

USA

2005



The QUEEN from VIRGINIA: *The Jackie Bong Wright Story*

David Ngo

David Ngo's moving documentary, *The Queen From Virginia: The Jackie Bong Wright Story*, centers on an extraordinary woman in her "age of elegance." At the age of 64, having survived war, the death of her husband, and multiple relocations, Jackie Bong Wright became the first Vietnamese American finalist in the Ms. Senior America beauty pageant. A loving portrayal of a self-described role model, Ngo's film pays tribute not only to his aunt Jackie but also, to the spirit of human resilience. As Jackie relates to her audience at the pageant, "To me success is not about how high and fast you reach the top, but how high and fast you bounce back when you hit bottom."

Integrating interviews, pageant footage, and photographs and stories from Jackie's life, *The Queen From Virginia* follows Jackie Bong Wright's journey. Looking back to Jackie's birth in Cambodia to her high school years in Da Lat to her family's escape from Viet Nam to America, the film traces this journey across three continents and through countless triumphs and heartbreaks. Through her work as a journalist in the U.S., Jackie discovers and enters the Ms. Senior America pageant and becomes the Queen of Virginia.

For Jackie's nephew, David Ngo, making *The Queen From Virginia* allowed him to learn more about a woman whom he had formerly known only as his "aunt from Virginia." He says of the film, "Although I refer to Jackie Bong Wright as my aunt, I soon realized that she was known to others as a war survivor, former refugee, journalist, community activist, and now a state beauty queen." Indeed, *The Queen From Virginia* contextualizes Jackie Bong Wright as an inspirational woman amongst a whole generation of inspirational women, now entering what the pageant publicist would call not "old age" but the "age of elegance." A film that celebrates perseverance and humanity, *The Queen From Virginia* comes to the Vietnamese International Film Festival already having recently won the Jury Prize for Best Documentary Feature at the Visual Communications Film Festival in Los Angeles.

--Laurel Westrup

Ngoi Viet

Westminster

THURSDAY 4-19 / 3:00 PM

90 mins / DVD color
English

Director/Writer
David Ngo

Producer
Katy Chen

Main Cast
Jackie Bong Wright

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