


SHOUTOUT LA

(<https://shoutoutla.com/>)

LOCAL STORIES ([HTTPS://SHOUTOUTLA.COM/CATEGORY/LOCAL-STORIES/](https://shoutoutla.com/category/local-stories/))

Meet Nadia Voukitchevitch | Filmmaker, Producer, Director, Writer, Educator, World Changer, Activist and Mother

May 22, 2023 ·  Leave a reply

We had the good fortune of connecting with Nadia Voukitchevitch and we've shared our conversation below.

Hi Nadia, why did you decide to pursue a creative path?

I remember taking a class in Economics when I was at Sarah Lawrence College and thinking how I must be as awful at business as my bohemian artistic parents were, but also realizing that I had to learn the basics if I was ever going to overcome being broke all the time. I suppose I always knew I would have a creative career because when I was about 10 or 12, I told my father, who spent most of his life writing and trying to get published, that I wanted to direct movies and change the world. He then told me: "Well, I'm sorry to hear that because I'm not Jewish and I have no contacts in the film business." One would think that after picking out a set of plain finger-paints out of all the toy possibilities at FAO Schwarz

back in the 1980's when it was a huge building at 745 Fifth Avenue, that I would naturally want to become a painter. While I do like to paint, I tried very hard to pursue many other "more sensible" careers like real estate -according to my mother who was also an artist and ran several art galleries in Soho New York, Much like Jeff Koons says: "Art to me is a humanitarian act and I believe that there is a responsibility that art should somehow be able to effect mankind, to make the world a better place." I've always wanted my work to have a social justice and didactic element, like re-writing history with a take away and call to action to do something about what you just watched or learned. Often to fund those "passion projects" one has to take on producing a number of commercials for brands that do not necessarily benefit underserved communities or advocate in favor of climate change being real. Incidentally, I did get a B+ in that Economics class even though I almost got expelled for allowing a classmate to read my notes who subsequently lifted an entire paragraph and used it in her paper for the class, but thankfully my Don managed to talk the Economics Professor out of pursuing the matter further, and my friend explained that she had recently had an abortion and that the painkillers along with her Prozac made it difficult for her to think clearly. At the risk of sounding cliché my creative career chose me, I have never felt as blissfully happy as I am directing and serving the community and people that I love. Changing situations and circumstances no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, mean the world to me, and if I can help make a difference in a child's life or a group of seniors that gives me such satisfaction. I also believe that I create in mediums that I find speak to everyone across the globe. Film is a universal language, you don't need to speak five languages to understand on film what a first kiss is or why someone is in pain and crying. When I take a photograph I try to capture a historic moment in time, but also what that person, animal, flower or landscape was feeling and share that as a memory to the world. Writing a poem in Spanish about a woman who miscarried at 9 months who worked at Bates Cafeteria whom I had only known from greeting her asking her about her day while serving myself enough food to last me a whole day when I was on a one-meal per day meal plan on full scholarship, astounded me when she broke down in tears after reading it and telling me: "How did you know? That was exactly what happened." I had no idea, I just wrote what came to me that night after unpacking all my food onto my desk and thinking what she must have been through to lose her baby at 9 months while working probably for minimum wage all day on her feet and then typing it up on my grandmother's Smith Corona typewriter. Growing up I watched a lot of old movies on Betamax and VHS tapes that my father would buy for his library. Many were classics like Citizen Kane or La Grande Illusion, Notorious, or Lawrence of Arabia, he also loved war films like A Bridge Too Far, Spitfire, A Bridge Over The River Kwai, For Whom The Bell Tolls, and Patton. I must admit that I did not care too much for the war films, except for the ones with planes as I love to fly, but enjoyed all the film noir and Marx Brother movies. Later on I would be inspired by the few women directors who were making a name for themselves in a male dominated industry and winning awards such as Maria Luisa Bemberg and Pilar Miró, and controversial Leni Riefenstahl as well as Documentarian Barbara

Kopple. Documentary film is where my passion lies, but sadly an area where funding is always scarce. I hope I haven't taken too many detours to say that I love art and it is the best way to express oneself and share your vision and ideas globally. Having said that, you also must be prepared for a lot of highs and lows – feast and famine, until you make it really big.

Can you open up a bit about your work and career? We're big fans and we'd love for our community to learn more about your work.

One of my photographs was exhibited and minted as an NFT at the Superchief Gallery – carbon negative- in New York for the 2021 Every Women Biennial, who celebrate and uplift women, non-binary artists, by creating opportunities, connection, bringing together established and emerging artists showing for the first time:

<http://2021.everywomanbiennial.com/nyc-nft-show/> I also had two of my photographs published in Fatal Flaw literary magazine, an international online magazine based in New York City that welcomes submissions from writers of all backgrounds, people of color, multiracial, indigenous, LGBTQIA+ and anyone from a community of underrepresented voices: <https://www.fatalflawlit.com/vol-4-ritual>

I'm working on a series of photos and paintings from my adventures in LA and will hopefully have a show at an art gallery soon. Stay tuned!

I've been writing my first book about my life and career as well as ancestor history, which might become a memoir. I also have several documentaries in development including one about the prison system in the US, and the US Public School system and one about the first female Asian groomer for male celebrities. I'm working on a feature script about the Great Retreat that my paternal grandfather survived and one about Flora Sandes the first woman General in the Serbian Army. I'm researching Tamara Bunker also known as "Tania the Guerillera" who fought along side Che Guevara in Cuba and Bolivia for a feature. I'm also researching Toussaint Louverture the leader of the Haitian Revolution and the General who ultimately managed to force the French out of Haiti and helped gain its independence in 1804 for a documentary.

The first feature film that I produced for CHIRLA (Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles) "America's Family" is now being submitted to film festivals and will be in theaters soon.

What sets me apart from others is definitely my unique background and the fact that I'm multilingual. One of my most recent accomplishments was going back to school after 20 years and getting my Masters degree in Human Development with a concentration in Leadership in Education and Human Services. Finishing my thesis on US Public Education Reform- A Teacher's Perspective and interviewing over 15 Teachers in the largest public school districts of the nation was such a major undertaking but so worth while, especially when I got a letter from the White House after sending Joe and Jill Biden a copy. Seeing my son at my graduation was wonderful and made me feel so proud of myself, despite him

having a moment of dis-regulation because he was “hangry” and didn’t want to get out of the car.

Another proud moment was when my friend, Brenda Fierro whom I worked with years before as an Account Executive, called me and asked for my help to produce and direct a video for the 80th anniversary of her brand/client and I got to not only produce but also co-direct with my husband. Another proud moment was when another former co-worker, Arturo Monroy, who is a talent voiceover artist called me to help him produce a campaign for a new client of his and I was able to produce it and have my husband do all the editorial and VFX work through his company; www.vfxla.com

Getting to where I am today professionally was not easy, I think anyone who says making it in the film industry or as an artist is easy, is probably not telling the truth or came from a place of privilege. I dealt with a lot of racism, discrimination, sexism, ageism, and plain old fashioned jealousy and envy. Working in the Latin Market in the US without being a Latina from say Mexico or Cuba or Argentina or even from Spain was extremely difficult and often met with – “Well where are you from anyway?” and “Why do you speak so many languages?” and “Why do you speak Spanish with a Castilian accent?” I even tried modifying my accent in order to fit in, but the truth of the matter is that I’ve never felt like I belonged in the US. Being first generation, and having lived in Haiti, Spain, Russia and a few other countries always made me feel like a foreigner in the US. But Unfortunately, I couldn’t work in Spain as a US Citizen so I had to come back to the US to find work and finish High School and College. Therefore, I had to prove myself through my work and create opportunities for myself which again wasn’t easy when someone is not willing to give you a chance simply because they don’t know you or you do not have a Spanish name. Incidentally, I do have Spanish last names on my mother’s side: Montemayor del Fierro, but my full last name doesn’t fit on any official documents. And, yes, I did consider using them for a while when I couldn’t get work in the U.S. Latin Market, but I would have had to reinvent myself all over again. Anything worth while in life has its challenges and you just have to keep trying different ways to get in and get that chance to show what you are worth or capable of doing and never give up. If you are turned down, then ask for another lead or a referral, worst that can happen is that they say: “no” but at least you tried and did your best. You have to be persistent, determined and brave, and not be afraid of speaking up for yourself.

I try to let my work speak for itself, but in this world you also have to know how to sell yourself and as an artist that is certainly a skill you must learn and isn’t always easy. I’m great at promoting others and their work, but have always struggled talking about my own and sharing it with the world. Til this day I will sooner talk about someone else’s work than mine, but as you get older you realize that time goes by and if you don’t seize the moment it will pass.

I would really like the world to know what good work I’ve done and continue to do with integrity and honesty and with good intentions always. I would also like them to know the amazing people I’ve worked with, who have helped shape my career and art. You cannot do a

film on your own, you need a whole Team of people behind you, supporting you and realizing that dream of yours. I'm really excited about what 2022 has to offer and what is in store! 22 is my favorite number so I believe something really good is going to come out of this year.

Let's say your best friend was visiting the area and you wanted to show them the best time ever. Where would you take them? Give us a little itinerary – say it was a week long trip, where would you eat, drink, visit, hang out, etc.

There are so many great places in our neighborhood as it has grown and developed so much since I moved here in 2005. We've always gone to Simply Wholesome on Overhill and Slauson Avenue for the grilled salmon dinner plate or just rice and beans and the spinach or seafood patties. I also like Hilltop Coffee and Kitchen for a tumeric latte and soul bowl with grits or the beignets. One of my favorite restaurants is Bianca's Bakery at the Platform in Culver City, their Pastry Chef, Federico made our wedding cake. I would also recommend Margot for the roof terrace. Ugo's is one of the first restaurants I went to when I first moved to our neighborhood and he catered to my co-ed baby shower and is still there despite all the new places that have opened up- during the pandemic they offered 50% off their menu and we ordered from them a lot to support them. If they like chocolate, I'd have them try my friend, Christine's chocolates at Milla's Chocolates on Venice Blvd. If they are in the mood for pizza La Rocco's Pizzeria or Upper Crust on Main Street in Culver City. If they feel like curry, Cardamon on Melrose and India Sweets and Spices for vegan on Venice Blvd. Another good vegan place is Crossroads Kitchen on Melrose, the lasagna and the artichokes were superb! If they are vegetarian and looking for an affordable meal I would take them to Govinda's buffet at the International Society of Krishna Consciousness. Metro Cafe on Washington Place and Sepulveda serves great brunch and amazing Serbian food, try the goulash, the english green pea hummus and seared tuna and the portobello mushroom sandwich. The Owner Sasha is very welcoming and is always working along side all his staff serving. For some of the best BBQ, I'd take them to JR'S BBQ on Lacienea Blvd. For sushi to Sugar Fish, Katsuya, Sushi Tama and Irori in Marina del Rey. A great place to meditate is the Peace Awareness Labyrinth and Gardens on West Adams Blvd.

West Adams Blvd has become very popular these days, I love Tartine's, Mizlala's and Mian. I would take them to some of the art galleries like ThinkSpace, The Underground Museum and also What's Ya Vibe in Inglewood.

For the best cupcakes Hotcakes Bakes on Centinela, Sprinkles, SusieCakes, Sweet Lady Jane and for best donuts, the Donut Friend in Highland Park.

I would definitely take them to DTLA, like the Hoxton Hotel and have dinner on the rooftop at Cabra. The Last Bookstore is a must see and The Broad Museum and well as MOCA and LA Phil. Dorothy Chandler Pavilion and Shrine Auditorium as well as Union Station for amazing architecture. The Cicada and Biltmore for an art deco feel. I'd take them to Philippe the Original to try the french dip sandwich and a cup of coffee for 45cents, which used to be a nickel and then a dime. For Scandinavian food, I'd take them to Gravlax in Culver City which

has the best gravlax and really good aquavit.

For small boutique shopping are rare finds, I would take them to Lundeen's, the Whole 9 in Culver City and Antiqua on West Adams Blvd. Abbott Kinney also has great little shops as does Honolulu Ave in Montrose and then of course there is Melrose and the Art District on Labrea Avenue.

I'd take them to the Academy Museum on Fairfax and then for the best cocktails I've had recently at Fanny's Bar & Restaurant try the Gladiator and LA Confidential. For a good show I'd take them to the Pantages Theater and for comedy to the Laugh Factory. For dancing The Three Clubs on Vine and The Edison in DTLA. For Salsa dancing El Floridita and La Granada LA in Alhambra.

For a good tea, I would recommend The Peninsula in Beverly Hills or the Langham and Tea Rose Garden in Pasadena as well as a cozy little place in Montrose called the "T" Room.

For the beach, my favorite is Manhattan Beach, and I'd take them for gelato at Paciugo's at Hermosa Beach, but I would also take them to a Paradise Cove and Zuma Beach and drinks at Moonshadows on the PCH. I would also book a reservation at the Getty Villa and take them to the Getty Center as well.

You can follow me on Instagram @2applelonea for more great finds in the LA area.

Shoutout is all about shouting out others who you feel deserve additional recognition and exposure. Who would you like to shoutout?

I met my Partner, Robb Hart about 14 years ago who became my husband over a Zoom wedding during the pandemic in 2020. Before I even knew I was pregnant with my son, I hired him on several jobs I was producing and he was the only Flame Artist who could soften the ridges on a dollop of sour cream exactly how the client wanted. When I became a single working parent, Robb started asking me out and now he has become a wonderful father to my 13 year old son and our two rambunctious doggies, Estrella and rescue puppy Fearless. His love, support, amazing cooking, and encouragement are what has lead me to finally start writing my first book. He has always believed in my talent and abilities and I am eternally grateful. I would also like to thank my parents, especially my father for giving me my first Minolta 35mm camera that was stolen a year after I moved to LA which I eventually replaced with a second hand camera from Sammy's, but still wasn't the same as that first one I ever held and pulled film through. My son's godmother and incredible Art Director/Set Decorator, Laura Harper, and my dear friend and sister Pamela Reyes. I would also like to recognize two Producers, Gretchen McGowan and Margot Bridger whom I met working on the first independent feature film as the Location Intern. It was Margot who decided to pay each Intern \$100 after working for free for about 3 months in over 20 locations all over New Jersey and Gretchen who tried to save me from the cops when they pulled me over driving the locations Budget truck at about 2AM for no good reason, and then followed me all the way to the Lincoln Tunnel making sure I would never come back to New Jersey. I also want to thank my first Boss on set, Gayle Vangrofsky, Locations Manager, who gave me a book on women in

film that featured my film Professor Abigail Child at Sarah Lawrence College. I also want to recognize Martha Sandlin who was the Documentary Production Professor who encouraged me to submit my documentary on Women in Russia to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and where I was a finalist in the Documentary category in 1998. I would also like to thank Hannah Weyer and Consuelo González who were two of the first women Directors I worked with one in film and the other in TV for CNN Newsstand. I want to thank Alma Herrera for giving me my first job in Miami and Director Jorge Ulla for recommending me for my first Advertising Agency job that changed my life. My mentors, James Schamus and Ted Hope from my days working at Good Machine Inc. Patricia Martinez de Velasco and Roberto Sneider for hiring me at La Banda Films. Cesar Vega and Sergio Nicolau for making copies of my reel when I first moved to LA and also for giving me the chance to work with Rodrigo Prieto and Gustavo Garzón on a Budweiser commercial that I produced. Lynn C. Franklin who gave me my first job in the publishing world and who recently passed away from cancer, but her publishing firm continues on as Franklin & Siegal Associates. Also Elizabeth Cházaro for offering me a job at Palomar Pictures when I was considering moving to LA. I want to recognize the amazing and beautiful first African- American woman Producer, Rita Michel that I worked with on “Farewell Miss Fortune” where I was promoted from Key PA to 2nd A.D. I also want to thank Mercy Palomo who was so understanding when I was repping her company Onda Films and juggling being a single mother, and Marta Burga, who has always recommended me for jobs in the US Latin Market. I would like to thank Oasis LA, and non-profits Esperanza Community Housing Corp, Salesian Boys and Girls Club, and CHIRLA for allowing me to produce and direct videos and PSAs for them and the first feature I produced “America’s Family.” Dina Mordaa who helped me find the first property I ever bought in LA. My Yoga Instructor Ally Hamilton. Lastly, I would like to recognize the inspiration that Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Dalai Lama have been to me throughout my life and the peace they have brought me. Their book: “The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World” helped me get through the worst of the pandemic. There are so many more people that I should thank including all my therapists over the years, and recognize as I really do believe in giving credit and merit where it is due, but I know they know who they are and will forgive me if I have not listed them here but they are in my mind and heart.

Website: <https://www.nadiafilms.com/> (<https://www.nadiafilms.com/>)

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/2appleonea/>
(<https://www.instagram.com/2appleonea/>)

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/nadiav/> (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/nadiav/>)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/vfilms22> (<https://twitter.com/vfilms22>)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nadia.voukitchevitch.7>
(<https://www.facebook.com/nadia.voukitchevitch.7>)

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/Applelonea1>
(<https://www.youtube.com/user/Applelonea1>)

Other: https://www.pinterest.com/2applelonea/_saved/
(https://www.pinterest.com/2applelonea/_saved/) <https://www.nadiavedu.com/>
(<https://www.nadiavedu.com/>) <http://nadiavoukit.blogspot.com/>
(<http://nadiavoukit.blogspot.com/>)

Image Credits

Nadia Voukitchevitch, Robb Hart, Brenda Fierro, Madeleine McGregor, Christian Palma, Lesley Elizondo, CHIRLA, Stuart Volkow, SuperChief Gallery,

Nominate Someone: (<https://shoutoutinterviews.com/la/recommendations>) ShoutoutLA is built on recommendations and shoutouts from the community; it's how we uncover hidden gems, so if you or someone you know deserves recognition please let us know [here](#). (<https://shoutoutinterviews.com/la/recommendations>).

(<https://shoutoutla.com/the-values-and-principles-that-matter-21/>).

You may also like



(<https://shoutoutla.com/meet-annie-howell-mixed-media-artist/>).

Meet Annie Howell |
Mixed Media Artist



(<https://shoutoutla.com/meet-hue-thi-hoffmaster-painter/>).

Meet Huê Thi
Hoffmaster | Painter
(<https://shoutoutla.com/meet->



(<https://shoutoutla.com/meet-david-fiuczynski-fretless-guitar-microtonality-screaming-headless-torsos/>).

(<https://shoutoutla.com/meet-hue-thi-hoffmaster-annie-howell-mixed-media-artist/>)

Meet David Fiuczynski |
fretless guitar,
microtonality,
Screaming Headless
Torsos
(<https://shoutoutla.com/meet-david-fiuczynski-fretless-guitar-microtonality-screaming-headless-torsos/>)



(<https://shoutoutla.com/meet-jean-denegar-cinematographer-2/>)

Meet Jean Denegar:
Cinematographer
(<https://shoutoutla.com/meet-jean-denegar-cinematographer-2/>)



(<https://shoutoutla.com/meet-tracy-kiggen-face-painter-artist/>)

Meet Tracy Kiggen |
Face Painter & Artist
(<https://shoutoutla.com/meet-tracy-kiggen-face-painter-artist/>)



(<https://shoutoutla.com/meet-wake-jones-founder-of-soul-ova-gold-clothing-company-wake-news-podcast-rule-of-8-graphic-novel-project-creator/>)

Meet Wake Jones |
Founder of Soul Ova
Gold Clothing
Company/WAKE
NEWS Podcast/Rule
Of 8 Graphic Novel
Project Creator
(<https://shoutoutla.com/meet-wake-jones-founder-of-soul-ova-gold-clothing-company-wake-news-podcast-rule-of-8-graphic-novel-project-creator/>)

Leave a comment

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked *

Comment Text...

Name *

Email *

Website

Save my name, email, and website in this browser for the next time I comment.

POST COMMENT

PREVIOUS ARTICLE



Our mission is to help change the way people spend money. We want people to spend more of their money with mom-and-pops, small businesses, independent artists and creatives. We think one of the most powerful ways to do that is by putting small business owners and creatives at the center of discussions designed to spark conversation within the community.

[instagram.com/shoutoutlaofficial/](https://www.instagram.com/shoutoutlaofficial/)

Unique Perspectives(<https://shoutoutla.com/category/unique-perspectives/>) [US\(https://shoutoutla.com/about-shoutout-la/\)](https://shoutoutla.com/about-shoutout-la/)

Tech & Culture(<https://shoutoutla.com/category/tech-culture/>)

Privacy & Terms of Service(<https://shoutoutla.com/shoutout-la-terms->

Lifestyle(<https://shoutoutla.com/category/lifestyle/>)

Nominations(<https://shoutoutinterviews.com/la/recommendations>)

Work & Life(<https://shoutoutla.com/category/work-life/>)

Shoutout LA © 2024. All Rights Reserved.