



The Joyce Ann Gaines Story: "More Than a Riot"-Press Kit

KoolWorldMedia Productions | info@koolworldmedia.com | Film website:
www.jagthedoc.com

Media Contact: Dorothy Holford | 408.300.0618 home/office | 408.509.6773 cell | 5542 Monterey
Hwy Suite #226, San Jose, CA. 95138-1529

Pg. 1-Contents

Pg. 2-Synopsis

Pg. 3-5-History | Overview

Pg. 6-7-KoolWorldMedia Bio

Pg. 8-Project Timeline | Status

Synopsis- The Joyce Ann Gaines Story: “More Than a Riot”

The JAG Project tells the compelling story of how young Joyce Ann Gaines became an unwitting provocateur, on the evening of August 11, 1965, of the horrendous LA Watts Riots. While her name was mentioned in many publications of the time, much false information was given out about her role. Now, after 46 years of silence, she is ready to put herself on the line and tell the world the truth about what happened to her that day. She will also talk about how the Watts Riots affected her family, and, from her own perspective, how they impacted her community. Our viewers will want to know both how Joyce coped for 46 years, knowing that she was a catalyst to the start of this event, and why she kept this to herself for so long, never giving an interview. We will answer these and other questions and bring them to the screen in a compelling way.

The film will begin by exploring what life was like for Blacks in America during the 1960s, and it will focus in on the Los Angeles area and the conditions that led up to the Watts Riots. This momentous event sparked over 126 riots across America over the following two years. We have located a plethora of experts in history and the social sciences with intimate knowledge of and passionate views on Watts and the aftermath who are ready and willing to share their understanding on camera. Our historical adviser and other staff are also performing extensive research on the subject. With this expertise and information at our disposal, we will be able to bring a well-documented and compelling story to our audience.

This project is profoundly relevant to the social unrest we see today. One of our major goals is to explore lessons learned from the reactions of government at all levels both to the riots and to the concerns of the Black community during the "Burn Baby Burn!" era, and to evaluate how well or poorly officials are addressing today's Occupy Movement and other uprisings and clashes of recent years. It is our fervent hope that Joyce Ann Gaines's story and the insights we provide on both the past and the present will contribute to healing the nation's urban communities, addressing the concerns of all ethnic groups and economic classes, and preventing a Watts-type event from ever happening again.

~More~

History-Overview

The Watts Riots of 1965 came precisely at the time that public action since the early 1900s against discrimination had reached its apogee. At the same time, actual conditions on the ground for African Americans had in many ways deteriorated. It was a seminal moment in American history. The explosive tension between the two realities was national in scope, but the first spark came in Watts as a result of a specific injustice that instantaneously rippled into the community, resulting in the cataclysmic Watts Riots that destroyed much not only of a black community but of the reservoir of good will that had developed toward them in the white community. This event decisively changed the course of civil rights from a broadly supported cause, except in the South, to a widely contested national issue.

Upward Arcs

The black civil rights movement dates back at least to the founding of the NAACP by a group of civic-minded black and white leaders in 1909. The body continually filed lawsuits and lobbied over the years to promote such benefits as better educational opportunities, equal voting rights, equal pay, and an end to lynching. Slowly, it accumulated victories amid many defeats, reaching a peak in 1954 as the plaintiff in the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* to end segregation in the public schools. During the 1950s, led by ministers like Martin Luther King Jr and Fred Shuttlesworth as well as by brave NAACP officers and many others, blacks in the South began to march, protest, and engage in sit-ins to demand an end to segregation and an equal chance for a good education and a good job. In many ways, the culmination of this movement was the voting rights march from Selma, Alabama, to Montgomery that began with the terrible beatings at the Pettus Bridge in Selma.

Parallel to, and in large degree in response to, black activism, the federal government slowly began to bend away from its shameful policy of supporting Jim Crow and segregation throughout the federal government during the administration of President Woodrow Wilson. Successive White House administrations, free to act when a Congress dominated by the South would not, promoted equal opportunity for blacks in jobs funded by the government with a series of executive programs and orders. Executive action culminated in 1961 when President Kennedy's ordered the government to take affirmative action for the first time to assure equal employment opportunity in government jobs. By this time, strong actions by the civil rights movement and violent reactions against it by racist opponents, culminating in the murder of Medgar Evers in 1963 and a bombing in Birmingham that killed four little black girls in 1964 forced Washington finally to take legislative action. The result was the Civil Rights Act of 1964 banning discrimination in virtually every area of national life and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that banned efforts to prevent minorities from voting.

A Negative Arc

Simultaneously with the two upward arcs of public progress was the development of a grim reality on the ground for black people. Setting the stage was the massive and historic "Great Migration" of blacks out of the rural South to the urban North and West that began in the early 1900s and continued until the latter part of the century. Spurred by available defense jobs in the World War I defense industry, blacks gladly left behind the impoverished Jim Crow South in hopes of making a better life elsewhere. Unfortunately, the defense jobs disappeared after that war, but black people kept coming, determined to escape the oppressive regime in the South. The Depression took its toll on blacks, like everyone else, though it was mitigated somewhat by government relief and public jobs. The job boom of World War II was no bonanza for black workers, unfortunately, as the government and its contractors made a major effort to hire white women to replace the male workers who were serving in the military--Rosie the Riveter epitomized this approach.

In the decades after the war, the steady, high-paying industrial jobs that blacks had held in Detroit, Pittsburgh, Chicago, and elsewhere started to disappear due to the combination of job-eliminating automation and the movement of industrial plants from inner cities to less expensive land in the suburbs. Lacking cars and adequate public transportation to reach these jobs, more and more black men became permanently unemployed and slipped onto welfare rolls and, for too many of them, into drug addiction and crime. Hostile urban police forces treated this social and economic problem as a law-and-order problem and increasingly mistreated black people, arresting and beating them, often on the slightest provocation. Combined with conditions of severe poverty and lack of employment and educational opportunity, police mistreatment led to deep-seated resentment and a profound sense of injustice in the urban black community throughout the country.

Why 1965, Why Watts?

The year 1965 marked an apogee of public accomplishment on behalf of blacks and racial minorities, but this very success in a sense mocked the misfortunes of the dwellers of the racial ghettos of the nation's cities. Unemployment there was typically double the national rate, housing was poor, schools inadequate, and crime rampant. The dichotomy between promise and reality was painfully obvious to the victims of these conditions. There had been rioting in many cities in 1964 after passage of the Civil Rights Act, particularly New York City, that provided precedent and encouragement to rebellion in the ghettos. Passage of the Voting Rights Act in August 1965 merely added to the sense of deprivation and frustration.

~More~

Like many ghettos, Watts in 1965 was a deprived and isolated community. Unemployment was estimated at 20 percent at a time when the national unemployment rate was only 4.4 percent. Watts for years had been treated as a step-child by the city of Los Angeles, which zoned it for industry, small housing lots, and high density. Education and city services were inadequate. There was a shortage of decent grocery stores with good quality food at affordable prices. Residents felt exploited by the many local businesses which sold poor-quality food and inferior goods at inflated prices. Discriminatory housing covenants and other real estate tactics throughout the LA area forced black people to concentrate into just a few areas, principally Watts. Public transportation from the area deteriorated during the 1940s and 50s with the gradual scrapping of the once-extensive system of inter-urban electric rail lines, with the result that the residents had difficulty getting to jobs in other parts of the city. On top of all that, the LA Police continued to treat residents brutally and arrest and incarcerate them at the slightest provocation. While Watts was not unpleasant-looking on a superficial level, the shoddiness, isolation, and neglect that were rampant made, to its residents, a mockery of the affluent "California Dream" lives lived by so many others in the region.

Watts was fairly typical of non-Southern black communities, and the tension between the arcs of public progress and economic and social deprivation was probably felt no more acutely there than anywhere else. But it was in Watts that an event occurred that triggered the anger and disappointment of a mistreated people. It was not a random event, but a specific perceived injustice to an innocent victim, Joyce Ann Gaines, that triggered the collective sense of injustice and deprivation that permeated much of the black population in Watts. The public record has consistently downplayed the nature and significance of the treatment of Ms. Gaines and the impact of this injustice on the witnesses. They were sentient human beings responding to an injustice to one of their own, not merely trouble-makers looking for an excuse to riot, loot, and burn.

JAG BIO'S

Debbie Brubaker, Project Manager

Debbie is a seasoned producer in the world of “indie” feature films and considered the “godmother” of the San Francisco Bay Area independent movie arena. One of her current production successes, was co-producing Peter Bratt’s movie La Mission. Debbie also was a producer on the recently unleashed comedy/horror pic, All About Evil, directed by Joshua Grannell. She has also done many other feature narratives, such as Finn Taylor’s The Darwin Awards. Debbie produced Dopamine, directed by Mark Decena, which was also a big hit at the Sundance Film Festival 2003, Unflinching Triumph: The Phillip Rockhammer Story, another feature directed by Mark Decena, Teknolust, directed by Lynn Hershman Leesom, Bartleby , and The Californians by Jonathan Parker, and Cherish, directed by Finn Taylor. Debbie has also worked on many feature documentaries, In the Shadow of the Stars, which won an Academy Award, the Emmy award winning movie, Blink, and the soon to air feature documentary by Jennifer Seibel Newsom, Miss Representation. Debbie’s currently a producer on the feature film Neon Sky directed by Jennifer Juelich, now in post production. Debbie is a Film Commissioner for the City of San Francisco and the Executive Chair of the San Francisco Coordinating Committee of the Directors Guild of America.

Dorothy Holford, Producer, Director

Dorothy Holford, is the Creative Director of KoolWorldMedia Video Production Company. In 2009 she developed, produced and hosted “WoodStockGranny & Friends” TV Show, which aired for two years on San Jose's public access channel. KWM produced 52 episodes for the series. She developed her interviewing skills during this period. Notable interviews include: Amy Goodman, host of "Democracy Now" and David Morrison, Director of the NASA Luna Science Institute.

Kristine Lowe, Co-Producer

Kristine Lowe recently changed careers from city planning to producing films. Two short films she produced this year received recognition at local film festivals. Kristine is currently completing an Associate’s degree in Film and Television Production from De Anza Community College in Cupertino and a Master's degree in Transportation Management from San Jose State University. Kristine was recently elected as Vice President of Operations of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society at De Anza College; and while maintaining her career in film producing, she aspires to become appointed as a planning commissioner or run for city council at a local community within the San Francisco Bay Area.

Herb Ferrette, Post- Production Editor

Extensive experience as a 7-time Emmy award winning feature length editor on character driven Cinéma-vérité and archival heavy projects for National PBS and Commercial broadcast affiliates. In my capacity as Post Production Supervisor I've managed and established post procedures for departments with weekly air dates and independent producer's with challenging budgets. The bottom line is the impetus for decisions and I've initiated process that with effective time management allows the budget to be a resource, not a problem.

To view short segments from some of my Documentaries: <https://vimeo.com/album/271064>

Specialties: "Effective manager's - manage." Finding, encouraging and unifying various disciplines and talent to achieve a common goal by enabling and encouraging the creative process. I don't just bark orders but make it a point to understand and become directly involved in the entire process from pre to production to post. Experience - this is what age brings.

Timeline- Current Status: In Production 03/31/13

KoolWorldMedia entered into an agreement with Joyce Ann Gaines on April, 17th 2011. We have since completed over three-quarters of the film.

After the reenactment scenes are shot, the film will go into post-production by end of summer 2013.