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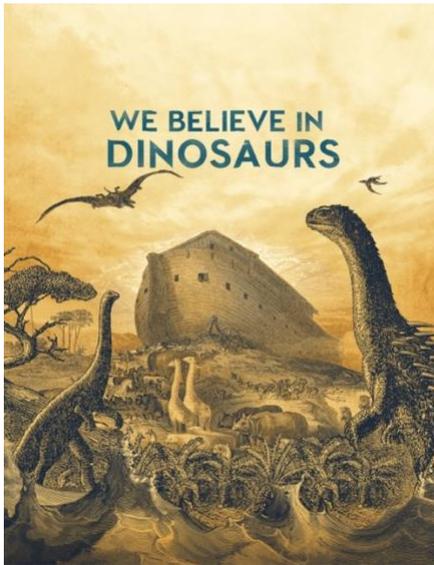
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***WE BELIEVE IN DINOSAURS* PREMIERES ON *INDEPENDENT LENS* MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2020 ON PBS AND PBS.ORG**

Documentary explores the roots of our beliefs and worldviews by examining the relationship between science and religion



(San Francisco, CA) — ***We Believe in Dinosaurs*** explores what happens when religious ideology clashes with mainstream science in modern day America. Called the Ark Encounter, the 510-foot Noah’s Ark experience in rural Williamstown, Kentucky, is located 45 miles south of its sister attraction, the Creation Museum. It has been designed to prove the Bible is scientifically and historically accurate, that evolution is heresy, and that dinosaurs and humans lived at the same time. Shot over the course of four years, filmmakers Clayton Brown and Monica Long Ross document the Ark Encounter’s construction from blueprints through opening day, following the efforts of creationists, scientists, atheists, and activists as they draw battle lines over evolution, the age of the Earth, and the separation of church and state.

Among those involved in the struggle is Doug, an artisan who leads a team of artists and designers that create lifelike animals for the Creation Museum and Ark Encounter; Dan, a geologist who blows the whistle on the Ark’s discriminatory hiring practices; David, a former creationist who blogs critically about beliefs he once held; and atheist activist Jim Helton, co-founder of Tri-State Freethinkers, who leads a protest rally outside the Ark on opening day.

Brown and Ross continue their commitment to chronicling America’s complicated relationship with science in ***We Believe in Dinosaurs***, the anticipated follow-up to their past award-winning documentaries *The Atom Smashers* and *The Believers*. The film, lauded as “intriguing...and timely” by *The Hollywood Reporter*, premieres on *Independent Lens* Monday, February 17, 2020, 10:00-11:00 PM ET ([check local listings](#)) on PBS, PBS.org and the PBS Video App.



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The Creation Museum and Ark Encounter were built to honor a particular branch of Christian fundamentalism known as “Young Earth creationism.” Young Earth creationism is a belief in the literal interpretation of the Bible that God created the universe 6,000 years ago in six 24-hour days, contending that humans coexisted with dinosaurs, as depicted in the museum.

The Ark Encounter made national news before it even opened when controversy erupted over state tax incentives it received. Highlighting the growing discord between church and state policies in the town where the park is located, the film also explores the local economic boom promised by the Ark Encounter’s founders and examines whether those promises have been met since the attraction’s opening.

“Science policy and the intersection of church and state have always inspired passionate discussion in the U.S.,” said *Independent Lens* Executive Producer Lois Vossen. “While we accept the science behind the theory of evolution, our goal with this film wasn’t to disparage or ridicule anyone’s right to believe whatever they want regarding how the universe was created. It’s important to listen respectfully in order to develop an understanding of what forms our various beliefs, especially when our belief systems differ. We hope our viewers will walk away from this story wanting to have informed discussions on science education, science policy, and the separation of church and state.”

We Believe in Dinosaurs was acquired by *Independent Lens*, making its broadcast debut on PBS, America’s home for documentaries.

Visit the ***We Believe in Dinosaurs*** page on *Independent Lens* for more information about the film, and join the Twitter conversation via #WeBelieveInDinosPBS.

About the Filmmakers:

Clayton Brown

Clayton is a Senior Lecturer in the department of Radio / TV / Film at Northwestern University. He is a documentary and narrative filmmaker interested in exploring the hidden stories and compelling characters that emerge when people pursue their passions. Of particular interest are the ways in which science and storytelling intersect, both in fiction and non-fiction. His fiction work includes *Galileo’s Grave*, winner of the Chicago IFP Production Fund and Best Short Film at the Albany and East Lansing film festivals, and *The Darkening Sun*, about the first woman to photograph a solar eclipse in



1869. He is a co-founder of 137 Films, a Chicago-based award-winning documentary production company committed to telling stories about America's complicated relationship with science. He co-directed *The Atom Smashers*, a documentary about the search for the Higgs boson particle, broadcast on *Independent Lens*; *The Believers* (winner, Best Documentary at Chicago International and Maryland Film Festivals), which tells the story of two scientists who thought they had discovered Cold Fusion; and 137 Films' newest documentary, *We Believe in Dinosaurs*.

Monica Long Ross

Monica is a filmmaker and playwright. She is a co-founder of 137 Films, a Chicago-based documentary production company. In addition to *We Believe in Dinosaurs*, Ross co-directed and co-produced the award-winning documentaries *The Atom Smashers* (*Independent Lens*), and *The Believers* (Chicago International Film Festival's Gold Hugo for Best Documentary, Maryland International Film Festival Best Documentary). Monica's documentaries have been screened at festivals around the world, as have her short films, including *Dinner*, a finalist at the Rose d'Or Montreux in Switzerland. She was a founding member and playwright for Childsplay in Tempe, AZ (*Mythic Proportions*, *Clarissa's Closet*, *Montana Molly and the Peppermint Kid*, *Phoebe Joins the Circus*) and the Arizona Women's Theatre Company (*Complications*, *Crazy Sexy*). Her plays have been produced nationally and published by Dramatic Publishing.

CREDITS:

Directed by	Monica Long Ross Clayton Brown
Produced by	Amy Ellison Monica Long Ross Clayton Brown
Written by	Monica Long Ross
Music by	Kate Simko
Animations by	Ian Benjamin Kenny
Edited by	Clayton Brown
Executive Producers	Philip Cable Paul and Danah Fisher Sally Jo Fifer Keith McCready Lois Vossen



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About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS Monday nights at 10:00 PM. The acclaimed series, with Lois Vossen as executive producer, features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by ITVS, the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more visit pbs.org/independentlens. Join the conversation: [facebook.com/independentlens](https://www.facebook.com/independentlens) and on Twitter [@IndependentLens](https://twitter.com/IndependentLens).

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