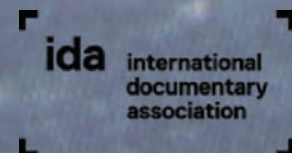


AFTER SHERMAN

a film by Jon-Sesrie Goff

with vital support from



A film by

Jon-Sesrie Goff

Written by

Jon-Sesrie Goff

Executive Producers

Erika Dilday
Leslie Fields-Cruz
Sally Jo Fifer
Justine Nagan
Chris White

Producers

blair dorosh-walther
Madeleine Hunt-Ehrlich
Jon-Sesrie Goff

Supervising Producer for ITVS

David Eisenberg

Consulting Producer for ITVS

Tamara Gould

Associate Producer

Lauren Waring Douglas

Editor

Blair Seab McClendon

Cinematography

Jon-Sesrie Goff

Animation by

Kelly Gallagher



contact

Festival information: Jeffrey Winter | jeffrey@thefilmcollaborative.org

media inquiries: info@aftersherman.com

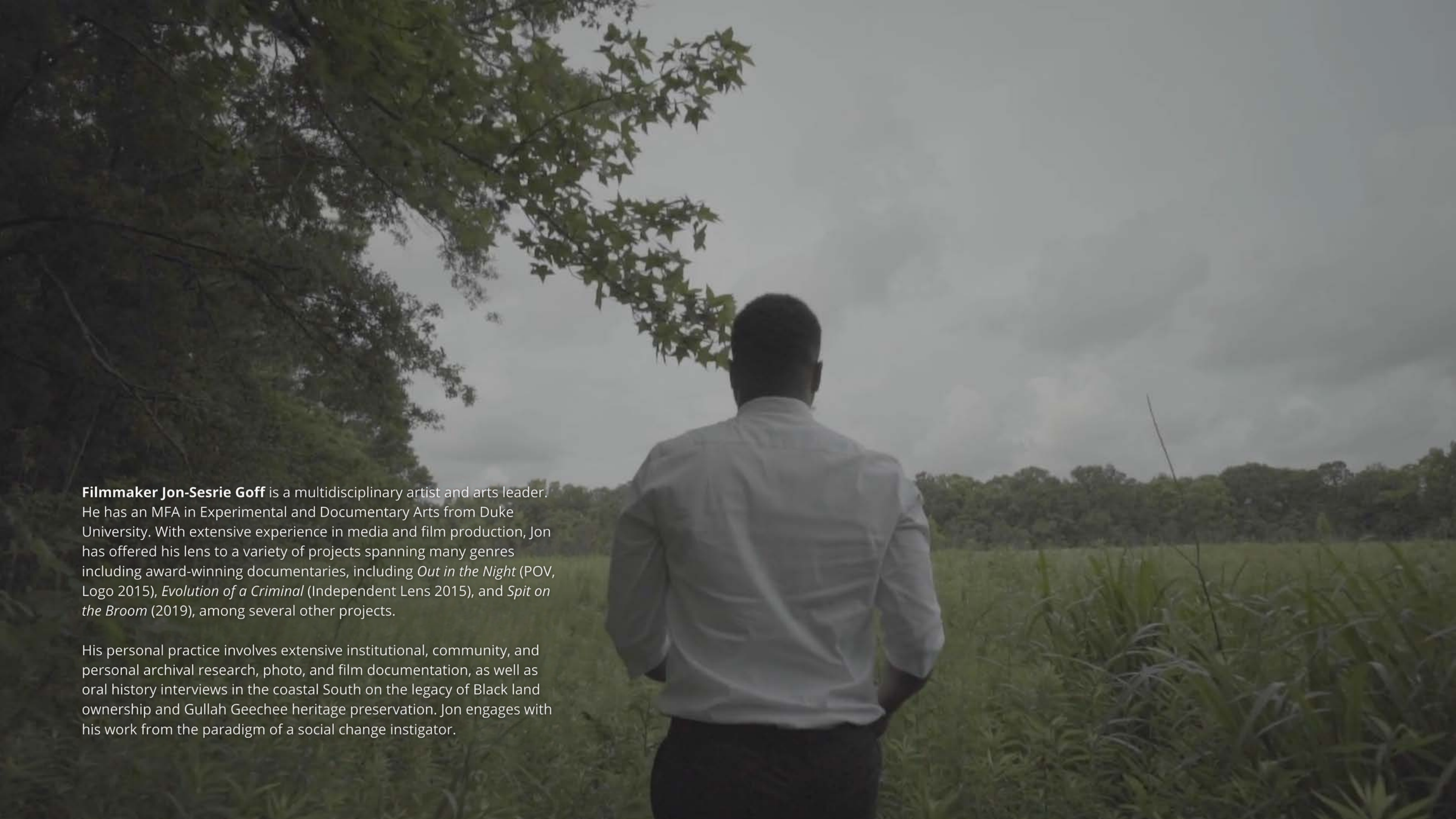
www.aftersherman.com



**America labeleded my
father Negro. I was
labeleded Black. We
Gullah Geechee and
we bin yah.**

Beautifully layered and expressionistic, ***After Sherman*** is a story about inheritance and the tension that defines our collective American history, especially Black history. The filmmaker follows his father, a minister, in the aftermath of a mass shooting at his church in Charleston, South Carolina to understand how communities of descendants of enslaved Africans use their unique faith as a form of survival as they continue to fight for America to live up to its many unfulfilled promises to Black Americans.



A man in a white shirt is seen from behind, standing in a field of tall grass. He is looking towards a line of trees in the distance under a cloudy sky. The lighting is soft and natural, suggesting an overcast day. The man's hands are in his pockets, and he appears to be in a contemplative or observational state.

Filmmaker Jon-Sesrie Goff is a multidisciplinary artist and arts leader. He has an MFA in Experimental and Documentary Arts from Duke University. With extensive experience in media and film production, Jon has offered his lens to a variety of projects spanning many genres including award-winning documentaries, including *Out in the Night* (POV, Logo 2015), *Evolution of a Criminal* (Independent Lens 2015), and *Spit on the Broom* (2019), among several other projects.

His personal practice involves extensive institutional, community, and personal archival research, photo, and film documentation, as well as oral history interviews in the coastal South on the legacy of Black land ownership and Gullah Geechee heritage preservation. Jon engages with his work from the paradigm of a social change instigator.



Director's Statement

You can reach the land by dirt road, or by boat if you sail down the Santee River towards the Atlantic. This plot of land has been in my family since the 1860s, when it was purchased by my ancestors after emancipation. The Hopswee plantation, where they were once enslaved still stands a mile away, now a wedding destination. The land presents unanswered questions about ownership, belonging, citizenship and history. Its transformation from marsh to the mainline of American rice and wealth was predicated on the skilled labor and ingenuity of Africans, primarily from the rice coast of western Africa. The fields were abandoned after Emancipation, when the formerly enslaved left for other trades. The land's potential still exists. One day I will inherit this land. And I will inherit all of this history and presence that comes with it.

- Jon-Sesrie Goff



The Lowcountry was originally home to the Santee, Seewee, Wando, Kiawah, Stono, Edisto, Combahee, Escamacu, Ashepoo, Wimbee and Yemassee peoples among other indigenous tribes.

The first Africans arrived in South Carolina in 1526, as part of a Spanish expedition from the Caribbean. By the Civil War in 1861, the coastal areas were over 85% African.



Aunt Peggy
& Francis

Summer of
1910

our nurses

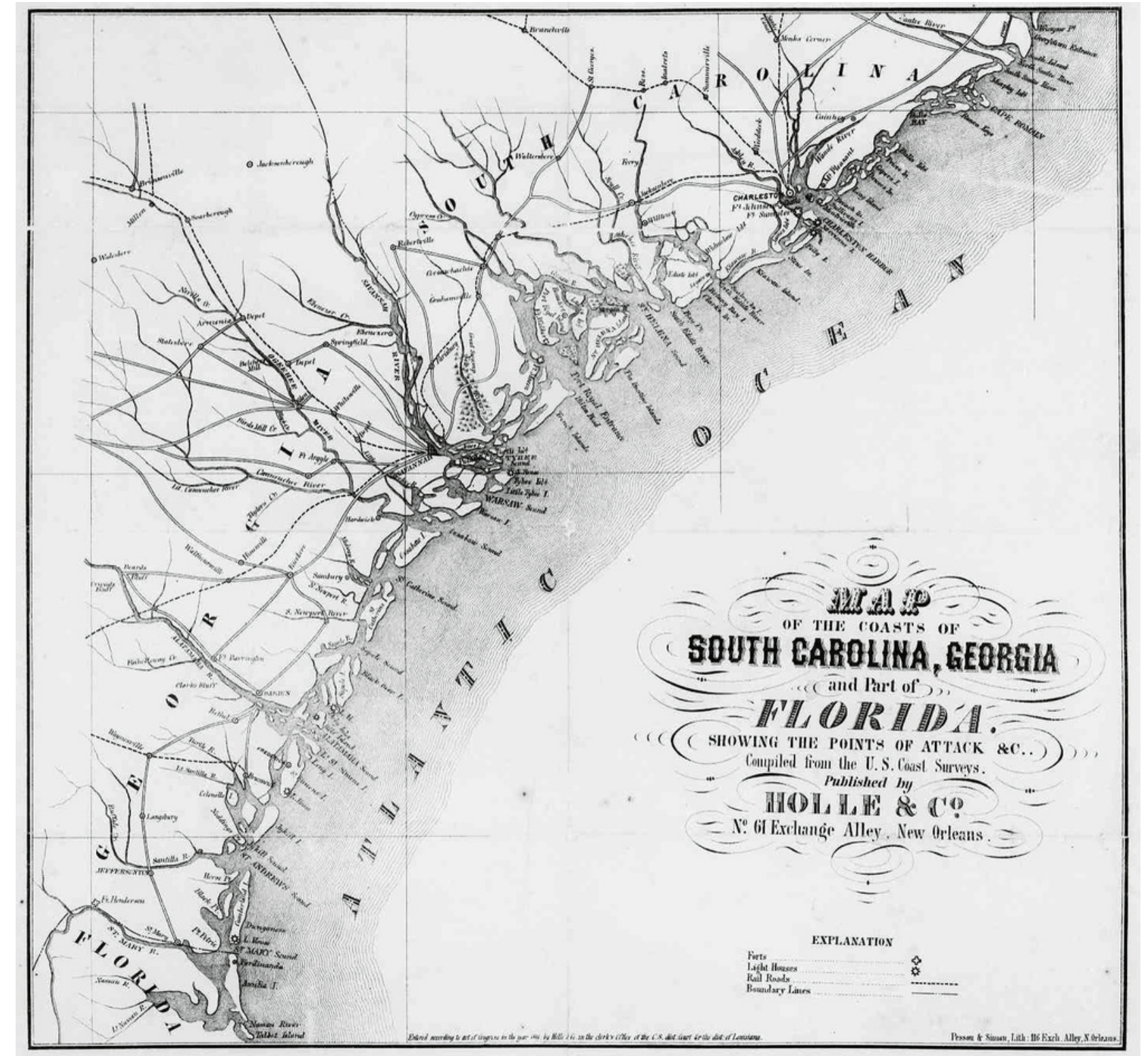
Mother & me

13-237-GL

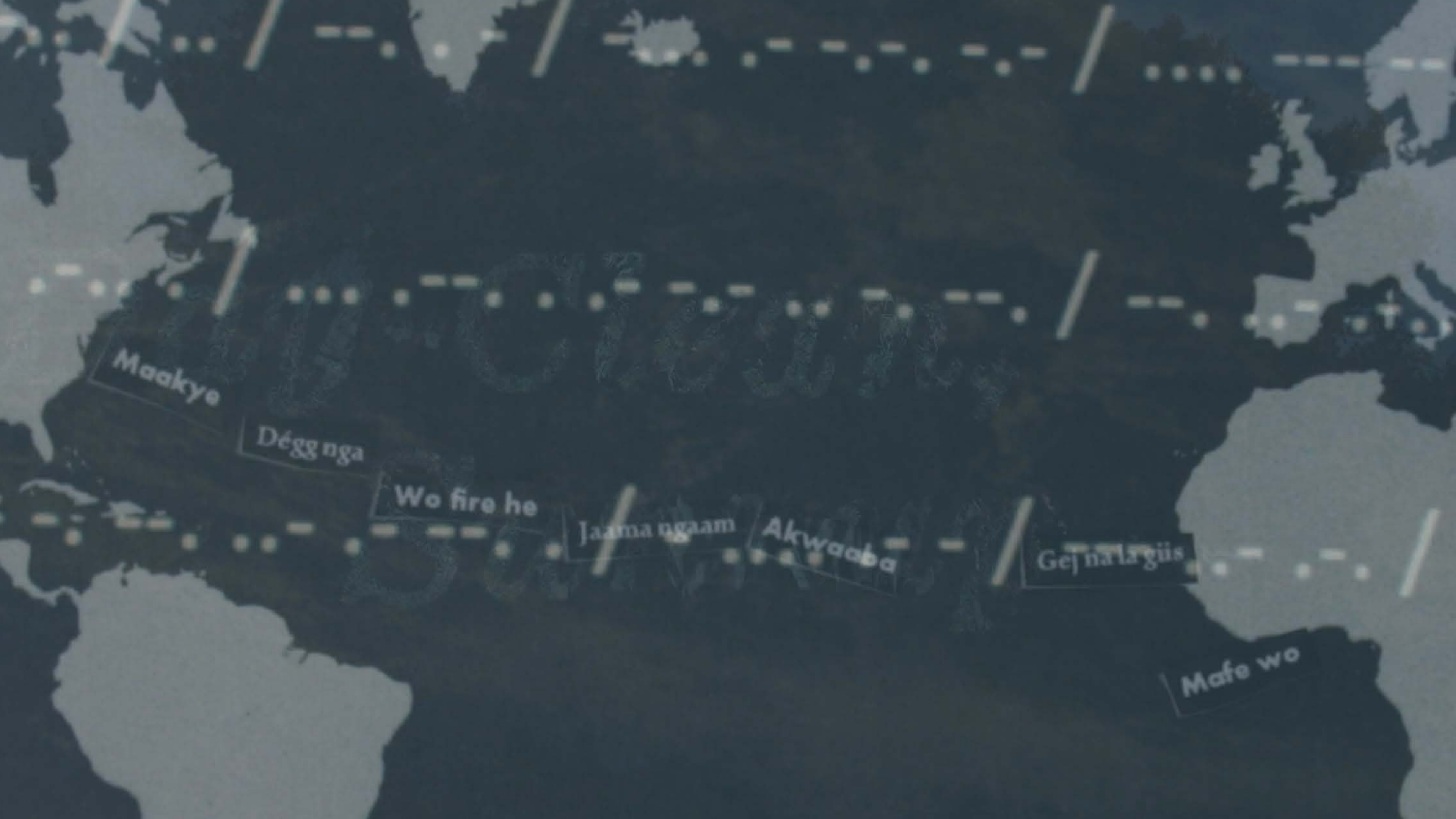
I spent my summers in the Lowcountry of South Carolina, the place my father insists is my home. I was always fascinated by the stories my grandmother and cousin Bunny would tell me during our time in Georgetown. Stories deeply rooted in Gullah culture – the coastal southern, recipes and incantations for survival. I soaked up everything that was said from my perch on my grandmother’s porch. *After Sherman* is my journey to explore my relationship with my father and to this land that we call home. We weave in and out of the present-day Lowcountry, home videos, and the historical archive, investigating the history of African people on this land, and the cultural and spiritual rituals that banded people together.

On June 17th, 2015 I spoke to my mother in the late afternoon. My parents were on their way to lead a quarterly meeting at Mother Emanuel church, a church under my father’s supervision. Within several hours, nine parishioners were dead including Reverend Pinckney. My parents had left the church just twenty minutes before the shooting began. My father was appointed interim pastor of Emanuel AME Church in the aftermath of the shooting. In a state of incomprehensible shock, I began to work on my film with new urgency. I filmed another drive alone in the car with my dad, this time a silent drive to open the church that Sunday for worship.

After Sherman is about the collective American inheritance. In the same manner, Aretha Franklin was able to hold popular music and protest in a single breath, I carefully orchestrate this film to be both a history lesson and a visual survey - a reclamation of space and the acknowledgment of a spatial tension that defines our collective history as Americans. This film will be structured around my journey to tell a personal story of national significance. It is a film about being present in a corner of the American south that is often forgotten except in moments of spectacular violence. It speaks to intergenerational questions between the post-civil rights and civil rights generations. Rather than depicting black subjects as at the whim of violent forces, it is a document of the imparting of wisdom between generations of African Americans on how to survive not just materially, but spiritually.



I love and hate South Carolina.



Maakye

Dégg nga

Wo fire he

Jaama ngaam

Akwaaba

Gej na la giis

Mafe wo

Rev. Dr. Norvel Goff, Sr.
Anna Marie Goff
Angielin Ford
Vermelle “Bunny” Smith Rodrigues
Alma White
Alphonoso Brown
John Henry Smalls
Alvin Shepard
Ruby Martin
Willi Glee
Liz Austin
Jean Ortiz
Rev. Arthur Pinckney
Dr. Emory Campbell
George A. Peters, II
Brandon McEachern
Jenna Bond
Benny L. Walk
Lauren Grove
Felicia Mosley
Jason Smith
Lawrence Jason Snipe
Elizabeth Coxim
Kyra Freeman
Arianna Osi - Oni
Emmanuel Osi-Oni
Tanesha Simmons

Dynasty Roberts
Kadence Simmons
Joseph Fields
Charmaine Wilder
Sonya Cardova
Terri Mcmillan
Maurice Wilder
Loretha Wilder
Marlaine Wilder
Loretha Wilder
Maurice Wilder
Karen D. Wilder Smalls
Arthur T. Wilder
Christopher A. Wilder
Arthur Parks II
Arthur D. Parks Sr.
Sheldon Scott
Shirley Scott
Maurice Scott Jr.
Candace Swinton
Bobby Carr
O’neal Smalls
Elijah Heyward III
Norvel “Jay” Goff, Jr.
Joe Cephus Kinloch
Joseph LeGree
Matthew Raiford
Jovan Sage
Nathaniel Bligen
Vernelle M. Heyward

Brooke Mcintyre Jackson
Viola JM Smalls
Julie M. Camfall
Bernard Mcintyre
Elijah Heyward Sr.
Francina E. Smalls Miller
Gemma Simmons
Aaniyah Green
Zamiyah Green
Annie R. Smalls

Talent

Brayden Satterwhite
John Smalls

Dancers

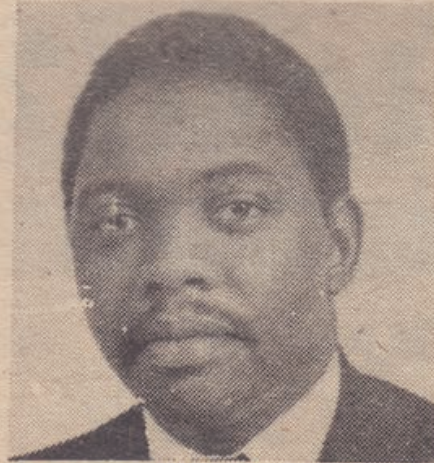
Ariel Waring
Tikayia Wilson
Virginia Ladson

Film Participants



After Sherman is an intergenerational exchange between an African-American father, son, and history.

Wednesday, March 14, 1979



By NORVEL GOFF

A CLEAR VOICE

Only a few years ago, we Black Americans were marching throughout this country -- to protest treatment of Black folks in this country.

Yet many Black folks who have made it (???) have made it on the blood, sweat, tears and death of Black folks who have blazed the trail for us, but many have forgotten from which they came. Recently many whites and Blacks have pose the question, "Did you see Roots II", and my very positive response was, "that I live Roots everyday of my life", and we are faced with similar situations here in 1979.

OH! HOW WE FORGET--

A Gullah Geechee native of Georgetown, South Carolina, film protagonist **Rev. Dr. Norvel Goff, Sr.** is one of the thousands who have inherited heirs property --- land purchased by the formerly enslaved after the end of the period of enslavement for Africans in America in 1863. The land in the coastal South and sea islands of the United States of America has been threatened by outside development since the mid-1950s.

With few opportunities in the region, Dr. Goff pursued opportunities in Connecticut and New York while fighting many of the injustices he experienced growing up in the South. Deeply concerned with the interaction between marginalized people and corporations. He was part of Coca-Cola's early 70s African American marketing team and dedicated his life to social activism, serving in the leadership of the AME Church, NAACP, and Urban League. He entered city and state politics in Hartford, CT in the late 70s.

Goff was part of the last wave of the Great Migration from the South to the North and also participated in the early wave of African American reverse migration, returning to South Carolina in the early 2000s. He attended Morris Brown College in Atlanta, GA on a football scholarship, he has a Master of Divinity from Yale University and a Ph.D. in Theology from Colgate Divinity School. He has pastored churches in Connecticut, New York, and South Carolina and currently oversees 37 churches in the Lowcountry of South Carolina as Presiding Elder of the Edisto District of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. In the aftermath of the mass murders at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC, he served as interim pastor.



Five ...
Pastor's Georgetown connection ...
helps usher changes in ...





Alma White has served as Georgetown County (South Carolina) Clerk of Court since January 2001 after a career as a public school teacher. While working for Georgetown County School District, Ms. White served as a member of the Georgetown City Council from 1990 to 2000. During part of that time, she served as Mayor Pro Tem.



Elijah Heyward III is a native of Beaufort, South Carolina, and a Hampton University graduate. Elijah earned his Ph.D. in American Studies from UNC-Chapel Hill. He has published and presented on his various research interests, which include African American history, popular culture, religion, & contemporary Gullah/Geechee culture. He served as Chief Operating Officer of the International African American Museum in Charleston.



Alphonso Brown is a licensed tour guide for the City of Charleston and owns and operates Gullah Tours. He is the author of one of The History Press bestseller, A Gullah to Guide Charleston. He is a lecturer on the Gullah language and the Black History of Charleston. He has given lectures and made presentations across the country on Gullah culture.



Vermelle "Bunny" Smith Rodrigues (1938 - 2015) was a community leader among the Gullah people, African Americans who live in the coastal low country region of South Carolina and Georgia. Campbell was born and raised on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina before that island. Throughout his adult life, he has been a peacemaker within his community and a bridge-builder between the Gullahs and the outside world.

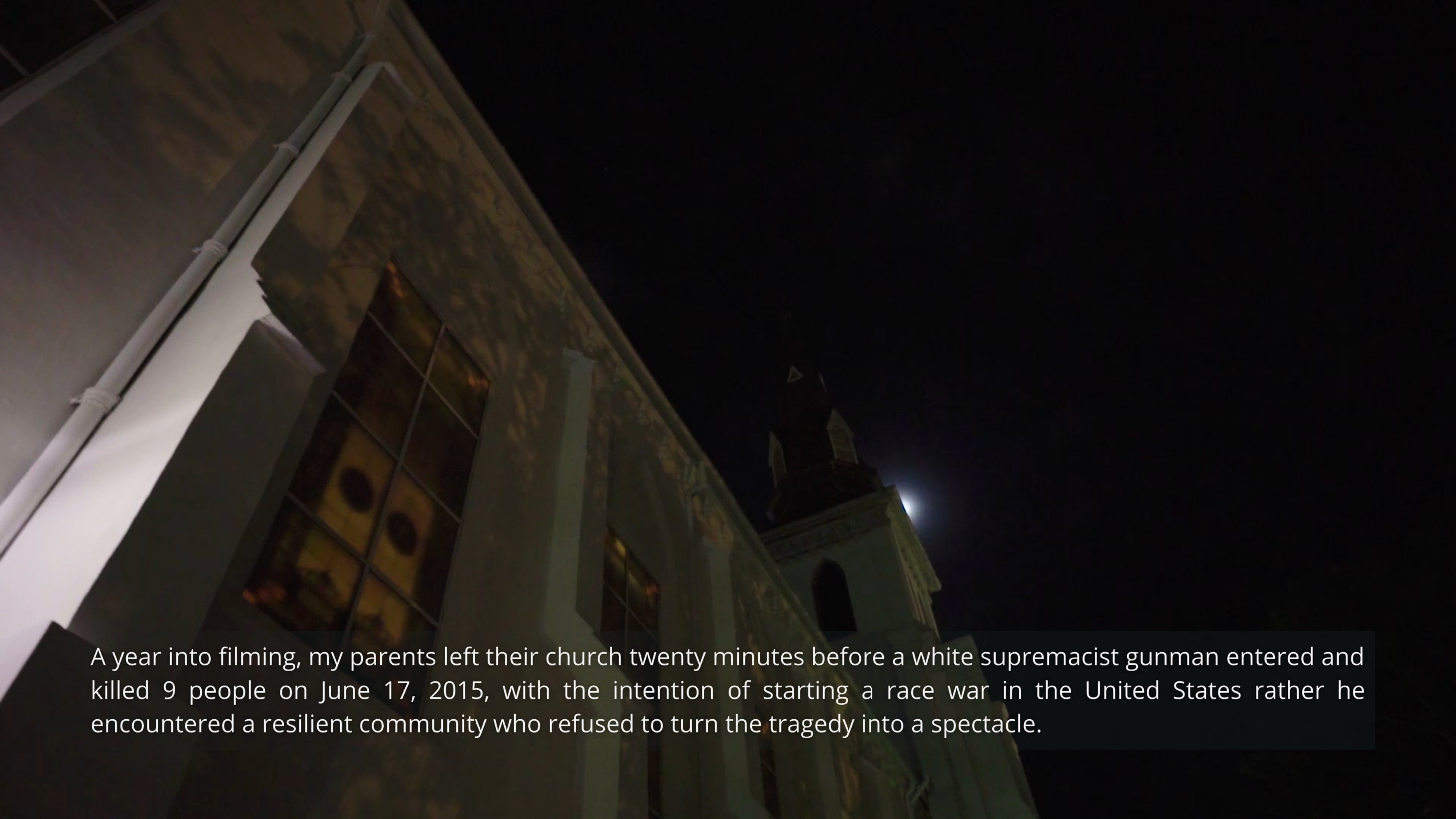


Matthew Raiford served until recently as the program coordinator and associate professor of culinary arts at the College of Coastal Georgia. In 2015, Raiford, the former executive chef at Little St. Simon's Resort, and his partner, Jovan Sage, a food alchemist, opened The Farmer and the Larder on Newcastle Street, helping jumpstart the revival of Brunswick's historic downtown. Raiford is a frequent presenter at food and wine festivals throughout the country.



Emory Campbell is a community leader among the Gullah people, African Americans who live in the coastal low country region of South Carolina and Georgia. Campbell was born and raised on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina before that island. Throughout his adult life, he has been a peacemaker within his community and a bridge-builder between the Gullahs and the outside world.

Film Participants



A year into filming, my parents left their church twenty minutes before a white supremacist gunman entered and killed 9 people on June 17, 2015, with the intention of starting a race war in the United States rather he encountered a resilient community who refused to turn the tragedy into a spectacle.

Artistic Statement

After Sherman's speaks to the double consciousness that many marginalized communities live with while engaging with the dominant culture, one where history is just below the surface for some Americans and at the forefront for the rest of us. Through black and white 16mm re-enactments I have a conversation with the past, telling my ancestor's stories of Gullah liberation. Paying homage to artist John Akomfrah, I explore where he leaves off, juxtaposing archival images, vérité, journalism, poetic performative moments, and lyrical reenactments to fuse past and present.

An aerial photograph of a vast wetland landscape. The terrain is a mix of green marshes and dark, winding water channels. In the distance, a road with a few vehicles is visible. The sky is overcast and grey.

**Depicting contested
spaces expands the
questions & meaning
of historic monuments
to the land itself.**

Crew



blair dorosh-walther
producer

blair identifies as gender non-conforming, using they/them pronouns, is a social issue and award-winning documentary director, activist, and artist with a passion for inspiring action for social justice through media. blair graduated with a BFA in Film and Television from NYU where they were awarded the Adam Balsano Award for social significance in documentary filmmaking and an MSW from Fordham University.

Their first feature-length documentary, *Out in the Night* had its international premiere at the Los Angeles Film Festival in 2014 and has screened in over 100 film festivals around the world, winning a dozen awards, partnering with the United Nations' and kicked off the 2015 POV season with a simultaneous broadcast on the Logo Network. blair is a Guggenheim Fellow and social worker, deeply engaged in affordable housing, economic justice, and alternatives to incarceration in New York City.



Madeleine Hunt-Ehrlich
producer

Madeleine is a filmmaker and artist. Her work has screened all over the world including at the Guggenheim Museum in New York and in film festivals such as New Orleans Film Festival, Doclisboa, and Blackstar Film Festival. She is the recipient of a 2019 Rema Hort Mann Award, a 2019 UNDO fellowship and grant, a 2015 TFI ESPN Future Filmmaker Award, and a 2014 Princess Grace Award in film.

Her work has been recognized by the Time Inc. Black Girl Magic Emerging Director's series, the National Magazine (ELLIE) Awards. Madeleine has a degree in Film and Photography from Hampshire College and has an MFA in Film and Media Arts from Temple University. She is the Assistant Professor in film and television production at CUNY - Queens College in New York City.



Blair Seab McClendon
editor

Blair Seab McClendon is an editor and filmmaker. He is a former Karen Schmeer Diversity fellow, was a Contributing Editor for the 2017 Sundance Documentary Edit and Story labs and winner of the Sundance Short Film Jury Award for Editing with the film LAPS. His work has also premiered at Tribeca, Cannes, TIFF, Telluride and other festivals around the world. He was most recently an editor on *The Assistant* and *Mr. Soul!* and a consulting editor on *Whose Streets*. Like many others, he lives in Brooklyn, New York.



Religion is a contested space.

Rather than presenting black people at the whim of violent forces, *After Sherman* is a document of the imparting wisdom between generations of African Americans on how to survive not just materially, but spiritually.

Crew



Tamar-kali
composer

Tamar-kali is a second-generation musician with roots in the coastal Sea Islands of South Carolina. As a composer, Tamar-kali has defied boundaries to craft her own unique alternative sound. 2017 marked her debut as a film score composer. Her work on Dee Rees' Oscar-nominated *Mudbound*, garnered her the World Soundtrack Academy's 2018 Discovery of the Year Award.

Her subsequent film scores; Joshua Marston's *Come Sunday*, starring Chiwetel Ejiofor and Martin Sheen and *The Lie*, directed by Veena Sud reveal an expanding palette that originates from her emotional artistic core.

In 2019 Tamar-kali conducted her 1st symphonic commission, scored four films, three which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival 2020. They include Dee Rees' adaptation, *The Last Thing He Wanted* starring Anne Hathaway, Josephine Decker's psychological drama, *Shirley* starring Elisabeth Moss, Kitty Green's *The Assistant*, and the documentary *John Lewis: Good Trouble*.



Kelly Gallagher
editor

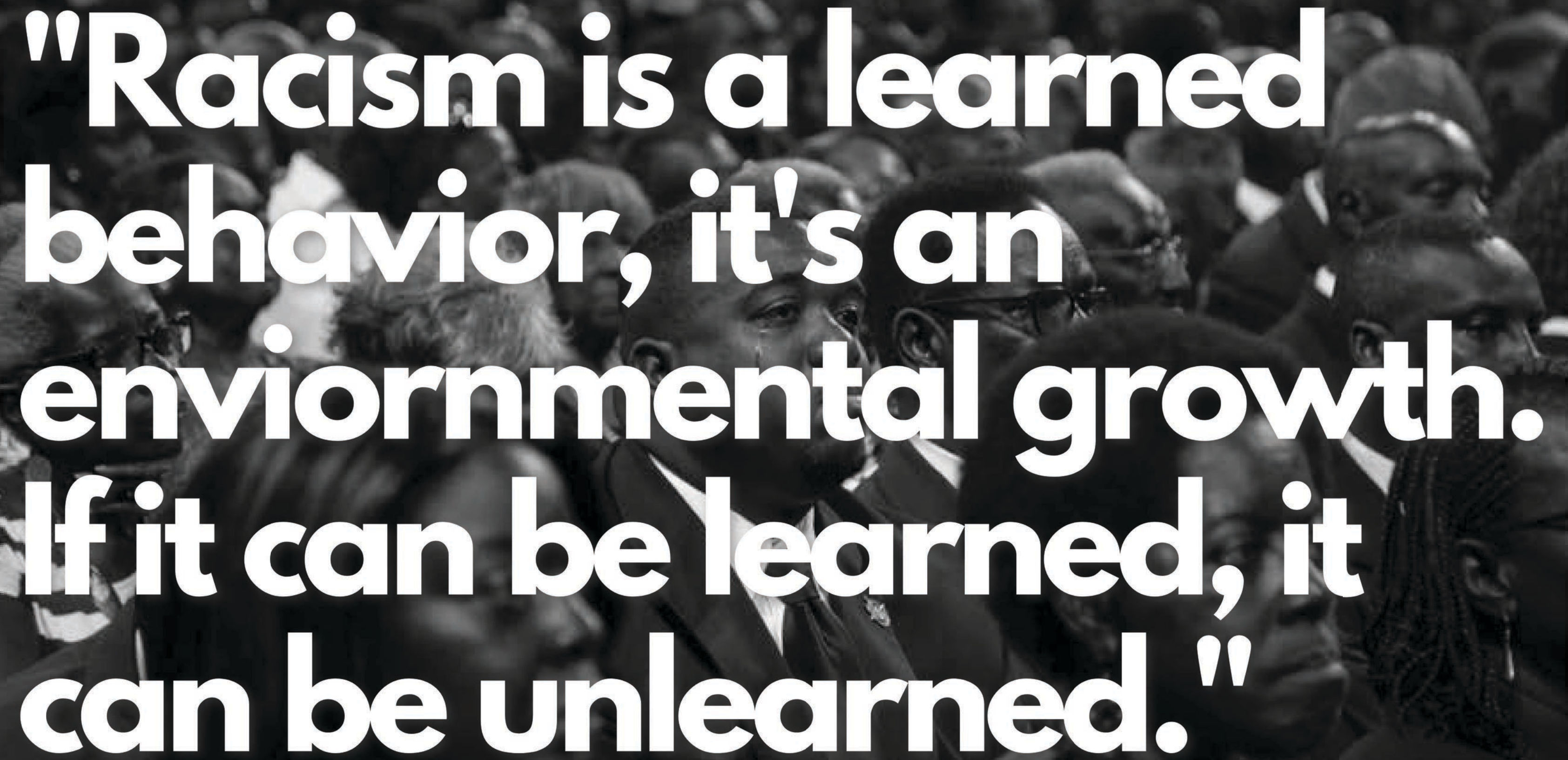
Kelly Gallagher is a filmmaker, animator, and Assistant Professor of Film at Syracuse University. Her creative work is rooted in themes of resistance, struggle, political histories, and personal explorations. Her award-winning films and commissioned animations have screened internationally at venues including: the Museum of Modern Art, the National Gallery of Art, Sundance Film Festival, the Smithsonian Institution, Anthology Film Archives, and International Film Festival Rotterdam. Her most recent animations have also screened on Netflix and PBS. She's presented solo programs of her work at institutions including: SFMOMA, Close-Up Cinema London, SF Cinematheque, and Wexner Center for the Arts. Kelly enthusiastically organizes and facilitates fun and inclusive film workshops, camps, and masterclasses for communities and groups of all ages, from Kentucky to California, from New York to Iowa and beyond.



****temp score provided courtesy of
Marty Ehrlich***

Marty Ehrlich is one of the most celebrated artists of his generation, critically acclaimed as both composer and player. Equally fluent on clarinet, saxophone, and flutes, Ehrlich has been hailed as "one of the most formidable multi-instrumentalists since Eric Dolphy...the jazz dream musician" (*The Village Voice*). *The New York Times* calls him "one of the premier melodists of his generation," and *The Nation* "one of his time's most original thinkers (with) a rare and wonderful talent, a now yearning, now biting attack and a stunningly voice-like expressiveness."

Jazz Zeitung states: "If there is a believable poetic sensibility in jazz, you will find it with Marty Ehrlich." The Jazz Journalist Association honored him as Wind Player of the Year in 2001 and as Clarinetist of the year in 2003. In 2004, Ehrlich was awarded a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in Composition. He has recorded 14 CDs with these ensembles on the Palmetto, Enja, New World, Omnitone and Tzadik labels.



"Racism is a learned behavior, it's an environmental growth. If it can be learned, it can be unlearned."

-Dr. Norvel Goff, Sr.

Crew

Additional Cinematography

Eric Branco
Alex Cunningham
Arshleigh Emile
Jerry Henry
Madeleine Hunt-Ehrlich
Michaela O'Brien

Assistant Camera

Franziska Schirmer Lewis
Marvin Van Buren
Dani Smith

Steadicam Operator

Jake Butler
Jerry Henry
Kyle Fasanella

Drone Operators

Adam Boozer
Jerry Henry

Additional Editor

Erik Dugger

Assistant Editors

Anne Yao
Vivian Hu

Gaffer

Alex Ashe
Jeancarlo Gomez

Grip

Larry Frazier
Joshua Echevaria

Sound Recording

by
Madeleine Hunt-Ehrlich
Eddie Wilson
Mike Gassert
Tony Bell

Production Assistant

Joseph "Joe" Johnson

Post-Production Assistant

Noura Ahmed

Still Photographer

Jon-Sesrie Goff

Consulting Producer

Elijah Heyward, III
George A. Peters, II

Archival Producer

Ray Segal

Legal Services

Fernando Ramirez

Post Production Facility

Goldcrest Post NY

Colorist

Steve Beganyi

Sound Finishing Provided By

Goldcrest Post NY

Supervising Sound Editor and Re-recording Mixer

Michael Suarez

Sound Effects Editor

Samantha Doyle

Director of Sound

Nicole Tessier

Post Production Producer

blair dorosh-walther

Temporary Soundtrack

Courtesy of

Marty Ehrlich
Mark Helias

Fiscal Sponsor

The International Documentary Association (IDA)
The Gotham Film & Media Institute
Doc Society

Photos Courtesy of

The Goff Family
The Belle W. Baruch Foundation, Hobcaw Barony
Morgan and Trenholm Collection, Georgetown County
Library

Archival Footage Courtesy of

The Goff Family
The African Methodist Episcopal Church
South Carolina Moving Images Research Collection
Getty - NBC News Collection
Kino Library
Periscope Films
WROC- NextStar
POND5
Shutterstock

“Everything Change Up Now: A View of the South Carolina
Sea Islands” by Gretchen Robinson
Distribution by FolkStream

Very Special Thanks

Barb Lee

This Film is a Co-Production of

American Documentary | POV
ITVS SSP
Black Public Media
Hedera Pictures
The Fire This Time

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