POV’s ‘Only the Young,’ Premiering Monday, July 15, 2013 on PBS, Tells a 21st-Century Coming-of-Age Story

Three Southern California Teens Face the Universal Questions of Youth—and the Present-day Realities of a Changed America

“[This] fast-moving documentary zeros in on three ultra-likeable Southern California high-schoolers, following them through a succession of hairstyles and turning points.”—Sheri Linden, The Hollywood Reporter

MEDIA ALERT – FACT SHEET

National Dates: Elizabeth Mims and Jason Tippet’s Only the Young premieres on PBS on Monday, July 15, 2013 at 10 p.m. (check local listings.) during the 26th season of POV (Point of View). The film will stream on POV’s website, www.pbs.org/pov/reportero, from July 16—Aug. 14, 2013. The 90-minute broadcast will also include Nancy Schwartzman’s xoxosms, a short documentary that chronicles digital intimacy and love in the 21st century.

American television’s longest-running independent documentary series, POV was recently honored with a 2013 MacArthur Foundation Award for Creative and Effective Institutions.

The Films: Only the Young follows three unconventional Christian teenagers coming of age in a small Southern California town. Skateboarders Garrison and Kevin, and Garrison’s on-and-off girlfriend, Skye, wrestle with the eternal questions of youth: friendship, true love and the promise of the future. Yet their lives are also touched by the distress signals of contemporary America—foreclosed homes, abandoned businesses and adults in financial trouble. As graduation approaches, these issues become shocking realities. With sun-drenched visuals, lyrical storytelling and a soul-music soundtrack, Only the Young embodies the innocence and candor of its youthful subjects—and of adolescence itself.

Only the Young is a production of THEsaurus LLC and Oscilloscope Laboratories.

The short film xoxosms follows the modern-day love story of Gus, a home-schooled Christian guy from small-town Illinois who takes a chance and Facebook messages Jiyun, a beautiful New York City art student from Korea. The two meet in the only place that such different people might ever find each other—online. When they decide to explore their romance offline, one wonders: Will online love work IRL (in real life)?

Embed a trailer, download press materials and learn more at www.pbs.org/pressroom.

‘Only the Young’

Characters: Garrison is an avid skateboarder and active in his church group. The revelation that his girlfriend, Skye and his best friend, Kevin, kissed in a moment of “wasted” abandon...
threatens the boys’ friendship. Garrison’s new girlfriend, Kristen, is described by Skye as “a hip-hop dancing crazy liberal,” which in turn brings a collective effort by church members to break up the young couple.

Kevin has been Garrison’s best friend since they were 13. Kevin is the first of the three to graduate, but his parents cannot afford to send him to college or trade school, so they decide to move to Tennessee where they hope financial conditions will be better.

Skye was lovingly raised by her grandparents. As she’s waiting for her father’s release from prison, she discovers that her mother is trying to re-enter her life by “friending” her on Facebook. Skye rebuffs her mother, but faces additional turmoil and an uncertain future due to her grandparents’ shaky finances.

Online: POV’s website for Only the Young, [www.pbs.org/pov/onlytheyoung](http://www.pbs.org/pov/onlytheyoung), offers a broad range of exclusive online content to enhance its broadcast. Watch the full film online for free for a limited time following the broadcast (July 16-Aug. 14, 2013), view a video interview with the directors and additional clips, and download a discussion guide and other viewing resources.

Outreach: POV works with educators, public television stations and national and community groups across the country to foster dialogue around the issues presented in our films. For a list of upcoming screening events, go to [www.pbs.org/pov/outreach](http://www.pbs.org/pov/outreach). POV and nationally recognized media educator Dr. Faith Rogow develop discussion guides with background information to help event organizers facilitate conversations. The Only the Young discussion guide includes prompts for dialogue and taking action steps. Educational consultant Michele Israel has also developed a lesson plan to accompany the film. The materials are available free of charge at [www.pbs.org/pov/onlytheyoung](http://www.pbs.org/pov/onlytheyoung). Event organizers may email POV at events@pov.org to request a free loaned DVD to screen at their event.

Filmmakers’ Statements: “I grew up 30 miles north of Los Angeles in the desert town of Santa Clarita,” says co-director Jason Tippet. “It was a place of rapid growth and development that served as an ideal backdrop for the seemingly endless days of unsupervised freedom of my teenage years. Now, just seven years after graduating from high school, I wanted to make a film about this period of life while it was still fresh in my mind.

“I set out to tell the story of three fairly normal teenagers—and, if it all possible, I tried to avoid stapling a ‘social-issue’ or ‘problem’ sign to their foreheads. We just focused on the lives of the kids as they were. “

Elizabeth Mims, co-director, adds, “Jason had spent his childhood as a largely unsupervised ‘latchkey kid,’ another wandering teen in an endless, epic landscape on the edge of the desert. Skateboards are a basic form of transportation and, like Kevin and Garrison, most kids aspire one day to own automobiles, though they remain oblivious to the responsibilities. I’m not much older than the kids in Only the Young, and I think that helped me to see the world from their point of view.

“I wanted to make a film where there was clear comfort and readability in the documentary subjects themselves—a sincere feeling that a solid relationship existed between the subjects and us as directors. I wanted to make a film that could help anyone remember his or her high school experiences and be completely immersed in the moment without the form intruding on the content.”
Bios:

**Only the Young**

*Jason Tippet (Co-director)*

Jason Tippet earned his undergraduate degree at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), where he directed *Thompson*, his first short documentary, which screened at the Sundance Film Festival in 2010 and won a jury award at SXSW 2009.

*Elizabeth Mims (Co-director)*

Elizabeth Mims grew up in Austin, Texas, and graduated from CalArts with a bachelor of fine arts degree in film and video in 2010. At CalArts, she produced Jason Tippet’s Thompson. Not to brag, but she was also freshman homecoming princess at Austin High School.

**xoxosms**

*Nancy Schwartzman (Director, Co-Producer)*

Named one of the “10 Filmmakers to Watch in 2011” by *Independent* magazine, Nancy Schwartzman is a media strategist who believes that storytelling and technology can create safer communities for women and girls. In addition to *xoxosms*, she is the director of the documentary *The Line*. Schwartzman’s team won the highly competitive White House “Apps Against Abuse” Technology with the creation of the “Circle of 6” iPhone and Android application, now with 55,000 users in 26 countries.

Credits:

**Only the Young**

Co-directors: Jason Tippet, Elizabeth Mims  
Producer: Derek Waters  
Cinematographer: Jason Tippet  
Editors: Jason Tippet, Elizabeth Mims  
Running Time: 68:00

**xoxosms**

Director/Co-producer: Nancy Schwartzman  
Cinematographer/Co-producer: Isaac Mathes  
Editor: Sarah Devorkin  
Running Time: 14:00

**POV Series Credits:**

Executive Producer: Simon Kilmurry  
Co-Executive Producer: Cynthia López  
VP, Programming & Production: Chris White  
Coordinating Producer: Andrew Catauro

‘Only the Young’

Awards/Fests:  
- Truer Than Fiction Award, Independent Spirit Awards, 2013  
- Top Five Documentaries, National Board of Review, 2012  
- Sterling Award for Best U.S. Feature, AFI Silverdocs Documentary Festival, 2012  
- Young Americans Audience Award, AFI Fest, 2012  
- Emerging Cinematic Vision Award, Camden International Film Festival, 2012  
- Honorable Mention, Philadelphia Film Festival, 2012  
- Official Selection, True/False Film Fest, 2012

POV: Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and celebrating its 25th season on PBS in 2012, the award-winning POV is the longest-running showcase on American television to feature the work of today's best independent documentary filmmakers. POV has brought more than 325 acclaimed documentaries to millions nationwide and has a Webby Award-winning online series, POV's Borders. Since 1988, POV has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. Visit www.pbs.org/pov.

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