WONDER WOMEN! THE UNTOLD STORY OF AMERICAN SUPERHEROINES traces the fascinating birth, evolution and legacy of Wonder Woman and introduces audiences to a dynamic group of fictional and real-life superheroines fighting for positive role models for girls, both on screen and off.

Duration: 62 minutes

www.wonderwomendoc.com

Contact:
Kristy Guevara-Flanagan, Director
415-350-3066
kristy@vaquerafilms.com

Sales: George Rush
415-867-3965
george@gmrush.com

Kelcey Edwards, Producer
512-773-3066
kelcey@vaquerafilms.com
Critical Acclaim

“★★★★★ The film is filled with interviews with a multitude of smart, eloquent women explaining what should be evident but is so not: Girls need super heroes because they need to know that their gender is not an obstacle. If you have a daughter, it is a moral imperative that you show her this film as soon as possible.”

Jessica Baxter, Film Threat

“Turns what could've just been a flat history of a comic book character into a brief study of female empowerment in the last century.”

Angela Watercutter, Wired.com

“Containing interviews with Gloria Steinem, Lynda Carter and the most adorable fourth grader you've seen on-screen this year, WONDER WOMEN! makes a strong case that Wonder Woman should be reborn on the big screen.”

Christopher Rosen, Huffington Post

“As a woman interested in why we have so few strong female leads in films today, WONDER WOMEN! was a great way for me to see really how far we haven't come.”

Melissa Silverstein, Indiewire

“Four-color images of the golden age Wonder Woman pop! on the silver screen, lending visual support to the testimony of Gloria Steinem and others about the impact that images of this powerful female had on them. The film makes a moving case for the necessity of heroic women in popular culture, never more affectingly than when a fourth-grade girl who's teased at school tells how this fantasy figure in star-spangled shorts inspires her to never give up.”

Robert Faires, Austin Chronicle

“If you're like me, or one of the other 400 women mouthing ‘Yes! Yes!’ during the screening, then WONDER WOMEN! will be candy for your inner feminist. WONDER WOMEN! is so technically developed that its arguments stand out, bold and clear.”

Joelle Pearson, Austin Woman Magazine

“★★★★½ With the narratives of iconic superheroes rooted deep in our psyches, Guevara-Flangagan exposes our cultural obsessions and shifting values through populist mediums and, in particular, the way women’s roles have been reflected over the decades.”

Astrid Francis, artsHub

“Don’t miss! A fun, empowering documentary about the never-ending battle against the rampant forces of chauvinist assholism.”

Paul Constant, The Stranger
“A delicious journey through decades of popular culture. Kristy Guevara-Flanagan interweaves the evolution of women superheroes, from the original Wonder Woman comic through Charlie’s Angels, Buffy, Riot Grrrls and beyond, and the history of modern feminism. It’s a vivid demonstration of the complex relationship between creators and consumers of popular culture.”

**Patricia Aufderheide, Center for Social Media**

“WONDER WOMEN! is the first film to recognize the importance of comic book characters in providing strong, active role models for girls and women. From the post-war domestication of Wonder Woman to her later revival as a feminist heroine, the film rigorously analyzes how shifting representations of powerful women reflect society’s anxieties about women’s liberation. This film fills a void in popular culture critiques that will inspire both girls and women, and enable lively classroom discussions about the profound influence of media in shaping notions of what women can be and do.”

**Caroline Heldman, Occidental College**

“Guevara-Flanagan’s collection of scholars, pop-artists and empowerment advocates (notably the always quotable Gloria Steinem) give fascinating insight, their accounts peppered with personal recollections and humor. Accompanying the talking heads are a geek’s dream collection of historical comic-book covers, scene clips and convention floor opinions. If it was the production’s intention to finally kill-off any non-believers who still consider the fantasy genre a worthless artform peopled by slackers dodging a real life, it is a goal achieved. The deeply human role our mythical figures continue to fulfill in our society, on many levels, is honored triumphantly.”

**Simon Foster, Screen-Space**

“This kind of cultural analysis, presented in an accessible and appealing way, is vital. Something as simple as showing the way Wonder Woman comics veered from feminist adventures into romantic dramas in the post-WWII, women-go-back-to-your-kitchens atmosphere provides an effective sort of call to arms against similar themes we still see everywhere today.”

**Brandi Sperry, The MacGuffin**

“What are the two greatest things on the planet? I’ll tell you. Bad-ass babes and comics. What happens when these two things collide? A mild-mannered documentarian/comic nerd is bitten by a radioactive feminist and is magically imbued with superhuman conscience and flair, I’m assuming. The result is WONDER WOMEN!, a film which at once made me feel empowered and like a terrible ‘emotional woman’ stereotype because I was crying and hyperventilating with joy the entire time. If you love your daughters, girlfriends, sisters and mothers, take them to see this fantastic gem of a movie.”

**Kit Bryant, Little Village**
Synopsis

**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.

**WONDER WOMEN!** goes behind the scenes with Lynda Carter, Lindsay Wagner, 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.

***
**WONDER WOMEN! THE UNTOLD STORY OF AMERICAN SUPERHEROINES**
is an independent documentary feature that looks at female superheroes, warrior princesses and other icons of women's empowerment in pop culture. Exploring our nation’s long-term love affair with comic book superheroes, the film 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. 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.

The hero is a key archetype in Western culture, yet heroes have almost invariably been male and white. Twenty-eight centuries since Achilles—arguably the first superhero—the classic heroic archetype remains unaltered: displaying the so-called “masculine” virtues of strength, courage, assertiveness, leadership, physicality, and sometimes violence.

Why are these characteristics considered “heroic”? What happens when women engage in ways of thought and behavior traditionally confined to “masculinity”? Why do most superheroes show little or no talent for communication, family, or empathetic caring? Why aren’t these values considered heroic, and how do our ideas about heroism reflect our culture’s values?

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. It is time to counter this with some reflection on why our culture struggles with images of women triumphant beyond the domestic arena of relationships and family.

This film invites women and girls, men and boys, to consider how stereotypes in the comic art genre serve to limit our vision of women, while reinforcing some of society’s deepest prejudices against them. 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.

A visually kinetic yet also warmly witty film, the film harnesses the voices of literary critics, women writers, classicists, philosophers, impersonators, collectors, feminists and fanatics to explore our very gendered notions of “heroism” and “power.”
Characters

**Gloria Steinem**, Feminist and Political Activist

American feminist, journalist, and social and political activist who became nationally recognized as a leader of, and media spokeswoman for, the Women’s Liberation Movement in the late 1960s and 1970s, Steinem surprisingly also has a lot to say about Wonder Woman.

**Lynda Carter**, Actress (Wonder Woman)

Actress Lynda Carter discusses her performance as the title character on the 1970s television series “Wonder Woman,” and how the experience has impacted her life. She also talks about why she feels the television character she helped to create has had such a profound and lasting impact on multiple generations of fans.

**Lindsay Wagner**, Actress (The Bionic Woman)

Actress Lindsay Wagner, most widely known for her portrayal of Jaime Sommers in the 1970s television series “The Bionic Woman,” shares stories about her experience as one of the earliest televised female superheroes. Lindsay also talks about why she feels there exists a strong need for similar icons of female power for young men and women today.

**Andy Mangels**, Wonder Woman Collector & Wonder Woman Day Founder

Wonder Woman collector, scholar, activist and enthusiast, Andy is known throughout the comics industry as Wonder Woman’s number-one fan. Founder of Wonder Woman Day – an annual fundraiser designed to raise money for battered women’s shelters – Andy describes his devotion to Wonder Woman as “almost religious.” Andy’s fanaticism begs the question: What can Wonder Woman tell us about the role sex and gender plays in feminism today?
**Kathleen Hanna**, Original Riot Grrl and Musician

Feminist activist, punk rocker and zine writer, Kathleen was the lead singer and songwriter of Bikini Kill, and later fronted Le Tigre. Kathleen reignited interest in feminism by a younger audience through her music and zines. She talks about using pop culture icons like Wonder Woman in her art.

**Jen Stuller**, Author

Jen Stuller is a Seattle-based writer and scholar, specializing in gender and sexuality in popular culture. Her most recent book, “Ink-Stained Amazons and Cinematic Warriors: Superwomen in Modern Mythology,” is a comprehensive history, critique, and reference guide examining feminist history and potential within popular culture.

**Katie Pineda**, Wonder Woman Fan and 4th Grader

Katie laments that not enough people know about Wonder Woman. She’s Katie’s favorite superhero, “because she’s strong, amazing, and she saves a lot of lives.” Katie loves to shoot arrows, beat her dad at video games, write comic books, and, on occasion, dress like her favorite superhero.

**Carmela Lane**, Wonder Woman Fan and Mom

Carmela has used Wonder Woman as her life’s inspiration and has multiple tattoos to prove it. An émigré from Brazil, she works and raises her daughter in New York and hopes that she can teach her daughter how to be a strong “Wonder Girl.”

**Trina Robbins**, Author and Comics Herstorian

Trina Robbins has been writing graphic novels, comics and books for over thirty years. She is a veteran of San Francisco’s underground comix movement. Her characters have ranged from Wonder Woman to the Powerpuff Girls to her own teenage superheroines in the “Go Girl!” series, and from women cartoonists to women who kill.
Like most women and men of my generation, I grew up with Lynda Carter’s “Wonder Woman” television show. It was the late 70’s, the show was already in the constant rotation of syndication, and there simply wasn’t anything else out there that captured my imagination as a little girl. I had friends who were Wonder Woman for Halloween year after year because there were so few options for girls as fantasy heroes.

When I started telling people about this film, men and women had wildly different reactions. Most of the guys admitted that Wonder Woman was their first TV crush. Women reminisced about how they pretended to be her: twirling a rope to capture foes or spinning to transform themselves into superheroes.

Fast-forward some thirty years and I was reading a New York Times article that introduced Gail Simone as Wonder Woman’s first female writer EVER. Here was this incredible feminist symbol who had always been stuck, like a lot of strong female characters, between being created by men and being primarily consumed by boys.

The story stayed with me, and I began looking into Wonder Woman’s origins. Her creator, William Moulton Marston, was a fascinating character who set out to create an empowering role model amid a lot of super-violent male heroes. Of course, he also had some interesting ideas about what a strong female hero should look like. But his creation has endured while so many others have been forgotten.

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. That’s one story WONDER WOMEN! tells, but to me, it’s not the most interesting one. I hope the film also conveys the unpredictable ways those icons can shape and even transform us in return. 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.
Cast & Credits

Kristy Guevara-Flanagan  director
Kelcey Edwards  producer
Erin Prather Stafford  executive producer
Melanie Levy, Carla Gutierrez  editors
Gabriel Miller  director of photography
Sylvia Roberts  animator
Jimmy LaValle  composer
PJ Raval  additional director of photography
Corey Ohama  additional editor
And featuring: Ruby Blondell, Lynda Carter, Sara Crosby, Jane Espenson, Danny Fingeroth, Katy Gilpatrick, Jehmu Greene, Jack Halberstam, Kathleen Hanna, LS. Kim, Shelby Knox, Carmela Lane, Mike Madrid, Andy Mangels, Kathleen Noble, Katie Pineda, Trina Robbins, Gail Simone, Gloria Steinem, Jennifer K. Stuller, Yvonne Tasker, Lindsay Wagner, and Maile Martinez & Reel Grrls, Seattle

Key Personnel

Kristy Guevara-Flanagan, Director. Kristy’s first feature-length film was an acclaimed documentary covering four years in the lives of four adolescent girls. GOING ON 13 was an official selection of Tribeca, Silverdocs, and many other international film festivals. It received funding from ITVS and was broadcast on public television in 2009. Kristy 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 Film Festivals. After receiving her MFA in Documentary Film & Video from Stanford University, she moved to New York City, where she works as a filmmaker, producer and arts educator. In June, 2008, she teamed up with director Kristy Guevara-Flanagan to produce WONDER WOMEN! THE UNTOLD STORY OF AMERICAN SUPERHEROINES. She is also the co-producer of WORDS OF WITNESS, a documentary feature by director Mai Iskander (GARBAGE DREAMS) and an official selection of Berlinale 2012.

Erin Prather Stafford, Executive Producer. Born and raised in Texas, communications specialist Erin Prather Stafford began having an interest in the media’s portrayal of women while earning her undergraduate degree at St. Edward’s University. She went on to earn an MA in Gender and International Development from the University of Warwick. Erin currently lives and works in Dallas. Among her awards for communications is a 2006 Barbara Jordan media award, given by the Texas Governor’s Committee on People with Disabilities.
Carla Gutierrez, Editor. Carla Gutierrez is an award-winning documentary editor based in New York City. She edited the Oscar-nominated documentary LA CORONA for HBO, which won Honorable Mention at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival and received the IDA Documentary Award for Best Short Film. Carla also edited SHE IS THE MATADOR, which was broadcast on PBS’s POV in 2009. Her recent work includes SURVIVING HITLER: A LOVE STORY, which premiered at the 2010 Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, where it won the Inspiration Award. In 2010, Carla edited TALES OF THE WARIA, a one-hour documentary about Indonesian transgenders funded by ITVS and awarded Best Documentary at the San Diego Asian Film Festival. Her latest work, REPORTERO, is slated to air on POV in 2012.

Melanie Levy, Editor. Melanie Vi Levy is a freelance editor, producer and shooter based in New York City. Films include A DIFFERENT COLOR BLUE (Broadcast on POV, Winner, Best Student Documentary, Palm Springs International ShortFest), THE SECRET LIFE OF BEARDS (winner of an Artistic Vision Award at the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival, WSFF), and MY NAME IS SYDNEY, which was nominated for a Student Academy Award and an IDA/David L. Wolper Student Documentary Award and has screened at international festivals nationwide. She has worked on programs for Discovery Channel, History Channel, Travel Channel and A&E and is currently in production on two feature docs slated for 2012. She holds a MFA in Documentary Film and Video from Stanford University and a BFA in Drama from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts and is the founder and director of Whistle Films.

Gabriel Miller, Director of Photography. Gabriel Miller has worked with some of the great documentary directors of our time, including Academy Award winners Barbara Kopple and Cynthia Wade, and Academy Award nominees Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady, as well as Rory Kennedy, Liz Garbus, Judith Helfand, and Dan Gold. Productions that he has worked on have been broadcast on HBO, CBS, ABC, BBC, the Sundance Channel, MTV, Discovery, A&E, and Arte, among others. Recent work includes shooting for MTV’s True Life series and producing a television series about artists, VERVE, which won a regional NATAS Emmy. Gabriel is currently developing a new television series about artists, called DEGREES OF INSPIRATION, and this project has received support from 4Culture and the Seattle Office of Arts and Culture.

Jimmy LaValle, Composer. Jimmy LaValle, and his musical project The Album Leaf, is best known for his distinctive, dreamy, cinematic soundscapes that have been featured in film, television, commercials, and five full-length albums. The Album Leaf has toured both nationally and internationally. Recent performances have included Red Rocks Amphitheater in Denver, Colorado; The Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles, California; Primavera Sound Festival in Barcelona, Spain; All Tomorrows Parties “I’ll Be Your Mirror” Festival, curated by Portishead; Metamorphose Festival in Tokyo, Japan; and national tours of the United States, Mexico, Canada, Europe, China, Singapore, Taiwan, and Malaysia. LaValle performed a critically acclaimed live score to the 1927 silent film SUNRISE: A SONG OF TWO HUMANS, at the 2008 Seattle International Film Festival, and scored the documentary film TOREY’S DISTRACTION, which won the Audience Award at the 2009 Austin Film Festival.
**Sylvia Roberts, Animator.** Sylvia Roberts has provided her animation skills to a wide variety of projects, including films selected for festivals around the world, as well as televised documentaries for Discovery Science Channel and PBS. She has also animated promotional sequences for a number of companies, including Hewlett Packard and Adidas. She is the director and editor of UNDERSTAND, a music video for the artist Cross-town Traffic, of Wicked Records, which was selected for the 2000 Seattle Underground Film Festival and the 2000 California Works Exhibit. Other animation projects include award winning DVD’s, most recently Blu-ray releases of popular films for Pixar Animation Studios. A native of Missoula, Montana, Sylvia studied animation and design at San Francisco State University’s Multimedia Studies Department and holds a Bachelor’s degree from the University of California, Berkeley.

**Screenings**

**Festivals:**
- South by Southwest Film Festival, Austin, Texas (March 2012) USA – *World Premiere*
- ActionFest, Asheville, North Carolina (April 2012) USA
- Seattle International Film Festival (May 2012) USA – *West Coast Premiere*
- Mendocino Film Festival (June 2012) USA
- Belfast Film Festival (June 2012) Northern Ireland – *International Premiere*
- Revelation Perth International Film Festival (July 2012) Australia
- Indianapolis International Film Festival (July 2012) USA – *Audience Award Winner*
- Hardacre Film Festival, Tipton, Iowa (August 2012) USA
- Nevada City Film Festival (August 2012) USA
- New Orleans Film Festival (October 2012) USA

**Community Screenings, Panels, and Speaking Engagements:**
- Panel at Geek Girl Con, Seattle, Washington (October 2011)
- Panel to benefit Girls Empowerment Network (GENaustin), Austin, Texas (March 2012)
- Speaking Engagement, Empowering Young Latinas Using Media & Technology, Austin, Texas (March 2012)
- Panel at Seattle International Film Festival with GeekGirlCon and Reel Grrls (May 2012)
- Special screening at Geek Girl Con, Seattle, Washington (August 2012)

**Press**
- Little Village, August 2012: “Talking Movies: Wonder Women!”
• Action Flick Chick, April 24, 2012: “ActionFest Screening: Wonder Women!”
• Laurel Mountain Post, Summer 2012: “Filling a Void in the Pink Ghetto: More Wonder Women”
• Film Threat, March 31, 2012: “Wonder Women! The Untold Story of American Superheroines”
• The Brand Curators of 97° West, March 23, 2012: “SXSWi Video Recap: Wonder Women!”
• Smells Like Screen Spirit, March 22, 2012: “‘Wonder Women! The Untold Story of American Superheroines’ Review”
• Movie Buzzers, March 22, 2012: “SXSW Wrap Up”
• Popcorn Biz, March 21, 2012: “A ‘Hunger Games’ Primer for Grown-Ups and Other Non-Obsessives”
• NOVI Magazine, March 20, 2012: “The Thing We Did for SXSW: A Documentary about Women and Comics”
• Austin Chronicle, March 16, 2012: “SXSW Film Daily Reviews and Interviews: Wonder Women! The Untold Story of American Superheroines”
• Center for Social Media, March 15, 2012: “SXSW 2012: Art as Process”
• Indiewire, March 12, 2012: “Interview with the Director Kristy Guevara-Flanagan and Producer Kelcey Edwards”
• Austin American-Statesman, March 11, 2012: “Documentary Traces Roles of Superheroines”
• Wired.com, March 10, 2012: “Wonder Women! Searches for Pop Culture’s Heroines”
• Film School Rejects, March 8, 2012: “The 16 Must-See Films of SXSW 2012”
• CinemaBlend.com, March 7, 2012: “Trailer, Clip and Poster for SXSW Doc Wonder Women!”
• Vancouver Sun, March 7, 2012: “Wonder Women Give Girls the Power”
• FlickeringMyth, March 6, 2012: “A Conversation with Kristy Guevara-Flanagan”
• Culture Map Austin, March 3, 2012: “Wonder Women documents the tumultuous history of female superheroes, entirely funded by Kickstarter”
• CNN, Geek Out! February 24, 2012: “‘Wonder Women!’ Puts Superheroines in the Spotlight”
• ScienceFiction.com, February 8, 2012: “‘Wonder Women!’ Documentary Examines the History of Female Superheroes”
• Chicago’s WGN Radio, February 8, 2012: “Learn How You Can Help Tell the Untold Story of America’s Superheroines”
• Huffington Post, Arts, February 2, 2012: “Fictional and Real Life Women Kick Butt in the Film ‘Wonder Women! The Untold Story of American Superheroines’”
• SF360, June 30, 2010: “Guevara-Flanagan Soars with ‘Wonder Woman’”
Funding and Support

Aepoch Fund
Cal Humanities
Chicken and Egg Pictures
The City of Oakland Cultural Funding Program
Puffin Foundation
Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program

And over $35,000 through Kickstarter from 700-plus individual fans!

Please visit our website for a complete list: http://www.wonderwomendoc.com

WONDER WOMEN! THE UNTOLD STORY OF AMERICAN SUPERHEROINES is produced by Vaquera Productions, LLC, who is solely responsible for its content. ©2012

For more information:
Vaquera Films
526 62nd Street
Oakland, CA 94609
www.vaquerafilms.com