

“PANDORA’S PROMISE,” by Oscar®-nominated Director Robert Stone to Premiere in Theaters June 12

Official Selection – Sundance Film Festival

“Whatever your stance, Stone’s compelling film opens Pandora’s box and promises to change the conversation for years to come.” – *Sundance Film Festival*

“When was the last time you saw a documentary that fundamentally changed the way you think?... ***Pandora’s Promise*** is built around what should be the *real* liberal agenda: looking at an issue not with orthodoxy, but with open eyes.” – Owen Gleiberman, *Entertainment Weekly*

Impact Partners and **CNN Films** present **PANDORA’S PROMISE**, the groundbreaking new film by Academy-Award®-nominated director Robert Stone. The atomic bomb and meltdowns like Fukushima have made nuclear power synonymous with global disaster. But what if we’ve got nuclear power wrong? An audience favorite at the Sundance Film Festival, **PANDORA’S PROMISE** asks whether the one technology we fear most could save our planet from a climate catastrophe, while providing the energy needed to lift billions of people in the developing world out of poverty. In his controversial new film, Stone tells the intensely personal stories of environmentalists and energy experts who have undergone a radical conversion from being fiercely anti to strongly pro-nuclear energy, risking their careers and reputations in the process. Stone exposes this controversy within the environmental movement head-on with stories of defection by heavy weights including Stewart Brand, Richard Rhodes, Gwyneth Cravens, Mark Lynas and Michael Shellenberger. Undaunted and fearlessly independent, **PANDORA’S PROMISE** is a landmark work that is forever changing the conversation about the myths and science behind this deeply emotional and polarizing issue.

More about the Film

In the next few decades, humankind will need to double, or even triple energy production as billions of people in the developing world lift themselves out of poverty and begin to live modern lives. Unless the energy of the future is clean and non-CO2 emitting, the risk of triggering global climate catastrophe is almost certain. With the world’s unquenchable thirst for energy and its resulting threat to our environment, the stakes may be nothing less than the survival of the planet. This monumental dilemma, and the limitations of solutions like wind and solar, have left the mainstream environmental movement on the verge of utter disarray.

Tackling this challenge head-on comes **PANDORA’S PROMISE**, the highly anticipated and debated new work by internationally-acclaimed filmmaker Robert Stone. Three years in the making and filmed on four continents, this meticulously researched and beautifully crafted film asks whether the one energy source that has the ability to completely replace fossil fuels might be the one technology that environmentalists fear the most: nuclear power.

Uniquely positioned to explore this question, Stone began his filmmaking career directing one of the great anti-nuclear documentaries, the Oscar®-nominated *Radio Bikini*. In 2009, his celebration of the rise of the modern environmental movement, *Earth Days* (Sundance Closing Night Film), established him as one of the great chroniclers of environmentalism.

With a no-holds-barred approach to nuclear power's troubled past, Stone opens **PANDORA'S PROMISE** with a trip to the "exclusion zone" at Fukushima, accompanied by British climate expert Mark Lynas. He moves on to revisit and meditate on the iconic accidents at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl. Investigating the genesis of our collective anti-nuclear psyche – from the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, the shadow of nuclear weapons testing and the entire baby boomer generation coming of age during the Cold War – Stone reveals that much of what passes for common knowledge about nuclear energy turns out to be based on a false premise: the conflation of nuclear power with nuclear weapons.

Intrigued by the story of a growing number of environmentalists who have had a fundamental change of heart about nuclear energy, Stone elegantly juxtaposes the personal narratives of five extraordinary individuals – Stewart Brand, Richard Rhodes, Gwyneth Cravens, Mark Lynas and Michael Shellenberger – to explore how and why they have come to see advanced nuclear power as humankind's greatest hope. Tracing their transformations, Stone turns to science, taking viewers along for the ride on his subjects' intellectual odyssey. The film also reveals the career trajectories of two pioneering scientists who led the development of a safer and very different nuclear energy technology than what the world has come to know.

Rather than being dismissed after Fukushima, nuclear power is gaining traction, with President Obama cheering the U.S. Department of Energy's purchase of small modular reactors, China and India aggressively pursuing advanced nuclear designs, and climate scientist Jim Hansen's recent scientific paper focusing on the promise of nuclear energy as our best hope for dramatically reducing CO2 emissions.

As a new generation looks beyond the ideological orthodoxy that has commanded mainstream environmental thinking on climate and energy – both on the Left and the Right – nuclear power will inevitably be a part of this critical debate. Everyone thinks they know the story of Pandora's Box: she opens the box and all the terrors of the world come flying out. But what most people forget, or perhaps never learned, is that the story does not end there. For according to the myth, at the bottom of the box, Pandora found hope.

PANDORA'S PROMISE (2013, 87 min, U.S.) Written and Directed by Robert Stone.

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