

'The Toyota Effect' World Premieres at New York Film Festival Convergence

September 28, 2015

NEW YORK (Sept. 28, 2015) — Last night at the New York Film Festival (NYFF) Convergence, a brand-new short film series – entitled *The Toyota Effect* – debuted from award-winning directors **Kief Davidson** (*A Lego Brickumentary*, *Open Heart*), **Steve James** (*Life Itself*, *Hoop Dreams*) and **Ross Kauffman** (*Born Into Brothels*, *The E-Team*).

The Toyota Effect premiered at NYFF in conjunction with a panel that was moderated by **Bob Garfield**, **Host of NPR's "On The Media"** and featured **Marjorie Schussel**, **Director, Integrated Brand Communications at Toyota**, Kief Davidson and Ross Kauffman. Entitled "Brand Meets Story: How Filmmakers and Brands Are Reinventing Digital Content", the panel explored how content marketing campaigns, like *The Toyota Effect*, are marrying creative freedom with meaningful brand communications to tell "stories that matter."

The three short films all highlight how Toyota shares its Toyota Production System with different partners to help them find better ways of doing things. By working with Toyota to make small changes to their day-to-day operations, the partners are able to have a greater impact – and, in many cases, help more people in need.

"The organizations and incredible people whose lives are being changed by this work are the stars of these three films," said Toyota's Marjorie Schussel, Director, Integrated Brand Communications. "And by working with these talented filmmakers, who each approached this project through their own unique lens, these stories are now being told more powerfully and authentically than we ever could on our own."

"Our mission at Convergence was to highlight projects that live at the intersection of film and media," says Matthew Bolish, Programmer, New York Film Festival Convergence. "We were excited to present The Toyota Effect series because it exemplifies how brands and high-profile film directors are creating new modes of storytelling for digital-first audiences."

The directors were given behind-the-scenes access to three of Toyota's partners to highlight the improvements that were made and the results:

- ***Saving Sight* (Dir. Kief Davidson)** – Academy-Award-nominated filmmaker Kief Davidson visits Harbor-UCLA Hospital's busy eye clinic, where medical staff struggle to provide timely care to underserved community members. Davidson looks at the partnership with Toyota through the eyes of Liseth, a diabetic patient hoping for surgery that will save her sight.
- ***Coming Home* (Dir. Ross Kauffman)** – Academy-Award-winning filmmaker Ross Kauffman explores how the St. Bernard Project works to get people back into their homes in the wake of natural disasters. The nonprofit's partnership with Toyota has allowed it to cut in half the time it takes to rebuild homes, and expand from serving residents in New Orleans to helping those devastated by disasters across the United States.

- **116 Innovators (Dir. Steve James)** – Academy-Award-nominated filmmaker Steve James visits Chicago-based ACE Metal Crafts, an unusually close-knit U.S. manufacturing company that gets a competitive boost from its collaboration with Toyota — proving that even in the era of offshoring, American manufacturers can do more than just survive, they can grow.

“What captured my imagination initially as a filmmaker was the fact that it’s an entire philosophy that Toyota brings to the table,” said **116 Innovators Director Steve James**. “But I was also struck by the camaraderie between management and shop floor workers at ACE, the company I profiled, and how their partnership with Toyota not only made them more competitive, but also contributed to their enthusiasm and collective sense of ownership.”

Following the world premiere event at the New York Film Festival Convergence, *The Toyota Effect* had a digital release today on www.TheToyotaEffect.com.

The initiative is also being supported through a digital media and influencer marketing plan that drives consumers to *The Toyota Effect* online hub where people can view and share the films.

The Toyota Effect campaign was developed for Toyota by 360i, in collaboration with Cinelan.