

FESTIVAL DE CANNES 2012 - OFFICIAL SELECTION
OUT OF COMPETITION - SPECIAL SCREENINGS

FLORENTINE FILMS

presents

THE CENTRAL PARK FIVE

a documentary
produced, written and directed by

Ken Burns

David McMahon

Sarah Burns

OFFICIAL SCREENING

THURSDAY MAY 24 - 7.45pm

Palais du Festival - Salle du Soixantième

PRESS SCREENING

THURSDAY MAY 24 - 1.15pm - Palais - Bazin Theatre

*The directors Ken Burns, David McMahon and Sarah Burns
will be in Cannes May 23 / 25.*

2012 - USA - Format 16x9 HD - Sound 5.1 Dolby Digital - Running time: 119 minutes

The pictures and Tv clips available on :

<http://www.festival-cannes.fr/en/pressConf/Packs+films.html>

Production

FLORENTINE FILMS

www.florentinefilms.com

US Press

DKC Public Relations / Joe DePlasco

joe_deplasco@dkcnews.com

French & International Press

BOSSA NOVA / Michel Burstein

Tel +33 (0)1 43 26 26 26

bossanovapr@free.fr

www.bossa-nova.info

Cannes from May 16 to 27

Hotel Majestic / DDA Office - Suite Royan 2

Cell +33 (0)6 07 555 888

Synopsis

In 1989, five black and Latino teenagers from Harlem were arrested and later convicted of raping a white woman in New York City's Central Park. They spent between 6 and 13 years in prison before a serial rapist confessed that he alone had committed the crime, leading to their convictions being overturned.

Set against a backdrop of a decaying city beset by violence and racial tension, **THE CENTRAL PARK FIVE** tells the story of that horrific crime, the rush to judgment by the police, a media clamoring for sensational stories and an outraged public, and the five lives upended by this miscarriage of justice.

New Documentary Tells the Untold Story of One of New York City's Most Horrific Crimes

THE CENTRAL PARK FIVE, a new film from award-winning filmmaker Ken Burns, tells the story of the five black and Latino teenagers from Harlem who were wrongly convicted of raping a white woman in New York City's Central Park in 1989. Directed and produced by Burns, David McMahon and Sarah Burns, the film chronicles the Central Park Jogger case, for the first time from the perspective of the five teenagers whose lives were upended by this miscarriage of justice.

On April 20, 1989, the body of a woman barely clinging to life is discovered in Central Park. Within days, Antron McCray, Kevin Richardson, Raymond Santana, Korey Wise, and Yusef Salaam confess to her rape and beating after many hours of aggressive interrogation at the hands of seasoned homicide detectives. The police announce to a press hungry for sensational crime stories that the young men had been part of a gang of teenagers who were out "wilding," assaulting joggers and bicyclists in Central Park that evening. The ensuing media frenzy is met with a public outcry for justice. The young men are tried as adults and convicted of rape, despite inconsistent and inaccurate confessions, DNA evidence that excludes them, and no eyewitness accounts that connect any of them to the victim. The five serve their complete sentences, between 6 and 13 years, before another man, serial rapist Matias Reyes, admits to the crime, and DNA testing supports his confession.

Set against the backdrop of a city beset by violence and facing deepening rifts between races and classes, THE CENTRAL PARK FIVE intertwines the stories of these five young men, the victim, police officers and prosecutors, and Matias Reyes, unraveling the forces behind the wrongful convictions. The film illuminates how law enforcement, social institutions, and media undermined the very rights of the individuals they were designed to safeguard and protect.

"This tragedy reminds us how much we struggle to come to terms with America's original sin, which is race," said Ken Burns. "One only need to look at the history books to understand that, unfortunately, the Central Park Five are not unique in American history."

"This case is a lens through which we can understand the on-going fault-line of race in America," said Sarah Burns, who also wrote *The Central Park Five: A Chronicle of a City Wilding*, (Knopf, 2011). "These young men were convicted long before the trial, by a city blinded by fear and, equally, freighted by race. They were convicted because it was all too easy for people to see them as violent criminals simply because of the color of their skin."

“Ultimately The Central Park Five is about human dignity,” said David McMahon. “It is about five young men who lose their youth but maintain their dignity in the face of an horrific and unimaginable situation.”

In 2002, based upon Matias Reyes’s confession, a judge vacated the original convictions of the Central Park Five. A year later, the men filed civil lawsuits against the City of New York, and the police officers and prosecutors who had worked toward their conviction. That lawsuit remains unresolved.

Among those interviewed in the film are: The Central Park Five and members of their families, New York City Mayors Ed Koch and David Dinkins, journalists Jim Dwyer, Natalie Byfield and LynNell Hancock, the Reverend Calvin Butts, and historian Craig Steven Wilder.

THE CENTRAL PARK FIVE: A film by Ken Burns, David McMahon and Sarah Burns; edited by Michael Levine; cinematography by Buddy Squires with Anthony Savini; original music by Doug Wamble. Funding for the film was provided by The Atlantic Philanthropies, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, The Better Angels Society and Bobby and Polly Stein, and PBS.

The producers are seeking a distributor for a theatrical release. The film will also be broadcast nationally on PBS in 2013 or 2014. Ken Burns's last film to premiere at Cannes was THE WAR (2007). Burns is also the director of such films as THE CIVIL WAR (1990), BASEBALL (1994), JAZZ (2001), and THE NATIONAL PARKS: AMERICA’S BEST IDEA (2009), among many others. His film THE DUST BOWL will air on PBS in November 2012.

Biographies

Ken Burns

Ken Burns has been making documentary films for more than 30 years. Since the Academy Award-nominated BROOKLYN BRIDGE in 1981, he has gone on to direct and produce some of the most acclaimed historical documentaries ever made. Burns was the director, producer, co-writer, chief cinematographer, music director and executive producer of the landmark television series THE CIVIL WAR. This film was the highest-rated series in the history of American public television, prior to BASEBALL, and attracted an audience of 40 million during its premiere in September 1990. The New York Times called it a masterpiece and said that Burns “takes his place as the most accomplished documentary filmmaker of his generation.” Tom Shales of The Washington Post said, “This is not just good television, nor even just great television. This is heroic television.” The columnist George Will said, “If better use has ever been made of television, I have not seen it and do not expect to see better until Ken Burns turns his prodigious talents to his next project.” The series has been honored with more than 40 major film and television awards, including two Emmy Awards, two Grammy Awards, a Producer of the Year Award from the Producer’s Guild, a People’s Choice Award, a Peabody Award, a duPont-Columbia Award, a D.W. Griffiths Award and the \$50,000 Lincoln Prize, among dozens of others.

Some of Burns’s other films include, THE DUST BOWL (scheduled to air on PBS in November, 2012), PROHIBITION (2011), THE NATIONAL PARKS: AMERICA’S BEST IDEA (2009), THE WAR (2007), co-directed with Lynn Novick, JAZZ (2001), LEWIS AND CLARK: THE JOURNEY OF THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY (1997), and BASEBALL (1994)

Burns was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1953. He graduated from Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts, in 1975.

David McMahon

David McMahon was co-producer of *THE WAR*, a seven-part series directed by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, which was an official selection of the 2007 Cannes Film Festival and later appeared on PBS. McMahon was also co-producer of Burns's *THE NATIONAL PARKS: AMERICA'S BEST IDEA*, which premiered on PBS in 2009 and won an Emmy Award for outstanding nonfiction series. With Burns and Novick, McMahon was producer and writer of *THE TENTH INNING* (2010), a two-part, four-hour follow-up to their 1994 PBS series *BASEBALL*.

Sarah Burns

Sarah Burns is the author of *THE CENTRAL PARK FIVE* (Knopf, 2011), a non-fiction book about the teenagers wrongly convicted in the Central Park Jogger rape in 1989.

Technical List

Directed, written and produced by	Ken Burns David McMahon Sarah Burns
Edited by	Michael Levine
Cinematography by	Buddy Squires with Anthony Savini
Original Music by	Doug Wamble
Production Coordinator	Stephanie Jenkins