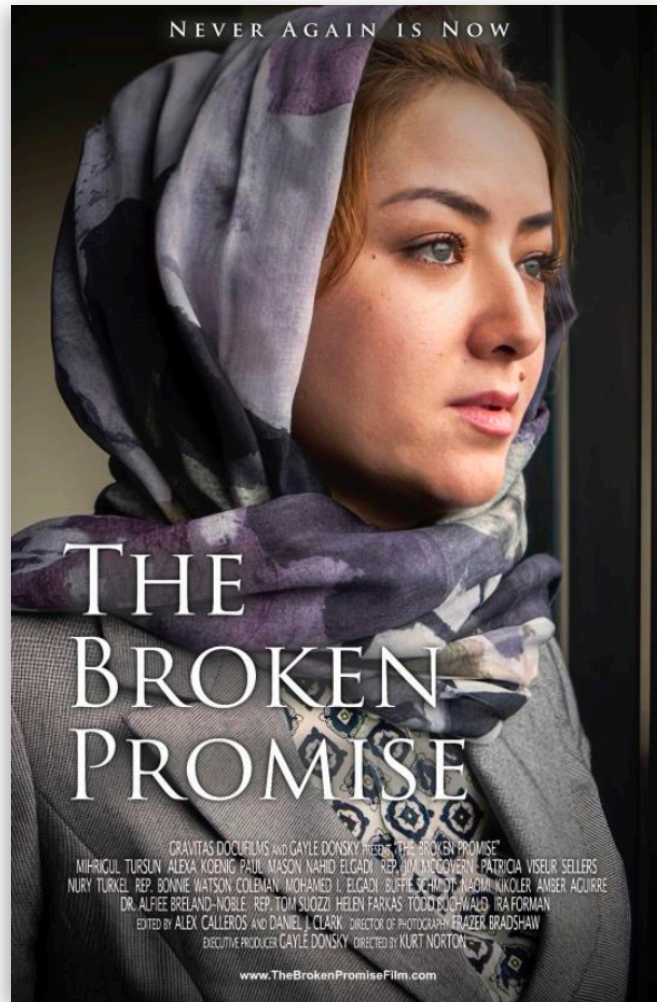


The Broken Promise



"Through moving testimonies spanning the globe and history, The Broken Promise shows us the warning signs that societies are moving to genocidal policies. A beautiful and timely film."

Ruth Ben-Ghiat

Author of Strongmen: From Mussolini to the Present

Run Time | 54:53

Trailer | <https://vimeo.com/720920746>

Website | <https://www.thebrokenpromisefilm.com/>

IMDb | <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt18884406/>

Film Stills | <https://tinyurl.com/y6hmjrp>

Film Poster | <https://tinyurl.com/u88jhrn3>

Press Contact | Gayle Donsky | gaylemjs@comcast.net

Sales Contact | Gravitas Docufilms | kurtornorton@gravitasdocufilms.com

FILM SYNOPSIS

After World War II, humanity declared that genocide would never be allowed to happen again. But “never again” has become “again and again,” from Cambodia to Bosnia to Rwanda to Darfur to China to Ukraine. Why? What makes people dehumanize one another? Why does it keep happening? And what can we do to make “never again” a reality?

The Broken Promise, a feature-length documentary, explores the mechanics of genocide, the conditions that allow it to occur, and the ideas and institutions that stand against it. The film presents the raw, unflinching first-person stories told by the survivors of genocide and how the trauma of genocide ripples through generations.

With insights from forward-thinking policymakers, scholars, and activists, it examines the characteristics of those who perpetrate it—their self-serving goals, their destruction of democratic institutions, and their utter disregard for the slaughter that follows. The interplay of racism, authoritarianism, and impunity is shown to be at the core of genocide.

The challenge is clear - genocide is not a once-in-a-generation event humanity can witness, wring our collective hands over, and consign to the history books. It is a tool authoritarians wield all too easily - and big business is complicit in its use.

While *The Broken Promise* includes honest stories of human cruelty and suffering, they are also stories of the human spirit...and inspiring stories of hope.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

After the Holocaust, the world promised: "never again." Since then, humanity has wrought genocidal terror from Cambodia to Rwanda to Bosnia to Darfur. Now in the Twenty-first Century, the suffering continues with the **Uyghurs** in China, the **Rohingya** in Burma, the **Yazidis** in Iran, and **Ukrainians** at the hands of the Russian government.

The Broken Promise draws from the forward-thinking ideas of scholars and policy-makers, revealing why genocides occur and the ideas and institutions that stand against it. And, how the trauma of genocide is passed from one generation to another.

The Broken Promise shines a light on the ways we can defend ourselves against genocide — and finally ensure that “never again” is now.

LOGLINE

Revealing raw, unflinching stories from genocide survivors, *The Broken Promise* shines a light on how we can overcome authoritarians, defend humanity against genocide and ensure that “never again” becomes a reality.

PRESS

Marin Filmmaker Produces Documentary Revealing the Hell Wreaked by Autocrats

by Nikki Silverstein, PacificSun

<https://pacificsun.com/broken-promise-documentary-marin/>

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

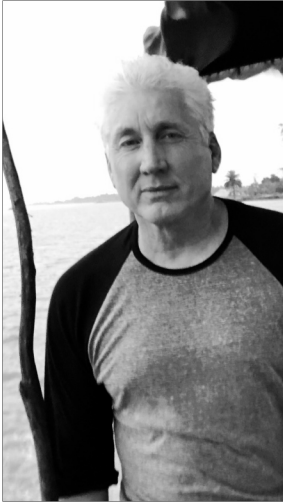
When we began this project, I thought I understood what genocide was. Frankly, I thought it was something that had happened to someone else. After all, I am a white male living in the United States. One of our interview subjects, **Patricia Viseur Sellers**, an international criminal lawyer, and professor, asks her students to "understand which genocide group you belong to." She asks because every survivor of genocide she has ever met never would have believed that it could have happened to them. I decided to try to answer her question. It didn't take long to realize what genocide group I am a part of. I come from a Deaf family. I am hearing, but my parents, aunt, uncle, and grandparents were Deaf. In Hitler's Germany, there was a policy of euthanasia for "those not worthy of life." Deaf people suffered that fate. I grew up seeing discrimination against my Deaf family – seeing how the "other" is marginalized and dehumanized.

That realization encouraged me to think about genocide more expansively. I wondered - have I benefited from genocide? My family has been in Northern California for over 175 years. I have always been proud of the romantic idea of tough and independent people risking it all, traveling to California to create an extraordinary life. In June of 2019, California Governor Gavin Newsom issued an apology through an executive order on behalf of the State of California to California Native American Peoples for the many instances of violence, mistreatment, and neglect inflicted upon Native Americans throughout the state's history. Called the **California Genocide**, Native Peoples, primarily between 1850 and 1859, were systematically killed, and often the killings were induced by bounties offered by the state government. California's first Governor declared, "a war of extermination will continue to be waged between the two races until the Indian race becomes extinct must be expected." The state authorized \$1.29 million (in 1850s dollars) in bounties.

I have had to face the fact that the killings and displacement of California Native Peoples benefited me. The growing prosperity my white family has experienced over the past 175 years in California came at a dark price I had known little about until recently.

Working on this documentary has changed me, and I have faced hard truths about my life, family, and what is true social justice. We hope that spirit is infused in our story - that our film will inspire people to think about our human responsibility to each other and how that idea shapes how we participate in our challenging world. ~ Kurt Norton

FILMMAKERS BIOGRAPHIES



Kurt Norton (director/producer) After a successful career working as a licensed Private Investigator specializing in death penalty cases, Kurt switched to focus on documentary filmmaking. He co-directed and co-produced *These Amazing Shadows* in 2011, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, distributed through IFC, and had multiple broadcasts on the PBS series Independent Lens. He followed by producing the documentary, *Being George Clooney*, a lively look into the world of the audio dubbing of Hollywood movies for the international market (2016 – Netflix Worldwide); *The S Word* (2017), a stirring glimpse into the lives of suicide survivors; co-produced *The Deep Sky* (2017) a narrative feature. He is a Cinematic Arts National Reviewer for YoungArts.

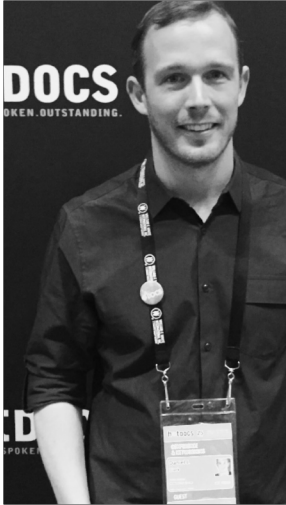


Gayle Donsky (executive producer) produced the short-form documentary *Faces of Genocide* after spending 15 years advocating for human rights. The film received an Outstanding Achievement in Filmmaking award at the Newport Beach Film Festival in 2019. She is a retired social worker who worked in adoptions, foster care, a pediatric outpatient clinic, and private psychotherapy practice. Working in public settings with children, she saw first-hand the devastating effects that dysfunctional institutions and governments have on innocent children and families. She organized “The Judgment on Genocide: An International Citizens’ Tribunal for Sudan” in New York. She is a recipient of the Jewish Community Relations Council’s Honorable Tom Lantos Memorial Award for Unsung Heroes.



Alex Calleros (co-editor) is a Los Angeles-based writer, director, and editor. He is part of the creative team behind the popular YouTube channel *Lessons from the Screenplay* and co-hosts the companion podcast *Beyond the Screenplay*. Alex's feature film and television editing credits include the Netflix original series *Evil Genius: The True Story of America's Most Diabolical Bank Heist*, *Being George Clooney*, and *These Amazing Shadows*. In 2011 Alex co-founded Finite Films, an innovative production company. Finite Films produced 12 short films inspired by user-generated rules or constraints in an ambitious year-long experiment. Alex went on to co-write, direct, and produce the award-winning web series *Anamnesis*. He is currently a Senior Video Editor on the Cinematic Team at BioWare.

FILMMAKERS BIOGRAPHIES (cont.)



Daniel J. Clark (co-editor) is a Sundance-supported artist whose debut feature, *Behind the Curve*, premiered at Hot Docs Film Festival in April 2018. Daniel produces short-form comedy alongside documentaries, notably directing sketches for Comedy Central, IFC, and Funny or Die. He won Best Pilot at the New York Television Festival in 2014 for the comedy *Cowards* and Seriesfest 2019 for the sketch comedy *Kwaczala*. In addition to directing, Daniel shoots, edits, and even sound mixes. Some of his editing work can be seen in the Emmy-nominated Netflix series *Ugly Delicious* and *Cheer*. He is originally from Delaware County, Pennsylvania, educated at Ball State University and Syracuse University, and resides in Los Angeles with his partner Caroline and two middle-aged cats.



Frazer Bradshaw (cinematographer) makes films, both as a director and as a cinematographer. Frazer attended a fine arts high school, where he got an early foundation in the traditional visual arts. Not until his fifth year of art school did he first begin working in film. His first directorial feature, *Everything Strange and New*, premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2009, and went on to win an International Film Critics Prize, and the Cinevision Award in Munich. It was also nominated for two Gotham Awards and an Independent Spirit Award. He has shot 13 narrative features including Richard Levien's *Collisions* (2018) and nearly as many documentary features, including Jamie Meltzer's *Informant* (2013), *These Amazing Shadows* (2011), and *Being George Clooney* (2016), work on the Focus Features hit *Babies* (2010).

QUOTES FROM THE FILM

"What happened to the text in our textbook, 'Never Again?' What happened to that vow? What happened to that promise?"

~ Nury Turkel, co-chair, United States Commission on International Religious Freedom
author, "No Escape: The True Story of China's Genocide of the Uyghurs"

"Genocide is not a single act. Deliberate decisions are made over a gradual period of time. It's a process. It's a phenomenon."

~ Naomi Kikoler, director, Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

"You can't change the past. But you can help to shape the future. How do you prevent genocides from happening? What are the warning signs?"

~ U.S. Rep. Jim McGovern (MA - 2nd District)

INTERVIEWS

(in alphabetical order)

Nahid Abunama-Elgadi

Daughter of Mohamed Elgadi -Torture Survivor
Artist, Teacher, and Activist

Amber Aguirre

Daughter of Helen Farkas - Holocaust Survivor
Ceramic Sculptor

Dr. Alfie Breland-Noble

Psychologist and Researcher
Founder: AAKOMA Project

Todd Buchwald

Former Ambassador, Office of Criminal Justice
U.S. Department of State

Mohamed Ibrahim Elgadi

Torture Survivor, Sudan
Ed.D. - University of Massachusetts Amherst

Helen Farkas

Holocaust Survivor - Auschwitz
Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp

Ira Foreman

Former Special Envoy on Anti-Semitism
U.S. State Department

Naomi Kikoler

Director
Simon-Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Alexa Koenig

Executive Director
Human Rights Center, Berkeley Law
University of California at Berkeley

Paul Mason

British Journalist
Author: *How to Stop Fascism*

Elisa Massimino

Executive Director
Human Rights Center
Georgetown University Law School

U.S. Rep. Jim McGovern

Massachusetts 2nd District

Buffie Schmidt

Vice-Chair, Sherwood Valley (CA) Rancheria
Instructor - Pomo Language and Culture

Patricia Viseur Sellers

International Criminal Attorney
Adviser on Gender-Related Crimes
Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda Legal
International

U.S. Rep. Tom Suozzi

New York 3rd District

Nury Turkel

Co-Founder and Board Chair,
Uyghur Human Rights Center
Author: *No Escape, The True Story of China's
Genocide of the Uyghurs*

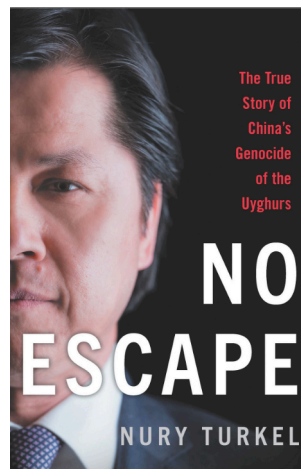
Migrigul Tursun

Uyghur Genocide Survivor
Author: *Place of No Return*

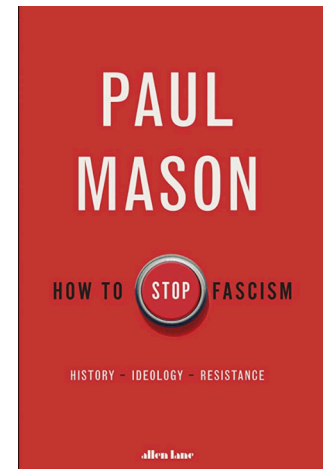
U.S. Rep Bonnie Watson Coleman

New Jersey 12th District

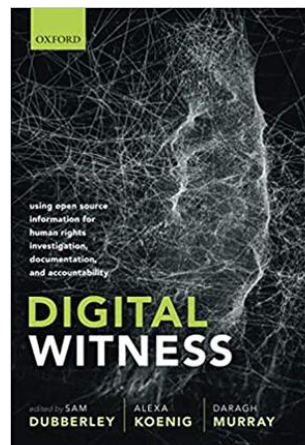
Books written by our interview subjects



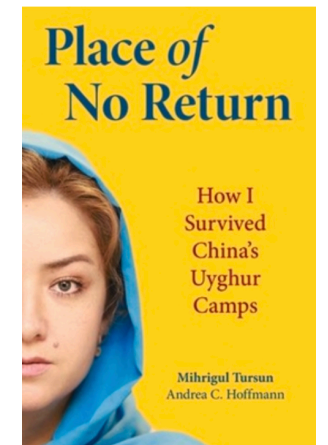
by Nury Turkel



by Paul Mason



by Alexa Koenig



by Mihrigul Tursun

TECHNICAL SPECS

Run Time: 54.53

Color

16:9

Sound Mix: Stereo (Dolby 5.1 available)

DCP Available

Format: HD and 4K

Closed Captions Available

CONTACT INFORMATION

Executive Producer | Gayle Donsky
gaylemjs@comcast.net

Director | Kurt Norton
kurtnorton@gravitasdocufilms.com

Project Website
<https://www.thebrokenpromisefilm.com/>

Project Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/TheBrokenPromiseFilm>

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Gravitas Docufilms
PO Box 5295, Berkeley, California 94705

Website
<http://www.gravitasdocufilms.com/>

FISCAL SPONSORS

The Gotham Film & Media Institute (formerly IFP) | New York
Film Projects, Inc. | San Francisco

CREDITS

Executive Producer

Gayle Donsky

Director

Kurt Norton

Written by

Alex Calleros
Gayle Donsky
Kurt Norton

Editor

Alex Calleros
Daniel J. Clark

Director of Photography

Frazer Bradshaw

Very Special Thanks

Morton Stein

Creative Advisor

Diane Sampson

Interviews (in alphabetical order)

Nahid Abunama–Elgadi
Amber Aguirre
Dr. M. Alfiee Breland–Noble
Todd Buchwald
Mohamed I. Elgadi
Helen Farkas
Ira Forman
Naomi Kikoler
K. Alexa Koenig
Paul Mason
Elisa Massimino
U.S. Rep. Jim McGovern
Buffie Schmidt
Patricia Viseur Sellers
U.S. Rep. Tom Suozzi
Nury Turkel
Mihrigul Tursun
U.S. Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman

Additional Photography

Tony Day
Matthew Caulk
Jeff Schmale
Negin Khazaei
Randy Graham

Sound Recording

Dwayne Dell

Post Production Supervisor

Daniel J. Clark

Color Grading
Frazer Bradshaw

Sound Editing and Re-recording Mixer
Daniel J. Clark

Post Production Consultant
Matt Radecki
Different By Design

Camera Department
Steve Henderson

Clearance Counsel
Chris Perez
Donaldson Callif Perez, LLP

Illustrations
Ahmad Neo

Motion Graphics
DesignCamp

Production Stills
Morton Stein
Patrick Ejelle-Ndille

Production Insurance
Truman Van Dyke

Special Thanks
Beth Van Schaack
Ruth Ben-Ghiat
Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley School of Law
United States House of Representatives
Georgetown University Law Center
The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum
AAKOMA Project
Uyghur Human Rights Project
Yad Veshem, The World Holocaust Remembrance Center
Beth Jacob Congregation of Kitchener-Waterloo
Ready Pictures
Theogene Rudasingwa
Haider Elias
Ramajana Hidic Demirovic
Elise Hagopian Taft Family
Chivy Sok
Tara Dao
Steven Norris
Andrew Hollinger
Jennifer Schmidt
Dr. Fabiana Franco
Eleanor Taylor
Kailei Jewell Ritcheson
Matt Bonaccorsi
Samantha Rucobo
Sydney Harvey
Mike Shanahan

Candice Nicole
Heidi Somers
Audree Norton
Pete Marino
Shane Zhang
Heidi Cuda
Tara Dao
Gerri Miller
Sandy Bulman
Alexey Berlind
Jeremy Russell
Ethel Sinofsky
Joanne Donsky
Stuart Oremland
Steve Gutow
Robin O'heeron
Suzan Bernes
Nina Snegg
David Escobar

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