



WIFV People in the News - December 2024

Laura Kroeger, Andrea Kalin, Claudia Myers, Laura Waters Hinson, Andrea Nix Fine, Sean Fine, Jon Gann, Alyscia Cunningham, Kerri Sheehan, Mark Ricche, Todd Gardner, Mariam Jahan Ashraf, Tod Hopkins, Nichole Meminger, Javonna Moore, Matthew McDonnell, Amelia Ross, Jordan Hoffman, Rick Kain, Caitlin Wallace, Jessica Mendel, Jean Rosolino, Martin Blank, Leah Michaels, Tara Zabriskie, Rebecca Bustamante, Susanne Coates, Emily Wathen, Babar Ahmed, Adrienne Cleary, Rosemary Reed



Kroeger Wins Feature Grand Prize!

Final Draft is excited to announce the Grand Prize Winners for Big Break 2024.

FEATURE WINNER - BIGGER IN TEXAS (Drama)
by **Laura Kroeger**

A 40-something ex-pageant queen finds the perfect vigilante solution to her mid-life crisis: exploit Texas's sex toy ban to blackmail powerful men. Laura workshopped her winning script, BIGGER IN TEXAS, in WIFV's 2022 Narrative Script Development Fellowship. The Grand Prize Winner is awarded \$10,000, a trip to Hollywood, key meetings with producers and executives, and a slew of coaching, technology, software, and memberships. Prior to her Grand Prize win, she signed with Max Gonzalez at Fourth Wall Management.

TV Winner
FOUNTAIN OF RUTH (Half Hour Comedy)
by Maia Mulcahy

After getting "de-aged" at a high-tech retirement community where everyone can look forever young, Ruth is shocked to discover her elderly husband has second thoughts, leaving them physically mismatched as they try to settle into their golden years.

Member Films Looking to Make the Academy's Short List for Doc Shorts



Directed by **Andrea Kalin**
 As Americans navigate life in a divided nation, PUBLIC DEFENDER offers a thoughtful lens on bridging the gaps between us. Through powerful storytelling, the film challenges us to understand one another and reconnect through our shared humanity. [Watch the film here](#). Special Screening at MLK Library on January 9. [Register here](#).



Directed by **Claudia Myers and Laura Waters Hinson**
 Ghanaian immigrant Eric Frimpong longs to become an American citizen and reunite with his family after nearly a decade apart, but the daunting U.S. citizenship test stands in his way. Jill & Carl Miller, residents of the senior living community where Eric works, offer to help tutor him, and in the process the three form their own unexpected bond.

And Looking to be on the Feature Doc Short List



THE SIXTH is a feature documentary produced in collaboration with A24. Directed by Academy Award®, Emmy and Peabody Award-winning filmmakers **Andrea Nix Fine** and **Sean Fine**, THE SIXTH takes you inside the January 6th attack on the U.S. Capitol through six personal accounts and never-before-seen original footage. Their interwoven experiences share an unflinching account of how race, service and truth defined that pivotal day. This harrowing yet hopeful film is a powerful reminder that the fate of democracy is in all our hands. Produced by Change Content and A24. [Watch here](#).

WIFV Members at MC Shorts Film Festival

On November 21st the Montgomery College Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus held their 2nd annual MC Shorts Film

Festival curated by WIFV member **Jon Gann**. Following the screenings WIFV members **Alyscia Cunningham**, **Kerri Sheehan**, and **Mark Ricche** joined Jon for a panel discussion on the state of the film industry. A big thank you goes out to panel moderator Graham Holford and MC Arts Liaison Heather Brown!
(L to R: Ricche, Cunningham, Sheehan, Gann)



Gathering for Coffee & Conversation in Frederick



From left front, around table, ending center front:
Todd Gardner, Mariam Jahan Ashraf, Tod Hopkins, Nichole Meminger, Javonna Moore, Matthew McDonnell, Amelia Ross, Jordan Hoffman, Rick Kain, Caitlin Wallace, Jessica Mendel, Jean Rosolino, Martin Blank, Leah Michaels, Tara Zabriskie.

Jean Rosolino organizes this monthly coffee in Frederick, usually the first Wednesday of the month. Next one is January 8.



Bustamante on the Red Carpet

Rebecca Bustamante plays a TV reporter in *DEAR PRA*, a short film directed by Nitin Adsul (*PARTU*, *KUNDALINI*). *DEAR PRA* opened at the NAFA Global film festival in San Diego and has been selected by Boston, East Village New York, and most recently, Culver City (LA) film festivals. *DEAR PRA* is a heartfelt tale that shines an unflinching light on an affliction that has upended the lives of millions of individuals and families in the US and around the world. It won Best Social Cause Award at this year's DC South Asian film festival, receiving special recognition awards from Congressman Shri Thanedar for the cast and crew. The film also won 'Best Screenplay' at the Delhi International Shorts film festival. Rebecca and Tristan Bustamante on the DCSAFF red carpet are pictured above!



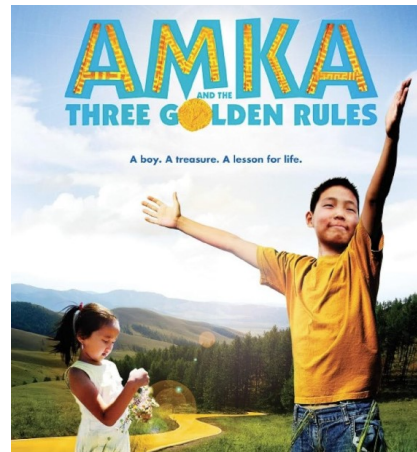
Coates Collaborates on DECODING DECEPTION

Susanne Coates has shared some exciting news about a project she's been working on over the past year with Gene Russo at the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). Together, we collaborated on a short film titled DECODING DECEPTION: The Psychology of Combating Misinformation. Released just a week before the elections, the film has already garnered over 7,600 views (and counting!)—making it the most-watched piece in the history of the PNAS YouTube channel (you can watch above).

Susanne filmed the interviews and some of the B-roll, and Wyld Earth Films, the company **Emily Wathen** and she founded, provided post-production services. The film was funded by a grant from the Pulitzer Center.

#1 in Mongolia!

AMKA & THE THREE GOLDEN RULES, written/directed/produced by **Babar (Bob) Ahmed**, is a movie about a boy in Mongolia who discovers a gold coin. Consumed by greed, his life spirals out of control. The film was reviewed as "Chilling" (*Village Voice*), "Breathtaking" (*Filmthreat*), and "Inspiring" (*Plain Dealer*), and won multiple awards at film festivals around the globe. Mongolia's biggest English language newspaper, *UB Post* reviewed the film as "Brilliantly crafted... the story is a symbol of how Mongolia must decide its own fate". On Emirates Airlines it was one of four movies classified as "great movies worth watching from around the world". The film was highlighted in the opening of the World Bank's 2017 World Development Report, and was ranked #1 amongst the Top 75 Films from Mongolia by YouTube's MisterCinema.



Cleary Wins 2 Bronze Awards

Adrienne Cleary's live improvisation "Abstraction" won Bronze Medals for Composition and for Instrumentalist at this year's Global Music Awards. **You can watch her 5-minute improv iMovie on Facebook.** Hear more of her work at www.aclearymusic.com

Reed Featured on *We Do Declare:*

Women's Voices on Independence

Rosemary Reed is featured in Smithsonian's *We Do Declare: Women's Voices on Independence* website. On the 50th Anniversary of Equal Credit Opportunity Act (1974), Rosemary Reed, President and Owner of Double R Productions, LLC is featured as one of four oral histories about building financial power. [Listen to the interview here.](#)

Reed was interviewed by Rachel Seidman, Curatorial Advisor to the Smithsonian's American History Museum. Participants shared stories about financial independence, demonstrating the importance of the ECOA and the phenomena of women's banks. Reed first joined the Abigail Adams National Bank on the suggestion of Susan Hagar, the founder of Hagar Sharp, a branding, creative development firm in Washington, DC. There she started a relationship with banker Stephanie Lipscomb who is also featured on the Smithsonian website and guided Reed as a small business owner navigating the sometimes difficult trials of operating a woman-owned firm in DC at the time. Since then, the bank is under new ownership, but Reed still has business and personal accounts at what is now called People's Bank at the branch on 17th St. NW, still run and operated by women.



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.



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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