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Sundance Deals are Underway

Posted Jan 18th 2007 4:08PM by [Jette Kernion](#)

Filed under: [Independent](#), [Deals](#), [Sundance](#), [Distribution](#), [Cinematical Indie](#)

This year's Sundance Film Festival has barely started and already I'm writing the first of what I expect to be a number of news items about distribution deals taking place during or related to the festival. Distribution deals with studios and other major players have become a big part of what Sundance is all about, like it or not ... for many indie films, this is their best chance of finding theatrical, DVD and/or TV distribution for their features and documentaries. The following documentaries are now among the lucky ones:



- The Sundance Channel [bought the television rights](#) to the six-hour film [Flying: Confessions of a Free Woman](#), which will premiere in North America during the festival. The length of the film makes it ideal for television, and Sundance Channel intends to air it as a six-part miniseries. The autobiographical documentary was directed by [Jennifer Fox](#), whose previous film, the ten-hour *An American Love Story*, also premiered at Sundance back in 1999.
- A&E IndieFilms [bought the North American television rights](#) for the documentary [My Kid Could Paint That](#), which will have its world premiere at Sundance this year. The film is about four-year-old painter Marla Olmstead, whose artwork has become internationally known, and is directed by [Amir Bar-Lev](#). The deal is unusual in that it makes A&E IndieFilms [an equity partner](#) for potential theatrical distribution, which of course they hope to secure during the festival.
- Atopia [acquired the North American distribution rights](#) to the documentary [The Short Life of Jose Antonio Gutierrez](#), which debuted at Sundance in 2006. German director [Heidi Specogna](#) filmed this look at the first American soldier to be killed in Iraq in 2003. Atopia is a production and distribution company based in Montreal; recent releases include the French-language Canadian features *On the Trail of Igor Rizzi* and *Missing Victor Pellerin*. Atopia intends to release *The Short Life of Jose Antonio Gutierrez* in U.S. and Canadian theaters this March, followed by a summertime DVD release.

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