China reshaped the music landscape of the country. The series is supported by a 2018 Sloan grant to New York Public Radio. *Radiolab* also received major grants from the Sloan Foundation since its early days.

### *Clear+Vivid* Podcast Releases First of New Sloan-Funded Science-Themed Episodes

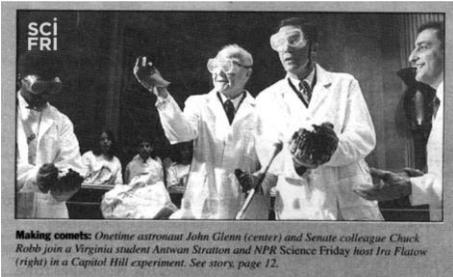


The first Sloan-funded, science-themed episode of the popular podcast *Clear+Vivid* debuted in early November. The episode featured Karl Deisseroth, D.H. Chen Professor of Bioengineering and of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University, in conversation with host Alan Alda, science champion and six-time Emmy Award and Golden Globe winner. Deisseroth discussed his work on the microbial molecules behind optogenetics, for which he was awarded the highest honor in medical research, the Lasker Award. Science-themed episodes of *Clear+Vivid* are supported by a 2021 Sloan grant to the podcast creators via the Stony Brook Foundation.



## Popular Sloan Grantee *Science Friday* Celebrates 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

[Science Friday](#), the two-hour, award-winning weekly slot on public radio devoted to all things science, [celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary](#) in November. The popular show, which reaches over two million people each week, is hosted by the renowned science correspondent and TV journalist Ira Flatow (pictured left taping a segment at Capitol Hill in 1996). Sloan has provided longtime support for *Science Friday*'s segments at the intersection of science and the arts.



**Making comets:** Onetime astronaut John Glenn (center) and Senate colleague Chuck Robb join a Virginia student Antwan Stratton and NPR Science Friday host Ira Flatow (right) in a Capitol Hill experiment. See story, page 12.

## WNYC Hosts Health Convening Focusing on the COVID-19 Pandemic

[WNYC](#) hosted its annual Sloan-funded Health Convening, focusing the sessions on timely topics related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the American healthcare system. Sessions included “The Future of mRNA Vaccines” (pictured left), “Black Lives, Mental Health, and Policing in NYC,” and “The Long-Term Effects & Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.” As in past years, this convening helped directly inform WNYC’s health reporting. The full event is [available to watch on WNYC’s site](#). The 2021 Health Convening was supported by a 2018 Sloan grant to WNYC to support story-driven health care reporting.



## TELEVISION

### North Fork TV Festival Hosts Inaugural Series Pitch Forum with Sloan-Backed Projects

The [North Fork TV Festival](#), a festival dedicated to the production of independent television, hosted its inaugural series Pitch Forum in August at its sixth yearly festival. The highly selective Pitch Forum brought together five emerging television creators, including two Sloan-supported filmmakers, for two days of learning and mentorship. Activities included a live pitch to a curated audience and panel of industry experts, one-on-ones with mentors, pitching training, and Q&As with experts. The Sloan-supported projects were *In Vitro Veritas* by Catherine Loerke, about a fertility doctor who struggles with becoming pregnant and discovers an experimental IVF treatment, and *Push It!* by Mirella Christou, about women’s rights activist Katharine Dexter McCormick, who orchestrated the creation of the birth control pill (winners pictured left with Sloan and North Fork staff). The North Fork Pitch Forum is supported by a 2021 Sloan grant to the North Fork TV Festival.





**Pioneer Works Hosts Reading of Sloan Pilot about First American Female Astronomers**

Sloan grantee [Pioneer Works](#) held [a staged reading of the Sundance/Sloan-supported pilot script \*The Harvard Computers\*](#) in October. Written by Graham Sack and executive produced by Jennifer 8. Lee, *The Harvard Computers* is based on the true story of a group of pioneering women who became America’s first female astronomers (pictured below), overcoming gender and class discrimination.



The story centers around Williamina Fleming, a Scottish immigrant who took a job as a maid in the home of Harvard professors of astronomy and brothers Edward and Henry Pickering and eventually moved up to leading a team of women astronomers. The reading featured experienced actors, as well as a post-reading discussion with the writer, producer, and Janna Levin, Pioneer Works Director of Sciences and Barnard College astrophysicist.

**Extra Life Doc on History of Public Health Wins Best Documentary Series at TBI Awards**

[Extra Life: A Short History of Living Longer](#), a four-part television series exploring the 300-year history of public health advances set against the current COVID-19 pandemic, won Best Documentary Series at Television Business International’s Content Innovation Awards in November. Produced by the award-winning filmmaking team at Nutopia and hosted by best-



selling science author Steven Johnson and University of Manchester historian David Olusoga (pictured left), each episode of the series examines one aspect of medicine and public health that has played

a central role in increasing life expectancy and juxtaposes it with current COVID-19 challenges. The four episodes, which are available to stream [via the PBS website](#) and [the BBC website](#), include “Vaccines,” “Data,” “Medical Drugs,” and “Behavior.” *Extra Life* was supported by a 2020 Sloan grant to the filmmakers via Women Make Movies.



NEW MEDIA

**Policing Project Hosts Sloan-Sponsored Event on Product Certification for Policing Tech**

In October, New York University’s [Policing Project](#) hosted a Sloan-funded conference on ethical product certification for policing technologies, such as surveillance cameras and microphones. The event was led by Barry Friedman, Faculty Director of the Policing Project and Professor of Law, and Farhang Heydari, Executive Director of the Policing Project and Adjunct Professor of Law (pictured below). Representatives from the FBI and local police forces, as well as the ACLU and advocacy groups, discussed questions such as “where to set



the bar for standards?” and “how should a certifier evaluate the efficacy of policing tech?” The conference was supported by a 2020 Sloan grant to New York University for a landscape analysis, including meeting with police and public interest groups, to establish a certification body for surveillance technologies used by law enforcement agencies.

**“Century of Science” Celebrates 100 Years of *Science News* and Scientific Breakthroughs**



[Century of Science](#), a website celebrating 100 years of science via trusted *Science News* reporting, launched in the Fall. The site has nine science “themes,” including “Our Wild Universe,” “The Human Story,” and “Epidemics and their Aftermath.” The “connections” section includes [profiles of unsung characters in science](#) and [stories of how single discoveries opened entirely new research questions](#). Over 200 “milestones” can be browsed by decade and filtered by science subtopic. *Century of Science*, which will continue to be updated through 2022, is supported by a 2020 Sloan grant to *Science News* through the Society for Science and the Public and was covered in [a radio segment by Sloan grantee Science Friday](#).



### Unladylike2020 Series of Short Films on Pioneering Women Wins Multiple Awards

[UNLADYLIKE 2020](#), an animated 26-part short film series on the achievements of women, has

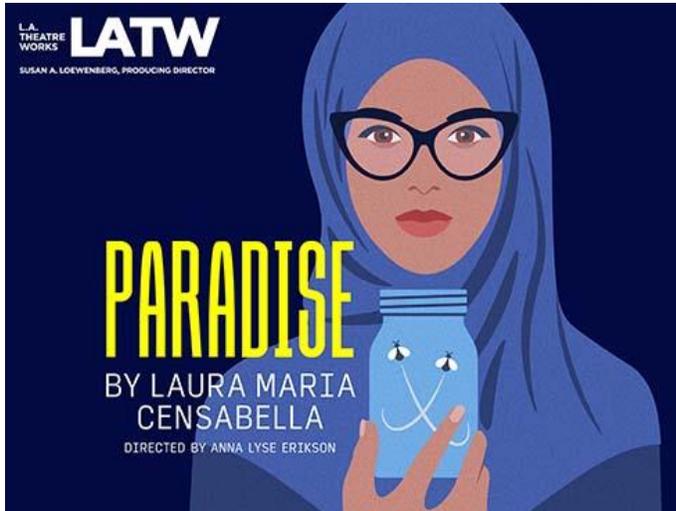


won multiple recent awards, including a Silver Telly Award, a Primetime Emmy Award, and an Imagen Award. Sloan supported four short videos in the series on unknown women scientist pioneers, all of which are now available to watch online. Scientists featured include polar explorer [Louise Arner Boyd](#), astronomer [Williamina Fleming](#) (pictured left), engineer [Lillian Moller Gilbreth](#), and botanist [Ynes Mexia](#). The series celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women’s suffrage in 2020.

### THEATER

#### L.A. Theatre Works Kicks off New Season with Sloan-Supported Science Play

[L.A. Theatre Works](#) (LATW), the nation’s leading producer of audio theater, released a new recording of an Ensemble Studio Theatre/Sloan-commissioned play to kick off their [2021-22 season](#). *Paradise*, by Laura Maria Censabella, tells the story of a Yemeni American high school student from the Bronx who teams up with her high school science teacher to



undertake an ambitious research project. LATW will also release another Sloan-funded radio drama, *Franklinland* by Lloyd Suh, on December 14 as part of their new season. *Franklinland* is an EST/Sloan-commissioned comedy about the American Revolution that looks at the relationship between William Franklin and his father Ben Franklin. The production of new science radio dramas as part of the *Relativity* series, which reaches millions of listeners across the world, is part of a 2019 Sloan grant to LATW.



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**UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE**

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**World Renowned Sloan Grantee Wikimedia Names Maryana Iskander as New CEO**

The Wikimedia Foundation—which oversees Wikipedia, the largest encyclopedia in human history—[announced that social entrepreneur and lawyer Maryana Iskander will become the next chief executive officer of the organization in 2022](#). Iskander is currently the CEO of the



Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator and the former chief operating officer of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. Egyptian-born Iskander is the fourth consecutive woman head of Wikipedia. Wikipedia, the world’s fifth largest website which has been translated into over 300 languages, has received major ongoing support from Sloan, including a recent grant for the extension of structured data from Wikimedia Commons across all Wikimedia content.

**DPLA Joins US Surgeon General in National Effort to Combat Misinformation**

Earlier this year, the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) [joined the US Surgeon General Vivek H.](#)



[Murthy](#) (pictured left) in a national effort to combat health misinformation and disinformation. In November, they held a [meeting that focused on community-based solutions to address the problem](#), including library, civic, philanthropy, and health leaders. DPLA’s involvement in this effort highlights the important role of libraries to provide access to accurate information and connect the public with trusted resources. DPLA’s The Exchange and SimplyE are supported by 2019 and 2020 Sloan grants, respectively.