



FINDING KUKAN

A film by Robin Lung

**National Premiere on AMERICA REFRAMED
Tuesday, May 8, 2018 at 8 p.m. on WORLD Channel**

“Finding KUKAN demonstrates that re-discovering forgotten history can yield treasures as valuable as gold or jewels.” --Peter Wong, *Beyond Chron*

MEDIA RELATIONS

Neyda Martinez
917 656 7846
neyda@amdac.org

AMERICA REFRAMED
20 Jay Street
Suite 940
Brooklyn, NY 11201

P: 212-989-8121
F: 212-989-8230
americareframed.com

April 11, 2018 – (New York, NY) –A filmmaker turns detective to uncover the remarkable story of Li Ling-Ai, the un-credited female producer of *KUKAN*, which in 1942 won an Academy Award®. The documentary, lost for decades, revealed the atrocities of World War II in China.

FINDING KUKAN, the feature documentary by Robin Lung, will make its U.S. broadcast premiere on Tuesday, May 8, 2018, at 8 p.m. on WORLD Channel ([check local listings](#)) as part of the new season of **AMERICA REFRAMED**, public media’s award-winning documentary series. Streaming will begin on May 9, 2018 on worldchannel.org and all station-branded PBS platforms including PBS.org, and on PBS apps for iOS, Android, Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV and Chromecast.

KUKAN was the first American feature documentary to win an Academy Award®. Why have so few people heard of *KUKAN* and the woman behind it? Li Ling-Ai (aka Gladys Li) was a second-generation Chinese American woman born in 1908 in Honolulu, Hawaii. Her love and respect for Chinese culture inspired her to create the documentary about war-torn China and its resistance against Japan in World War II.

Filmed in color by photojournalist Rey Scott, *KUKAN* featured shocking ground-level footage of the bombing of Chungking, and was one of the first films available to the U.S. that portrayed China in a factual, unprejudiced light. In 1942 *KUKAN* was one of two feature documentaries that received special awards in the Academy’s inaugural year of recognizing the



documentary category. Yet despite her involvement in the story's conception and funding, Li went uncredited as a producer, and the film became lost and eventually forgotten.

In **FINDING KUKAN**, director Robin Lung embarks on a seven-year quest to discover as much as she can about Li Ling-Ai's involvement and recover and restore an original film print of *KUKAN*. Featuring clips from a 1993 interview with the feisty Li, conversations with her living friends and relatives, archival footage, and correspondence between her and Scott, **FINDING KUKAN** celebrates this female filmmaking pioneer and shines a light on what is undoubtedly an essential piece of cinematic and world history.

"Li Ling-Ai overcame tremendous obstacles to create a film that continues to resonate today. Her passion and drive inspire me. Her entire life story embodies the Chinese meaning of *KUKAN* – "heroic courage under bitter suffering." It's emblematic of many women and minorities whose accomplishments have gone unrecorded and uncelebrated throughout history. By paying tribute to one woman's legacy in **FINDING KUKAN**, I hope to draw attention to the unrecognized contributions of countless others who came before me and whose shoulders I stand on," says director, Robin Lung.

FINDING KUKAN is part of WORLD Channel's celebration of Asian and Pacific Islander (API) American Heritage Month throughout May 2018. In partnership with AMERICA REFRAMED, PBS, and other public television organizations, WORLD Channel is honored to participate in the social media campaign #MyAPALife. A great success among API Americans for the past several years, #MyAPALife brings together film and video content from across the PBS system that is relevant to the Heritage Month and to API audiences nationwide.

###

Media Contacts

For interviews and special requests, journalists and reviewers may contact Neyda Martinez at **917-656-7846** or via email at neyda@amdoc.org.



Film Credits

A film by Robin Lung

FINDING KUKAN is a production of Nested Egg Productions, LLC, presented by the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM) with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

About AMERICA REFRAMED

AMERICA REFRAMED is a co-production of the WORLD Channel and American Documentary, Inc.

AMERICA REFRAMED curates a diverse selection of films highlighting innovative and artistic approaches to storytelling from emerging and veteran filmmakers alike. Viewers will be immersed in personal stories from the streets of towns big and small to the exurbs and country roads that span the spectrum of American life. The documentaries invite audiences to reflect on topics as varied as culture, health care, politics, gun violence, religion and more.

An award-winning documentary series, AMERICA REFRAMED is the recipient of an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award for broadcast journalism. The series has earned several Christopher, GRACIE, Telly and Cine Golden Eagle Awards, as well as nominations for an EMMY, Independent Documentary Association, and Imagen Award.

AMERICA REFRAMED Series Credits

Executive Producers: Justine Nagan, Chris Hastings, Chris White
Series Producer: Carmen L. Vicencio

AMERICA REFRAMED can be accessed online via
<http://worldchannel.org/programs/america-reframed/>
and,
<https://www.facebook.com/WorldChannel>
<https://www.facebook.com/AmericaReFramed>

@worldchannel
@americareframed

AMERICA REFRAMED Co-Producers

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia arts organization dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions



and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation. AmDoc is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. For more information, visit: www.amdoc.org

The **WORLD Channel** delivers the best of public television's nonfiction, news and documentary programming. The channel features original content by and about diverse communities to U.S. audiences through local public television stations and streaming online at worldchannel.org. WORLD reached 33.3 million unique viewers 18+ last year (52% adults 18-49) and over-indexes in key diversity demographics. Online, the WORLD Channel expands on broadcast topics and fuels dialogue across social media, providing opportunities for broad and diverse audience interaction. WORLD has won numerous national honors including an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Award, Tellys, a Media for a Just Society Award, two Lesbian & Gay Journalist Awards, a Gracie, an Asian American Journalists Award and many others. WORLD Channel also won the Radio Television Digital News Association's 2017 Kaleidoscope Award for its critically-acclaimed series, AMERICA REFRAMED and has received four National News & Documentary Emmy Nominations.

WORLD is programmed by WGBH/Boston, in partnership with American Public Television and WNET/New York, and in association with PBS and National Educational Telecommunications Association. Funding for the WORLD Channel is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Wyncote Foundation and The Keneda Fund. For more information about The WORLD Channel, visit www.worldchannel.org

