

Amnesia Productions  
Presents

# GORE VIDAL

The United States of Amnesia



**Film info:**

<http://www.tribecafilm.com/filmguide/513a8382c07f5d4713000294-gore-vidal-the-united-sta>

**U.S., 2013**

**89 minutes / Color / HD**

**World Premiere - 2013 Tribeca Film Festival, Spotlight Section**

**Screening:**

Thursday 4/18/2013 8:30pm - 1st Screening, AMC Loews Village 7 - 3  
Friday 4/19/2013 12:15pm – P&I Screening, Chelsea Clearview Cinemas 6  
Saturday 4/20/2013 2:30pm - 2nd Screening, AMC Loews Village 7 - 3  
Friday 4/26/2013 5:30pm - 3rd Screening, Chelsea Clearview Cinemas 4

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## LOG LINE

Anchored by intimate, one-on-one interviews with the man himself, *GORE VIDAL: THE UNITED STATES OF AMNESIA* is a fascinating and wholly entertaining tribute to the iconic Gore Vidal. Commentary by those who knew him best—including filmmaker/nephew Burr Steers and the late Christopher Hitchens—blends with footage from Vidal’s legendary on-air career to remind us why he will forever stand as one of the most brilliant and fearless critics of our time.

## SYNOPSIS

No twentieth-century figure has had a more profound effect on the worlds of literature, film, politics, historical debate, and the culture wars than Gore Vidal. Anchored by intimate one-on-one interviews with the man himself, Nicholas Wrathall’s new documentary is a fascinating and wholly entertaining portrait of the last lion of the age of American liberalism.

Commentary by those who knew him best—including filmmaker/nephew Burr Steers and the late Christopher Hitchens—blends with footage from Vidal’s legendary on-air career to remind us why he will forever stand as one of the most brilliant and fearless critics of our time.

Gore Vidal’s professional life spans more than 50 years of American politics and letters. His return to America in 2005 marked the last great stage in his creative career and this film represents an extraordinary opportunity to share his view on America in the twenty-first century. Featuring candid vérité footage of Vidal in his final years, the film explores his enduring global impact on art, politics, and everything in between. His overview of the current state of the Republic and the health of US democracy is unique and incisive.

This is Gore Vidal’s last word and testimony.

## PRINCIPAL CAST

Gore Vidal	Burr Steers
Christopher Hitchens	Jodie Evans
Tim Robbins	Mikhail Gorbachev
Sting	David Mamet
Bob Scheer	William F. Buckley
Jay Parini	Norman Mailer
Nina Straight	Dick Cavett.

## PRINCIPAL CREW

<b>Director</b>	Nicholas Wrathall
<b>Producers</b>	Nicholas Wrathall, Theodore James, Burr Steers
<b>Screenwriter</b>	Nicholas Wrathall
<b>Cinematographers</b>	Derek Wieseahn, Joel Schwartzberg, Armando De'ath
<b>Editors</b>	Suresh Ayyar, William Haugse, Rob Bralver, Derek Boonstra
<b>Executive Producers</b>	Nicholas Wrathall, Erik Nelson, Mike Barnett, Dave Harding, Damon Martin, Andrew Kortschak, Walter Kortschak, Chad Troutwine

## GORE VIDAL - BIOGRAPHY

No twentieth-century figure has moved as easily and confidently and had a more profound effect in the worlds of literature, drama, film, politics, historical debate, and the cultural wars than Gore Vidal. He was a brilliant novelist, political essayist, literary critic, historian, scenarist, television pundit, political activist and candidate. As a raconteur, lecturer, and platform performer, Vidal is rivaled only by Mark Twain.

Gore Vidal was born in 1925 with high political and social connections. His father, Eugene Luther Vidal, worked for the Roosevelt administration as Director of Air Commerce from 1933 until 1937. His maternal grandfather was the legendary blind Senator Thomas Prior Gore of Oklahoma, a Democrat who played an important role in Democratic politics for many decades. Gore Vidal's mother, Nina Gore Vidal, was divorced in 1935, when Vidal was ten. She then married Hugh D. Auchincloss, a wealthy financier, who in turn divorced her and married Jacqueline Kennedy's mother, thus establishing a connection between Vidal and the Kennedy clan that persisted through the presidency of John F. Kennedy.

In 1943, after graduating from Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire, he entered the Reserve Corps of the U.S. Army. After a brief training period at the Virginia Military Institute, he joined the Army Transportation Corps as an officer and was sent to the Aleutian Islands. He wrote much of his first novel, *WILLIWAW*, during a run between Chernowski Bay and Dutch Harbor. Suffering from serious frostbite and arthritis, he was sent back to the States, where he finished the novel while recuperating in a military hospital. In its tight-lipped, minimalist style, *WILLIWAW* reflects Vidal's reading of Hemingway and Stephen Crane. This novel put Vidal on the map of young postwar novelists that included Norman Mailer, John Horne Burns, and Truman Capote.

By any standard, the postwar years were productive ones for the young Vidal, who published eight novels in succession between 1946 and 1954. These include *THE CITY AND THE PILLAR*, *THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS*, and *MESSIAH*. *THE CITY AND THE PILLAR* is notable for reasons that go beyond its aesthetic qualities; it counts among the first explicitly gay novels in the history of American fiction. Vidal suffered the consequences of bringing a gay novel before a wide audience in 1948. Indeed, his next five novels were dismissed by the mainstream press. Among the best of these was *MESSIAH*, a prophetic novel that makes deft use of the modernist technique of the journal within the memoir — a form that Vidal would exploit to good effect in later novels.

After a period in Europe, where he traveled with his friend Tennessee Williams, Vidal settled along the Hudson River in a mansion called Edgewater with his companion, Howard Austen. Among the many projects that occupied him during this period was *THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS*, one of his most compelling early novels.

Needing money to support his expensive establishment, he took on a variety of commercial ventures, writing a series of mysteries under the pseudonym Edgar Box. Unlike his serious fiction, these potboilers were very well received in the press. However, these clever fictions did not solve their creator's financial problems. Vidal then opted to make a more unusual move by entering the new medium of original drama for television.

At the time, many of the most popular programs were anthology shows, such as *Studio One* and *Playhouse 90*, broadcast live. Most serious writers in the '50s shunned the medium, but Vidal seized the opportunity. In a few years, he was to write 20 of these dramas. He scored his greatest success in the medium with an original fantasy, *Visit to a Small Planet*. He adapted *Visit to a Small Planet* for

the Broadway stage, where it was an immediate hit.

Television dramatists like Vidal, Paddy Chayefsky and Rod Serling were public figures in the 1950s, and Vidal was asked to appear on the new talk programs like *Today* and *The Tonight Show*. His mellifluous voice, ready wit, gift for mimicry, and unexpected candor about sex, politics and every other subject made him a sought-after guest..

Film adaptations of *Visit to a Small Planet*, and Vidal's Billy the Kid drama, *Left-Handed Gun*, were disappointments to him. He accepted an offer from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and was one of the last writers to be placed under long-term contract to any studio. Vidal prospered in Hollywood, writing acclaimed screenplays for *The Catered Affair*, *Suddenly Last Summer* (based on a play by his friend Tennessee Williams) and *J'Accuse*. He also worked as an uncredited script doctor on the epic film *Ben Hur*, in exchange for which he was released from his contract. His earnings from television, Broadway and Hollywood had now freed him to write what he pleased without taking on other work. But just as he was prepared to plunge full-time into literary labor, ghosts of his Washington past returned to draw him back into the world of electoral politics.

Vidal observed the political world from the sidelines for many years, but this vantage did not satisfy him. He wrote a play, *The Best Man*, exposing the backstage intrigues at a presidential nominating convention. The play was a hit on Broadway, and was later made into a successful motion picture, the only film version of his work with which Vidal was entirely satisfied.

Meanwhile, Vidal had become friends with a Dutchess County neighbor, Eleanor Roosevelt, widow of the 32nd president. With the encouragement of the Kennedys and the Roosevelts, Vidal decided to challenge the incumbent Congressman from Dutchess County, a strongly Republican area. Although he lost the general election, he garnered more votes in the district than Kennedy, the party's presidential candidate.

For the first year of Kennedy's presidency, Vidal enjoyed the role of intimate to the first family, but he soon felt confined by the atmosphere of official Washington and was eager to return to literary work. He moved to Italy and began work on the novel *Julian*. The book was published to great acclaim and topped the best-seller lists in 1964. After *Julian*, Vidal made his living as a novelist, turning to the essay or the lecture stage only to express his passionately held opinions on literature and politics.

Vidal's satirical novels include MYRA BRECKINRIDGE, MYRON, DULUTH, LIVE FROM GOLGOTHA, and THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION. Ferociously bitter and subversive, his satires are lauded for their progressive themes. But it's in his canny exploration of American history, in such novels as WASHINGTON, D.C., 1876, LINCOLN, and THE GOLDEN AGE, among others, that may be seen by future critics as his principle achievement in fiction.

Beginning in the 1950s, Vidal published occasional essays on politics and literature. A collection of 40 years of his work in the essay medium, *United States: Collected Essays 1952-1992*, won the National Book Award in 1993. The award confirmed Vidal's status as the greatest English language essayist of the 20th century. In this collection he wrote about homosexuality, about the French fiction, about such important American figures as William Dean Howells, Scott Fitzgerald, Orson Wells, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Tennessee Williams, most of whom he had actually known. His unique presence on the scene of history lends his essays a feeling of authority and intimacy.

Vidal became, in the '60s, a leading spokesman for the New Left, an iconoclast who was willing to debate William F. Buckley on television and write scathing essays about Richard Nixon. In "Pink Triangle and Yellow Star," he drew stunning parallels between the persecution of homosexuals and Jews. In "The Holy Family," he burst the bubble of awe and admiration that had kept the Kennedy

family free of criticism for many years. He poked fun at any number of American icons, from Theodore Roosevelt (whom he called “an American sissy”) to Edmund Wilson, the most revered man of letters in the twentieth century. Perhaps more importantly, he singled out neglected writers for praise, raising their profile in the world of letters. Among those he helped to reach a wider audience were Italo Calvino and Dawn Powell, both of whom he knew as friends.

In his later years, Vidal gave up writing longer novels, and published two volumes of memoirs, *Palimpsest* (1995) and *Point to Point Navigation* (2006). He also published a thoughtful study of the Founding Fathers, *Inventing a Nation: Washington, Adams, Jefferson* (2003). He continued to publish book-length essays on political topics, such as *Dreaming War* and *Imperial America*. Until his final illness, he continued to speak publicly against what he saw as the erosion of constitutional liberty in America. His ability to say what everyone secretly knows and to make it unsettling without worrying about the implications, for himself or his reputation, was a particular gift. This habit won him many admirers and numerous enemies over the years. Gore Vidal died at home in Los Angeles at the age of 86.

# GORE VIDAL TIMELINE

- 1925-Gore Vidal is born Eugene Luther Gore Vidal, Jr. on October 3<sup>rd</sup> at West Point to Eugene Vidal and Nina Gore Vidal.
- 1928- Gore flies the transcontinental rail-air route, becoming the first child ever to fly cross-country.
- 1935-Gene and Nina divorce and Nina marries High D. Auchincloss later that year.
- 1936-Gore Attends St. Albans School in Washington.
- 1940-Gore is granted admission to Phillips Exeter Academy where he makes his first appearance on the debate platform.
- 1941-Drops “Eugene”, “Luther” and “Jr.” to become Gore Vidal.
- 1943-Enlists in the Army Special Training Program, heads for the Virginia Military Institute.
- 1945-Finishes his first novel WILLIWAW while recovering from hypothermia that he contracted as a warrant officer aboard a freight supply ship in the Aleutian Islands.
- 1947-Second novel, IN A YELLOW WOOD, is published.
- 1948-Travels through Italy with new friend Tennessee Williams. THE CITY AND THE PILLAR IS PUBLISHED and critics vow to ignore Vidal’s future efforts.
- 1950-Vidal meets his long-term partner, Howard Austen.
- 1952-THE JUDGEMENT OF PARIS is published.
- 1954-MESSIAH is published.
- 1955-Satirical teleplay “Visit to a Small Planet” is broadcast live to millions. Vidal signs a five-year contract to write scripts for MGM.
- 1958-Introduces Tennessee Williams to Jack and Jackie Kennedy.
- 1960-“The Best Man” opens on Broadway and runs for 520 performances. Vidal accepts the Democratic Party nomination for Congress from his Dutchess County District and loses. Vidal becomes friends with Eleanor Roosevelt.
- 1963-Moves to Rome.
- 1964-JULIAN is published and becomes a number one best-seller.
- 1966-WASHINGTON, D.C. is published.
- 1967-Writes the uproarious satire MYRA BRECKENRIDGE from moon to moon.

- 1968-MYRA BRECKENRIDGE is published and becomes an immediate bestseller. ABC News invites Vidal and William F. Buckley to be political analysts of the Republican and National Conventions. An intense, public feud between the two begins.
- 1971-Purchases La Rondinaia in Ravello.
- 1972-BURR is published and becomes a number one bestseller.
- 1976-1876 published.
- 1981-CREATION, which focuses on religion in the fifth century B.C., is published.
- 1982-Becomes a candidate for the Democratic nomination for Senator from California. Loses to Governor Jerry Brown in primary, coming in second of nine candidates.
- 1983-DULUTH is published.
- 1984- LINCOLN is published and becomes a bestseller.
- 1987-EMPIRE is published.
- 1993-UNITED STATES: ESSAYS 1952-92 is published and wins the National Book Award.
- 1995-PALIMPSEST, Vidal's memoir, is published on his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- 1998-THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION is published, becomes a best-seller.
- 2000- THE GOLDEN AGE is published. "The Best Man" is revived on Broadway.
- 2001-THE LAST EMPIRE: ESSAYS 1992-2000
- 2002-DREAMING WAR: BLOOD FOR OIL AND THE CHENEY-BUSH JUNTA and PERPETUAL WAR FOR PERPETUAL PEACE are published.
- 2003-Vidal sells his Villa in Ravello and moves to Los Angeles. Howard Austen dies in November.
- 2009-Vidal accepts appointment to the position of honor president of the American Humanist Association, succeeding Kurt Vonnegut.
- 2012-Gore Vidal dies at his home in Los Angeles on July 31 at the age of 86.

# DIRECTOR STATEMENT

## **Nicholas Wrathall / Producer, Director, Writer**

I had the great honor to know Gore late in his life. He has been an inspirational figure to me, and spending time with him was a true education. His impact reaches beyond his achievements in politics and the arts to the very way he lived his life. In my opinion, one of his greatest attributes was his courage to speak truth to power. He understood power and the motivations and machinations of those who wield it, and he was not afraid to confront it head on or expose the lies that help maintain it.

One of my first conversations with him was about Australian politics. This is a subject dear to my heart as my family has always been involved in the Labor Party and Greens in Australia. In particular, Gore wanted to know about Bob Carr, former premier of New South Wales. He asked about Carr's retirement and if I thought he would go into federal politics. My response was that despite what people were saying, I thought eventually he would.

I soon discovered that Gore knew the leaders of the Labor Party in Australia personally. Gough Whitlam, the shining star of the 1970's Australian Labor Party, had visited him at his home in Ravello, Italy. More recently, Gore travelled around China on a tour with Bob Carr. They also hosted him when he visited Australia in the 1990s. Gore's knowledge and the people he knew came from far and wide and reached deeply into the Australian left.

It was through these discussions that we developed a rapport. I was lucky enough to travel with him to Italy, Cuba, and many cities in America. He let me into his home and his life, though he strained to keep his personal life private from the cameras and media that he so loved to address. Gore sized me up and I like to believe I may have earned a miniscule amount of respect from him, though I could be fooling myself there.

Having listened to him speak both privately and publically many times, I do think that this film represents him in the last years of his life. It represents the Gore I witnessed in his last great act. The issues he was focused on in his final years are here in this film: his concern for the constitution and the loss of habeas corpus, his concern about the voting process, his warnings about the focus on empire building and war mongering, his disgust during the Bush era and his warnings about the elite agenda and corporate control of America. He was horrified by the direction this country was going and the acceleration of wealth upwards, but he was moved and supportive of the youth movements like Occupy.

One question I hope people will ask themselves about this film is, "Who will pick up the baton now that Gore has passed on?" He was a unique and brilliant man with an eloquent and witty manner. Even in his later years, Gore was never afraid to shine light on the issues most important to our liberties. Our loss in Gore's passing is one that can never be replaced.

My hope is that this film will inspire a new generation to be courageous and to demand truth from those who hold power in our society.



## **DIRECTOR Q&A - NICHOLAS WRATHALL**

### **-What was your initial inspiration to make a documentary about Gore Vidal?**

My inspiration came from the pamphlets Gore put out after 9/11. Dreaming War, Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace and Imperial America. At the time these seemed to me like the sanest reaction to what the Bush administration was up to. I then had the opportunity to meet him through my friend Burr Steers who is his nephew. After that I filmed him in Ravello, Italy on the weekend that he was packing up to leave for the last time. The film slowly developed from there.

### **-Can you please detail the history of the making 'The United States of Amnesia'?**

My inspiration came from the pamphlets Gore put out after 9/11. Dreaming War, Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace and Imperial America. I then had the opportunity to meet him through my friend Burr Steers who is his nephew. After that I filmed him in Ravello, Italy on the weekend that he was packing up to leave for the last time. The film slowly developed from there. It was filmed on and off between 2005 and 2011. I also did a lot of archival research in the first few years of the process. It was part time at this stage as I was also doing other film work to make a living. In 2012 I stopped doing anything else and spent the year editing the film.

### **-What is your background as a filmmaker?**

I grew up in Sydney Australia and Canada as a child. I watched a lot of foreign films and in high school started going to the Sydney film festival every year. I have always been interested in social and political films both fiction and non-fiction. Directors like D.A Pennebaker and Fredrick Weisman and the Maysles brothers were all people we studied in college and they had a profound effect on me. I went to Sydney University and made my first short film while studying there. When I was 22 I moved to NYC and worked for Jane Loader as an intern. I was a big fan of her great documentary Atomic Café, which she co-directed. I then started working in music videos and later commercials for many years. In between I made a few more short films and worked on a few indie features and generally made my way as a first AD and then a producer. At this time I started coming out to LA to work and was looking for other projects. I then co-directed and co-produced Abandoned: The Betrayal of America's Immigrants, a documentary on immigration and asylum seekers in the USA that sold to PBS Independent Lens and won the Alfred I. duPont Award for broadcast journalism.

I continued to make short docs as well as working occasionally in commercials until this project really took over.

### **-You grew up in Australia, but have spent the majority of your life in the US and New York - how do you think this contributes to your worldview as a filmmaker. And do you feel a kinship with Vidal as an outsider?**

I think living outside the US helps gain perspective on the amount of propaganda that we are bombarded with here. Australians are pretty cynical about government and patriotic ideas like the ever popular American dream myth and as a foreigner I was always interested in seeing other perspectives and figuring out what this country is really about hence my interest in making a film about the plight of modern legal immigrants caught in the detention and deportation system that is essentially run for profit. Coming from a parliamentary government system I was also very suspicious of the US political system which is so financially driven. This is one of the reasons why I was so drawn to Gore Vidal's

writing. As a Washington insider he had a great ability to cut through the noise and see things for what they were. I think critical thinking is a dying art in this country and people like Gore remind us of how important it is to be able to read between the lines and not take things on face value.

**-You have a balance of archival footage and interviews with Gore—how did you strike a balance between the two in telling your story?**

When I met Gore he was already in his late 70s and still very sharp and witty however I felt that it was important to show through archival footage that he had held many of the same beliefs about the nation for decades. When you look at the interviews in black and white of Gore speaking out openly on homosexuality and questioning the values of the times you see just how ahead of his time he really was. It is important to show that his beliefs were formed at a young age and that he always stuck to his guns no matter how controversial his ideas may have seemed at the time. In fact he loved the controversy and used his television appearances very shrewdly to garner attention and get his criticisms across to a large audience by courting controversy. Archival footage is also a powerful tool to illustrate that the same arguments in politics taking place in the 1960s are very similar to those that we are hearing today. In many ways we have not moved on and are caught fighting the same battles over and over again.

**-Is this film for Gore fans or those who may not know him?**

Both. Gore fans should appreciate it and hopefully it will reach a bigger audience too. I would like people to leave the movie wanting to read Gore's work and feel motivated by his courage and beliefs. I think a younger audience will also appreciate seeing that historically many ideas in the US that seem important now have actually been around a long time and that real change will need a major paradigm shift to occur. Gore was very upset by political complacency and believed that we need radical steps to achieve change like a constitutional convention to update our laws. He loved to point out that America is a class ruled society, something that is only now being openly discussed in the broader media with the idea of the 99% and the 1%. He was very inspired when he saw the occupy movement bringing these ideas to the public and them starting to take hold.

## FILMMAKER BIOGRAPHIES

### **Nicholas Wrathall / Producer, Director, Writer**

Nicholas Wrathall is an award-winning director and producer who has been working in the documentary and commercial fields for more than fifteen years. Nicholas spent his childhood in Sydney, Australia and Canada, and made his first film while attending Sydney University.

At 22 he moved to New York where he began to make his way as an Assistant Director and Producer for music videos and commercials shot around the world, including Madonna's "Frozen," which won the 1998 MTV Award for Best Music Video. He has produced dozens of commercials for clients that include Sprint, Toyota, Fanta, and Sony Bravia.

He was first recognized for his direction of the documentary *Abandoned: The Betrayal of America's Immigrants*, which was featured on PBS Independent Lens and won the 2000 Alfred I. duPont Columbia Award for Broadcast Journalism.

In addition to his feature work, Nicholas directs and produces short documentaries on a variety of social issues. Recent work includes *Endless Caravan*, *Haitian Eksperyans* and *The Modern Gulag*, which was picked-up by the New York Times as the basis for a feature on North Korean gulags operating in Far East Russia.

Currently, Nicholas is based in Los Angeles and New York and is in the final stages of production on *Gore Vidal: The United States Of Amnesia*, an independent documentary that he is directing and producing. Nicholas was fortunate to interview Gore many times over the last few years of his life, having sparked an idea for the documentary after the release of several of Gore's political pamphlets post-911. Nicholas went on to travel with Gore to Italy, Cuba and many U.S. Cities, gaining further access to Gore's insight on the current state of affairs in this country.

With a lifelong interest in politics and social issues, Nicholas strives to use filmmaking as a tool to inspire people to question media representation and reignite the art of critical thinking.

### **Theodore James / Producer**

Theodore James began his career in 2004 when he moved to Los Angeles and started working in non-fiction productions. In 2005 he teamed up with Patrick Creadon and Christine O'Malley on the release of *Wordplay*, a documentary about *The New York Times* crossword editor and National Public Radio personality Will Shortz. *Wordplay* was a breakout hit at the 2006 Sundance Film Festival and went on to become the second-highest grossing documentary of the year.

He next served as a producer on *I.O.U.S.A.*, an examination of America's debt problem, which premiered at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival and was later nominated for a Critics' Choice Award for best Documentary Feature.

In 2009 he produced his first made-for-television documentary for Nickelodeon about the lovable cartoon character SpongeBob SquarePants. *Square Roots: The Story of SpongeBob SquarePants*, which aired on VH1 and Nickelodeon to stellar ratings.

As the economy continued to worsened, he re-teamed with his *I.O.U.S.A.* filmmakers and produced *I.O.U.S.A.: Solutions*, a two-hour follow-up, that gave possible solutions to our troubled national debt. It aired on CNN in April, 2010 to great acclaim.

Next he started his own production company (SuperFilms!) with fellow colleague Michael Barnett. Together they financed their first feature documentary film *Superheroes*. The film was a breakout hit at the 2011 Slamdance Film Festival where it won the first ever "Theatrical Release Award". It was quickly bought by *HBO Documentary Films* and aired last August on the network. He and Michael are currently developing new projects at SuperFilms!.

### **Burr Steers / Producer**

Burr Gore Steers is an American actor, screenwriter, and director. He is also the nephew of writer Gore Vidal. Born in Washington, D.C., he was the son of Republican Congressman Newton Ivan Steers, Jr. (1917–1993) and Nina Gore Auchincloss. Steers wrote and directed the film *Igby Goes Down* (2002) and was a writer for the film *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* (2003). He has directed episodes of *Weeds*, *The L Word*, and *Big Love*. Steers also directed the teen films *17 Again* (2009) and *Charlie St. Cloud* (2010). He has had minor roles in a few of Quentin Tarantino's films, playing Roger (or "Flock of seagulls") in *Pulp Fiction* (1994) and providing one of the radio voices in *Reservoir Dogs* (1992). He also appeared in *The Last Days of Disco* (1998) and *Gore Vidal's Billy the Kid* (1989).

### **Derek Wieseahn / Cinematographer**

Derek Wieseahn is a New York based director of photography with over 20 years of experience in film and television. Recent cinematography credits have included the 2010 Academy Award winning documentary short film *Music By Prudence*, the 2013 Academy Award nominated documentary feature *How To Survive A Plague*, and the 2013 Sundance selected documentary feature *God Loves Uganda*. Derek also received a camera operating credit on the 2011 Sundance winner, and Academy Award nominated documentary, *Restrepo*.

Derek has shot over 100 music videos, as well as numerous commercials and promos for such clients as HBO, Showtime, McDonalds, Adidas, Fedex, Haagan-dazs, Columbia Records, AOL, MTV, and Nickelodeon. His work has won several New York Festivals Awards as well as Addy and headliner awards. Narrative credits also include several feature films, and shorts, which have been well received at Sundance, the Tribeca Film Festival and the New York Film Festival.

### **Joel Schwartzberg / Cinematographer**

Joel has worked in the industry as a Director of Photography for over two decades, specializing in documentary and broadcast projects around the globe. His credits include work on numerous documentary series and specials for networks that include CNN, ABC, and Discovery, as well as the prime time series "Houston Medical" (2002) and "Extreme Makeover" (2003-2006). Joel has received five regional Emmy Awards, a Bronze Telly, and a Cine Golden Eagle.

### **Armando De'ath / Cinematographer**

As a Cinematographer Armando's passion for stylized images is clearly visible in the 200+ music videos he has been credited with.. His oeuvre includes legendary acts such as Manic Street Preachers, Leftfield, Motörhead, DJ Sash, Skunk Anancie, Mercury Rev and Paul Weller to name but a few.

Fluent in six languages, Armando has worked extensively abroad making use of both 35mm film and the latest digital formats. Often taking his inspiration from 1940s black and white cinematic lighting, his work and subject matters are visually strong and well suited to realm of Fashion and Advertising, as is evident in the viral campaign he recently shot for Agent Provocateur.

### **Suresh Ayyar / Editor**

Suresh Ayyar has been editing feature films and documentaries for over 30 years. He is based in Sydney, Australia. Recent credits include *Iron Sky* (2012), *Dancing with Dictators: The Story of the Last Foreign Publisher in Burma* (2011) and *The Dragon Pearl* (2011).

### **William Haugse / Editor**

An Oscar- and Emmy-nominated editor, William Haugse has edited a dozen feature documentaries including “Hoop Dreams,” “Sunset Story,” “Stevie,” and “No Impact Man,” and in New York last year, “Magic Men.” This year’s work also includes “We Are Wisconsin” (Hot Docs) and “The Woman Who Wasn’t There” (Discovery). He has edited approximately 50 hours of network and cable documentaries. He was nominated for both an Oscar (“Hoop Dreams” Finline) and an Emmy (“The Last Days of Kennedy and King” Turner), and received the American Cinema Editors Eddie Award among other prizes. He has worked with Orson Welles and John Cassavetes, among others. His own film, “Breakfast in Bed,” starring John Ritter, was “finely crafted” according to the Hollywood Reporter and received festival awards both here and in Europe. As a director of short documentaries he has won several national prizes including Chris Gold awards. He taught for 5 years in the USC Dept of Cinema and now after many travels is based in Los Angeles.

### **Rob Bralver / Editor**

Rob's first film was the acclaimed music documentary *Cure for Pain: The Mark Sandman Story* (2012), which won numerous best film and best editing awards at festivals worldwide. After editing *Gore Vidal: The United States of Amnesia*, he wrote and edited the upcoming *Our Vinyl Weighs A Ton: This Stones Throw Records* starring Common & Kanye West, due to premiere at the 2013 LA Film Festival. Rob is 26 years old and lives in Los Angeles.

### **Derek Boonstra / Editor**

Derek grew up in Colorado and has been working on documentaries in various capacities since 2006. Among other projects, he produced, wrote and edited 2009's *BAKER BOYS*, a 4-part documentary series about American soldiers stationed in Iraq, and edited the 2011 Slamdance award winning HBO Documentary *SUPERHEROES*, a humorous look into the strange world of real-life caped crusaders, as well as 2012's *THE INVISIBLE WAR*, a sobering exposé of sexual assault in the US military which earned numerous accolades, including an Academy Award nomination for best documentary and Rotten Tomatoes' top film of 2012. Outside of the edit room, he volunteers on the board of directors for *The Bicycle Kitchen/La Bicicocina*, a non-profit organization in Los Angeles dedicated to providing bicycle education.

## **GORE VIDAL:**

### **The United States of Amnesia**

Country:	U.S.
World Premiere:	2013 Tribeca International Film Festival
Language:	English
Running Time:	89 minutes
Shooting Locations:	Ravello and Venice Italy, Los Angeles, New York, Washington DC, Havana Cuba,
Format:	HD
Production Co:	Amnesia Productions

This film was made with the support of Film Independent.