



Presents

# VISUAL ACOUSTICS



"Case Study House #22." Copyright J. Paul Getty Trust.

**A film by Eric Bricker**

**RELEASE DATE:** Oct. 9, 2009 in NYC at Cinema Village and Oct. 16, 2009 in LA at Landmark Nuart

**RUNNING TIME:** 84 minutes

**RATING:** Unrated

**OFFICIAL WEBSITE:** [www.arthousefilmsonline.com](http://www.arthousefilmsonline.com), [www.juliusshulmanfilm.com](http://www.juliusshulmanfilm.com)

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## **FILMMAKERS**

Director **ERIC BRICKER**  
Producer **ERIC BRICKER**  
Producer **BABETTE ZILCH**  
Production Consultant **KAREN LEE ARBEENY**  
Executive Producer **LISA HUGHES**  
**MICHELLE OLIVER**  
Co-Producer **WILL PAICE**  
**FREDERIC LIEBERT**  
Associate Producer **ROSE NIELSEN**  
Director of Photography **AIKEN WEISS**  
**DANTE SPINOTTI**  
Editor **CHARLTON MCMILLAN**  
Composer **CHARLIE CAMPAGNA**  
Writer **ERIC BRICKER**  
**PHIL ETHINGTON**  
Co-Writer **JESSICA HUNDLEY**  
**LISA HUGHES**  
Design and Animation **TROLLBACK + COMPANY**

**FEATURING**

JULIUS SHULMAN

Narrated by

DUSTIN HOFFMAN

with

FRANCES ANDERTON  
WIM DE WIT  
HERNAN DIAZ-ALONSO  
FRANK ESCHER  
GEORGE FENNEMAN  
TOM FORD  
CARLOS VON FRANKENBERG  
FRANK O. GEHRY  
MITCH GLAZER  
BETH EDWARDS HARRIS  
THOMAS S. HINES  
SHARON JOHNSTON  
RAY KAPPE  
CRAIG KRULL  
MARK LEE  
RICARDO LEGORRETA  
IRENE LOTSPEICH-PHILLIPS  
JANICE LYLE  
KELLY LYNCH  
LEO MARMOL  
JUDY MCKEE

CATHERINE MEYLER  
KIMBERLI MEYER  
RAYMOND RICHARD NEUTRA  
ROSE NIELSEN  
JUERGEN NOGAI  
MARK SCHINDLER  
CHRIS SHANLEY  
DANTE SPINOTTI  
PIERLUIGI SERRAINO  
BUCK STAHL  
CARLOTTA STAHL  
JOSEPH ROSA  
ROB ROTHBLATT  
ED RUSCHA  
ANGELIKA TASCHEN  
BENEDIKT TASCHEN  
KAZYS VARNELIS  
MICHAEL WEBB  
LEIGH WIENER  
E. STEWART WILLIAMS  
ALINKA ZABLUDOVSKY

## **SYNOPSIS**

Narrated by Dustin Hoffman, VISUAL ACOUSTICS celebrates the life and career of Julius Shulman, the world's greatest architectural photographer, whose images brought modern architecture to the American mainstream. Shulman, who passed away this year, captured the work of nearly every major modern and progressive architect since the 1930s including Frank Lloyd Wright, Richard Neutra, John Lautner, and Frank Gehry. His images epitomized the singular beauty of Southern California's modernist movement and brought its iconic structures to the attention of the general public. This unique film is both a testament to the evolution of modern architecture and a joyful portrait of the magnetic, whip-smart gentleman who chronicled it with his unforgettable images.

VISUAL ACOUSTICS won the Mercedes-Benz Audience Award for Best Documentary at the Palm Springs International Film Festival, the Audience Award at the Austin Film Festival, the Grand Jury Prize at the Lone Star International Film Festival and Outstanding Achievement in Documentary Filmmaking from the Newport Beach Film Festival.

## **ABOUT THE FILM**

VISUAL ACOUSTICS explores the monumental career of the late architectural photographer, Julius Shulman, who passed away on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Populating his photos with human models and striking landscapes, Shulman combined the organic with the synthetic, melding nature with revolutionary urban design. The resulting images helped shape the careers of some of the greatest architects of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, including Richard Neutra, Rudolph Schindler, Pierre Koenig, John Lautner and many others.

Taking aesthetic cues from Shulman's own sensual and nuanced photography, the film's narrative is built from a blend of Shulman's own images and in-depth interviews with architect Frank Gehry, designer Tom Ford, artist Ed Ruscha, actress Kelly Lynch, writer Mitch Glazer, publisher Benedikt Taschen, Academy Award-nominated cinematographer Dante Spinotti and a host of others. By offering unprecedented and exclusive access to his amazing photographic archive and day-to-day life, Shulman's dedicated involvement in the filming process was an incalculable benefit to the film.

Shulman's career began in 1936 when he began photographing homes designed by the architect Richard Neutra. Shulman was subsequently flooded with commissions from other well-known architects including Frank Lloyd Wright and Mies Van der Rohe. Over the coming years, Shulman became one of the artists responsible for establishing the cohesive "look" of 20<sup>th</sup>-century Modernist design.

Shulman's photography remains as powerful today as it was in those heady days of the 1950s and 60s. Nearly 70 years after his first commission, his work continues to move a new generation and inspire artists who are currently defining 21st Century design. The enthusiastic resurgence of Shulman's fans resulted in a renewed celebration of his work – including featured articles in newspapers and magazines, and countless design and architecture books released by high-profile publishers such as Taschen and Rizzoli.

Still active until his death at 98 years-old, Shulman took photography assignments and lecture invitations from around the world. While at home, holding court in his 1949 Raphael Soriano-designed home and studio, Shulman and his incomparable archive continued to bring to life a Los Angeles style that he helped to create; a style that has influenced the designers of today's sleek global aesthetic.

In addition to remaining a respected and insightful voice within the architecture community, Shulman continued to be an outspoken and extremely vocal advocate of imbuing the urban 21<sup>st</sup> century with a sense of humanity and a balance with the natural world.

As an uncompromising critic of coldness and abstraction in modern design, Shulman had an historic role in the creation of the Southern California architectural landscape. He continued to fight for more green spaces and less development. Shulman's insistence on design in harmony with nature was formed by his own life experience – his passion for the solace of his own home garden and a deeply personal commitment to ecological causes.

In essence, Julius Shulman was a humanist. His genuine love for people, culture, and the arts granted him eternal youth of both spirit and heart. Whether it is a student or neophyte architect embarking upon a new career, prestigious heads of state or Frank Gehry, Julius had a genuine and equal interest in all.

Shulman, the photographer, the intuitive artist and the outspoken critic, was the living embodiment of the great social vision of modernism: by mobilizing volumes of industrial materials such as glass and steel, we will free the soul and spirit from enclosure and open our lives to the harmony of the natural world.

## **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

### **Eric Bricker (Director, Producer)**

Filmmaker Eric Bricker made his directorial debut with VISUAL ACOUSTICS, the award winning documentary film narrated by Dustin Hoffman, on the life and work of acclaimed photographer Julius Shulman. VISUAL ACOUSTICS won the Mercedes-Benz Audience Award for Best Documentary at the Palm Springs International Film Festival, the Audience Award at the Austin Film Festival, and the Grand Jury Prize at the Lone Star International Film Festival. It has also been screened with much critical acclaim at the Los Angeles Film Festival (world premiere), Festival International Du Film Sur L'Art, LACMA, The Blanton Museum of Art in Austin, TX, and The Marfa Film Festival. Arthouse Films will release the film theatrically in the US in the Fall of 2009.

Eric's passion for filmmaking grew out of a background in art, theatre and music; including a B.A. in English Literature and Theater from Indiana University and acting stints with both the California Repertory Company and the Utah Shakespearean Festival. Once in LA, Eric turned his focus toward film and television production, working with such notable talent as Jerry Seinfeld, Alec Baldwin and Danny Aiello.

He also nourished his artistic interests by creating an art consultation firm, called Artistic Designs Unlimited. Eric currently has several other projects in development, including two documentary features and a narrative feature, through his company, Kaleidoscope Mediaworks.

### **Babette Zilch (Producer)**

Babette Zilch is a native of Germany with a decade of production experience at both a production company and at an agency as a producer for companies such as Publicis, Grey and BBDO. She has produced shoots in Europe, USA, Africa and Central America. After relocating to the U.S., Zilch made the transition into television, producing various documentary segments on American subjects for a popular magazine program on German national public television.

### **Karen Lee Arbeeny (Production Consultant)**

With an extensive background in the television and film industry, Karen Lee Arbeeny has raised equity financing, directed and produced independent films and served as an executive in both media.

Recently Karen served as a production consultant and unit director on the documentary BRIDGE TO HAVANA, she traveled to Cuba with numerous musicians (Bonnie Raitt, Mick Fleetwood, Stewart Copeland, Burt Bacharach, etc.) and engaged in a cultural exchange which culminated in a live concert and meeting with Fidel Castro. Karen directed and produced the independent family film, MR. ATLAS and executive produced THE AMERICAN SAMURAI.

As an executive, Karen has been involved in the development, production and worldwide distribution of forty-eight films, most notably RUNAWAY TRAIN, directed by Andrei Konchalovsky; OTELLO directed by Franco Zeffirelli; BARFLY, directed by Barbet Schroeder; and KING LEAR directed by Jean Luc Godard.

Currently, as Vice President, Business Operations at Comcast International Media Group, Karen oversees program and contract administration for international sales of programming produced by the Comcast networks, E! Entertainment Television, The Style Network, G4, Versus, TV One and Golf Channel as well as supervising the creation and implementation of a web-based, modular designed sales, availability and rights management system for the division.

**Lisa Hughes (Executive Producer)**

Lisa is founder and principal of Out of the Box Productions. Out of the Box Productions' first project was MR. GEHRY GOES TO WASHINGTON, a short film on the Frank Gehry design for the Corcoran Gallery of Art. The film was the recipient of an NEA grant and was also the centerpiece of the Corcoran Gallery's exhibition on the Gehry design. Out of the Box, in conjunction with the National Homebuilders Association, also developed a proposed series, "The Shape of Things to Come." This series, intended for cable television, focused on emerging trends in design, architecture, and modern urban culture.

Lisa was associate producer, with PRP Productions, on the recently completed film, INVISIBLE: ABBOTT THAYER AND THE ART OF CAMOUFLAGE, on the art and life of noted turn of the century painter and naturalist, Abbott Thayer. This film, intended for New Hampshire Public Television, will make its premiere this summer at the Colonial Theatre in Keene, New Hampshire, birthplace of Abbott Thayer.

Lisa was co-creator and segment producer of the proposed cable program "Design TV," which helped to define the concept of translating shelter magazine programming onto the television screen.

Lisa's interest in documentary filmmaking emerged as she worked as a freelancer, contributing as assignment and segment producer and editor for television and cable TV programming, including work for McCarthy Marcus and Hennings in Washington, DC. Drawing upon her years as a financial consultant, Lisa served in a production capacity on various media projects and assisted in the production of numerous corporate videos.

Lisa served as interim director of the Santa Barbara Film Council while living in California.

Prior to completion of a Master's of Arts (M.A.) in Film and Video at the American University and graduate studies in their MBA program, Lisa graduated with honors from the University of Virginia with a major in French.

**Michelle Oliver (Executive Producer)**

Michelle Oliver, a Southern California native, began a career in photography at Pacific Palisades High School. After graduating from Pepperdine University with a degree in advertising, she moved to New York City to pursue her career in photography. Michelle quickly put her skills and personality to work in the highly competitive world of fashion magazine publication. Her subsequent seven years experience led her to play a vital role in the best-selling magazine launch to date, "O, The Oprah Magazine."

Soon after 9/11, Michelle left New York and moved to the Pacific Northwest to explore a career in property management. Under the guidance of her uncle/partner, Michael Shulman, Michelle managed and expanded her family's well-established commercial and retail property in the highly coveted area of Kirkland, Washington.

Upon her return to Los Angeles, Michelle met Director Eric Bricker through her great uncle, Julius Shulman and contributed to the development of VISUAL ACOUSTICS as executive producer. From the inception of the project, Michelle has played a key role in coordinating fund raising efforts and has utilized the opportunity to reconnect with the life long career of her great uncle, Julius. Michelle continues her architectural photography pursuits and is currently a property manager in Beverly Hills. She resides in Westwood, California with her husband, television Producer / Director Josh Oliver.

### **Dustin Hoffman (Narrator)**

A two-time Academy Award winner and seven-time nominee whose arrival in Hollywood helped usher in a new and revitalized approach to filmmaking, Dustin Hoffman continues to add singular performances to a career rich with characters that have obliterated the line previously dividing the archetypes of "character actor" and "leading man."

Hoffman caught the world's attention for his role as Benjamin Braddock in Mike Nichol's Academy Award nominated film, THE GRADUATE. Since then, he has been nominated for six more Academy Awards for diverse films such as MIDNIGHT COWBOY, LENNY, TOOTSIE (a film he also produced through his company, Punch Productions), and WAG THE DOG. Hoffman won the Oscar in 1979 for his role in KRAMER VS. KRAMER and again in 1988 for RAIN MAN.

Hoffman will soon begin production on Richard J. Lewis's BARNEY'S VERSION opposite Paul Giamatti. Filming is scheduled to begin this September.

Hoffman last starred in LAST CHANC HARVEY, a love story set in London, co-starring Emma Thompson. Hoffman received a Golden Globe nomination for Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture - Comedy or Musical category for his role.

Hoffman recently lent his voice to the box office hit, KUNG FU PANDA The film was nominated for an Academy Award for Animated Feature Film of the Year and Hoffman received the Annie Award for Voice Acting in an Animated Feature Production.

His other film credits include: THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX, MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM, STRANGER THAN FICTION, PERFUME, MEET THE FOCKERS, FINDING NEVERLAND, I HEART HUCKABEE'S, THE LOST CITY, RACING STRIPES, RUNAWAY JURY, LITTLE BIG MAN, STRAW DOGS, PAPILLON, ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN, MARATHON MAN, STRAIGHT TIME, AGATHA, ISHTAR, DICK TRACY, BILLY BATHGATE, MAD CITY, HERO, SLEEPERS, SPHERE, AMERICAN BUFFALO, HOOK and OUTBREAK.

On stage, Hoffman has had an equally impressive career. His first stage role was in the Sarah Lawrence College production of Gertrude Stein's "Yes is for a Very Young Man." This performance led to several roles Off Broadway, such as "Journey of the Fifth Horse," for which he won the Obie, and "Eh?", for which he won the Drama Desk Award for Best Actor. His success on stage caught the attention of Mike Nichols, who cast him in THE GRADUATE. In 1969, Hoffman made his Broadway debut in Murray Schisgal's "Jimmy Shine." In 1974, Hoffman made his Broadway directorial debut with Schisgal's "All Over Town." In 1984, Hoffman garnered a Drama Desk Award for Best Actor for his portrayal of Willy Loman in the Broadway revival of "Death of a Salesman" which he also produced. In addition to starring in the Broadway production, a special presentation aired on television and Hoffman won the Emmy Award. Additionally, Hoffman received a Tony Award Nomination for his role as Shylock in "The Merchant of Venice" which he reprised from his long run on the London Stage.

As a producer, Hoffman produced Tony Goldwyn's feature film A WALK ON THE MOON starring Diane Lane, Viggo Mortensen, Liev Schreiber and Anna Paquin. He executive produced THE DEVIL'S ARITHMETIC which won two Emmy Awards.

Hoffman was born in Los Angeles and attended Santa Monica Community College. He later studied at the Pasadena Playhouse before moving to New York to study with Lee Strasberg.

Hoffman serves as the chair of the Artistic Advisory Board for the newly constructed Eli and Edythe Broad Stage Theater, which opened on September 20, 2008. This intimate 499-seat state-of-the-art



theater provides a much-needed performance facility for Santa Monica College and the surrounding community.

Hoffman was recently awarded the Honorary César Medal at the 2009 César Awards.

### **Dante Spinotti (Director of Photography)**

Dante Spinotti, ASC, AIC was born in Italy and raised in a rustic environment near Venice. He began taking still photographs and making enlargements in a homemade darkroom when he was about 11 years old. When he was 17, Spinotti went to Kenya where he worked with an uncle who was a documentary and news film director/ cinematographer. He shot his first documentary footage with a handheld, spring-loaded Eyemo camera. After about a year, Spinotti returned to Italy, where he worked on commercials, documentaries and dramas for RAI, the state television network. That led to opportunities to shoot his first features during the early 1980s.

Dino De Laurentiis discovered Spinotti and brought him to the United States to shoot MANHUNTER in 1986. He subsequently earned Oscar nominations for L.A. CONFIDENTIAL (1997) and for THE INSIDER (1999). His body of work also includes BEACHES, TRUE COLORS, BANDITS, THE MIRROR HAS TWO FACES, THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS, BLINK, NELL, HEAT, WONDER BOYS and RED DRAGON.

### **Aiken Weiss (Director of Photography)**

Aiken Weiss, a native of Bavaria, studied architecture in Munich. While studying he had the opportunity to work as a sound recordist and camera assistant before starting work as a freelance director of photography in 1991.

In 1992 he established himself in Los Angeles as a 1st / 2nd assistant cameraman on features, commercials and music videos while shooting as a director of photography for various Munich based production companies back in Germany.

In 1997 Aiken underwent the Garrett Brown's Steadicam workshop in Malibu. Intrigued and fascinated by the workshop, he not only added a new specialty to his camera repertoire, but also a mentor and an inspiration.

With over 17 years experience, Aiken has shot feature films, commercials, music videos, TV series, documentaries, and various other genres on land, in the air, and underwater, all over the world. Aiken is a member of the Cinematographers Guild, the Society of Camera Operators and the Steadicam Operators Association.

### **Charlton McMillan (Editor)**

Charlton McMillan is a distinguished editor with an extensive background in nonfiction films. In 2001 he won a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Picture Editing for "Living Dolls: The Making of a Child Beauty Queen." McMillan was also nominated for Outstanding Sound Editing.

McMillan and two associates were recently honored at Sundance 2007 with an award for Best Documentary Editing for the film NANKING, which chronicles Japan's brutal occupation of the Chinese capital in 1937.

In 2004 McMillan co-produced and edited the HBO documentary feature ALL ABOARD! ROSIE'S FAMILY CRUISE, which premiered at Sundance 2006. It follows the first-ever gay family cruise, organized by Rosie and Kelli O'Donnell, as it embarks on a journey into the heart of one of the most powerful civil rights issues of our time. It received three Primetime Emmy nominations including Outstanding Nonfiction Special.

In 2003 he completed KEEP ME IN YOUR HEART. This film chronicles the final months in the life of singer/songwriter Warren Zevon as he struggles to complete his album, "The Wind," while battling terminal lung cancer.

In 2002 McMillan edited THE ROAD TO MEMPHIS, directed by Dick Pearce for executive producer Martin Scorsese's THE BLUES. This feature examines the rise of Memphis Blues through the words and music of the stars of Beale Street.

Also that year McMillan worked with director Rory Kennedy on the HBO film A BOY'S LIFE, which examines issues of child custody and mental illness in a poor Mississippi family. It premiered at New York's Tribeca Film Festival in May, 2003 and won the Best Feature Documentary Award at the Woodstock Film Festival.

McMillan earned his film degree from the University of Texas at Austin. He lives in Los Angeles where he co-founded Sceneworks with his director/producer wife, Shari Cookson, with whom he has collaborated on many films including LIVING DOLLS and ALL ABOARD! ROSIE'S FAMILY CRUISE.

### **Charlie Campagna (Composer)**

Charlie Campagna has been music director/composer for Los Angeles based TRIP Dance Theatre since 1998 and a composer and musician in Los Angeles since 1998. The Los Angeles Times has praised Campagna for his "transfixing" and "crackling guitar work", and called collaborations with TRIP "a mind-blowing journey into the aural and physical."

Campagna's compositions and live playing merge his interests in guitar, cello, percussion, and textural sound collage. Lauded as a superb instrumentalist and musician he has composed and directed music for TRIP Dance Theatre performances: "Praying for Daybreak," "Inanna," "Light," "May Mother Sea," "Feast," "Wanderlust," "Exquisite Corpse," "Soulstasis" and "Poisoning the Well" as well as for such choreographers as Nina Kaufman, Erica Rebollar, Linda Gold, and Koala Yip. In 1999 Campagna co-founded the community-based improvisational dance workshop Sacred Spaces.

Working in many areas of music, with a full production studio, Charlie has contributed his music to many different projects such as the films DON'T SAY A WORD, HIGH CRIMES, THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY, and PHOENIX and has collaborated/performed with artists such as John Cale, Barry White, Lalah Hathaway, DJ Dan, Paul Hasslinger and Graham Revel. Campagna was a founding member of the band Quarks, for which he composed and played guitar from 1990-1997.

### **Trollbäck + Company (Design and Animation)**

Trollbäck + Company is a visual and conceptual creative studio producing expressive and purposeful graphics, design and live action for advertising, broadcast, and entertainment.

Led by creative directors Jakob Trollbäck and Joe Wright, the collaborative group of designers and writers launches and rebrands TV networks, creates motion graphics, live action, print, environmental design, and film titles. T + Co's trademark approach relies on unorthodox thinking and immersive storytelling, and the belief that a compelling and focused message is essential for any communication to be truly successful.