

Sheffield
Doc/Fest

MeetMarket Report 2006–2012



Produced by

Broadcast

MeetMarket: the first seven years

→ Welcome



We're delighted to be releasing this report marking the first seven years of MeetMarket. Since 2006, our pitching initiative has featured 369 projects, raising more than £27m for documentary and digital projects from 41 countries. In many cases, these meetings would never have happened without MeetMarket and the films may never have been made – and it is almost impossible to measure the wider impacts of MeetMarket in keeping documentary alive and its makers thriving.

MeetMarket is now one of the major European markets for documentary and cross-platform media. Over two days

in Sheffield, there'll be 1,300 individually matchmade meetings happening, all arranged in advance based around the meeting preferences of both buyers and producers.

This report celebrates just a few of the success stories since 2006. We first saw them as raw projects being pitched and they're now internationally recognised factual films, winning awards and being seen by large audiences.

The documentary industry is a tough place to survive. We are proud to be making a difference and helping film-makers get amazing and important stories made and onto screens around the world as a result of doing their fundraising at Sheffield Doc/Fest. We're very excited about creating more of these stories in the next seven years, and we hope you'll be a part of it. ■

Heather Croall, festival director

£27m
Money MeetMarket has raised for projects since 2006

MM
Factfile

Contents

What is MeetMarket?	4
↓ Case Studies	
Planet Of Snail	6
Ping Pong	8
Rainmakers	10
Give Up Tomorrow	12
Autumn Gold	14
5 Broken Cameras	17

MeetMarket

Supported by



audio
network

gettyimages®

Principal sponsors & funders



Photo credits

Sheffield Doc/Fest photography:
©Jacqui Bellamy, Pixelwitch
Pictures 2012; ©Nynke Wierda
2012; ©Jude Calvert-Toulmin
2012. All rights reserved.

What is MeetMarket?

→ Introduction

Sheffield 13-14 June 2013

Apply here (opens 7 Jan) www.sheffdocfest.com/view/meetmarket

MeeMarket is one of the top European documentary hubs for networking and deal-making, viewed by the 2,600 industry delegates at Sheffield Doc/Fest and many thousands in its extended network as one of the key places to meet with international documentary professionals and explore the international market for cutting-edge documentary and factual media.

Producers and directors of all levels of experience emphasise the value of the immediate feedback on their projects from buyers from around the world – for example, where the blindspots are, where interest is lost, and what is commanding special attention. In addition, comments and advice from these decision-makers – and other producers – have helped shape the production, distribution, exhibition, marketing and outreach strategies of many projects brought to market.

MeetMarket features a wide array of decision-makers and producers, and this includes those devising new strategies for the funding and distribution of factual projects. Some will help devise, for example, a programme of funding

parties, non-theatrical tours, marketing campaigns, social networking and deployment of digital technology that is a long way from the 'straight' linear broadcast commissioning process.

Increasingly, those pitching projects at MeetMarket are being encouraged to talk about their conception of their audience. Many of the 'new' decision-makers operate in this space of facilitating close connections with audiences, and democratising the relationship between producer and consumer of factual media.

MeetMarket attempts to generate self-sufficiency in documentary-makers, giving them the skills and confidence to push boundaries creatively and explore new and alternative funding models. The case studies on the following pages demonstrate exactly that. ■

To attend as a funder or mentor email
Charlie Phillips at:
charlie@sidf.co.uk

For sponsorship opportunities email:
Campbell Glennie at:
campbell@sidf.co.uk

“Producers of all levels of experience emphasise the value of immediate feedback on projects from buyers from around the world”



The format

MeetMarket selects projects based on a system of online submissions. Project representatives have three months between January and late March to upload information about their factual media project to a protected area of the Sheffield Doc/Fest website.

A dedicated assessment committee looks for the most innovative, creative and original documentary projects with international potential. Around 500 projects apply each year.

Online matchmaking takes place throughout May. Preferences from both sides are carefully matched up and a schedule of meetings is created three weeks ahead of the festival and sent to all participants. More than 1,000 meetings are scheduled.

One-to-one meetings then take place in the Hubs building in Sheffield over the course of two days. Each project has an average of 16-20 meetings over the two days.

Initial 15-minute meetings provide an opportunity for a creative and commercial conversation. Investment on the spot does happen, but the likely positive outcome for a project is a strong commitment to invest funds after seeing additional visual and budgetary materials. The MeetMarket application and



meeting process deliberately does not intervene substantially in budgetary information, on the understanding that this will be discussed in detail in follow-up meetings.

Reflecting demand

The MeetMarket format strives to reflect the demands of the often specialised, diverse and personalised marketplace, and the necessities of developing projects for the international market.

The submission requirements drive the producers to distil their projects down to their essence, both in terms of story and style. This means decision-makers can efficiently browse through the projects, delving into detail when they find projects of relevance to their particular brief and slot requirements. This is especially useful for speciality channels and slots, stressing the MeetMarket's added value for niche and specialist factual genres.

Planet Of Snail

→ Case Study

South Korea

MeetMarket 2009

Min-Chul and his director Seung-Jun Yi came to MeetMarket having not pitched at an international pitching event before. The MeetMarket assessors spotted something special in this unknown project from South Korea, with its allusive title and abstract swimming clip. We knew it would become a beautiful, poetic documentary – there was just something without precedent about it.

The final film surpassed our already high expectations, weaving a spell via the life of Young-Chan, a man without sight or hearing, but making up for it with a wonderful heart, captured by his wife, Soon-Ho. This couple, an instant documentary classic of a pair, enlighten the world of Young-Chan, a self-confessed ‘snail’ who experiences the world entirely by touch.

“The final film surpassed our expectations, weaving a spell via the life of Young-Chan, a man without sight or hearing but with a wonderful heart”

MeetMarket is the ideal format for a rookie project like this, especially one of subtle poetry that needs further explanation via personal meetings rather than a one-size-fits-all public presentation. Min-Chul and Seung-Jun took 14 meetings at MeetMarket, including one with Iikka Vehklahti of

YLE, who became a supporter and international advocate of the project. The *Planet Of Snail* team then went on to receive 2010 grants from the Sundance Documentary Film Programme and Cinereach Documentary Grants, as well as participating in Eurodoc 2010 and signing up with prominent sales agent Cat Le Clef.

Planet Of Snail won the Feature Length Documentary Award at IDFA in 2011 and was selected for the World Documentary Feature competition at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2012, as well as screening at Sheffield Doc/Fest 2012. We’re proud to have set this remarkable film on its journey. ■

MM
Factfile

35

Number of countries
represented with
buyers at MM
since 2006

Min-Chul Kim
Producer, Minch&Films



“2011 IDFA winner *Planet Of Snail* started its journey at Sheffield Doc/Fest. MeetMarket recognised the potential of a cute little project by an unknown team from Asia and offered me an opportunity to learn so much about the international documentary market and trends, and to meet many of my future funders, co-producers and creative talents. MeetMarket is definitely a place for the trend-setters in the documentary world. I can’t wait for the ever-evolving MeetMarket and the famous roller disco with vodka and oysters.”



PLANET OF SNAIL





Ping Pong

→ Case Study

UK

MeetMarket 2010

In *Ping Pong*, pensioners from across the planet compete in the World

over-80s Table Tennis Championships in Inner Mongolia. Eight players with 703 years between them guide us through the extraordinary world of veteran sport. With intimate and candid portraits of life back home, *Ping Pong* explores the hope, regret and immediacy of growing old.

Young UK documentary-makers Hugh and Anson Hartford took their first major step into the international documentary market with *Ping Pong*, a life-affirming feature that we knew would appeal across borders. The team at Banyak had applied once before to MeetMarket, but on this repeat

application we noticed a dramatic change in their application material, especially the teaser clip, which buzzed with wit and a surprising amount of drama and speed for a one-minute clip about elderly sport.

Knowing that ping pong was growing rapidly as a trendy urban sport, we were sure there would be a big audience for this film and that decision-makers would pick up on that.

Hugh and Anson took 21 meetings at MeetMarket, covering broadcasters across Western and Eastern Europe, the US, Japan and Israel. They also met with Picturehouse Cinemas and have gone on to organise their own theatrical tour of Picturehouses, distributed by their backers at the Channel 4 Britdoc Foundation. ■

MM
Factfile

369

Number of projects
pitched at
MeetMarket
since 2006

2,411

Total number of
applications since
2006

Hugh Hartford
Banyak Films



"MeetMarket 2010 was essential to us for getting *Ping Pong* made. We had more than 20 formal meetings arranged and countless informal meetings with commissioners, foundations and distributors. Actual cash came from three pre-sales to European and North American broadcasters, which meant we could go into the next stage of production. But adding to this, the list of feature doc decision-makers with whom we have now had face-to-face contact is pretty comprehensive and, now that the film is finished, this is playing an important part in getting it out there."

"Knowing that ping pong was growing rapidly as a trendy urban sport, we were sure there would be a big audience for this film"

Rainmakers

→ Case Study

The Netherlands

MeetMarket 2008

An investigative documentary about the decline of China's environment, *Rainmakers* is told from the perspective of four civil activists who refuse to accept the ongoing ecological destruction of their homeland.

On the border of heroism and stubbornness, four diverse and remarkable Chinese civilians explain why they have the courage to fight the petty and aggressive local authorities, against all the odds. In a film that takes the natural cycle of water as its visual framework, the polluted air of Beijing and Changsha, the filthy water of the Qiantang river and the advancing sand of the Tengger desert serve as symbols for an environmental battle with many losers and occasionally some winners.

Director Floris-Jan van Luyn and producers Bruno Felix and Femke Wolting took 12 meetings at MeetMarket 2008, with decision-makers from Austria, the UK, the US, Sweden and Canada.

We were attracted by the combination of an urgent environ-

mental story and a cautionary tale of the rising Chinese economy.

Going beyond the usual narrative of an 'environmental' documentary, *Rainmakers* is a complex story where not all the heroes and villains are unambiguous characters. We could see

instantly from the application that the characterisation of the water cycle, and the unavoidable and yet often surprising presence of heavy rain, were forces that would prove bigger than any human element. A

combination of pop science and beautiful cinematography, right from application stage, the film is possessed of quiet wit as well as social importance, and in its own way is subtly feminist as well. ■

Rainmakers screened at Doc/Fest 2010, winning the Green Award, won Best Science Doc at multiple world festivals and was a big hit for ZDF, VPRO and other broadcasters.

MM
Factfile

239

Total number of buyers who attended the 2012 MeetMarket

Femke Wolting
Submarine

"The MeetMarket was very helpful for our film *Rainmakers*. We connected with a number of broadcasters, such as SVT and NRK. We already had ZDF/ARTE and VPRO on board, but with the pre-sales we did at Sheffield, we could close the financing.

We are big fans of the MeetMarket because important financiers, producers, broadcasters, funds and sales agents/distributors are present, and the festival is very good in setting up meetings and making sure they happen. The market is also innovative in inviting transmedia documentary projects and finding new kinds of financiers. It is very useful to meet lots of people in a short period."

"The characterisation of the water cycle, and the unavoidable presence of heavy rain, were forces that would prove bigger than any human element"



RAINMAKERS

Give Up Tomorrow

→ Case Study

USA

MeetMarket 2009

Six years in the making, *Give Up Tomorrow* is the story of a major injustice: the accusation that Paco Larrañaga committed two murders on the Philippine island of Cebu, despite being surrounded by dozens of reliable witnesses many miles away at the time. Reflecting schisms of race, class and political power at the core of the Philippines' tumultuous democracy, clashing families, institutions and individuals face off to convict or free Paco.

Their irreconcilable versions of reality and justice play out in a case that ends a country's use of capital punishment, yet fails to free an innocent man. In a way that is both specific to the Philippines and disquietingly universal, the film exposes a Kafkaesque extravaganza populated by flamboyantly corrupt public officials, drug dealers, cops on the take, and journalists in thrall to and in lonely stance against, a frenzied legal and media circus.

It is also an intimate family drama focused on the near mythic struggle of two angry and sorrowful mothers who

have dedicated more than a decade to executing or saving one young man.

The film-makers, Marty Syjuco and Michael Collins, took 22 meetings over the two days, such was the appeal of their story to the international documentary

MM
Factfile

£117m

Total budgets of MM projects since 2006

market. They pitched to commissioning editors from Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK, Sweden, the US and Germany, plus distributors, sales agents, film funds and private investors, all of whom

gave a rave response to their pitch. The film subsequently premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2011, where it won both the Audience Award and the Special Jury Prize for Best New Documentary Director, before also winning the Audience Award at Sheffield Doc/Fest 2011.

The film-makers' intentions were primarily about publicising the case and winning justice for Paco, and this fight is ongoing. We were excited to read about their outreach and impact plan in their MeetMarket application and have continued to support their campaigning through the festival's social networks. ■



"The film exposes a Kafkaesque extravaganza populated by corrupt officials, drug dealers, cops on the take and a frenzied legal and media circus"

GIVE UP TOMORROW

Thoughtful Robot MeetMarket Results

- Met with Mette Hoffmann Meyer; secured a DR pre-sale
- Met with Axel Arno, which led eventually to an acquisition deal and broadcast on SVT
- Met with Nathalie Windhorst and an acquisition deal is pending with VPRO
- Met with Andrew Mer and currently negotiating VoD distribution deal with Snag Films
- Met with Caitlin Boyle of Film Sprout; now consulting with her on outreach campaign



Marty Syjuco Thoughtful Robot

The meetings we had during MeetMarket in 2009 were meaningful, intimate and well organised, and the commissioning editors were warm, approachable and receptive. We did an immediate pre-sale with Mette Hoffman Meyer of DR TV as a direct result of our meeting at Sheffield, and made many more connections and deals.

We participated in a fantastic pitch training workshop and were able to practice our pitch over and over again.

Our experience at MeetMarket gave us the confidence to participate in other pitch markets such as the IDFA Forum, Good Pitch and IFFP Independent Film Week. We came full circle when we returned to Sheffield two years later to screen our film and won the Audience Award.

When we participated in MeetMarket, we had no idea how precious 15 minutes could be. We had over 20 one-on-one meetings with commissioning editors, sales agents and distributors, with astonishing results.

Give Up Tomorrow was our first feature film, and the access we had to the international doc community at MeetMarket was unparalleled.

Autumn Gold

→ Case Study

Germany MeetMarket 2008

The producers of *Autumn Gold* held eight meetings at Meet

Market 2008, with a variety of commissioning editors and other documentary decision-makers.

The film tells the life-affirming story of five athletes preparing for the Track and Field World Championships. Their toughest challenge is their age: these potential world champions are all between 80 and 100 years old.

With ambition and a good portion of humour, they accept the task. On the finishing line of their life, they seek their ultimate challenge one more time and give

their best on the way to a gold medal in Finland. True to the motto: "We can rest after death."

It is a competition against age and other hurdles of life. They want to stand on the podium for one last time. Who will make it to Finland? Who will retire in dignity? Who will fight to the bitter end? A story of winning and losing, of setbacks and triumphs. *Autumn Gold* is a homage to how life can be: not smooth and wrinkle-free but full of humour and determination. ■

The film was a winner at Hot Docs and Guangzhou film festivals.



MM
Factfile

672

Total number of film-makers who have pitched at MM

Split of MM Attendees 2012

- Distributors and sales agents **57 (15.5%)**
- Commissioners, buyers, financiers, investors and film funds **149 (40.7%)**
- Producers and executive producers **91 (24.9%)**
- Directors, film-makers and creatives **41 (11.2%)**
- Crowdfunding platforms, mentors, advisers and consultants **28 (7.7%)**



"A story of winning and losing, of setbacks and triumphs. *Autumn Gold* is a homage to how life can be"



AUTUMN GOLD

Beetz Brothers Producers

MeetMarket is one of the most important meeting points for creative documentary-makers.

We met Frank Poulsen, director of *Blood In The Mobile*, as well as a lot of broadcasters – which jumped on our award-winning documentary straight away. It is a good place to meet people and do business at the same time.

MeetMarket Awards

→ MeetMarket projects have won awards at Sundance, Tribeca, IDFA, Hot Docs and Sheffield Doc/Fest

5 Broken Cameras

→ Case Study

Palestine, Israel, France

MeetMarket 2010

Director Emad Bornat and producer Guy Davidi pitched this remarkable film about everyday non-violent resistance through film-making in November 2010. It has since gone on to win the IDFA Special Jury Award in 2011 and the World Cinema Directing Award at Sundance and Sheffield Doc/Fest Audience Award in 2012.

It has also screened at the 2012 Berlinale, HotDocs and many other international film festivals.

When his son Gibreel is born, Emad, a Palestinian villager, gets

his first camera. In his village, Bil'in, a separation barrier is being built on the villagers' land, which they begin to resist. Over the years, Emad films the struggle led by two of his friends while also filming his son growing up. Very soon this struggle affects his life. Daily arrests and night raids scare his family. His friends, brothers and even Emad are shot or arrested. One camera after another is shot or smashed. And with each camera, a part of Emad's story unfolds.

Marketplace director Charlie Phillips saw the project pitched

Guy Davidi
Guy DVD Film

MeetMarket was a great opportunity for us. Pitching in intimate roundtable sessions was a big comfort. It reduces tension and competitiveness and makes the whole thing much more relaxed and fun. We have created important connections and in one case it led directly to an investment.





at the Israeli Co-Pro Market in Tel Aviv in 2010 and knew instantly that the story's combination of politics and cinematic metaphor would resonate with international financiers.

The project team took 16 meetings at MeetMarket, with a

particularly successful meeting with WorldView leading to a £10,000 grant in their first cycle for international documentaries. We're delighted that we played a part in bringing to life a documentary that can promote understanding and change in a troubled region. ■

"During the struggle in Bil'in, one camera after another is shot or smashed. And with each camera, a part of Emad's story unfolds"

Total MM Deals Since 2006

£27.2m comprising:

- 2012 £7m (projected)
- 2011 £6.5m
- 2010 £5.9m
- 2009 £3.2m
- 2008 £2.8m
- 2007 £1.3m
- 2006 £500,000