

her aim is true

Journey behind the lens of unlikely rock and roll photographer, Jini Dellaccio who visualized punk before it had a name and embodied indie before it was cool. In tracing Jini's courageous and convention-defying pursuit of creativity, the film is a riveting story of an artistic legacy lost and found.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

In 1964, a middle-aged self-taught photographer, Jini Dellaccio, began hanging out with raucous garage bands like The Sonics in her backyard, creating startling images and innovative album covers. Soon she was grabbing unprecedented portraits of Neil Young and early performances by bands like The Who, Rolling Stones, and Mamas & Papas. Musicians and rock photographers join Jini Dellaccio on an inspiring tour of her ingenuity and style, with a soundtrack and interviews that capture the Pacific Northwest's vibrant music subculture. At the heart of this film though, is a legacy lost and found in an enduring story about love, creativity and indie spirit, with universal appeal.

SYNOPSIS

In the early 1960s, rock 'n' roll was supposed to be for kids. While the Beatles were premiering *A Hard Day's Night*, a raucous, dangerous sound was emerging in the northwest United States in the working class towns around Seattle. Youngsters were doing a dance called the Witch and garage bands were producing their own records with songs about drinking strychnine for kicks. Bands like The Wailers and The Sonics were punk before there was a name for it. And in the middle of the crowd, a 48-year-old self-taught photographer named Jini Dellaccio had finally found her subject. A shy, unassuming farm girl from Indiana, Jini got the rockers to be themselves, while being old enough to be their mother.

Dellaccio's signature approach was for the bands to be climbing trees, peering through the mist or surrounded by great works of architecture and sculpture in their Beatle Boots. Rejecting the boring five-member line-up band photograph, established Dellaccio as one of the most exciting, innovative composers in rock photography and through her lens, these garage bands, dismissed by other adults, saw for the first time that what they were doing could truly be art.

Shot entirely on location in the Pacific Northwest, *Her Aim is True* goes behind Dellaccio's lens to trace the roots of her avant-garde artistry, her fearless life and the

unlikely friendships she formed. Jini recalls her Depression era childhood, her days traveling on the road in all-girl jazz bands, and the critical influence of her mother, who made music as important as meals. The film has an original soundtrack and evocative archival material as well as commentary on Dellaccio's unheralded legacy by distinguished rock photographers and musicians from then and now.

In many ways, Jini Dellaccio's unquenchable need to realize a new form of photography ran parallel with the do-it-yourself attitude of the music bands she documented but in the course of the film, and thanks to Jini's charming storytelling, the audience gets an unusual and inspiring demonstration of *carpe diem* spirit which resonates with all of us about how we live our lives and pursue creativity.

For More information:

www.heraimistruemovie.com

<http://heraimistruemovie.com/2013/04/09/talking-pictures/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/heraimistruedocumentary>

Twitter [@jinidocumentary](https://twitter.com/jinidocumentary)

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT:

When I first met Jini (she was 92 at the time), I was immediately intrigued by her vivacious spirit and cool stories. It wasn't until I started digging around the Pacific Northwest music scene that I realized I had been in the presence of a very unusual woman. With her Hasselblad camera in hand, Jini changed the formula, and brought a new sensibility to rock band photo shoots while barely any other women photographers had professional careers, let alone ones in rock 'n' roll.

Curiosity and indignation fuelled my determination to make this film. Curiosity – how did this elegant, unassuming woman wind up spending her middle age documenting garage rockers? Indignation - why had Jini's artistic ingenuity been tucked away on the sidelines of our cultural history? But I wanted to craft something much more than a retrospective about a reclusive artist. Instead, I envisioned a fun, engaging journey around Jini's 'ageless' artistry. The film is meticulously crafted around a series of encounters that explore Jini's unique relationship with the bands and the strong connection between their role as innovators in music and Jini's own independent spirit.

The film's narrative takes its cue from Jini's intense passion for her art, her creative process and influences. Through the telling of this story, I set out to share something that speaks to all of us about pursuing our dreams and creativity. I am hoping *her aim is true* will have universal appeal, with a tone that is at once intimate, inspiring and nostalgic.

Link: Director's [production diary blogs](#)

PRODUCTION STILLS:

Click on the download production stills icon on the website

PRESS:

<http://www.examiner.com/article/her-aim-is-true-karen-whitehead-brings-jini-dellaccio-s-story-to-sold-out-crowds>

<http://blog.kexp.org/2013/05/25/siff-2013-preview-her-aim-is-true/>

<http://www.filmthreat.com/reviews/66948/>

<http://www.hasselbladbulletin.com/uk/may-2013/update/a-true-pioneer.aspx>

photofocus.com/2014/05/08/finding-the-first-woman-photographer-of-cool-jini-dellaccio/

[Her Aim Is True: The Queen of Northwest Rock Photography](#)

[Through her lens: 50 years of photos from Jini Dellaccio - The News Tribune \(03/12\)](#)

PRODUCTION TEAM:

Washington DC-based British filmmaker Karen Whitehead is making her indie doc directorial debut with this film, which receives fiscal sponsorship from Northwest Film Forum. Her Seattle-based crew includes award winning filmmaker and cinematographer John Jeffcoat (*Outsourced & Big In Japan*) and Ryan McMackin. Art direction is by Gabe Kean, from the multi-award winning design studio Belle & Wissell. The film is being produced in association with 18th Street Films, a subsidiary of Story House Media and the executive producer is the award winning filmmaker Karim Chrobog (*War Child*). The film is edited by Kelli Boyd.

DIRECTOR'S BIO:

KAREN WHITEHEAD is an independent filmmaker originally from London, UK. An accomplished journalist, former BBC producer and director of current affairs programs as well as creator of documentary style videos for non-profits. She has produced a film on the history of the Berlin Wall for the Newseum, currently on exhibit in Washington, DC and is involved with video advocacy projects with the autism community. Whitehead currently serves on the Board of Women In Film and Video for the DC-Metro area.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS:

Running Time: 71 min / 52 min (versions available)

Aspect Ratio: 16:9

Format: HD, color

Screening Formats: HDCam, Blu Ray/DVD, VOD

Language: English

JINI DELLACCIO – THE WOMAN BEHIND THE CAMERA

“I see my photos as music. It is what I have always done.”

- For Jini, every picture is a lyrical experience that reminds her of days playing the saxophone.

Born Jini Duckworth in her grandfather's goat shed on a rural Indiana farm in 1917, Jini was raised with three siblings. Her young parents were Paul, an auto mechanic, and Merle, a musician at heart who held down a variety of jobs from baking fancy cakes to cosmetology. Jini vividly recalls her mother's creative talents as a self-taught violinist. Merle's determination that her children should also have music in their lives led Jini to learn the saxophone as a teenager and perform with local family vaudeville troupes on weekends. After graduating high school in 1935, Jini left home and spent the next 12 years touring all over the USA with several all-girl jazz ensembles.

While playing with “The Sweethearts of Swing” in Hollywood, Florida during World War II, Jini met her husband, Carl Dellaccio, who dreamed of being a pioneer in the field of education. In 1946, the couple married in Chicago. Jini soon set aside her sax for a paintbrush when she enrolled in the Chicago Institute of Arts. She acquired her first camera, a \$70 Leica, to keep a photographic record of her commercial art portfolio. In the early 1950s, Jini and Carl moved west to Long Beach, California. Following a chance meeting with a fashion model in a department store, Jini found a niche shooting fashion portfolios, her passion for photography having firmly replaced her love of painting. In 1958, she joined her brother Paul on a tour of the South Sea Islands and took along her Leica, capturing one of her most cherished images – of the Tasman Sea.

When Carl and Jini settled near Seattle, Washington a few years later, Jini was disheartened to realize that there was no fashion industry in the region and shifted to commercial photography. Her clients included the renowned architect Alan Liddle, a Frank Lloyd Wright protégé. Liddle helped the couple design their Gig Harbor home, which was to become the critical setting for many of Jini's later photo shoots. After Jini's photography was spotted in a 1963 art show in the neighboring working class town of Tacoma, she was asked to create an album cover for local garage band, The Wailers, who were preparing to release a new album of their hard-edged punk sound. Graphic designer John Vlahovich, along with publicist for newly formed indie record label Etiquette records, Barrie Jackson, describe Jini's photography as “like Life magazine coming to Tacoma.” The two knew they had found what they were looking for in Jini's innovative, intriguing style. Before long, Dellaccio was shooting album covers like the “The Sonics Boom,” which has been reproduced countless times world-wide.

From 1964, Jini was considered “the one” for publicity shots, and bands lined up at her Gig Harbor home for a dose of her signature look, often climbing trees or peering at her lens through the misty Puget Sound waterfront by her backyard. Iconic photos of original punk rockers, The Sonics and the Wailers, Seattle's first “Hippie” band the Daily

Flash, popular performers Merilee Rush and the Turnabouts, plus Don and the Goodtimes are among those taken at Jini's "Gig Harbor" studio. While their portraits against the backdrop of nature were avant-garde for rock 'n' roll at the time, Jini's aesthetic was in keeping with the "northwest school" art movement of the region.

Jini's work caught the attention of concert promoter Pat O Day, who quickly hired her to be the official photographer of his popular "teen dance spectaculars" at venues like the Seattle Coliseum. As teen dances became bigger events where local bands shared the stage with touring headline performers, Jini's repertoire expanded to candid live performance shots of legendary bands including The Who (on their first US tour), Mitch Ryder and the Detroit Wheels, The Rolling Stones, The Yardbirds and the Mamas and Papas. It was during this period that Jini also got the opportunity to spend a day photographing Neil Young at his Laurel Canyon home.

By the end of the 60s, as the music scene changed and many of the bands Jini photographed split up, Jini returned to more commercial work and family portraits before retirement with Carl to Arizona. It was not long after this move that Carl suffered a major stroke, leaving him paralyzed and barely able to communicate. Jini put her Hasselblad away and nursed her husband for almost 15 years before he died in 2003. Jini had promised Carl she would take up photography again, and she spent the following years learning the new world of digital photography. This culminated in an exhibition in 2008 of stunning wildlife images taken from looking out of the windows of her Arizona home.

Jini Dellaccio spent the last years of her life living back in Seattle, Washington until her death at 97, on July 3rd 2014. Painstaking work continues to restore & preserve Jini's remarkable photo archive. More information about the archive is available from The Jini Dellaccio Collection.

SOLO EXHIBITS:

Mar 31, 2012 - July 2012 "With a Loving Eye: Photographs of Jini Dellaccio "
Harbor History Museum, Gig Harbor, Washington

Nov 1 – Dec 16, 2011 "Rock 'n' Roll Jini Dellaccio"
Photo Center NW, Seattle

OTHER EXHIBITS:

Feb 6 – May 23, 2010 Taking Aim: Unforgettable Rock 'n' Roll Photographs
selected by Graham Nash
Experience Music Project, Seattle

June 2008 "Accidents Will Happen: Stories from Rock Photography" at
Belle & Wissell, Co gallery
Georgetown, Seattle

ROCK N ROLL PHOTO SHOOTS INCLUDE:

- 1964: The Wailers (Tacoma, Seattle, Gig Harbor)
- 1965: The Wailers, The Sonics, Arrtesians, Galaxies, Raymarks (Gig Harbor, Tacoma, Seattle, Victoria, British Columbia)
- 1966: The Sonics, Daily Flash, Don and The Goodtimes, Emergency Exit, Ian Whitcomb, Merrilee & The Turnabouts (Gig Harbor, Seattle, Los Angeles)
- 1967: Daily Flash, The Bards, Bootmen, Paul Revere & The Raiders, Neil Young (Gig Harbor, Seattle, Los Angeles)
- 1968: Jim Valley, Steve Lalor [Daily Flash], Music Box
- 1970-71: King Biscuit Entertainers, Hawk & The Randelas, Timber, Jim Valley (Gig Harbor & Seattle)
- 2010: The Moondoggies (Seattle)

LIVE PERFORMANCE SHOOTS INCLUDE:

- 1964: The Wailers
- 1965: The Shangri-Las, Vibrations, The Wailers, The Sonics, Patti LaBelle & The Bluebells
- 1966: Mamas & Papas, Lovin Spoonful, Yardbirds, Beach Boys
- 1967: Herman's Hermits, Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels, The Rolling Stones, The Who, Springfield Riffle

For additional information about the unique Northwest music scene documented by Jini Dellaccio below are links to these oral history blog postings at heraimistruemove.com:

<http://heraimistruemovie.com/2013/02/12/the-boys-from-tacoma/>

<http://heraimistruemovie.com/2012/12/13/when-rock-was-young-a-personal-tale-from-the-productions-research-file/>

<http://heraimistruemovie.com/2013/08/08/finding-northwest-cool/>