



American
MASTERS



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American Masters
Dorothea Lange: Grab a Hunk of Lightning

Premieres nationally Friday, August 29, 9-11 p.m. on PBS (check local listings)

Production Bios

Dyanna Taylor

Producer, Writer and Director

Dyanna Taylor is a five-time Emmy Award-winning cinematographer and director of photography whose prominent career in documentaries and features has also earned her a Peabody Award and the honored Muse Lifetime Achievement Award for Outstanding Vision and Achievement in Cinematography from New York Women in Film and Television.

She has traveled the world lensing and directing films, documentaries and television specials on social issues and environmental/wildlife concerns. Her extensive credits include work for all of the major network and cable media organizations, including HBO, PBS, ABC, NBC, CBS, and Nat Geo. Recently, she was 2nd unit director of photography for the Disney feature *McFarland*, scheduled for release in fall 2014, and is currently shooting *Sleep* for National Geographic. Taylor is also well known for her work as director and co-producer of *Annapurna: A Woman's Place*, which tells the gripping story of the first American women's ascent of Annapurna I, and the tragic deaths of two of the climbers during the filming. She has a strong commitment to innovative, independently produced films and a deep interest in the world of art and the artistic mind. In progress: a film she has been shooting over a period of 20 years focused on artist James Turrell's work at the Roden Crater.

American Masters — Dorothea Lange: Grab a Hunk of Lightning has special meaning for Taylor. She is Dorothea Lange's granddaughter, and has been deeply influenced by her grandmother's sensibility and aesthetic. This relationship has given Taylor access to never-before-seen footage, photographs and journals. Combining Taylor's memories and personal understanding with thorough scholarship, her film gives the viewer both an understanding and felt sense of the woman whose influential 20th century work revealed America to America.

Her past work for PBS includes ***American Masters — Ernest Hemingway: Rivers to the Sea, American Masters: F. Scott Fitzgerald — Winter Dreams***, *ART21, Great Performances — Porgy and Bess: An American Voice, Great Performances — Swingin' With the Duke: Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis* and episodes of *American Experience* and the *Evolution* series.

A Buddhist, lover of animals and the natural world, Taylor also co-leads retreats for Media Makers. She was raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, attended University of California, Santa Cruz and, after 11 years working out of New York City, now lives in Santa Fe, N.M.

Roberta Grossman

Producer

An award-winning filmmaker with a passion for history and social justice, Roberta Grossman has written and produced more than 40 hours of documentary film and television. Her most recent film *Hava Nagila (The Movie)* was opening or closing night at 40 film festivals. Grossman's 2008 film *Blessed Is the Match: The Life and Death of Hannah Senesh* won awards at 13 film festivals, aired on the PBS series *Independent Lens*, and was nominated for a Primetime Emmy Award. Grossman was the series producer and co-writer of *500 Nations*, the CBS mini-series on Native American history hosted by Kevin Costner. Grossman's feature documentary *Homeland: Four Portraits of Native Action* premiered in February 2005, screened on PBS, and screened and won awards at film festivals worldwide. Other writing and producing credits include *In the Footsteps of Jesus*, a four-hour special for the History Channel; *Hollywood & Power: Women on Top*, a special for AMC; *The Rich in America: 150 Years of Town and Country Magazine* for A&E; *The History of Christianity: the First Thousand Years*, a four-hour special on A&E; *Medal of Honor*, a six-part television series produced for *U.S. News & World Report*; and *Heroines of the Hebrew Bible and Judas* for the A&E series *Mysteries of the Bible*. Grossman is currently directing *Above and Beyond: The Birth of the Israeli Air Force*.

Michael Kantor

***American Masters* Series Executive Producer**

For over two decades, award-winning filmmaker Michael Kantor has created outstanding programs on the arts for television. He joined ***American Masters*** as the series' executive producer April 30, 2014.

In January 2013, Kantor's Peabody Award-winning, 90-minute film, *Broadway Musicals: A Jewish Legacy*, aired as part of the *Great Performances* series on PBS. Narrated by Joel Grey, it included performances by Matthew Broderick, Kelli O'Hara, David Hyde Pierce, Marc Shaiman and many other Broadway talents. In 2012, Kantor produced *The Thomashefskys: Music and Memories of a Life in the Yiddish Theater* with Michael Tilson Thomas, which aired on PBS and was nominated for a Primetime Emmy. Kantor served as executive producer of the ninety-minute special *Give Me the Banjo*, hosted by Steve Martin, and created *Make 'Em Laugh: The Funny Business of America*, the critically acclaimed six-part documentary series hosted by Billy Crystal that debuted in January 2009. His episode four script, *When I'm Bad, I'm Better: The Groundbreakers*, co-authored with Laurence Maslon, was nominated for a Primetime Emmy Award. His landmark six-part series *Broadway: The American Musical* was hosted by Julie Andrews and was honored with the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Nonfiction Series in 2005. That same year, he created three hours of DVD extras for 20th Century Fox's 40th anniversary release of *The Sound of Music*. Kantor also produced *Superheroes: A Never-Ending Battle*, hosted by Liev Schreiber, a three-hour series for PBS that premiered in fall 2013, with a companion book published by Random House.

Kantor wrote, directed and produced the award-winning profile ***American Masters: Quincy Jones: In the Pocket***. With Stephen Ives, he co-directed *Cornerstone: An Interstate Adventure* for HBO, and produced *The West* (Executive Producer Ken Burns). His 20 years of work in documentaries include projects as varied as *EKG: the arts show*, *Coney Island*, *The Donner Party*, *Margaret Sanger* and Ric Burns' *New York* series. As a writer, Kantor created *Lullaby of Broadway: Opening Night on 42nd Street*, co-authored the companion books to *Broadway* (Bulfinch) and *Make 'Em Laugh* (Grand Central Publishing) and has published numerous essays and articles. He is also president of Almo Inc., a company which distributes The American Film Theatre series, which includes Edward Albee's *A Delicate Balance* (starring Katharine Hepburn), Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh* (Lee Marvin) and Chekhov's *Three Sisters* (Laurence Olivier) among its titles. Kantor has served as a Tony nominator and teaches documentary filmmaking at the School for Visual Arts in New York City.

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