



FACE OF A NATION

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WORLD'S FAIR?

A film by Mina Chow



Presenting the power of architecture on the world's imagination and its ability to affect a nation's dreams.

ABOUT THE FILM

Daughter of immigrants, an idealistic American architect struggles to keep her dream alive as she journeys to discover why America abandoned World's Fairs.

"**FACE OF A NATION: WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WORLD'S FAIR?**" captures erosion of the American image at one of the most important events in showcasing a nation's influence on the international stage. A reminder that **"to keep the dream alive,"** we must never lose sight of our vision and values. Probing deeply into national identity, Mina Chow investigates the controversy surrounding U.S. participation at World's Fairs for the last 25 years. The film asks important questions about the country's role in the world and perceptions of the American image. **With our diminished presence at World's Fairs, have we lost sight of what it means to be American?**

WHY THIS FILM

Twenty years after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in which iconic American buildings were deliberately targeted, **the connection between design and global politics** continues to be highlighted in provocative visual symbolism, extreme positions about cultural sites, and identity politics at international borders. Our film documents **unfavorable** international perceptions about the U.S. when **design excellence** at World's Fairs is neglected. World's Fairs (i.e.—Expos) are important opportunities for people from various countries to engage peacefully with others around the world on an actual site; to diffuse conflict face-to-face "within the last 3 feet." Architectural excellence uses the substance of the real world to influence and engage people. A powerful persuasion without words. The highest quality design at World's Fairs is an important opportunity to reshape our American story with international audiences on a real-world stage.

OUR MISSION

To inform American audiences about **the importance of design excellence with public funding** towards the BEST representation of the American people. Our film is listed as an **historic resource for the U.S. Department of State**. Our film will broadcast nationally on PBS stations with multiple air dates starting in early 2022 to coincide with the Dubai World Expo.



"...as an architect investigating the death of the U.S. pavilion, Chow tells the story of a nation undergoing an identity crisis."

--Neel Patel, Architectural Record



"The documentary film FACE OF A NATION couldn't be more timely. It comes at a moment when the United States seems to be turning inward and pursuing a new kind of isolationism."

--Roger K. Lewis, Washington Post columnist,
Shaping the City



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"FACE OF A NATION: WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WORLD'S FAIR?"

THE CAST

Jack Masey, legendary USIA Design Director, and U.S. foreign service officer who hired America's most creative people to represent our BEST at official international exhibitions during the Cold War.

Mina Chow FAIA, Narrator and patriotic daughter of immigrants inspired to become an architect from her parent's engagement pictures at the 1964 NY World's Fair.

Frank Gehry FAIA, world-renowned architect celebrated for his innovative contemporary architecture.

Barton Myers FAIA, award-winning American architect selected to design the U.S. Pavilion at the 1992 Seville World Expo, the beginning of the end of American participation at World's Fairs.

James Biber FAIA, award-winning American design architect for the U.S.A. Pavilion at the 2015 World Expo in Milan, Italy. His firm was among those who suffered major fiscal losses while working on the U.S. Pavilion in Milan.

Barry Howard, American exhibition designer selected with Barton Myers to design the exhibitions for the U.S. Pavilion at the 1992 Seville World Expo. His expo experiences led to his disillusion.



Jack Masey



Mina Chow



Frank Gehry



"Chow... convincingly demonstrates in her film that the result of this shortsighted decision has been a series of national embarrassments."

--Witold Rybczynski, Architect Magazine



Think Progress, May 24, 2010
Popular Science, May 6, 2010

"If you're playing in the world arena and you lose face—that's serious."

--Frank Gehry FAIA, Pritzker Prize Architect
"FACE OF A NATION"

ABOUT THE FILMMAKER

Mina Chow FAIA NCARB is an award-winning interdisciplinary filmmaker, licensed architect, USC Adjunct Assoc. Professor of Architecture and Faculty Fellow at the USC Center on Public Diplomacy. The goal of Mina's work--to communicate important underlying relationships between design and culture--was recognized at the 2012 Venice Architecture Biennale, and by the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, the California Architectural Foundation, the USC Ambassador's Fund, the USC Fund for Innovative Teaching, and the Peerless Award for Architectural Design.

JOIN US

As a partner, we'd like to collaborate with you as we release **"FACE OF A NATION: WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WORLD'S FAIR?"** to audiences across the country through our *National Outreach Campaign*. Our release will reach a broad audience and achieve our mission objectives through the following initiatives:

1. **National Television Broadcast** reaching millions of viewers
2. **International Global Engagement Campaign** at the Dubai World Expo
3. **National Educational screenings** at universities and non-profits nationwide
4. **Digital Release** through Show & Tell streaming and virtual events platform



"Mina Chow wants American ideals to shine on the world stage again, and you will too after seeing her troubling but ultimately hopeful journey. Everyone should experience her passion, and ask the questions in this important film."

--Fred Bernstein, NY Times/WSJ/
Architectural Record

CONTACT

✉ faceofanationfilm@gmail.com



www.faceofanationmovie.com



@faceofanation8



@faceofanationmovie



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