

HBO DOCUMENTARY FILMS

IN THE SAME BREATH

A film by Nanfu Wang



#InTheSameBreathHBO

DEBUTS 2021 ON HBO

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL SCREENING SCHEDULE

Thursday, January 28 at 5:00 PM PT / 6:00 PM MT – Online (*WORLD PREMIERE*)

For press materials, please visit:

<ftp://ftp.homeboxoffice.com>

username: documr password: qq3DjpQ4

Running Time: 95 min

Press Contact

HBO Documentary Films

Asheba Edghill / Hayley Hanson

Asheba cell: 347-721-1539

Hayley cell: 201-207-7853

Asheba.Edghill@hbo.com

Hayley.Hanson@hbo.com

Press Contact

Cinetic Marketing

Rachel Allen / Ryan Werner

Rachel cell: 937-241-9737

Ryan cell: 917-254-7653

rachel@cineticmedia.com

ryan@cineticmedia.com

LOGLINE

Nanfu Wang's deeply personal IN THE SAME BREATH recounts the origin and spread of the novel coronavirus from the earliest days of the outbreak in Wuhan to its rampage across the United States.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

IN THE SAME BREATH, directed by Nanfu Wang (“One Child Nation”), recounts the origin and spread of the novel coronavirus from the earliest days of the outbreak in Wuhan to its rampage across the United States. In a deeply personal approach, Wang, who was born in China and now lives in the United States, explores the parallel campaigns of misinformation waged by leadership and the devastating impact on citizens of both countries. Emotional first-hand accounts and startling, on-the-ground footage weave a revelatory picture of cover-ups and misinformation while also highlighting the strength and resilience of the healthcare workers, activists and family members who risked everything to communicate the truth.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I spent a lot of my childhood in hospitals taking care of my father, who had rheumatic heart disease. His illness resulted from a fever that lasted for weeks when he was nine years old. His family was too poor to afford proper care, and when they finally scraped together enough money to take him to a hospital, the doctors said the inflammation caused by the fever permanently damaged his heart. For the rest of my father's life, he was in and out of hospitals - when he could afford it.

The hospital was where I formed some of the most precious memories of my childhood, because my father's visits there were rare chances for me to spend time with him. When he was well, I barely saw him. He spent all of his time as a farmer, a teacher, and sometimes as a migrant worker just so our family could survive. But in the hospital, he would tell me stories. We would play games. I slept in the same bed with him, and we would befriend other patients together.

I also formed some of my most traumatic memories in hospitals. It was the place where I first encountered the concept of death, and evidence of it was everywhere around me. I routinely would hear desperate cries from the corridor outside my father's room, and I would know in that moment that someone had just lost a family member. And then, one day, it was my family's turn.

My father died at 33 years old. His death instantly and completely reshaped my life. The grief, the sadness, and the anger; the hardship for my mother, brother, and me when he was gone — the trauma of it changed the way I saw the world. Later when I grew up, when I realized that I wanted to make documentaries, I always felt a compulsion and a sense of responsibility to make a film about the healthcare system in China.

In the Same Breath is not about the healthcare system, though it does play a part in this story. The same unfairness, the same injustices pervasive in the system that failed my father still existed in the system that buckled under the weight of Wuhan's coronavirus outbreak. When the lockdown began and the desperate images poured out on social media, I recognized that helplessness and grief I felt written on the faces of people crowded into hospital corridors in Wuhan. I felt compelled to save every social media post I could and assemble a record of what was happening.

The first person that I talked to about this project was Jialing Zhang, who co-directed and produced *One Child Nation* with me. On Jan. 25th, 2020, I mentioned the idea of doing a film on COVID to her (at the time I didn't expect that eventually the virus would have spread to the U.S. as well). The two of us shared the same feelings of helplessness and anger at the Chinese government's handling of the outbreak and felt an urgent need to show the world what we were seeing. She immediately agreed to help produce. A few days later, I asked Julie Goldman, Chris Clements, and Carolyn Hepburn, who also produced our last film, *One Child Nation*, to join us. All of us are based in the U.S., so remotely finding the camera people, field producers, and contacting subjects was tremendously difficult. I've made two other films in China, and both of them were challenging because of state surveillance and censorship, but this film was much more challenging. The intensity of the state's suppression of reporting on the outbreak was nothing like what I had encountered before.

Getting permission to film basically anywhere was strictly limited to people whose background and professions were carefully vetted by the government. Healthcare workers, funeral home workers, and other frontline workers had all been warned against doing interviews. With all eyes on China's outbreak, the state has convinced people that maintaining a positive image of China's outbreak response was a critical national priority, and every Chinese citizen was responsible for it. Foreign press are often considered "hostile forces" that try to subvert the Chinese government, so many people refused to engage with them except to praise the government's handling of the outbreak.

In many instances, when I first contacted a potential crew member or a character, the issue of how to introduce myself was a delicate one. Sometimes simply mentioning that I live in the U.S. would cause suspicion. I'd try to carefully gauge the other person's response and then gradually share information about the project. The concern was not only that they might refuse to participate in the film, but also that they would report our project to the authorities, jeopardizing our ability to continue filming.

Eventually we assembled a team of ten camera people filming in China and ten camera people in the U.S, in addition to dozens of other researchers, field producers, and fixers. China and the U.S have a 12 hour time difference, and our crew would film all day and start uploading footage onto an encrypted cloud service. When they were asleep, I'd review the footage they shot that day and give notes for the next day's shoot.

After a shoot or two, I could determine the personality and political views from each camera person - the way they framed a shot and the things that they paid attention to were revealing of their personal and political points of view. I could tell whether they felt proud of the government's response to the outbreak, or if they felt moved by the healthcare workers' sacrifices, or if they were angry and sad about the cover-ups. I then assigned the camera people to different tasks based on those determinations. On the night of Wuhan's lockdown being lifted, the city staged a magnificent light show to celebrate, and we sent three different camera people to film. Each saw it with completely different sets of feelings. One felt proud of the country's achievements and saw the grand lights as a visualization of the state's triumph. Another camera person saw the red lights all across the city and felt that it was a metaphor for the blood shed by the victims of the outbreak.

Then, when the virus reached the U.S., I was more shocked by NYC's quarantine order than Wuhan's lockdown. I didn't see it coming despite knowing how severe and contagious the virus had been in Wuhan. I blindly thought of the U.S. as being more developed and advanced than China. As the outbreak here spiraled out of control, my own bias became painfully obvious to me.

We decided to include America's outbreak within the scope of the story that we were telling, and we started sending camera people (with every possible precaution) around the country to capture how the virus was affecting this country. The more I saw, the more I was forced to confront my own preconceptions about the U.S. It wasn't the country I thought it was when I chose to come here.

I find myself at the end of this process of observing the outbreak in my home and my adoptive home wondering how all of this will end, hoping that the questions the film raises will strike viewers as deeply as they have struck me.

BIOS

NANFU WANG – DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, CO-EDITOR

Nanfu Wang is an award-winning Chinese filmmaker based in the U.S. Her feature documentaries include **Hooligan Sparrow** (Sundance 2016), **I Am Another You** (SXSW 2017, Special Jury Prize winner), and **One Child Nation** (Sundance 2019, Grand Jury Prize Winner).

Wang was awarded the 2020 MacArthur Genius Grant. She has received four Emmy nominations and was shortlisted for two Academy Awards for her films and is a recipient of the Independent Spirit Award, the Peabody Award, the George Polk Award, Cinema Eye Honor awards, and an IDA award.

In her films, Wang creates intimate character studies that examine the impact of authoritarian governance, corruption, and lack of accountability on the lives of individuals and the well-being of communities. With the rigor of an investigative journalist and immersive, emotionally powerful storytelling, Wang interrogates notions of responsibility and freedom, particularly amid the repressive state mandates in her native China.

Originally from a remote village in China, Wang overcame poverty and a lack of access to formal education and eventually earned three Master's degrees from Shanghai University (M.A. in English Literature), Ohio University (M.A. in Media Studies), and New York University (M.A. in Documentary Filmmaking). She teaches cinematography and editing at New York University.

JIALING ZHANG – PRODUCER

Jialing Zhang is an independent Chinese filmmaker based in Massachusetts. She co-directed and produced Emmy-Award nominated **One Child Nation** (Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner, 2019) & **Complicit** (Human Rights Watch Film Festival, 2017). Jialing was nominated for a DGA Award for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Documentary, a PGA Award for Outstanding Producer of Documentary, the Gotham Independent Film Award in 2019 and most recently has won a Ridenhour Prize. She worked as a freelance journalist in Beijing for six years and holds a master's degree from NYU's School of Journalism.

JULIE GOLDMAN - PRODUCER

Julie Goldman is an Oscar-nominated and Emmy Award-winning producer and executive producer of documentary feature films and series. Julie is the first documentary producer to receive the Amazon Studios Sundance Institute Producer's Award and the Cinereach Producer's Award. She produced Nanfu Wang's new film, **In The Same Breath**, which will premiere on opening night at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival. She is currently in production on **The Velvet Underground**, directed by Todd Haynes, which is set to be released by Apple in 2021, and is producing new films with Roger Ross Williams and Maite Alberdi. Julie executive produced Tribeca Grand Jury Prize winner **Socks on Fire**, and the acclaimed, Goya Award nominated **The Mole Agent**, and produced Gotham and IDA Award winner **A Thousand Cuts**—both 2020 Sundance premieres. She produced Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner and Oscar-shortlisted **One Child Nation**, which was acquired by Amazon Studios; **Ringside**, which had its world premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival and recently debuted on Showtime; and **Bully. Coward. Victim. The Story of Roy Cohn**, which premiered at the New York Film Festival and launched on HBO in June. Julie produced Emmy Award-winning and Oscar-nominated **Abacus: Small Enough to Jail**, **The Final Year**, and Showtime's series

Murder in the Bayou. Julie is the producer of **Life, Animated** which won the Sundance Directing Award, was nominated for the 2017 Best Documentary Oscar, and won three Emmys, including the award for Best Documentary. She is executive producer of **Weiner**, winner of the Sundance Grand Jury Prize. Julie also produced and executive produced: Emmy Award-winning films **Best of Enemies, Solitary, Manhunt**; Peabody Award-winning films **Inventing Tomorrow, Southwest of Salem**; Emmy-nominated films and series **Gideon's Army, 1971, Humans of New York**; Oscar-shortlisted films, **God Loves Uganda, Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry, 3 1/2 Minutes, Ten Bullets, Art and Craft** and **Buck**.

CHRISTOPHER CLEMENTS - PRODUCER

Christopher Clements is an Emmy and Peabody Award-winning producer and partner at Motto Pictures. He produced Nanfu Wang's new film, **In The Same Breath**, which will premiere on opening night at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival. He is currently in production on **The Velvet Underground**, directed by Todd Haynes, which is set to be released by Apple in 2021, and is producing new films with Roger Ross Williams and Maite Alberdi. Christopher recently executive produced Tribeca Grand Jury Prize winner **Socks on Fire**, and the acclaimed, Goya Award nominated **The Mole Agent**, and produced Gotham and IDA Award winner **A Thousand Cuts**—both 2020 Sundance Film Festival premieres. Christopher produced Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner and Oscar-shortlisted **One Child Nation**, released by Amazon Studios; **Bully. Coward. Victim. The Story of Roy Cohn**, which premiered at the New York Film Festival and broadcast in June on HBO; **Ringside**, which premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival, won the Silver Hugo Award at the Chicago International Film Festival and debuted on Showtime in June; and Netflix's **Take Your Pills** which premiered at SXSW. Christopher executive produced Steve James' Emmy Award-winning and Oscar-nominated **Abacus: Small Enough to Jail; Weiner**, which won the U.S. Documentary Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival and was shortlisted for the 2017 Academy Award; two Peabody Award winners, **Inventing Tomorrow** and **Southwest of Salem**; Sundance 2018 premiere and winner of the Prix Europa **The Cleaners**; Emmy Award-winner **Solitary**; CPH:DoX Grand Jury Award and Prix Europa winner **The Raft**; Ric Burns' **Oliver Sacks: His Own Life**; and the acclaimed Showtime series **Murder in the Bayou**. Christopher co-produced **Life, Animated**, which was nominated for the 2017 Best Documentary Feature Academy Award, and won three Emmys, including the award for Best Documentary. Christopher is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the Producers Guild of America, British Academy of Film and Television Arts, and the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.

CAROLYN HEPBURN - PRODUCER

Carolyn Hepburn is an Emmy and Peabody Award-winning producer who joined Motto Pictures in 2010 and is the Head of Production. She produced Nanfu Wang's new film, **In The Same Breath**, which will premiere on opening night at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival. She is currently in production on **The Velvet Underground**, directed by Todd Haynes, which is set to be released by Apple in 2021, and is producing new films with Roger Ross Williams and Maite Alberdi. She recently executive produced **Socks on Fire**, winner of the 2020 Tribeca Grand Jury Prize; **Ringside** which premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival, won the Silver Hugo Award at the Chicago International Film Festival and debuted in June on Showtime; and the acclaimed, Goya Award nominated **The Mole Agent**, and produced Gotham and IDA Award winner **A Thousand Cuts**—both 2020 Sundance Film Festival premieres. Carolyn produced Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner and Oscar-shortlisted **One Child Nation**, released by Amazon Studios, and **Bully. Coward. Victim. The Story of Roy Cohn**, which premiered at the

New York Film Festival and launched on HBO in June. She produced the Emmy-nominated and Oscar-shortlisted **3 1/2 Minutes, Ten Bullets**; the Netflix Original **Take Your Pills**, which premiered at SXSW; and **Take Back the Harbor**, which premiered on Discovery. She co-produced **Life, Animated**, which was nominated for the 2017 Best Documentary Feature Academy Award, and won three Emmys, including the award for Best Documentary in 2018. She executive produced **Charm City**, shortlisted for the 2019 Academy Award; **Love, Gilda**, the 2018 Tribeca Film Festival Opening Night Film; **Weiner**, shortlisted for the 2017 Academy Award; **Art and Craft**, Emmy-nominated and shortlisted for the 2015 Academy Award; and the Showtime series **Murder in the Bayou**. Carolyn is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the Producers Guild of America, British Academy of Film and Television Arts, and the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.

MICHAEL SHADE – CO-EDITOR

Michael Shade is an editor who has worked with Nanfu Wang on **One Child Nation** (Sundance 2019, Grand Jury Prize Winner), **I Am Another You** (SXSW 2017, Special Jury Prize winner), and **Hooligan Sparrow** (Sundance 2016). He has worked as an editor, cameraperson, and producer for a variety of news organizations, including Vice, Al Jazeera, The Guardian, and The Atlantic, among others.

NATHAN HALPERN - COMPOSER

Nathan Halpern is an Emmy-nominated composer, named a 'Composer to Watch' by Classic FM and Indiewire. His score for acclaimed 2020 psychological thriller **Swallow** (IFC Films) was called "brilliant" (Little White Lies) and "a highlight of the film" (Indiewire). He composed the scores of two films from Barack Obama's 2018 Best Films of the Year list: Cannes winner **The Rider** (Sony Pictures Classics) and the Oscar-nominated **Minding The Gap** (Hulu). Halpern's score for **The Rider** was featured at #3 in Vulture/New York Magazine's 10 Best Movies Scores of The Year, described as "a plaintively lovely score" (LA Times) and "a beautiful score" (Screen Anarchy). Other notable scores include Sundance Grand Jury Prize winners **One Child Nation** (Amazon Studios) and **Rich Hill** (Orchard), the Emmy and Peabody Award-winning **Marina Abramovic: The Artist Is Present** (HBO Films), and the Oscar-shortlisted films **Hooligan Sparrow** and **THE WITNESS**. He was nominated for a HOLLYWOOD MUSIC IN MEDIA AWARD for Best Original Song for "Calling to Me" from **One Percent More Humid** (Sony Pictures / starring Julia Garner). Next up: revenge thriller **Catch The Fair One**.

CREDITS

HBO Documentary Films presents

a Motto Pictures, Little Horse Crossing The River & Little Lantern Company production

A film by Nanfu Wang

IN THE SAME BREATH

Directed and Produced by
Nanfu Wang

Produced by
Jialing Zhang

Produced by
Julie Goldman
Christopher Clements
Carolyn Hepburn

For HBO Box Office
Executive Producers
Nancy Abraham
Lisa Heller

Senior Producer
Sara Rodriguez

Edited by
Nanfu Wang
Michael Shade

Music by
Nathan Halpern

Cinematographers (China)

Matt Yu
Michelle Gao
Anonymous D
Anonymous K
R.C. Song
K. Yang

Cinematographers (US)

Jarred Alterman
Yuanchen Liu
Tom Bergmann
Martina Radwan
Michael Shade
Peter Alton

Rex Miller
Sam Rong
Gil de la Rosa
Paul Szynol

Field Producers
Emma Fidel
Li Shen
Anonymous D
Anonymous Y

Production Assistants (China)
Sa Sa
Q. Pei
Anonymous Z
Anonymous S

Additional Camera
Long Li
Yue Wu
Li Shen
Beimeng Fu

Drone Photography by
Anonymous D
Anonymous Z
K. Yang
R.C. Song
Michael Shade

Sound Recordists
Mark Barroso
Adrian Menudo Crissy

Assistant Editor
Siyi Chen

Editing Consultants
Peter Lucas
Alex O'Flinn
Carla Gutierrez
Carol Dysinger
Kirsten Johnson
Don Bernier

Post Production Supervisor
Caitlin Tartaro

Post Production Assistants
Yiwei Chen
Chenhui Lin

Valerie Chen
Keliang Li
Yuru Zhu

Additional Research Assistants
Mingyan Xu
Ziyu Wu

Additional Production Assistant
Mustafa Mirza

Title and Motion Design
Blue Spill

Head of Design
Allison Brownmoore

Flame Artist
Anthony Brownmoore

Designers
Joe Nowacki
Kevin Smy
Linda Scerpella

Post Production
Lucy Beavis
James Edwards

Digital Intermediate Colorist
Will Cox

Digital Intermediate Online Editor
Kevin Caby

Digital Intermediate Producer
Kate C. Albers

Digital Intermediate Manager
Drew Kilgore

Digital Intermediate Technical Supervisor
Sandy Patch

Digital Intermediate Executive Producer
Will Cox

Post Production Services
Final Frame

Sound Design & Re-Recording Mixer

Ron Bochar

Sound Editors
Alexa Zimmerman
Allan Zaleski

Assistant Sound Editor
Sarah Streit

Post Production Sound
C5, Inc.

For Motto Pictures

Production Executive
Marissa Ericson

Production Associates
Daniel Torres
Samantha Bloom

Production Assistant
Alejandra Leipen

Legal Counsel
Gray Schwartz LLP
Jonathan Gray, Esq.

Clearance Counsel
Donaldson + Callif, LLP
Lisa Callif, Esq.
Katy Alimohammadi, Esq.

Tax Services
Gary E. Schreiber, CPA
Moses and Schreiber, LLP

Accounting Services
Michelle A. Jacoby

Production Insurance
Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. Insurance Brokers of CA., Inc.

End Titles made with
ENDCRAWL

Translations & Transcripts
Siyi Chen
Tzu-Wen Cheng
Kevin Lawrence
Liuyu Ivy Chen

Weiwei Niu
Maria Florencia Smith
Anonymous Y
Yuru Zhu
Jeff Wang
Production Intern
Weixin Zhuang

Archival Footage and Images Courtesy of
Wang Yuexi
Nie Dong
Peien Liu
Getty Images
K. Yang
Li La Li La Qing
Xuan Wang
Xuxiang Hou

Original Score by Nathan Halpern
Courtesy of Copticon Music (ASCAP)
Violin, Viola and Cello performed by Robert Pycior

Featuring
Runzhen Chen
Peien Liu
Mingxing Tao
Wenbing Tao
Yingyun Ding
Yawen Wang
Li Zhou Family
The Wusinski Family
Diana Torres
Adam Witt
Dawn Kulach
Nicole Warring

Special Thanks
Jenny Adames
Amsterdam Memorial Chapel
John Bozga
Steven Bozga
Amber Brown
Qian Cao
Lisa Chanoff
Lori Cheatle
Chaoyi Chen
Bonni Cohen
Jinlong Chu
John Culleton
Xuechen Gao
Megan Gelstein

The George Hotel
Matthew Heineman
Lynn Jiang
Huiying Jin
Simon Kilmurry
Alison Klayman
Alex Lee
Canfu Li
Silian Li
Xiaoling Li
Carrie Lozano
Oliver Noble
Marcia Rock
Shifu Ruan
Cecilia Rubino
Jim Shade
Marsha Shade
Manqing Shang
Yi Su
Douglas Trumbull
Julia Trumbull
Lily Sage Weinrieb
Chu Yang
Zhanqing Yang
Mengchen Zhang

This film was made possible with the support of
Catapult Film Fund
International Documentary Association Enterprise Documentary Fund and the Jonathan Logan
Family Foundation

THIS FILM IS DEDICATED TO THE VICTIMS OF COVID-19

IN THE SAME BREATH

Copyright © 2021 Home Box Office, Inc. All Rights Reserved. First publication of this motion picture (sound recording and film): United States of America 2021. Home Box Office, Inc. is the owner of the copyright in this motion picture. This motion picture is protected by the copyright laws of the United States of America and other countries. Any unauthorized duplication, copying or use of all or part of this motion picture may result in civil liability and/or criminal prosecution in accordance with applicable laws.

Little Lantern Company Logo

Little Horse Crossing The River Logo

Motto Pictures Logo