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P.O.V. “The Chances of the World Changing”

By Eric Daniel Metzgar and Nell Carden Grey

FACT SHEET

Summary: The **P.O.V.** series (a cinema term for “point of view”) celebrates its 20th year on PBS in 2007. P.O.V. is American television’s longest-running independent documentary series. P.O.V. is broadcast **Tuesdays at 10 p.m.** (check local listings), June through September on PBS, with primetime specials in the fall and winter.

Description: P.O.V.’s **The Chances of the World Changing** by Eric Daniel Metzgar and Nell Carden Grey (www.pbs.org/pov/chancesoftheworld), **Tuesday, July 17 at 10 p.m. on PBS.** (Check local listings.)

A decade ago, after an epiphany at a New York restaurant, Richard Ogust began dedicating his time and resources to rescuing endangered turtles — confiscating hundreds bound for Southeast Asian food markets. When filmmakers Eric Daniel Metzgar and Nell Carden Grey catch up with the 50-year-old writer in **The Chances of the World Changing**, he is sharing his Manhattan loft with 1,200 turtles, including five species extinct in the wild. But his growing “ark” and preservation efforts are threatening to exhaust him, both mentally and financially. With luminous images and a haunting musical score, the film documents two years in the life of a man who finds himself struggling to save hundreds of lives, including his own.

Dedicated to a cause most would applaud but few would choose to share, Ogust may have fit someone’s definition of an eccentric. But his work was anything but quirky; he was deeply engaged in the serious and grueling labor of modern conservation. The evidence of the ongoing slaughter of millions of endangered turtles for unregulated Asian food markets had led him to acquire the largest genetic population of several of the world’s most critically endangered species.

Filmmaker’s

Statement: “A film about extinction is really a study of its opposing force: survival,” says director Metzgar of the two years he and co-producer Nell Carden Grey spent with Ogust. “When one is fraught with immeasurable responsibility, an excess of strength, not gloom, powers the day. And that strength, again and again, in the face of all obstacles, is what we filmed. Each day hovered on the next, and from an urgent story emerged a grand narrative.”

Biographies:

Eric Daniel Metzgar, Director/Co-producer

Eric Daniel Metzgar owns and operates Merigold Moving Pictures, LLC, a film production company based in Brooklyn, N.Y. The Chances of the World Changing is his first documentary feature film. He is currently producing two new projects while continuing his freelance work as a cinematographer and writer.

Nell Carden Grey, Co-producer

Nell Carden Grey works under the banner of Pigeon Post Pictures LLC. She produced and shot additional photography for **The Chances of the World Changing**. Grey, who lives in Seattle, is working on a series of video art installations, as well as three new documentary projects, two based in Seattle. One film is a historical/folklore project about

Pacific Northwest fiddlers. The other documents a design lab at the University of Washington and investigates how technology affects human relationships and our experience of the world.

Length: 86:46

Awards/Fests:

- BENDFILM, 2006 – *Best Cinematography and Conservation Award*
- Maine International Film Festival, 2006 – *Joan Phillips-Sandy Award*
- International Wildlife Film Festival, 2006 – *Merit Awards, Story, Dedication to a Cause*
- Independent Spirit Awards, 2007 – Nominee, *Axiom Truer Than Fiction Award*
- SXSW Film Festival, 2007, Austin
- Adelaide Film Festival, 2007, Australia
- Wild & Scenic Film Festival, 2007
- Hot Docs International Documentary Festival, 2006, Toronto
- Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, 2006, Durham, N.C.
- Seattle International Film Festival, 2006
- San Francisco Documentary Festival, 2006
- Sheffield International Documentary Festival, 2006, United Kingdom
- Museum of Television and Radio DocFest, 2006, New York
- Margaret Meade Film & Video Festival, 2006, New York
- Atlanta Film Festival, 2006

Credits: Director/Co-producer: Eric Daniel Metzgar
Co-producer: Nell Carden Grey
Cinematographer/Editor: Eric Daniel Metzgar
Original Music: Eric Liebman
Featuring the song “Live Old” by Faun Fables

The Chances of the World Changing is a co-production of Merigold Moving Pictures, LLC and Pigeon Post Pictures, LLC.

P.O.V. Web: **The Chances of the World Changing** companion Web site, www.pbs.org/pov/chancesoftheworld, offers a streaming video trailer of the film, an interview with filmmaker Eric Daniel Metzgar (video, podcast and text); a list of related Web sites, organizations and books; a downloadable discussion guide and classroom activity, and these special features:

Video Interview: A Conversation at the American Museum of Natural History
Filmmaker Eric Daniel Metzgar visits the American Museum of Natural History for an informative talk with George Amato, director of conservation genetics, about the Asian turtle crisis and the relationship between evolution and extinction.

Production Journal: Metzgar and composer Eric Liebman talk about how they collaborated on the haunting score for **The Chances of the World Changing**.

Outreach: P.O.V. is working with public television stations and national and community-based groups across the country to foster community dialogue around the issues presented in **The Chances of the World Changing**. For a list of upcoming screening and discussion events, go to http://www.amdoc.org/outreach_news.php.

P.O.V. has also worked with nationally recognized media educator Dr. Faith Rogow to develop a facilitation guide with discussion questions and background information to help event organizers carry out substantive and sensitive discussions around the film’s content. Cari Ladd created the lesson plan. In addition, the American Library Association and P.O.V. have created a multimedia resource list of related fiction and nonfiction books and videos that further explore the issues. The materials are available free of charge at www.pbs.org/pov/outreach.

Pressroom: Visit P.O.V.'s pressroom, www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom, for press releases, downloadable art, filmmaker biographies, transcripts and special features.

P.O.V.: Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and celebrating its 20th season on PBS in 2007, the award-winning P.O.V. series is the longest-running showcase on television to feature the work of America's best contemporary-issue independent filmmakers. Airing on PBS on Tuesdays at 10 p.m., June through September, with primetime specials during the year, P.O.V. has brought more than 250 documentaries to millions nationwide, and has a Webby Award-winning online series, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. Since 1988, P.O.V. has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. More information about P.O.V is available at www.pbs.org/pov.

Major funding for P.O.V. is provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Ford Foundation, the Educational Foundation of America, PBS and public television viewers. Funding for P.O.V.'s *Diverse Voices Project* is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, with additional support from JPMorgan Chase Foundation, the official sponsor of P.O.V.'s 20th Anniversary Campaign. P.O.V. is presented by a consortium of PBS stations including KCET Los Angeles, WGBH Boston, and Thirteen/WNET New York.

TAPE REQUESTS: Please note that broadcast versions of the films are available upon request, as the films may be edited to comply with new FCC regulations.



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