The Dalai Lama – Scientist to Premiere at 76th Venice International Film Festival

A new documentary, *The Dalai Lama – Scientist*, is due to make its world premiere at the 76th Venice International Film Festival at the end of this month.

Described as featuring extensive rare and never-before-seen footage, *The Dalai Lama – Scientist* is billed as “telling the very human story of the Dalai Lama that no one knows.” The feature-length film will be shown at the Cinema Astra as part of the Venice Production Bridge on 31 August.

“We are thrilled to be able to premiere this new film in Venice and to share the fascinating and unexpected story of the Dalai Lama and science in a way that no one has ever seen it before,” said Dawn Gifford Engle, the film's director and writer. (Central Tibetan Administration)

In the documentary, His Holiness the Dalai Lama tells his own story in his own words of his lifelong journey from the world of Buddhism into the world of modern science, and how the world has changed as a result. In a statement announcing the film’s world premiere, production company PeaceJam Productions said:

*Around the world, one of the most recognized leaders on our planet today is The Dalai Lama.*
Everyone knows him as a man of peace, a great Buddhist teacher, an advocate for humanity. “The Dalai Lama: Scientist” tells the story of the man you do not know; the Dalai Lama that very few people have seen. For the past thirty-five years, The Dalai Lama has been engaged in an ongoing series of dialogues with leading, world class scientists. They have covered subjects ranging from quantum physics and cosmology to neurobiology and destructive emotions. “The Dalai Lama: Scientist” immerses the viewer into these profound dialogues; explores the correlations between science and Buddhism; and shares personal life experiences from The Dalai Lama that have had a deep impact on his development as a world leader -- and also, on the world itself.” (PeaceJam)

Narrated by actress Laurel Harris (Odd Thomas [2013]), the documentary features a number of prominent figures from the worlds of Buddhism and science, among them: psychologist Paul Ekman; mathematician and geneticist Eric Lander; neuroscientist Christof Koch; astrophysicist George Greenstein; biologist, philosopher, and neuroscientist Francisco Varela (1946–2001); professor of psychology and psychiatry Richard J. Davidson; Susan Bauer-Wu, president of the Mind & Life Institute, which serves as a catalyst and community builder for the contemplative sciences; Michael J. Meaney, professor in biological psychiatry, neurology, and neurosurgery; writer and Buddhist monk Matthieu Ricard; Zen Buddhist teacher Joan Halifax; and Zen Buddhist and professor emeritus of medicine and founder of the Stress Reduction Clinic and the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, Jon Kabat-Zinn.

Click here to watch the official trailer for The Dalai Lama – Scientist

The Dalai Lama has initiated numerous interdisciplinary dialogues with scientists, experts, and spiritual leaders over the decades to discuss the intersection of scientific and spiritual disciplines with regard to critical issues facing contemporary society and the modern world. In an essay penned in 2005, His Holiness stated:

“Although my own interest in science began as the curiosity of a restless young boy growing up in Tibet, gradually the colossal importance of science and technology for understanding the modern world dawned on me. Not only have I sought to grasp specific scientific ideas, but have also attempted to explore the wider implications of the new advances in human knowledge and technological power brought about through science. The specific areas of science I have explored most over the years are subatomic physics, cosmology, biology and psychology. . . . [I am] grateful to the numerous eminent scientists with whom I have had the privilege of engaging in conversations through the auspices of the Mind and Life Institute, which initiated the Mind and Life conferences that began in 1987 at my residence in Dharamsala, India.” (His Holiness the 14th dalai Lama of Tibet)
From peacejam.org

*The Dalai Lama - Scientist* is the sixth in PeaceJam Production’s award-winning “Nobel Legacy Film Series,” which began with the premiere of the life story of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, *Children of the Light* at the Monte Carlo Television Festival in June 2014.

Filmmaker Engle is also co-founder and executive director of the PeaceJam Foundation, an international nonprofit organization led by 13 Nobel Peace Prize laureates with a mission statement to “create young leaders committed to positive change in themselves, their communities, and the world through the inspiration of Nobel Peace Laureates who pass on the spirit, skills, and wisdom they embody.” (PeaceJam)

Engle is the co-author of *PEACEJAM: A Billion Simple Acts of Peace* (Penguin 2008), and directed the award-winning documentaries *Daughter of the Maya, Children of the Light*, and *Adolfo Perez Esquivel: Rivers of Hope.*