

OBITUARIES

CHARLES GUGGENHEIM

DOCUMAKER

Charles Guggenheim, Oscar-winning documentary filmmaker whose social, political and historical films, died Oct. 9 of pancreatic cancer at Georgetown U. Hospital. He was 78.

Internationally noted Washington-based filmmaker, considered by many to be a central figure in the evolution of the American docu, made more than 100 docs, was nominated for 12 Academy Awards and garnered Oscars four times during his prolific 50-year career.

He was also credited as being one of the first to use a documentary style for American presidential TV campaigns.

A native of Cincinnati, Guggenheim served in the U.S. Army during World War



II (1943-1946). After the war, he returned to college and earned his B.A. from the U. of Iowa in 1948.

His media career began in earnest during the early 1950s when he was a producer on a CBS children's TV series "Fearless Fosdick." He went on to serve as acting director for KETC Educational Communications in St. Louis. In 1954, he set up his own production company, Guggenheim Prods. In 1959 he produced and directed Steve McQueen starrer "The Great St. Louis Bank Robbery."

During the Kennedy administration, he relocated to Washington to work with George Stevens Jr. at the U.S. Information Agency, which was under the management of Edward R. Murrow. In the 1950s, '60s and '70s, he directed numerous media campaigns including presidential ones for Adlai Stevenson, 1956; Robert Kennedy, 1968; George McGovern, 1972; and Edward Kennedy, 1980, as well as 75 senatorial and gubernatorial ones such as those for Robert Kennedy, Pat Brown and Walter Mondale.

Guggenheim's most recent film was "Berga: Soldiers of Another War," slated to air on PBS in March.

He is survived by his wife, Marion Davis Streett; a daughter, film producer Grace; two sons, film and TV director Davis and freelance film associate Jonathan; and four grandchildren.

— Doug Galloway