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CONTACT

Voleine Amilcar
Mary Lugo
Cara White

415-356-8383 x 244
770-623-8190
843-881-1480

voleine_amilcar@itvs.org
lugo@negia.net
cara.white@mac.com

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WONDER WOMEN! THE UNTOLD STORY OF AMERICAN SUPERHEROINES
PREMIERES ON INDEPENDENT LENS ON MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2013 ON PBS

Film traces the fascinating birth, evolution, and legacy of Wonder Woman and introduces a dynamic group of fictional and real-life superheroines fighting for positive role models for girls, both on screen and off

(San Francisco, CA) – *Wonder Women! The Untold Story of American Superheroines* traces the fascinating evolution and legacy of Wonder Woman. From the birth of the comic book superheroine in the 1940s to the blockbusters of today, *Wonder Women* looks at how popular representations of powerful women often reflect society’s anxieties about women’s liberation. The film goes behind the scenes with TV stars Lynda Carter (*Wonder Woman*) and Lindsay Wagner (*The Bionic Woman*), comic writers and artists, and real-life superheroines such as Gloria Steinem, Kathleen Hanna, and others, who offer an enlightening and entertaining counterpoint to the male-dominated superhero genre. A film by Kristy Guevara-Flanagan and Kelcey Edwards, *Wonder Women! The Untold Story of American Superheroines* premieres on the award-winning series *Independent Lens*, hosted by Stanley Tucci, on Monday, April 15, 2013 at 10 PM ET (check local listings).

Wonder Women explores our nation’s long-term love affair with comic book superheroes and raises questions about the possibilities and contradictions of heroines within the genre. Reflecting our culture’s deep-seated ambivalence toward powerful women — even in this so-called post-feminist era — women may be portrayed as good, or brave, or even featured as “action babes,” but rarely are they seen as heroes at the center of their own journey.



Tying the film together is the groundbreaking figure of Wonder Woman, the unlikely brainchild of a Harvard-trained pop psychologist named William Moulton Marston. From Wonder Woman's original, radical World War II presence, to her uninspiring 1960s incarnation as a fashion boutique owner, to her dramatic resurrection by feminist Gloria Steinem and the women of *Ms. Magazine*, Wonder Woman's legacy continues today—despite the fact that she has yet to make it to the big screen.

In our era of increased plastic surgeries and emphasis on “looking good” rather than acting powerfully, many psychologists, media and social critics have long decried the fact that women are bombarded with images of physical perfection and portrayals of their gender purely in terms of sexual attractiveness. *Wonder Women* counters this by reflecting on why our culture struggles with images of women triumphant beyond the domestic arena of relationships and family. Exploring how our highly visual culture places more emphasis on girls' and women's looks rather than on their deeds, *Wonder Women* urges women to claim the action genre — and media in general— as their own, if they want to change how they are represented. Says director Guevera-Flanagan, “I loved the idea of looking at something as populist as comics to reveal our cultural obsessions, and in particular, how women's roles have changed over time. The narratives of our most iconic superheroes, told and re-told over decades, boldly outline our shifting values. For some it's Lara Croft, for others it's Buffy the Vampire Slayer, but we all need those iconic heroes that tell us we have the power to slay our dragons and don't have to wait around to be rescued.”

To learn more about the film, visit the *Wonder Women* companion website (<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/wonder-women>), which features information about the film, including an interview with the filmmaker and links and resources pertaining to the film's subject matter. The site also features a Talkback section for viewers to share their ideas and opinions, preview clips of the film, and more.

About the Participants

Gloria Steinem, feminist and political activist

Lynda Carter, actress who portrayed Wonder Woman on the 1970s television series

Lindsay Wagner, actress who portrayed the Bionic Woman on the 1970s television series

Andy Mangels, Wonder Woman collector, scholar and enthusiast

Kathleen Hanna, Original Riot Grrl and musician

Jen Stuller, author of *Ink-Stained Amazons and Cinematic Warriors: Superwomen in Modern Mythology*

Katie Pineda, young Wonder Woman fan

Carmela Lane, Wonder Woman fan

Trina Robbins, author and comics herstorian who has been writing graphic novels and comics for over thirty years

About the Filmmakers

Kristy Guevara-Flanagan (Director)

Kristy Guevara-Flanagan's first feature-length film was an acclaimed documentary covering four years in the lives of four adolescent girls, *Going On 13*. The film was an official selection of Tribeca, Silverdocs, and many other international film festivals, and was broadcast on public television in 2009. Guevara-Flanagan has also produced and directed several short films, including *El Corrido De Cecilia Rios*, a chronicle of the violent death of 15-year-old Cecilia Rios. It was an official selection of the Sundance Film Festival. Now an assistant professor at Diablo Valley College, Kristy has a MFA in Film Production from San Francisco State University.

Kelcey Edwards (Producer)

Kelcey Edwards is an award-winning documentary filmmaker whose films have screened at many of the top-ranking festivals around the country, including True/False, Silverdocs, and SXSW. After receiving her MFA in Documentary Film & Video from Stanford University, Edwards moved to New York City, where she works as a filmmaker, producer and arts educator. She is the co-producer of *Words Of Witness*, a documentary feature by director Mai Iskander (*Garbage Dreams*) and an official selection of Berlinale 2012.

About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award winning weekly series airing on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by the Independent Television Service (ITVS), the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the MacArthur Foundation. The senior series producer is Lois Vossen. You can find more information at www.pbs.org/independentlens and join *Independent Lens* on Facebook at www.facebook.com/independentlens.

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