

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT**

Cara White	843/881-1480	carapub@aol.com
Mary Lugo	770/623-8190	lugo@negia.net
Randall Cole	415/356-8383 x254	randall_cole@itvs.org
Wilson Ling	415/356-8383 x231	wilson_ling@itvs.org

*Pressroom for more information and/or downloadable images:*

*[www.itvs.org/pressroom/photos](http://www.itvs.org/pressroom/photos)*

*Program companion website: [www.pbs.org/losangelesnow](http://www.pbs.org/losangelesnow)*



**INDEPENDENT LENS's "LOS ANGELES  
NOW" CAPTURES CITY OF PERPETUAL CHANGE**

*High Definition Film by Phillip Rodriguez*

*Premieres Nationally on "Independent Lens"*

*Emmy® Award-Winning Series on PBS*

*Hosted by Susan Sarandon*

*Tuesday, November 23, 2004 at 10:00 P.M.*

*(check local listings)*

---

*"Los Angeles may be a diagnostic of what a different America will look like and feel like in the next fifty years."*

—D.J. WALDIE, CO-AUTHOR, AUTHOR OF "HOLY LAND:  
A SUBURBAN MEMOIR"

*"Once you've met your first Asian American surfer dude, you're in the presence of a new paradigm."*

—KEVIN STARR, CO-AUTHOR, HISTORIAN AND LIBRARIAN FOR  
THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

(San Francisco, CA) — Los Angeles, once the whitest city in America, is now the most multicultural city in the world. Formerly an empty, bucolic space, L.A. is now a disorienting megalopolis. Yet the city's cultural transformation has gone largely overlooked by the media, the movies, and even by many of its residents. The entertainment industry continues to churn outdated images of L.A. while ignoring the many new stories emerging from the city's increasingly diverse population.

A rare and thoughtful evocation of a city, **LOS ANGELES NOW** looks beyond *Baywatch* and *Blade Runner* to create a fresh and candid portrait of America's second largest city following the close of its Anglo Century (1900-2000). A fascinating look at a city where more than half of the population is Latino and 40 percent are foreign born, **LOS ANGELES NOW** will air on Tuesday, November 23, 2004 at 10:00 P.M. (check local listings) on **Independent Lens**.



The film uses creative visuals and computer-generated imagery to evoke the city's vast array of moods and rhythms, exploring challenging questions and provocative points of view. The film includes conversations with a broad range of

Los Angeles figures, from acclaimed actor Salma Hayek and businessman/philanthropist Eli Broad to renowned author and essayist Richard Rodriguez and Cardinal Roger Mahony.

Far-reaching and thought-provoking, the issues explored in **LOS ANGELES NOW** are relevant well beyond the borders of the city. Many agree that Los Angeles serves as a diagnostic for other urban centers. Cities from Hartford to Las Vegas inevitably face the influx of immigrants, cultural confrontations and urban sprawl. If the future were a place, Los Angeles would be it. **LOS ANGELES NOW** provides a much-needed starting point for imagining our American future.

Among the topics raised in the film:

- Now that L.A.'s Anglo century is over, how will the new Latino/Asian majority work with other ethnic groups to create a cultural consensus? Will the new coalitions manage to sustain the high productivity that the Anglos achieved?
- What is the future of L.A.'s unprecedented multiculturalism? Is this the beginning of more harmonious race relations or increased racial tensions? Will L.A.'s many ethnic neighborhoods balkanize or coalesce?
- Is Los Angeles impermanent by nature? Can it retain a sense of history despite its earthquakes and its seemingly insatiable desire to rebuild? And why does the city set fire to itself every generation or so?
- What effects does the city's sprawl—its freeways, diffuse borders, lack of center—have on its citizens? To what extent do Angelenos, in the words of William McClung, "construct their own Los Angeles out of the areas that are meaningful to them?"



**LOS ANGELES NOW**, a presentation of KPBS, is made possible by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PBS, The Skirball Foundation, the Independent Television Service, Latino Public Broadcasting, the California Council for the Humanities and the Center for the Study of Los Angeles at Loyola Marymount University.

Additional information and/or downloadable photographs from **LOS ANGELES NOW** are available at [www.itvs.org/pressroom/photos](http://www.itvs.org/pressroom/photos).



The program's interactive companion website ([www.pbs.org/losangelesnow](http://www.pbs.org/losangelesnow)) features detailed information about the film, including an interview with the filmmaker, cast and crew bios, as well as links and resources pertaining to the film's subject matter. The site also features a "talkback" section for viewers to share their ideas and opinions, preview clips of the film and more.

## ON AIR PARTICIPANTS

**RENÁN ALMENDÁREZ COELLO**, "El Cucuy de la Mañana" or "Morning Boogeyman" to his radio audience, rules morning radio in Los Angeles with two million listeners a day.

**MARK BRADFORD**, artist whose paintings probe the relation between class, culture and identity.

**ELI BROAD**, businessman/philanthropist who is on a quest to build a "center" for Los Angeles.

**WANDA COLEMAN**, native of Los Angeles and author of several volumes of poetry including *Bathwater Wine* (1998), winner of the 1999 Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize.

**MIKE DAVIS**, author, whose works include *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster*, *Under the Perfect Sun: The San Diego Tourists Never See* and *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*.

**HARRY GAMBOA JR.**, artist who has pioneered multimedia formats for nearly three decades. His work is crucial to an understanding not only of Chicano art but also of the post-1968 avant-garde in the United States.

**DR. FERNANDO GUERRA**, professor and director of the Center for the Study of Los Angeles at Loyola Marymount University since 1996. Guerra is also an associate professor at LMU in the departments of Chicano studies and political science.

**JESSICA HALL-VALDÉS**, designer for North East Trees and an impassioned advocate of watershed, and in particular, stream restoration in urban Los Angeles.

**SALMA HAYEK**, actor. Born in Coatzacoalcos, Mexico to parents of Lebanese and Spanish heritage, Hayek came to Los Angeles in 1991.

**PICO IYER**, author of *The Global Soul*, which begins in Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), a place he terms the model for future cities.

**PHIL JACKSON**, former Los Angeles Lakers head coach.

**NORMAN KLEIN**, cultural critic, urban and media historian and novelist whose work includes *The Vatican to Vegas: A History of Special Effects*, *The History of Forgetting: Los Angeles and the Erasure of Memory* and *Bleeding Through: Layers of Los Angeles, 1920-86*.



**JOEL KOTKIN**, an author and internationally recognized authority on global, economic, political and social trends, is a senior fellow at the Davenport Institute for Public Policy at Pepperdine University.

**HELIE LEE**, Los Angeles resident and author of the best-selling book *Still Life with Rice* (1996), the story of her extended family's journey from Japanese oppression in Korea to escape to China to immigration to the U.S.

**CARDINAL ROGER MAHONY**, leader of the largest Catholic archdiocese in North America.

**GERALD MATCHIN**, Los Angeles County Medical Center Administration staff member. Founded in 1878, Los Angeles County Medical Center was originally established as a 100-bed hospital with 47 patients, it is now licensed for 1,395 beds and budgeted to staff 745 beds.

**WILLIAM ALEXANDER MCCLUNG**, author of *Landscapes of Desire: Anglo Mythologies of Los Angeles*.

**MEDUSA**, Hip-Hop artist who is one of a small underground cadre of female artists, record producers, and concert promoters who are fighting to uphold the revolutionary spirit that has all but disappeared in mainstream Hip-Hop today.

**YXTA MAYA MURRAY**, author and professor of Law at Loyola Law School. Murray's novels include *The Conquest* and *Locas*, both set within the Los Angeles area.

**LUIS ORELLANA**, taxi driver who came to the U.S. at the age of 18 from El Salvador and has been driving the streets of Los Angeles for over 20 years.

**RICHARD RODRIGUEZ**, author of three books: *Brown: The Last Discovery of America*, *Hunger of Memory*, and *Days of Obligation: An Argument With My Mexican Father*, as well as two BBC documentaries. Rodriguez is a frequent contributor to *The News Hour* on PBS and one of the nation's most respected essayists.

**YUVAL ROTEM**, U.S. Ambassador of the Consul General of Israel in Los Angeles since 1999.

**KEVIN STARR**, historian and librarian for the State of California, who is currently researching California history, history of American culture, urban history and government. More than 30 years in the making, his six-volume book series titled *Americans and the California Dream* captures the enigmatic blend of dreams and hardscrabble reality that loosely defines California.

**UPTOWN 3000**, Hip-Hop group that has sold millions of records in Asia and has been labeled as the Run DMC of Korea.

**MICHAEL VENTURA**, author, who writes for *L.A. Weekly* and former columnist for *L.A. View's* "Letters at 3 a.m.," a weekly, award-winning meditation on odd angles of Angeleno life.

**D.J. WALDIE**, author of *Holy Land: A Suburban Memoir* and *Where We Are Now: Notes From Los Angeles*.

## OFF SCREEN PARTICIPANTS

**MARIANA BOTEY**, Mexican artist whose work in film and video installation experiment with ritual, coded and sub-cultural languages as tools for “critical resistance.”

**DOV CHARNEY**, founder and CEO of L.A.-based American Apparel, the self-proclaimed “Sweatshop Free” T-shirt manufacturer that sews and sells clothing with a capitalist-socialist business fusion. American Apparel’s policy is to pay American workers living wages to produce 100% of their products in the United States.

**MAJID NACIFY**, Iranian-born poet and exile, whose collections of poetry include *After the Silence*, *Sorrow of the Border*, and *Poems of Venice*, as well as a book of essays called *In Search of Joy: A Critique of Male-Dominated, Death-Oriented Culture in Iran*, all in Persian. Majid is currently a co-editor of *Daftarha-ye Shanbeh*, a Persian literary journal published in Los Angeles.

## LOS ANGELES NOW Credits

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR  
CINEMATOGRAPHY  
EDITOR  
ANIMATORS  
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER  
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR  
SOUND DESIGNER

**Phillip Rodriguez**  
**Claudio Rocha**  
**Bernard Lhert**  
**Claudio Rocha & Humberto Ramirez**  
**Jennifer Kobzik**  
**Joaquin Mesa**  
**Jon Oh**

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKER

**PHILLIP RODRIGUEZ** (Producer/Director), a documentary filmmaker and Los Angeles native, is driven by a desire to chronicle and translate the dramatic cultural changes occurring in the western United States. Rodriguez’ previous documentary, the critically acclaimed *Mixed Feelings: San Diego/Tijuana* explores the landscape and architecture between the U.S./Mexican border. It aired several times throughout 2002 and 2003 and will continue to air in 2004 on the PBS national schedule as well as local schedules. Critics lauded the film’s innovative and fresh approach, which uses animation of architectural models, aerial photography, split screen, digital music and other means to illustrate the cultural differences suggested by the built environments of the two cities.

Rodriguez’ interest in how culture is constructed and brokered by and among elites led to the making of the documentary *Manuel Ocampo: God is My Copilot*. The film, an examination of multi-culturalism as manifested in the contemporary art world, chronicles the rise and fall of a talented young Filipino-American painter and his relationship to art dealers and collectors, many of whom saw him as an heir to Jean-Michel Basquiat. Featuring Julian Schnabel, Dennis Hopper, Mary Boone and other prominent figures in the contemporary art world, the film witnesses the many misunderstandings between an Asian American West Coast artist and the decidedly New York-centered art world. The film was celebrated at film festivals worldwide, including the AFI International Festival, Hawaii International Film Festival, the Biennale Internationale du film sur l’art at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris and the Havana Film Festival.



Another Rodriguez project *Pancho Villa & Other Stories* focused on the general exploits of General Pancho Villa and the oral histories of those involved in the revolutionary movement in Mexico. It won an award for Best Documentary at the 2000 San Antonio Cinefestival and was honored at the Smithsonian National Gallery.

Not limited to film, Rodriguez wrote the story and title song for the Grammy-nominated “Papa’s Dream” by Los Lobos. He also founded, published, and edited *Avance*, a national Latino magazine of arts and culture as well as *Esencia*, a San Francisco Latino magazine of arts and culture.

Rodriguez is a graduate of U.C. Berkeley and has an M.A. in Latin American Studies and an M.F.A. in Film and Television from UCLA. He also studied Art History and Spanish Literature at Universidad Complutense de Madrid. He is a former Senior Research Fellow at The Center for the Study of Los Angeles at Loyola Marymount University.

## **ABOUT INDEPENDENT LENS**

**Independent Lens** is an Emmy Award-winning weekly series airing Tuesday nights at 10 P.M. on PBS. Hosted by Susan Sarandon, the acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement and unflinching visions of their independent producers. **Independent Lens** features unforgettable stories about a unique individual, community or moment in history, which prompted Nancy Franklin to write in *The New Yorker*: “Watching **Independent Lens**... is like going into an independent bookstore—you don’t always find what you were looking for but you often find something you didn’t even know you wanted.” Presented by ITVS, the series is supported by interactive companion websites, and national publicity and community outreach campaigns. Further information about the series is available at [www.pbs.org/independentlens](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens). **Independent Lens** is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS, and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts.

## **ABOUT ITVS**

Independent Television Service (ITVS) funds and presents award-winning documentaries and dramas on public television, innovative new media projects on the Web and the Emmy Award-winning weekly series **Independent Lens** on Tuesday nights at 10 P.M. on PBS. ITVS is a miracle of public policy created by media activists, citizens and politicians seeking to foster plurality and diversity in public television. ITVS was established by a historic mandate of Congress to champion independently produced programs that take creative risks, spark public dialogue and serve underserved audiences. Since its inception in 1991, ITVS programs have revitalized the relationship between the public and public television, bringing TV audiences face-to-face with the lives and concerns of their fellow Americans. More information about ITVS can be obtained by visiting [www.itvs.org](http://www.itvs.org). ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American People.



## ABOUT LPB

Latino Public Broadcasting (LPB) supports the development, production, acquisition and distribution of non-commercial educational and cultural television that is representative of Latino people, or addresses issues of particular interest to Latino Americans. LPB creates a structure and process that allows Latino artists, the public broadcasting resources, community, government and the private sector to bring their resources and creativity to the service of the public. LPB has funded more than fifty projects for public television since its creation in 1998. More information about LPB can be found at [www.lpbp.org](http://www.lpbp.org).

## ABOUT KPBS

KPBS is a broadcast service of San Diego State University, serving the region with TV, radio and Internet content that is educational as well as entertaining—and free of commercial interruption. More information about KPBS can be found at [www.kpbs.org](http://www.kpbs.org).

## ABOUT PBS

PBS is a private, nonprofit media enterprise that serves the nation's 349 public noncommercial television stations, reaching nearly 90 million people each week. Bringing diverse viewpoints to television and the Internet, PBS provides high-quality documentary and dramatic entertainment, and consistently dominates the most prestigious award competitions. PBS is the leading provider of educational materials for K-12 teachers, and offers a broad array of educational services for adult learners. PBS' premier kids' TV programming and Web site, PBS KIDS Online ([pbskids.org](http://pbskids.org)), continue to be parents' and teachers' most trusted learning environments for children. More information about PBS is available at [pbs.org](http://pbs.org), the leading dot-org Web site on the Internet. PBS is headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia.



ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American People.

Pressroom for more information and/or downloadable images: [www.itvs.org/pressroom/photos](http://www.itvs.org/pressroom/photos)  
Program companion website: [www.pbs.org/losangelesnow](http://www.pbs.org/losangelesnow)