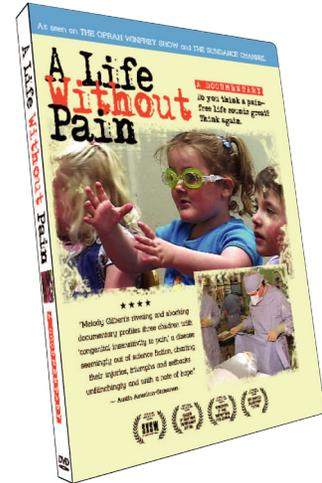


A Life Without Pain

A documentary directed by Melody Gilbert
www.alifewithoutpain.com



**Think a pain-free life sounds good?
Think again.**

What happens when a person can't feel pain?

A LIFE WITHOUT PAIN is an exploration into the day-to-day lives of three children who literally can't feel pain. Three-year-old Gabby from Minnesota, 7-year-old Miriam from Norway and 10-year old Jamilah from Germany suffer from a genetic defect so rare that is shared by only about one hundred people in the world. Their parents have tried to monitor their every move, but even their vigilance hasn't shielded the girls from many serious, life-altering injuries such as scratched eyes, burns and broken bones. As filmmaker Melody Gilbert follows these families coping with this enormous challenge, we learn that pain is really a gift that no one wants, but none of us can do without.

Contact: Melody Gilbert
651-336-5111
www.frozenfeetfilms.com

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

MELODY GILBERT

Director, *A Life Without Pain*

When I first started shooting this documentary, it never occurred to me that pain is a good thing. That's why I became fascinated with three-year-old Gabby and her inability to feel pain. Wouldn't that be wonderful? Isn't that what we want? The answer is... no.

Through Gabby, I began to understand that pain is a priceless, essential gift. Her life will most likely be cut short — and almost certainly limited by — her extremely rare genetic disorder, Congenital Insensitivity to Pain, or CIPA. Only a few hundred people in the world are born with CIPA, and the few who have survived have severely damaged bodies because their internal warning systems don't work. Broken bones, fevers, infections, burns and scratched eyes aren't noticed. For babies, teething on fingers and biting to the bone is not unusual. However, there are no screams or cries to warn the parents of any of these things. Gabby's world — the one we think would be just fabulous and beautiful — is actually a very scary place.

When I met 7-year-old Miriam in Norway and 10-year old Jamilah in Germany, both of whom have CIPA, I became a bit more hopeful. They, too, can't feel pain but their lives are very different. Miriam's life has been filled with problems related to her disorder while Jamilah looks and lives like a "normal" child. They both had many of the same problems as Gabby, but some of their injuries were not as severe and their parents also treated them differently, leading to starkly different outcomes. Or maybe it was just luck.

In a world where it seems like so many people are trying to get rid of pain with pills or potions, I have spent many days with three girls who feel nothing. I am fascinated by this juxtaposition. By exploring the lives of Gabby, Miriam and Jamilah, I've come to realize that pain is actually a gift that none of us want, but none of us can do without.

CREDITS and DIRECTOR BIO

PRODUCTION COMPANY: FROZEN FEET FILMS www.frozenfeetfilms.com

WEBSITE FOR FILM: www.alifewithoutpain.com

Director/Producer: Melody Gilbert
Cinematographer: Melody Gilbert
Additional Cinematography: Adrian Danciu & Matt Ehling
Editors: Charlie Gerszewski and Todd Grabe
Associate Producer/Researcher: Rita Beatty
Production Assistant: Carrie Bush
Post Production Facilities: Channel Z Edit, Hi-Wire & Pure Sound
Post Audio: Paul Dahlseid
Composer: Dan Solovitz
Colorist: Oscar Oboza
Legal: Dan Satorius

DIRECTOR BIO

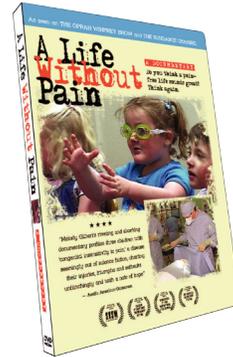
MELODY GILBERT is an award-winning independent documentary filmmaker and educator from St. Paul, Minnesota who has worked in film and television for 20 years. Her most recent feature-length documentary, A LIFE WITHOUT PAIN, premiered (in competition) at the South by Southwest Film Festival (www.sxsw.com) and was featured on the The Oprah Winfrey Show, CNN, Good Morning America, and ABC News. It has been screened in dozens of film festivals and been broadcast on the Sundance Channel and more than a dozen international television networks. Her controversial documentary WHOLE (www.whole-documentary.com), which is about physically healthy people who want to become an amputee, premiered at the 2003 Los Angeles Film Festival (in competition) and has been seen at festivals, theaters and on television stations worldwide including the Sundance Channel and TV2 Denmark. Her debut independent documentary, MARRIED AT THE MALL, has also screened worldwide.

Ms. Gilbert is the recipient of grants and fellowships from the Minnesota State Arts Board and The Jerome Foundation. In 2004, Ms. Gilbert was awarded the IFP/McKnight Foundation Artist Fellowship in Filmmaking. She is also an educator who has taught broadcast journalism and documentary production at the University of Minnesota, the Walker Art Center, IFP MN Center for Media Arts and to students in Romania and Kyrgyzstan. She formed her production company, Frozen Feet Films (www.frozenfeetfilms.com) in 2001.

Melody can be reached at: melody@frozenfeetfilms.com

Here is what is being said about the new documentary

A Life Without Pain



“The docu is an eye-opening experience at the very least, and Gilbert’s intense look at the situation is compelling in every way.”

- Hollywood Reporter

http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/thr/search/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1002074162

“Melody Gilbert’s riveting and shocking documentary... profiles three children with ‘congenital insensitivity to pain,’ a disease seemingly out of science fiction, charting their injuries, triumphs and setbacks unflinchingly and with a note of hope.”

- Austin Statesman (4stars ****)

<http://www.austin360.com/news/content/sxsw/articles/12reviews.html>

“By the time you’re done visiting these families, you’ll feel sincere sympathy for the kids, true admiration for their parents and siblings, and probably a dose of appreciation for your own ability to feel pain—as crazy as that might sound.”

- Scott Weinberg, eFilmCritic.com

<http://www.efilmcritic.com/review.php?movie=11715>

“A Life Without Pain simply fascinates, with its snapshot moments in the lives of the three girls. Watching the girls suffer in their painless bodies, it is impossible not to ache for them.”

- South By Southwest Film Festival

www.sxsw.com

“A Life Without Pain is the buzz of the festival”

- KVUE-TV news on 3/12/05

“Among hundreds of titles at film festivals, a few stand out like little diamonds amid so much rough. We predict that a handful of films will have good bounce—they will find an audience in theatrical release or television—including “A Life Without Pain.”

- Chris Garcia, American-Statesman Film Critic
<http://www.austin360.com/sxsw/content/sxsw/articles/20mostlikely.html>

“Eye-opening... The biggest achievement of “A Life Without Pain” is simply introducing the viewer to this exotic and nearly unbelievable condition. It also does a great job demonstrating not only how the sufferers themselves must learn to live with this disease, but also by showing how CIP and, by extension, any handicap puts a strain on overburdened, overly stressed out parents and siblings.”

- FILM THREAT
<http://filmthreat.com/Reviews.asp?Id=7233>

“Bring Kleenex, and thank God for pain.”

- Star Tribune

“It’s a substantial piece of work and well worth the discomfort it takes to view.”

- Hollywood Reporter

“See this movie. It will change your life.”

- eFilmCritic.com



HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

A LIFE WITHOUT PAIN

By Marilyn Moss

9 p.m, Feb 27
Sundance Channel

As if the title weren't ironic enough, watching this documentary on children who were born with a rare congenital defect that renders them unable to feel pain is, at times, ironically almost too painful to see. Filmmaker Melody Gilbert, who directed the docu "Whole," a look at people who choose to become amputees, here focuses her lens on kids who are at risk and don't even know it. It's a substantial piece of work and well worth the discomfort it takes to view.

Gilbert follows several children, a 3-year-old in Minnesota, a 7-year-old from Norway and 10-year-old from Germany, and looks at the day-to-day struggles of these kids and their parents as the youngsters go about hurting themselves inadvertently simply by playing, being in the house and taking up the business of being a normal kid. When teething as infants, they may have chewed through their lips without knowing it hurt; now the possibilities for hurt get larger as the kids grow. But they also learn how to handle their rare condition, and we get to hope that they will overcome the dangers and, ironically, the psychic pain of their disorder.

The docu is an eye-opening experience at the very least, and Gilbert's intense look at the situation is compelling in every way.

http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/thr/search/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1002074162



