**JOSEPH PULITZER:  
VOICE OF THE PEOPLE**

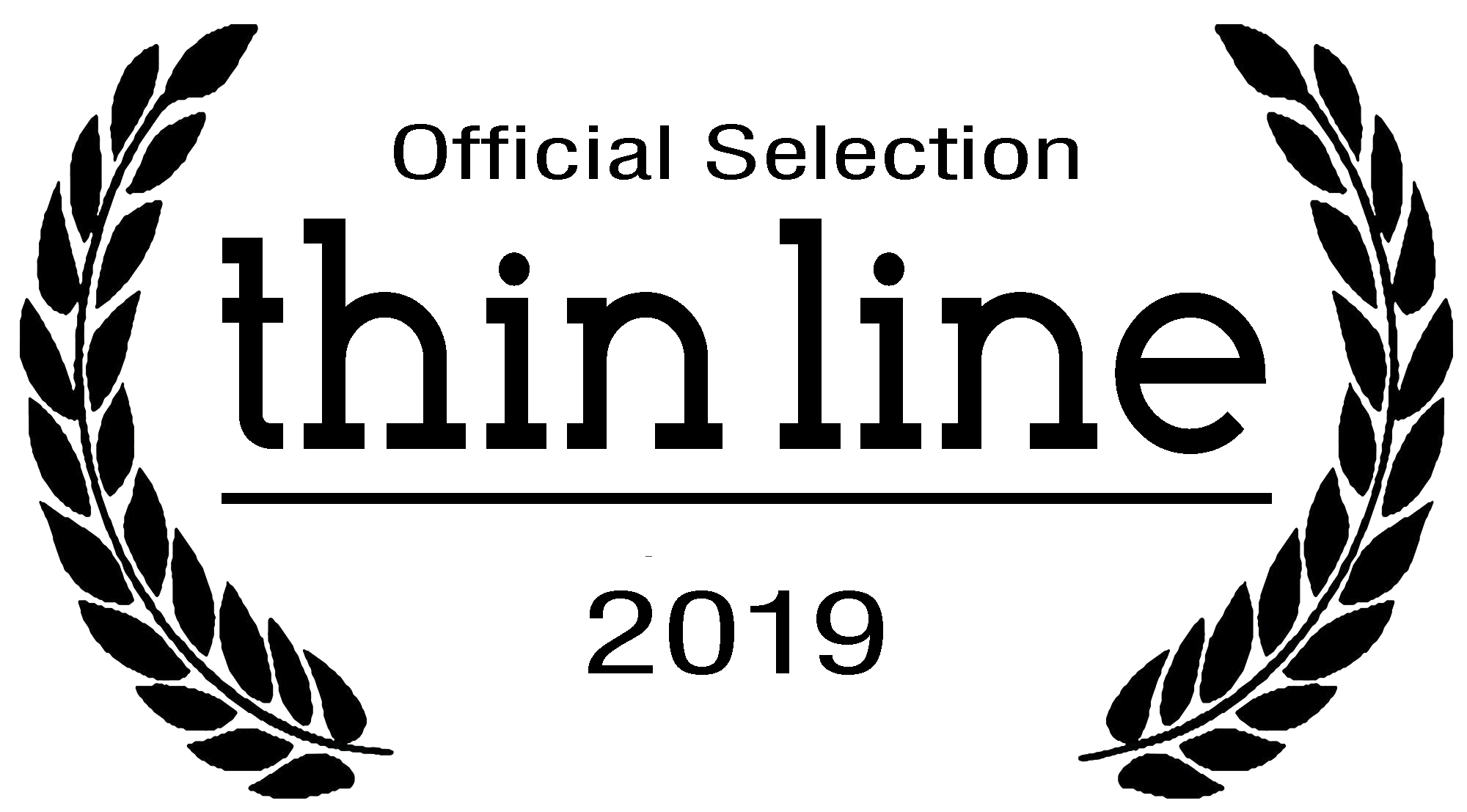
A Feature Length Documentary for PBS’s

*American Masters*

*Major Funding from National Endowment for the Humanities,*

*PBS American Masters, The Carnegie Corporation of New York, and Roxanne & Scott Bok*



**JosephPulitzerFilm.com**

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Building Block

FOLIUM FILMS AND OREN RUDAVSKY PRODUCTIONS FOR AMERICAN

MASTERS PICTURES PRESENTS JOSEPH PULITZER: VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

NARRATOR ADAM DRIVER VOICE OF PULITZER LIEV SCHREIBER FEATURED VOICES

LAUREN AMBROSE, RACHEL BROSNAHAN, HUGH DANCY, RYAN JAMES

HATANAKA, BILLY MAGNUSSEN, TIM BLAKE NELSON, SEBASTIAN STAN

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER CLARE REDDEN GRAPHICS ANDREW ROBERTS

COMPOSERS OLIVIER & CLARE MANCHON EDITOR RAMON RIVERA MORET

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY WOLFGANG HELD WRITERS ROBERT SEIDMAN &

OREN RUDAVSKY PRODUCERS ANDREA MILLER, OREN RUDAVSKY &

ROBERT SEIDMAN DIRECTOR OREN RUDAVSKY CASTING ADRIENNE STERN

CASTING FOR AMERICAN MASTERS SUPERVISING PRODUCER JUNKO TSUNASHIMA SERIES

PRODUCER JULIE SACKS EXECUTIVE PRODUCER MICHAEL KANTOR

FUNDERS NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES, ROXANNE & SCOTT

BOK, CARNEGIE CORPORATION OF NEW YORK, NORMAN PEARLSTINE &

JANE BOON, DAVID & HOPE JEFFREY, PETER OBOURN, JAMES SYKES

ORIGINAL AMERICAN MASTERS PRODUCTION FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE CORPORATION

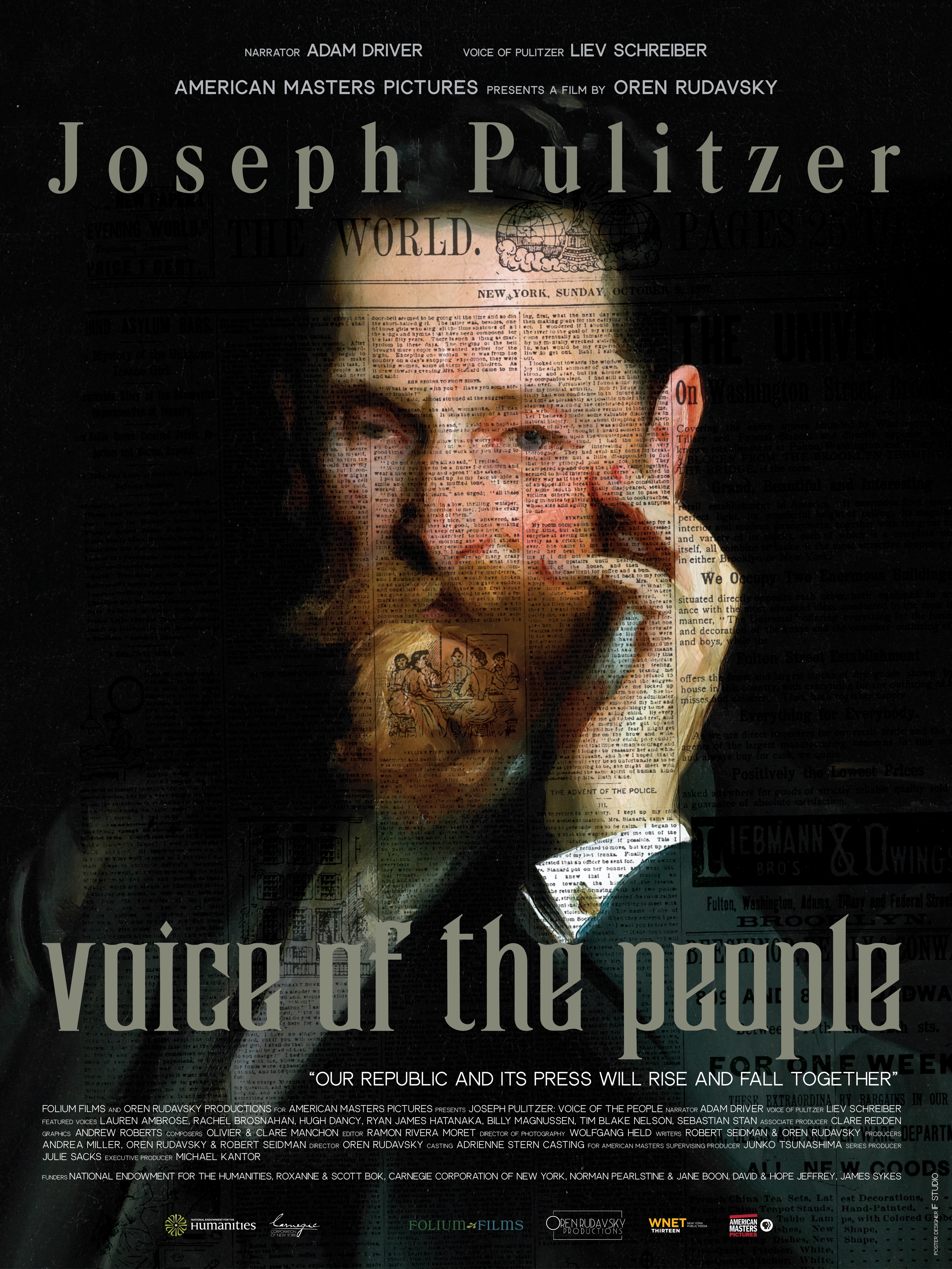
FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING, ROSALIND P. WALTER, THE PHILIP &

JANICE LEVIN FOUNDATION, ELLEN & JAMES S. MARCUS, SETON MELVIN,

LILLIAN GOLDMAN PROGRAMMING ENDOWMENT, JUDITH & BURTON

RESNICK, VITAL PROJECTS FUND, THE BLANCHE & IRVING LAURIE

FOUNDATION, THE ANDRE & ELIZABETH KERTESZ FOUNDATION



**Synopsis**

Joseph Pulitzer’s New York newspaper, The World, would transform American media and make him wealthy, admired and feared. Throughout his four decades as a reporter and publisher, he created a powerful artistic vehicle that spoke to an unprecedented number of readers. Towards the end of his life, both sickly and blind, Pulitzer’s commitment to fearless reporting would tested by the most powerful person in American life. On December 15th, 1908, President Teddy Roosevelt delivered a scathing indictment of Pulitzer to Congress - accusing the publisher of libel - for claiming that the President’s ¬greatest achievement, the Panama Canal—amounted to a colonialist overreach built on a $40 million cover-up. Roosevelt threatened Pulitzer with imprisonment. The president proclaimed: “it is high national duty to bring to justice this vilifier of the American people.”

Pulitzer is an American icon who spoke of “fake news” over one hundred years ago. He fought the dangers that the suppression of news had for a democracy long before our present threats to press freedom. While he is remembered for the prizes that bear his name, his own heroic battles in the face of grave illness and Presidential ire have been forgotten as has the artistry and game changing originality he brought to newspapers. How did Joseph Pulitzer, once a penniless young Jewish immigrant from Hungary, come to challenge a popular president and fight for freedom of the press as essential to our democracy?

Adam Driver narrates the film. Liev Schreiber is the voice of Pulitzer. Tim Blake Nelson is the voice of Teddy Roosevelt and Rachel Brosnahan is the voice of Nelly Bly.

**High Resolution Images**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/22vsdgfqy1org86/AACaNXSHTZU9oMB1-WTCoXJma?dl=0>

**Director’s Statement**

In 2013, Bob Seidman approached me. I had worked with him in the past on a film about the Hasidim called *A Life Apart*. He approached me with the idea of making a film about Joseph Pulitzer. All I knew about Joseph Pulitzer was that he had created the Pulitzer Prizes. When I started to dig into who Joseph Pulitzer was, I realized that he was not only a really interesting guy, but that he was quite relevant to the moment we were in in America, which is the Trump era.

Pulitzer was a believer in freedom of the press. He published everything he thought was news. He didn't care whom he harmed. He was an equal opportunity offender and critic of the way things are in the world. He was progressive. He was a guy you could like if he weren't such a difficult guy. And eventually Pulitzer went blind, so the last 20 years of his life, he was managing and micromanaging his newspaper with a whole slew of secretaries, who would send messages to the editors at the newspapers on a daily or multiple times a day basis. He was just a fascinating person to make a film about.

He was impressive to me and interesting to me because of his maladies and his ability to overcome them. He was impressive to me because he came over as an immigrant, became fabulously wealthy, but maintained his progressive ideals. I admire that, because it's very easy for people, once they get comfortable, for their ideals to change. His did not. And his brilliance as a newspaper publisher. When I went down to Duke University to the archives where they have the last remaining run of his newspapers, which was saved by Nicholson Baker, that was the moment when I said, "Uh huh, this guy was amazing, was a genius," and the history of those newspapers, the beauty of the illustrations and the typography, and you can't really understand it until you have a newspaper in your hands. The tragedy, one of the tragedies which is not really in the film, is that libraries across this country and across the world have systematically destroyed the originals of newspapers in favor of microfilm, which just simply does not preserve tactilely or even visually the quality of those newspapers. But at Duke, I was able to see them in their ... Each page, I could've spent hours on each page of the newspaper. It was just filled to the brim with interesting stories, and I understood immediately why he was so fabulously successful when there was no internet, no TV.

The most satisfying part of making the film was when you're really close to done, and you go into the sound mix, and you hear all this music, this wonderful music by Olivier and Clare Manchon, and the wonderful voices of Adam Driver and Liev Schreiber and all the other terrific actors that played a role in it, and you see all the careful work that your associate producer and editors, and all the fights and disagreements and considerations that go into making a film, and the thousands of decisions, when you go into the sound mix and you see the film as a whole and realize that you feel like you made most of the right decisions. There's always things you want to change, even when you're done, but it's very satisfying to see something come together and really come to life. It's like putting a child out into the world, and that's what making this film was like, for better or for worse.

**Technical Details**

Country of Origin: United States of America

Language: English

Running Time: 85 Minutes

Aspect Ratio: 16 X 9

Format: Color

**Credits**

Director/Producer/Writer/Camera Oren Rudavsky

Director of Photography Wolfgang Held

Producer/Writer Robert Seidman

Producer Andrea Miller

Editor/Writer Ramon Rivera Moret

Composers Olivier & Clare Manchon

Graphics Andrew Roberts

Casting Adrienne Stern Casting

**Supplemental Material**

Art In America article by Robert Seidman:

<https://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/magazines/pulitzers-pictures/>

**Producer Bios**

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| --- | --- |
| **Oren Rudavsky**  Director/  Writer/Producer | Oren Rudavsky is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, and several National Endowment for the Humanities and National Endowment for the Arts grants. Rudavsky produced the NEH funded American Masters documentary: *Joseph Pulitzer: Voice of the People,* broadcast date April, 2019. The film was chosen to premiere at the Mill Valley Film Festival and at the Hot Springs Documentary Festival. He produced *Witness Theater* a film chronicling a Selfhelp organized workshop between holocaust survivors and high-school students which will premiere in 2019. His films *Colliding Dreams* co-directed with Joseph Dorman, and *The Ruins of Lifta* co-directed with Menachem Daum, were released theatrically in 2016. *Colliding Dreams* was broadcast on PBS in May 2018.  His film *A Life Apart: Hasidism in America* was broadcast on PBS and his ITVS funded film *Hiding and Seeking* was nominated for an Independent Spirit award and was chosen for the PBS POV series. Both were co-directed with Menachem Daum. Rudavsky was the producer of media for the small and large screen permanent installations at the Russian Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center in Moscow which opened in 2013. In 2011, Rudavsky produced a series of profile documentaries for Bloomberg television called *Risk Takers*. These included profiles of Michael Burry and Michelle Rhee. In 2009 Rudavsky was Producer/Writer of the two part series Time for School 3, a twelve-year longitudinal study examining the education of seven children in the developing world for the PBS series Wide Angle. In 2006, Oren completed *The Treatment*, his fiction feature as Producer/Writer/Director, starring Chris Eigeman, Ian Holm and Famke Janssen. The film premiered at the 2006 Tribeca Film Festival where it was awarded Best Film, Made in New York. Other work by Rudavsky includes *And Baby Makes Two*, funded by ITVS and presented on PBS Independent Lens (co-directed with Judy Katz), *Spark Among the Ashes, At the Crossroads, Theater of the Palms, Dreams So Real* and *A Film About My Home.* He was director of photography on most of his films as well as on the PBS POV film *Twitch and Shout.*  Rudavsky’s work includes writing and producing segments for the ABC national series *PrimeTime Live*, the PBS series *Media Matters, Religion and Ethics Newsweekly* and other national programming. He has also worked as a post-production supervisor on the film unit of *Saturday Night Live* and the syndicated series *Tales From the* *Darkside* in the 1980’s. |
| **Robert Seidman**  Writer/Producer | Robert J. Seidman is a novelist, Emmy-winning screenwriter and literary critic. His latest novel, Moments Captured was published by The Overlook Press in 2012 and in England by Duckworth Press in 2014. The work is based loosely on the work and life of the pioneering 19th century photographer Eadweard Muybridge. Seidman’s One Smart Indian, a novel about a Northern Cheyenne set in mid-nineteenth century America, was published by the Overlook Press in 1980. The book has never been out of print. Seidman’s screenwriting credits include the Emmy-nominated A Life Apart: Hasidism in America, a 90-minute documentary (directed by Oren Rudavsky). He has written PBS documentary films about Wallace Stevens, Margaret Mead, and Samuel Beckett. He also wrote several films about art, including In Our Time, the final program of the nine-part series ambitiously titled Art of the Western World. Seidman was co-writer of Billy Strayhorn: Lush Life. This film won the Writers’ Guild Award for Best Documentary, a George Foster Peabody Award, and the Emmy for Best Documentary, 2007.He is currently finishing a feature documentary film about Joseph Pulitzer, one of the America’s most dynamic and innovative newspaper publishers. The film is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and “American Masters,” WNET-Channel 13.With Don Gifford, Robert Seidman is co-author of Ulysses Annotated: An Annotation of James Joyce's, Ulysses, University of California Press, 1988. |
| **Andrea Miller**  Producer | Andrea Miller, Folium Films LLC, is an independent producer with more than twenty-five years of experience in the entertainment business. Folium Films provides services in all phases of production from development through outreach and is dedicated to producing feature-length documentaries and films that address meaningful historical, social and ethical issues. Ms. Miller is a former partner in the company Anthos Media which she founded with Carla Solomon and in Saltmill which she founded with Mary Salter. Ms. Miller’s credits with Anthos Media include the prize-winning documentary PARTICLE FEVER (National Academy of Science, Du Pont Columbia, Grierson and Hawking Prizes, PGA nomination for best documentary, 2014) as well as THE PRICE OF EVERYTHING (consulting producer – Sundance 2018), THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE, LETTERS FROM BAGHDAD, THE NEW PUBLIC, and COLLIDING DREAMS. With Mary Salter, she produced the fictional feature, DARK MATTER .Ms. Miller is currently in post-production on JOSPEH PULITZER; VOICE OF THE PEOPLE for American Masters and HOW TO HANDLE A SPOON, directed by Jerret Engle. TAKE MY NOSE, PLEASE directed by Joan Kron, is in current release on Hulu and her feature Savage Youth just premiered at Slamdance. Ms. Miller’s primary experience is in television where she produced PEE WEE’S PLAYHOUSE, SHINING TIME STATION, and the original INDECISION ’92, as well as pilots for ABC, HBO, and We.  She was formerly Vice President of International Co-Production and Sales at Sony Wonder and Vice President of Programming at Turner Networks Asia, responsible for channel launches of TNT and Cartoon Network throughout the region and General Manager of Cartoon Network Japan. She serves on the board of the Flea Theater; and among numerous projects as a consultant, she is currently working on the first free-to-air children’s television channel in Kenya as well as an opera by famed author Colm Toibin and composer Alberto Caruso. |

**Cast**

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| Adam Driver | Narrator |
| Liev Schreiber | Joseph Pulitzer |
| Lauren Ambrose | Kate Davis |
| Rachel Brosnahan | Nellie Bly |
| Hugh Dancy | Alleyne Ireland |
| Ryan-James Hatanaka | Joseph Pulitzer II |
| Billy Magnussen | William Randolph Hearst |
| Tim Blake Nelson | Theodore Roosevelt |
| Sebastian Stan | Priest |

**Interviewees**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Daniel Albert../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%201.57.38%20PM.png** | Dr. Daniel Albert speaks to the eye malady that rendered Joseph Pulitzer blind and the resulting complications of his loss of sight |
| **Nicholson Baker../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%2011.59.22%20AM.png** | Baker established a non-profit corporation, the American Newspaper Repository, to rescue old newspapers from destruction by libraries. He saved the largest and most complete run of *The New York World* |
| **Daniel Czitrom**  **../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%2012.01.12%20PM.png** | Professor Daniel Czitrom explains Pulitzer’s role in the Spanish American War and his resulting conflict with Roosevelt |
| **Jennifer Lee**  **../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%201.16.07%20PM.png** | Jennifer Lee is the curator for the Pulitzer archives at Columbia University, containing large amounts of his work related writings, donated by his son. She speaks to the items which Pulitzer left behind |
| **James McGrath Morris**  **../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%2011.49.11%20AM.png** | Award winning author, James McGrath Morris, wrote one of the definitive biographies of Joseph Pulitzer |
| **David Nasaw**  **../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%2011.50.52%20AM.png** | David Nasaw wrote the definitive biography on William Randolph Hearst, Joseph Pulitzer’s primary competitor and fellow Yellow Journalist |
| **Emily Pulitzer**  **../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%201.59.22%20PM.png** | Emily Pulitzer was the deciding vote, determining the fate of the Pulitzer newspaper empire |
| **Chris Daly**  **../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%2011.55.00%20AM.png** | Chris Daly, a professor with a journalism background. Deep understanding of the legacy of Joseph Pulitzer |
| **Hasia Diner**  **../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%202.13.28%20PM.png** | Professor Hasia Diner, specializes in Jewish American history at New York University. Diner speaks to Pulitzer’s identity as a Jewish immigrant in the Gilded Age |
| **Elisabeth Gitter**  **../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%2011.52.31%20AM.png** | Professor Elisabeth Gitter specializes in Victorian Era melodies. She speaks to Joseph Pulitzer’s ill health and the personal cost of being sick in the 1890s |
| **David Redden**  **../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%2011.57.52%20AM.png** | David Redden lives in Joseph Pulitzer’s home and explains the eccentricities of Pulitzer’s personality and employment methods |
| **Nancy Tomes**  **../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%201.18.14%20PM.png** | Professor Nancy Tomes, speaks to Pulitzer’s state of mind and his impact on the immigrant population |
| **Andie Tucher**  **../Desktop/Screen%20Shot%202018-10-25%20at%201.13.28%20PM.png** | Andie Tucher is a historian and journalist who teaches at the graduate school created by Joseph Pulitzer |

**Crew**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Clare and Olivier Manchon**  **Composers** | Based in Kingston NY (from Brooklyn/Paris), We come from a background of writing, recording and touring, sharing with live audiences. We had the band Clare and the Reasons for 3 studio albums, 2 live albums and several world tours. Olivier leads Orchestre de Chambre Miniature (currently dormant but will wake someday!). One of our main focuses when writing music for image is quality of sound. Since we have a human string orchestra, (Olivier) we're able to create all real strings and don't have to cave in to fake string sounds because of budget; something that has become all too common nowadays. We're thrilled by taking on projects and creating a palette that paints musical contours as boldly or subtle as the film calls for. |
| **Wolfgang Held**  **DP** | Emmy Award Winning director of photography Wolfgang Held has worked in New York City since the late 1990s. During his career, he has assembled an extensive filmography in both documentary and narrative genres. He has photographed feature films for directors Larry Charles and Sacha Baron Cohen, Maggie Greenwald, Rob Morrow, Mitchell Lichtenstein, and the late Gary Winick, as well as feature documentaries for filmmakers Nanette Burstein, Susan Froemke, Joe Berlinger, Marilyn Agrelo, Dan Klores and Madeleine Sackler and many others. Most recently Held has put his emphasis on photographing socially minded films and TV shows such as The Lottery, Escape Fire, Half the Sky, A Path Appears, Years of Living Dangerously, and Far from the Tree. |
| **Ramon Rivera Moret**  Editor | Ramón Rivera-Moret’s practice engages an experimental approach to storytelling, bringing together a multiplicity of stories and situations through a mixture of narrative strategies. He is interested in ways to construct cinematic stories beyond traditional paradigms - including the abstract, the fragment and the small gesture - within an open ended, non-linear narrative.  Ramón's works include THE ORDINAL DIRECTIONS, a four-channel video installation recorded over a period of a year in Flushing Meadows Corona Park in Queens, NY. The flow of time and space provide the piece’s forward momentum through a cascade of encounters with others.  ON CALLOWAY STREET, a feature non-fiction film, interweaves the stories of a group of immigrants from radically different cultures living in an ordinary building in Queens, NY.   Chishimo: A Lunda Story, shot on location in northwestern Zambia, follows the life of a traditional African doctor. Eyes Upside Down, multiple site-specific outdoor projections of the night sky, was installed at Amherst College. Ramón is currently in production documenting scientists probing questions about the fabric of space and matter at Brookhaven National Lab.  Ramón’s films and videos have been exhibited at Anthology Film Archives; Millennium Film Workshop; The Queens Museum Of Art; The Birmingham Museum Of Art; The American Museum Of Natural History; Amherst College; Hampshire College; Chicago Filmmakers; and the Ann Arbor, Athens, Chicago Latino, and San Francisco Art Institute Film Festivals.   Ramón has received grants and awards from The Independent Television Service (ITVS), The National Endowment for the Arts/American Film Institute Regional Fellowships; The Jerome Foundation; the New York State Council On The Arts; the Amherst Art Series Fund; the Institute Of Puerto Rican Culture; the Puerto Rican National Cultural Development Program; and the Puerto Rico Film Development Fund.  Ramón Rivera-Moret is currently Assistant Professor in the Film/Animation/Video  Department at the Rhode Island School of Design. Prior to his appointment at RISD, Ramón was Visiting Assistant Professor at Pratt Institute in New York, and Artist in Residence and Visiting Assistant Professor of Filmmaking at Amherst College. Ramón has lectured on his films at Hampshire College, Amherst College and the Queens Museum Of Art. |
| **Andrew Roberts**  **Graphics** | Andrew Roberts is an illustrator and animator based in Brooklyn, NY and Portland, OR. Working in a variety of styles, Andrew uses humor and whimsy to create striking images, infographics and animations. He loves storytelling in all of its forms and enjoys collaborating with clients to create the most compelling visual solutions possible. Andrew received his MFA in Illustration from the School of Visual Arts in New York City. Prior to working as an illustrator, he was co-founder and partner of *studio 209*, a graphic design studio in Portland, Oregon. |
| **Clare Redden**  Associate Producer & Assistant Editor | Clare Redden graduated a year early from Vassar College, having majored in Theater and minored in Religion. She has worked in the documentary world in various capacities. She has worked on films for PBS’ *American Masters* and *American Experience*, as well as independent films. |

**Reviews**

“Brisk and engaging" - [LA Times](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-mini-joseph-pulitzer-documentary-review-20190307-story.html?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter)

"could not be more relevant" - Louis Proyer, [The Unrepentant Marxist](https://louisproyect.org/2019/03/01/joseph-pulitzer-voice-of-the-people/)

"…entertainingly, far from a portrait of uncomplicated virtue." - [Hollywood Reporter](https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/joseph-pulitzer-voice-people-1191550)

"…an excellent primer...stuffed with anecdotes and observations" - [Hollywood Reporter](https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/joseph-pulitzer-voice-people-1191550)

“…something new and wonderful, this film solidly captures an essential moment.” - [Hollywood Reporter](https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/joseph-pulitzer-voice-people-1191550)

"…a very fascinating life" - [Solzy at the Movies](http://www.solzyatthemovies.com/2019/03/01/joseph-pulitzer-voice-of-the-people/)

“…as informative and entertaining a documentary one could hope for.” - [Cinema Retro](http://www.cinemaretro.com/index.php?/archives/10414-REVIEW-JOSEPH-PULITZER-VOICE-OF-THE-PEOPLE;-DIRECTED-BY-OREN-RUDAVSKY.html)

"a fascinating and timely film" - [Cinema Citizen](https://awfj.org/cinema-citizen/2019/02/13/joseph-pulitzer-voice-of-the-people-documentary-review/?doing_wp_cron=1552054974.2138240337371826171875)

"full of fascinating contradictions" - [NY Times](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/28/movies/joseph-pulitzer-voice-of-the-people-review.html)

**Where We have Screened**

The Quad Cinema

New York City

Laemmle Theaters – Music Hall, Town Center, Playhouse 7

Los Angeles

The Morgan Library

New York

The New York History Journalism Conference

New York

The Newseum

Washington D.C.

The National Archives

Washington D.C.

WBUR Boston – City Space

Boston

Power of Narrative Conference

Massachusetts

**Festivals**

Faena New York Jewish D.C. Jewish Atlanta Jewish San Francisco Jewish Palm Springs Jewish

Sedona Cleveland Sebastopol Thin Line Mill Valley Hot Springs Toronto Jewish Annapolis

Massachusetts Multicultural Film Festival

**Additional Themes**

“Freedom of speech is not a favor to be exercised at the pleasure of the president.”

Joseph Pulitzer

**1 Economics of the Newspaper (1883-1911)**

Will print journalism as we know it survive? Will the costly, carefully edited news story become a relic of the past? Is on line newsgathering the inevitable wave of the future? When the production team of Joseph Pulitzer: Voice of the People asked those questions two years ago, the prognosis for traditional print dailies looked dire. Today several newspapers have responded positively to the changing economic landscape: One dramatic example: in the third quarter of 2018 the *New York Times* digital edition reported a profit of $24 million. Rumors of the demise of print newspaper, we hope, have been exaggerated.

As to the heyday of the traditional newspaper: In the late 19th and early 20th centuries Joseph Pulitzer made a fortune by publishing two daily papers, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and *The World*. His 1883 debut Manhattan occurred when the city had grown so large that most people had to commute to work. First hundreds of thousands then millions of commuters used their relatively free time to read the portable, foldable daily newspaper on the City’s growing network of busses and subways.

When in 1883 Pulitzer bought the money-losing *World* the daily’s circulation was 15,000. In two years he was selling 150,000 every day, a ten-fold increase. With blaring headlines and hard-hitting editorials, with investigations of political corruption and crusades for better working conditions, Pulitzer cultivated his core constituents—the working poor and immigrants of New York City. Criticized by rivals for sensationalism, The World replied:

“The daily [newspaper] is like a mirror. It reflects that which is before it. Let those who are startled by it blame the people who are before the mirror, and not the mirror, which only reflects their features and actions.”

Technological Advances: By the mid-19th century newspaper publishers had abandoned expensive rag paper and gratefully turned to wood pulp, which dramatically lowered production costs. Giant high-speed presses, including the R.H. Hoe Electrotype Press favored by Pulitzer, could produce a staggering 16,000 to 24,000 copies per hour, all of them folded, pasted and delivered in bunches of 25 or 50. Other technological advances—the Transatlantic Cable (1866), the massive spread of the telegraph across the U.S., the establishment of the Associated Press Syndicate (1846), the typewriter (in common use in pressrooms by 1870) and the advent of reliable public transportation helped turn the newspaper into a daily habit, as indispensable as that first cup of coffee.

Advertising became the newspapers’ primary source of revenue: Population density helped bolster the fiscal success of large department stores, the new emporia of Macys, Gimbels and A.T. Stewart that dominated Manhattan retail sales. Joseph Pulitzer recognized that increased circulation would boost profits, which would in turn pay off in ever-escalating advertising rates. The canny publisher initiated an in-house design department that tailored ads to clients’ needs. The big retailers responded, investing in full page or half page ads, using this relatively inexpensive way to reach potential customers with lures of sales and discount coupons. Pulitzer’s designers created visually alluring advertisements, breaking up the columns any which way—horizontally, vertically or both— to create configurations that “fit” the advertisers’ desires. As more consumers read his paper, ads rates soared. The department stores became the daily newspapers’ most profitable revenue stream.

**2. The Press and the President: The Panama Canal Scandal**

In 1908 *The World* became involved in an epic legal dispute with President Theodore Roosevelt over a huge government-sanctioned scam. Roosevelt wanted to construct a transoceanic canal in Panama, following the failure of a French enterprise to do the job. He ordered the U.S. to pay $40 million to acquire the assets of an entity called the “New Panama Canal Company.” Then things got murky. Contemporary commentary suggested that the French government gave the money to a liquidator for distribution to its numerous investors. This was the accepted narrative until an insider informed *The World* that the $40 million was paid not to the French government but to the American financier J.P. Morgan who distributed $15 million to the liquidator and a sizeable portion (said to be $12 million) to investors in a U.S. financial syndicate. Two of the lead investors were Douglas Robinson, Roosevelt’s brother-in-law, and Clark P. Taft, brother of T.R.’s Vice-President (and the next president), William H. Taft.

After *The World* attacked the questionable deal, the President accused Pulitzer’s paper of “practicing every form of mendacity known to man.” The World editorial stated that Roosevelt’s reply was “full of flagrant untruths, reeking of misstatements.” Pulitzer then hired an English attorney who reported that he could find no records related to the company or its backers:

“I have never known in my lengthy experience of company matters any public corporation, much less one of such of such vast importance, having so completely disappeared and removed all traces of its existence as the New Panama Canal Company.”

Roosevelt responded: *The World’s* stories were “scurrilous and libelous, and false in every essential particular. . . . It is a high national duty to bring to justice this man who wantonly and wickedly and without one shadow of justification seeks to convict the government of his own country in the eyes of the civilized world of wrongdoing of the basest and foulest kind.”

In 1909, as Roosevelt prepared to leave office, his Attorney General filed Federal “criminal libel” charges against *The World* and its publisher. This was an unprecedented move because the government had never filed libel charges against anyone—the legal history of libel had always been restricted to the states. After a District Court judge quashed the indictment, the case made its way to the Supreme Court, where Pulitzer’s lawyers argued that it was essential to decide if the government could encroach on the First Amendment rights of a free press. On January 3, 1911, the Supreme Court handed down a unanimous ruling in favor of Pulitzer and his paper.

A *World* editorial trumpeted its victory, decrying the “vigorous attempt by executive usurpation to destroy freedom of the press of the United States. . . . Freedom of speech is not a favor to be exercised at the pleasure of the president.” Pulitzer continued:

“Mr. Roosevelt is an episode. *The World* is an institution. Long after Roosevelt and Pulitzer are dead, *The World* will still go on as a great independent newspaper, unmuzzled, undaunted and un-terrorized.”

Even now, no one knows who received the $40 million designated for the New Panama Canal Company.

**3 Health: Neurasthenia (in this case, Male Hysteria) and Blindness**

Though the term neurasthenia was usually described as a “female complaint,” Joseph Pulitzer apparently suffered from this illness. Symptoms of those diagnosed with the ailment included anxiety, fatigue, headaches, heart palpitations, neuralgia and, perhaps foremost, depression. Throughout his lifetime Joseph Pulitzer (1847-1911) was also plagued by real and imagined illnesses, including acute indigestion, insomnia, asthmatic lungs, angina and “generalized anxiety disorder,” which was then termed ‘neurasthenia” and is now diagnosed as depression. (In the 19th century neurasthenia was usually defined as “female hysteria.”) In addition, Pulitzer suffered from diabetes.

Pulitzer was understandably terrified of death: six of his seven siblings died prematurely; he was 11 when his father Fulop died at the age of 47. Two of his own seven children— daughters Katherine Ethel and Lucille— died before reaching maturity.

Blindness: Joseph Pulitzer had only owned *The World* for seven years when in 1890 the publisher learned that his right retina was detached, the left retina in danger of detaching. At the age of 43, Joseph Pulitzer was legally blind. *The World* published an official pronouncement:

“Yielding to the advice of his physicians, Mr. Joseph Pulitzer has withdrawn from the editorship of *The World*.” (The World, 16 October 1890)

The rival *Tribune’s* editor, Charles A. Dana, offered a grudging bow to the 43-year-old publisher:

“We droop our colors to him. We have not always agreed with the spirit which made his ideas a journalistic success. . . instead of merely astonishing us, frightening us and, we may add, perhaps a little disgusting us. But ‘le roi est mort; vive le roi.’”

Fortunately for the American reading public, Dana’s announcement about Pulitzer’s retirement was premature. Though blind and rarely in New York City, he continued to publish both the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and *The World* until his death in 1911.

**4. The Liberty - Filmed Aboard the Cangarda**

One silent but often seen star of the documentary film *Joseph Pulitzer: Voice of the People* is the luxury steam yacht, the Cangarda. This magnificently restored wooden yacht, where scenes from the end of Pulitzer’s life were shot, is a stand-in for Pulitzer’s beloved Liberty and provides glimpses into the luxury and isolation that Pulitzer demanded in his final years of blindness and anguish.

In its heyday Pulitzer’s Liberty was one of the largest private steam yachts afloat, measuring 286’. In 1908, having tired of temporarily outfitting his suite of cabins in larger public cruise ships, Pulitzer commissioned the design for his yacht from G.L. Watson, an English firm known for its work for the royal family. The publisher spent a staggering $1,500,000 for such special features as the two triple steam engines and custom soundproofing. Other notable expenses included the custom-designed Cuban mahogany interiors as well as music and dining rooms, a gym, superbly machined fittings and a 3000 book library.

Pulitzer demand for luxurious accommodation reflected his desire to live and work almost exclusively on the Liberty. His blindness and acute neurasthenia made social life, and even the company of his own family, unbearable. The 53 men crew plus the seven private secretaries were at the insomniac’s call, summoned at any hour by a coded system of bells. In his navigable stronghold Pulitzer ran his two newspapers while taking time out to listen to the soothing sounds of a resident string quartet. Since radio telegraphy had not yet been invented, every few days the Liberty would dock at ports where his Secretaries would purchase multiple papers and magazines to keep their compulsive employer up to date with latest news items. Each day Pulitzer would dictate lengthy and commanding telegrams to his editors in both Manhattan and St. Louis. Because of his fear of being scooped, Pulitzer devised an elaborate secret Morse-like code for make certain his correspondence with the papers’ editors remained private. During his years aboard the Liberty Pulitzer compulsively crossed and re-crossed the Atlantic Ocean until, in 1911 while anchored off the North Carolina coast, he died at the age of sixty-four.

Berthed at the Mystic Seaport Museum every summer, the Cangarda is a stellar example of early 20th century shipbuilding, one of three private steam yachts to have survived somewhat intact. The yacht, constructed in 1904 at Pusey and James, Wilmington, DE, for Michigan lumber magnate Charles Canfield, was sold multiple times and finally became the Canadian Fulford family’s showcase for entertaining dignitaries and celebrities. During World War II, the Cangarda was loaned to the Royal Canadian Navy for use as a training vessel. By 1999, the vessel was so derelict that it actually tipped or and partially sank into the Boston Harbor. (There’s startling film footage of the disaster.) Through the efforts of the expert restorer Jeff Rutherford and owner Robert McNeill sections of the original craft were salvaged. Robert MacNeill meticulously rehabilitated the vessel and now the Cangarda is regarded as a particularly fine example of the shipbuilding craft of the period.

The film team shot the boat in a natural harbor off the Maine coast. Because the yacht was anchored off shore in deep water, the crew had to wade out to speed boats then make the precarious climb, laden with camera equipment, lights, costumes and props, up the ladders to the main deck. It was definitely worth it! For all aficinados of seafaring, look for the Cangarda on display in Joseph Pulitzer: Voice of the People.”