

Career Summary of Su Friedrich

Su Friedrich was born in 1954 in New Haven, Connecticut. She attended the University of Chicago in 1971-72 and Oberlin College from 1972-1975, from which she graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a B.A. in Art and Art History. Since 1976 she has lived and worked in NY.

Friedrich has produced and directed twenty-seven 16mm films and digital videos, including *Today* (2022), *I Cannot Tell You How I Feel* (2016), *Queen Takes Pawn* (2013), *Gut Renovation* (2012), *From the Ground Up* (2007), *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* (1984), *Gently Down the Stream* (1981), and *Cool Hands, Warm Heart* (1979).

With the exception of *Hide and Seek*, which was co-written with Cathy Quinlan and shot by Jim Denault, Friedrich has been the writer, director, cinematographer, sound recordist and editor of all her films, which range in length from 10 to 65 minutes.

In 2015, *Sink or Swim* was one of the 25 films chosen that year by the Library of Congress to be included in the National Film Registry.

Her work is the subject of two recent books: *Su Friedrich: Interviews*, edited by Sonia Misra and Rox Samer, Univ. of Mississippi Press (2022) and *Su Friedrich* by Barbara Menzel, Univ of Illinois Press (2023.)

Friedrich's films have won many other awards, including: **Audience Award** at the Brooklyn Film Festival for *Gut Renovation*; **Best Documentary** at Identities Festival in Vienna for *The Odds of Recovery*; **Best Narrative Film Award** at the Athens International Film Festival, **Outstanding Documentary Feature** at Outfest '97 in Los Angeles, **Special Jury Award** at the New York Gay & Lesbian Film Festival and **Juror's Choice Award** at the Charlotte Film Festival for *Hide and Seek*; **Grand Prix** at the Melbourne Film Festival, the **Golden Gate Award** at the San Francisco Film Festival, **Gold Juror's Choice Award** at the Charlotte Film and Video Festival, **Special Jury Award** at the Atlanta Film Festival and **Best Experimental Film Award** at the USA Short Film and Video Festival for *Sink or Swim*; **Best Experimental Film Award** at the Athens Film Festival and **Best Experimental Narrative Award** at the Atlanta Film Festival for *Damned If You Don't*; and **Special Merit Award** at the Athens Film Festival for *Cool Hands, Warm Heart*. Friedrich also won the **Peter S. Reed Lifetime Achievement Award** in 2000.

Her work is widely screened in the United States, Canada and Europe. Since 1983, Friedrich has made personal appearances at over 180 one person shows and has been the subject of thirty-one retrospectives at the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Rotterdam International Film Festival, The London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, The Stadtkino in Vienna, the Pacific Cinematheque in Vancouver, the National Film Theater in London, the Buenos Aires Festival of Independent Cinema, the New York Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, the First Tokyo Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, the Cork Film Festival in Ireland, the Wellington Film Festival in New Zealand, The Bios Art Center in Athens, Greece, and the Anthology Film Archives in New York, among others.

Hide and Seek was broadcast on the Sundance Channel and on forty seven public television

stations in the US; *First Comes Love, Sink or Swim, Damned If You Don't*, and *Cool Hands, Warm Heart* were all broadcast on WNET-NY on the "Independent Focus" program; *Sink or Swim* was also broadcast on "The Learning Channel"; SBS-TV in Australia; KLRU-TV in Austin, Texas; WYBE-TV in Philadelphia and Channel 5 in Vancouver. *The Ties That Bind* was shown on "New York Screening Room" on WNYC-TV; Manhattan Cable "Group W"; "Mixed Signals" in New England; and Channel 21 in Pittsburgh.

Friedrich is the recipient of the Alpert Award in the Arts (1996), an Independent Television Service production grant (1994), an NEA Fellowship (1994), a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship (1990), a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship (1989), a DAAD grant as artist-in-residence in Berlin (1984), as well as numerous grants from the New York State Council on the Arts (2002, 2001, 1999, 1993, 1992, 1989, 1986, 1982), the New York Foundation for the Arts (1999, 1993, 1989), the Jerome Foundation (1992, 1989, 1986), Art Matters, Inc. (1989) and Artist's Space (1984). She was also a resident at the Yaddo Artist's Colony for six weeks in the summer of 1993.

From 1998-2023, Friedrich was Professor of Visual Arts in the Peter B. Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University. She previously taught at New York University, the Millennium Film Workshop, Bard College, the New School for Social Research, the Hartford Art School and the Univ. of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, and has curated several film shows at the Millennium Film Workshop in New York and at the Arsenal Kino in Berlin.

Her work is in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the New York Public Library, the Royal Film Archive of Belgium, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the National Library of Australia, as well as many university libraries. The films are distributed by The Museum of Modern Art, Outcast Films, Canyon Cinema, Canadian Filmmaker's Distribution Center in Toronto, Light Cone in Paris, Archives du Film Experimental in Avignon, and Freunde der Deutschen Kinemathek in Berlin.

The films have been reviewed in numerous publications, including *Variety*, *Premiere*, *The Village Voice*, *Artforum*, *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, *Film Quarterly*, *The Millennium Film Journal*, *Film Comment*, *Sight and Sound*, *Flash Art*, *Cineaste*, *The Independent*, *Heresies Art Journal*, *Afterimage*, and *The L.A. Weekly*. Essays on her work as well as excerpts from her scripts have appeared in numerous books, including *Crafting Truth: Documentary Form and Meaning* (2011) *Modern Women: Women Artists at the Museum of Modern Art* (2010), *Women's Experimental Cinema* (2007), *501 Movie Directors* (2007), *Contemporary American Independent Film: From the Margins to the Mainstream* (2005), *Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde, 1943-2000* (2002), *Left In the Dark* (2002), *Collecting Visible Evidence* (1999), *Experimental Ethnography* (1999), *The New American Cinema* (1998), *Play It Again, Sam* (1998), *Film Fatales* (1998), *Cinematernity* (1996), *Screen Writings* (1994), *Women's Films* (1994), *Queer Looks* (1993), *Avant-Garde Film: Motion Studies* (1993), *Vampires and Violets* (1992), and *Critical Cinema: Volume Two* (1992).

Her DVD collection is distributed by [Outcast Films: The link to stream all the films](#) and her two most recent films are at [Icarus Films](#).