



# DO NOT RESIST

## DIRECTED BY CRAIG ATKINSON

### **2016 TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL SCREENINGS**

Thursday, April 14, 6:30 PM, Regal Cinemas Battery Park Stadium 11, World Premiere

Friday, April 15, 1:45 PM, Regal Cinemas Battery Park Stadium 11, P&I Screening

Friday, April 15, 5:00 PM, Regal Cinemas Battery Park Stadium 11, Public Screening

Saturday, April 16, 2:30 PM, SVA Theater 2, Public Screening

Tuesday, April 19, 10:00 PM, Bowtie Cinemas Chelsea, Public Screening

Friday, April 22, 9:30 AM, Regal Cinemas Battery Park Stadium 11, P&I Screening,

Friday, April 22, 6:30 PM, Public Screening, Regal Cinemas Battery Park Stadium 11

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## **SYNOPSIS**

In *Do Not Resist*, Craig Atkinson (cinematographer - *Detropia*) makes a dazzling directorial debut with jaw dropping access. From the riots in Ferguson to disagreements on Capitol Hill, whether he is following a heavily armored SWAT team as they issue a no-call warrant or sitting in on a meeting during which the town council of Concord, New Hampshire votes to utilize a US Homeland Security grant to purchase a tank, Atkinson delivers a unique and powerful image of the stories and characters surrounding an issue that has billions of dollars -- and lives -- hanging in the balance. Using footage shot over two years, in 11 states, *Do Not Resist* reveals a rare and surprising look into the increasingly disturbing realities of American police culture.

## **2016 TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL FILM GUIDE SYNOPSIS**

*Do Not Resist* is an urgent and powerful exploration of the rapid militarization of the police in the United States. Opening on startling on-the-scene footage in Ferguson, Missouri, the film then broadens its scope to present scenes from across the country—a conference presentation where the value of high-end weapons technologies is presented to potential police buyers, a community that has just received its very own military-grade tank, and a SWAT team arriving at a home to execute a warrant. The cumulative effect of these vignettes paints a startling picture of the direction our local law enforcement is headed.

Craig Atkinson filmed his directorial debut over two years and in 11 states. Through keen and thoughtful observances, Atkinson deftly presents the characters and stories that comprise this pressing issue. The result reveals a rare and surprising look into the increasingly disturbing realities of American police culture.

—Deborah Rudolph

## **WHAT THE FILM EXPOSES**

- How police officers across America have been armed like the military.
- The Pentagon transfer of armored vehicles to small community police forces.
- Extraordinary access to multiple search warrant raids as they're happening.
- Exposes how local police force behaves on a live drug raid.
- Testimony by the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Defense at a Senate hearing on police use of military equipment.
- Police training seminars with the number one trainer of all US military and law enforcement.
- The top down messaging from the federal government to local law enforcement leaders.
- Adaptation of surveillance technology once reserved for the highest levels of government being used within local police departments.
- Predictive policing tools reminiscent of *Minority Report* being introduced into policing.

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

In April 2013, I watched the police response in the days following the Boston Marathon bombing in awe. I had never associated the vehicles, weapons and tactics used by officers after the attack with domestic police work. I grew up with the War on Drugs era of policing: My father was an officer for 29 years in a city bordering Detroit and became a SWAT commander when his city formed a team in 1989. What I wasn't familiar with, since my father's retirement from the force in 2002, was the effect the War on Terror had on police work. Making this film was an attempt to understand what had changed.

Knowing that interviews with experts would do little to communicate the on-the-ground reality of American policing, we instead set out to give the viewer a direct experience. We attended police conventions throughout the country and started conversations with SWAT officers at equipment expos and a seemingly endless cascade of happy hours, offering the only thing we could: an authentic portrayal of whatever we filmed together. On more than one occasion, we were on our way to the airport, camera in hand, only to receive a phone call from our contact in the police department instructing us not to come. Our access seemed to be directly tied to the amount of negative press the police were getting at that time. It became increasingly difficult to get access after the events in Ferguson, and there were many times we thought we would have to stop production altogether. The urgency of the situation, however, motivated us to continue.

We noticed a trend in early 2014 of police departments being solicited by technology companies offering new tools to help alleviate dwindling operating budgets and loss of personnel. One technology provider we filmed with offered the same IBM platform the NSA uses to collect web communications to police departments, for as little as \$1,000 per year. Throughout 2014 and 2015, we

watched as departments throughout the county adapted the technologies without any guidelines or policy directives governing their use. At times, the companies would make the chief of police sign a nondisclosure agreement preventing them from telling their communities they even had the technologies. The mantra we would continue to hear was that the police couldn't let terrorists know the tools they were using to intercept their plots. The problem is, in three years of filming police, there was never an opportunity to use the equipment on domestic terrorism. Instead, the military surplus equipment and surveillance technology were used on a day-to-day basis to serve search warrants, almost always for drugs.

In hindsight it's not hard to understand how we arrived at the current state of policing in America. Since 9/11, the federal government has given police departments more than \$40 billion in equipment with no stipulations on how it should be deployed or any reporting requirements. Additionally, the federal government created a loophole that allowed police departments to keep the majority of the money and property seized during search warrants to supplement their operating revenue. If a police department makes a portion of their operating revenue from ticketing citizens or seizing their assets, then police officers become de facto tax collectors. We met many officers who said they didn't sign up for that.

Everyone wants to know what my father thinks of the film, and in all honesty, I think it pains him. It's hard to watch the profession you dedicated your life to evolve into something completely unrecognizable. During the 13 years my father was on SWAT from 1989-2002, his team conducted 29 search warrants total. Compare that to today, when departments of a similar size we filmed conducted more than 200 a year.

As we begin to share the film, the overwhelming response from audiences has been shock and disbelief. I can say that we were just as shocked while filming the material. Going in, we had no idea what we were going to find. We kept thinking

we were creating opportunities to film with departments that would show the full spectrum of the SWAT experience, but time and time again, we found ourselves inside homes searching for things that we never found. It's my hope that both community members and officers working hard to challenge the culture of policing within their departments use this film to illustrate the dire need for change.

## **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

### **CRAIG ATKINSON**

DIRECTOR/CINEMATOGRAPHER/EDITOR

A multi-faceted documentary filmmaker, Craig Atkinson is a notable producer, editor and cinematographer. Most recently, Craig was an additional cinematographer on documentary *Norman Lear: Just Another Version of You*. Craig also produced, and was the co-cinematographer on feature length documentary *Detropia*, a lyrical exploration about the city of Detroit trying to re-invent itself in a post-manufacturing United States. The film premiered at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival and won the Editing Award for U.S. Documentary. *Detropia* went on to win ten additional awards worldwide and was short-listed for an Academy Award. While in Detroit, Craig was also a cinematographer on *The Education of Muhammed Hussein*, a 40-minute short documentary exploring the Muslim population in the Detroit area. The film, made for HBO, was short-listed for an Academy Award in 2012. Earlier in his career, he was Enat Sidi's (*The Wolfpack*, *Jesus Camp*) assistant editor during *12th and Delaware*, an HBO film that takes a compelling look at the ongoing abortion debate in America. The film was an official selection at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival. Craig holds a MA in Visual Media Arts from Emerson College.

### **LAURA HARTRICK**

PRODUCER/EDITOR

Laura Hartrick started her career working as a production assistant in Detroit on documentary *Detropia* in 2011. She went on to work at Alex Gibney's Jigsaw Productions, contributing to documentaries *We Steal Secrets: The Story of Wikileaks* and *Mea Maxima Culpa: Silence in the House of God*. She also

worked as an assistant to Director Jason Da Silva at AXS Lab, a non-profit organization dedicated to telling stories of disability through new media and documentary film. Laura is co-founder of Vanish Films. She holds a BA in Social and Historical Studies from Indiana University, and finished her last semester studying international journalism at Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, Spain.

This is Laura's first credit as producer and editor on a documentary feature.

**DAVID MENSCHEL**  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

David Menschel is a criminal defense lawyer and director of Vital Projects Fund, a charitable foundation with an interest in human rights and criminal justice reform. Through the Vital Projects Fund, Menschel has helped to fund several documentary films that advance progressive messages including Academy Award winning film *Citizen Four*, about NSA bulk surveillance and whistleblower Edward Snowden, as well as Sundance award winning films *Detropia* and *The Oath*. He received a B.A. from Princeton University ('93) and a J.D. from Yale Law School ('02).

**GRAYSON SANDERS**  
COMPOSER

Grayson Sanders is a composer and performer from Los Angeles, CA. He holds a degree in Classical Composition from NYU, where he was Composer in Residence with the University's symphony. All four of his large-scale concert works have received premiers from New York Symphonies, including an orchestral commission of 'Cover Me,' for Bjork. *Do Not Resist* marks Grayson's first foray into feature-length documentary film. Grayson is also the lead singer/songwriter for the nationally touring indie outfit SNOWMINE.



**MICHAEL STEARNS**  
ADDITIONAL MUSIC

Michael Stearns is an ambient music composer and performer, film composer, soundtrack producer for theatrical films, documentaries, large format films, commercials and themed attractions, His award winning scores to Ron Fricke's non-verbal global film masterpieces *Chronos*, *Baraka* and *Samsara* have played to audiences around the world.

**VANISH FILMS PRESENTS**

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE VITAL PROJECTS FUND, THE FORD  
FOUNDATION/JUSTFILMS AND THE FRANCES LEAR FOUNDATION

A FILM BY CRAIG ATKINSON

# **DO NOT RESIST**

**DIRECTED BY**

Craig Atkinson

**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

David Menschel

**PRODUCER**

Laura Hartrick

**EDITED BY**

Craig Atkinson and Laura Hartrick

**CINEMATOGRAPHY**

Craig Atkinson

**ORIGINAL SCORE**

Grayson Sanders

**ADDITIONAL MUSIC**

Michael Stearns

**SUPERVISING SOUND MIXER**

Scott Weber

**SOUND EFFECTS EDITOR**

Bob Costanza

**SOUND MIX:**

Smart Post Sound

**POST PRODUCTION SERVICES**

Final Frame

**DI COLORIST**

Will Cox

**DI PRODUCER**

Caitlin Tartaro

**GRAPHICS AND TITLE DESIGN**

Ion Furjanic, We Are Kix

**ADDITIONAL GRAPHICS**

Bil Thompson, Fixture Films

**POSTER ART**

Anthony Freds and Dan Zollinger

**LEGAL**

Jody Simon and Lincoln Bandlow  
Fox Rothschild LLP