



For Immediate Release May 10, 2022

Media Contact: Cherie Hill
Communications Manager, chill@calhum.org

California Humanities Grants \$450k to 16 Documentary Projects for Production, Research & Development

(Oakland, CA)— California Humanities is pleased to award California Documentary Project (CDP) grants to 16 new film and audio media productions. The California Documentary Project (CDP) grant program supports humanities-based media productions that seek to document California in all its complexity.

This year, four CDP production grants and twelve CDP research and development grants use the humanities to provide context, depth, and perspective; enhance our understanding of California and its cultures, peoples, and histories; and reach and engage statewide and national audiences. Selected projects include a podcast series telling the stories of Indigenous communities living along the US/Mexico border and a feature documentary that honors the current and past contributions of female Black Panther Party members. From a film about the Yurok’s knowledge and use of fire to heal land and people to the coming-of-age story of a Cambodian American high school basketball star, these projects bring vital California stories to statewide and national audiences.

For over 40 years, California Humanities has been the leading funder of documentaries by, for, and about Californians. Since 2003, the organization has awarded almost \$7.5 million through the CDP grant program to film, audio, and interactive media productions that inform and engage broad audiences through multiple means such as radio and television broadcasts, podcasts, online, community screenings and discussions, classroom and library presentations, film festivals, and more. Each CDP-supported project adds a new layer to California's complex and growing portrait. Together, they help us better understand who we are and where we live.

“We are proud to support such a diverse representation of our state through these projects that amplify untold stories,” shares President and CEO Julie Fry. “Congratulations to this year’s awardees, and we look forward to seeing how their projects develop.”

California Documentary Projects Awarded in 2022

CDP RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT GRANTS:

MAKING HISTORY / HACIENDO HISTORIA: LATINAS/OS IN MENDOCINO

Project Director: A. Loreto Rojas

Applicant Organization: Mendocino County Public Broadcasting

A podcast series that tells stories of the arrival, growth, and establishment of the Latinx community on Northern California's Mendocino coast.

SAUND VS. COCHRAN

Project Director: Mridu Chandra

Applicant Organization: Gotham Film and Media Institute

SAUND vs COCHRAN is a documentary about Dalip Singh Saund's 1956 congressional campaign against aviatrix Jackie Cochran Odlum in California's 29th District, making him the first-ever Asian American member of U.S. Congress.

THE SILENCES OF RAMÓN NOVARRO

Project Director: Phillip Rodriguez

Applicant Organization: About Productions

This film tells the story of the life and death of a proudly Mexican, ardently Catholic, and an actively but secretly gay movie idol. The documentary examines how the LA film industry packaged his identity for consumption by mainstream movie audiences.

WE BEG YOUR PARDON, AMERICA

Project Director: A.K. Sandhu

Applicant Organization: Filmmakers Collaborative

A feature documentary that honors the current and past contributions of female Black Panther Party members, including poet Ericka Huggins and Fredrika Newton, widow of BPP's co-founder Huey Newton.

CDP PRODUCTION GRANTS:

CANADA LEE, NATIVE SON

Project Director: Jonathan Skurnik

Applicant Organization: Documentary Educational Resources Inc

This 90-minute feature documentary will be the first to explore the life and legacy of African American actor and civil rights activist Canada Lee.

GOOD FIRE

Project Director: Roni Jo Draper

Applicant Organization: Women Make Movies

An 86-minute documentary that follows three generations of Yurok women as they use their ancient knowledge of fire to heal land and people.

HOME COURT

Project Director: Erica Tanamachi

Applicant Organization: Women Make Movies

A documentary feature about Ashley Chea, an elite high school basketball player and daughter of Cambodian refugees, as she navigates college recruiters vying for her attention and the deep, though the lesser-known history of Asian American basketball players.

HOME IS A HOTEL

Project Director: Kevin Wong

Applicant Organization: Bay Area Video Coalition

Told through the lens of five residents living in San Francisco Single Room Occupancy Hotels, this feature-length, character-driven documentary bears witness to the struggle of staying housed in America's most expensive city.

INSTRUMENTAL: THE ELAYNE JONES STORY

Project Director: Grace Wang

Applicant Organization: Women Make Movies

This 40-minute film profiles 93-year-old African American percussionist and political activist Elayne Jones and her struggle for racial justice in the world of classical music.

THE MAKING OF TAN DAN, NEW CITIZENS, A 1975-ERA REFUGEE CAMP NEWSPAPER

Project Director: Ngoc Nguyen

Applicant Organization: Independent Arts & Media

Told through the narrative device of a refugee camp newspaper, this documentary podcast series tells the origin story of the Vietnamese community in the United States and gives voice to the first wave of new Vietnamese citizens.

MY UNCLE THE FUGITIVE

Project Director: Kathy Huang

Applicant Organization: Catticus Corporation

In this feature documentary, a filmmaker investigates the shadowy past of her uncle, a Taiwanese political exile living in Orange County, only to uncover family secrets and the tale of democracy in peril.

THE PEOPLE'S RECORDER

Project Director: Andrea Kalin

Applicant Organization: Stone Soup Productions

This episode of a national podcast series examining the history and legacy of the 1930s Federal Writers' Project focuses on the WPA Guide to California published in 1939, the Californians who assembled it, and what their experience says about issues of inequality, race, migration, and cultural crisis.

PORT OF ENTRY PODCAST

Project Director: John Decker

Applicant Organization: KPBS/San Diego State University Research Foundation

A podcast series telling the stories of people whose lives are impacted by the U.S.-Mexico border. This new six-episode season is dedicated to the Indigenous people of northern Baja and Southern California.

A PRAYER FOR SALMON

Project Director: Judy Silber

Applicant Organization: KALW Public Media

A radio and documentary podcast series tells the story of Northern California's Winnemem Wintu tribe's fight to protect sacred sites and return salmon to spawning grounds above Shasta Dam.

SIN NADA (With Nothing)

Project Director: Jose Luis Figueroa

Applicant Organization: International Documentary Association

A 90-minute film about activists and artists who help the families of migrants who have lost loved ones along the US/Mexico borderlands.

SOL

Project Director: Emily Cohen Ibañez

Applicant Organization: Studio IX

SOL is a 30-minute film documenting one woman's transformation from incarceration to rejuvenation as she re-establishes her life in East Oakland after spending 16 years in prison.

Learn more about the California Documentary Project Grant Program [here](#).

About California Humanities:

California Humanities, a nonprofit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities, promotes the humanities—focused on ideas, conversation, and learning—as relevant, meaningful ways to understand the human condition and connect people to each other in order to help strengthen California. California Humanities has provided grants and programs across the state since 1975. To learn more, visit calhum.org, or like and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

###