

## WIFV People in the News - September 2024

WIFV 45th Anniversary Celebrants, SRB Communications, Nina Gilden Seavey, John Aaron, Cam Lawson, Connie St. John, Alyscia Cunningham, Roland Millman, James Gossard, Day Al-Mohamed

### The Celebration has Begun! More to Come!



Photos Credit: Lauren Fletcher



## SRB Nominated

**SRB Communications** earned an Emmy nomination for producing a 30-second public service announcement to warn Maryland residents about the dangers of using Fentanyl and Xylazine.

The Maryland Department of Health partnered with Maryland Public Television and contracted with SRB to create and execute a statewide public education campaign. SRB produced 30-second television and radio PSAs in English and Spanish, as well as digital and print campaign assets.

The Emmy-nominated PSAs are a testament to SRB's creativity and production expertise. We appreciate our continued partnership with MPT. Thank you to the National Capital Chesapeake Bay Chapter Emmy Awards of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (NATAS).

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## Seavey Publishes

Pre-sales are open for *The Documentary Filmmaker's Workbook* by **Nina Gilden Seavey**, Emmy Award-winning documentary filmmaker, podcaster, author, and film professor. [Pre-order your copy here.](#)

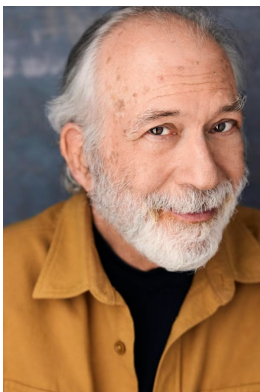
It's two books in one! On one side is *Directing Documentary*. Flip the book over and turn it upside down. On the other side is *Producing Documentary*.



A soup-to-nuts guide for making documentary films. Best of all, it's focused on YOUR own work - with simple, easy-to-understand text, writing prompts, budget exercises, work samples, and quotes to keep you inspired as you make the journey from film conceptualization through distribution.

If you're a student, an emerging documentarian, or an accomplished filmmaker who wants to up your game, *The Documentary Filmmaker's Workbook* will be your constant companion. Nina will be teaching a workshop at **Script DC** in November based on her new book. [Pre-order your workbook now](#) and get ready! [Register for ScriptDC here.](#) Early Bird Pricing for ScriptDC until October 10.

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## Aaron Working on Vet Housing Story

In early September a federal judge in Los Angeles handed veterans a major victory in a case **John Aaron** has been involved with over the course of 17 years. He plans to continue telling the story of this struggle as a book and/or documentary and is seeking the advice of producers or literary agents who might be interested in hearing more.

The VA facility in Los Angeles is the largest in the nation. The original 650 acres of land were donated to the United States in 1886 for the "permanent maintenance of a Home for disabled soldiers." Over the years the land was systematically despoiled and reduced to about 365 acres by a succession of corrupt local and federal politicians, indifferent Congresses, the public and complicit bureaucrats at the Veterans Administration and its successor, the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The homeless veteran crisis is still endemic across the country. In an age when a distressingly large portion of the population agrees with the proposition that veterans are "losers and suckers," John feels compelled to continue telling the story. He would gratefully appreciate the assistance of the WIFV community in this effort. [Contact him here.](#)

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**THE OPENING SCENE Now on YouTube!**



THE OPENING SCENE is a new production by **Cam Lawson** available on YouTube! The episode above includes WIFV President, **Connie St. John**, along with BET+ Executive Producer/Producer Loretta E. Wilson, Woolly Mammoth Artistic Director Maria Manuela Goyanes, and Managing Director Kimberly E. Douglas.

## Cunningham Residency & Festival

**Alyscia Cunningham** is thrilled to announce that she has been selected for the Montgomery County Artist Residency by the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCMC)! Along with two other talented artists, Jasmine Adams, and Liliane Blom, they'll be embarking on a year-long residency designed to foster civic dialogue within the East County, Mid-County, and Upcounty areas.



This residency offers an incredible opportunity to use art as a means to build stronger, more connected communities. I'm eager to contribute to this mission, working closely with regional service centers to uplift diverse voices and deepen community ties.

Cunningham's film, *SENSES*, has been accepted to screen online at the Caribbean Tales Film Festival! You can watch it from September 4-30. This year's theme, *HOME*, explores self-care, healing, and the preservation of Caribbean traditions through the lens of home and sanctuary. The films selected offer powerful insights into the connection between our cultural roots and personal well-being, capturing the essence of resilience and renewal within the diaspora. Purchase your pass here: [Caribbean Tales Film Festival Pass](#)

## Millman New Productions

**Roland Millman** is working on a project for the Fiscal Affairs Department of the IMF and recently finished up on a piece for the Tax Administration Diagnostic Assessment Tool group that goes on missions to countries around the world to help countries make sure they are collecting taxes in the best way possible. You can watch the TADAT video below.

He's also completed a video for the PSL Group on their LinkedIn "Life" page. [You can watch it here.](#)



## DIVINE INSTINCT Trifecta+

Director **James Gossard's** recent production, DIVINE INSTINCT, received three awards in early September at the Accolade Global Film Competition Awards. He shares his congratulations to the crew, participants, and supporters in the telling of Gary's story.

Award of Merit Special Mention: Documentary Feature – Congrats to all crew and participants

Award of Merit Special Mention: Cinematography – Congrats to Stewart Nash, Mauricio Ventura, Rob Frank, Jesse Olszewski, Kate Nahvi, Mike Berlin

Award of Merit: Editing – Congrats to Bob Kanner, Matt Maddock

"DIVINE INSTINCT is a peek behind the creative curtain. This film unapologetically investigates what makes an artist tick. Gary Spinosa is surprisingly open and honest about his work in a way that manages to be both mystical and practical. This documentary is a singular focused film that captures what it is to be an artist hence, the human experience." Clint Gaige of Growth Media Productions

A special thanks and shout out to the folks who sponsored our entry into this competition— Steve Tessier, John Rowles, Brian H Freeman, Lucinda Outten, Chantal Bron, Kris McCurry, Brian Gregory, Diana H George, Ron Spinosa, Becci Kuligowski. Thank you!

And, just in, Honourable Mention at the Disappear Here Film Festival in Ballyliffin, Ireland. "...such was the quality of your work and its resonance with our judges, that we feel it has to be included in our Honourable Mention list. This is awarded to a select group of submissions where our judges feel that the creativity and innovation shown by the production team should be recognised."

## Al-Mohamed's Latest at REACH - 9/29

**Day Al-Mohamed** is the series creator and senior producer of AMERICAN MASTERS: RENEGADES, a collection of five short films that will be broadcast by PBS. She coordinated 30+ filmmakers with disabilities in 5 teams to make the digital shorts. You have a chance to see their work at a free screening in the Justice Forum at the REACH, Kennedy Center on Sunday, Sept 29 at 3:00 pm. [Make your reservation here.](#)

RENEGADES showcases the lives of little-known historical figures with disabilities, exploring their contributions to U.S. society and unique elements of disability culture. The series is hosted by



musician and disability rights advocate Lachi. The five historical figures were selected with an eye toward diversity of disability, gender, race, geography, time period, and field, embracing intersectional identities, and featuring three profiles of men and two of women, and four profiles of people of color, as follows:

- Thomas “Blind Tom” Wiggins (1849–1908): The first African American composer and pianist to perform at the White House, Wiggins was blind and autistic. He toured throughout the U.S. and Europe—yet because he was under guardianship, Wiggins received only \$20 per month.
- Daniel Inouye (1924–2012): A veteran who lost his right arm in WWII while serving in the U.S. Army’s 442nd Regimental Combat Team, Inouye represented Hawai’i in Congress for more than 50 years.
- Judith Lynn Del Rey (1943–1986): As an editor, Del Rey, a woman with dwarfism, brought us books from science fiction luminaries such as Ray Bradbury, Isaac Asimov, Philip K. Dick, and even George Lucas’ Star Wars. Del Rey’s chosen genre, science fiction, offers a unique lens through which disability can be reframed and recontextualized.
- Brad Lomax (1950–1984): A civil rights and disability rights leader, Lomax’s life story is one of care, community, and compassion. In the 1970s, in Oakland, the Black Panthers were providing free breakfast for kids and a health clinic; only a few miles away in Berkeley, disabled people were organizing for their right to live independently.
- Celestine Tate Harrington (1955–1998): Born without limbs, Harrington impressed audiences with her skill at playing the electric keyboard with her tongue. In 1975, the City of Philadelphia took away her baby daughter, claiming she could not provide adequate care. Harrington successfully defended her right to parent. In the courtroom, she demonstrated her skills—dressing and undressing her daughter, and changing her diaper, using only her lips, teeth, and tongue.

According to historian Douglas Baynton, “Disability is everywhere in history, once you begin looking for it, but conspicuously absent in the histories we write.” Join us at the REACH on September 29 and learn more about these RENEGADES.

## Thanks to the WIFV Sponsors



### News Deadline

The deadline to submit your information for the monthly Members in the News e-publication is the 10th of the month. Send your article (100 words or so) and a jpg-format photograph or link to your video project to [director@wifv.org](mailto:director@wifv.org).



### About WIFV

Women in Film & Video (WIFV) provides educational and networking opportunities for screen-based media makers, celebrates women's creative and technical achievements in media, and advocates for parity both in front of and behind the camera to ensure that all voices can be heard.





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