



JIMMY IN SAIGON

A Feature Documentary Film by Peter McDowell

Executive Producer: Dan Savage

Original Score by John McDowell and Sabina Sciubba

THE FILM

Jimmy in Saigon explores the mysterious death, radical life, and forbidden romance of a 24 year old Vietnam veteran who died in Saigon in 1972. Jimmy's rejection of his family's values and his eventual death created deep trauma within the lives of his surviving family and complicated how he was remembered.

Director Peter McDowell, Jimmy's younger brother, was only 5 years old when Jimmy died under a shroud of secrecy and shame. *Jimmy in Saigon* follows Peter's 10 year search to uncover secrets surrounding Jimmy's sexual orientation and rumored drug use. Peter finds surprising connections with his deceased brother and struggles to reach a new understanding of his own identity as a gay man.

THE MESSAGE

While *Jimmy in Saigon* is about loss and intergenerational trauma, it is also about love and connection across boundaries of culture, class, and time.

After leaving the army, Jimmy unexpectedly chose to return to Vietnam as a civilian while the war still raged. He died a year later. Where a son cut down in military action might be remembered with certain rituals and pride, a son who abandoned his native country to live and die far from his roots could be seen as a traitor. Why do some aspects of a remembered life fade, while others persist? Why are some memories cherished, and others buried?

In accepting complicated truths, director Peter McDowell hopes to redeem Jimmy's past and restore how he is remembered in the present.

By shedding light on the secrets of one family, *Jimmy in Saigon* aims to normalize the grieving process for countless others and to destigmatize both drug use and LGBTQ+ sexuality. Peter's journey provides an empathetic lens through which to explore Jimmy's life in Saigon - a story of adventure and of love that was unacceptable at the time and still challenging today.

"It will grab you. Handsomely filmed and filled with very forthcoming, honest and emotional interviews, it has the feel of a detective story."

—Rick Kogan, Chicago Tribune





"It's projects like yours that inspire us to investigate and delve into our family ties, traditions and to know our close ones' dreams and desires."

–Gabrielle Sanchez, audience member

JOIN US

A story can change a life. Through a targeted release and community engagement, *Jimmy in Saigon* will be seen by a national and international audience. We hope the film can be the start of a conversation for individuals and families coping with traumatic grief and misunderstood identity.

It's about family—our bonds, our secrets, our subconscious connections—and the pain and joy that runs throughout.

THE PLAN

- **Red carpet film festival screenings.**
- **Theatrical release** in select cities.
- **Partnerships with organizations and notable figures** in the LGBTQIA+ and veterans' communities.
- **Screenings and discussions** at universities, museums, and nonprofits.
- **National television broadcast** on PBS.
- **Digital release** on streaming platforms such as Amazon, Netflix, and HBO Max
- **Educational release** on platforms such as Kanopy or Docuseek

THE TEAM



Surrounded by opera as a child and trained as a musician and actor, **Director Peter McDowell** has always been drawn to melding music and film in his work. Two of his short films played at San Francisco's Frameline Film Festival; *I Dream of Dorothy* went on to festivals worldwide. In addition to film making, Peter works as an arts producer, publicist and fundraiser.



Executive Producer Dan Savage, is an author, advice columnist, podcaster, pundit, and public speaker. "Savage Love" first appeared in *The Stranger*, Seattle's alternative weekly, in 1991 and is now syndicated to more than 50 papers across the United States and Canada. Dan has published six books and along with his husband, Terry Miller, founded the Emmy award- winning It Gets Better Project (IGBP), which has gathered thousands of videos from across the world offering hope to LGBTQ+ kids. Dan's graphic, pragmatic, and humorous advice has changed the cultural conversation about monogamy, gay rights, religiosity, and politics.