Fact-based dramas have always been an important part of film history, but have never seemed so popular as they are now…in the last few years alone, think The Post, All the Money in the World, Dunkirk, Hidden Figures, A United Kingdom, Victoria and Abdul, Stronger, The Revenant, Steve Jobs, Trumbo, The Danish Girl, Joy, I Saw the Light, Love and Mercy, Snowden, Black Mass, Miles Ahead, Spotlight, Everest, Unbroken, Foxcatcher, American Sniper, Wild, The Monuments Men, The Good Lie, Pride, Rosewater, The Theory of Everything, Mr. Turner, Big Eyes, The Imitation Game, Get on Up, Fruitvale Station, The Wolf of Wall Street, American Hustle, 12 Years a Slave, Dallas Buyers Club, The Butler, Lovelace, Behind the Candelabra, Captain Phillips, and Philomena, among many others.

But such biopics and other based-on-a-true-story films have now been joined by a very specific phenomenon—the remaking of documentary films as narrative films. Why has this practice begun to flourish? I give some credit to the increased acceptance of the documentary form, notably as feature-length entertainment, and people’s desire to be further immersed in these compelling true-life stories. Catherine Shoard of The Guardian has proposed that it’s an outgrowth of our immediate online access to “the facts, [so] it’s those places Google can’t reach we long to travel to”:

http://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/sep/07/documentary-remakes-the-walk-the-program-our-brand-is-crisis

The practice of doc-to-drama remakes is primarily a product of the 21st century. Here’s a list of such remakes so far:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documentary</th>
<th>Narrative Film</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Streetwise</td>
<td>American Heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984, Martin Bell</td>
<td>1992, Martin Bell</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Battle Over Citizen Kane</td>
<td>RKO 281</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996, Michael Epstein &amp; Thomas Lennon, for PBS’ American Experience</td>
<td>1999, Benjamin Ross</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Brandon Teena Story</td>
<td>Boys Don’t Cry</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998, Susan Muska &amp; Greta Olafsdottir</td>
<td>1999, Kimberly Peirce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Party Monster: The Shockumentary</td>
<td>Party Monster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aileen Wuornos: The Selling of a Serial Killer
1993, Nick Broomfield
→ Monster
2003, Patty Jenkins

Dogtown & Z-Boys
2001, Stacy Paralta
→ Lords of Dogtown
2005, Catherine Hardwicke

Little Dieter Needs to Fly
1997, Werner Herzog
→ Rescue Dawn
2007, Werner Herzog

The Times of Harvey Milk
1984, Robert Epstein
→ Milk
2008, Gus Van Sant

Grey Gardens
1975, Albert & David Maysles
→ Grey Gardens
2009, Michael Sucsy, for HBO

An American Family
1975, Craig Gilbert (P), for PBS
→ Cinema Verite
2011, Shari Springer Berman & Robert Pulcini, for HBO

Kon-Tiki
1950, Thor Heyerdahl
→ Kon-Tiki
2012, Joachim Rønning & Espen Sandberg

Planet B-Boy
2007, Benson Lee
→ Battle of the Year
2013, Benson Lee

Beautiful Young Minds
2007, Morgan Matthews
→ A Brilliant Young Mind
2014, Morgan Matthews

Man on Wire
2008, James Marsh
→ The Walk
2015, Robert Zemeckis

The Armstrong Lie
2013, Alex Gibney
→ The Program
2015, Stephen Frears

Our Brand is Crisis
2005, Rachel Boynton
→ Our Brand is Crisis
2015, David Gordon Green

Freeheld
2007, Cynthia Wade
→ Freeheld
2015, Peter Sollett

The Man Who Would Be Polka King
2009, Joshua Brown and John Mikulak
→ The Polka King
2017, Maya Forbes

Marwencol
2010, Jeff Maimberg
→ Welcome to Marwen
2018, Robert Zemeckis; starring Steve Carell
White Boy
2017, Shawn Rech

→

White Boy Rick
2018, Yan Demange

Quantum Hoops
2007, Rick Greenwald

→

Quantum Hoops
in development, Ben Stiller’s production company, Red Hour Films

The Bengali Detective
2011, Philip Cox

→

The Bengali Detective
in development, Mira Nair

Girlhood
2003, Liz Garbus

→

Hood Girls
in development, Miriam Kruishoop

Undefeated
2011, Daniel Lindsay & T.J. Martin

→

Undefeated
in development, Marty Bowen & Wyck Godfrey

The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters
2007, Seth Gordon

→

The King of Kong
proposed, Seth Gordon

“Doc-to-Drama” Inspirations At Least

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documentary</th>
<th>Narrative Film</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Training 1971, Frederick Wiseman</td>
<td>Full Metal Jacket 1987, Stanley Kubrick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Young and the Dead 2000, Sheri Berman Springer &amp; Robert Pulcini</td>
<td>The Final Cut 2004, Omar Naim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Day in September 1999, Kevin Macdonald</td>
<td>Munich 2005, Steven Speilberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Idi Amin Dada: A Self Portrait 1974, Barbet Schroeder</td>
<td>The Last King of Scotland 2006, Kevin Macdonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dont Look Back 1967, D. A. Pennebaker</td>
<td>I’m Not There 2007, Todd Haynes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Citizenfour 2014, Laura Poitras ➔ Snowden 2016, Oliver Stone

The Loving Story 2011, Nancy Buirski ➔ Loving 2016, Jeff Nichols

Other Future Doc-to-Drama Possibilities are proposed at these web sites:

Fully 46 different doc-to-drama projects are identified here:
https://nonfics.com/46-promised-remakes-of-documentaries-that-still-havent-happened-b8931a4e23d3#.pty1yd7bp
