

# JENNIE LIVINGSTON

## FILM/VIDEO PROJECTS

- Ongoing** **Earth Camp One** Directing/writing/editing an autobiographical feature length film about grief, loss, and a Northern California hippie summer camp in the 1970s, also a broad essay on how Americans understand impermanence. Editing, animating, and producing continue. Funders and fellowships include Netflix, The Guggenheim Foundation, The New York State Council on the Arts, The Rosenthal Family Foundation, Artemis Rising Foundation, The French American Charitable Trust, The Newhouse Foundation, Chicken and Egg, The MacDowell Colony, individual donors, and 540 Kickstarter backers.
- 2011** Directed video piece for **The Million Dollar Piano**, Elton John's current stage show. A series of black and white moving-image portraits of New Yorkers to accompany the singer's performance of the song **Mona Lisas and Mad Hatters**. Running through 2016 at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas and on tour.
- 2005** **Through the Ice** Produced/directed/edited the digital short commissioned by WNET's Reel New York for the show's tenth anniversary special. A portrait of the death of a man who fell through the ice in the lake in Prospect Park, Brooklyn through the eyes of the dog-walkers who tried to save his life. Broadcast on WNET and an official selection at the 2006 Sundance Film Festival.
- 1999-2005** **Who's the Top?** Wrote, directed, co-produced and co-edited. A 22-minute 35mm sex comedy with musical numbers. Features Marin Hinkle (**Two and a Half Men**), Shelly Mars, Steve Buscemi, Brigitte Bako, and 24 dancers. Choreography by John Carrafa. Premiered at the Berlinale; screenings at over 100 film festivals worldwide. Extended runs at The Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the London ICA; See below for awards.
- 1995 – present** **Prenzlauer Berg** dramatic script: developed, researched, and wrote. Based on original research in Berlin on a 6-month fellowship from the German Academic Exchange (DAAD). An ensemble film, set in the art worlds of East Berlin and New York in 1989. Development is ongoing.
- 2000** **Film Fans** Researched, developed, and wrote treatment. Commissioned by the AMC Channel. Explores the underlying meaning of Americans' collective obsession with fame.

**1991-94 Not for Profit** dramatic script, wrote and developed. Readings included actors Lili Taylor, Peter Gallagher, CCH Pounder, Liza Minelli, John Cameron Mitchell. Suspense/satire set in the worlds of finance, fundraising, and media.

**1994 Stonewall** Directed and designed triptych film installation for an outdoor, site-specific Off-Broadway play directed by Tina Landau and produced by EnGarde Arts.

**1993 Hotheads** A video short, directed/shot/edited a portrait of comedian Reno and cartoonist Diane DiMassa, including music by Smashing Pumpkins. Commissioned by and produced by the Red Hot Organization for No Alternative, an MTV special. Video compilation released on Polygram Video, , whose work benefits AIDS research and treatment. Premiered at The Walter Reade Theater at Lincoln Center, and broadcast by The Living Room Festival, KQED.

**1986-1991 Paris is Burning** Director/producer, feature documentary film about a New York City fashion subculture. Distributed by Miramax in the US and by other companies worldwide. Grants included The National Endowment for the Arts; also funded by BBC-2 show Arena. According to *Variety*, the film remains one of the most successful documentaries ever released. Grand Jury Prize winner at Sundance, on ten-best-film-of-the-year lists of The Washington Post, Time Magazine, The Los Angeles Times, National Public Radio. Paris is Burning was included in the Film Registry at the Library of Congress in 2016 and was the Sundance Film Festival's sole Sundance Collection screening at the 2015 festival. Please see below for further info and accolades.

## AWARDS AND HONORS

### FELLOWSHIPS/RESIDENCIES/GRANTS

**2008-17** Production grants from The New York State Council on the Arts, The Rosenthal Family Foundation, The French American Charitable Trust, The Newhouse Foundation, Chicken & Egg, Artemis Rising Foundation, The Dobkin Family Foundation

**2010, 2008, 2002** MacDowell Colony Fellowship(s)

**2000-2001** Guggenheim Fellowship

**1995** German Academic Exchange (DAAD) Berlin Artists Program.

- 1992-93            Visiting Scholar at the Getty Center for Arts and Humanities, Los Angeles
- 1987-1989        Production grants from The National Endowment for the Arts, The New York Foundation for the Arts, The Paul Robeson Fund, Art Matters, The New York State Council on the Arts, The Jerome Foundation, The AIVF Donor-Assisted Fund
- 1984-85            Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, MA. For work in photography.

#### AWARDS and HONORS

##### For WHO'S THE TOP? (partial list)

- Best Short, Cinekink Film Festival, New York City
- Best Short, Mezipatra Film Festival, Prague, The Czech Republic
- Best Short of the Year, Girlfriends Magazine

##### For PARIS IS BURNING (partial list)

- Sundance Collection Screening and restoration (2015)
- Cinema Eye Honors Legacy Award (2015)
- Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize
- Toronto International Film Festival Audience Award
- The New York Film Critics' Circle Award
- The L.A. Film Critics' Award
- The Seattle International Film Festival Audience Award
- The Independent Feature Project's [first] Breakthrough Director award
- The Berlin Film Festival (Berlinale) Teddy Bear
- Women in Film Crystal Award
- Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation Media Award
- International Documentary Association Award

#### EARLY WORK IN FILM AND PHOTOGRAPHY

- Staff photographer, *Staten Island Advance* 1985
- Intern, Laurie Anderson's *Home of the Brave*, 1985
- Art Department Assistant, Alan J. Pakula's *Orphans*, 1986

#### WRITING/MEDIA/ CRITICISM/ EXHIBITIONS

- 2015    28 People on the Lesbian-Culture Artifacts That Changed Their Lives, *New York Magazine*, November 18, 2015 (a sidebar accompanying a Frank Rich article on Todd Haynes's film *Carol*)

**2015 Drawings and photographs at AMP Gallery, Provincetown, MA, June - July 2015**

**2014 Wrote kickoff blog piece for Sundance.org, for Sundance Film festival's FreeFail event, featuring a panel with Robert Redford, Jill Soloway, and others: "Indie Film Game-Changer Outs Herself as a Failure (Despite Evidence to the Contrary)"**

**2011 Featured speaker in CurrentTV's Morgan Spurlock-hosted series 50 Documentaries to See Before You Die**

**2006 Featured speaker in the Independent Feature Channel documentary Fabulous! The Story of Queer Cinema.  
[<http://dvd.netflix.com/Movie/70048098?sod>]**

**2005 Panelist, Goethe Institut, New York: a discussion of East German cinema in conjunction with screenings at the Museum of Modern Art.**

**2004 On-Air Host, introduced films and wrote commentary for startup cable channel, Divine HD (Rainbow Media/Viacom).**

**2003 Created critical commentaries for the DEFA Film Library Catalog: The Cinema of East Germany, University of Massachusetts.**

**2001 Meditating After 9/11, commissioned by The New York Times Magazine, published in The Journal of Fire Lotus.**

**1995 Selected and introduced A Program of Short Films and Videos by Independent Directors Who Usually Do Feature Length Work, The San Francisco Cinematheque.**

**1995 Year in Review: When Worlds Collide, The Advocate, (January 24)**

**1994 Let's Watch Something Daddy Wants to Watch, curated, wrote and co-edited clip show in association with film editor James Lyons (Far from Heaven, The Virgin Suicides). Commissioned by The New Festival and by Frameline.**

**1993 A Conversation with John Waters, Out Magazine (July)**

**1992 The Art of the Angry Letter, Out Magazine (Fall)**

**1991 Strike the Pose, The Off Hollywood Report (now Filmmaker Magazine) (Spring)**

**1988 The Fairer Sex, Aperture: The Body in Question**

## **TEACHING/PUBLIC SPEAKING SEMINARS**

**2015** Curated and introduced 2 films for the New York Jewish Film Festival (Lincoln Center) *Doctor Strangelove*; *Sophie's Choice*

**2012** Hosted screening and spoke to Diversity Group at Fenwick & West LLP, a San Francisco law firm serving technology companies, including issues around venture capital and intellectual property.

**2010** Fran and Ray Stark Distinguished Teaching fellow, Connecticut College. Taught two classes: screenwriting, and a course on the history, theory and practice of independent films and filmmaking.

**2008-9** Brooklyn College, Screenwriting I. The fundamentals of writing narrative fictional screenplays through screenings, discussion, readings, and the creation of an original short script.

**1999** Yale College, Independent Film. Issues of representation, storytelling, commerce, and structure. Coursework included screenings, readings, discussion, and writing.

**1995** Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen (Munich). Seminar on independent films and independent filmmaking

## **TALKS/LECTURES/PANELS (partial list)**

**1991-2016**

**Alamo Theater (Austin, TX) • American University Center for Social Media (Washington DC) • Byrn Mawr • Cal Arts • Columbia University Film School • DePaul University • Fashion Institute of Technology (New York) • Fenwick & West LLP (San Francisco) • Fordham University • The Getty Center (Los Angeles) • Goethe Institut (New York) • Hampshire College • Independent Feature Market (New York) • MIT Medialab • Middlebury College • The New School for Social Research • New York Institute of the Humanities at NYU • Princeton • Rutgers University Writers House • South Africa School of Motion Picture Medium and Live Performance (AFDA), Johannesburg • University of California Santa Cruz • University of Missouri at Columbia • University of Southern California Film School • Stephens College (Columbia, Missouri) • Vassar College • Wesleyan College • Williams College • Yale College**

## EDUCATION

**2002** Final Cut Pro editing, The Edit Center, New York

**1999-2000** Studied directing actors with Adrienne Weiss, member of NYU Film School (Tisch) faculty, acting coach, and director.

**1998** Studied acting in seminars with Susan Batson, stage and film actor (Summer of Sam, Bamboozled), acting teacher and coach.

**1985** New York University, film production intensive ("Sight and Sound"). (Summer)

**1979-83** Yale University, B.A., cum laude, photography and painting, minor in English literature.

- Recipient of Louis Sudler Prize, given annually to one Yale College graduating senior in the visual or performing arts, for work in photography, drawing, and painting.
- Recipient of an Ellen Battel Stoeckel fellowship to the Yale-Norfolk School of Music and the Arts.

## PRAISE FOR *Paris is Burning*

"A politically astute, historically important document of our precarious times."

**-Michelle Parkerson, The Black Film Review**

"a beautiful piece of work—lively, intelligent, exploratory....Everything about 'Paris is Burning' signifies so blatantly and so promiscuously that our formulations – our neatly paired theses and antitheses – multiply faster than we can keep track of them, and the movie induces a semiotic daze. What's wonderful about the picture is that Livingston is smart enough not to reduce her subjects to the sum of their possible meanings..."

**-Terrence Rafferty, The New Yorker**

"Houses of silk and gabardine are built. Houses of dream and fantasy. Houses that bear the names of their legendary founders...Houses rise and fall. Legends come and go. To pose is to reach for power while simultaneously holding a real powerlessness at bay."

**-Essex Hemphill, The Guardian**

“Zeroing in on an obscure and outré corner of a subculture, Livingston’s film ends up shedding an extraordinary light on American culture as a whole.”

**-David Ansen, Newsweek**

## **PRAISE FOR *Who’s the Top?***

“witty and accomplished”

**- Kevin Thomas, The Los Angeles Times**

“Livingston delivers a sharp...and provoking tale about the meaning of power, the nature of reality and the elusiveness of love by posing questions seldom heard at cinemas.”

**-RJ Grubb, Bay Windows (Boston)**

“the best Marie Antoinette fantasy we've ever seen”

**-Sarah Harrison, Nerve.com**

"production numbers are more exuberant than anything in Rent.”

**-Wesley Morris, Boston Globe**

## **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY** (for links, please see Press page of [jennielivingston.com](http://jennielivingston.com))

**National Film Registry Adds The Lion King and Thelma and Louise, Dave Itzkoff, The New York Times, December 14, 2016**

**Paris is Burning, Thelma & Louise sashay into The National Film Registry, Katie Rife, A.V.club, December 14, 2016**

**BFI [British Film Institute] Flare names the top 30 LGBT films of all time, Daniel Megarry, Gay Times UK, March 15, 2016**

**Cinema Eye Honors Announces The Influentials, a list of 25 nonfiction films that were most on the minds of fellow filmmakers in 2015, cinemaeyehonors.com, October 13, 2015**

**The 22 Best Woman-Directed Films Streaming on Netflix, by the editors, Tribecafilm.com, August 17, 2015**

**Burning Down the House: Why the Debate over Paris is Burning Rages On, Ashley Clark, The Guardian, June 24, 2015**

**From Paris is Burning to Earth Camp One, Jennie Livingston on the Perils and Pleasures of Documentary, Rebecca M. Alvin, Provincetown Magazine, June 3, 2015**

**Paris is Burning Sizzles Again at the Sundance Film Festival, Brian Moylan, The Guardian, January 29, 2015**

**Voices from the Front Lines: Ava DuVernay, Barbra Streisand, and Others Talk about Directing, Manohla Dargis, The New York Times, January 21, 2015**

**Cinema Eye Honors, The Influentials, a list of 25 nonfiction films that were most on the minds of fellow filmmakers in 2014, October 23, 2014**

**Paris is Burning a Queer Film Classic, Lucas Hilderbrand, Arsenal Pulp Press, 2014 (the first volume in a series, Queer Film Classics)**

**Paris is Burning was ranked number 4 in an indiewire.com Reader's Poll of the 25 most important LGBT films of all time. June 6, 2014**

**Paris Is Burning is number 9 on nonfics.com's list of 100 best documentaries to stream on Netflix. June 1, 2014**

**Filmmaker Jennie Livingston on Life and Loss after Paris is Burning, Saeed Jones, BuzzFeed, March 22, 2013**

**8 Music Videos that Pay Homage to 'Paris is Burning,' Saeed Jones, buzzfeed.com, February 7, 2013**

**Steven Tyler Dresses In Drag, Calls Himself Pepper Labeija, and Now the Whole Paris is Burning Thing is Out of Control, Rich Juzwiak, gawker.com, February 1, 2013**

**POV Reader poll on PBS.org, The Greatest Documentaries of All Time, in which Paris is Burning is the number 1 film, November 8, 2012**

**Paris is Burning Helps Make Minority Gay Culture Mainstream, 50 Documentaries to See Before You Die, Current TV, August 16, 2011**

**In the Works: New Doc from "Paris is Burning" Director, Bryce J. Renninger, Indiewire.com, January 6, 2011**

**An Interview with Jennie Livingston by Dena Seidel, Films for the Feminist Classroom, volume 1, number 1, Rutgers University, 2009**



**New York Magazine's 40th Anniversary Approval Matrix**, their "deliberately oversimplified guide to 40 years in the culture capital of the world." *Paris is Burning* appears next to *Annie Hall*, *Do the Right Thing*, and *Pauline Kael*; *New York Magazine*, September 28, 2008

**Anything Goes**, Jennie Livingston on her musical short *Who's the Top?*, Sarah Harrison, *nerve.com*, January 2006

**Five Questions for Jennie Livingston**, Director of *Paris is Burning* and *Who's the Top?*, Eugene Hernandez, *indiewire.com*, August 6, 2005

**After the Burning**, RJ Grubb, *Bay Windows*, May 19, 2005

**How a Film Indie Shops For a Backer**, Peter Nichols, *The New York Times*, Arts Section, Thursday, September 23, 1999

**Dykes on Film**, Lisa Sherman, *Skin Two Magazine*, Issue 29, Summer 1999

**Home, Houses, Nonidentity: Paris is Burning**, Chandan C. Reddy, *Burning Down the House: Recycling Domesticity*, Westview Press, 1997

**'Kings' In Good Company**, *Variety*, February 24-March 2, 1997

**Gender is Burning**, Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, Routledge, 1993

**Queens of Language**, Jackie Goldsby, *Queer Looks*, Routledge, 1993 (originally published in *Afterimage* magazine)

**Tanz der Beleidigten**, Bodo Fründt, *Sddeutsche Zeitung*. Nr. 254, November 4, 1991

**Crossed-Dressed for Success**, David Ansen with Abigail Kuflik, *The Arts*, *Newsweek*, August 12, 1991

**Paris is Burning**, *Illusions Were Never So Real*, Essex Hemphill, *The Guardian*, July 3, 1991 (later published in *Ceremonies*, Plume, 1992)

**Talent to Burn**, Amruta Slee, *The Australian*, June 15, 1991

**Paris is Burning**, Michelle Parkerson, *The Black Film Review*, vol. 6., no. 3

**Redefining "Realness" in Paris is Burning**, William Jones, *International Documentary*, Spring 1991

**Realness**, *The Current Cinema*, Terrence Rafferty, *The New Yorker Magazine*, March 25, 1991

**An Exotic Gay Subculture is Poignant Under Scrutiny, Jennifer Dunning,  
Dance Section, The New York Times, March 23, 1991**

**Stop Making Censors: Photo Opportunities Lost and Found, Stacey  
D'Erasmus, A Review of The Body in Question, Aperture No. 121, The Village  
Voice, January 15, 1991**

**Exits and Entrances, On Voguing, John Howell, Artforum, February 1989**