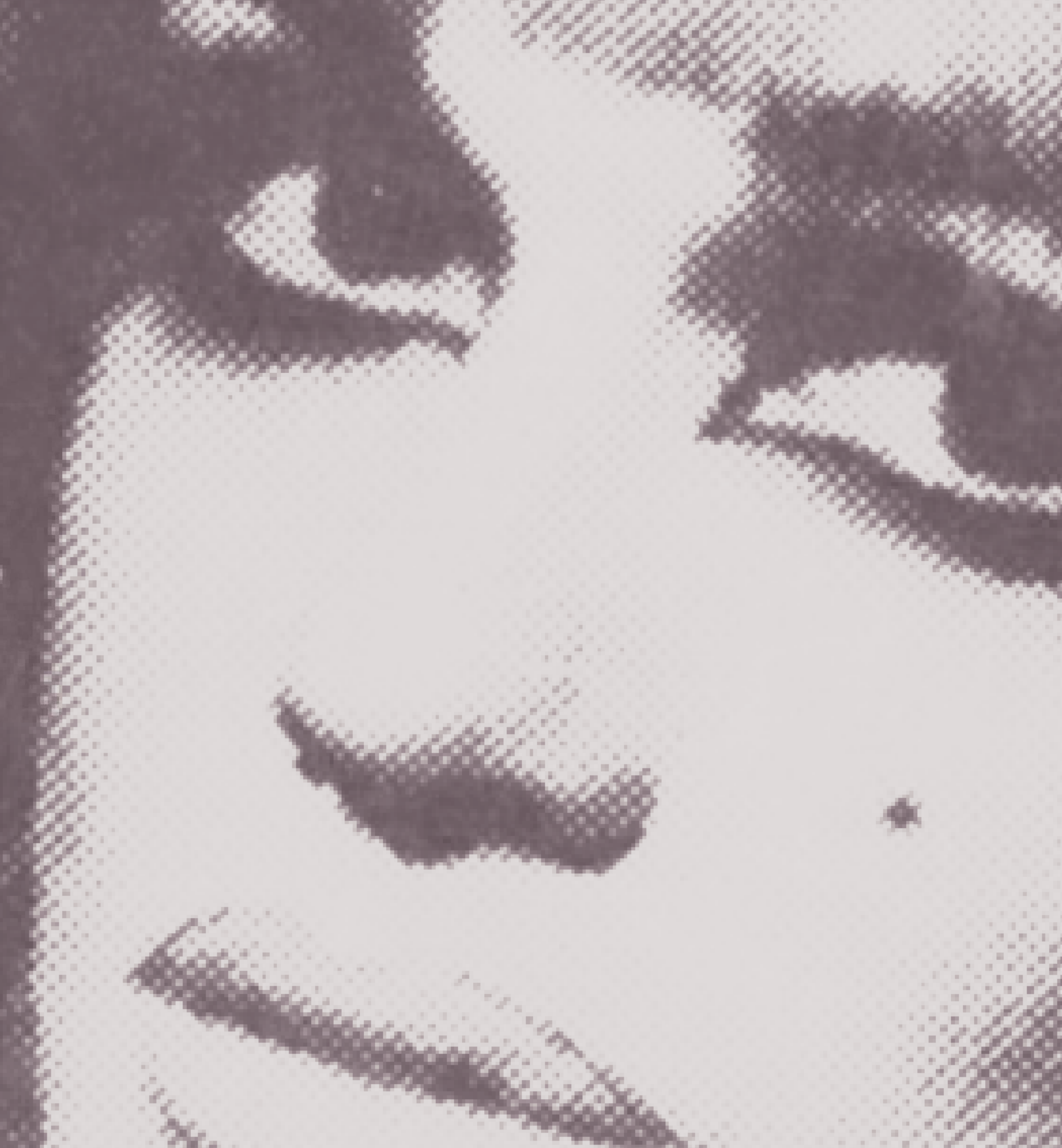




CONCEPT DECK

FEATURE DOCUMENTARY IN PROGRESS

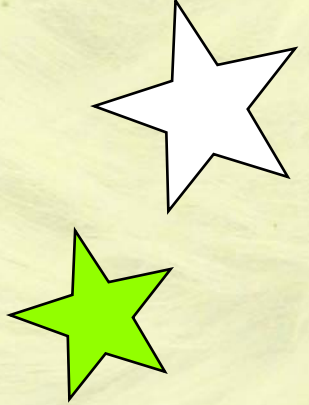
Directed by Scott Braucht



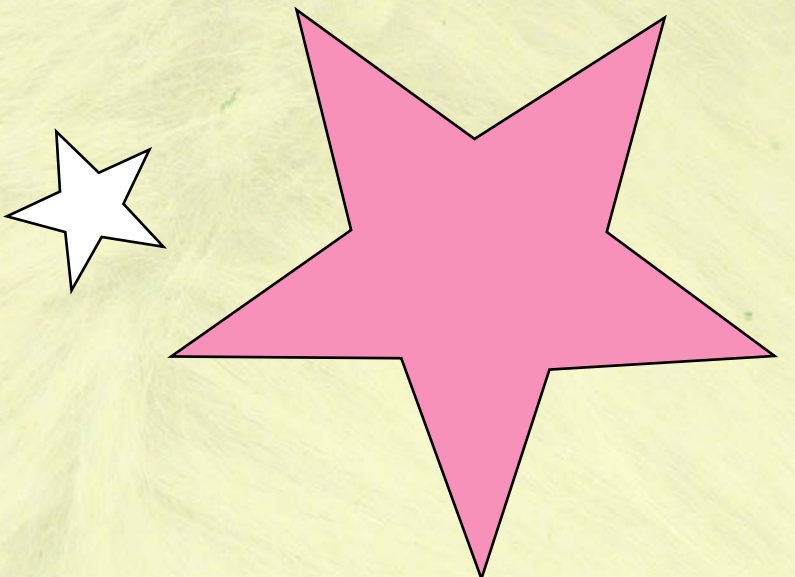

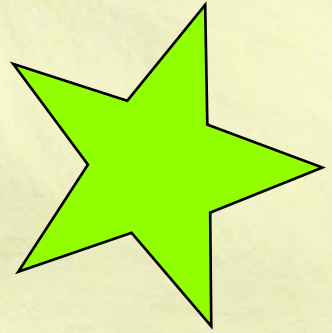
★
Before there was RuPaul's Drag Race, there was Vegas in Space...



LOGLINE



A raucous love letter to Doris Fish – the pioneering, DIY queen from Down Under and creative force behind 1991 queer cult classic *Vegas in Space (VIS)*. Fueled by her visionary band of misfits and boundary breaking views beyond the gender identity, **DEAR DORIS chronicles this unsung hero's whirlwind rise to drag icon in San Francisco.**





DORIS'S ORIGINS



"People often said we were ahead of our time but really we were very much a product of that time. It was a time of the emergence of the liberation groups, especially Gay Liberation."

— Doris Fish on her group Sylvia and the Synthetics (Campaign Magazine, 1977)

THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

In the vibrant tapestry of queer history, few artists embody resilience, creativity, and advocacy as powerfully as drag performer and sex worker Doris Fish. Born Philip Mills in 1950s Sydney, Australia, Doris broke through a culture steeped in hypermasculinity and homophobia with her rebellious "Sylvia and the Synthetics" performances. Driven by dreams of stardom, the troupe made the bold move to San Francisco to hone their craft, ultimately leading to the creation of queer cult classic film VEGAS IN SPACE (VIS).

As a filmmaker / queen historian, when I began my journey with DEAR DORIS five years ago, the information available was limited, and delving deeper into her life proved challenging. However, as I explored the rich history of the communities she helped shape, it became clear that Doris was not simply an entertainer but a pioneering figure whose experiences and activism resonated far beyond the stage.

She was an advocate her entire life. I was particularly struck with a 1986 national U.S. news talkshow appearance she made, discussing the spectrum of gender identity at a time when such conversations were often silenced or stigmatized. Doris was also one of the most publicly known HIV-positive local celebrities, using her platform on stage and in her *San Francisco Sun Sentinel* articles to challenge societal norms and advocate for the visibility of all gender identities.

As someone who grew up in Salem, Oregon during the 1990's in a very cookie-cutter conservative town, I found through making the film that I related to Doris Fish far beyond being a queer filmmaker. Doris Fish's life exemplified sharing your personal story as loud and proud as you can. She was not merely a performer; she was a revolutionary voice at the intersections of art, sexuality, and social awareness, a triad of important issues in my own personal life. It is time her legacy be told.

- **SCOTT BRAUCHT, Director / Editor**



BEHIND THE SCENES AT TROMA

KEY STORYTELLERS



MISS X
Friend, VIS Co-Writer, Co-Star "Queen Veneer / Empress of Earth" & Asst Art Director



PHILLIP R FORD
Collaborator, VIS Co-Writer & Director



JACQUELINE HYDE
Friend & Stage Performer



PEACHES CHRIST
Drag Performer & Queer Film Historian



SILVANA NOVA
Drag Artist, Activist, VIS Co-Star
"Wynetta Whitehead"



ROBIN CLARKE
VIS Cinematographer & Friend

*VIS = Vegas In Space, the film

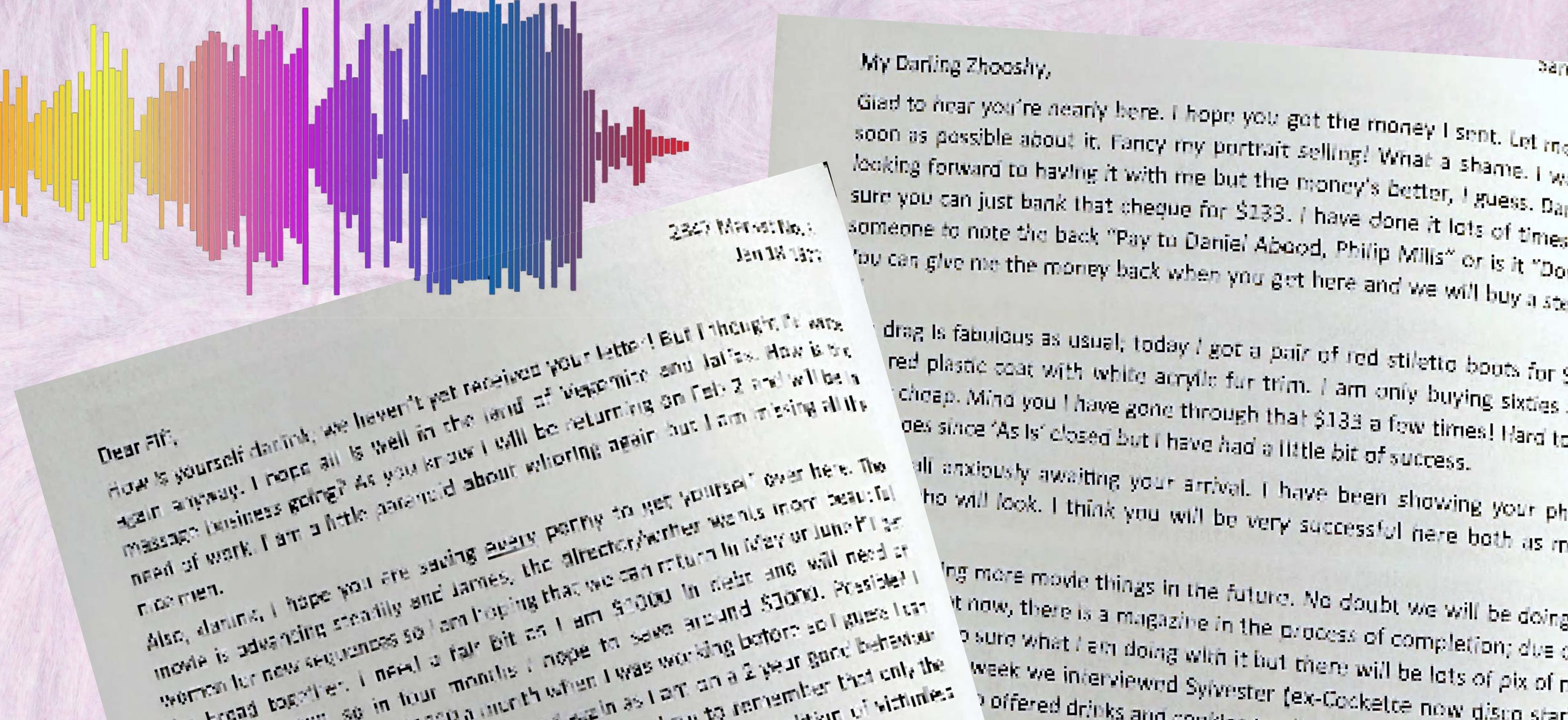
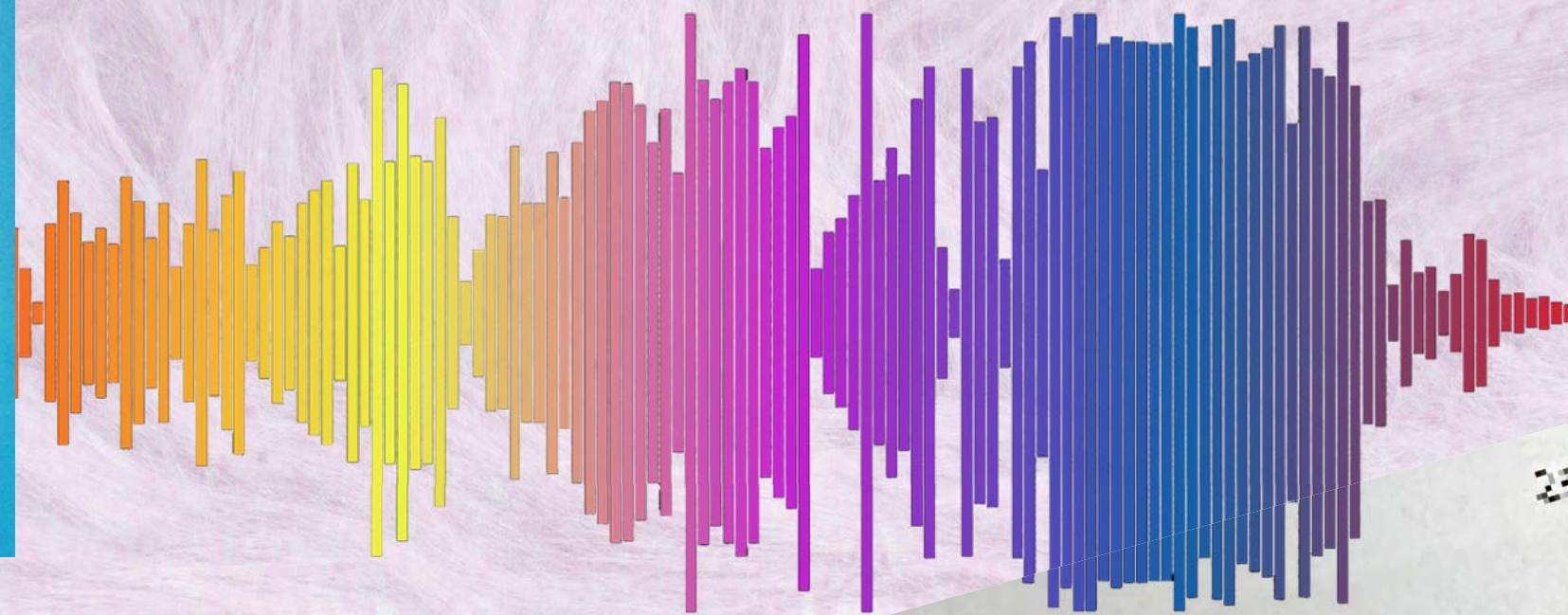
RESURRECTING DORIS'S VOICE



COUTNEY ACT

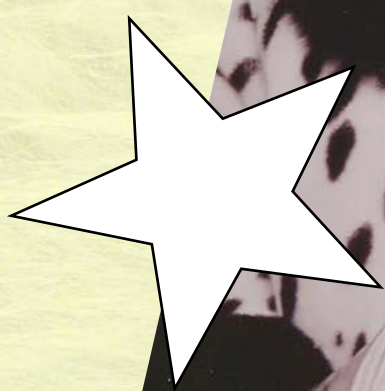
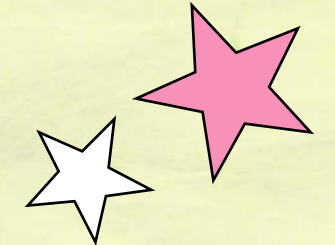
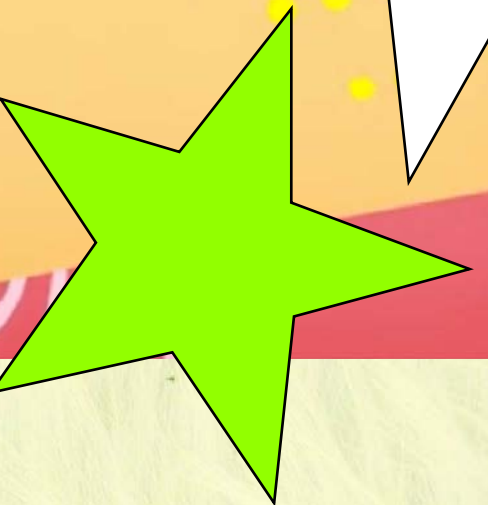
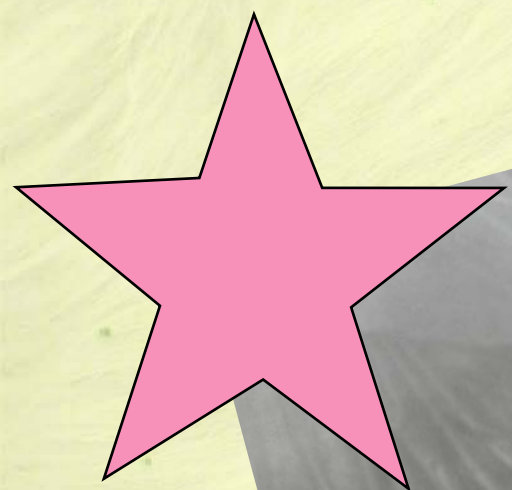
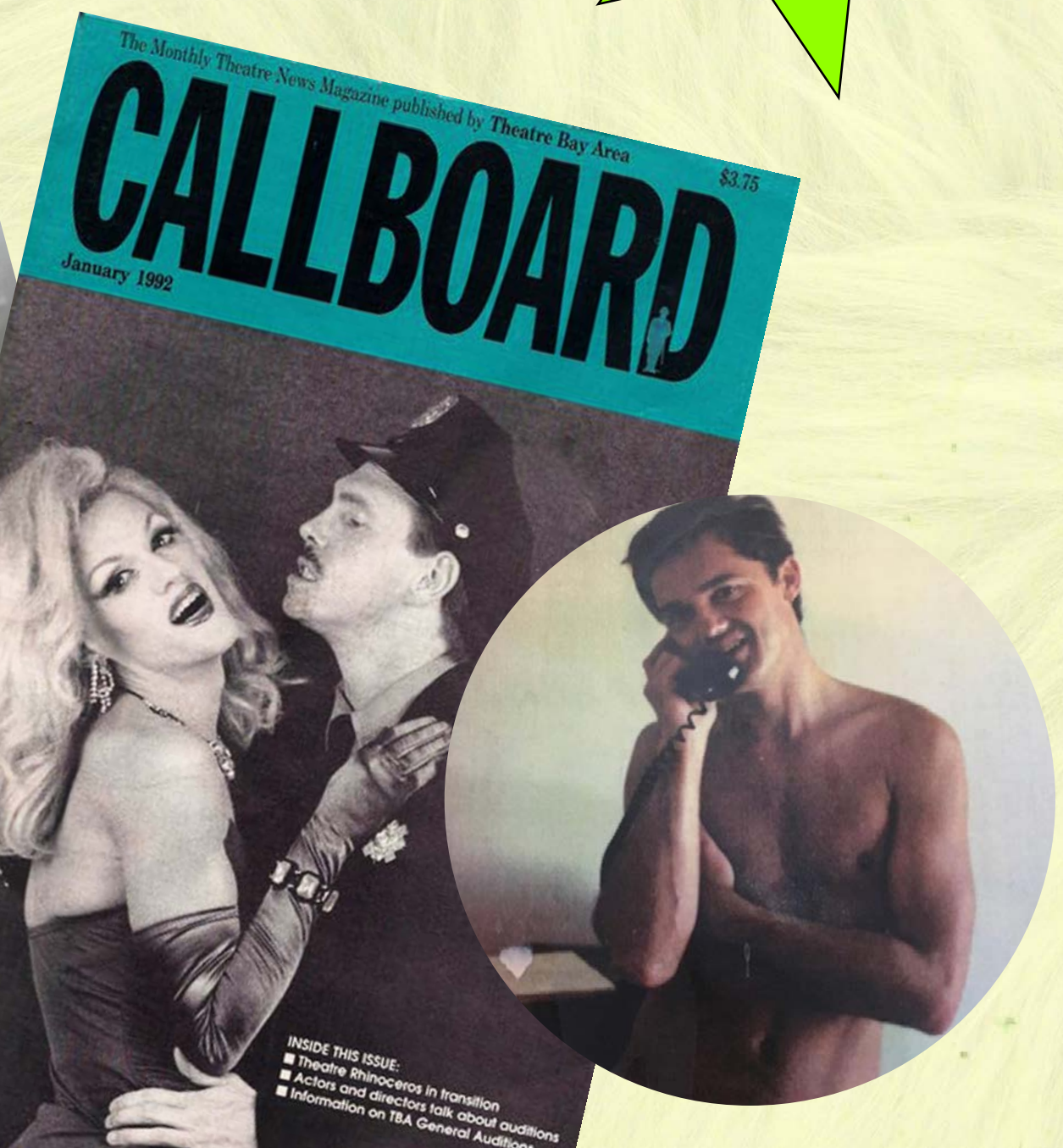
Contemporary Australian Drag Icon who earned runner up on Season 6 of *RuPaul's Drag Race* and has also appeared on *Australian Idol*, *Celebrity Big Brother UK*, and *Dancing With the Stars UK*

Weaving in Doris's firsthand accounts of her creative escapades is paramount to us in bringing this film to life. While in Australia, Scott discovered **a collection of letters written by Doris Fish** to friends in Australia after she had made her move across the pond. We plan to work with a contemporary drag icon to bring voice to her letters and can think of no one better than Australia's own, Courtney Act. Key project advisor Zackary Drucker is in talks with her currently to confirm possibility for recording together in 2025.





ANIMATION STILL FROM "DEAR DORIS"



VOICES FROM THE VIS* ORBIT



BOB HAWK

Film Guru, VIS Sundance Programmer



TIMMY SPENCE

VIS Co-Star "Lt. Dick Hunter"



RAMONA FISHER

VIS "Lt. Mike / Shiela Shadows"



JENNIFER BLOWDRYER

VIS "Futura Volare, KUN-TV"



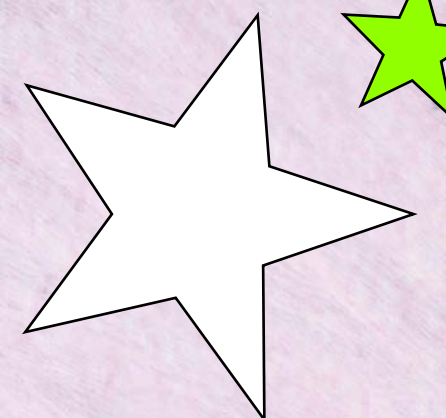
J RAOUL BRODY

VIS Composer



LLOYD KAUFMAN

Co-Founder Troma Films, VIS Distributor



*VIS = Vegas In Space, the film

SUPPORTING VOICES



DORIS FISH'S BROTHERS

Doris' Surviving Siblings, Andrew & Michael



CRAIG SELIGMAN

Historian, Author of Doris Fish Biography



NICK HENDERSON

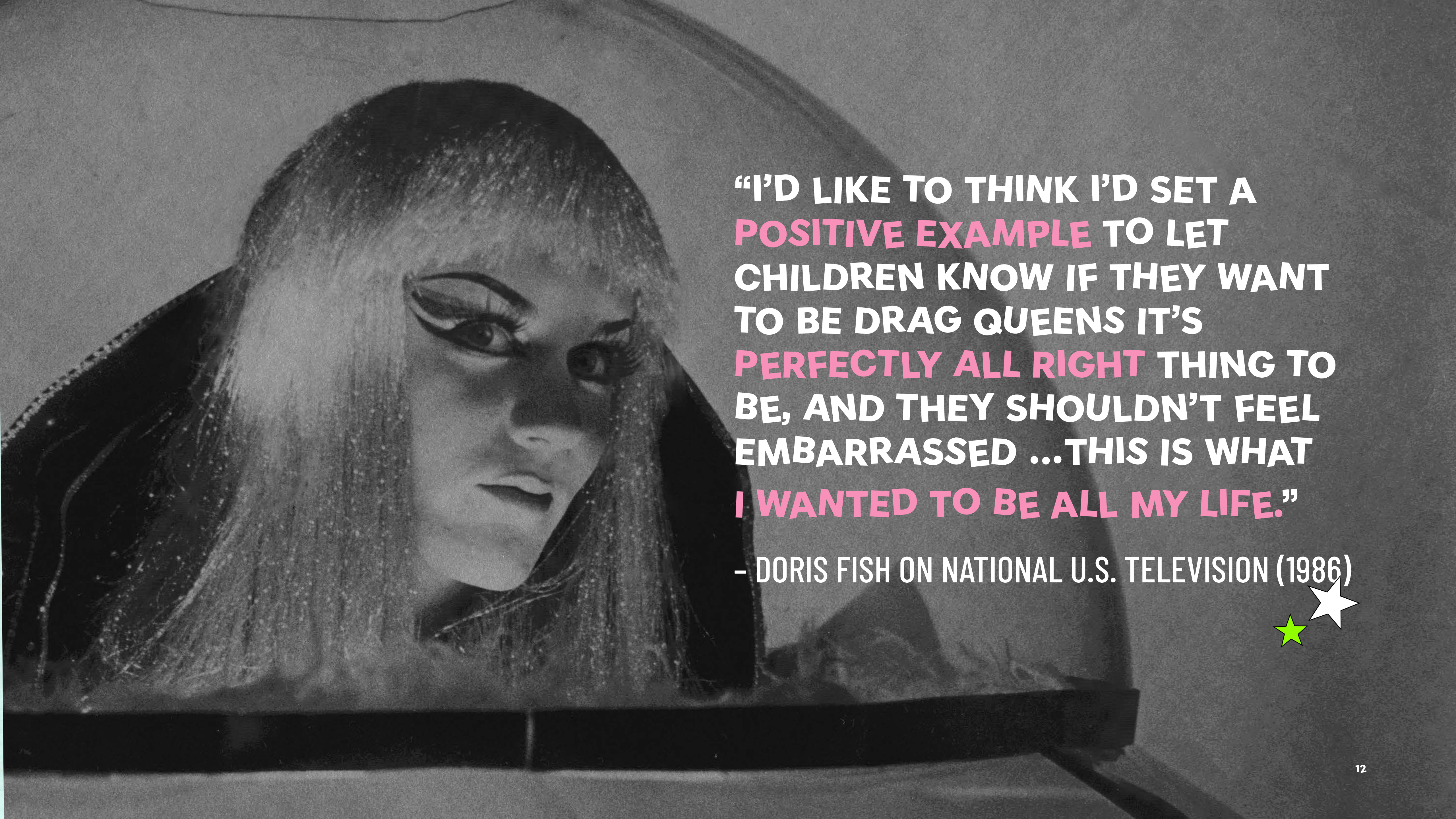
Curator & Australian Queer Archives Collection Manager



JOHNNY ALLEN

Friend & Sydney Queer Arts Organizer





**“I’D LIKE TO THINK I’D SET A
POSITIVE EXAMPLE TO LET
CHILDREN KNOW IF THEY WANT
TO BE DRAG QUEENS IT’S
PERFECTLY ALL RIGHT THING TO
BE, AND THEY SHOULDN’T FEEL
EMBARRASSED ...THIS IS WHAT
I WANTED TO BE ALL MY LIFE.”**

– DORIS FISH ON NATIONAL U.S. TELEVISION (1986)



SYNOPSIS

DEAR DORIS tells the outlandish behind-the-scenes tale of queer cult classic **Vegas in Space (VIS)** while framing the timely tour de force that was Doris Fish's life. An unsung innovator, drag icon, and sex worker – her story has too often been lost in more monolithic representations of the gay arts scene and AIDS-era San Francisco. Decades after her death, her letters, troves of rare archival, and her colorful friends and campy collaborators finally come together with stunning animation for Doris to reclaim centerstage where she ruled up until her death in 1991.

The film begins in 1975 when Philip Mills (he/him), aka Doris Fish (she/her), jets from his suburban hometown of Manly Vale, Australia to San Francisco on holiday and instantly falls for the free love, hippie lifestyle of the Mission District. One year later, Doris made the move permanent.

Philip earned his living and fueled creative endeavors through sex work. Despite the stigma and criminalization, prostitution was a job he was never ashamed of and was actually quite drawn to given his magnetic personality. The empowerment Philip found and caregiving he provided to his older clientele especially are foundational to present day conversations around de-stigmatization as cities like San Francisco only recently started passing legislation to decriminalize prostitution.



In 1979, Miss X recounts how she, Doris, and Tippi become fast friends at a come-as-your-favorite-Fellini-character party. Together, they form Sluts-A-Go-Go and begin their ascent to San Francisco drag infamy. More queens joined the group and they landed on stage for aspiring gay filmmaker Phillip R Ford's Happy Hour Series. Doris reveled in being centerstage, as it helped her compartmentalize and control more of her gender and sexual fluidity.

Through mutual friends, Ford finds out that Doris is interested in working with him again and sets up a meeting with her and Miss X. Over a stack of pancakes, they furiously craft 30 pages of their VIS script. The plot was genius... A crew of spacemen from Earth are sent on a secret mission to Planet Clitoris, an all-female pleasure planet where a crime wave has struck. As no men were allowed to touchdown on Clitoris, they're ordered by the Empress of Earth to take gender reversal pills, swap their sex and go undercover as traditional mid-20th century showgirls from Earth on a secret mission to retrieve stolen "girlinium" gems.



Both in Australia and the US, Doris's politics and gender identity were ahead of her time – before RuPaul was a household name, dressing as a woman was rare and rebellious. Even in the gay community, they were misfits.

In 1977, VIS co-star and activist Silvana Nova remembers how the drag community and trans people were urged not to walk

on Gay Freedom Day, but Doris rallied and the community showed up. In numerous interviews, Doris can be seen arguing for fluid gender identity. "Oh yes certainly, and I like to think I'd be a positive example... People think there are two sexes, male and female, and that's just a little too hard and sharp. Sexuality and gender is a little more fluid than that," (Pittsburg 2 Day, 1986).



Principal photography on VIS was a year-long rollercoaster ride and Doris wore MANY hats. It was primarily shot in Doris's one bedroom apartment where she made the models, designed and built the sets and props, did everyone's makeup, co-wrote the script, recruited new talent, and starred in the film.

Cinematographer Robin Clark remembers the raucous times – stringing electricity from the neighboring building, the scriptwriter making threats to deport cast back to Australia over romantic drama, Ford's drug addiction, constant continuity errors, and overexposed footage rendered unusable after an error at the lab. Against all odds, Doris and her crew endure, finding DIY solutions and booking sex work to pay for production. Eventually, they finish principal photography and slip back into their daily lives.



1985 presents a new set of challenges, not only the steep cost of post-production but the rise of the AIDS epidemic. Ford had no budget secured for editing, sound design, or color correction. While attending funerals for friends and families, Doris' relentless charisma drove numerous fundraisers (parties and performances) for VIS.

Although Doris never came out as HIV positive, friends take notice when she acted in THE BAD SEED play and her "age spot" makeup is actually blended into lesions on her face. It becomes a race against time to complete the film. Ford reaches out to a friend (who to this day remains anonymous) for a private investment, walking away with enough money to complete the film.



In 1991 Doris holds her last performance – a fundraiser for her medical bills titled, WHO DOES THIS BITCH THINK SHE IS? (The namesake of Craig Seligman's 2022 biography about Doris).

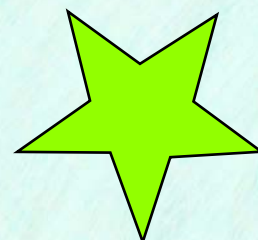
Ford, Timmy Spence, Miss X, and Miss Bob Davis all visit

Doris before she dies from complications of AIDS in July of 1991 – just four months before VIS premieres at the Castro. Tippi, her drag daughter and co-star in the film passed away 6 weeks after Doris.

Although they wouldn't be able to attend, Doris died knowing the film would be seen by the world and her dream of becoming a movie star was becoming a reality.

The film went on to screen at Sundance and Cannes during the "Year of the Queer," but was sadly shunned within its own community for being too campy and not serious enough. Today, the film and Doris's legacy make new waves and inspire the queer community as Bob Hawk, Peaches Christ, and Lloyd Kaufman all attest to in interviews.

This love letter to Doris Fish culminates in Sydney, Australia at 2023 World Pride where Doris' siblings and the queer community gather in celebration as a recreation of Doris's unforgettable Pink Cadillac float makes it way through the Mardi Gras parade with Miss X, Ford, and Silvana Nova all on board and Philip's siblings are recognized in the inaugural Doris Fish Day celebration. A final coup de grâce for a forever queen.



AIDS Emergency Fund
CARE-A-THON
All-Day Marathon of Entertainment!



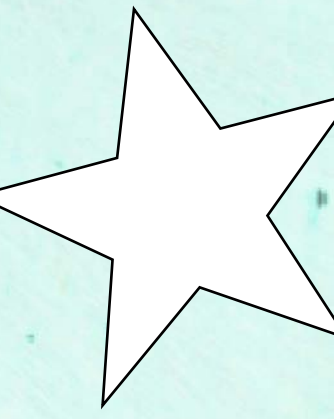
JOIN


SAMANTHA SAMUELS	RONNIE SALAZAR
DORIS FISH	GAIL WILSON
SHARON McNIGHT	DANNY WILLIAMS
MARGA GOMEZ	MARSHALL LA FLEUR
TOM AMMIANO	RITA ROCKET
JORGE ESTRADA	MAHOGANY
JO CARROL BLOCK	TOM ANDERSON
BERMUDA SCHWARTZ	

and many other performers who are volunteering their time and talents for the AIDS Emergency Fund

Come Enjoy the Fun and Make a Donation for an Important Cause!

TODAY!





“GLAMOUR IS A SCOTTISH WORD, THAT MEANS TO CAST A SPELL. AND SHE CAST THAT SPELL TO PUT THE WORLD IN DRAG. SHE WANTED EVERYONE TO BE GLAMOROUS. STRONG, COURAGEOUS, GLAMOROUS.”

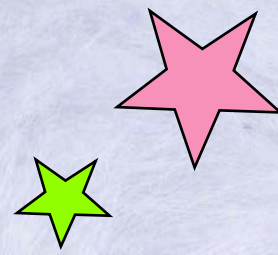
- MISS X



STATUS & TIMELINE

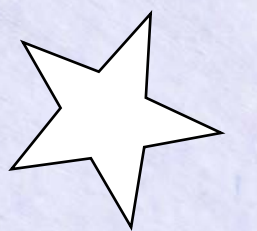
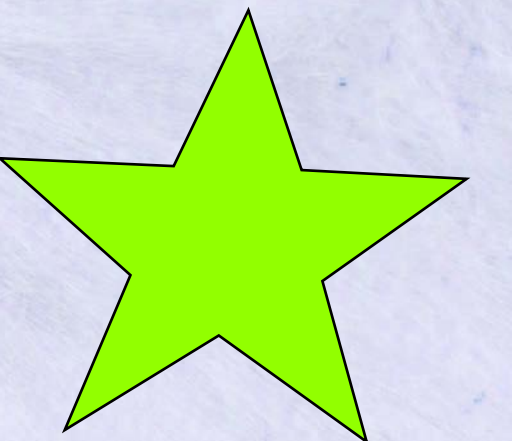
PRODUCTION OVERVIEW:

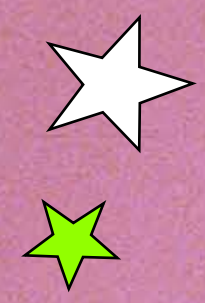
- 20 Shoot Days completed to date
- **2019** – Development Filming Begins ~ key interviews with Phillip R Ford, Peaches Christ, and Timmy Spence in SF and Jackie Hyde in Paris
- **2020** – Archival Gathering, Animation Test Scenes, Zoom Pre-Interviews, and Research Underway ~ after Covid forced a pause in in-person production
- **2021** – Production Reboot ~ 2 Days with Miss X and Al Chandler in AZ for key interviews, archival documentation, and 1 week on East Coast for additional interviews
- **2022** – Preliminary Editing, Research, and Fundraising
- **2023** – Bob Hawk Interview and Filming in Doris's hometown during Sydney World Pride ~ interviews with family, friends, and Philip R Ford with Miss X, as well as vérité of Sydney and special Doris Fish events, and rare archival access



OUR GOALS IN 2024:

- **2024** – Final Shoot Days ~ estimating 4 total:
 - Stylized "Ode to Doris" recreation shoot day with [Rify Royalty](#) in NYC
 - Trip to Arizona to document / archive Miss X's special Doris Fish collection
- **Animation with Jenny Kincaid** ~ envisioning 17-20 minutes or 20% of the final film to be animated using archival assets, Doris Fish artwork, and original illustrations
- **Transcript Review & Scripting** with key consultants
- **Voiceover Recording** once in Rough Cut phase
- **MAR-AUG 2025** – Editing to Fine Cut for Festival Submissions (e.g. Sundance, Berlinale, SXSW, CPH:Docs)
- **Early 2026** – Q1 Festival premiere





**“BEHOLD, VEGAS IN SPACE.
AN OASIS OF GLAMOUR IN A
UNIVERSE OF MEDIOCRITY.”**

- PRINCESS ANGEL IN VIS

KEY CREW BIOS



DIRECTOR / EDITOR: SCOTT BRAUCHT is an Oregon based queer filmmaker, whose creative endeavors were sparked when he got his hands on a VHS camera at the age of eight. He is very creatively driven and strives to make and share daring stories for those voices not visible in the media, particularly with his debut feature-length documentary DEAR DORIS. For this in progress film Scott has been awarded two Regional Arts & Cultural Council Grants, A Sisters

of Perpetual Indulgence Grant, the 2023 Seattle Pride Artist Residency, and the Sou-wester Artist Residency along with a pride month exhibition in their theater. In 2023, he co-founded the "I Saw That: Queer Movie Club," as a space for monthly film viewing in the Portland area. His commitment to stories that center the LGBTQ2ia+ community is evidenced in prior work, including his short MEL & KATE (NewFest 2011) and his experimental film CUBICLES & COWGIRLS that screened at multiple queer film festivals. Scott recently received a Regional Arts Council Grant for the pilot episode of his series LULU'S CLUBHOUSE, hosted by drag queen Lulu Luscius and highlighting businesses in Portland owned by marginalized community members and impacted during Covid. In addition to his directorial pursuits, Scott art directs narrative films and music videos for artists including Cake, The Shins, and Lara Gibson and freelance as an assistant editor. He earned a Certificate in Filmmaking from the NW Film Center and is passionate about volunteering with numerous film and art venues in Portland's vibrant arts community.



PRODUCER: JANIQUE L ROBILLARD is an independent creative producer based in Brooklyn, NY. Her freelance work spans many categories – live action and animated content, music videos, and commercial work for major brands like Google and Nike – but her passion has always been in celebrating the everyday extraordinary through documentary. Janique actively seeks opportunities to elevate womxn's

voices and marginalized communities in film, evidenced in her work on 1000 TIMES (a women's MMA short documentary) which was awarded the Women In Film Vision Grant and her on-going collaboration with the Free Body Project series, which includes their short FROM THERE TO HERE, which was supported by the Fulbright Foreign Student Program and a Dance Films Association Production Grant. She has produced work for acclaimed directors including Kim A Snyder (DEATH BY NUMBERS short and THE LIBRARIANS with ITVS) and Jeremiah Zagar (THE FIX docu-series), and developed documentary projects for directors like Lina Plioplyte (PERIODICAL, MSNBC films) and clients including Netflix. Janique completed her B.S. in Journalism and Finance at Syracuse University and earned her M.F.A. in Filmmaking at Maryland Institute College of Art, where she continues to teach Film Branding workshops.

KEY CREW BIOS



PRODUCER: JESS MILLS is a film industry executive specializing in social media, digital marketing and communications for independent cinema. After working in production in Australia, Jess spent nearly a decade in New York City working for independent distributors such as Troma, FilmRise, Breaker and Metrograph Pictures. In 2020 she launched OuiOui Marketing, an award-winning social media and digital marketing company for independent filmmakers. She has a passion for helping underrepresented filmmakers, as well as issue-driven documentary films, and recently co-produced her first documentary feature, NO ONE ASKED YOU, which premiered at DOCNYC 2023. She lives in Brooklyn NYC, with her two cats, dog and loves cheese and punny jokes.



PRODUCER: KANANI KOSTER is a Hapa woman identifying Director, Producer, and Camera Operator. Her passion for filmmaking and education brought her to meet her husband in college where they would start Cherry Street Films: Digital Storytelling for Youth. She is the director of the award-winning short, THE NEW FRONTIER, which has played across the West Coast at festivals like Red Nation Film Festival, Oregon International Film Festival, and Local Sightings. She has spoken on numerous panels on race, diversity and representation in film. Kanani enjoys creating films that incite dialogue by reclaiming traditional narratives through violent racial justice themes. She has worked in the marketing department for both Seattle Intl Film Festival and Portland Intl Film Festival and is currently the Acquisitions Coordinator at Collective Eye Films. Kanani is currently in Los Angeles as a 2024 AFI Directing Fellow.



ANIMATOR: JENNY KINCAID is a Portland, Oregon based illustrator, designer, and animator. For the past 20 years, she has worked on countless animated commercials, but her first loves are documentary films and children's books. She has created animations about accessibility and inclusion for Microsoft, and designed, illustrated, and animated maps for NECESSITY, a climate resistance documentary series. Jenny is currently collaborating with musicians and performers on a documentary about grief, with an emphasis on accessibility for the visually impaired.



KEY CREW BIOS



EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: LORI CHEATLE

is a Producer and Executive Producer of over 25 award-winning films and the founder of Hard Working Movies, a director-driven production company with an appetite for bold, beautiful, high-profile narratives, with films as unique as the filmmakers behind them. The films she's produced have screened at all the top international film festivals, in cinemas and on TV and platforms

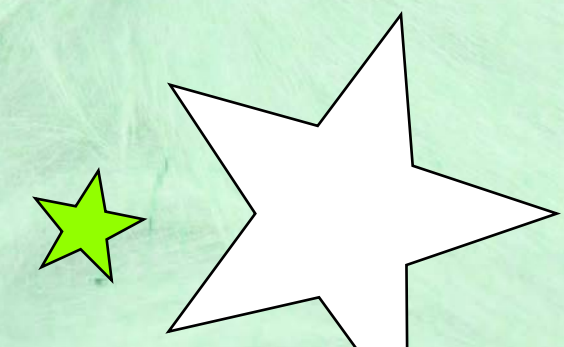
around the world. Some titles include DREAMING WALLS: Inside the Chelsea Hotel, presented by Martin Scorsese, and Us KIDS (Greenwich Entertainment, Sundance 2020). Other titles include MATANGI/MAYA/M.I.A. (Netflix, Sundance 2018); KIKI (IFC Films, Sundance 2016), which won the Outfest Emerging Artist award and Independent Spirit Award and GLAAD award nominations. Lori has given talks or participated on industry panels for Sundance, SXSW, Berlin Film Festival, NYWIFT, Women In Film L.A., Toronto Film Festival, DOC NYC, Hot Docs, MoMA among others. She received the Amazon Sundance Producing Award and is a member of AMPAS, BAFTA and PGA.



EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: CYNTHIA KANE

co-created Sundance Channel's DOCday and brought Jean-Xavier de Lestrade and Denis Poncet's documentary series, THE STAIRCASE (2006 Peabody award winner, Alfred duPont Columbia Awards) to U.S. television. At ITVS, she shepherded 150+ international and U.S. co-productions for public media. At Al Jazeera America, she commissioned documentaries and

series (Albert Maysles' final work, IN TRANSIT and duPont Award-winning series, Kartemquin Films' Hard Earned). Recent work includes Raj Patel and Zak Piper's THE ANTS AND THE GRASSHOPPER (2021), Carl Gierstorfer and Antje Boehmert's THE RIVER BETWEEN US (2021), NC Heikin's LIFE & LIFE (2021), Maria Finitzo's THE DILEMMA OF DESIRE (2020-Showtime), Kim A Snyder, Maria Cuomo Cole, Lori Cheatle's US KIDS (2020), and Maia Lekow and Chris King's THE LETTER (2019).



ADVISORY BOARD



ZACKARY DRUCKER is an independent artist, filmmaker, and cultural producer. She has performed and exhibited her work internationally in museums, galleries, and film festivals including The Baltimore Museum of Art, the Whitney Biennial 2014, MoMa PS1, Hammer Museum, Art Gallery of Ontario, MCA San Diego, and SF MoMA, among others. Drucker is an Emmy nominated producer for the docuseries *THIS IS ME*, and was a producer on the Golden Globe and Emmy Award-winning Amazon show *Transparent*. *THE LADY AND THE DALE*, her directorial debut for television, premiered on HBO in 2021. Her follow-up project with HBO, *THE STROLL*, won a Peabody Award in 2024 and a Special Jury Award: Clarity of Vision at Sundance 2023. Her standalone directorial feature *QUEENMAKER* was released on Hulu in May 2023.





THANK YOU

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JESS MILLS, Producer

+1 917-635-7312 / jess@ouiouimarketing.com

DEAR DORIS FILM

www.deardorisfilm.com / [@deardorisfilm](https://www.instagram.com/deardorisfilm)

