

***The Last Laugh* Premieres on *Independent Lens* Monday, April 24, 2017 on PBS**

About the Filmmakers



Credit: Anne Etheridge

Ferne Pearlstein (Director, Writer, Producer) is an American filmmaker based in New York City whose work has won numerous awards and been screened and broadcast worldwide. Pearlstein holds post-graduate degrees in documentary film and photography from Stanford University and the International Center of Photography. In 2003, Pearlstein's feature documentary *Sumo East and West* — which she directed, produced, photographed, and edited — premiered at the Tribeca, Los Angeles, and Melbourne International Film Festivals, and was shown nationwide on *Independent Lens*. Other credits as director include *Dita and the Family Business* (PBS) with Josh Taylor, and three short films, including her debut *Raising Nicholas*, which premiered at the 2003 Sundance and San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Film Festivals.

As a director of photography with dozens of films to her credit, Pearlstein is one of only a handful of female cinematographers featured in Kodak's long-running "On Film" ad campaign in the pages of *American Cinematographer* magazine. In 2004 she won the Excellence in Cinematography Prize at the Sundance Film Festival for her work on *Imelda*, a feature documentary about Imelda Marcos, which followed the former First Lady of the Philippines during her campaign for the presidency. Committed to shooting on film, she has shot documentaries in places as diverse as Haiti, Uganda, and Guyana, and snuck her 16mm camera from the Karen refugee camps of Thailand across the border to film in the rebel bases of the Karen Liberation Army in Burma. Among her other credits as cinematographer are: Academy Award® winner Alex Gibney's segment of *Freakonomics* (Tribeca 2010); DP on three-time Academy Award nominee Deborah Dickson's *Ruthie and Connie* (HBO); and DP on *The Voice of the Prophet* (Sundance, 2002) where she met her longtime collaborator and husband Robert Edwards.

The Last Laugh had its world premiere at the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival and its international premiere at HotDocs 2016 and has gone on to play at dozens of festivals including the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, BFI London Film Festival, Michael Moore's Traverse City Film Festival, Jerusalem Film Festival, Rome Film Festival, Aspen FilmFest and Chicago International Film Festival.

Robert Edwards (Writer/Producer) is a writer/director based in New York. His most recent film is *One More Time (aka When I Live My Life Over Again)*, starring Christopher Walken and Amber Heard, which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2015. A graduate of Stanford University's Master's Program in Documentary Film, Edwards won a 2001 Nicholl Fellowship in Screenwriting from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for his first script, *Land of the Blind*, which

in 2006 became his directorial debut, starring Ralph Fiennes and Donald Sutherland. As a screenwriter, he has written scripts for directors including Bennett Miller, Mark Romanek, and Mike Newell, and for producers Plan B, John Davis, and HBO. He is currently at work on a seven-part miniseries about the Flying Tigers for executive producer John Woo and collaborating on a new script with director Ray Tintori. For his own next film, Edwards is developing *The Bomb in My Garden*, based on his adaptation of the memoir of the chief scientist in Saddam Hussein's uranium enrichment program, with Johnny Depp's production company Infinitum Nihil.

Amy Hobby (Producer) is an Academy Award®-nominated producer of both scripted and documentary films. Her most recent film, *What Happened, Miss Simone?*, was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary, a Grammy, and a Peabody Award and won the Emmy for Outstanding Documentary. In a career spanning more than 20 years, Hobby has had 13 films premiere at the Sundance Film Festival including *Nadja* (produced with David Lynch), *Sunday* (Sundance Grand Jury Prize), *Hamlet* starring Ethan Hawke, Sam Shepard and Bill Murray, and *Secretary* (another Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner) starring Maggie Gyllenhaal, who was nominated for a Golden Globe for her role. Hobby's documentary films include *And Everything Is Going Fine* (IFC) directed by Steven Soderbergh, *Shepard & Dark* (official selection Cannes Film Festival) and *Love, Marilyn* (HBO) directed by Liz Garbus, with whom she collaborated again on *What Happened, Miss Simone?* (Netflix). In 2013 she and partner Anne Hubbell co-founded Tangerine Entertainment which produces and builds community for films directed by women. *The Last Laugh* is the only non-scripted film Tangerine has chosen to produce. Hobby is the current Vice President of Artists Programs at the Tribeca Film Institute.

###