



Sloan Commissioned Play *Fast Company* Premieres at Ensemble Studio Theatre

THEATER



The Ensemble Studio Theatre (EST)/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Project to produce and commission new plays about science and technology premieres its 2014 Mainstage Production in partnership with the Ma-Yi Theater Company on March 12th. *Fast Company*, written by Carla Ching and directed by Robert Ross Parker, depicts a family of grifters using game theory to outsmart each other and get their hands on a million dollar comic book. It was originally commissioned by the Sloan-EST Project in 2010 and has been developed over four years. This production, which runs through April 6, is part of the annual EST/Sloan First Light Festival which began in December 2013 and features Sloan supported workshops, readings, productions, and other special events including *Please Continue* about Stanley Milgram's famous "obedience experiments" in the 1960s; *Binary* about the Netflix algorithm for customer preference; and *Father Unknown* about the ethics of sperm banks. The Ensemble Studio Theatre is the recipient of a current three-year Sloan grant to commission, develop, produce, and disseminate new science plays in New York and across the country.

Particle Fever, about the Discovery of the Higgs, Opens in New York City

FILM



Particle Fever, a new documentary about one of the greatest scientific discoveries of our time--the discovery of the Higgs boson, which won the 2013 Nobel Prize in Physics--had its world premiere on March 5th in New York City. *Particle Fever* was produced by physicist [David Kaplan](#) who had the prescience to begin work on the film in 2006 when the search for the Higgs first began. The film was directed by particle physicist turned filmmaker Mark Levinson and edited by film legend Walter Murch, and three of the six stars are Sloan Research Fellows. *Particle*

Fever captures the remarkable collaboration of 10,000 scientists from over 100 countries building the largest structure ever built to discover a subatomic particle whose existence was first theorized in 1964. [ScienceNews](#) calls it "a beautiful and moving tribute to one of humankind's true triumphs" and [The New York Times](#) wrote that it's "one of those rare movies in which scientists are the heroes--not trying to rule the world, just trying to figure out how it works." The film is the recipient of a Sloan grant to support its wide theatrical release and enhanced outreach and an educational campaign.

Mike Cahill's *I Origins* wins \$20,000 Sloan Prize & More from Sundance

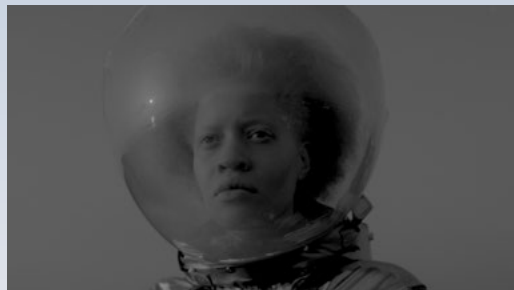


The 2014 Sundance Film Festival, supported by the Foundation for 11 years, featured a number of Sloan events including the sold-out “Cosmic Crossroads” panel that was moderated by multimedia journalist Flora Lichtman and featured Kevin Hand from NASA, Jill Tarter of the SETI Institute (and the model for Jodi Foster’s character in *Contact*), and screenwriters Jon Spaihts (*Prometheus*) and Max Mayer (*Adam*). The panelists, who were featured on an episode of [Science Friday](#), also comprised the jury that picked the Sloan Feature Film Prize winner. The \$20,000 cash prize was [awarded](#) to Mike Cahill’s feature film *I Origins* starring Michael Pitt and Brit Marling for its “portrayal of molecular biologists as central

characters, and for dramatizing the power of the scientific process to explore fundamental questions about the human condition.” The film has already been picked up for distribution by Fox Searchlight and received numerous positive critical reviews including three stars from [Time Out NY](#). Cahill accepted his award on January 21st at the Sloan awards ceremony where it was also announced that Joan Schimke and Averie Storck’s *The Buried Life*, which follows an archaeologist on a dig that will make or break her career, won the 2014 Sloan Lab Fellowship. Last year’s winner *Prodigal Summer*, co-written by best-selling novelist Barbara Kingsolver and Nicole Kassell (*The Woodsman*), plans to shoot this year and will have a staged reading on March 31, 2014 in New York. During the Sundance festival [IndieWire](#) published “Meet the Man Behind the Sundance Film Festival’s Valued Partner, the Sloan Foundation” that covers the breadth of the Sloan film program and its farm system of multiple program partners. The Sundance Institute is the recipient of a current two-year Sloan grant to support a science and technology program at Sundance that includes film fellowships, film prizes, and film panels and outreach.

Sloan-Supported Short Film *Afronauts* Premieres at Sundance

A short film by NYU student and rising director [Frances Bodomo](#) called *Afronauts* premiered at the 2014 Sundance film festival. The film received Sloan production funds through NYU and is inspired by the true story of a Zambian community in the 1960s who entered the space race as America prepared to send Apollo 11 to the moon. *Afronauts* has received very positive critical attention and was selected as part of the prestigious Berlin International Film Festival, and as one of only eleven shorts in the Film Society of Lincoln Center/MoMA’s *New Directors New Films* series where it will screen on March 22 and 23 in New York. Bodomo, whose first film *Boneshaker* (starring Oscar Nominee Quvenzhané Wallis) also premiered at Sundance, is currently working on a Sloan-supported feature version of *Afronauts*.



Unprecedented Number of Sloan-Supported Films Opening in 2014

In addition to *Particle Fever* and *I Origins* mentioned previously, at least seven additional films that have received Sloan support will be released into theatres or will have their premieres in 2014. [Decoding Annie Parker](#), the [Sloan Feature Film Prize winner](#) from the 2013 [Hamptons International Film Festival](#) about Mary-Claire King's discovery of the BRCA1 gene responsible for many breast and ovarian cancers, will be released into theatres and VOD by Entertainment One Films in summer 2014. Two films supported through Sloan's film development pipeline--[A Birder's Guide to Everything](#), directed



by Rob Meyer and featuring Sir Ben Kingsley, and Musa Syeed's film [Valley of Saints](#), an environmental film shot in Kashmir--have had successful runs at festivals and are set to have their theatrical debuts in spring 2014. [2030](#), about the impacts of climate change in near-future Vietnam, which received a Sloan development grant from Tribeca Film Institute, is directed by Nguyen-Vo Nghiem-Minh of *Buffalo Boy*--an Oscar contender in 2006--and premiered at the 2014 Berlin International Film Festival and has

plans for a release in Vietnam in 2014. [Basmati Blues](#), a Bollywood-style musical about genetically modified rice starring Brie Larson and Donald Sutherland, was also developed through Sloan's film pipeline and is currently in post-production for release in 2014. The first of three films supported by the Foundation about James Cameron's historic Deep Sea Challenge dive to the Mariana Trench is complete and will hit theatres in 2014. In addition, the Sloan supported documentary about the making of the avant-garde opera *Einstein on the Beach* from director John Walter aims to premiere at festivals in 2014. This bumper crop year is a testament to the efficacy of Sloan's film development pipeline at getting science films into production and onto screens and for the range of projects the Foundation has been supporting over the years.

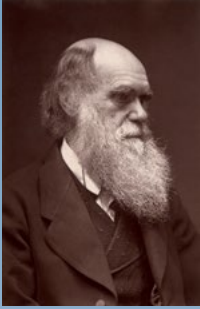
\$50,000 TFI Sloan Student Grand Jury Prize Goes to UCLA Film Student



On February 27, 2014 the \$50,000 TFI Sloan Student Grand Jury Prize was awarded to UCLA film student [Laura Alsum](#) for her screenplay *Survival of the Fittest*. The Sloan Student Grand Jury Prize was established three years ago to honor the "best of the best" screenplay from the winning science scripts submitted by Sloan's six film school partners--NYU, Columbia, Carnegie Mellon, USC, UCLA, and AFI. The award was selected by a jury of scientists and filmmakers that included actor Matthew Modine, actress Amy Ryan, producer/director/screenwriter Nancy Savoca, biological anthropologist Helen Fisher and physicist Gabriel Cwilich. *Survival of the Fittest* is a coming of age story about

a twelve year old boy struggling with a neuromuscular disorder. Alsum [received](#) a \$30,000 cash prize and an additional \$20,000 towards year-round support by Tribeca Film Institute including mentorship from science and film advisors. AFI student Kendall Klein's script *unNatural Science* about pioneering zoologist Ivan Sanderson received honorable mention. A sizzle reel about the prize can be viewed [online](#) and the awards ceremony was covered in [ScreenDaily](#) and [IndieWire](#). The Tribeca Film Institute is the recipient of a current two year Sloan grant to award the annual Sloan Student Grand Jury Prize to the best student film from all film school partners and to develop each winning screenplay towards production.

Latest Installment of Darwin's Letters Published



Cambridge University Press will publish [The Correspondence of Charles Darwin, Volume 21](#), part of the landmark edition of Darwin's writings, on April 30, 2014. This volume focuses on the year 1873 when Darwin was working on human and animal expression. The book is the result of an ongoing Sloan grant to the American Council of Learned Societies to publish the definitive print edition of over 7,000 letters Darwin wrote to hundreds of correspondents during his lifetime, which will become the basis for further research across the sciences and humanities.

Interactive ebook about DNA Science and the Innocence Project Now Available on iTunes

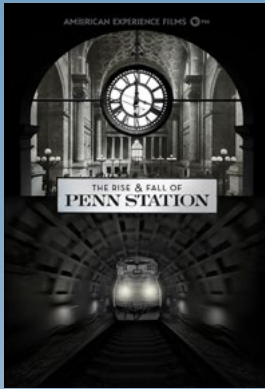
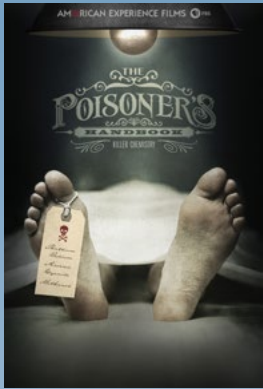
An innovative effort led by the New York Hall of Science and supported by Sloan to develop an interactive ebook for iPad about the role of DNA in overturning wrongful convictions has just been completed. [False Conviction: Innocence, Guilt, and Science](#) is now available for download on the iTunes store. The ebook, spearheaded by Peter Neufeld of the Innocence Project, Eric Siegel of the New York Hall of Science, and Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Jim Dwyer in collaboration with Touch Press, uses animation, video, text, photographs, and games centering on subjects such as DNA and cognitive psychology to explore what is and isn't scientific evidence and how misuse of science has led to false convictions. Best-selling author of legal thrillers John Grisham says that the book illustrates "through heartbreaking cases of wrongful convictions why the system fails and how science is helping restore justice." The New York Hall of Science is the recipient of a Sloan grant to create an interactive ebook for iPad that incorporates compelling narratives from the Innocence Project with scientific themes.

Science on Screen Goes National March 31st

On March 31st, 2014 the Sloan Foundation and Coolidge Corner Theatre will present a national evening of Science on Screen in which seventeen independent grantee theatres across the country will simultaneously hold a Science on Screen event. Coolidge Corner Theatre's [Science on Screen](#) Program, supported by the Foundation, pairs feature films with introductions by working scientists, engineers, and mathematicians. Sloan has supported the expansion of this program to art house cinemas nationwide--awarding 48 grants to 32 independent cinemas to date--each of which also shows at least one Sloan film per year, providing a unique distribution opportunity for Sloan-funded films. Programs on March 31st include the Center for Contemporary Arts in Santa Fe screening *Panic in the Streets* with a discussion of infectious diseases, and the Little Theatre in Rochester, NY screening *Another Earth* with a discussion by an astrophysicist about parallel universes. The Coolidge Corner Theatre Foundation is the recipient of a current two-year Sloan grant to support the theatre's Science on Screen Program and expand its reach to another 40 theatres nationwide



Two Sloan-Supported *American Experience* Films Premiere



The American Experience, the Foundation's flagship television partner, premiered two new Sloan productions this winter. The first, [The Poisoners Handbook](#), was broadcast on January 7th, 2014 on PBS to 5.1 million viewers--several million more than a typical broadcast. The film tells the story of New York's first scientifically trained medical examiner who helped turn forensic chemistry into a science and exposed the poisons in everyday products. The film received numerous positive reviews in the press including the [New York Times](#), [LA Times](#), [Discover](#), and [Scientific American](#). [The Rise and Fall of Penn Station](#) premiered February 18th

and tells the story of the great engineering and architectural feat behind Penn Station and the outcry after it was demolished some 50 years later which led to the establishment of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. The Museum of the City of New York hosted a preview and discussion of the film on February 11th moderated by WNYC host Leonard Lopate with *Penn Station* writer and producer Randall MacLowry, historian Jill Jonnes, and author Lorraine Diehl. WGBH also unveiled its new [Engineering Map of America](#) app, funded by Sloan, which highlights through maps and archival photos and videos the most significant engineering feats across America. The app is available for free download on the iTunes store. WGBH Educational Foundation is the recipient of a current three year Sloan grant to research and produce four primetime films on PBS's *American Experience* on the role of science, technology, and engineering in history.

Admiral Rickover Film to Premiere on PBS



A one-hour documentary about the pioneering Admiral Hyman Rickover and his development of the first nuclear submarine and civilian nuclear power plant will premiere on PBS in fall 2014. This colorful story, told for the first time by award-winning television producer Michael Pack, conveys to a new generation the important role Rickover played in history. The Public Media Lab is the recipient of a current Sloan grant to produce and broadcast a one-hour PBS documentary on Admiral Rickover.

A Great Woman of Science, Mary-Claire King, Honored at Gala and Through Film

The 2014 [World Science Festival](#), of which Sloan is a founding sponsor, will take place in New York from May 28-June 1st celebrating science through performances, conversations, multimedia events, street fairs, theatre, film, and more. In April the World Science Festival will honor [Dr. Mary-Claire King](#) at its 2014 Gala--she will be the first woman honored at this annual event which has previously celebrated scientist luminaries such as Stephen Hawking, James Watson, and E.O. Wilson. Dr. King discovered the breast cancer gene, BRCA1, in 1990, proving for the first time that breast cancer could

be inherited, a feat dramatized in a Sloan-supported film premiering this spring starring Helen Hunt and Samantha Morton called *Decoding Annie Parker*. *Decoding Annie Parker* has been playing at festivals and private screenings around the country helping to raise funds for cancer research and most recently played as the Centerpiece film at the 2014 [Athena Film Festival](#), that was followed by a panel discussion with top scientists. The Science Festival Foundation is the recipient of a current two year Sloan grant to support programming and dissemination of the World Science Festival.

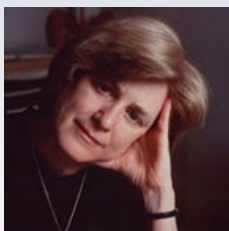


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Sloan Retrospective Screening of *Eternal Sunshine* at the 2014 Tribeca Film Festival

FILM



The 13th annual Tribeca Film Festival, supported by Sloan since inception, will take place April 16-27, 2014. This year's festival will feature a Sloan-supported 10th anniversary retrospective screening of Michel Gondry's *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* followed by a panel of expert scientists and top film professionals discussing the latest research on our ability to modify the brain's memory pathways—an advance foreshadowed by the film. On April 21st the TFI Sloan Filmmaker Fund will announce the three feature films that have won a total of \$150,000 for successfully dramatizing science and technology themes and characters. This annual juried prize is awarded by a panel of ac-

claimed scientists and film professionals which this year include actors Jon Slattery (*Mad Men*) and Meg Ryan (*Sleepless in Seattle*) and screenwriter Jonathan Nolan (*Memento*). The Sloan Works in Progress Readings, staged readings by professional actors of the winning scripts, will also take place that week at the Crosby Street Hotel. The Tribeca Film Institute is the recipient of a current two-year Sloan grant to develop science and technology films for production, to showcase classic science and technology movies, and to hold panels and readings at the Tribeca Film Festival.

COSMOS: A Spacetime Odyssey Premieres on FOX

On Sunday evening March 9, 2014, [COSMOS: A Spacetime Odyssey](#), a remake of Carl Sagan's classic 1980 television series seen by over 750 million people, premiered on Fox and National Geographic with an introduction by President Obama. Over 8.5 million viewers tuned in with projections that the first episode will be seen by 40 million people worldwide. This new 13-part series about the universe is hosted by astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson and produced by Ann Druyan, who

co-wrote the original *Cosmos* with Sagan, by Seth MacFarlane of *Family Guy*, and by *Star Trek* producer Brannon Braga. The show is airing on an unprecedented ten Fox owned channels and will be available in 181 countries and over 220 networks. Sloan, which has supported Tyson's career as a science communicator for over a decade and has worked closely with Druyan, was involved in early discussions with PBS about *Cosmos* until Fox came in. Sloan is currently providing gap funding for Tyson's popular radio series *Star Talk* during the blackout period imposed by Fox.



TELEVISION

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