



COURTESY OF WOMEN MAKE MOVIES

ALL IN THE FAMILY: American-born Janet Jagan and her husband Cheddi Jagan, pictured with their children, fought for a democratic and independent Guyana for over half a century.

GUYANA'S POLITICAL PIONEERS

Suzanne Wasserman grew up hearing stories about her cousin, a beautiful woman who left her home and her country to marry a man against her parents' wishes. The older cousin was Janet Rosenberg. She married the man who would later become the first democratically elected president of Guyana, a position she would inhabit after her husband's death.

Wasserman, a Chicago-born American social historian, tells the story of her adventurous cousin in "Thunder in Guyana," a documentary that is being shown at various film festivals around the country.

Rosenberg fell in love with Cheddi Jagan, the son of East Indian immigrants in the colony of British Guiana while she was a nursing student in Chicago. Jagan and Rosen-

berg married in 1943 despite the objections of her Jewish and his Hindu parents, and they planned to go to British Guiana to fight for the colony's independence. In 1950, they founded the Peo-

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ple's Progressive Party, the colony's first modern political party. Jagan was elected chief minister in 1953, and his wife was elected the colony's first female deputy speaker of parliament. She became known in newspaper headlines as the "Second Eva Peron."

They governed for 133 days, until Britain's prime minister, Winston Churchill, deposed them. Cheddi Jagan was elected prime minister in 1961 but lost power in 1964 due to an alliance of foes backed by the CIA. Finally, in 1992, in the first free and fair elections in almost three decades, he was sworn in as president of Guyana. In the winter of 1997, he passed away and his wife was elected president, the first foreign-born person and first woman to serve this role.

The film recounts her life and her adopted homeland through archival photographs and film footage, as well as interviews with her friends and family.

— LISA SOPHER

National Council of Jewish Women's Women's Film Festival, Caldwell College, 9 Ryerson Ave., Caldwell, N.J.; Oct. 25, 7:30 p.m.; patron \$40, benefactor \$125, director \$175, film critics circle \$500 per couple. (973-740-0588 or www.ncjwessex.org); Reel Jews Film Festival, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 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