

# Poetics + 5 Politics

Poetics in the Politics of Now

Documentary Research Symposium  
UC Santa Cruz, May 14-17th, 2026

<https://poeticsandpolitics.ucsc.edu>

## POETICS + POLITICS 5 DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

May 14 - 17, 2026  
University of California, Santa Cruz  
Digital Arts Research Center (DARC) 108 and 306

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Organized by Irene Gustafson, Hannah Jayanti, and Irene Lusztig

The symposium is made possible by funding from a Porter College Production Funding Grant, the UCSC Institute of the Arts and Sciences, the UCSC Center for Documentary Arts and Research (CDAR), the UCSC Arts Division, and the Porter College/Film and Digital Media Visiting Artist Series.

**Thank you:** Jenny Horne and Selmin Kara and the UCSC Center for Documentary Arts and Research, Jessica Abramson and the Arts Event Office, Colleen Jennings, Mike Nardell, John Steiner, Paul Fortino, Dung Wong, Nicole Nolte, UCSC Film and Digital Media Department, Dave McLaughlin and Arts Business Office, UCSC Travel and Parking/Shuttle Services, Amber Pearsall, Dima Mabsout, Pooja Rangan, Tugba Baykal, Glenn Philip Martinez Aquino, Libertad Huerta Rodriguez, Matte Hewitt, Lalu Ozban

**Donations generously provided by these local organizations:** Pacific Cookie Company, Trader Joes, Marianne's Ice Cream, New Leaf Community Markets, S. Martinelli & Company, Santa Cruz Mountain Vineyard, West Peak, Discretion Brewing, The Homeless Garden Project, Whole Foods

**Saturday dinner created and prepared by:** Linh Amanda Vong  
[auntiemannas.com](http://auntiemannas.com)

**Porter 061 students:** Paola Canseco, Tia Cutting, Aidan Dittmar, Steph Dumlilig, Kimberly Estrada, Molly Kaeyer, Cory Klein, Nicholas Lin, Alyssa Lu Lopez, Maddox McDonald, Tatum Mitchell, Angelee Montances, Juls Prudente, Milo Sinton, Maya Wik

## POETICS + POLITICS 5: POETICS IN THE POLITICS OF NOW

Welcome to the fifth iteration of Poetics and Politics. The theme we have set for this year's symposium is the Poetics and Politics of Now, an invitation to collectively describe the present moment(s) we find ourselves in. The theme came to us somewhat atmospherically but also as a sharply and collectively felt desire to be in conversation about the things that we were noticing and feeling: increasing state violence, austerity, direct and indirect assault on minoritarian bodies and perspectives, and the dis-establishment of independent documentary infrastructures, among other things. In response, we knew that we wanted to create a space for gathering, grappling, and showcasing the important world-conjuring and world-building work that documentary is capable of. And so after a five year pause, the result of COVID shutdowns and other disruptions and intensifications, we are thrilled to welcome you back.

Since its inauguration at Aalto University in Helsinki (2013), Poetics and Politics has become an important site for arts based, interdisciplinary, documentary research. The symposium represents a unique opportunity for practitioners working within the broad ambit of documentary to come together in order to think out loud about what it is we do and why it matters. Documentary carries with it the burden of the political, regardless of whether it deserves or can uphold it. Sometimes the attention to, or imperative of, the political comes at the expense of a concern with poetics. What makes this event unique is that it insists on holding fast to both terms simultaneously, prioritizing neither, yet unwilling to jettison either as well. The symposium's uniquely interdisciplinary, intimate and dialogic character has been nurtured by its emphasis on practice-led and work-in-progress research, which we are honored to continue centering during this iteration. In this tradition, we have tried to create a space for documentary practitioners to situate and discuss their work in the context of an unfolding present—to weigh and debate the conditions of and possibilities for making documentary work within this current moment.

Our keynote presenters this year are Dee Dee Halleck and Miko Reverez, two practitioners whose work deeply excavates the poetics

and politics of the now and who also imagine and instruct how we might, in our local and extended communities, shape and transform them. The featured screening is *Ruthless Times – Songs of Care* by Susanna Helke. Along with these, this year's symposium will feature around 45 presenters, sharing works-in-progress projects across a range of topics, approaches, and commitments.

As much as possible, we have tried to create an event where a collective conversation can build over our time together. Most of the symposium will be held in DARC 108, which allows for a single stream of presentations. There will be four time blocks with concurrent presentations that will occur in DARC 108 and DARC 306 simultaneously, to accommodate the high number of compelling proposals that we received this year. On Saturday we have sequenced those sessions to create a flow between the programs being offered in each space.

We're so glad that you're here!

Irene Gustafson, Hannah Jayanti, and Irene Lusztig

## SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

presentations will take place in DARC 108 or 306, as indicated

### THURSDAY MAY 14th

**WELCOME** 5:00 - 5:30 pm DARC 108

*Honoring Land Relations:* Matte Hewitt

*Opening Remarks:* Irene Gustafson, Hannah Jayanti, and Irene Lusztig

**SESSION 1** 5:30 - 7:30 pm DARC 108

*Poetics of Solidarity*

Mary Jirmanus Saba, Raed El Rafei, John Greyson

[Moderated by Irene Lusztig]

In a presentation spanning nude Walt Whitman, a megaphone choir, a boycott duet, and a wartime Gaza hospital diary, John Greyson explores questions of poetics and witness, solidarity and activism, asking: what does it mean to sing queer songs against the tsunami of a genocide? Raed Rafei's essay film-in-progress, tentatively titled *To be in a Time of War*, is a reflection on the cognitive dissonance of witnessing the devastating war in Gaza from the safety of San Francisco, a supposed queer utopian haven that both obscures US support and fosters solidarity. Mary Jirmanus Saba will show clips from a collaborative work in progress (with Native Studies Scholar Balraj Gill and Massachusetts Sagamore War Chief Faries Gray) offering a framework of spatial sensing as countercartography that asks: what kind of relationships to land and place does embodied sensing foster? What kinds of artistic sensibilities might we as documentarians help to cultivate that could confront the profound challenges of our contemporary moment? This opening session moves expansively from a series of gay marches in San Francisco between the 70s and 90s, to a hospital in Khan Younis, to a protest in a Toronto university lobby, to Indigenous land in Massachusetts, oscillating between there and here, then and now. Collectively, we hope this presentation will offer images and ideas to ground our conversation to come in questions about solidarity across time and space—and how to make art in the most challenging of times.

**OPENING RECEPTION** 7:30 - 9:00 pm 3rd FLOOR BALCONY

Drinks, light snacks, and a view!

### FRIDAY MAY 15th

**MORNING COFFEE / TEA** 9:00 - 10:00 am DARC LOBBY

**KEYNOTE** 10:00 - 11:30 am DARC 108

*Martial Arts: Defending Ourselves and Others*

DeeDee Halleck

[In conversation with Marty Lucas]

Halleck will look at the history of activism in the arts — from satire, posters and murals to boycotts, whistles, disruption, occupation, and general strike.

**SESSION 2** 11:30 am - 1:00 pm DARC 108

*Aftermath Practices*

Adam Sekuler, The Abortion Clinic Film Collective (Kristy Guevara-Flanagan, Doan Hoang Curtis, Lynne Sachs), Helen De Michiel

[Moderated by S. Topiary Landberg]

What does it mean to practice documentary when familiar structures no longer hold? This panel is framed by this timely provocation, posed by filmmaker Helen De Michiel, who invites us to think beyond questions of “organizing to restore our legacy institutions,” towards, instead, considering a framework of “aftermath practice — not retreat or defeat, but exploration and discovery.” Filmmaker-members of the Abortion Clinic Film Collective (Doan Hoang Curtis, Kristy Guevara Flanagan, Lynne Sachs) share urgent filmmaking and distribution strategies emerging from the frontlines of the post-Roe v. Wade reproductive health crisis. Filmmaker Adam Sekuler invites us to linger in the aftermath of film festival programming, and to attend to the “unseen archive” of what gets left out—silenced forms, counter-temporalities, and other refusals. The presenters in this panel collectively grapple with questions of aftermath: how to make work in new ways in spite of—or ignited by—the unraveling of political, public health, and arts institutions at every scale.

**LUNCH** 1:00 - 2:00 pm DARC LOBBY

Catered for registered symposium participants

[SESSIONS 3 + 4 ARE CONCURRENT PRESENTATIONS]

**SESSION 3**                      **2:00 - 3:30 pm**                      **DARC 108**

***Gestures of Repair***

**Rosie Reed Hillman, Eva Knopf, Erin Wilkerson**

**[Moderated by Hope Tucker]**

How can we explore the “poetics of repair in a seemingly broken world?” We’ve taken this resonant question posed by filmmaker Eva Knopf as a frame for this conversation between three filmmakers. Filmmaker Rosie Reed Hillman creates a tender feminist portrait of witches— working-class women in midlife, “using magic to transform and transport.” Filmmaker and media artist Erin Wilkerson calls for “feral” filmmaking and situated knowledge in a live autoethnographic video performance exploring colonial landscapes, early American settlement and expansion, and botanical-based fieldwork. Knopf’s work in progress *Movie Kintsugi* explores “how we deal with break-ages, repairs and the broken pieces of everyday life – in a world of pieces and multiple crises. What do fracture lines tell us that would otherwise remain hidden?”

**SESSION 4**                      **2:00 - 3:30 pm**                      **DARC 306**

***Reframing Interference***

**Hanna Rose Shell, Anna Friz, Nadia Ahmed**

**[Moderated by Rebecca Ora / rora]**

The three presenters in this panel reframe interferences such as sun flare, noise, fuzziness, and ephemerality as productive modes of inquiry rather than obstacles to knowledge. We’ve borrowed the title of this session from Anna Friz’s practice of “detunement” which embraces the uncertainty that research and empirical observation have typically sought to filter out. Through a practice of listening and noticing across radio bands, foggy Icelandic landscapes, and Chile’s industrialized Atacama desert, Friz treats perceptual ambiguity as a means of apprehending a complex world. Hanna Rose Shell’s work-in-progress, *Flare Patrol / Parallax Vision*, weaves together deteriorating 35mm solar-detection films from Cold War-era coronagraphs, and contemporaneous news archives. Placing these in “parallax” across seemingly incommensurable vantage points, Shell explores whether shifting the scale towards the solar can open new ways of thinking about fidelity, frequency, and the politics of “now.” Nadia Ahmed’s *Wetlands of Mass De-*

*struction* explores how the shifting marshlands of southern Iraq’s Al-Ahwar has long functioned as ecological and political endurance. Reading across myth, indigenous Ahwari poetry, and environmental policy, Nadia argues that foreign restoration efforts fail when they treat the ephemeral nature of these waters as interference to be corrected rather than resilience.

**COFFEE / TEA BREAK**                      **3:30 - 4:00 pm**                      **DARC LOBBY**

**SESSION 5**                      **4:00 - 5:00 pm**                      **DARC 108**

***Documentary as Health Care | Workshop***

**Liz Roberts and Alexandra Juhasz**

Juhasz and Roberts screen clips from two new works, *Please Hold* and *Love is the Drug* to engage facilitated conversation with workshop participants about community-situated documentary practice in spaces of health related vulnerability. Both works engage with the durational crisis of HIV/AIDS. Engaging with Juhasz’s definition of queer feminist media praxis, our facilitated experience invites participants to think together in an expansive way through the poetics and practices of activist media. The works are deeply archival, across time and format, but use experimental form to show how all those times can be copresent now, that grief is spatial, and care is always possible.

**SESSION 6**                      **5:00 - 7:00 pm**                      **DARC 108**

***Ruthless Times – Songs of Care***

**Screening and discussion with Susanna Helke**

**[In conversation with Irene Gustafson]**

*Ruthless Times – Songs of Care* (92 mins, 2022) is a documentary film employing choral tableaux juxtaposed with documentary episodes to capture the corrosive effects of privatization and austerity in the Finnish elderly care sector, as an example of the ongoing neoliberal paradigm change in the Nordic welfare states. The anonymous testimonies of nurses are composed into choral songs, while elderly citizens sing lyrics utilizing the econo-bureaucratic “newspeak” of our time. The film makes visible, and tangible, such abstract phenomena as an omnipresent neoliberal rationality. What cannot be talked about, has to be sung!

## SATURDAY MAY 16th

**MORNING COFFEE / TEA** 9:00 - 9:30 am DARC LOBBY

**SESSION 7** 9:30 - 10:15 am DARC 108

***On The Edge Of Your Seat: A Workshop with Chairs | Workshop***  
**Julie Forrest Wyman**

This workshop offers a chance to reconsider and remake the place within the cinema where our body meets the world: the chair. This hands-on process of re-creating our own viewing spots will likely land somewhere between a meditation session and an exercise in fort-building. The session will include a screening of one *How We Look* short film whose production process is chronicled in the 2025 feature documentary *The Tallest Dwarf*.

**KEYNOTE** 10:30 am - 12:00 pm DARC 108  
***Undocumentability and Smuggling Through Loophole Cinema***  
**Miko Revereza**

**[In conversation with Hannah Jayanti]**

This talk engages Miko Revereza's practice through notions of undocumentability and smuggling through what Revereza calls loophole cinema. Emerging from his experiences growing up as an undocumented immigrant in the United States, his research begins with the question: how does an undocumented documentary filmmaker document themselves? Revereza explores the ontological loopholes between bureaucratic and cinematic documents and how these forms might contaminate each other. His filmmaking practice, operating within registers of visibility and invisibility, becomes entangled with existential decisions such as self-deportation and exile, treating cinema as a stage for refusal and as a tactical method for infiltrating, transmitting, or smuggling himself through borders. In this talk Revereza will explore the evolution of personal filmmaking, departing from his initial question towards a new one: how might an undocumented documentary filmmaker become undocumentable?

**LUNCH** 12:00 - 1:00 pm DARC LOBBY  
Catered for registered symposium participants

## [SESSIONS 8 + 9 ARE CONCURRENT PRESENTATIONS]

**SESSION 8** 1:00 - 2:30 pm DARC 108  
***XO & Struggle: A Case Study in Tactical Film Programming & Exhibition***  
**| Screening and Workshop**  
**Emily Rose Apter and Keisha Knight**  
**[Moderated by Abram Stern]**

*Featuring work by Saeedah Cook, Kelly Gallagher, Cameron A. Granger, Christopher Harris, Alex Johnston, and Matazi Weathers*

Solidarity Media Network presents *XO & Struggle*, a film screening dedicated to the George Jackson Brigade's enduring legacy of both love and struggle. Drawing inspiration from Ruth Wilson Gilmore's notion of abolition as presence, the program explores possibilities of anti-carceral image-making while maintaining that art alone cannot transform the conditions that produce carceral violence. Previous iterations of *XO & Struggle* appeared in cinema and organizing spaces across NYC, evolving in collaboration with participating artists, organizers, and political educators. This screening will be followed by a facilitated discussion and brainstorm session focused on nourishing an abolitionist imaginary, strengthening inside/outside collaboration, and expanding the use of media in support of global freedom struggles.

**SESSION 9** 1:00 - 2:30 pm DARC 306  
***Tracing Terrains***  
**Amir Husak, Jenny Lion, Amy Reid**  
**[Moderated by Leslie Tai]**

This session explores filmmaking through what Amir Husak refers to as "a cartographic and poetic act," where terrains are traced through the histories, politics, and communities that shape them. Husak's film-in-progress, *The Eye of the Mountain*, turns an intentionally slow and meditative gaze on Plješevica mountain in Northwest Bosnia-Herzegovina. Investigating how EU border policy is inscribed into the landscape, the project foregrounds stillness, atmosphere, and ecological attention as a form of counter-surveillance. Jenny Lion brings a durational practice to moving-image works set in militarized landscapes of the American West. Lion's presentation will include excerpts from the work-in-progress cinematic essay *Dixie Valley* which has been shot over twenty years in a remote Nevada valley emptied of its inhabitants by the U.S. Navy and remade as a staging ground for electronic warfare. Amy Reid's documentary *Grandmother's Garden* finds its cartography in

the American quilt, tracing histories of enslavement, sharecropping, and women's labor that are threaded through domestic life. Filmed with quilters across the country over several years, Reid asks what these objects reveal about the economic landscape we have inherited, and what they can teach us about our contemporary moments.

**[SESSIONS 10 + 11 ARE CONCURRENT PRESENTATIONS]**

**SESSION 10                      2:30 - 4:00 pm                      DARC 108**

***Collective (In)visibility***

**æryka jourdaine hollis o'neil, Lalu Ozban and Chisato Hughes, Nile Tan**

**[Moderated by Tatum Howey]**

Visibility, for the presenters in this session, is a set of ongoing, tense, and embodied negotiations with archives, surveillance, and the limits of the image. æryka jourdaine hollis o'neil presents their film *in the interval* through critically framing the interval as a site where images falter and cinematic form becomes a mode of thinking through crisis. Drawing from family VHS, viral media, 16mm, and digital diaries, *in the interval* explores how to poetically confront the limits of documentary visibility in racial and gendered regimes of visual control. Lalu Ozban's work-in-progress documents two collective porn-watching events—one in Istanbul in 2021, another in Santa Cruz in 2026—examining how communal viewing might function as a practice of transfeminist solidarity. Filming the second event with thermal cameras, Ozban prioritizes heat and presence over legible identity, enacting a “poetics of anonymity” and repurposing technologies often used for surveillance. Nile Tan's documentary *As If I'm Here, As If I'm Not* explores visibility in contemporary politics and data driven surveillance. Using haptic abstraction, voice modulation, and glitch aesthetics, Tan asks what we can learn from existing illegibility strategies. Across all three works, poetic explorations of (in)visibility are framed not as aesthetic preferences but as conditions of political expression.

**SESSION 11                      2:30 - 4:00 pm                      DARC 306**

***Mediations of Place***

**Eli Boonin-Vail, EB Landesberg, Liz Miller**

**[Moderated by Selmin Kara]**

Place is a starting point for these presenters to interrogate larger systems. EB Landesberg's work-in-progress film *Con Todo Combina* examines Peru's Inca Kola in order to trace entangled histories and “the legacies of colonialism as

they are felt in everyday life.” Through juxtaposing various forms of production—capitalist, cultural, historical—Landesberg asks about the aesthetics of global capitalism and the construction of national imaginaries. Eli Boonin-Vail's video essay *Panorama of Western State Penitentiary* considers an abandoned Pittsburgh prison repurposed as a film set in order to explore the relationship between prisons and media. Through presenting excerpts from the film alongside historical contexts, theoretical underpinnings, and an exploration of the artistic process, Boonin-Vail “proposes reflexive methods for researching images under carceral capitalism.” Liz Miller's collaborative installation *In the Wake of the Hochelaga Archipelago* follows the water infrastructures shaping Tioh:tiáke/Montréal. Through a practice dedicated to “the poetics and politics of water, waste, consumption, collaboration and place-based documentary methods,” Miller interrogates how technological representations, such as aerial imagery, and documentary methods including non-linear forms, can create alternate imaginaries.

**COFFEE / TEA BREAK                      4:00 - 4:30 pm                      DARC LOBBY**

**SESSION 12                      4:30 - 6:00 pm                      DARC 108**

***Frictional Filmmaking***

**Chico Pereira, Brett Kashmere and Solomon Turner, Jackson Kroopf**

**[Moderated by Maya Scherr-Willson]**

How does history exert its pressure on the present moment? Pereira's *Fiction Enters Town* (working title), emerged from the experience of making his previous film—where a reenactment of a miner's strike from the 1980s activated collective memory, energized public discourse and inspired political action, all the while being dismissed by local authorities as “only fiction.” The new project probes the distinctions between ‘reality’ and ‘fiction’ even further by testing whether cinema can intervene where reality itself seems to stall. In a presentation on their collaboratively produced film, *Hundred Yard Universe*, Kashmere and Turner speculate about the historical imaginary of American football: how the ‘now’ is shaped by cultural forces and how the future might emerge through a collective processing of physical, emotional, and political traumas. Kroopf's hybrid non-fiction film project *The Art of Survival (or What in the Son-of-a-Bitchin-Fuck IS That?)* features 97 year-old acting teacher, movement artist, and Holocaust survivor Maria Wida. Her simultaneous desire for representation and also her resistance against it, sets the stage for the film's query of imaginary and historical selves.

## **SYMPOSIUM DINNER**

*for symposium presenters and moderators only*

**7:00 pm - 10:00 pm**

**SYMPOSIUM DINNER AT THE UCSC FARM CENTER**

*created and prepared by Linh Amanda Vong*

### **ABOUT THE UCSC FARM**

Founded in 1971, the 30-acre, certified organic farm includes handworked gardens of annual and perennial food, medicinal, and ornamental crops, mechanically cultivated row crops, orchards, and research plots. Students, staff, and researchers use both the farm and Chadwick Garden as research and teaching sites. The Center's offices, the agroecology laboratory, greenhouses and hoop houses, and an ecological aquaculture greenhouse are among the facilities located at the farm. The dinner will be held next to The Greenhouse Project (Instagram @the\_greenhouse\_project), an intergenerational educational space that centers art, food, and climate justice. For more information about the UCSC farm, visit <https://agroecology.ucsc.edu/>

### **GETTING TO DINNER**

The dinner will be held at the UCSC Farm Center, which is a 22 minute walk from the DARC building. We will be leading a group walk for those who would like to walk over after the last presentation. Note that the walk includes some unpaved terrain. We'll also have one small shuttle bus available outside the DARC, also leaving shortly after the last Saturday presentation, to transport attendees who prefer to ride to the Farm Center and do not have cars. This shuttle can also transport people back to the DARC at the end of the evening. If you have your own car, we encourage you to drive to the dinner venue. Please use the Cowell Hay Barn parking lot to park and Lot 116 if the Hay Barn lot is full, and then walk (around 9 minutes) up to the Farm Center. QR codes are provided for mapping both walks and for more detailed parking instructions for those who need it. Your purchased 'A' parking permits will work in these lots. Carpooling is encouraged (and we will help facilitate this).



**DARC TO FARM CENTER WALK**



**HAY BARN PARKING**



**HAY BARN TO FARM CENTER WALK**

## SUNDAY MAY 17th

**MORNING COFFEE / TEA 9:00 - 10:00 am DARC LOBBY**

**[SESSIONS 13 + 14 ARE CONCURRENT PRESENTATIONS]**

**SESSION 13 10:00 am - 11:30 am DARC 108**

### ***Balancing the Scales***

**Jason Fox, Paige Sarlin, Sharon Daniel**

**[Moderated by Pooja Rangan]**

Positioned at the nexus of journalistic and documentary discourses, this panel engages with national narratives of fairness and justice. Fox's work-in-progress, a feature-length live cinema project, *A Social History of Fairness*, explores forms and frameworks for judgment animating various scenes of modern athletic spectacle across the 20th and 21st centuries, suggesting that there is much to learn here about our American purposes and desires; the collective satisfactions we think we seek. Sarlin's presentation considers how 'interview work'-- the production, reproduction, editing, and representation of interviews --has been drawn into the politics of the present. Using the October 2024 *60 Minutes* interview with Kamala Harris as a case study, Sarlin considers the status of editing in recent attempts to establish ethical norms for documentary practice. Daniel's multi-part, multi-media project, *Reasonable Doubt*, examines the subjective nature of investigation and the ephemerality, instability and opacity of "evidence" -- exploring the failure science and law, ethics and aesthetics, politics and representation, in efforts to resist structural racism, capitalism and corruption.

**SESSION 14 10:00 am - 11:30 am DARC 306**

### ***Physical Imprints***

**Abigail Raphael Collins, Sophie Hamacher, Kym McDaniel**

**[Moderated by Inês Pedrosa e Melo]**

The sensing, feeling, resilient and, also, vulnerable body is both a site of inquiry and the location from which these three presenters stage questions about ethics, care and the medicalized body. Collins' early stage project, *Machine Listening*, explores how listening from within and to the constraints of the disabled body can offer antidotes for AI's bodiless prioritization of homogeneity. This work centers the interlocking sonic experiences of Collins and her father, in relation to their disabilities, professional voice over work, and what they each stand to lose from AI generated speech and listening.

Hamacher's multimedia installation, *Piece of My Heart: A Laboratory* asks how visual systems—like medical imaging and surveillance—shape our perception of care, vulnerability, and the body. Through an essayistic video address, ceramic speakers, and silkscreen prints, the work explores how political and environmental forces inscribe themselves on the human heart, a simultaneous metaphorical and tangible organ. In her in-progress film, *Memory Recall*, McDaniel uses animation, montage theory, and text-on-screen to explore trauma narratives. The film is both a method of processing embodied trauma as well as an invitation to question and resist medicalized and depersonalized approaches to the topic and experience of trauma.

**SESSION 15 11:30 am - 1:00 pm DARC 108**

### ***Common Threads***

**Ernest Larsen and Sherry Millner, Alex Johnston, Jeanne C. Finley**

**[Moderated by Anita Wen-Shing Chang]**

Through practices of engaged collaboration, this panel imagines how filmmaking can enact care and relationship building processes. In a presentation on their in-progress experimental essay film, *Uprooted*, Larsen and Millner reflect upon the "complex, anti-authoritarian poetics, rooted in and uprooted from the multiply determining contexts" in which the film and the filmmakers themselves are embedded. Johnston explores the intimate nature of his in progress film, *Cozy Cuddly, Armed and Dangerous: A Film with the George Jackson Brigade*. His presentation considers the film's acts of relational and political entanglement and ponders the ways we learn and listen and teach and love one another amidst historical periods of dislocation, isolation, and precarity. An extended meditation on the necessary and complex nature of hope-- as an orientation of the heart-- Finley will discuss her latest documentary *A Radical Thread*.

**CLOSING REMARKS 1:00 pm - 1:30 pm DARC 108**

## RESOURCES:

### Online Schedule

A downloadable PDF version of this program is available at <https://poeticsandpolitics.sites.ucsc.edu/2026-program/>

### Internet Access

- 1) Select UCSC-Guest from the list of available wireless networks on your device.
- 2) Once selected, a page with an Acceptable Use Policy will open
- 3) Read through the Acceptable Use Policy and select Accept.
- 4) Once connected, you will be taken to a success connection screen.

### Social Media Tags

#poeticsandpolitics5

### Parking

Deatiled information about parking is on our website at <https://poeticsand-politics.ucsc.edu/travel-and-accommodation/#parking>

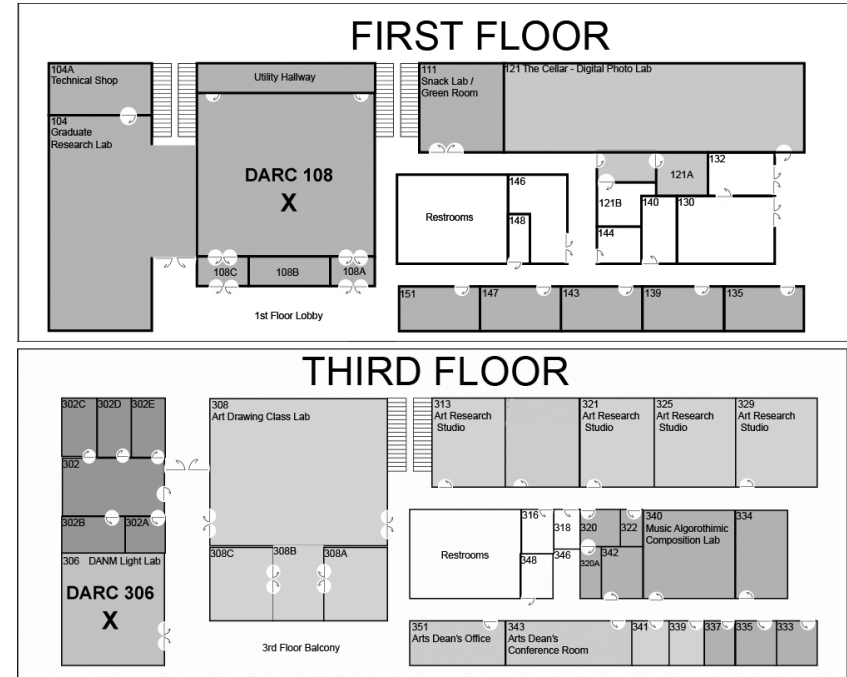
### Coffee, Tea, and Food

Lunch is provided on Friday and Saturday for registered symposium participants with badges. Coffee and tea service is provided in the morning and afternoon on Friday and Saturday, as well as on Sunday morning.

### Maps

Campus maps are available at: <http://maps.ucsc.edu/>

## DARC Building Floor Plan



## PARTICIPANTS

### NADIA AHMED

***UC Santa Barbara | [nadia\\_ahmed@ucsb.edu](mailto:nadia_ahmed@ucsb.edu)***

Nadia is a PhD candidate in the English department at UCSB whose research examines the cultural and political life of temporary waters. She studies ephemerality as an ecological reality and a strategy for resisting imperial claims to permanence.

### EMILY ROSE APTER

***Solidarity Media Network | [emily@solidaritymedianetwork.org](mailto:emily@solidaritymedianetwork.org)***

Emily Rose Apter is a Brooklyn-based cultural worker, whose work explores overlapping spheres of cultural production, (counter)archives, labor, and collective struggle. She works in public programming for film and cultural heritage organizations, most recently as Director of Programming at Maysles Documentary Center in Harlem. Currently, Emily oversees programming and special projects for Solidarity Media Network and is co-teaching “Necrophilanthropy: Nonprofit Killers, Cultural Work, and the Carceral State” at The New Centre for Research & Practice this spring. Emily has programmed at cinemas, museums, and schools around the country including: Maysles Cinema, Spectacle, Mayday Space, Museum of the City of NY, City College, Pratt University, the Film-Makers’ Cooperative, among others. She has written for The Baffler, Screen Slate, Millennium Film Journal, Analog Cookbook, Cinémovil, and Chute Film Coop.

### ELI BOONIN-VAIL

***University At Albany, SUNY | [eboonin-vail@albany.edu](mailto:eboonin-vail@albany.edu)***

Eli Boonin-Vail is a Lecturer and the director of the Film Studies Minor at University at Albany, State University of New York. His research focuses on American cinemas, Hollywood and independent, and their relationship to the prison industrial complex in the 20th and 21st centuries. He has contributed to the edited collections *Desegregating Comics* and *A Century of 16mm* and published articles in *Film Criticism*, *French Screen Studies*, *The Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, and *Music, Sound, and The Moving Image*, and is currently in final revisions for an article in *JCMS*. He has also published video essays in *InMediaRes* and *[in]Transition*, which hosts the video he will show at the symposium along with accompanying essays by Alison Griffiths and Martine Beugnet.

### ANITA WEN-SHIN CHANG

***California State University, East Bay | [anita.chang@csueastbay.edu](mailto:anita.chang@csueastbay.edu)***

Anita Wen-Shin Chang was born to parents who immigrated to the U.S. from Taiwan in the 1960s, fleeing a dictatorship. Chang received her BA from Tufts University, an MFA from San Francisco State University, and her PhD in Film and Digital Media from UC Santa Cruz. Chang works with various media forms, including film, digital video, photography, installation and the web. Her research and creative works focus on the experiences of women and girls, minorities, immigrants, exiles, and disenfranchised communities. They engage with and complicate discourses on (post)colonialism, ethnography, diaspora, race, gender and cross-cultural representation. Grant awards include Creative Capital, Fulbright, San Francisco Arts Commission, and National Geographic. Chang has taught film production and media studies in the Bay Area, Nepal and Taiwan, including the Department of Indigenous Languages and Communication at National Dong Hwa University. She is associate professor of communication at Cal State East Bay.

### ABIGAIL RAPHAEL COLLINS

***[abigail.r.collins@gmail.com](mailto:abigail.r.collins@gmail.com)***

Abigail Raphael Collins uses video installation and experimental non-fiction to listen to what is considered unspeakable. Her work explores what gets passed on through generations, outside of language: the gaps, silences, and stutters in intimate and historical dialog. Recent exhibitions and screenings have been at REDCAT, Union Docs, A.I.R Gallery, CAC Gallery, Johnson Museum of Art, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, and Pasadena Armory. She received a BFA from Cooper Union and a MFA from UCLA. Collins is the recipient of a New York State Council for the Arts Award, CalArts Research & Practice Fellowship Program, FCA Emergency grant, Toby Devan Lewis Fellowship, and is a former resident at Seoul Art Space Geumcheon and Shandaken Projects.

### ĐOAN HOÀNG CURTIS

***[info@ohsaigon.com](mailto:info@ohsaigon.com)***

Đoan Hoàng Curtis is an award-winning documentary director and producer. A former child refugee, her work highlights overlooked voices in narratives of war, conflict, trauma, and reconciliation. As series producer for Netflix’s Emmy-nominated *Turning Point: The Vietnam War* (2025, debuted at #3 internationally), Đoan has reshaped how audiences engage with the Vietnam War. Her documentary *Oh, Saigon: A War in the Family* — about her

family's escape on the last helicopter out of Saigon — won the Grand Jury Prize at the LA Asian Pacific Film Festival and Best Feature Documentary at the Brooklyn Arts Council International Film Festival. She has received grants from Sundance, Firelight Media/National Endowment for the Humanities, ITVS/Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Center for Asian American Media, Open Society, International Documentary Association, and the Ms. Foundation, plus a 2025 Global Peace & Legacy Award. Her work has been exhibited at museums such as MoMA in NYC, embassies, and festivals across five continents, streaming on Netflix, Amazon, Hulu, and Criterion.

#### **SHARON DANIEL**

***UC Santa Cruz | [sdaniel@ucsc.edu](mailto:sdaniel@ucsc.edu)***

Sharon Daniel is a media artist who creates online artworks and multimedia installations that examine social, racial, and environmental injustice. The interactive documentaries and installations Daniel has co-authored with incarcerated people, homeless injection drug users, and victims and offenders participating in restorative justice mediation have been exhibited internationally in museums and festivals. Her work has been supported by Rockefeller (2007), Fulbright (2017), and Guggenheim (2023-24) Foundation Fellowships. She has been honored by the Webby Awards and included in the "Yerba Buena Center for the Arts 100," a list of innovative cultural changemakers. Daniel is a professor in the Department of Film and Digital Media at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

#### **HELEN DE MICHIEL**

***California College of the Arts | [helen@thirtyleaves.org](mailto:helen@thirtyleaves.org)***

Helen De Michiel is a filmmaker, author, and independent media leader based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Her accomplishments in documentary, narrative, and new media have earned her prestigious awards and fellowships. Her films are included in media collections at The Museum of Modern Art in New York, The Exploratorium in San Francisco, and The Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. She co-authored *Open Space New Media Documentary: A Toolkit for Theory and Practice*, and writes on issues in documentary practice, including co-creative/participatory filmmaking and community engagement. She teaches in the Film Department at California College of the Arts and currently serves on the board of directors of the Documentary Producers Alliance. Her latest feature documentary, *Between the Sun and the Sidewalk* (2024), is touring US and international venues as she experiments with new forms of community-based distribution.

#### **ARTURO DELGADO PEREIRA**

***Aalto University | [arturo.delgado@aalto.fi](mailto:arturo.delgado@aalto.fi)***

Arturo Delgado Pereira (aka Chico Pereira) is a Spanish filmmaker working as an Assistant Professor in Documentary Film at Aalto University, Finland. Chico's debut feature-length documentary, *Pablo's Winter* (2012), won awards at DOK-Leipzig, IDFA, and Full Frame, and it opened the 2013 MoMA Documentary Fortnight in NYC. *Donkeyote* (2017) premiered at 2017 International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) and won several awards including Best Feature Documentary Film at 2017 Edinburgh International Film Festival, and the 2017 International Documentary Association (IDA) Creative Recognition for Best Writing. His latest feature documentary, *11 Underground* (2025), mixes documentary reenactment, experimental ethnography and art as social practice in a former mining town and has also garnished some international film awards and recognition. Pereira holds a PhD in Film & Digital Media, (emphasis on Anthropology) from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and currently directs the Master's Programme in Documentary Film at Aalto University, Finland.

#### **JEANNE C. FINLEY**

***Californial College of the Arts (Emerita) | [jcfinley55@gmail.com](mailto:jcfinley55@gmail.com)***

Jeanne C. Finley works in film, video, photography, and installation. These expanded cinema projects and hybrid documentaries utilize a variety of forms including sculpture, drawings, film, site-specific projections, and engaged participatory events to reflect on the contested past, the turbulent present, and the unpredictable future. She has received numerous grants including the Rockefeller Media Arts Fellowship, Guggenheim Fellowship, Creative Capital Foundation, Cal Arts / Alpert Award and NEA. Her films have shown at festivals and Museums throughout the world including, SF International Film Festival, Mill Valley Film Festival, True/False Film Festival, Tokyo Film Festival, Seoul International Film Festival, Amsterdam Int. Doc Festival, NY MOMA, SF MOMA, Pompidou Center, among others. Finley has created projects through residencies at the Wexner Center Media Arts Program, Headlands Center for the Arts, the Camargo Foundation in France, the Arts Link Fellowship in Bosnia and Kazakhstan, the Fulbright Fellowship in Belgrade and the Lila Wallace Readers Digest Foundation in Istanbul, among others.

### **JASON FOX**

**World Records / New York University | [jason@worldrecordsjournal.org](mailto:jason@worldrecordsjournal.org)**

Jason Fox is a filmmaker, teacher, and editor. He is the founding editor of *World Records*, published with New York University's Center for Media, Culture and History.

### **ANNA FRIZ**

**UC Santa Cruz | [afriz@ucsc.edu](mailto:afriz@ucsc.edu)**

Anna Friz, Ph.D., is a transmission, sound, and media artist, and media studies scholar. Her research reflects upon media ecologies, land and land use, infrastructures, time perception and durational media works, radio and transmission art histories, and critical fictions. She specializes in self-reflexive radio for broadcast, installation or performance, where radio is the source, subject, and medium of the work. Anna is a 2023 Guggenheim Fellow, and won the Karl Sczuka Prize for Radio Art/Ars Acoustica in 2024. She has presented work internationally since 1998 and her radio artworks have been commissioned by national public radio in Canada, Australia, Austria, Finland, Germany, Denmark, and Spain, and heard on public and independent airwaves all over the world. Anna is currently Associate Professor in the Film and Digital Media Department at University of California, Santa Cruz.

### **JOHN GREYSON**

**York University | [johngreyzone@gmail.com](mailto:johngreyzone@gmail.com)**

John Greyson is an award-winning queer Toronto video/film artist, whose features, shorts and transmedia works include: *Unauthorized Amplification Devices* (2026), *Gauze* (2025), *Door Prize* (2025), *Death Mask* (2024), *Photo Booth* (2023), *International Dawn Chorus Day* (2020), *Mercurial* (2018), *Gazonto* (2016), *Murder in Passing* (2013), *Fig Trees* (2009), *Proteus* (2003), *Lilies* (1996), *Zero Patience* (1993), *The Making of Monsters* (1991) and *Urial* (1989).

### **KRISTY GUEVARA-FLANAGAN**

**UCLA | [kgflanagan@tft.ucla.edu](mailto:kgflanagan@tft.ucla.edu)**

Kristy Guevara-Flanagan is an award-winning documentary filmmaker whose genre-defying work explores gender, power, and cultural mythologies. Her films have screened at Tribeca, SXSW, Sundance, and Hot Docs, and aired on Starz, BBC, and PBS. Her feature *Wonder Women! The Untold Story of American Superheroines* (2013) examines Wonder Woman's feminist legacy, while *What Happened to Her* (2016), about the "dead woman" trope in film, won

the Grand Jury Prize at the Dallas International Film Festival. *Águilas* (2021), focused on volunteers searching for missing migrants, was acquired by The New Yorker and shortlisted for an Academy Award. Her recent feature *Body Parts* (2022) investigates the hidden labor behind Hollywood sex scenes. She co-founded the Abortion Clinic Film Collective and teaches documentary at UCLA, where she leads the MFA program.

### **IRENE GUSTAFSON**

**UC Santa Cruz | [ireneg@ucsc.edu](mailto:ireneg@ucsc.edu)**

Irene Gustafson is a documentary filmmaker and writer. She works as Associate Professor at the Department of Film and Digital Media, UCSC. Her films and videos have screened nationally and internationally and her writing has appeared in *[in]Transition*, *Camera Obscura*, *The Journal of Visual Culture*, *The Moving Image*, *Cinema Journal Dossier* and *Spectator*. Her work, both audiovisual and written, explores a discrete set of interests: essayistic modes of production; non-fiction media production, history and theory; and questions of identity, visual style, gender and sexuality.

### **DEEDEE HALLECK**

**UC San Diego (Emerita) | [dhalleck@ucsd.edu](mailto:dhalleck@ucsd.edu)**

DeeDee Halleck is a media activist, founder of Paper Tiger Television and co-founder of the Deep Dish Satellite Network, the first grass roots community television network. Her first film, *Children Make Movies* (1961), documented a project at the Lillian Wald Settlement in Lower Manhattan. Her film *Mural on Our Street* (1964) was nominated for an Academy Award in 1965. She founded film workshops at Henry Street Settlement (1963-66) and Otisville State School for Boys in 1968. As President of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) in the nineteen seventies, Halleck led a media reform campaign in Washington, organizing union and civil rights organizations to support efforts to make "public television public" and to include required funding for independent diverse producers. She testified twice before the House Sub-Committee on Telecommunications for increased support and channel space for independent video and film. This work led to "sunshine legislation" which meant that public television entities have to have open books, open meetings and local community advisory boards. The campaign ultimately developed ITVS, POV and other independent outlets. She has served as a trustee of the American Film Institute, Women Make Movies and the Instructional Telecommunications Foundation. She was Chair of the WBAI-FM Local Station Board (2019-2023). Her book,

*Hand-Held Visions: The Impossible Possibilities of Community Media* (2002), is published by Fordham Press. She co-authored *Public Broadcasting and the Public Interest* (2003) and has written essays for a number of collections about independent media. Halleck is an official representative of the Non-Commercial Users Constituency (NCUC) of ICANN (The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) which is the only official regulatory body of the internet. Halleck has received four awards for life-time achievement: an Indy from AIVF, The George Stoney Award from the Alliance for Community Media; The Lifetime Achievement Award of the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC), and the Dallas Smythe Award from the Union for Democratic Communication, 2008. She is Professor Emerita in the Department of Communication at the University of California at San Diego.

#### **SOPHIE HAMACHER**

**Maine College of Art & Design | shamacher@gmail.com**

Sophie Hamacher is an artist, teacher, and curator whose multidisciplinary work spans film, printmaking, ceramics, and text. She investigates media histories, surveillance, and medical imaging and her work moves between independent studio practice and collaborative projects with artists, scientists, and scholars. She is the editor of *Supervision: On Motherhood and Surveillance* (MIT Press, 2023), a wide-ranging anthology of art and writing that examines the impact of surveillance on contemporary motherhood. She teaches at the Maine College of Art & Design.

#### **SUSANNA HELKE**

**Aalto University | susanna.helke@aalto.fi**

Susanna Helke is an associate professor, head of research, and director of the Critical Cinema Lab in the Department of Film at Aalto University in Finland. She is an award-winning filmmaker and theorist whose films—such as *American Vagabond* (2013) and *Ruthless Times: Songs of Care* (2022)—have screened at major international festivals, including IDFA, the Locarno International Film Festival, and Visions du Réel. Her work has received numerous domestic and international honors, including the Zonta Club Award at Locarno, the Jury Special Prize at the Chicago International Film Festival, three Best Scandinavian Documentary Awards at Nordisk Panorama, and the Finnish Academy Award for Best Documentary. Her artistic research investigates performative strategies for articulating the political and examines the intersection of the poetics and politics of documentary cinema, engaging with contemporary political philosophy and critical theory. Her recent theo-

retical work has critically addressed trends such as the “therapeutic turn” in Scandinavian creative documentary film.

#### **ÆRYKA JOURDAINE HOLLIS O’NEIL**

**University of Toronto | aeryka.phd@gmail.com**

æryka jourdaine hollis o’neil, PhD, MFA is a scholar, writer, and filmmaker whose work examines Black trans aesthetics, experimental documentary, and the political ontology of cinematic form. She is Assistant Professor of Trans Cinema and Media at the University of Toronto, jointly appointed in the Cinema Studies Institute and the Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies. hollis o’neil holds a PhD in Black Studies and an MFA in Documentary Media from Northwestern University, where she also earned graduate certificates in Critical Theory and Gender and Sexuality Studies. Her writing appears in *Feminist Theory*, *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, and *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory*. Alongside her scholarship, she maintains a creative research practice in hybrid nonfiction film; her film *in the interval* received the Jury Award for Best Experimental Short at the New Orleans Film Festival and has screened at venues and festivals including Prismatic Ground, MIX NYC, Onion City Experimental Film Festival, San Francisco Documentary Festival, and Harvard University.

#### **TATUM HOWEY**

**UC San Diego | thowey@ucsd.edu**

Tatum Howey is a doctoral candidate whose work circles around questions of visibility and the political implications and potentials of risk. They hold an MFA from California Institute of the Arts in Critical Studies and a specialization in Integrated Media. They were the collections assessment assistant for Vtape, a long-standing video art distributor in Canada. Their in-progress documentary was selected by the Research & Development Lab led by Su Kim at UnionDocs. They also attended the Open City Documentary Festival’s “Another Gaze Critics Workshop” run by Daniella Shreir. In 2024, they were invited to participate in Banff International Curatorial Institute’s Art, Writing, Practice residency with scholars Macarena Gómez-Barris, Tina Campt, Saidiya Hartman, and Jack Halberstam. Their work has been featured in *Wonder Press*, *The Capilano Review*, *Commo Magazine*, *Mimesis: Film as Performance Magazine*, *Momus*, *Fieldnotes*, and *LUX*. Their poetry manuscript was shortlisted for the 2025 Metatron International Poetry Prize.

**CHISATO (CHISA) HUGHES*****chisahughes@gmail.com***

Chisato (Chisa) Hughes is interested in film as a way of enabling new forms of relating and worldbuilding. Their hybrid documentary, *Many Moons*, distributed by Third World Newsreel, examines relationships between Chinese and Native communities in Humboldt County shaped by and resisting settler violence. In Fall 2025, Chisa directed their short fiction screenplay, *Behind the Horizon Line*, with Timetides Film Cooperative. Chisa's work has screened at SFMOMA, UCLA Film & Television Archive, UC Santa Cruz's Sesnon Institute for the Arts and Sciences, and Light Work, amongst others.

**AMIR HUSAK*****The New School | husaka@newschool.edu***

Amir Husak is a media maker and Assistant Professor of Media Studies at The New School. His work spans film, sound, and essayistic and interactive forms, exploring non-fiction media as a social practice with a focus on migration and memory. His works have screened at festivals and venues including Cinemateca Distrital Bogota, Sarajevo Film Festival, Stadtmuseum Graz, and Anthology Film Archives. In 2016, Husak co-edited *Crisis, Art, Action*, a volume on socially engaged art in Southeastern Europe. His writing on documentary and activist media has appeared in venues such as *e-flux* and *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, among others. A Fulbright Fellow at Humboldt University in Berlin in 2013, he holds a PhD from the University of Leeds and serves as Artistic Director of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Film Festival in New York.

**HANNAH JAYANTI*****UC Santa Cruz | hjayanti@ucsc.edu***

Hannah Jayanti is a documentary filmmaker and organizer whose work spans films, performances, installations, and community projects. Through a collaborative process these combine documentary with emerging technologies alongside social practices. Her work has been supported by Sundance, Sandbox, Tribeca, Catapult, Points North, New York Council on the Arts, Jerome Foundation, among others, and exhibitions include Rotterdam, Sheffield, Dok Leipzig, Transmediale, Smithsonian, Museum of the Moving Image, New Yorker Festival. She is a PhD candidate at UCSC focusing on speculative documentaries, spatial knowledge practices, multi-format storytelling, and ethical collaborative practices. More at [www.hannahjayanti.com](http://www.hannahjayanti.com).

**ALEX JOHNSTON*****Seattle University | johnstonalex@seattleu.edu***

Alex is an award-winning abolitionist film + media maker, scholar, and educator, whose work focuses on trans-historical struggles for social justice and liberation. His films, including *Evidence of the Evidence*, *Dark Cell Harlem Farm*, and *NOW! AGAIN!* have screened at a wide range of venues, including the Berlinale, Sheffield Doc/Fest, New Orleans Film Festival, London Short Film Festival, and the Colfax Medical Center, a convalescent home for retired hard rock and coal miners in rural New Mexico. He was a founding editor of the radical online media journal *NOW! A Journal of Urgent Praxis*, and is an associate professor of Film + Media at Seattle University.

**ALEXANDRA JUHASZ*****Brooklyn College, CUNY | Alexandra.Juhasz@brooklyn.cuny.edu***

Dr. Alexandra Juhasz is a Distinguished Professor of Film at Brooklyn College, CUNY. She makes and studies committed media practices that contribute to political change and individual and community growth. She is the author of work on feminist and Black lesbian media, most recently with Yvonne Welbon, *Sisters in the Life: A History of Out African American Media Making* (Duke 2018); AIDS, most recently, *We Are Having this Conversation Now: The Times of AIDS Cultural Production* (with Ted Kerr, Duke, 2022); and fake (and real) documentaries, most recently, *Really Fake* (with Nishant Shah and Ganaele Langlois, Minnesota and meson Presses, 2021). Her (currently censored) VHS Activism Archive holds records of all her tapes collected about the issues raised above. Most recently (Fall 2025) her *HOLDING PATTERNS*, takes the form of an installation about archives, grief, AIDS, and research and is showing at ONE Archives in Los Angeles and the Center in NYC. See: [pleaseholdvideo.com](http://pleaseholdvideo.com) for more.

**SELMIN KARA*****UC Santa Cruz | sekara@ucsc.edu***

Selmin Kara is an Associate Professor at the Department of Film and Digital Media at UCSC. Her primary research interests are environmental media, digital aesthetics, and documentary sound. Selmin is the co-editor of *Contemporary Documentary* and *Cybermedia: Explorations in Science, Sound, and Vision*.

**BRETT KASHMERE*****brett.d.kashmere@gmail.com***

Brett Kashmere is a filmmaker, curator, and writer living in Oakland, California. His creative and scholarly practice reframes dominant narratives about sports and illuminates new perspectives and histories. Kashmere's films and videos have screened at the BFI London Film Festival, Milano Film Festival, Kassel Documentary Festival, Ann Arbor Film Festival, Museum of Contemporary Photography, UnionDocs, Conversations at the Edge, CROSSROADS, and the Wexner Center for the Arts. He is executive director of Canyon Cinema Foundation, founding editor of *INCITE Journal of Experimental Media*, and co-editor of *Craig Baldwin: Avant to Live!* Kashmere holds an MA in Film Studies and an MFA in Studio Art from Concordia University and a PhD in Film & Digital Media from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

**KEISHA KNIGHT*****Solidarity Media Network | keisha@solidaritymedianetwork.org***

Keisha Nicole Knight is a researcher and media organizer based in Los Angeles, California. She is the founder of Sentient.Art.Film and Solidarity Media Network. She is also a doctoral candidate in Film and Visual Studies at Harvard University where her study focuses on image circulation and visual economy.

**EVA KNOPF*****Universität Bremen | eknopf@uni-bremen.de***

Eva Knopf is an award-winning filmmaker and film scholar whose work explores cultural borders and the shifting boundaries between documentary and fiction. Her films have screened at international festivals and are informed by her work in Ghana, Tanzania, Germany, and Myanmar. She studied Cultural Anthropology and Film Studies at the University of Göttingen, the University of Amsterdam, and the University of California, Berkeley, trained in directing at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, and earned her PhD in Film Studies from the University of Hamburg. Most recently, she was an artist-in-residence at the Goethe-Institut's Villa Kamogawa in Kyoto, Japan. She is a lecturer in artistic film practice at the University of Bremen and has contributed to research on the history of documentary film and its ongoing transformations. She lives in Berlin.

**JACKSON KROOPF*****jacksonkroopf@gmail.com***

Jackson Kroopf is a filmmaker and educator working across fiction, documentary, and hybrid forms. His films explore identity formation, place, and the social impact of storytelling, blending improvisation, interviews, scripted elements, and archival material. Jackson's films have screened at BFI London, Clermont-Ferrand, Outfest, and SFFILM, and have been featured by Vimeo Staff Picks, Short of the Week, and PBS. His short film *NASIR* won the Grand Jury Prize at DOC NYC and was distributed by the Los Angeles Times. As a Sundance Institute/NEH Fellow, he created performance-centered nonfiction work collaborating closely with elders to explore memory, influence, and intergenerational storytelling. Jackson has taught filmmaking at USC, Vassar College, and CalArts, as well as in youth and community programs across California and New York. He is currently a Lecturer in Cinematic Arts at UC San Diego.

**S. TOPIARY LANDBERG*****UC Santa Cruz | stopiary@ucsc.edu***

S Topiary Landberg is a multimedia artist, filmmaker, scholar, and curator focused on feminist, queer, and environmental subjects. Recent work includes the short essay film *Lesbian Custody* (2025), the podcast series *Animal-Vegetable-Mineral*. Her writing can be found in *Feminist Media Histories*, *Camera Obscura*, *Film Quarterly*, *JCMS*, the *Millennium Film Journal*, and in *Reclaiming Popular Documentary* (Indiana UP, 2021). Topiary's multimedia work has been presented in theaters, art galleries, and museums and in many film festivals across the US and internationally. In the 1990s, Topiary was part of the infamous spoken word tour *Sister Spit*. She has an MFA in Film/Video from Bard College, and a theory/practice PhD in Film & Digital Media from UCSC where currently lectures. For more info, see her website: [www.topiary.land](http://www.topiary.land)

**EB LANDESBERG*****University of South Carolina | elizabeth.landesberg@gmail.com***

EB Landesberg ([www.elizabethlandesberg.com](http://www.elizabethlandesberg.com)) is a filmmaker, educator, mother, and translator. She teaches filmmaking at the University of South Carolina, and has collaborated with young people through media workshops and community organizations around the world. She was an editor of the feature-length documentary *La memoria de las mariposas*, which premiered at the 2025 Berlin International Film Festival; and producer and editor of the cross-border collaborative documentary feature *Only the Ocean Between*

Us, created through Another Kind of Girl Collective, which had its world premiere at Hot Docs 2021. She is a member and programmer of Southern-Gauge, an itinerant screening series bringing new, independent, and experimental films to Columbia, SC.

#### **ERNEST LARSEN**

***elarsen3@aol.com***

Ernie Larsen is a novelist, filmmaker, media critic, and curator. He has collaborated with Sherry Millner on photo-text projects and many films including *Rock the Cradle* on the December '09 uprising in Greece and *How Do Animals and Plants Live?*, on the consequences of the demolition of a self-organized migrant squat in Thessaloniki, and *41 Shots*, the first film to skewer the racist 'broken windows' theory of policing that underpinned the notorious police killing of Amadou Diallo in New York City. His book *The Trial Before the Trial* (Autonomedia) chronicles his experiences as the first citizen in New York state history to be removed from a grand jury. He co-curated "Global Revolt: Cinematic Ammunition" for Flaherty NYC at Anthology Film Archives.

#### **JENNY LION**

***Duke University | jenny.lion@duke.edu***

Jenny Lion works with video in cinematic, participatory, activist, and installation contexts. She frequently collaborates, in groups and with individuals, and over long periods of time. Her current body of work explores landscape, militarism, and sustained observation at military, settler, indigenous, and industrial sites in the U.S. West. She has reenacted works of early video including Wendy Clarke's pioneering *The Love Tapes* and edited a book on Canadian artists video, *Magnetic North*. A resident at the Center for Land-Use Interpretation and Wexner Center, she is a 2021 Creative Capital Awardee and 2022 Guggenheim Fellow. She teaches at Duke University.

#### **MARTIN LUCAS**

***Hunter College, CUNY (Emeritus) | martin@martinlucas.net***

Martin is a filmmaker and educator. Since his first film, *Tighten Your Belts, Bite the Bullet* (NYFF, 1980) he has examined social injustice as it is embedded in cultural and technological systems of communications, economics and war. As a member of Paper Tiger TV, Martin was a producer of *The Gulf Crisis Television Project* (Whitney Biennial, 1993). His film *Hiroshima Bound* (2015) uses photography to reflect on America's collective memory of the atomic bombings of World War 2. Martin is Emeritus Associate Professor in the

Department of Film & Media Studies, Hunter College, CUNY, and co-author of *Documentary Voice and Vision: A Creative Approach to Non-fiction Media Production* (Focal Press, 2016). His writing has appeared in publications including *Afterimage*, *World Records Journal* and *Rethinking Marxism*. Most recently, he is a visiting curator with Shared Dialog, Shared Space, a social practice public space art project in New York's immigrant neighborhoods.

#### **IRENE LUSZTIG**

***UC Santa Cruz | ilusztig@ucsc.edu***

Irene Lusztig is a feminist filmmaker, archival researcher, educator, and amateur seamstress. She works in a space of delicate mediation between people, their pasts, and the present-tense spaces and landscapes where unresolved histories bloom and erupt. Her four feature length films *Reconstruction* (2001), *The Motherhood Archives* (2013), *Yours in Sisterhood* (2018), and *Richland* (2023) have been screened around the world. She has been awarded fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, among others. She teaches filmmaking at UC Santa Cruz where she is Professor of Film and Digital Media.

#### **KYM McDANIEL**

***The Ohio State University | info.kymmcdaniel@gmail.com***

Kym McDaniel is an interdisciplinary artist and experimental filmmaker working across fields of moving image, choreography, and disability studies. Her embodiment as a dancer living with chronic pain informs her relationship to time, the body, and movement in her work. She has recently screened at the Ann Arbor Film Festival, Images, Slamdance, The Whitney Humanities Center, Alchemy Film and Moving Image Festival, and at UnionDocs, among others. She currently teaches film and choreography as an Assistant Professor within the Department of Dance at The Ohio State University. [www.kymmcdaniel.com](http://www.kymmcdaniel.com)

#### **LIZ MILLER**

***Concordia University | elizabeth.miller@concordia.ca***

Elizabeth (Liz) Miller has two decades of experience in cross-platform documentary and environmental media. She is a Full Professor in Communication Studies at Concordia University. Her documentary projects (*SwampScapes*, *The Shore Line*, *WasteScapes*, *The Water Front*) have been showcased in galleries, theatres, science museums and site specific venues. Liz has written numerous articles about collaborative documentary, environmental media,

and place-based pedagogies. She is the co-author of *Going Public: The Art of Participatory Practice* (2018), a book that explores the ethics and challenges of co-creation. She has been an active member of the Association of Women in Television and Radio for two decades, sitting on the board and chairing the Documentary Committee. She is currently a jury member of the interactive board of the Peabody Awards.

#### **SHERRY MILLNER**

**College of Staten Island CUNY | millnershe@aol.com**

Sherry Millner has produced films, video, installations, photo-text pieces, and curatorial projects, exhibited in mainstream festivals, museums, and galleries as well as in cultural centers, squats, windows, and storefronts. She has created several ongoing series of photomontages and collages including the triptychs of “Forced Mobility: An Affective Physics” and the 500+ altered postcards of “No Respirator Included.” As co-creator of the collaborative video project *State of Emergency* (2003–2008) she involved 15 artists in protesting U.S. invasions of the Middle East. She made three anti-documentaries that re-define crime and a series of semi-autobiographical videos focusing on the structural relations between the nuclear family and American politics. At the Oberhausen Film Festival she co-curated “Border-Crossers and Trouble-Makers,” She is co-curator of *Disruptive Film*, a two volume DVD set of experimental short-form non-fiction political films and videos.

#### **REBECCA ORA / RORA**

**ora.rebecca@gmail.com**

Rebecca Ora (rora) works across video, performance, installation and writing to address taboo, controversial and urgent subjects, often through dark comedy. Her hybrid theory-practice doctoral dissertation at the University of California, Santa Cruz in Film & Digital Media is titled *Barbaric Poetry: Comedy, Obscenity & Art About the Holocaust*. At California College of the Arts, her MFA thesis film, *Watching Lillian*, was awarded the Toby Devan Lewis Fellowship. She has exhibited at the Contemporary Jewish Museum (San Francisco, CA); Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (San Francisco, CA); Chashama Art Space (Brooklyn, NY); Steven Wolf Fine Arts (San Francisco, CA); Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions/LACE (Los Angeles, CA) and Bergamot Gallery (Los Angeles, CA), among others. Her writing has appeared in museums publications, journals and books worldwide, including the peer-reviewed anthologies *Constructions of the Real: Intersections of Practice and Theory in Documentary-Based Filmmaking* (2022), and the forthcoming *Laughter in*

*War and Film and Genocide Vol,2.* <https://rebeccaora.net/>

#### **LALU OZBAN**

**UC Santa Cruz | eozban@ucsc.edu**

Lalu Ozban ( they/them) is a Laz lubunya who makes, curates, screens, archives, and researches still and moving images, building trans-local alliances across times, spaces, and movements. Their work moves between artistic, curatorial, and archival practices that challenge the hegemonic memory politics erasing queer, trans, and feminist histories and practices. Lalu is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Film and Digital Media at the University of California, Santa Cruz, pursuing designated emphases in Feminist Studies and Critical Race and Ethnic Studies. Lalu holds an MA in Film and Screen Studies from Goldsmiths, University of London and BA in Economics from Boğaziçi University.

#### **INÊS PEDROSA E MELO**

**UC Santa Cruz | inesmelo@ucsc.edu**

Inês Pedrosa e Melo is a documentary filmmaker, researcher, and Ph. D. student in Film and Digital Media at the University of California, Santa Cruz, whose critical-creative research practice intersects documentary studies with archival cinema, feminist film practices, memory and trauma studies, and histories/narratives of science, technology, medicine, and the body. Inês has an MFA in Documentary Film & Video Production from Stanford University and an MA in Visual Anthropology from NOVA University Lisbon.

#### **RAED EL RAFEI**

**University of Pittsburgh | raed.rafei@gmail.com**

Raed (El) Rafei is a filmmaker, film and media scholar, and multimedia journalist working across cinema, criticism, and queer cultural studies. He has worked as a journalist for international publications including *The Los Angeles Times*, as well as broadcast outlets such as CNN and Al Jazeera Documentary Channel. His award winning films, including *74 (The Reconstitution of a Struggle)* (2012), *Salam* (2017), and *Tripoli / A Tale of Three Cities* (2024), have screened at international film festivals and institutions including IDFA (Amsterdam), the Centre Pompidou (Paris), and the Pacific Film Archive (Berkeley). Rafei has contributed chapters to several edited volumes and his essays have appeared in *The New Review of Film and Television Studies*, *Mizna*, and *e-flux journal*. He is currently Assistant Professor of Film and Media Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. His research focuses on queer cinema

in the Arab region and its diasporas.

#### **POOJA RANGAN**

**Amherst College | [poojarangan@gmail.com](mailto:poojarangan@gmail.com)**

Pooja Rangan is Professor of English and Film and Media Studies at Amherst College and currently a Visiting Scholar at Visualizing Abolition, UC Santa Cruz. Her research focuses on the ethics and politics of justice-driven documentary. Rangan is the author of *The Documentary Audit: Listening and the Limits of Accountability* (Columbia University Press, 2025), *Thinking with an Accent* (coedited, University of California Press, 2023), and *Immediations: The Humanitarian Impulse in Documentary* (Duke University Press, 2017). She is currently co-authoring a book with filmmaker Brett Story on documentary as a site of carceral world-building and abolitionist struggle. Rangan is the recipient of the Harry Levin and René Wellek book prizes and co-edits the Investigating Visible Evidence book series at Columbia.

#### **ROSIE REED HILLMAN**

**Manchester Metropolitan University | [r.reed.hillman@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:r.reed.hillman@mmu.ac.uk)**

Rosie Reed Hillman is an award-winning filmmaker and visual anthropologist. She is known for her portraits of women and autoethnographic approach. Rosie directed and shot *Cailleach* (2014) which screened at over 30 festivals internationally winning 6 festival awards including Best Short at San Francisco International Film Festival. The film was long listed for an Academy Award in 2015 and acquired by the Criterion Channel. Rosie's work has screened at: SXSW, Riverrun Film Festival, Big Sky Film Festival, Edinburgh International Film Festival, Nashville Film Festival, Ashland Film Festival, Aesthetica Short Film Festival, Short Shorts Asia, Royal Anthropological Institute Film Festival and Glasgow Short Film Festival among many others. As a scholar Rosie's practice based feminist research explores women's everyday lives focusing on life cycle, identity, place, spirituality and class. Rosie is currently developing two feature documentaries and is lecturer in filmmaking at Manchester Metropolitan University, UK.

#### **AMY REID**

**UC Santa Cruz | [amcreid@ucsc.edu](mailto:amcreid@ucsc.edu)**

Amy Reid is a filmmaker whose work examines the intersections between gender, national identity, and labor. Reid's work questions how labor is constructed in the filmic form through feature length films, video installations, and texts. These multi-year projects, often working closely with a

group—long haul female truckers, quilters, e-commerce sellers—premise upon collaboration, performance, and experimentation. Reid received her BFA from The Cooper Union in 2009 and her MFA in 2017 from the University of California, San Diego. Reid is an alumnus of The Whitney Independent Study Program. Currently she is a PhD Candidate in Film and Digital Media at the University of California, Santa Cruz finishing her dissertation *Feminist Relationality in the Americas: Women's Practices in Filmmaking & Quilting*. Reid's dissertation considers the aesthetic and political practices of feminist filmmakers from the 1970s in relation to her own filmmaking and work as a film programmer. Part of her dissertation is a feature-length 16mm and video experimental film looking at women, quilting, and 19th and 20th century US history entitled *Grandmother's Garden*.

#### **MIKO REVEREZA**

**[miko.revereza@gmail.com](mailto:miko.revereza@gmail.com)**

Miko Revereza (b. 1988, Manila, Philippines) is an award-winning experimental filmmaker raised in California and currently residing in Oaxaca City. His upbringing as an undocumented immigrant and current exile from the United States informs his relationship to moving images. He has made a series of personal documentaries informed by his experiences with migration and exile: *DROGA!* (2014), *Disintegration 93–96* (2017), *No Data Plan* (2018), *Distancing* (2019), *El Lado Quieto* (2021), and *Nowhere Near* (2023). These works have been screened at festivals and institutions such as Locarno, TIFF, NYFF, and MoMA. *No Data Plan* is recognized with such honors as the Sheffield Doc Fest Art Award, and was listed in BFI's Sight & Sound Magazine's 50 Best Films of 2019, Hyperallergic's Top 12 Documentary and Experimental Films of 2019, and CNN Philippines' Best Filipino Films of 2019. *Nowhere Near* (recipient of Hubert Bals Fund) was among Film Comment's Best Undistributed Films of 2023 and CNN Philippines' Best Filipino Films of 2023. Revereza was included in *Filmmaker Magazine*'s New Faces of Independent Cinema, is a Flaherty Seminar featured filmmaker, and is a recipient of the 2021 Vilcek Prize in Filmmaker. He holds an MFA from Bard College, Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts. His films are distributed by LUX, and he is the co-founder of Cinema Antena in San Agustín Etla.

**LIZ ROBERTS****CU Boulder | [lizrobertszero@gmail.com](mailto:lizrobertszero@gmail.com)**

Liz Roberts is an artist filmmaker and researcher who uses critical media practices to engage community health archives, harm reduction organizing techniques, and potentials for liberatory care. Her short film, *Love is the Drug*, on the history of queer feminist needle exchange in Santa Cruz, California was commissioned by Visual AIDS for a presentation at MoMA PS1 in 2025, premiered internationally at the 2026 Open City Documentary Festival in London, and was selected for a 2026 Creative Capital Award to be expanded into a feature length film. Roberts is a practitioner with lived experience. Her personal documentary, *Midwaste*, has been supported by BAVC Media's MediaMaker Fellowship, SFFILM's Rainin Grant for Filmmakers with Disabilities, the International Documentary Association's Nonfiction Access Initiative, and the Berkeley Film Foundation. She has held teaching positions at The Ohio State University, Denison University, and Columbus College of Art & Design.

**MARY JIRMANUS SABA****UC Santa Cruz | [mjirmanus@ucsc.edu](mailto:mjirmanus@ucsc.edu)**

Mary Jirmanus Saba is a geographer who uses film and other media to explore the histories of labor movement and anticolonialism in the Arab world and its connections to Indigenous cosmovisions in the Americas, feminist internationalism, and new transformative possibilities. Saba's debut feature *A Feeling Greater Than Love* (2017) received the FIPRESCI International Critics Prize at the Berlinale Forum and went on to make several "Best of 2017" film lists. Upon its theatrical release in Beirut, the film sparked intense debate on feminism, history, and women in politics in the Lebanese press. Saba's writing has appeared in *Antipode*, *Critical Times*, *The Guardian*, *Public Source* and the *LA Progressive* among other venues. Saba's research and artistic practice has been supported by the New England Arts Foundation, the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC), Boston Arts and Culture Office, and the Asian Cinema Fund, among others. Saba's latest film *Mahdi Amel in Gaza* (2024) is screening in community centers, public spaces, and also festivals. Saba is a Fellow at the Harvard Film Study Center and a Presidential Postdoctoral Fellow at University of California Santa Cruz in Film and Digital Media.

**LYNNE SACHS****[lynnesachs@gmail.com](mailto:lynnesachs@gmail.com)**

Lynne Sachs is a filmmaker and poet living in Brooklyn. Over the last four

decades, she has created cinematic works that defy genre through hybrid forms and cross-disciplinary collaboration, incorporating elements of the essay, documentary, performance, and collage. She uses letters, archives, diaries, and music to take us on a critical journey through reality and memory. Working from a feminist perspective, she investigates connections between the body, the camera, and the materiality of film itself. Retrospectives of her work have been presented at the Museum of the Moving Image, Buenos Aires Festival of Independent Cinema, Cork Film Festival, China Women's Film Festival, Costa Rica IFF, and Ambulante Festival of Documentary. Her books include *Year by Year Poems* (Tender Button Press) and *Hand Book: A Manual on Performance, Process and the Labor of Laundry* (punctum books). In 2026, the San Francisco International Film Festival awarded Lynne their annual Persistence of Vision Award.

**PAIGE SARLIN****University at Buffalo/SUNY | [p.sarlin@gmail.com](mailto:p.sarlin@gmail.com)**

Paige Sarlin is an artist, filmmaker, and researcher. She holds an MFA in Film, Video, and New Media from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a PhD in Modern Culture and Media from Brown University. Her feature-length documentary film, *The Last Slide Projector*, premiered at the Rotterdam International Film Festival in 2007. More recently, *[six years]* (2023), an expanded and experimental documentary and cello performance, screened at Anthology Film Archives, the Mimesis Documentary Festival, and the Buffalo International Film Festival. Her scholarly writing has appeared in *World Records*, *Discourse*, *October*, *Re-Thinking Marxism*, *Framework*, and *Camera Obscura*. Her first book, *Interview Work and the Politics of Documentary Form*, is forthcoming from Indiana University Press. She is an Associate Professor in the Department of Media Study at the University at Buffalo/SUNY.

**MAYA SCHERR-WILLSON****UC Santa Cruz | [mscherrw@ucsc.edu](mailto:mscherrw@ucsc.edu)**

Maya Scherr-Willson is a scholar and filmmaker with a background in independent film production. Over the past decade, she has collaborated with Mexico City-based Pimienta Films, as well as The Match Factory, in various production roles on films by acclaimed directors like Tatiana Huezo, Alfonso Cuarón, Joshua Oppenheimer, Amat Escalante and Lila Avilés. She has been invited to participate in industry events including IDFA Forum Pitch, Torino FilmLab and Berlinale Talents. She holds an MA in Visual Anthropology from Goldsmiths, University of London, and is pursuing a PhD in Film and Digital

Media at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Her research centers on collective memory, documentary film and feminist media methodologies. She is currently developing *Penumbra of Memory*, her debut documentary.

#### **ADAM SEKULER**

***University of Michigan - Dearborn | asekuler@umich.edu***

Adam Sekuler is a filmmaker, curator, educator and editor. Screening in forums and film festivals throughout the US and internationally, his many alternative films strike a delicate balance between stylization and naturalism, creating a poetic and lyrical form of visual storytelling. His feature length documentary *Tomorrow Never Knows* won the Radical Empathy Jury Award at the Chicago Underground Film Festival where his film *36 Hours* also won the Carolee Schneemann Award. He's produced short works for Barry Jenkins, Lisandro Alonso, Josh and Benny Safdie, Valerie Massadian, Amie Siegel, and Joe Swanberg. As an editor he's worked with Robinson Devor, Courtney Stephens, Pacho Velez and Stephanie Spray. He was shortlisted for the IDA editing prize for his work on Robinson Devor's *Suburban Fury*. He holds an MFA in Studio Arts from the University of Colorado, Boulder and currently teaches in the Journalism and Media Production program at University of Michigan – Dearborn

#### **HANNA ROSE SHELL**

***University of Colorado Boulder | hanna.shell@colorado.edu***

Hanna Rose Shell is a professor of Cinema Studies & Moving Image Arts and Art & Art History at the University of Colorado Boulder. Her work examines textiles and the interconnections among visual, material, and scientific cultures. Shell is author of *Hide and Seek: Camouflage, Photography, and the Media of Reconnaissance* (Zone Books) and *Shoddy: From Devil's Dust to the Renaissance of Rags* (University of Chicago Press). Her films have appeared worldwide at venues including Anthology Film Archives, the Museum of Modern Art, Slamdance, Black Maria Film Festival, and the ZKM Center for Art and Media. Shell's current project, titled *Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds*, forms the basis of an exhibition that opened at the National Center for Atmospheric Research and is now traveling. Between 2020 and 2024 she directed the Stan Brakhage Center for Media Arts, and in 2024–2025 she was Artist-in-Residence at the National Solar Observatory.

#### **ABRAM STERN**

***UC Santa Cruz | aphid@ucsc.edu***

Abram Stern, MFA. Ph.D., is an artist and scholar whose work seeks out ways that institutionally situated media reveals itself. Much of this work draws from collections of government media and metadata related to surveillance and its oversight. They look closely at technical systems and make projects that operate in gaps of intelligibility. Rather than seeing these gaps as problems to be solved through technical solutions, Stern works to surface systemic frictions in the rhymes and dissonances among institutions, infrastructures, formats, and techniques of sense-making. They are currently working on a project about cancer surveillance.

#### **LESLIE TAI**

***leslie.tai@gmail.com***

Leslie Tai is a Chinese American filmmaker from San Francisco, CA. Her non-fiction shorts have premiered at Tribeca Film Festival, MoMA's Documentary Fortnight, IDFA, Visions du Réel and The New York Times. From 2006-2011, Tai made and exhibited work as a member of the New Independent Chinese Documentary Movement in Beijing. Her feature debut *How to Have an American Baby* premiered at True/False Film Festival was broadcast on Season 36 of POV. Her work has been supported by Creative Capital, Field of Vision, Fork Films, California Humanities, SFFILM, Firelight, MacDowell, Yaddo, and Bogliasco Foundation, among others.

#### **NILE TAN**

***UC Berkeley | renkai\_tan@berkeley.edu***

Nile (Renkai) Tan is a lecturer and researcher at the Wuhan Institute of Design and Sciences. He is a filmmaker and scholar who holds a Master of Design from the University of California, Berkeley, and a BFA in Film and Television Production from New York University. His work focuses on the emergence of filmmaking and new media technologies, specifically investigating how experimental aesthetics and computational tools like can be used as forms of alternative storytelling. Tan's creative projects, including the short films *The Goddess and Limitation of Life*, have received the Panavision New Filmmaker Grant and have been acquired for distributions. In addition to his academic and creative practice, he has published over 50 critical essays as a contributor to *World Screen Magazine*.

**HOPE TUCKER**

***hope@theobituaryproject.org***

Hope Tucker documents the afterlives of social, institutional, and environmental decisions and circumstances through The Obituary Project. She has retraced the path of protest that closed the only nuclear power plant in Austria and preserved reckonings made by travelers to the site of the first detonation of an atomic bomb. Her films have screened in hundreds of cultural spaces including Cairo Video Festival; Flaherty NYC; Guam Public Television; Punto de Vista; Sundance. She is a recently Certified Facilitator of Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process. [www.theobituaryproject.org](http://www.theobituaryproject.org)

**SOLOMON TURNER**

***solomon@hellobenjaminfilms.com***

Solomon Turner is a filmmaker, cinematographer, producer and co-founder of Hello Benjamin Films, an award winning film production company. He participated in the Visions du Réel Industry Rough Cut Lab with a feature in post production. Solomon received his BA in Cinema Studies from Oberlin College and an MFA in Film/Video from the California Institute of the Arts. His work has been featured on IndieWire and has screened at the REDCAT Theatre and Poetic Research Bureau (Los Angeles), Art Basel Miami, and Vienna International Film Festival. He is an alum of the Sundance Creative Producing Summit. Solomon is a Sundance Documentary Fund Grantee.

**ERIN WILKERSON**

***Duke Kunshan University | erin.wilkerson@dukekunshan.edu.cn***

Guerilla gardener turned feral filmmaker, Erin Wilkerson, is the co-founder of the political art collective, Creative Agitation. She has exhibited in the Venice Biennale, the Locarno Film Festival, the Viennale, and the Berlinale, and her co-directed film, *Nuclear Family*, (2021) was awarded Mencion Especial at the Mar del Plata International Film Festival, and is distributed by Arsenal. Grounded in ecology thanks to her early professional work in landscape architecture, her solo practice has exhibited internationally including, *The Second Burial* (2023), which streamed on MUBI Latin America. Her solo work has shown at Prismatic Ground, FICUNAM, Arica Docs, and INTERSECCION and was just honored with a retrospective at Filmoteca Galicia and solo gallery show, "Nuclear Family: Fieldwork" at Fundación Luis Seoane. She developed the methodology, 'feral filmmaking,' for her PhD from Liverpool John Moores University, and is currently a lecturer in Media and Arts at Duke Kunshan University.

**JULIE FORREST WYMAN**

***UC Davis | jfwyman@ucdavis.edu***

Julie Forrest Wyman's creative work engages issues of embodiment, body image, and the possibilities and problematics of media spectatorship- all informed by her experience of living with hypochondroplasia dwarfism. Her 2025 documentary *The Tallest Dwarf* (SXSW 2025) is broadcasting nationally on PBS's Emmy award winning series, Independent Lens. Wyman's work has been awarded support from Sundance, Sandbox, IDA, , SF Film Society, Points North, ITVS, the Creative Capital Foundation, The Princess Grace Foundation, California Humanities and NEH. She has been a fellow at the UC Davis Feminist Research Institute and a resident SF Film Society's Filmhouse, Siena Art Institute, Logan Nonfiction and Points North. Her films, including *FatMob* (2016) *Buoyant* (2005) and *A Boy Named Sue* (2000), have aired on Showtime, MTV's LOGO-TV, and have been exhibited on five continents. She serves as Associate Professor of Cinema and Digital Media at UC Davis.

**WEST PEAK**  
SPARKLING SPIRITS

 **HOMELESS  
GARDEN  
PROJECT**



*Marianne's*  
ICE CREAM  
Since 1947



SINCE 1868  
*Martinelli's*  
GOLD MEDAL®



 **New Leaf**  
Community Markets

**PACIFIC  
COOKIE  
COMPANY**



UC SANTA CRUZ |  Arts

ARTS RESEARCH INSTITUTE



UC SANTA CRUZ |  Arts | **Film & Digital Media**