



Contact:

POV Communications: 212-989-7425.

Cathy Fisher, cfisher@pov.org, Amanda Nguyen, anguyen@pov.org

POV online pressroom: www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom

‘When I Walk,’ a Soaring Tribute to the Powers of Creativity and Courage, Kicks Off POV’s 27th Season on PBS on Monday, June 23, 2014

Diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis Turns Filmmaker Jason DaSilva’s World Upside Down, Propelling Him on a Fateful Journey to Make Another Documentary

“Extraordinarily accomplished, poignant and wise.” — Inkoo Kang, *Los Angeles Times*

MEDIA ALERT – FACT SHEET

National Dates: Jason DaSilva’s **When I Walk** has its national broadcast premiere on **Monday, June 23, 2013** at 10 p.m. (check local listings), kicking off the 27th season of the award-winning PBS series **POV (Point of View)**. The film will stream on POV’s website, www.pbs.org/pov/wheniwalk/ June 24 – July 23, 2014.

The Film: Jason DaSilva was 25 years old and a rising independent filmmaker when a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis changed everything—and inspired him to make another film. **When I Walk** is a candid and brave chronicle of one young man’s struggle to adapt to the harsh realities of M.S. while holding on to his personal and creative life. With his body growing weaker, DaSilva’s spirits, and his film, get a boost from his mothers tough love and the support of Alice Cook, who becomes his wife and filmmaking partner. The result is a life-affirming documentary filled with unexpected moments of joy and humor.

When I Walk, an Official Selection of the 2013 Sundance Film Festival, is a co-production of AXS Lab Inc. and ITVS, with support from the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program. It is a co-presentation with the Center for Asian American Media.

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

Online: POV’s website for **When I Walk** – <http://www.pbs.org/pov/wheniwalk/> – offers a broad range of exclusive online content to enhance the PBS broadcast. Watch the full film online for free for a limited time following the broadcast (June 24 – July 23, 2014), watch an extended interview with filmmaker-subject Jason DaSilva to find out what’s happened since the cameras stopped rolling, download a discussion guide and other viewing resources, and more.

Filmmaker’s
Statement:

“At age 25, nine years ago, I was told I had multiple sclerosis, and I saw my freedoms slowly vanish,” says director/producer Jason DaSilva. “I wanted to capture this transformative experience—becoming disabled—in **When I Walk** because I hadn’t seen it done before, and people need to see how a degenerative disease impacts the lives of those living with it.

“My diagnosis was not the end of the world. Instead, and with a bit of determination, it has proven to be a new way for me to see and be in the world. This was the voice and heart that

emerged in the film, almost more through its own will than mine. As director, my role was to foster that spirit, to learn to adapt, and enjoy the ride.”

Filmmaker Bios: [Jason DaSilva \(Director/Producer/Writer/Editor\)](#)

Jason DaSilva has been a prolific filmmaker for the past 10 years, directing four short films (*Olivia’s Puzzle*, *A Song for Daniel*, *Twins of Mankala* and *First Steps*) and two feature-length documentaries (*Lest We Forget* and **When I Walk**). Many of his films have won awards; *Olivia’s Puzzle* premiered at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival and qualified for an Academy Award®. Three of his films have been broadcast nationally on PBS and HBO and in Canada on CBC Television. He also produced *Shocking and Awful*, a film installation on the movement against the war in Iraq, exhibited at the 2006 Whitney Biennial.

In 2006, DaSilva took a short break from filmmaking to earn his master’s degree in applied media arts from Emily Carr University. He produced and directed an op-doc (opinion documentary) for *The New York Times* entitled *The Long Wait*, published in January 2013. He and Alice Cook live and work in New York City.

[Alice Cook, Director/Producer/Editor](#)

Alice Cook is a documentary filmmaker and producer living in New York City. **When I Walk** is her first production. She also produced and directed *The New York Times* op-doc *The Long Wait*, published in January 2013. She produced the digital media project AXS Map, which was funded by charitable giving from Google and other organizations. Cook received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in engineering and science from Stanford University.

About AXS Map: In 2011, DaSilva and Cook received a grant from Google Earth Outreach and other foundations to build a prototype of [AXS Map](#) (pronounced access map), which uses new media technology to engage, empower, and connect the disability community. Through the AXS Map app and website, users are invited to search for businesses or public places that have accessible features such as entrances and washrooms, and then share their reviews with a 1- to 5-star rating. AXS Map will offer all people—including people with disabilities, seniors, and their supporters—freedom and spontaneity to make decisions about where they eat, shop, work and play.

AXS Map is available online or via mobile web, as well as Android and iPhone applications. It’s free and easy to use. To learn more and start mapping, visit www.axsmap.com. AXS Map recently received the prestigious Google Earth Outreach Developer Award.

Related Stories: “Accessibility Improvements for M.S.: What’s a Renter to Do?” by Trevis Gleason, *Everyday Health*, April 2, 2014. <http://bit.ly/1dOpD17>

“Behind the Wheel of an Accessible Cab in New York City,” by Yoni Bashan, *The Wall Street Journal*, March 28, 2014. <http://on.wsj.com/1fDI7x>

“For Runner With M.S., No Pain While Racing, No Feeling at the Finish,” by Lindsay Crouse, *The New York Times*, March 3, 2014. <http://nyti.ms/1mDjSX>

“New York City eyes taxi wheelchair-accessibility surcharge,” ABC 7 Eyewitness News, March 26, 2014. <http://bit.ly/PkAKnf>

“Under Pressure, Bloomberg shifts on taxi accessibility,” by Dana Rubinstein, *Capital New York*, Dec. 6, 2013. <http://bit.ly/1jo91Ng>

“Judge Flunks NYC in Disaster Plans for Disabled,” by Larry Neumeister, Associated Press, Nov. 7, 2013. <http://bit.ly/1j3UOEt>

Outreach: POV works with educators, public television stations and national and community groups to present more than 650 free screenings nationwide. In addition, POV and nationally recognized media educator Dr. Faith Rogow develop discussion guides and standards-aligned lesson plans for each of our films. The **When I Walk** discussion guide includes background information on Jason DaSilva, M.S. and issues of accessibility, plus prompts for dialogue and a list of educational resources. Join POV’s [Community Network](#) to borrow the film for free from the POV Lending Library to host your own screening. Visit the [When I Walk Partner Toolkit](#) for all the resources you need to get involved with the film, from spreading the word to hosting a screening. For upcoming events, visit www.pbs.org/pov/outreach.

Credits:

Directors/Producers:	Jason DaSilva, Alice Cook
Executive Producers:	Yael Melamede, Stanley Nelson, Lydia Dean Pilcher, Peter Starr
Editors:	Jason DaSilva, Keiko Deguchi, Alice Cook
Animation:	Mihai Wilson, Davide Disaro, Wyatt Banks, Matt Faust
Original Music:	Jeff Beal
Running Time:	86:46

POV Series Credits:

Executive Producer:	Simon Kilmurry
Co-Executive Producer:	Cynthia López
VP, Programming and Production:	Chris White
Associate Producer:	Nicole Tsien
Production Coordinator:	Nikki Heyman

Festivals: Official Selection, Sundance Film Festival, 2013
Best Canadian Feature, HotDocs 2013

Visit www.wheniwalk.com for a complete list of screenings and events.

Pressroom: Visit POV’s pressroom, www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom, for press releases, downloadable art, filmmaker biographies, transcripts and special features.

POV: Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and now in its 27th season on PBS, 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 365 acclaimed documentaries to millions nationwide. Its films have won 32 Emmys, 17 George Foster Peabody Awards, 12 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards, three Academy Awards® and the Prix Italia. 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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