



# Tre Maison Dasan

Hello World Productions Presents  
In Association with Chicken and Egg Pictures,  
Shine Global, Sustainable Films and  
Pilgrim Media Group

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Directed and Produced by Denali Tiller

Produced by Rebecca Stern and Craig Pilligan

Executive Produced by Andrew Freiband  
and Patty Quillin

Co-Executive Produced by Andrea van Beuren

Co-produced by Susan MacLaury  
and Albie Hecht and Sarba Das

Edited by Carlos Rojas Felice

Cinematography by Jon Gourlay

Original Score by Gil Talmi

With music by Tre Janson, Dasan Lopes  
and Maison Teixeira

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TREMAISONDASAN.COM



94 MINUTES

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## LOG LINE

A Story of  
Boyhood  
Marked by  
the Criminal  
Justice System



## SYNOPSIS

*Tre Maison Dasan* is an intimate portrait of three boys growing up, each with a parent in prison. Told directly through the child's perspective, the film is an exploration of relationships and separation, masculinity, and coming of age in America when a parent is behind bars.

Tre, Maison and Dasan are three very different boys. Tre is a charismatic 13-year-old who hides his emotions behind a mask of tough talk and hard edges. Maison is a bright-eyed 11-year-old whose Autism presents itself through his ever-active mind and deep love for those around him. Dasan is a sensitive 6-year old with an incredible capacity for empathy and curiosity. Their parents are not incarcerated for the low-level offenses that have become well known in conversations around mass-incarceration, but their histories and relationships beg many questions about justice, and the rippling effects of a system at large.



PRODUCTION STILL — Dasan and his mother.



## PRAISE FOR “TRE MAISON DASAN”

“Potent, sometimes wrenchingly intimate...  
This feature directorial debut is an excellent non-fiction drama”

—[VARIETY MAGAZINE](#)

“Gripping... This picture opens our eyes to a social disruption that has been underexposed and that we all ignore at our peril”

—[THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER](#)

“I feel like you were telling my life. The film was perfect... It’s a must-see for everyone in prison, especially those who have children”

—[SAN QUENTIN NEWS](#)

“Nonfiction filmmaking doesn’t get much better than this.”

—[FILM FESTIVAL TODAY](#)



## OTHER PRESS

RISD Filmmaker Looks at Life for Children with  
Parents Behind Bars

—[PROVIDENCE JOURNAL](#)

*Tre Maison Dasan*: Three Boys Grow Up with  
Parents in Prison

—[MOTIF MAGAZINE, RI](#)

Review by Paul Parcellin

—[FILM THREAT](#)

Review by Jay Seaver

—[EFILM CRITIC](#)

Five Questions with Filmmaker Denali Tiller

—[NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS](#)

Film Spotlights Children of the Incarcerated

—[BROWN DAILY HERALD](#)



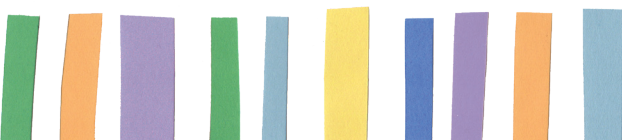


## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In 2014, I entered the Adult Correctional Facility in Cranston Rhode Island to observe the Saturday visiting hours between children and their fathers. A small boy in a crisp snap-back hat and matching Nike shirt caught my eye. He struck me as confident, a tough kid. But when the heavy metal door clanged open, and his father was standing there big in his khakis, the boy collapsed into his open arms and cried.

Tre, Maison and Dasan have driven me to question the criminal justice system through an important lens - one that is imperative to recognizing the rippling effects that mass-incarceration has on our communities. Enmeshed in this vast system are children struggling to identify themselves in a society that demonizes their parents, provides little support for their families and assumes "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree." These are disproportionately children of color and from lower-income families, a statistic that in turn affects the social and economic progress of communities already burdened by neglect, violence, and the legacy of white-supremacy. Beyond barriers of race and class, however, children's voices are most often silenced or spoken for. We so often we tell stories about children from a top down perspective, informed by what we (adults) "know" about their experiences and psychology, and consequently how their lives will unfold. As Tre, Maison and Dasan taught me about their worlds, I recognized that there was a desperate need for a film that allows children to speak for themselves - particularly children of color - to capture the power in their own emotional intelligence, and elevate their voices in a way that fully represents their lives as they experience them.

Tre Maison Dasan acknowledges that these children have their own agency and insights which should be valued and considered in systemic dialogue and designed interventions. There is intentionally no explicit call to action for an unfamiliar audience, and no specific agenda that might flatten their stories for an inevitably two-dimensional cause. Through a participatory, intimate and intuitive process, the audience is lead through the ups and downs of life itself, a process that is both riveting and personal but also values the complexity and nuance of these children's different experiences. The film has become more than just an exploration of the criminal justice system, but by extension also systems of masculinity, familial and institutional support systems, education, social and economic justice, mental health, and many more. Our intention, through a strategic and far-reaching impact campaign and continued research project, is to look beyond "the conversation" and towards specific ways that this work has created and can share knowledge around the systems that effect these boys and millions of other children. Not until children like Tre, Maison and Dasan can see and understand themselves to be important and necessary in the fabric of America can we be comfortable with the world we expect them to grow into.



PRODUCTION STILLS





PRODUCTION STILLS



## THE TEAM



### DENALI TILLER — DIRECTOR & PRODUCER

Tiller is an artist and filmmaker named one of 110 “filmmakers to watch” by Variety Magazine in 2015 for her short film, *Sons and Daughters of the Incarcerated* — which grew into her feature documentary, *Tre Maison Dasan*. She has worked with the US Agency for International Development, and is currently adjunct faculty at Rhode Island School of Design. Through her work, Denali is interested in empowering artists’ in systemic thinking, social justice and activism. She is most passionate about children and youth advocacy, and how we raise boys in America.



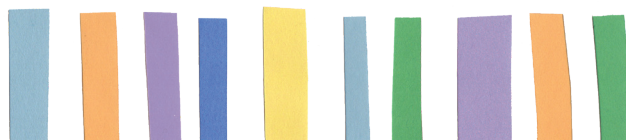
### REBECCA STERN — PRODUCER

Stern has worked for 6 years in documentary film. She is the Co-Producer of the film *NETIZENS* (Tribeca 2018), the Associate Producer of *the bomb*, an innovative installation and film experience which closed 2016 Tribeca Film Festival and opened 2017 Berlin, and the Director and Producer of the short film, *WELL GROOMED* (The Atlantic, Vimeo Staff Picks Premieres). Previously, Stern was the Production Coordinator for Academy Award nominated documentary *Cartel Land*, and managed the development and implementation of film campaigns with the leading impact firm, Picture Motion, including *Food Chains* (2016 BritDoc Impact Award). Rebecca lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.



### ANDREW FREIBAND — EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Freiband is a filmmaker, writer, artist, and teacher who has worked in feature films, documentary, and television for over 15 years. He co-produced and was director of photography on *I Learn America* which premiered at AFIDocs in 2013 and continues to tour. The film was also selected by the US State Department for its American Film Showcase, and by the New York City Dept of Education, which developed a viewing guide and now distributes the film to every school in New York City.





## THE TEAM



### CARLOS ROJAS FELICE — EDITOR

Rojas has been working in documentaries since 2008, when he assisted in *The Reckoning*, a film detailing the work of the International Criminal Court. In 2009 he was additional editor for *Abused: The Postville Raid*, and an assistant editor on *Reportero*, *Kingdom of Shadows*, *Miss Sharon Jones* and *Sembene*. He is an alumnus of the Sundance Documentary Edit and Story Lab as a contributing editor in 2013 and 2016.



### GIL TALMI — COMPOSER

Gil Talmi is a world-renowned EMMY nominated composer, producer and recording artist with a passion for socially conscious projects. Blending his traditional orchestral background with tasteful modular electronics and eclectic world music sensibilities, Talmi has created a signature sound that can be heard in many award winning productions worldwide. Gil has scored the Peabody Award winning documentaries *Between The Folds* (PBS Independent Lens), *Who Killed Chea Vichea?* (PBS) and *New Year Baby* (PBS Independent Lens). Some of Gil's most recent work includes the opening theme to CBS News: *50 Years of 60 Minutes*, *Chavela* (Aubin Pictures), and *Straight / Curve* (Epix).



### JON GOURLAY —

#### DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY & PRODUCER

Jon as a documentary cinematographer has worked around the world exploring a diverse range of stories. *Tre Maison Dasan* is his second collaboration with Denali having worked together on her thesis film while at Rhode Island School of Design. He has also worked as cinematographer for renowned filmmaker Marian Marzyński on his 2016 film *Do You Speak Chopin?* and has shot numerous projects for acclaimed photographer Henry Horenstein as well as other directors including Sheida Soleimani and James Rutenbeck.

### SUSTAINABLE FILMS — CO-PRODUCER

Sustainable Films is a privately run company that invests equity into non-fiction projects. They actively look to connect with filmmakers who are telling powerful stories and raising awareness about critical issues, with the goal is to support projects that will have a profound impact on the audiences that see them, films that will inspire social change and environmental action on a global level.

sustainablefilms



#### **PILGRIM MEDIA GROUP — CO-PRODUCER**

Pilgrim Media Group, a Lionsgate Company, is among the industry's largest and most prolific studios, having produced award-winning content for more than 25 years. While lauded for creating unscripted content for top distribution platforms including Netflix, National Geographic, ABC, CBS, Discovery, History, Lifetime, OWN, TLC and over a dozen other networks, Pilgrim also has deep roots in scripted, digital and documentary features.



#### **SHINE GLOBAL, INC. — CO-PRODUCER**

Shine Global is a non-profit media company which produces inspiring films and compelling content about at-risk children. Through tailored distribution and outreach, they connect with audiences in communities, classrooms, museums, and on capitol hill as part of a powerful engagement campaign to encourage social change.



CHICKEN & EGG  
PICTURES

#### **CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES — CO-PRODUCER**

Chicken & Egg Pictures supports women nonfiction filmmakers whose artful and innovative storytelling catalyzes social change. They envision a world in which women filmmakers, representing a range of experiences and backgrounds, are fully supported to realize their artistic goals, build sustainable careers, and achieve parity in all areas of the film industry.





## SELECTED QUOTES

FROM TRE JANSON



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Tre Maison Dasan

People know me as a bad kid,  
but some people know me as a  
good kid...I'm both.

—TRE, 1:19:05

I need to get my mind right,  
'cause if not I'm going to be locked  
up, just like my dad.

—TRE'S SONG, 52:31

[It's my fault] because  
maybe he thought I didn't love  
him, or cared for him.

—TRE, 50:39





## SELECTED QUOTES

FROM MAISON TEIXEIRA

I see my dad for 300 hours a year...  
so I see my dad for, like, 1/11th  
of the time I see my Nana.

—MAISON, 13:18

The system does not have any feelings,  
it just knows what it is told to do.

—MAISON, 1:06:15

I never want you to wear a khaki  
shirt again, once you're out of here...  
I'll tell you to take it off,  
and put something else on!

—MAISON, 1:05:50





## SELECTED QUOTES

FROM DASAN LOPES

But what did you do? What  
wrong thing did you do?

—DASAN, 1:36

I am a little bit sad.

—DASAN, 44:29

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Tre Maison Dasan





## SELECTED QUOTES

FROM TRE'S FATHER

14

Tre Maison Dasan



I know you're hurting right now.  
This is going to pass.

—TRE'S FATHER, 5:22

It's not normal for a father and son  
to be sitting in here comparing  
house arrest stories. We need new  
memories...we need some fishing!

—TRE'S FATHER, 31:29





## SELECTED QUOTES

FROM MAISON'S FATHER

Do you think everyone involved  
becomes a victim?

—MAISON'S FATHER, 1:07:15

I don't want you to convince yourself  
that I'm here, and I didn't do anything.

—MAISON'S FATHER, 29:47

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Tre Maison Dasan





## SELECTED QUOTES

FROM DASAN'S MOTHER



16

Tre Maison Dasan

Are you sad because I was in  
prison? I'm home now.

—DASAN'S MOTHER, 45:52

Can we not say the J-A-I-L word?  
Because he doesn't know.

—DASAN'S MOTHER, 19:55





## ISSUE STATISTICS

One out of every fourteen children in the U.S. has a parent who is currently or has previously been incarcerated. In other words, a staggering 7% of our nation's youth—an estimated 5 million children—have experienced the incarceration of a parent at one point in their lives.<sup>1</sup>

1 in 9 Black children (11.4%), 1 in 28 Hispanic children (3.5%) and 1 in 57 White children (1.8%) have an incarcerated parent. Black children are twice as likely as White children to experience parental incarceration.<sup>2</sup>

Children living in poverty are more than three times as likely to have experienced parental incarceration as children in families with incomes at least twice the poverty level. Children who have no resident parent with more than a high school education are 41 percent more likely to have experienced parental incarceration than are children with at least one parent who has had some education beyond high school.<sup>3</sup>

Children with fathers who have been incarcerated are significantly more likely than other children to be expelled or suspended from school (23 percent compared with 4 percent).<sup>4</sup>

Having an incarcerated parent is recognized as an “Adverse Childhood Experience” (ACE). Children who have an incarcerated parent are more likely to experience additional ACEs including, emotional and psychological trauma, increased family disintegration and/or dysfunction, residential and financial instability, developmental challenges, social stigma and emotional pain, and exposure to extreme poverty.<sup>5</sup>

According to one study presented at the 4th National Head Start Research Conference, interviews of arrested parents indicated that 67% were handcuffed in front of their children, 27% reported weapons drawn in front of their children, and 4.3% reported a physical struggle.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Murphey, David and Cooper, P. Mae (2015). Parents Behind Bars: What Happens to Their Children?. pp 1

<sup>2</sup> The Pew Charitable Trusts. (2010). Collateral Costs: Incarceration's Effect on Economic Mobility. Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts.

<sup>3</sup> Murphey, David and Cooper, P. Mae (2015). Parents Behind Bars: What Happens to Their Children?. pp 4

<sup>4</sup> The Pew Charitable Trusts. (2010). Collateral Costs: Incarceration's Effect on Economic Mobility. Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts.

<sup>5</sup> Murphey, David and Cooper, P. Mae (2015). Parents Behind Bars: What Happens to Their Children?. pp 6-8

<sup>6</sup> Phillips, S. D. (1998). Programming for children of female offenders. Proceedings from 4th National Head Start Research Conference. Washington, DC. Criminology and Public Policy, 5, pp 677–702.



## CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS BILL OF RIGHTS

### I HAVE THE RIGHT...

1. To be kept safe and informed at the time of my parent's arrest.
2. To be heard when decisions are made about me.
3. To be considered when decisions are made about my parent.
4. To be well cared for in my parent's absence.
5. To speak with, see, and touch my parent.
6. To support as I face my parent's incarceration.
7. To not be judged, blamed, or labeled because my parent is incarcerated.
8. To a lifelong relationship with my parent.

*Developed by the San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership*

