



## SU FRIEDRICH

**Born:** Su Friedrich, December 12, 1954 (New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.).

**Directing style:** Avant-garde maker of experimental shorts and docudramas; striking black and white cinematography; feminist and lesbian themes; analysis of private rituals and social conventions.

### Top Takes...

*Seeing Red* 2005

*The Head of a Pin* 2004

*The Odds of Recovery* 2002

*Hide and Seek* 1996

*Rules of the Road* 1993

*First Comes Love* 1991

*Sink or Swim* 1990

*Damned If You Don't* 1987

*The Ties That Bind* 1985

*But No One* 1982

*Gently Down the Stream* 1981

*I Suggest Mine* 1980

*Cool Hands, Warm Heart* 1979

*Scar Tissue* 1979

*Hot Water* 1978

New York filmmaker Su Friedrich studied art and art history at the University of Chicago and Oberlin College before becoming a photographer and writer. After attending New York's Millennium Film Workshop she made her directorial debut with *Hot Water* (1978), an experiment in sound. She continues to produce 16mm shorts, many of which have received international acclaim. Her movies are notable for their experimental nature, black and white cinematography, feminist and lesbian themes, analysis of the private and intimate, and a depiction of how emotions and rituals function within social convention. Such films include *Cool Hands, Warm Heart* (1979). Set in a busy outdoor market, it depicts various women on stages performing intimate rituals such as shaving their legs and brushing their hair. Another woman attempts to disrupt their activities, but eventually joins in, as Friedrich portrays the pull of social convention and the herd instinct.

Friedrich's oeuvre often draws on her own life. *The Ties That Bind* (1985) illustrates the life of Friedrich's mother, who lived in Germany during the Nazi regime. In a series of interviews, her mother describes life during this period, and the subsequent relationship she developed with a U.S. soldier who became her

husband. *Sink or Swim* (1990) describes, through 26 short stories, the childhood events that shaped Friedrich's concepts of parenthood, family, and work, and in particular her difficult relationship with her father. Groundbreaking docudrama *Hide and Seek* (1996) was nominated for

the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival. It mixes interviews with adult lesbians discussing their teenage years with the tale of a twelve-year-old girl exploring her sexuality in the 1960s, and the sense of alienation she experiences. **ES**

*"The Ties That Bind breaks with the usual format of war documentaries."*