

SUBURBAN FURY

A FILM BY ROBINSON DEVOR

120 min. | USA | 2024



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LOGLINE

In 1975, suburban mother Sara Jane Moore tried to assassinate President Gerald Ford. In an original and compelling new work told in the distinctive style of director Robinson Devor, *Suburban Fury* explores her radicalization – revealing how isolation and ideology can warp the American dream.

SYNOPSIS

Suburban Fury is a gripping portrait of Sara Jane Moore, a single mother from suburban San Francisco who, in 1975, attempted to assassinate President Gerald Ford.

More than a historical retelling, the film is an intimate character study — and a chilling mirror of America's ideological divide. Framed around unprecedented access to Moore herself, it unfolds as a first-person monologue shot across the Bay Area sites where her radicalization took root. Blending rare archival footage with a stylized imagined exchange between Moore and her FBI handler, Suburban Fury traces her transformation from patriotic volunteer and government informant to disillusioned revolutionary with a gun in her hand.

Fifty years later, Moore's story feels eerily prescient — a reflection of how ordinary citizens can be swept into extremism, conspiracy, and rage. Suburban Fury doesn't offer easy answers; instead, it immerses us in one woman's unraveling and the country that mirrored her fracture.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

As with many of the films I have made, I try to see the good in all people — no matter how corrupt they may appear at first look. As such, I fought every day to bring compassion and open-mindedness to Sara Jane Moore and her life story. Her paradoxical nature is unique, but not so far from a universal experience. Are any of us reliable narrators when it comes to speaking nakedly about our own lives? What do we omit? What is private? What is relevant? These issues came up constantly with Sara Jane. As it turns out, many of the things she did not want to talk about in the end did feel extraneous, and fell away from the cut.

How open was Sara Jane about her dealings with the FBI and the damage that she may have caused? She herself said she could not talk about certain things. I do believe that, as she is still under watch by the Secret Service, all her informant reports and correspondences with the FBI remain sealed by the government, and overall key facts remain hidden. And yet I do believe Sara Jane was honest about things in a way that was liberating for her.

On a broader level, the film is more than an examination of Sara Jane. It is a celebration of the many fearless activists, leaders and artists who envisioned change and championed the oppressed — the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, the Black Panthers, the Women's Liberation Movement - to name just a few. It is also a love letter to the city of San Francisco and all of its beauty and radical spirit. It was also a chance to experiment with non-traditional interview set-ups - like Sara Jane speaking frequently from behind glass or in the backseat of cars - or to attempt narrative voiceover tactics that are daringly poetic and not literal matches with the visuals.

Some of the major influences in this film have been: filmmaker James Benning - his formalism, his minimalism, and his great associative powers, especially in crime films like *"Landscape Suicide"* (1987); poet and filmmaker Sandra Hochman's *"Year of the Woman"* (1972), which incorporates the director's poetry against the 1972 Democratic Convention; Emile de Antonio's *"In The Year of The Pig"* (1968) - with its hallucinatory sound design against war footage and interviews of politicians, soldiers, and activists; Kazuo Hara's *"The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On"* (1987) - in which Kenzō Okuzaki, the ex-soldier who hunts down his murderous WWII commanders, states the greatest enemies of peace are loyalty to family and country; Chantal Akerman's *"Jeanne Dielman"* - with its quotidian domestic horrors and her protagonist's' simmering rage beneath the surface appearance; the great Italian director Pier Paolo Pasolini - a self-proclaimed "gay Marxist Catholic" and a beautiful example of three disparate people living as a unified whole.

PRESS QUOTES

"To the list of great documentaries rooted in interviews of a single person, such as Shirley Clarke's 'Portrait of Jason' and Jean Eustache's 'Numero Zero,' add Robinson Devor's 'Suburban Fury.' The loose threads of Moore's life story suggest the elusiveness of identity itself... and contradictory goals of which a life is made—and the uncanny connections of intimate motives to the grand currents of history."

– **Richard Brody, *The New Yorker***

"Riveting. [A] fascinating new documentary. Bursting with energy of the archives and the thrill of a narrator who can't quite be trusted."

– **Lovia Gyarke, *The Hollywood Reporter***

"A Rapt Documentary Thriller... 'Suburban Fury' does that rare thing and offers a highly specific motivation for Moore's infamous crime... Holds you with a kind of rapt tension."

– **Owen Gleiberman, *Variety***

"Fascinating. Paints its subject as a microcosm for the country that produced her."

– **David Ehrlich, *IndieWire***

One of the "23 Best (and Most Anticipated) Documentaries of 2024"

"Nothing short of riveting, excavating a strange, compelling story from the footnotes of history... The impressive breadth of archival footage manages to sidestep the era's clichés, while Moore, who served more than 30 years of a life prison sentence, shows off her prime storytelling skills and occasionally some deft evasions."

– **Lisa Wong Macabasco, *Vogue***

"A time capsule of 1970s San Francisco.... The film unfolds like a thriller."

– **G. Allen Johnson, *San Francisco Chronicle***

"Robinson Devor is no stranger to unusual subjects... In his new film, *Suburban Fury*, Devor sits with Moore to learn her story. Through her eyes, the film presents the immense social and political turmoil of the early to mid-'70s, interlacing copious archival footage into interviews with Moore taking place throughout San Francisco."

– **Dan Schindel, *IDA - Documentary Magazine***

"Robinson Devor's filmmaking has always defied easy definition... Through Devor's distinctive approach—a fragmented narrative divided into numbered chapters—Sara Jane emerges as a dizzyingly multifaceted figure, a collage of complex and contradictory selves. The film is also a rich portrait of an era of American history with distinct similarities to today—a time of intense anger at the government, paranoia about surveillance, distrust between the classes, and impassioned protest movements."

– **Lucia Ahrens Dorf, *Film Comment***

“(A) remarkable documentary set in the turbulent early ‘70s... It’s a really, really extraordinary film.”

– Matt Carey, *Deadline*

FILM TEAM

ROBINSON DEVOR - Director, Producer, Writer, Editor

Robinson Devor is a Seattle-based feature film writer and director. His 2018 feature documentary, *Pow Wow*, debuted at the Locarno Film Festival and in the US at Lincoln Center’s Art of the Real series. It was hailed by New Yorker film critic Richard Brody as “one of the best films of this or any year,” while Slate called the multi-character film “ambitious, surreal and intoxicating.” Devor’s previous documentary, *Zoo*, made its world premiere at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival and went on to play at the Cannes Film Festival in the Directors’ Fortnight section. The press called the film “masterful” (Dennis Lim, *The New York Times*) and “a breathtakingly original nonfiction work” (Scott Foundas, *Variety*). It was named by *Filmmaker* magazine as “One of the Top 25 Indie Films of The Decade.” Devor’s 2005 narrative feature, *Police Beat*, premiered in Dramatic Competition at Sundance, where it was called “emotionally devastating” (*Rolling Stone*) and “Sundance at its best” (*Los Angeles Times*). The film has since been included in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art. Devor was named one of *Variety*’s “10 Directors To Watch” for his 1999 directorial debut, the neo-noir comedy *The Woman Chaser*, which premiered at the New York Film Festival and later screened at Sundance.

JASON REID - Producer, Writer

Jason Reid is an award-winning producer, editor and director. He directed and produced the Emmy® award-winning documentary feature *Man Zou: Beijing to Shanghai* and the Webby award-winning *Sonicsgate: Requiem for a Team*, which aired on both CNBC and ESPN. He also

produced the documentary features *K2: Siren of the Himalayas* and *Evergreen: The Road to Legalization*, which both streamed on Netflix, and *Dirtbag: The Legend of Fred Beckey*, which won 26 awards at film festivals and is currently streaming on Amazon Prime. He is also producer of *Super Frenchie*, a documentary feature that aired on National Geographic. Reid was selected as a Film Independent Fellow for the ITVS funded documentary feature, *Sam Now*, which he produced and edited. It has screened at over 50 festivals, winning 15 awards, including 10 for Best Documentary, and was nominated for Best Editing in 2022 by the IDA. *Sam Now* premiered theatrically in 2023 and received The New York Times Critics’ Pick, aired nationally on PBS’s Independent Lens and is currently streaming on The Criterion Channel. It was nominated for a 2024 Peabody Award.

ZACHARIAH SEBASTIAN - Producer

Zach Sebastian is founder of Santa West, a production company making its debut with *Suburban Fury*. Sebastian and Robinson Devor are also collaborating on the forthcoming feature film *You Can’t Win*, based on the cult novel by hobo and criminal Jack Black (1926). Cutting his teeth in Reality TV, he has since focused on branded content working with clients such as Marc Jacobs, Vans, BBC, Adidas Originals, Fred Perry and Mello Music.

BOB FINK - Executive Producer, Writer, Archival Research

Bob Fink is a Minnesota born filmmaker who received his BA (psychology) from Stanford University in 1970 and his MD from the University of Minnesota in 1975. He went on to practice medicine for over 40 years. Fink made his first film, the award-winning documentary feature *Wally*, in 2006 which screened at 35 film festivals around the world. He worked in various capacities on *Zoo*, *Grassroots*, *Tsuyako*, *Sweetheart Deal*, *The Immaculate Conception of Little Dizzle* and other films before retiring from medicine to follow his lifelong dream of attending film school. In 2020, at the age of 72, he received his Bachelor of Media Arts Degree (Visual Arts) from the Waikato Institute of Technology in Hamilton, New Zealand. Shortly thereafter, he began working full time with Robinson Devor to create *Suburban Fury*.

CHARLES MUDEDE - Writer

Charles Mudede is a Seattle-based writer, filmmaker and cultural critic. He is presently Associate Editor for the Seattle-based weekly, *The Stranger*, as well as professor at Cornish College of the Arts. Mudede is also the co-writer of Robinson Devor's *Police Beat* and *Zoo*, and the writer/director of the 2020 feature *Thin Skin*. A founder of the Seattle Research Institute, a Marxist circle inspired by the Frankfurt School and the work of Hardt and Negri, Mudede and SRI have published two books, "Politics Without The State" and "Experimental Theology." Mudede's academic work has appeared in numerous books, including "Nervous Conditions," "Critical Digital Studies: A Reader and Life In The Wires" and "Life Science." His journalism has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Village Voice*, *LA Weekly*, *The District Weekly*, *Cinema Scope*, *Nest Magazine*, *Souls Journal*, and *Radical Urban Theory*.

D.D. WIGLEY - Executive Producer

D.D. Wigley is a film producer and playwright. She has produced seven documentary features, including the Peabody Award documentary nominee *Sam Now* and the Cannes Film Festival feature *Be Natural: The Untold Story of Alice Guy-Blaché*, which was released theatrically in 2019. Other documentary features to her credit include *Anbessa*, which premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival, and *There Was, There Was Not*, which premiered at True/False in 2024. She currently has numerous documentary features in post-production, as well as two documentary shorts. D.D. has also produced two narrative features and four narrative shorts with four more narrative features, one narrative series and one narrative short in various stages of production. As a playwright, D.D. has seen thirteen of her works produced. She was an artist-in-residence at the Seven Devils Playwrights Conference in June 2024.

PATRICK WARBURTON - Executive Producer

Patrick Warburton is known to many for the role of Elaine's laconic boyfriend "Puddy" in the famed NBC comedy *Seinfeld*. He starred for seven seasons on the hit CBS comedy *Rules of Engagement* and is now set to star in NBC's upcoming sitcom series *Crowded*. Warburton also played "Guy" in the international blockbuster comedy *Ted* and recently completed shooting the

sequel *Ted 2*, where he reprises his role. He starred on the ABC hit comedy *Less than Perfect*, as "Jeb Denton," an opinionated network anchorman; and on the hit show *NewsRadio* as "Johnny Johnson" the unscrupulous business rival who takes over the station. Warburton starred in Disney's live action comedy *Underdog* as the archenemy "Cad." He is also one of the busiest voiceover artists in Hollywood for his many characters including the role of the overzealous cop, "Joe Swanson," on the long-running comedy *Family Guy*. In 1999, he played the lead role in Robinson Devor's feature narrative debut *The Woman Chaser*.

SU KIM - Executive Producer

Su Kim is an Academy Award-nominated, Emmy® and two-time Peabody Award-winning documentary producer. Her credits include the Oscar®-nominated *Hale County This Morning This Evening*, *Free Chol Soo Lee* and *Midnight Traveler*. Kim is a former Women at Sundance fellow and is the recipient of the 2022 Sundance Amazon Studios Nonfiction Producers Award. Films in release currently include *Bitterbrush*, *Hidden Letters*, *Sansón and Me* and *The Tuba Thieves*.

JOSHUA ZEMAN - Executive Producer

Joshua Zeman is the director of the acclaimed true-crime documentary *Cropsey*. In 2017, he EP'd, with Alex Gibney, and directed *The Killing Season*, an unscripted docu-series. Recent director credits include the 6-part docu-series *Murder Mountain*; the Netflix hit *The Sons of Sam*; and *The Loneliest Whale*, EP'd by Leonardo DiCaprio, which was released by Bleeker Street and nominated for 3 Critics Choice Awards. His latest film, *Checkpoint Zoo*, premiered and won an Audience Award at the 2024 Tribeca Festival.

SEAN KIRBY - Cinematographer

Sean Kirby has photographed a multitude of films that have premiered at the Sundance, Tribeca, Toronto and Cannes film festivals, including the documentaries *Zoo* and *Pow Wow* (Robinson Devor), *Happy Valley* and *The Tillman Story* (Amir Bar-Lev), *Racing Extinction* (Louie Psihoyos), *We Are X* (Stephen Kijak), and the narrative films *Lovely*, *Still* (Nik Fackler), *Magic Valley* (Jaffe Zinn), *Against The Current* (Peter Callahan) and *Police Beat* (Robinson Devor). Kirby has also served as the director of photography on episodic documentaries, including *Five Came Back* (produced by Steven Spielberg, Scott Rudin and John Battsek)

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ADAM SEKULER - Supervising Editor

Adam Sekuler is a filmmaker, curator, educator and editor. Screening in forums and film festivals

throughout the US and internationally, his many alternative films strike a delicate balance between stylization and naturalism, creating a poetic and lyrical form of visual storytelling. He is interested in the intersection of documentary and fiction filmmaking practices. Sekuler is known for *Cinema-19* (2020), *36 Hours* (2019) and *Open Air* (2015). He is currently Assistant Professor of Journalism and Media Production at the University of Michigan-Dearborn and has taught at Loyola University and Skidmore College. His latest documentary feature, *The Flamingo*, made its world premiere at the 2024 Camden International Film Festival.

JOHN W. COMERFORD - Consulting Producer

John W. Comerford is a principal at Paradigm Studio, an independent motion picture production company based in the San Francisco area. He recently produced the acclaimed feature drama *Wallflower*, the award-winning conservation documentary *The Wild* and the race and sports documentary *Marshan Lynch: A History*. Comerford is currently assisting as a producer on the documentary *Kinsu Maru*. He previously co-wrote and co-produced the music-driven drama *Around the Fire*, which has been distributed worldwide, and the feature film and television series *Icons Among Us: jazz in the present tense*. Distributors and exhibitors of Comerford's work include Showtime, Starz/Encore, Public Television, Netflix, Hulu, Amazon, Peacock, American Film Institute, and the SXSW, Seattle and Mill Valley film festivals. In addition, his work has been exhibited and supported by institutions such as The Smithsonian, Jazz at Lincoln Center and National Endowment for the Arts.

PAUL MATTHEW MOORE - Original Score

Paul Matthew Moore has scored sixteen films, including Robinson Devor's *Police Beat* and *Zoo*, which was featured in the Sundance and Cannes festivals. Since moving to Seattle in 1995, he has worked with Wayne Horvitz, Eyvind Kang, Timothy Young, Tim Hecker, Randall Dunn, Stuart Dempster and Kronos Quartet, among many others. Moore worked with Dayna Hanson on the film *Improvement Club* and toured with her live theater piece, *Gloria's Cause*. Choreographers with whom he has collaborated include Mark Dendy, Mark Haim, Rob Kitsos, Jennifer Salk and many more. He has also transcribed and performed scores for ten seasons with the Chamber Dance Company. Moore is currently a lecturer in the Music Department at the University of Washington in Seattle.

BRIAN BECKER - Archival Producer

Brian Becker is a New York-based filmmaker who directed and produced *Time Bomb Y2K* (co-directed with Marley McDonald), which premiered on HBO in 2023. The film's festival run included True/False, Hot Docs, Sheffield DocFest, IDFA, Camden International Film Festival, and DOC NYC. Brian served as archival producer on *Free Chol Soo Lee*, *MLK/FBI*, *Spaceship Earth* and *The Fourth Estate*, and as co-producer on *Bobby Kennedy for President*. He began his career on the Oscar-winning *O.J.: Made in America*. He is a 2022 DOC NYC "40 Under 40" recipient, Impact Partners Producing Fellow, Points North Fellow and a FOCAL Jane Mercer Researcher of the Year award nominee.

CREDITS

Robinson Devor

Director, Producer, Writer, Editor

Jason Reid

Producer, Writer

Zachariah Sebastian

Producer

Bob Fink

Executive Producer, Lead Archival Researcher, Writer

Charles Mudede

Writer

D.D. Wigley

Patrick Warburton

Su Kim

Joshua Zeman

Executive Producers

Sean Kirby

Director of Photography

John W. Comerford

Consulting Producer

Paul Matthew Moore

Original Score

Matt Levinthal

Roxanne Tarn

Co-Producers

Brian Becker

Wyatt Fiske
Brittan Dunham
Archival Producers

Adam Sekuler
Supervising Editor

Michael McConville
Art Director

Gerald Sullivan
Production Designer

Gena Segala
Ms. Moore's Wardrobe

AJ Lenzi
Second Unit Director of Photography

Tim Maffia
Colorist

Tony Volante
Co-Supervising Sound Editor / Sound Designer

Dan Timmons
Co-Supervising Sound Editor / Re-recording Mixer

Ryan Billia
Jeremy Bloom
Sound Effects Editor / Additional Re-Recording Mixer

Alex Stuart
Sound Effects Editor & Dialogue Editor

J. Baab
Associate Art Director

Dillon Brown
Online Editor

Matt Levinthal
Darren Lund

Jason Reid
Consulting Editors

Robinson Devor
The Voice of Bert Worthington