

**SUNDANCE TWENTYTEN**

FILM FESTIVAL, PARK CITY UTAH, JAN 21-31  
WORLD CINEMA DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION

# SPACE TOURISTS

A FILM BY CHRISTIAN FREI



ILLUSTRATION: MICHAEL PLEESZ

WITH ANOUSHEH ANSARI • JONAS BENDIKSEN • DUMITRU POPESCU • CHARLES SIMONYI

CHRISTIAN FREI FILMPRODUCTIONS GMBH IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH SWISS NATIONAL TELEVISION, ZDF / ARTE AND SUISSIMAGE PRESENT «SPACE TOURISTS»  
CINEMATOGRAPHY PETER INDERGAND SCS • LINE PRODUCER AND TRANSLATOR THOMAS SCHMIDT • ASSISTANT DIRECTOR & ASSISTANT EDITOR ANDREAS WINTERSTEIN  
SOUND DESIGN FLORIAN EIDENBENZ • MUSIC BY JAN GARBAREK, EDWARD ARTEMYEV, STEVE REICH • VISUAL EFFECTS PATRICK LINDENMAIER, PAUL AVONDET  
WORLD SALES FILMS TRANSIT INTERNATIONAL INC. • PRODUCED, DIRECTED AND EDITED BY CHRISTIAN FREI

# SPACE TOURISTS

DOCUMENTARY BY CHRISTIAN FREI • SWITZERLAND 2009

ORIGINAL VERSION: ENGLISH, RUSSIAN, ROMANIAN • 35 mm 1:1,85, DOLBY DIGITAL, 98'

TV-VERSION: HDCAM 98' AND 52'

A humorous and laconic view of the way billionaires depart our planet earth to travel into outer space for fun. With extra-ordinary access and truly first-time images the film investigates the emotional oscillations of an expensive enterprise and questions the meaning and boundaries of the human spirit and our hunger for adventure and discovery.

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#### Public Screenings

Friday, Jan. 22, 3:00 p.m. - Screening Room, Sundance Resort  
Saturday, Jan. 23, noon - Holiday Village Cinema IV  
Saturday, Jan. 23, 10:30 p.m. - Broadway Centre Cinemas IV, SLC  
Tuesday, Jan 26, 5:30 p.m. - Prospector Square Theatre  
Friday, Jan. 29, 2:30 p.m. - Holiday Village Cinema I

#### Press and Industry Screening

Sunday, Jan. 24, 4:30 p.m. - Holiday Village Cinema I

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**«How do you put a price on a dream? I would go to space even if it was a one way ticket, if it meant going and never returning, if it meant losing my life over it! I am ready to pay any price... to go to space.»**

ANOUSHEH ANSARI, FIRST FEMALE SPACE TOURIST



High above the vast Kazakh steppes, a parachute glides toward earth at the break of dawn. It is awaited by an armada of Russian helicopters. Jammed into the tiny spacecraft are two cosmonauts and a woman. She is pulled out of the capsule and carried to a chair. They wrap her in fur, open the visor of her space suit and hand her some flowers and an apple. The woman's name is Anousheh Ansari. She has just fulfilled her childhood dream: As the world's first female space tourist, she spent one week aboard the International Space Station.

In his latest work, Oscar-nominated Swiss documentarian Christian Frei turns to an age-old dream of mankind. The dream that we, as «perfectly ordinary» people, can leave our planet behind and travel to outer space. Today, space tourism is no longer the stuff of naïve fantasy and science fiction. The age-old dream has become reality. Not made possible by NASA, but by the Russian Federal Space Agency. The price tag for the ten-day journey into space: 20 million dollars.



**«Despite the danger of living close to the rocket trajectory... for some these rockets are literally a gift from the heavens! I met many farmers who make a lot of their farming tools from secondhand space ship metal! Shovels or sleds... There're people repairing a patch of their roof with a Soyuz rocket ship... it's very common in this area.»**

JONAS BENDIKSEN, MAGNUM PHOTOGRAPHER

With its images of breathtaking beauty, *SPACE TOURISTS* takes the audience into a fascinating world full of wonder and surprise. The legendary space launching station Baikonur is where the American Anousheh Ansari embarks on her «journey of a lifetime». The film documents her preparations and accompanies her up close on her daily routine in space, all the way to the rough landing in the steppes of Kazakhstan. The magnificent beauty of this journey is contrasted with the wild ride we take with Kazakh scrap metal collectors hunting for the coveted «carrots», rocket stages which literally fall from the heavens, awaited by these men driving trucks the size of dinosaurs. Scenes that are reminiscent of «Mad Max».

*SPACE TOURISTS* takes its audience by surprise, with images and situations that have very little to do with the futuristic fantasy of «space tourism». Encounters with the least likely people imaginable: places even stranger and more unknown than outer space itself.



PHOTOGRAPHY: JONAS BENDIKSEN / Magnum Photos