REBELS WITH A CAUSE

a film by Nancy Kelly and Kenji Yamamoto
produced in association with KRCB North Bay Public Media

Theatrical Release:
May 31, 2013 – San Francisco (Roxie Theater)
June 7, 2013 – San Rafael (Smith Rafael Film Center)
- Berkeley (Elmwood Theater),
- Sebastopol (Rialto Cinemas Sebastopol)
- June 14, 15, 16 San Jose (Camera 3 Cinema)
Running Time: 72 Minutes

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Short Synopsis

Narrated by Frances McDormand, REBELS WITH A CAUSE spotlights a group of citizens from many walks of life who fought to preserve open space, protect agriculture and wildlife, establish public parks next to a densely populated urban center yearning for access to nature.

Full Synopsis

“What happened here is worth sharing because it shows all of the gains happened in incremental baby step ways. They weren't magnificent, you didn't all of a sudden say, here's a hundred thousand acre park. It wasn't like that. It was all incremental.”

Gary Giacomini, Marin County Supervisor 1972-1996
In REBELS WITH A CAUSE

REBELS WITH A CAUSE celebrates the people and passion that saved the coastal wonders that would become the Point Reyes National Seashore and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. With California's rapid population rise in the 1950s, the California coast seemed destined to follow the prevalent pattern of suburban development. But, these rebels changed the fate of the land. Their efforts set new precedents for protecting open space and shaped the environmental movement as we know it today.

REBELS WITH A CAUSE is an inspiring story about citizen action, community organizing and ordinary people making their government give them what they wanted.

REBELS WITH A CAUSE features interviews with several prominent Bay Area residents including: Huey Johnson, Co-Founder of the Trust for Public Land and the Founder of the Resource Renewal Institute; Amy Meyer and Edgar Wayburn, Co-Chairs, People for a Golden Gate National Recreation Area; Martin Griffin, Founder, Audubon Canyon Ranch; Phyllis Faber and Ellen Straus, Co-Founders Marin Agricultural Land Trust; Doug Ferguson, lawyer and environmental activist; Martin Rosen, former president of the Trust for Public Land and attorney Robert Praetzel.

REBELS WITH A CAUSE had its World Premiere at the 2012 Mill Valley Film Festival and won the Audience Favorite Award.
for Best Documentary - Active Cinema. REBELS WITH A CAUSE has also been in the Cleveland International Film Festival, the Miami International Documentary Film Festival, the Sebastopol Documentary Film Festival, the Sonoma International Film Festival, the Mendocino Film Festival, the United Nations Association Film Festival and the Ecofalante Environmental Film Festival in Brazil.
About the filmmakers

Writer/Director/Producer Nancy Kelly
Nancy Kelly has been making independent fiction and non-fiction films for more than twenty-five years. Nancy directed and produced a documentary trilogy about the transformative power of art: TRUST: SECOND ACTS IN YOUNG LIVES, about an 18-year-old Honduran teen whose traumatic life story is unveiled in a daring original play; SMITTEN, about art collector Rene di Rosa; and DOWNSIDE UP, an hour-long documentary about the beginning of America’s largest museum of contemporary art, MASS MoCA. Nancy also developed, produced, and directed THOUSAND PIECES OF GOLD, starring Rosalind Chao and Chris Cooper, a narrative feature about a Chinese woman sold into slavery during the California Gold Rush. Nancy has also directed the award-winning documentary shorts: COWGIRLS and, SWEEPING OCEAN VIEWS and co-directed A COWHAND’S SONG.
**Editor/Producer Kenji Yamamoto**

In addition to his work on all of Nancy Kelly’s films, Kenji has edited the acclaimed documentaries NEW MUSLIM COOL directed by Jennifer Maytorena Taylor and THIRST, directed by Alan Snitow and Deborah Kaufman. He is currently editing GRACE, produced and directed by Helen Cohen and Mark Lipman. Nancy and Kenji are married.

**Director of Photography Lou Weinert**

Lou Weinert brings a unique aesthetic and consummate cinematographic skills to REBELS WITH A CAUSE. Among his credits as Director of Photography are the narrative feature films TWISTED by Phillip Kaufman and RUMOR HAS IT...by Rob Reiner and the documentaries SMITTEN and DOWNSIDE UP, both by Nancy Kelly, PHIL LESH AND FRIENDS LIVE AT THE WARFIELD by Jay Blakesburg and Bob Sarles, LOVE IN THE AGE OF FISHSTICKS by Yun Shin, VIRTUE by Camera Obscura, and MULLIT by Pat Healy. He was camera operator on the Hollywood feature films THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS by Gabriele Muccino, MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA by Rob Marshall, RENT by Chris Columbus, BEE SEASON by Scott McGehee and David Siegel, I HEART HUCKABEES by David O. Russell. He wrote, directed and edited the short film LARK RHAPSODY, winner of a Gold Plaque from the Chicago International Film Festival and Certificate of Merit from the San Francisco International Film Festival.

**KRCB North Bay Public Media**

KRCB TV, Channel 22, has been the local PBS station in Sonoma County for 24 years, supplying quality broadcasting to the viewing public. KRCB has produced or co-produced a
number of programs with this philosophy in mind, including the multiple Emmy Award winning *Natural Heroes*, a nationally aired series on the environment featuring local people working to create change in their own communities, with production support coming in part from Wallace Genetic Foundation and the Sierra Club. KRCB has also produced short, interstitial length programs on local history (*Expressions*) and on the local environment (*Bay Nature on the Air*) in conjunction with *Bay Nature* Magazine.

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**Credits**

**REBELS WITH A CAUSE**  
A KRCB presentation in association with Kelly+Yamamoto Productions

**Written, Directed and Produced by**  
Nancy Kelly

**Edited and Produced by**  
Kenji Yamamoto

**Narrated by**  
Frances McDormand

**Director of Photography**  
Lou Weinert

**Original Music**  
Todd Boekelheide

**Animation**  
Mark Fiore

**Title Design**  
Gary Jaeger, Core Studio

**Archival Research**  
Jane Greenberg

**Rebels (in order of appearance)**  
Huey Johnson, Robert Praetzel, Stewart Udall, Amy Meyer, Bill Duddleson, Joe Mendoza, Sr., Katy Miller Johnson, Peter Behr, Martin Griffin, M.D., Martin Rosen, Doug Ferguson, Edgar Wayburn, M.D., Gary Giacomini, Ellen Straus, Phyllis Faber, Jolynn Mendoza-McClelland, Jarod Mendoza, Albert Straus

**Funded by**  
Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation
This project was made possible with support from Cal Humanities, an independent non-profit state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities, in partnership with the Skirball Foundation. For more information, visit [www.calhum.org](http://www.calhum.org)

Kira and Bradley J. Haas Fund at the Marin Community Foundation


Production Notes

No doesn’t work for me.

One of the many challenges in making REBELS WITH A CAUSE was that some of the characters in the story, like Congressman Clem Miller who was a prime mover behind passing the Point Reyes National Seashore bill, were dead.

In 2004, as Nancy Kelly and Kenji Yamamoto started developing REBELS WITH A CAUSE, Don Neubacher who was then Superintendent of Point Reyes National Seashore, introduced Nancy to Bill Duddleson, who had been Congressman Clem Miller’s legislative aide in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Passing the Point Reyes National Seashore bill was Bill’s number one assignment. Bill introduced Nancy to Stewart Udall who was Secretary of the Interior under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. Bill offered Nancy tips on how to approach him, including, “Address him as Mr. Udall not Stewart.”

“When I called Mr. Udall to ask whether I could bring a crew to interview him in Santa Fe where he lived, he said no. I honestly didn’t know if I’d have a film without him, so I said in the most polite tone I could muster, ‘Mr. Udall, no doesn’t really work for me.’”
Before the conversation ended, Mr. Udall agreed that if Nancy sent him a short description of the film, he would read it. Mr. Udall was at that time well into his 80s and told her he had macular degeneration, so she printed the letter in extra large font and sent it off with very little hope of success. A few weeks later, to Nancy’s surprise, Mr. Udall called to say he was coming to the Bay Area to spend Thanksgiving with his son and would be willing to be interviewed while he was here.

Nancy says, “Our interview with Mr. Udall was fantastic, one of the best I’ve ever done in thirty years of filmmaking.”

Searching for the developer’s model of Marincello

As we began filming and moving the project forward, it became clear that the defeat of Marincello, the city of 30,000 that Gulf Oil and developer Thomas Frouge wanted to build in the Marin Headlands, was a defining moment in the story of creation the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA). Marincello was to have multiple high rises on the tops of hills and a mall a mile long. Had Marincello been built, other such projects in the Marin Headlands would likely also have been approved and built, and the vast, contiguous stretch of parkland, open space, and farms stretching from San Francisco to the northern tip of Point Reyes, could never have happened.

The few existing photographs of the developer’s model of Marincello simply did not do justice to the proposed
development’s scope and scale. REBELS Director of Photography Lou Weinert, who grew up in the Bay Area, mentioned to Director Nancy Kelly that as a kid he’d seen the model. From that moment on, Nancy asked everyone she met who might know if it still existed and when I asked Brian O’Neill, Superintendent of the GGNRA, he waved his hand and said, “It’s around here somewhere.” That vague statement did not inspire much confidence in Nancy, but she kept looking.

Their big break came when REBELS WITH A C AUSE Archival Researcher Jane Greenberg, who is also a filmmaker in her own right, met Abby Sue Fisher, Chief, Cultural Resources of the GGNRA at a barbeque. Abby Sue, a petite, fashionable, adventurous person, was new the GGNRA, but did a bit of research and discovered where the model was stored. She invited Nancy to come with her to see the model where it was stored and suggested she bring a couple production assistants with crowbars and hammers. After zipping herself into a protective canvas jump suit, she unlocked the rolling metal door and said lightly, “I hope you aren’t afraid of spiders.”

“We walked deep into the building, turning down one narrow hallway after another, passing crates with ‘cruise missile parts’ stenciled on their sides,” Nancy says. “Finally we came to another locked metal door – and as she turned the key, Abby Sue gave them another heads up, “Don’t be shocked by the stuffed sea lion, it’s huge and it’s the first thing you see.”

Stacked in that storage room, behind the sea lion (which was indeed huge) and the graffiti, were four large crates holding Thomas Frouge’s Marincello model. When the production assistants pried off the tops, Nancy could see that the model was a bit worse for wear – the Golden Gate Bridge was lying on its side, a rodent had chewed a corner, it was dusty, and had been sawed into five enormous pieces – but she was thrilled because she knew that with it she could bring developer Thomas Frouge’s dream to life.

Abby Sue and Nancy came up with a three-part plan: clean and repair the model, film it, and exhibit it publically.

Abby Sue stressed that the filmmakers had to work with people who would treat the model as the historic artifact it was. The highly-skilled model makers at the now-defunct
Kerner Optical in San Rafael, many of who had worked for Lucasfilm on the STAR WARS movies, agreed to treat the model with the appropriate reverence, and they moved the big crates to their studio where they cleaned and repaired the model. Then back into crates it went until the filmmakers raised enough money to film it in the Marin County Civic Center, one of the most stunning mid-century buildings Nancy and Kenji could think of for a location.

“Finding, repairing, filming the model took a lot of time, money and effort and some people told me the documentary would work just fine without it, but I never believed that. I knew having it in the story would bring the story of Marincello alive.”

Step three, exhibiting the developer’s model of Marincello publicly will happen from September to December 2013 at the California Historical Society, as part of the Unbuilt California exhibit.

Young animals in springtime

It was spring and the filmmakers hoped to film the bounty of baby birds, seals, and deer that Natalie Gates, Chief of Natural Resource Management at Point Reyes National Seashore, had described to Nancy.

Tim Bernot, Point Reyes National Seashore bio-technician, contacted Nancy and Kenji to say, “There are currently two beautifully spotted fawns that roam around the area just
outside of our offices. I see them almost every morning. I call ‘em the lawn fawns.”

A couple days after she received the tip about the lawn fawns, Director of Photography Lou Weinert and Nancy were out location scouting in the Point Reyes National Seashore. They had just finished looking around the area around Tim Bernot’s offices, figuring out where they would set the camera up when they came back to shoot a few days later. Leaving the Bear Valley headquarters, Nancy turned her car onto Bear Valley Road and almost immediately saw a doe and two spotted fawns crossing the road. They wondered whether those could be the lawn fawns. Nancy says, “As they walked in front of my car, and from out of nowhere, an SUV barreled down the road. Hearing it approach, the doe jumped across the road and into the brush, but the speeding SUV literally creamed the two fawns, catching one underneath its carriage and knocking the other down with its front drivers-side tire. The second fawn leapt up and scampered into the brush after its mother, but we parked the car on the side of the road, got out and helplessly watched first fawn die on the road.” Tim Bernot told Nancy he never saw those twin fawns again, so he assumed both of them died that day.

As part of the effort to help us film baby animals in springtime, Dave Press, Point Reyes National Seashore Wildlife Ecologist, took Nancy and her crew to film some baby spotted owls in their nest – each spring, the wildlife biologists at the Seashore monitor a number of nests on a weekly basis. Dave promised to take them to the easiest nest to film, for which Nancy was grateful, since one of
their lenses weighed about forty pounds, the camera was a full-sized professional HD camera, and they had to bring an extra heavy tripod to support the lens and camera.

But when they reached the tree where the nest was, Dave looked down at where the trunk met the ground and said, “Is that a skull?” And it was – the skull of a baby spotted owl nestled in a few downy white feathers. Some animal had eaten the babies since a few days before when Dave checked on the nest.

Nancy says, “As I looked at the skull resting in the feathers – all that was left of the baby spotted owls – I thought about how from the beginning making REBELS had felt like a race against time to capture both people and animals involved in the story. Former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall was in his late 80s when we interviewed him in 2007 and he died in 2010. Golden Gate National Recreation Area Co-Founder Edgar Wayburn had just turned 100 when we interviewed him. Point Reyes dairy rancher Joe Mendoza was hale and hearty when we interviewed him in the spring of 2008, but before the end of the year, he passed away. Standing in the redwood forest looking at that skull, I was reminded of all these losses and of having seen the fawns killed only a few days before.”

Dave suggested another nest on Inverness Ridge, but cautioned the crew that it was not anywhere near as easy to get to as this nest. He drove them on a fire road as far as possible, and then guided them on a narrow trail and when the trail ended, they bushwhacked, traversing a steep, slippery slope on with the heavy gear. Not only did Nancy and her crew get a shot of the baby spotted owls in their nest, they filmed the mother owl watching over them from a branch above the nest.