

# **The Sundance Institute**

## **Fields of Fuel Film Review**

By CAROLINE LIBRESCO

Most Americans know we've got a problem: an addiction to oil that taxes the environment, entangles us in costly foreign policies, and threatens the nations long-term stability. But few are informed or empowered enough to do much about it. Enter Josh Tickell, an expert young activist who, driven by his own emotionally charged motives, shuttles us on a revelatory, whirlwind journey to unravel this addiction from its historical origins to political constructs that support it, to alternatives available now and the steps we can take to change things.

Tickell tracks the rising domination of the petrochemical industry from Rockefeller's strategy to halt ethanol use in Ford's first cars to the mysterious death of Rudolph Diesel at the height of his biodiesel engines popularization, to our government's choice to declare war after 9/11, rather than wean the country from fossil fuel. Never minimizing the complexities of ending oil dependence, Tickell uncovers a hopeful reality pointing toward a decentralized, sustainable energy infrastructure like big rigs tanking up on biofuel at Carls Corner Texas truck stop, a new Brooklyn biodiesel plant serving three states, a miraculous Arizona algae-based fuel farm, and the Swedish public voting to be petroleum free by 2020.

Sweeping and exhilarating, Tickell's passionate film goes beyond great storytelling; it rings out like a bell that stirs consciousness and makes individual action suddenly seem consequential.