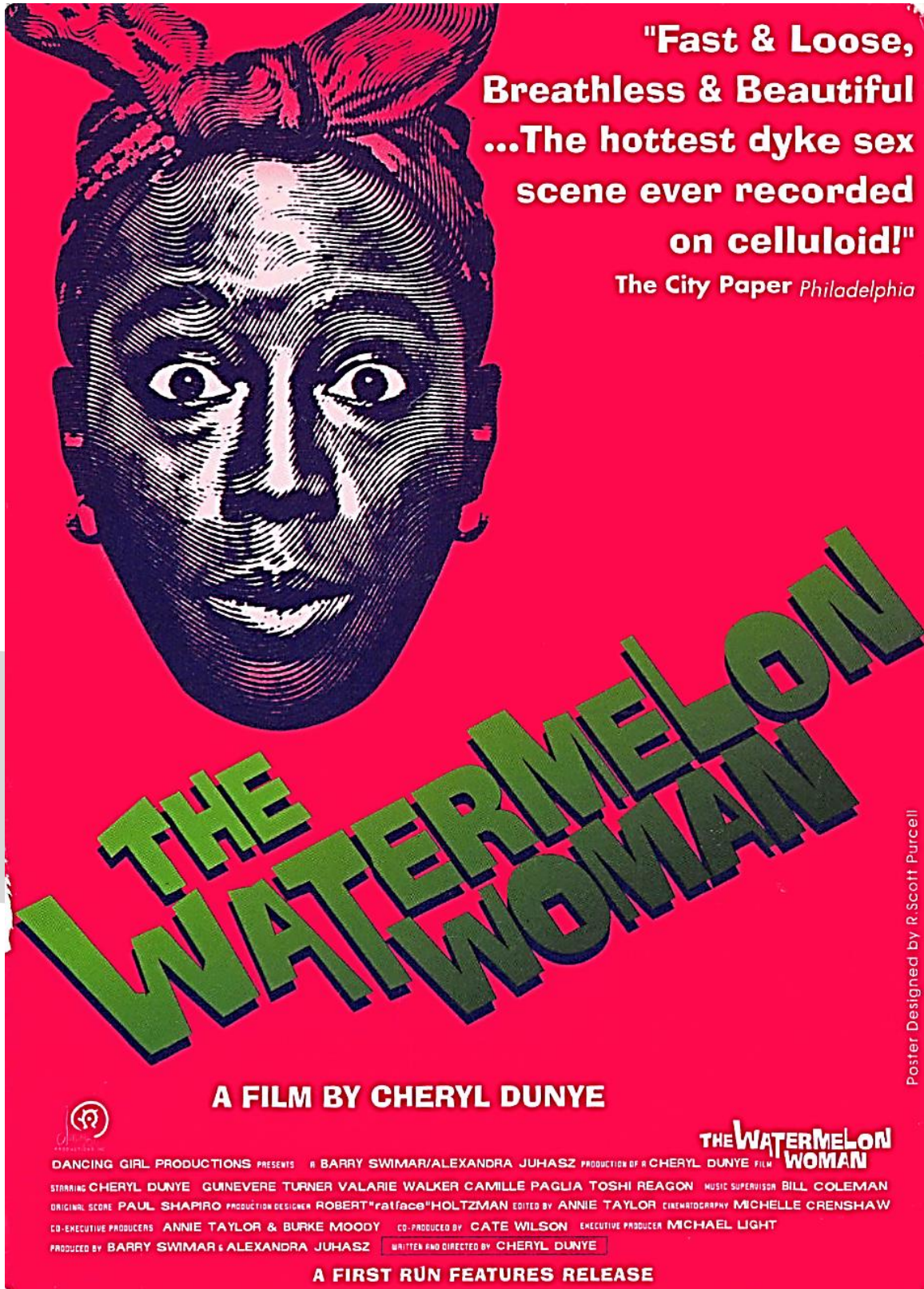


THE WATERMELON 20TH ANNIVERSARY WOMAN



AWARDS



REMASTERING OVERSEEN BY

MODERN | VIDEOFILM

AND

13TH GEN

SPONSORED BY



Preservation & Re-master Produced by Marc Smolowitz, 13th Gen

Digitally remastered for the 20th Anniversary by Modern VideoFilm
83 minutes | Available on DCP and Blu-ray | Color | Stereo | 1996

MAIN CAST

CHERYL Cheryl Dunye

DIANA Guinevere Turner

TAMARA Valarie Walker

FAE RICHARDS Lisa Marie Bronson

Featuring Camille Paglia, Toshi Reagon, Cheryl Clarke, and Sarah Schulman



Guinevere Turner and Cheryl Dunye

MAIN CREDITS

Written and Directed by Cheryl Dunye

Produced by Barry Swimar and Alexandra Juhasz

Restoration Producer Marc Smolowitz

Co-producer Cate Wilson

Editor and co-executive producer Annie Taylor

Executive Producer Michael Light

Director of Photography Michelle Crenshaw

Music Supervisor Bill Coleman

IN MEMORIAM

Edith Irene Dunye

Ira Jeffries

David Rakoff

SYNOPSIS

Director Cheryl Dunye's landmark Black Queer Film, *THE WATERMELON WOMAN*, is being re-released for its 20th Anniversary, with a pristine 2K HD Restoration overseen by 13th Gen. The film is touring the international LGBT film festival circuit once again, and re-connecting with a lively new generation of fans worldwide.



Cheryl Dunye, Guinevere Turner, and Valarie Walker

Set in Philadelphia, *THE WATERMELON WOMAN* is the story of Cheryl (Cheryl Dunye), a twenty-something black lesbian struggling to make a documentary about Fae Richards, a beautiful and elusive 1930s black film actress popularly known as "The Watermelon Woman." While uncovering the meaning of Fae Richards' life, Cheryl experiences a total upheaval in her personal life. Her love affair with Diana (Guinevere Turner, *Go Fish*), a beautiful white woman, and her interactions with the gay and black

communities are subject to the comic yet biting criticism of her best friend Tamara (Valarie Walker). Meanwhile, each answer Cheryl discovers about the Watermelon Woman evokes a flurry of new questions about herself and her future. At the film's conclusion, the Watermelon Woman is clearly a metaphor for Cheryl's search for identity, community, and love.

According to director Cheryl Dunye, much about the character she plays in the film is autobiographical, but the historical references to the Watermelon Woman are fictional: "The Watermelon Woman came from the real lack of any information about the lesbian and film history of African-American women. Since it wasn't happening, I invented it." Well-known lesbian photographer Zoe Leonard collaborated by creating a fictional photographic "archive" from the "life" of the Watermelon Woman. Leonard's photographs for the film have shown internationally and at two Whitney Biennials, and are published in the book *The Fae Richards Photo Archive* (Artspace Books 1997). Leonard is represented by Hauser & Wirth in New York.

THE WATERMELON WOMAN features cameo performances by notable figures including Camille Paglia (controversial cultural critic), Toshi Reagon (African American lesbian singer/songwriter), Brian Freeman (actor from the performance troupe Pomo Afro Homos), Cheryl Clark (African American lesbian poet), and Sarah Schulman (lesbian novelist and activist).

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

CHERYL DUNYE

WRITER, DIRECTOR, "CHERYL"

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0243109/>



Cheryl Dunye, a native of Liberia, received her BA from Temple University and her MFA from Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts.

Dunye's most recent film, *BLACK IS BLUE*, won awards at five major festivals, and has struck a powerful nerve with its exploration of everyday racism and transphobic experiences in the lives of trans black men. Her fifth feature film, *MOMMY IS COMING*, continues to win international awards as the first queer adult romantic comedy. Dunye's fourth feature film *THE OWLS*, was celebrated at national and international film festivals in 2010. Her third feature film, Miramax's *MY BABY'S DADDY*, was a box office success and played at theaters nationwide. Dunye's second feature, the acclaimed HBO Films' *STRANGER INSIDE*, garnered Dunye an

Independent Spirit award nomination for best director in 2002. Dunye's other works have been included in the Whitney Biennial and screened internationally at festivals in New York, London, Tokyo, Cape Town, Amsterdam, and Sydney.

In 1996, Dunye wrote, directed and starred in her first feature-length film, *THE WATERMELON WOMAN*. It was awarded the Teddy Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival, and won Best Feature at OutFest LA, Italy's Torino, and France's Creteil Film Festival. *THE WATERMELON WOMAN* was recently honored as one of three OutFest UCLA Legacy Project films, and granted a pristine 2K remastering for re-release. The film is currently being honored with a series of 20th Anniversary screenings at top-tier festivals such as the Berlinale, OutFest, the San Francisco International Film Festival, and at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Dunye has served on the Directors Guild of America's Independent Council and on the advisory board for New York's Independent Film Project's Gordon Parks Award. She was also a mentor for IFP/ West Project Involve, and a board member of Los Angeles OutFest. Presently she is a member of the Board of Directors for the Queer Cultural Center, and sits on the board of Radar Productions, as well as the Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project.

In addition, Dunye has received grants from the Astraea Foundation, Frameline, the National Endowment of the Arts, and the Rockefeller Foundation. She has been honored with the prestigious Anonymous was a Woman Award, as well as a lifetime achievement award from Girlfriend's Magazine.

Based in Oakland, Dunye is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Cinema at San Francisco State University.

ALEXANDRA JUHASZ

PRODUCER

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0432055/>



Dr. Alexandra Juhasz is the producer of the feature films *The Watermelon Woman* (Cheryl Dunye, 1997) and *The Owls* (Dunye, 2010). Her current work is on and about feminist Internet culture including YouTube (Learning from YouTube, MIT Press, 2011: <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/learning-youtube-0>) and feminist pedagogy and community (she is the co-founder of FemTechNet, an international feminist collective that runs the world's most successful "anti-MOOC": <http://femtechnet.org/>). Dr. Juhasz makes and studies committed media practices that contribute to political change and individual and community growth. She has produced educational videotapes on feminist issues from AIDS to teen pregnancy, and directed

the feature documentaries *SCALE: Measuring Might in the Media Age* (2008), *Video Remains* (2005), *Dear Gabe* (2003) and *Women of Vision: 18 Histories in Feminist Film and Video* (1998), as well as the shorts *RELEASED: 5 Short Videos about Women and Prison* (2000) and *Naming Prairie* (2001), an official selection of the 2002 Sundance Film Festival. Currently, she is Professor of Media Studies at Pitzer College.

MARC SMOLOWITZ

RESTORATION PRODUCER

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0810625/>



Marc Smolowitz is a multi-award winning director, producer and executive producer with 20+ years of experience across all aspects of the entertainment and media business. His career focus has been powerful social issue filmmaking across all genres. His long list of credits includes films that have screened at top-tier festivals - Sundance, Berlinale, AFI Docs, IDFA, Tokyo, Melbourne, among others - and been released worldwide theatrically, across all forms of television, and on VOD/Digital. Select titles including: "The Nine" (Producer, 2016), "Buried Above Ground" (Producer, 2015), "Desert Migration" (Producer, 2015) "Black Is Blue" (Producer, 2014), "Heaven Adores You" (Producer, 2014), "Havana Curveball" (Exec. Producer, 2014), "The Campaign" (Producer, 2013), "Keep The Promise: The Global Fight Against AIDS," narrated by Margaret

Cho (Director/Producer, 2013), "The Power Of Two" (Director/Producer, 2011) "Still Around" (Exec. Producer/Collaborating Director, 2011), "The Weather Underground" (Producer, 2003), "Trembling Before G-d" (Producer, 2001). In recent years, he was the Producer at TellyTopia, a Silicon Valley start-up specializing in interactive television, IP-TV and VOD products for cable & satellite companies. In the 1990s, he was widely known as the President & Founder of Turbulent Arts -- a boutique, indie film distribution and sales company based in San Francisco that ranked as the 26th largest film company in North America, 14th among independents, at its peak in 1998. Today, he works full-time as an independent filmmaker, while maintaining a thriving consulting practice called 13th Gen that guides filmmakers through key stages of development, fundraising, production, post, completion, and distribution.

FILMMAKERS (CONTINUED)

BARRY SWIMAR

PRODUCER

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0842657/>

Barry Swimar received his MFA in photography and film at Yale University. He and Jennie Livingston co-produced PARIS IS BURNING, which was distributed by Miramax and received numerous awards including: Best Documentary, New York Film Critics Circle (1991); Best Documentary, Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize (1991); Best Documentary, National Film Critics (1991); and the International Documentary Association Achievement Award (1991).

CATE WILSON

CO-PRODUCER

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0933148/>

Cate Wilson is the producer of Eugene Martin's feature film, TWO PLUS ONE, and line producer for Frances Negrón-Mutaner's experimental documentary BRINCANDO EL CHARCO. She was production manager on Mirra Bank's NOBODY'S GIRLS and was production coordinator of Tamara Jenkins' FAMILY REMAINS (1994 Sundance Film Festival, Best Short Film). Her independent documentary, A POCKETFUL OF CHANGE, aired on PBS and was screened at the Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema.

ANNIE TAYLOR

EDITOR, CO-EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Annie Taylor graduated with a license de lettres in English from the University of Aix-en-Provence. She is president and owner of Seventh Art Incorporated, a production and post-production company in Philadelphia which specializes in high-end television commercial work. As editor and producer, Taylor has worked on numerous television commercials and documentaries, and has won several awards including the CLIO and the ADDY.

MICHAEL LIGHT

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Michael Light is a San Francisco-based photographer and bookmaker focused on the environment and how contemporary American culture relates to it. He has exhibited extensively worldwide, and his work has been collected by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Getty Research Institute, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The New York Public Library, and the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, among others.

Light is also known for his globally-published archival works. His first, FULL MOON (1999), used lunar geological survey imagery made by the Apollo astronauts to show the moon both as a sublime desert and an embattled point of first human contact. 100 SUNS (2003), focused on the politics and landscape meanings of military photographs of U.S. atmospheric nuclear detonations from 1945 to 1962.



Stills from "THE FAE RICHARDS ARCHIVE"
by photographer Zoe Leonard

MICHELLE CRENSHAW

(DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY)

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0187410/>

Michelle Crenshaw has made it her career to master the art of storytelling with moving images, by working behind the lens as a cinematographer. Her recent works include: *Bridging the Divide: Tom Bradley and The Politics Of Race*, *Amen: The Life and Music of Jester Hairston* and *The New Black*, and a series of photographic works that premiered at the 2013 LA Film Festival.

Some of her previous award-winning films include *Homecoming* and *The Man Who Drove with Mandela*, two documentaries that aired on PBS. One of her early works, *The Watermelon Woman*, had a theatrical release in the late 90's and was recently remastered for a new release in 2016. A long-time member of the International Cinematographers Guild, Michelle freelances as a camera operator on features, episodic television and documentaries, including *CSI NY*, *American Dreams*, *Love Jones*, *Grumpier Old Men*, and *Eyes on the Prize II*.

BILL COLEMAN

(MUSIC SUPERVISOR)

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0170943/>

Bill Coleman is the owner of Peace Bisquit Productions and Management. His film credits include *Ultra Nate*, *Brooklyn Funk Essentials*, and *Towa "Towa" Tei*. As a producer he has worked with Deee-Lite, Sinéad O'Connor, Ru-Paul, and Karen Finley. He presently writes a music column for Paper Magazine, and has worked as a music supervisor on *PARTY GIRL*, *JEFFREY*, *RESCUING DESIRE*, and *ALL OVER ME*, as well as for the Warner Bros. television pilot of *PARTY GIRL*.

ABOUT THE CAST

GUINEVERE TURNER

DIANA

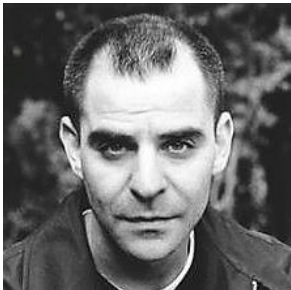
<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0877587/>



Guinevere Turner is an American actress and screenwriter. She is best known as the screenwriter of such films as *American Psycho* and *The Notorious Bettie Page*, and for playing the lead role of the dominatrix Tanya Cheex in *Preaching to the Perverted*. In 1994 she co-wrote and starred in Rose Troupe's lesbian hit *Go Fish*. From there she started a career primarily in writing, acting, directing and producing. She has starred in many movies and projects, including – but not restricted to – *The Watermelon Woman*, *The Itty Bitty Titty Committee*, *Preaching to the Perverted*, *Dante's View*, and more. Once again collaborating with Rose Troupe, she has written for and starred in Showtime's "The L Word" (2004).

WITH CAMEOS FROM

DAVID RAKOFF



David Rakoff was a Canadian-born American writer based in New York City, noted for his humorous and sometimes autobiographical non-fiction essays. Rakoff was an essayist, journalist, and actor, and a regular contributor to WBEZ's *This American Life*. Rakoff described himself as a "New York writer" who also happened to be a "Canadian writer", a "mega Jewish writer", a "gay writer" and an "East Asian Studies major who has forgotten most of his Japanese" writer. He passed away from cancer in 2012.

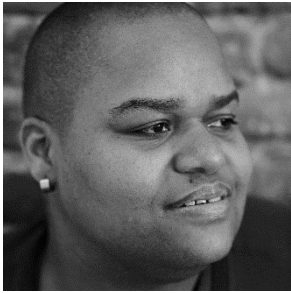
SARAH SCHULMAN



Sarah Schulman is an American novelist, playwright and lesbian rights activist. Schulman is a Distinguished Professor of the Humanities at College of Staten Island (CSI) and a Fellow at the New York Institute for the Humanities. Schulman was named one of Publisher Weekly's 60 Most Underrated Writers, *Slate* called *The Gentrification of the Mind* one of the 10 Best Most Unknown Books and *GalleyCat* called it one of the Best Unrecognized Books of the year. She has been awarded a Guggenheim in Playwriting, A Fulbright in Judaic Studies The Kessler Award for Sustained Contribution to LGBT Studies, 3 NY Foundation for the Art Fellowships (Fiction and Playwriting) and a number of other awards.

CAMEOS (CONTINUED)

TOSHI REAGON



Toshi Reagon is an American folk and blues musician. Reagon began performing when she dropped out of college; soon afterward, Lenny Kravitz invited her to open for him on his first world tour. She has since shared the stage with performers ranging from Ani DiFranco to Elvis Costello. Her band, BIGLovely, has been performing together since September 1996. In 2015 Reagon was named a Ford Foundation *Art of Change* Fellow. Reagon, a lesbian, lives in Brooklyn, New York with her partner and their daughter.

CAMILLE PAGLIA



Camille Paglia is an American academic and social critic. Paglia has been a professor at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, since 1984. *The New York Times* has described her as "first and foremost an educator". Paglia is known for her critical views of many aspects of modern culture, including liberalism.

She is the author of *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson* (1990) and a collection of essays, *Sex, Art, and American Culture* (1992). Her other books and essays include an analysis of Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*, and *Break, Blow, Burn* (2005) on poetry. Her most recent book is *Glittering Images* (2012),

a history of the visual arts. She is a critic of American feminism and of post-structuralism as well as a commentator on multiple aspects of American culture such as its visual art, music, and film history.

CHERYL CLARKE



Cheryl Clarke is a lesbian poet, essayist, educator and a Black feminist community activist: she lives in Jersey City, New Jersey and Hobart, New York. With her life partner, Barbara Balliet, she is co-owner of Bleinheim Hill Books, a used and rare bookstore in Hobart. Her younger sister is novelist Breena Clarke, with whom Clarke and Balliet organize the Hobart Festival of Women writers each summer. Her scholarship focuses on African American women's literature, black lesbian feminism, and the Black Arts Movement in the United States. Retired from her work in higher education, she maintains a teaching affiliation with the Graduate Faculty of the

Department of Women and Gender Studies, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, and serves on the board of the Newark Pride Alliance.

CREDITS

Written and Directed by Cheryl Dunye
Producers Barry Swimar and Alexandra Juhasz
Executive Producer Michael Light
Co-Executive Producers Annie Taylor and Burke Moody
Co-Producer Cate Wilson
Cinematographer Michelle Crenshaw
Editor Annie Taylor
Production Designer Robert "Ratface" Holtzman
Associate Producer Joy Milnowski
Music Supervisor Bill Coleman
Original Score Paul Shapiro

Photos and Home Movies of the Watermelon Woman by Zoe Leonard

CAST

Cheryl Dunye Cheryl
Guinevere Turner Diana
Valerie Walker Tamara
Lisa Marie Bronson Fae Richards
V.S. Brodie Karaoke Singer
Shelley Oliver Annie Heath
David Rakoff Librarian
Toshi Reagon Street Musician
Christopher Ridenhour Bob
Kathy Robertson Yvette
Joceyn Taylor Stacey
Cheryl Clark June Walker
Irene Dunye Herself
Brian Freeman Lee Edwards
Ira Jeffries Shirley Hamilton
Alexandra Juhasz Martha Page
Camille Pagilla Herself
Sarah Schulman CLIT archivist

Additional Photography Dane Smith
Sound Recordist Jack A. Mehilbaum
Production Manager Sharon Stein
Assistant Producer Benjamin Goldberg
Assistant Director Renae Dinerman
Second Assistant Director Ted Shields and Elenie Marsalis

Second Assistant Director Michael La Corte
Location Managers Tim Downs and Missy Moyer
Location Assistant Ana Margaret Sanchez
Script Supervisor Sonya Klimuk
Production Coordinator Duana Butler

Costumes Solomon Wise and Luciana Moreira
Period Costumes Alison Froling
Wardrobe JoAnn Colameco
Wardrobe Assistant Sarah Vogt
Key Makeup Kathy Robertson
Additional Makeup Rebecca Sawyer
Makeup Assistants Kevin Buckley and Anna Chin
Casting Director Gail Lloyd
Casting Keylan Bradley and Sharon Levin Cogen
Extras Casting K. Brent Hill

Film Recreations, "Plantation Memories" and "Souls of Deceit"
Written by Cheryl Dunye and Doug McKeown
Directed by Doug McKeown

Archivists Steve Armor, Amadee Braxton, Rebecca Britt, Tania Galloni, Alicia Le Blanc, Eve Oishi
Archival Consultant John Gerbec
Still Photographers Elena Bouvler, Barbara Kigozi, Sam McLean
Graphic Design Scott Purcell

REMASTER CREW

Marc Smolowitz Preservation & Re-master Producer
Benjy Blanco Associate Producer

Digitally remastered for the 20th Anniversary by Modern VideoFilm
Manager, Restoration Services Vincent Pirozzi

Special thanks to the following for making this effort possible:

Vincent Pirozzi	Michelle Crenshaw
Todd Wiener	Jesse Wente
Alice Royer	Marc Mauceri
John Polito	Noah Cowan
Gregg Garvin	Alexandra Juhasz

Restoration Partners

