FAMOUS FESTIVALS

Sundance

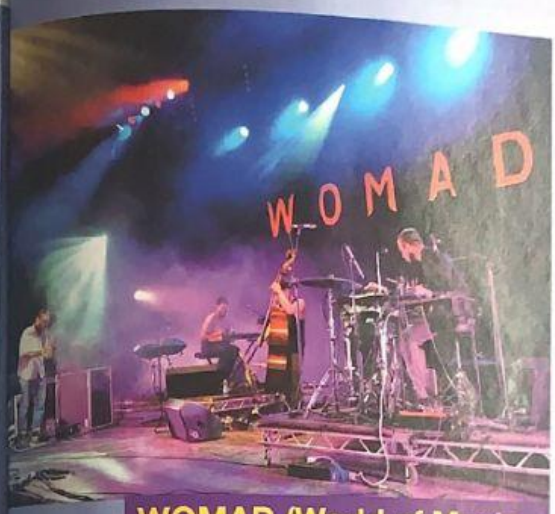
What have Steven Soderbergh (*Ocean's Eleven*) and Quentin Tarantino (*Pulp Fiction*) got in common? Well, they're both world-famous directors, but they're also independent film-makers who got their 'big break' at the *Sundance Film Festival*.

When the film festival first started in 1978, its aim was to attract tourists to Utah, a little-known state in Midwest America. Back then, the festival was called *The Utah Film Festival* and it showed mostly retrospectives of old films. It wasn't a popular event and as a result made little money. Then, in 1981, Hollywood star Robert Redford got involved and founded the *Sundance Institute*. The purpose of the festival changed and a competition for independent film-makers became the main focus. Redford wanted to bring exciting new films, made outside the Hollywood system, to a wider audience.

During the 1980s and 1990s the event grew in size and film studios became interested. Unfortunately, celebrity actors and paparazzi started to appear on the scene, too. Big companies began paying a few of the celebrities to endorse products that had nothing to do with film, taking attention away from the independent directors. Festival organizers responded with a *Focus on Film* campaign, urging people to remember the real purpose of *Sundance*. 'It was never intended to be commercial. It was intended to be a place of discovery,' said Redford. Luckily, the campaign worked and today most of the 50,000 festival-goers come to see the new directors, rather than famous film stars.

Today, *Sundance* is one of the most eagerly-awaited film festivals in America. The competition includes feature-length films, short films, thought-provoking documentaries and drama, but there are few famous names, because most entries are from first-time directors. Some of these films may be controversial and cutting-edge, but they all tell a good story. 'Storytellers broaden our minds,' says Robert Redford. 'They engage, provoke, inspire, and ultimately, connect us.' And it's that inspiration that keeps people going to *Sundance*, year after year.





WOMAD (World of Music, Arts & Dance)

In 1982, the world was a very different place. Bands like *The Rolling Stones* or *Aerosmith* dominated the music scene, and people didn't know much about traditional musicians from other cultures. No one had heard of the *Drummers of Burundi* or Youssou N'Dour from Senegal, but then *WOMAD* came along and things started to change. These artists now had an international stage where they could show off their talent ... and their culture.

WOMAD was originally the vision of a British rock star called Peter Gabriel, who wanted to bring traditional music to the world. As well as a festival, he founded a record label called *Real World*, so artists could reach audiences in other countries.

In 1982, when the first *WOMAD* took place in England, many of the performers were unknown, but the festival was still a huge success. 'Music is a universal language that brings people together,' said Gabriel later, 'and each festival allows many different audiences to gain an insight into cultures other than their own.' That was the purpose of *WOMAD* – it championed diversity and difference, while at the same time celebrating everyone's common humanity. People were united through music.

Since then, *WOMAD* has held more than 160 festivals in 27 different countries. Most of the festivals are open-air events with a little of everything – live music, ethnic markets with some traditional food and artefacts, and family-oriented zones with a few workshops teaching dance, music and art. *WOMADelaide* in Australia is a good example. It's the most talked-about music festival in the country and brings together some of the best traditional artists in the world. *WOMADelaide* proves that the purpose of the festival is still going strong. 'If the world was just like a big version of *WOMADelaide*,' commented one performer, 'it would be a better place.'

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2 Read the article again and choose the correct answers.

1 The main purpose of *The Utah Film Festival* was to
   a attract Hollywood stars.
   b show popular Hollywood films.
   c encourage people to visit Utah.
   d show films by new film makers.

2 The main purpose of *The Sundance Festival* is to
   a make money for big companies.
   b attract celebrity endorsements.
   c support and encourage independent film-makers.
   d screen popular, well-known films.

3 People mainly go back to the festival every year because
   a they might see a famous person.
   b they enjoy the stories that the film-makers tell.
   c they only want to watch 'classic' movies.
   d they want to enter their own film.

4 WOMAD gives people the opportunity to
   a get to know music from their own culture.
   b listen to well-known bands.
   c enjoy traditional music from other countries.
   d record their own music.

5 Peter Gabriel created WOMAD in order to
   a teach people about other cultures and ways of life.
   b provide entertainment for families.
   c help unknown musicians make money.
   d find new musicians for a record label.

6 WOMAD festivals <u>don't</u> include
   a educational classes.
   b entertainment for children.
   c open-air cinema.
   d places to try new food.

LIVEWORKSHEETS