

TANYA SELVARATNAM producer/writer/actor/activist
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Tanya Selvaratnam is a writer, an actor, an activist, and an Emmy-nominated and Webby-winning producer with more than twenty years of experience working in the areas of arts and social justice. She is also an experienced fundraiser, organizer, connector, and public relations strategist.

For more than a decade, she has been a producer with both Aubin Pictures (founded by Catherine Gund) and Di San Luca Films (founded by Chiara Clemente). For nine years, she was the Communications and Special Projects Officer for the Rubell Family Collection/Contemporary Arts Foundation, based in Miami, FL. In addition, Selvaratnam is the Co-Founder of Humanity for Progress, a social media campaign launched in July 2016 that has videos and memes viewed more than 50 million times.

During the 2016 election cycle, she founded and managed Filmmakers for Hillary, a collective of more than 100 artists around the country that generated shareable content to get out the vote. Currently, Selvaratnam is one of the core organizers for a new initiative called The Federation: a coalition of individuals and organizations to stand up for freedom of expression, keep cultural borders open, and use the arts as a catalyst for critical thinking and empathy. Selvaratnam's co-organizers are the artist Laurie Anderson, the producer Laura Michalchyshyn, and the multimedia journalist Farai Chideya.

Selvaratnam's career in the arts and social justice began with her work assisting Anna Deavere Smith on the development of *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* about the human toll of the L.A. riots, and with her position as a youth organizer on the steering committee of the NGO Forum/Fourth World Conference on Women in China in 1995. In addition, she was an organizer and researcher for the World Health Organization's Kobe Conference on Women and Tobacco in 1999.

Born in Sri Lanka and raised in Long Beach, CA, Selvaratnam is based in New York City and Portland, Oregon. She has been a fellow at Yaddo and Blue Mountain Center. She is the author of *THE BIG LIE: Motherhood, Feminism, and the Reality of the Biological Clock*; and her writing has appeared in *Vogue*, *CNN News*, *Bust*, *Huffington Post*, *The Stranger*, *PAPER*, *Pop and Politics*, the *Toronto Review*, *Art Basel Magazine*, *xoJane*, and *Women's eNews*. In her various roles, she has been quoted in publications including *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *The New Yorker*, *Slate*, *Artforum*, *Cosmo*, *Redbook*, *Metro*, *Village Voice*, *PAPER*, *The Globe and Mail* (Canada), and *New York*. She has been a featured guest on CNN, MSNBC, Al Jazeera, NPR, Sirius XM, Modern Hero TV, and CBS Radio News.

Selvaratnam has participated in panels and conferences around the world, from Kobe, Japan to Abu Dhabi to Hanover, Germany to Los Angeles, California. She has spoken on a variety of subjects, including public health policies regarding women, humanitarian relief work, and the future of theater. She has also conducted workshops on art and activism with students of all ages, from elementary school through graduate school. In May 2017, she received a Woman of Resilience Award from The Memo, a vocational boot-camp for young women of color.

As a producer, Selvaratnam has worked on films, live events, and exhibitions. She has produced projects by Gabri Christa, Chiara Clemente, Lisa Cortes, Laura Dawn, Liz Garbus, Catherine Gund, Le Tigre and Laura Parnes, Mickalene Thomas, Carrie Mae Weems, and Jed Weintrob, among others; and her films have played on HBO, IFC, PBS, Starz, and the Sundance Channel. Selvaratnam has produced campaigns and events for the ACLU, Center for Health and Gender Equity, EMILY's List, Gays Against Guns, Guggenheim Museum, MoveOn, Ms. Foundation for Women, PS122, Rubell Family Collection, Women's March on Washington, World Health Organization, and Yaddo.

As a performer, Selvaratnam has toured around the world with companies including The Wooster Group and The Builders Association; and been a guest actor at New Dramatists, Lincoln Center Directors Lab, Voice & Vision Theater, and the Institute on Arts and Civic Dialogue. She has played on stages at prestigious venues around the world, such as New York's Brooklyn Academy of Music and Lincoln Center, London's Barbican Theatre, and Singapore's Victoria Theatre. In April 2015, she received a MAP Artist Award supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

She has served on the boards of the Third Wave Fund, Boom Arts, The Wooster Group, and Groundswell Community Mural Project; and been an advisor to The DO School, a Germany-based and internationally focused creative educational organization that offers learning experiences to generate global impact.

She received her graduate and undergraduate degrees in Chinese language and legal history from Harvard University. Her Masters thesis on women's organizations in post-Tiananmen China was published in the *Journal of Law and Politics*.

CURRENT

- Co-Founder, The Federation, 2017-
- Co-Founder, Humanity for Progress, 2016-
- Producer, Aubin Pictures: 2007-
- Producer, Di San Luca Films: 2007-

PAST

- Communications and Special Projects Officer, Rubell Family Collection/Contemporary Arts Foundation: 2008-2017
- Senior Producer, Art Not War, 2015-17
- Benefit Producer, Yaddo: 2015
- Gala Producer, PS122: 2014 & 2015
- Producer, HERE Arts Center: 2009-2013
- Benefit Producer, The Wooster Group: 2007
- Research Associate and Conference Assistant Coordinator, World Health Organization: 1999-2003
- Producer: Internet Stories Productions, 1998-2003
- Special Projects Coordinator, Ms. Foundation for Women: 1996-9
- Co-Coordinator, Youth Tent and Producer, Youth Arts and Culture Events, Fourth World Conference on Women: 1995
- Assistant, Anna Deavere Smith: 1993-4
- Program Coordinator, Center for Chinese Legal Studies, Columbia Law School: 1993-4

EDUCATION

Harvard University, M.A., Regional Studies – East Asia, 1996

- Focus: Chinese language and the history of law
- Thesis Topic: the repression of women's organizations in post-Tiananmen China
- Publication: "Backseat Driver: Steering Chinese Women's Voices Through the 1990s," Journal of Law and Politics, University of Virginia Press

Harvard College, B.A., East Asian Languages & Civilizations, 1992

- Focus: Chinese language and history
- Thesis Topic: the interplay of law and practice in the lives of widows in the Qing Dynasty

LANGUAGES

- Majored in Mandarin Chinese (work/study in China, 1987, 1988, 1993, 1995)
- Studied Classical Chinese and Vietnamese for two years
- Studied Spanish for six years (and live/study in Cuba, 2015/16)
- Studied Latin and Greek for six years

SKILLS

- Writing
- Producing films, shows, events, and benefits
- Social media campaign strategy
- Communications and public relations
- Organizing large-scale convenings
- Fundraising
- Public speaking and performing
- Team building and managing
- Mentoring
- Connecting

SELECTION COMMITTEES

- Judge, Emmy Awards, Documentary section: 2016
- Panelist, MAP Fund/Doris Duke Charitable Foundation: 2014
- Panelist, New York State Council on the Arts, 2 sections—Film and Theater: 2010-12
- Panelist, Yaddo: 2009-2012
- Reader, Voice & Vision Theater, 2008

PRODUCER

Films/TV/PSAs (Select List)

1. “CHAVELA” – documentary feature about Mexican lesbian outlaw ranchera Chavela Vargas. Director: Catherine Gund. Premiere: Berlin International Film Festival, 2017. Theatrical Premiere: Film Forum, forthcoming 2017.
2. “Prepare to March” – the official info video for the Women’s March on Washington. Director: Hannah Rosenzweig. Facebook release: January 2017; 4.6 million views.
3. “#StandUpForUs” – PSA of a non-partisan letter to Congress to stand up for civil liberties and protect vulnerable peoples. Featuring activists, faith leaders, and celebrities including Sally Field, Bishop Gene Robinson, Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum, Keegan-Michael Key, Imam Khalid Latif, Ai-jen Poo, Steve Buscemi, and Yasmeen Hassan. Director: Liz Garbus. Facebook release: January 2017; 851,000 views.
4. “#LostInTheSystem” – PSA for the NYCLU about the Justice Equality Act. Narration by Jeffrey Wright. Director: Laura Dawn. Facebook release: January 2017; 576,000 views.
5. “Born to Fly” – documentary feature about daredevil choreographer Elizabeth Streb. Director: Catherine Gund. World Premiere: SXSW Film Festival, 2014; Theatrical Premiere: Film Forum, September 2014; Television Premiere: PBS’s Independent Lens, 2015; Emmy nomination for Best Arts & Culture Programming.
6. “Happy Birthday to a Beautiful Woman” – documentary short by visual artist Mickalene Thomas about her mother and muse, Sandra Bush. Director: Mickalene Thomas. Television Premiere: HBO, February 2014. Audience Award, Black Star Film Festival, 2014.
7. “Beginnings” – short film series of 13 episodes about creative leaders including Yoko Ono, Marjane Satrapi, and Christian Louboutin. Director: Chiara Clemente.

Television Premiere: Sundance Channel, Season One in October 2010 and Season Two in March 2012. WEBBY Award for Best Online Documentary Series.

8. "MADE HERE" – HERE Arts Center's 4-season documentary series of 50 short episodes and a website featuring about 100 NYC-based performing artists including Joan Jonas, Bill T. Jones, Cherry Jones, and Philip Seymour Hoffman. Director: Chiara Clemente. Online launch from May 2010 through December 2013. Television Premiere: NYC Life (Channel 25), beginning May 2011.
9. "What's on Your Plate?" – documentary feature about children and food politics. Director: Catherine Gund. World Premiere: Berlin International Film Festival, 2009; Television Premiere: Discovery's Planet Green, 2010.
10. "Our City Dreams" – documentary feature about five decades of women artists, including Swoon, Ghada Amer, Kiki Smith, Marina Abramovic, and Nancy Spero. Director: Chiara Clemente. World Premiere: Art Basel, 2008; Theatrical Premiere: Film Forum, February 2009; Television Premiere: Sundance Channel, Spring 2009.

Events and Shows (Select List)

1. Rubell Family Collection Annual Exhibition Opening – event. Miami, FL, 2008-2017. As the Communications and Special Projects Officer, Selvaratnam worked behind the scenes on the openings during Art Basel Miami Beach of 9 exhibitions, including "NO MAN'S LAND," "30 Americans," and "28 Chinese," and on events for touring exhibitions, including at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. She handled public relations year-round and liaised with dozens of artists affiliated with the Collection.
2. "Elijah Green" – theatrical production. The Kitchen, New York, NY, March 2016. Playwright/Director: Andrew Ondrejcek. In collaboration with the Ethical Fashion Initiative. Recipient of a NEFA National Theater Project Grant.
3. Annual Benefit for Yaddo – event. Tribeca Rooftop, New York, NY, June 2015. Hosted by Steve Buscemi and Kate Valk, honoring Laurie Anderson, featuring appearances by Ayad Akhtar, Eisa Davis, Young Jean Lee, and Joseph Keckler. Most financially successful Yaddo benefit in at least fifteen years.
4. Spring Gala for Performance Space 122 – event. Capitale, New York, NY, April 2015. Hosted by Alan Cumming, honoring Claire Danes, featuring appearances by Mandy Patinkin, Peaches, Andrew Andrew, and Faye Driscoll. Raised more than double the revenue of any previous year.
5. Spring Gala for Performance Space 122 – event. The Diamond Horseshoe, New York, NY, May 2014. Featuring Michael Stipe, Justin Vivian Bond, Nath Ann Carrera, Ira Glass, Lena Hall, Amber Martin, Okwui Okpokwasili, Duncan Sheik, and Olaf Triebel.
6. "CMW Live from the Guggenheim" – series of events. Guggenheim Museum, NY, April 2014. Featuring panels, performances, and lectures by 100 artists from around the world, curated by Carrie Mae Weems. Produced in collaboration with The Office.
7. "World of Wires" – theatrical production. Based on Fassbinder's *Welt am Draht*. The Kitchen, New York, NY, January 2012; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA, September 2012; French Tour, November 2012: Maison des Arts in Creteil, Le Lieu Unique in Nantes, and Le Manege in Maubeuge. Director: Jay Scheib. OBIE Award for Best Direction.

8. "Bellona, Destroyer of Cities" – theatrical production. Based on Samuel Delany's *Dhalgren*. World Premiere: The Kitchen, New York, NY, 2010; Tour: Maison des Arts, Creteil, France; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA, 2011. Director: Jay Scheib.
9. "A Theater of Varieties to Benefit The Wooster Group" – event. The Box, New York, NY, April 2007. Hosted by John Waters, featuring appearances by the little death, The Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black, and Mikhail Baryshnikov.
10. "Artists for Tsunami Relief" – event. Marquee, New York, NY, January 2005. Featuring appearances by David Byrne, Lou Reed, Angela McCluskey, Nelson George, Colson Whitehead, Living Color, Sussan Deyhim, and Moby.

PERFORMER (Select List)

1. "Summer Solstice Ritual: 12 Shouts to the Ten Forgotten Heavens." Playwright/Director: Sibyl Kempson. The Whitney Museum, New York, NY, June 2016 and June 2017.
2. "I'm Bleeding All Over the Place." Playwright/Director: Brooke O'Harra. La Mama, New York, NY, July 2016.
3. "And That's How the Rent Gets Paid." Playwright: Jeff Weiss and Richard C. Martinez. Director: Brooke O'Harra. The Kitchen, New York, NY, July 2015.
4. "Let Us Now Praise Susan Sontag." Playwright/Director: Sibyl Kempson. Abrons Arts Center, New York, NY, April 2015.
5. "Sorry, Robot." Playwright: Mike Iveson, Jr. Director: Will Davis. PS122/New Ohio Theater, New York, NY, January 2015.
6. "9 Scripts from a Nation at War." (Video Installation) Director: Andrea Geyer, Sharon Hayes, Ashley Hunt, Katya Sander and David Thorne. Documenta 12, Kassel, Germany, 2007; Tate Modern, England, 2008; REDCAT, Los Angeles, CA, 2009; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, 2011.
7. "Super Vision." The Builders Association, Director: Marianne Weems. World Premiere: Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, NY, followed by world tour to 17 cities, 2005-7.
8. "Alladeen." The Builders Association, Director: Marianne Weems. World Premiere: Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, NY, followed by world tour to 24 cities, 2003-2005.
9. "Common Infractions." Conceived by Anna Deavere Smith, Director: Liz Diamond. American Repertory Theater, Cambridge, MA, 1999.
10. "House/Lights." The Wooster Group, Director: Elizabeth LeCompte. World Premiere: The Performing Garage, New York, NY, followed by world tour to 14 cities, 1996-2005.

BOOK

The Big Lie: Motherhood, Feminism, and the Reality of the Biological Clock (Prometheus Books: New York, 2014).

Through the lens of delayed motherhood, *The Big Lie* is about the choices women have to make and how those choices impact the future. Part personal account, part manifesto, Selvaratnam speaks to fertility doctors, adoption counselors, reproductive health professionals, celebrities, feminists, journalists, and sociologists. Through in-depth reporting and her own experience, Selvaratnam urges more widespread education and open discussion about delayed motherhood in the hope that long-lasting solutions can take effect. The result is a book full of valuable information that will enable women to make smarter choices about their reproductive futures and to strike a more realistic balance between science, society, and personal goals.

MEDIA INTERVIEWS include:

NPR, WNYC, CBS Radio, WBZ, Sirius XM, PRI, WKCR, CNN, MSNBC, Al Jazeera

COMPLETE LIST AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (Select List)

1. Conversation, Women of Resilience Awards (with Natalie Madeira Cofield and Miko Branch), The Memo, May 18, 2017.
2. Panel, "Visible and Invisible Walls" (with Hassan Hajaj and Richard Mosse, moderated by Isolde Brielmaier), Tang Museum, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY, April 20, 2017.
3. Panel and Workshops, Art and Activism Day, Brooklyn Friends School, Brooklyn, NY, April 19, 2017.
4. Speaker, MAKERS Women's Town Hall, MAKERS HQ, New York, NY, November 17, 2016.
5. Moderator, "How Can the Arts Advance Body Politics?," National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C., November 13, 2016.
6. Panel, "Art & Work: Surviving and Thriving as a Creative Person" (moderated by Farai Chideya), Housing Works Bookstore, New York, NY, February 8, 2016.
7. Panel, "Representations of Childbirth and Pregnancy in the Media," Brooklyn Law School, Brooklyn, NY, April 13, 2015.
8. Visiting Artist Lecture and Workshop, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA, March 30, 2015.
9. Speaker and Conference Participant, "Reversible: Narrating Identity from the Inside Out and the Outside In," New York University/Abu Dhabi Institute, Abu Dhabi, December 8, 2014.
10. Panel, "Swimming Against the Mainstream," Brooklyn Book Festival, Brooklyn, NY, September 21, 2014.

BOARD/ADVISORY COUNCIL/MEMBERSHIP

- Member, PEN American Center, 2015-
- Advisor/Curator, Segal Film Festival on Theatre and Performance, CUNY: 2014-2015
- Advisor, Boom Arts (Portland, OR): 2014-

- Advisor, NGO Committee on the Status of Women, 2013-
- Advisor, The DO School: 2013-
- Board, The Wooster Group: 2013-
- Advisor, DeKeyser & Friends Foundation: 2011-13
- Board, Groundswell Community Mural Project: 2002-5
- Board, Third Wave Foundation: 1998-2004

ACTING AFFILIATIONS

- Company Member, Sibyl Kempson's 7 Daughters of Eve Thtr. & Perf. Co., 2015-
- Company Member, The Builders Association: 2001-7
- Associate, The Wooster Group: 1995-
- Actor, New Dramatists: 1996-
- Company Member, Institute on Arts & Civic Dialogue, Cambridge, MA: 1999
- Actor, Lincoln Center Directors Lab: 1996 & 1997

ARTIST RESIDENCIES

- Watermill Center (with Carrie Mae Weems), Watermill, NY: April 2017
- The Orchard Project (with Mike Iveson, Jr.), Catskills, NY: July 2014
- Blue Mountain Center, Blue Mountain, NY: September 2007
- Voice & Vision Theater, Bard College, Annandale on Hudson, NY: August 2007
- Yaddo, Saratoga Springs, NY: May-June 2007

TANYA SELVARATNAM
Collaborations

Selvaratnam has produced projects featuring more than 250 public figures including:

Marina Abramovic	Reverend Dr. Jacqui Lewis
Ghada Amer	Christian Louboutin
Ayad Akhtar	Taylor Mac
Erika Alexander	Frederic Malle
Laurie Anderson	Moby
Andrew Andrew	Julie Atlas Muz
Moe Angelos	Rose McGowan
Joey Arias	Dame Helen Mirren
Yigal Azrouel	Janet Mock
Dan Barber	Yoko Ono
Mikhail Baryshnikov	Mandy Patinkin
Mickey Boardman	Rosie Perez
Justin Vivian Bond	Ai-jen Poo
Steve Buscemi	Bruce Ratner
Francesco Clemente	Vernon Reid
Alan Cumming	Bishop Gene Robinson
Claire Danes	Salman Rushdie
Eisa Davis	Senator Bernie Sanders
Lea DeLaria	Marjane Satrapi
Carmen de Lavallade	Duncan Sheik
Lena Dunham	Gabourey Sidibe
Oskar Eustis	Lorna Simpson
James Tigger! Ferguson	Kiki Smith
Charlotte Gainsbourg	Nancy Spero
Nelson George	Elizabeth Streb
Tavi Gevinson	Meryl Streep
Whoopi Goldberg	Swoon
Halsey	Amber Tamblyn
Yasmeen Hassan	Mickalene Thomas
Philip Seymour Hoffman	Basil Twist
Rabbi David Ingber	Kate Valk
Joan Jonas	Inez van Lamsweerde
Cherry Jones	John Waters
Alex Katz	Reggie Watts
Keegan-Michael Key	Carrie Mae Weems
Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum	Marianne Weems
Zoe Kravitz	Colson Whitehead
Lisa Kron	Myrlie Evers Williams
Elizabeth LeCompte	Jeffrey Wright
Young Jean Lee	Malik Yoba

Selvaratnam has produced projects at, by, and for:

ACLU
Andrew Ondrejcek
Art Not War
Aubin Pictures
Baccarat
Center for Health and Gender Equity
Gabri Christa
Chiara Clemente
Lisa Cortes
Laura Dawn
Di San Luca Films
Discovery Networks
EMILY's List
Ethical Fashion Initiative
Filmmakers for Hillary
Liz Garbus
Gays Against Guns
Guggenheim Museum
Catherine Gund
HBO
Humanity for Progress
ICA Boston
IFC
The Kennedy Center
The Kitchen
Le Tigre
Maison des Arts (Creteil, France)
Alex Marashian
Albert Maysles
Mercedes-Benz
Ms. Foundation for Women
MoveOn
NGO Forum/World Conference on
Women in China
Pink Martini
Laura Parnes
PBS
PS122
Rubell Family Collection
Jennifer Rubell
Sundance Channel
Mickalene Thomas
V-Day/One Billion Rising
The Von Trapps
Carrie Mae Weems
Jed Weintrob
The Wooster Group
World Health Organization
Yaddo
Yale Rep