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Sundance Women's March

Patricia Goldstone · Saturday, January 21st, 2017

Even an epic snowstorm didn't deter an estimated 8,000 Women's Marchers from descending on Park City to join a full-throated protest against the newly inaugurated Trump presidency organized by comedian Chelsea Handler in conjunction with Planned Parenthood. Participants from the Sundance Festival, which did not share in sponsoring the event, were outnumbered by locals from as away as Salt Lake City (where a similar protest has been postponed for a month). "We have had one hundred percent support from our local government," said one lifelong resident brandishing a sign reading "Trump was born in Russia—Putin has the birth certificate". "Everyone is just delighted that an event of this importance is taking place in Park City." The march on Main Street was peaceful, even festive, as restaurant owners rushed out of their storefronts to offer trays of hot drinks to the marchers.

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Despite Trump's Twitter attacks on Meryl Streep for her outspokenness at the Golden Globes (many marchers wore "I'm with Streep" buttons) fears of a new McCarthy era seem somewhat overdone, at least for now. Although, as one Television Academy insider recently remarked to the Hollywood Reporter presumably on behalf of advertisers, political discourse by Hollywood celebrities pisses off 50 percent of the country; Winnie Kim, a television development executive, said the corporate side of her company was "all very supportive." Wendy Gan, a legal affairs and production executive, pointed out that it is illegal for corporations to retaliate against employees expressing themselves outside the office. However, author Katie Schickel, a former journalist, said that a witch-hunt against journalists was already underway.



An estimated 8,000 people joined the Women's March at Sundance today. Photo by Patricia Goldstone

A certain reticence was perhaps evident in the Festival's dearth of information on the March. Organizer Chelsea Handler, who clearly doesn't suffer from it, delivered an impassioned address exhorting women's rights, human rights, labor, and climate change activists to quit mourning and organize into a new and alternative political Big Tent. Her speech epitomized how the Trump election may prove to be the advertisers' worst nightmare: winning 50 percent of the country but losing the other half (or more). Laurie David, producer of the Festival's opening *An Inconvenient Sequel* as well as its predecessor, *An Inconvenient Truth*, summed up that new organizing principle in one simple statement: "There is no more important woman on earth than Ms. Mother Earth."

Top photo: Women's March, Sundance, 21 January 2017. Photo by Adam Leipzig

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