



AND **SHE**
COULD BE
NEXT

CWC VIRTUAL:

THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2020 / 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

with

GRACE LEE (Director/Producer)
and MARJAN SAFINIA (Director/Producer)

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AND SHE COULD BE NEXT

The two-part documentary series *And She Could Be Next* (2020) tells the story of a defiant movement of women of color who are transforming politics from the ground up. The series follows candidates and organizers across the country, asking whether U.S. democracy can be preserved and made stronger by those most marginalized. Directed by Grace Lee and Marjan Safinia, the series was filmed during 2018 and 2019. It centers on those at the heart of the movement behind the New American Majority, including Stacey Abrams (Georgia), Bushra Amiwala (Skokie, IL), Maria Elena Durazo (Los Angeles, CA), Veronica Escobar (El Paso, TX), Lucy McBath (Atlanta, GA), Rashida Tlaib (Detroit, MI) and Nse Ufot, Executive Director of the New Georgia Project. *And She Could Be Next* features an entirely women of color creative team.

Director/producers Grace Lee and Marjan Safinia will join moderator Wendy Eley Jackson (Film and Media Studies, UCSB) for a Zoom discussion of their groundbreaking documentary work. The two episodes of the series are currently airing on PBS and can be streamed for free until August 29 on the official series website: <https://www.andshecouldbenext.com>.



Guest Biographies: Director/Producer Grace Lee

Grace Lee directed and produced the Peabody Award-winning *American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs*, about the legendary civil rights activist, which *The Hollywood Reporter* called “an entertainingly revealing portrait of the power of a single individual to effect change.” The film won multiple festival audience awards and was broadcast on the PBS documentary series POV. Other directing credits include the Emmy-nominated *Makers: Women in Politics* for PBS; the interactive online documentary *K-Town '92* about the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest, *Off the Menu: Asian America*; and the feature film *Janeane from Des Moines*, set during the 2012 presidential campaign, which premiered at the Toronto Film Festival. She recently directed and produced two episodes of PBS’ five-part series *Asian Americans*. She has been a Sundance Institute Fellow, a 2017 Chicken & Egg Breakthrough Award winner, an envoy of the American Film Showcase and is co-founder of the Asian American Documentary Network.



Director/Producer Marjan Safinia

Marjan Safinia is an Iranian documentary filmmaker whose films examine identity, community and social justice. *But You Speak Such Good English* explores the first-generation immigrant experience from an insider perspective. *Seeds* tells the story of ten brave teenagers from the world’s most troubled conflict zones living side-by-side for one life-changing summer. Collectively her films have played at over 100 international film festivals and been broadcast in North America, Europe and across the Arab world. Most recently she produced and directed work for Google Founder Sergey Brin, the Obama administration, and Hillary Clinton’s Next Generation. Until 2018, Marjan was the longest-serving President of the Board of Directors of the International Documentary Association (and the only woman of color to lead this organization since it was founded in 1982). She currently serves on the Board of Directors of Chicken & Egg. She co-hosts the pre-eminent online documentary community, The D-Word, and is a regular juror, programmer, speaker and connector of all things documentary.



Moderator Wendy Eley Jackson (Film and Media Studies, UCSB)

Wendy Eley Jackson has over 25 years experience in film and television. She founded the Atlanta-based company Golden Street Entertainment, where she owned and operated one of the largest faith-based post-production facilities in the USA, overseeing editorial work for 20 shows each week. In 2015, she founded Auburn Avenue Films and began working with award-winning directors and producers such as Academy Award nominee and multiple Emmy winner Sam Pollard, Daphne McWilliams, and Henry Adebajo. For her motion picture work, she has recently received the Producers Guild of America mark for the multi-award winning documentary *Maynard* for Netflix. She is producing a docu-series entitled *The Election of Stacey Abrams* with mega-producer Malcolm D. Lee and showrunner Holly Sorensen. Along with Holly Sorensen, Vicangelo Bulluck, and A.J. Morewitz, she is developing a television series adapted from the *New York Times* best-seller *Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn* for DIGA Studios. She is currently a Lecturer in Film and Media Studies at the UCSB. Wendy is a board member for Women In Film Atlanta, Atlanta Film Society, BronzeLens Film Festival, and the National Association for Television Arts and Sciences.





Crew Biographies: Jyoti Sarda /Producer

Jyoti Sarda brings twenty years as a senior-level global marketing executive with major studios and blue chip brands to developing impact-creating, documentary and narrative content through her company Nimble Media LLC. Her current production *And She Could Be Next*, following a defiant women of color led movement to transform politics from the ground up airs on POV on June 29 & 30 . She is also Co-Executive Producer of *Equal Means Equal*, an award-winning documentary feature that is an unflinching examination of the discrimination against women built into the US legal system. Until recently, Jyoti was Vice President of Marketing at Paramount Home Media where she led all facets of global marketing operations for Paramount partner brands, while overseeing international acquisitions. Prior to Paramount, she worked at Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment. Jyoti serves on the boards of GlobalGirl Media, an organization that trains young women to become civically engaged through citizen journalism and LAANE, a leading LA-based social justice nonprofit. She is intently focused on improving the diversity of elected officials and the electorate.



AVA DuVERNAY / Executive Producer

Academy Award nominee and winner of the Emmy, the BAFTA and the Peabody, Ava DuVernay is a writer, director, producer and film distributor. Her directorial work includes *When They See Us*, nominated for 16 Emmys, the Oscar-winning historical drama *Selma*, the Oscar-nominated criminal justice documentary *13TH* and Disney's *A Wrinkle In Time*, with which she became the highest grossing African-American woman director in domestic box office history. She also oversees production of her hit TV series *Queen Sugar*. Winner of the 2012 Sundance Film Festival's Best Director Prize for *Middle of Nowhere*, DuVernay amplifies the work of people of color and women of all kinds through her independent film collective ARRAY, named one of Fast Company's Most Innovative Companies. In 2017, she was featured as one of Fortune Magazine's 50 Greatest Culture Leaders and TIME Magazine's 100 Most Influential People. DuVernay sits on the boards of Sundance Institute and Film Independent.



Yoruba Richen / Field Director

Yoruba's work has been featured on PBS, *New York Times* Op Doc, *Frontline*, *New York Magazine's* website, *The Cut*, and *The Atlantic*. Her feature documentary, *The New Black*, won multiple audience awards and best documentary at the Urbanworld Film Festival, was nominated for a NAACP Image Award and a GLAAD Media Award and broadcast on Independent Lens. Yoruba's previous film *Promised Land*, received a Diverse Voices Co-Production fund award from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and won the Fledgling Fund award for social issue documentary. Yoruba is a featured TED Speaker, a Guggenheim and Sundance Fellow and a 2016 recipient of the Chicken & Egg Breakthrough Filmmaker Award. She is director of the documentary program at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism and most recently directed *Green Book: Guide to Freedom* for the Smithsonian Channel and *The Sit In: Harry Belafonte Hosts The Tonight Show*.



Amber Fares / Field Director

Amber directed and shot her film *Speed Sisters* (Hot Docs, 2015) that follows a team of Palestinian women race car drivers and was the Director of Photography on *The Judge* (TIFF, 2017). She has cinematography credits on several upcoming documentaries in production including *Love and Stuff* (Judith Helfand), a short film on Standing Rock (The Front), and *Basement Bhangra* (Fictionless). Amber has branched into episodic series, working on shows such as *America Inside Out* with Katie Couric for National Geographic (Senior Producer and cinematographer), and *Transparent* season 4 for Amazon (Associate Producer).



Deborah S. Esquenazi / Field Director

Deborah's first feature *Southwest of Salem: the Story of the San Antonio Four*, won a Peabody, Critic's Choice Award for 'Best First Feature', an Emmy nomination for 'Outstanding Social Issue Documentary', and a GLAAD Media Award for 'Outstanding Documentary'. The film helped exonerate the 'San Antonio Four' a group of Latinas wrongfully accused of rape who were imprisoned for 15 years. Esquenazi is also a Rockwood JustFilms Ford Fellow, Sundance Documentary Film Fellow, Sundance Creative Producing Fellow, and a Firelight Film Fellow. She is a native of Texas and is based in Austin where she lives with her wife and two children.



Anayansi Prado / Field Director

Anayansi Prado was born in Panama and moved to the United States as a teenager. Credits include *Maid in America* (PBS, 2004) about Latina domestic workers; *Children in No Man's Land* (PBS, 2008) about unaccompanied minors crossing the border; and *Pariaso for Sale* (PBS, 2011) about Americans moving to Panama. In 2006, Prado executive produced and directed the Discovery en Español doc series *Voces de Cambio* (Voices of Change) featuring Carlos Santana and Edward James Olmos. Her most recent film is *The Unafraid*, about a movement of undocumented students in Georgia banned from attending the state's top public universities.



Geeta Gandbhir / Field Director

Geeta Gandbhir is an award-winning director, producer and editor. As director, she won Best Documentary at the 2019 News and Doc Emmys for *I Am Evidence*, an HBO Documentary Film, and *Armed With Faith* which aired on PBS. As editor, she won a Primetime Emmy for Spike Lee's *When the Levees Broke* and also for the HBO film *By the People, the Election of Barack Obama*. A documentary film she co-produced, *The Sentence* for HBO, also won a 2019 Special Jury Primetime Emmy. Other films she edited, *Mr Dynamite: the Rise of James Brown*, *My Neighborhood*, and *When the Levees Broke* all won Peabody Awards. Another film she edited, *Music by Prudence*, won an Academy Award in 2010. From 2018-2019 she directed the series *Why We Hate* with Amblin Entertainment and Jigsaw Productions for Discovery, a feature doc *Hungry to Learn* for Soledad O'Brien Productions, and an episode of the PBS series *Asian Americans*.



Ramona Emerson / Field Director

Ramona Emerson is a Diné writer and filmmaker whose work explores the expectations of Native cultural identity, including the 2018 Emmy-nominated *The Mayors of Shiprock*. She has worked as a professional videographer, writer and editor for over twenty years and is currently working on her eighth film project, *Crossing the Line* about violence against Navajo people in the border towns around the Navajo nation. She has been a Sundance Native Lab Fellow, a Time-Warner Storyteller Fellow, a Tribeca All-Access Grantee and has been supported by CPB, WGBH and ITVS. She is based in Albuquerque NM where she and her husband run their production company Reel Indian Pictures.



Asad Faruqi / Director of Photography

Asad Faruqi is an Emmy Nominated Cinematographer/Filmmaker whose work has been featured on HBO, The New York Times, PBS, ABC, Amazon Prime, Channel 4, CBC, SBS, Al-Jazeera to name a few. Credits include the 2016 Academy Award winning short documentary, *A Girl in the River* and 2012's Academy and Emmy Award winning film *Saving Face*. Both were produced for HBO Documentaries by SOCFilms. Most recently, he was the cinematographer and co-director on *Armed With Faith* (2017) produced by G2P2 Films, which won an Emmy. The film played on PBS and Al-Jazeera. Asad was the cinematographer and co-producer on *Song of Lahore* (2015) produced by Ravi Films and distributed theatrically by Broad Green pictures and Amazon Prime. Other notable works include Emmy and Alfred I Dupont Award winning, *Pakistan's Taliban Generation* (2009), *Transgenders: Pakistan's Open Secret* (2011), *Peacekeepers: A Journey of a Thousand Miles* (2015) and *New Homeland* (2018).



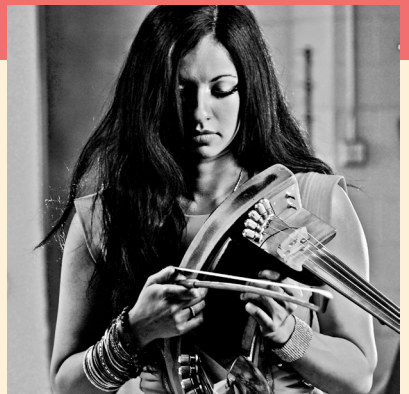
Juli Vizza / Editor

Juli Vizza is an award-winning editor with nearly two decades of experience in both fiction and non-fiction filmmaking. Their films have premiered at the top film festivals, including Sundance, Berlin and Tribeca and have been broadcast on PBS, Showtime, and The History Channel. They received an Emmy Award for their editing on the 2002 Winter Olympics for NBC. In addition to their work as editor on *And She Could Be Next*, they are also the editor of *The Worlds of Ursula K. Le Guin*, which explores the life and legacy of a groundbreaking science fiction author, which will broadcast on American Masters in August 2019. Juli co-produced and edited the feature-length documentary *Xmas Without China*, which premiered at SXSW. They are also the producer of *Nine to Ninety*, which premiered at Hot Docs, broadcast nationally on PBS, and was nominated for an IDA Award.



Gingger Shankar / Composer

Gingger Shankar is a singer, violinist and composer, and was born into one of the world's most acclaimed and influential musical families. She has worked with artists including The Smashing Pumpkins, Trent Reznor, Mike Myers, and James Newton Howard. Gingger composed music for the critically acclaimed Sundance U.S. Dramatic Audience Award Winner *Circumstance* and was the artist and co-composer behind the score of Mel Gibson's blockbuster *Passion of the Christ*. Gingger's music can also be heard in Mike Nichol's film, *Charlie Wilson's War*. Her multimedia project *Himalaya Song* premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and was named one of the '10 Best Music Films at Sundance 2012' by Rolling Stone. Recent projects include *Heartbeats* directed by Duane Adler with Jay-Z and Roc Nation, and Former First Lady Michelle Obama's *We Will Rise* which aired on CNN. Her personal project *Nari*, which debuted at the Toronto and Sundance Film Festivals follows the story of Lakshmi and Viji Shankar (her mother and grandmother) as they brought Indian music to the West with Ravi Shankar and George Harrison.



Julia Meltzer / Executive Producer

Julia Meltzer is an award-winning filmmaker and the director of Clockshop, a non-profit arts organization in Los Angeles. Her films explore how human agency shapes the future in moments of political upheaval, and have been screened at the Los Angeles Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, Rotterdam International Film Festival, Whitney Museum of American Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and toured with the Sundance Film Forward Program. Meltzer's most recent films, *The Light in Her Eyes* (2011) and *Dalya's Other Country* (2017), were broadcast on POV on PBS, and focus on the lives of Muslim women. She is also the founder of Clockshop, an arts organization that works to expand the dialogue around cultural production, politics, and urban space.



Neda Nobari / Executive Producer

Ms. Neda Nobari is the former Vice Chair of bebe stores, and founder of the Center for Iranian Diaspora Studies at San Francisco State University, Neda Nobari Foundation, and most recently, MOZAIK Philanthropy. Her mission is to support social, environmental and racial justice through the arts and education including the production of social impact cinema. Ms. Nobari's most recent Executive Producer credits include the 2019 Oscar nominated short *Los Comandos* as part of the *Humanity On The Move* series – the story of a million people displaced by war, violence and natural disasters, who are seeking refuge and a new place to call home; *Coup 53* (2019) – the story of the 1953 Anglo-American coup d'état that overthrew Iran's government of Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh and reinstalled the Shah; as well as *Yours Truly* (2019), a feature-length documentary that follows artist and activist Ai Weiwei as he inspires public compassion for prisoners of conscience around the world. In 2016, Ms. Nobari accepted the Hivos Tiger Award alongside director Babak Jalali and producer Marjaneh Moghimi for *Radio Dreams*, winner of the 45th International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR).



James Costa / Co-Executive Producer

James Costa is a film producer. He is Co-Vice President of The International Documentary Association. He is also a National Council Member of American Film Institute, Executive Producer Council of CAP/UCLA as well as Leadership Council of The Roundabout Theatre New York. He is a member of The Producers Guild of America as well as BAFTA. His other films include *Call her Ganda*, *The Animal People*, *Weed the People*, *Lunch Hour* and *Welcome to Chechyna*. He is currently helping to produce five documentaries.





This event is sponsored by the Carsey-Wolf Center.

CWC Docs

The Carsey-Wolf Center is committed to screening documentaries from across the world that engage with contemporary and historical issues, especially regarding social justice and environmental concerns. Documentaries allow filmmakers to address pressing issues and frame the critical debates of our time.

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