

*featuring*

**DITA VON TEESE**

**LARRY KING**

**HUGH HEFNER**

**BETTIE PAGE**

**NAKED**

**AMBITION**





# NAKED AMBITION

**73 MINS / DOCUMENTARY / UNITED STATES / ENGLISH / 2023**

**OFFICIAL WEBSITE**  
**OFFICIAL STILLS**

## CONTACT

### **NATIONAL PUBLICITY**

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## LOGLINE

A documentary celebrating the overlooked career of Bunny Yeager, once known as the “world’s prettiest photographer,” who helped popularize the bikini, Bettie Page, and the Playboy pin-up.

## SUMMARY

Bunny Yeager, once heralded as the world's prettiest photographer, had a huge influence on 20th-century pop culture, though few people know her name. Whether by popularizing the bikini, helping discover Bettie Page, shaping the image of Playboy, or inventing the selfie, Bunny was a trailblazer whose work bucked against conservative 1950s America and helped pave the way for the feminist movement and the sexual revolution. Yet the very changes she helped usher in would soon render her a forgotten relic... until now. Featuring testimonies from Dita Von Teese, Bruce Weber, and Larry King, *Naked Ambition* is a rediscovery of a brilliant yet overlooked artist.



## DIRECTORS STATEMENT

In 2012, Dennis embarked on a passionate quest to convince Bunny Yeager, a living legend, to share her extraordinary life on film. Undeterred by Bunny's initial reluctance, Dennis persisted for two years, fueled by an unwavering determination to unveil her captivating narrative. Finally, in 2014, Bunny agreed and plans rapidly materialized.

However, fate dealt a cruel hand on the day of Bunny's first interview. Despite falling ill and needing to reschedule, she was convinced she could summon the strength to join the set the next day, only for her condition to worsen overnight. Tragically, Bunny passed away ten days later, leaving the project in dormancy for five years.

Amidst this period of hiatus, Dennis and Kareem found themselves captivated by another tale—the poignant chronicle of Miami Beach's elderly population in the 1970s, immortalized through the lenses of two young photographers in "The Last Resort." As they wove this narrative, thoughts of a new collaboration emerged. Bunny's story emerged as the ideal follow-up to their previous partnership, offering a unique perspective on Miami's evolution and that of our society through Bunny Yeager's groundbreaking pin-up photography.

The project's revival in the fall of 2019 was met with the unforeseen obstacle of the COVID-19 pandemic, yet the team persisted, undeterred by the myriad challenges. Bunny's resilience, mirrored in her life journey, became a beacon of inspiration for us as filmmakers. Despite setbacks, and with the help of our remarkable producer and editor, Dia Kontaxis, our unwavering dedication to bringing Bunny's story to life persisted, drawing strength from her mantra of persistence and determination.

In many ways, the film's underlying message resonates beyond Bunny's era, echoing a timeless truth: never cease pushing forward in pursuing your artistic goals. The journey is fraught with challenges, but as Bunny's legacy reminds us, persistence is the key. The film serves as a testament to the indomitable spirit of creators, urging them to stay ready for the moment when everything aligns and to seize the opportunity to make an impact. Bunny surely did, and we hope this film is a testament to her indomitable spirit and artistry.

—Dennis Scholl & Kareem Tabsch







# FILMMAKER BIOS

## **Dennis Scholl - Director/Producer**

Dennis Scholl is an award-winning documentary filmmaker focusing on arts and artists. His interview subjects have included Robert Redford, Frank Gehry, Wynton Marsalis, Ai Wei Wei, and Tracy Emin. He is the director of the feature documentary *The Last Resort*, that he co-directed with Kareem Tabsch and which won the Miami Jewish Film Festival Audience Choice Award, received a national theatrical release, and is currently available on Netflix. He recently released *Lifeline*, the story of 50s Ab Ex Painter, Clyfford Still, distributed by Kino Lorber, and *Singular*, a documentary on Cecile McLorin Salvant, three-time jazz vocal Grammy winner, which was awarded Best Documentary by the Haiti International Film Festival and it is currently screening in syndication on public television stations across the US, via American Public Television. He has received 23 regional Emmys from the National Academy of Television Arts and Science, all for documentaries on art and artists.

## **Kareem Tabsch - Director/Producer**

Kareem Tabsch is an Emmy-nominated filmmaker whose work focuses on documenting that which exists on the fringes of mainstream society. His feature films include *Mucho Mucho Amor* (2020) *The Last Resort* (2018), which he co-directed with Dennis Scholl, and the short film *Dolphin Lover* (2015). Tabsch's work has been included at prestigious festivals like Sundance, SXSW, HotDocs and has been featured in outlets like The New York Times, Los Angeles Times and NPR among others. In 2020, Tabsch's film *Mucho Mucho Amor* was named one of the 20 essential Latino Films by The New York Times. It was nominated for Emmy, GLADD, Imagen Awards and named Best Latinx Film by the National Association of Latino Independent Producers. He was named a '40 under 40' Documentary filmmaker by DocNYC, America's largest documentary film festival. Tabsch is a first-generation American of Latino and Middle Eastern descent. Rush Limbaugh once said his work was contributing to the decay of American Society.

### **Konstantia Kontaxis - Producer/Editor**

Konstantia Kontaxis is a filmmaker and media artist. She has created films on artists: Carmen Herrera, Anna Valentina Murch, Cundo Bermudez, Jose Bedia, Maria Sevastaki, Robert Zakanitch, Shan Shan Sheng and Brad Goldberg among others. Kontaxis has been awarded film commissions by the city of Miami and the Corning Museum of Glass of New York and video art commissions by Broward County and Miami Art Central. Her works have been screened at festivals, museums and galleries around the world including Rome, Venice (Art Biennale), New York (Tribeca Film Festival), Montreal (Art Fifa), Paris, Athens, Ankara, Lleida, Taipei, Miami (Art Basel). She has received honors at the Moondance Film Festival, Cleveland Film festival, Yorkton Film Festival, UFVA, Park City Film Music Festival. As an editor, she has worked for Israeli film director Amos Kollek, and New York photographer Brenda Ann Kenneally. Her professional credits also include production coordinator and script supervisor for several feature films. She is currently an associate professor and the director of the Motion Picture Program at the University of Miami School of Communication.

### **Ed Talavera - Cinematographer**

Ed Talavera is an award-winning cinematographer of narrative and documentary feature films. Talavera's numerous film credits include work aired on HBO, Showtime, Cinemax, and theaters worldwide. His theatrical film credits include *Sue*, *Perfect Prey*, *Queenie in Love*, *Bridget*, and *Mi Amor*. Feature documentaries include *One Water*, *Finding Gaston*, *Lifeline*, and *Singular*. His films *Landscape Sublime* and *Jen Clay: the Texture of Anxiety* recently won Suncoast Regional Emmy Awards. Talavera's unique and evocative visual style has garnered international praise and awards. A graduate of New York University's Graduate Film program, Professor Talavera serves as the coordinator of the M.F.A program in the Department of Cinematic Arts at the University of Miami and faculty director of the Canes Film Festival, an annual showcase of student films.

### **Alex Fumero - Executive Producer**

Alex Fumero is an Emmy-nominated producer, creative developer and writer. Recent credits include *Mucho Mucho Amor* (Netflix), an Official Selection of the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, SxSW Film Festival, True/False, Miami Film Festival and more, and the critically-acclaimed sketch show, *I Think You Should Leave* with Tim Robinson (Netflix/Irony Point). He previously served as Vice President, Original Programming, for HBO, where his projects included *2 Dope Queens*, *Random Acts of Flyness*, *the Untitled Jon Stewart Project*, *All Def Comedy*, *Any Given Wednesday with Bill Simmons*, *Felipe Esparza: Translate This* and *Chris Gethard: Career Suicide*, among others. Prior to joining HBO, Fumero was Senior Director of Programming & Development for Fusion. Fumero is a member of the Television Academy, the Latinx writer's group G.O.A.L.S, and holds a BFA from NYU Tisch.



# CREDITS

**Featuring (in alphabetical order)**

Carlos Betancourt  
Sarahjane Blum  
Ed Christin  
Cherilu Duval  
Dian Hanson  
Lisa Irwin  
Larry King  
Nani Maka  
Dick Rozenzweig  
Holly Ruscin  
Eric Shiner  
Christy Strong  
Guinevere Turner  
Marcia Valibus  
Dita Von Teese  
Bruce Weber

**Associate Producer**

Marlon Johnson

**Assistant Editor**

Ellie Konn

**Online Editor**

Rodrigo Arauz

**Additional Cinematography by**

Joey Daoud  
Art Nobo

**Assistant Camera**

Abdiel Thorne

**Sound Mixer**

Brooks Reid

**Art Department**

George Hernandez

**Sound Design and Mix**

Scott Pringle

**5.1 Surround Mix**

Tony Pipitone  
Scott Pringle

**Color Correction**

Ed Talavera

**Hair and Makeup Artist**

Alexis Lamborn  
Orestes de la Paz

**ASL Interpreters**

Brenda Adkinson  
Abdiel Davila-Cruz  
Mairim Penote

**Production Assistants**

Ryan Capiro  
Bennet Holgerson  
Jason Fitzroy Jeffers  
Keisha Rae Witherspoon

**Music Supervisor**

Groove Garden  
Melissa Chapman & Annie Pearlman

**Archival Rights and Clearances**

Lost and Found Research and Clearances  
Matthew Fisher

**Clearance Counsel**

Jayaram Law Firm







## ABOUT MUSIC BOX FILMS

Music Box Films is the prestigious North American distributor of acclaimed international, independent, and documentary feature films. Recent releases include *Mountains*, the debut feature from Monica Sorelle, who took home the Independent Spirit Awards “Someone to Watch” Award, and *In the Summers*, Alessandra Lacorazza’s heartfelt and subtly powerful coming-of-age directorial debut that won the two top prizes in the U.S. Dramatic Competition at Sundance. Upcoming releases include the Cannes Directors’ Fortnight baseball comedy *Eephus* by Carson Lund, and *Ghost Trail*, Jonathan Millet’s tense and haunting revenge thriller that premiered at Cannes Film Festival.

Since its formation in 2007, Music Box Films has distributed award-winning films and art-house favorites that include Academy Award winner *Ida*, *Meru* (from Oscar-winning filmmakers Jimmy Chin and E. Chai Vaserhelyi), Christian Petzold’s *Transit*, the popular Swedish comedy *A Man Called Ove*, and the original *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*. Music Box Films is independently owned and operated by the Southport Music Box Corporation, which also owns and operates the Music Box Theatre, Chicago’s premier venue for independent and foreign films. For more information, visit [www.musicboxfilms.com](http://www.musicboxfilms.com).

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