

a film by CHRISTIAN D. BRUUN

# Calendar Girl



DITLEVFILMS PRESENTS "CALENDAR GIRL" MUSIC BY DERON JOHNSON EDITED BY ROSIE NAKAMURA  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY CHRISTIAN D. BRUUN EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS KATE DELPIZZO RAPHAEL AVIGDOR REIKA ALEXANDER  
KIKKA HANAZAWA TRACY JENKINS YOSHIMURA ANGELA SUN ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS TERESA LAI MARK ROMEO  
MARY MYERS HACKLEY PRODUCED BY CHRISTIAN D. BRUUN NATALIE NUDELL DIRECTED BY CHRISTIAN D. BRUUN

Poster by Jan-Christian Bruun

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Photo by Izzy Cohan

## SYNOPSIS

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A quintessential New York story. For over 70 years, the influential *Fashion Calendar* with its iconic pink pages laid out every fashion event in New York City, including New York Fashion Week. Behind it was founder Ruth Finley.

In 2014, Ruth retired at 95 and sold the *Fashion Calendar* to the Council of Fashion Designers of America.

The documentary examines this momentous transition, and reflects on the life, work, and legacy of this trailblazer and the industry Ruth helped create.

## TECHNICAL

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Genre	<b>DOCUMENTARY</b>	Format	<b>2K</b>
Language	<b>ENGLISH</b>	Aspect Ratio	<b>1:1:90</b>
Country	<b>USA</b>	Sound	<b>STEREO / 5.1</b>
Running Time	<b>91 MINUTES</b>		

## TEAM

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Director/Producer	<b>CHRISTIAN D. BRUUN</b>
Writer/Producer	<b>NATALIE NUDELL</b>
Executive Producers	<b>KATE DELPIZZO REIKA ALEXANDER KIKKA HANAZAWA RAPHAEL AVIGDOR TRACY JENKINS YOSHIMURA ANGELA SUN</b>
Associate Producers	<b>TERESA LAI MARY MYERS HACKLEY MARK ROMEO</b>
Editor	<b>ROSIE NAKAMURA</b>
Cinematographer	<b>CHRISTIAN D. BRUUN</b>
Composer	<b>DERON JOHNSON</b>
Production Company	<b>DITLEVFILMS</b>
World Sales	<b>SYNDICADO</b>

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**Calendar**  
**Girl**

## **SYNOPSIS** (short)

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For over 70 years, founder Ruth Finley and the game-changing *Fashion Calendar* scheduled every fashion event in New York City. At 95, Ruth sold the calendar, ending an era.

## **QUOTES**

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**"All of us designers have an emotional connection with Ruth Finley because we all remember when we listed ourselves for the first time in the Fashion Calendar."**

DIANE VON FURSTENBERG  
Chairwoman (2015–9), Council of Fashion  
Designers of America

**"Ruth is the woman who has held the fashion flock together, and by association, brought the industry together."**

DONNA KARAN  
Designer

**"Some people wish on rainbows. Some people look for the pot of gold at the end of a rainbow. Ruth lives on a rainbow."**

MARYLOU LUTHER  
Creative Fashion Director

**"I would like to thank Ruth and commend Ruth for her tireless work in keeping our entire industry on one calendar."**

RALPH LAUREN  
Designer



## OVERVIEW

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*Calendar Girl* is about Ruth Finley, fashion industry and fashion history legend, on the eve of her retirement at 95 and her handing over of her lifelong work on the *Fashion Calendar*. This is the story of a woman who in the 1940s carved out a place for herself in a man's world and developed a reputation characterized by tenacity, perseverance, fairness, humanity, diplomacy, and decency. She influenced the inner workings of New York fashion, she celebrated and was celebrated by both the industry's powerhouses and rising stars, and she survived its many incarnations.

**“You know, they talk today about the disruptors, in the economy, like an iPhone, or Uber, or all of these major disruptors, and the Elon Musks of the world. But in her day, Ruth was a major disruptor.”**

EDIE WEINER  
President and CEO, The Future Hunters

Her story is told by industry insiders, her sons, and friends, who bear witness to her long career as publisher, entrepreneur, and patron saint and fairy godmother to fashion designers.

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### *Ruth's Career*

From the first issue in 1945, the *Fashion Calendar* was an impartial listing service for fashion events in New York City year-round, making sure that no two shows would happen at the same time. This comprehensive, much-sought-after, up-to-date, one-stop-shop publication of who was showing when, with contact information, grew along with the industry. It came to be called the iconic Pink Bible, and made loyal paid subscribers of designers, press, retailers, buyers, models, PR agents, and influencers. Ruth became the supreme behind-the-runway mover and shaker.

When Ruth started, New York's fashion industry was an island, as described by Stan Herman, former president of the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA). During World War II, the Paris fashion industry was on hold, and American fashion rose to the scene. Ruth played a crucial role in facilitating the sharing of information, and solidified the industry over the years. Ruth established her place as the master connector, planner, and negotiator. Every designer's first memories of Ruth were of her helping them when they were starting out. She never underestimated the importance and effectiveness of simply picking up the phone, especially when it came to scheduling New York Fashion Week and getting designers their ideal spot on the calendar.





### *Ruth's Upbringing*

Ruth was born in 1920 and grew up in Haverhill, Massachusetts. At age 11, she approached her father, a dentist, with the resolve to attend college after high school and to have a career and family. Her mother, a homemaker, could not identify with Ruth's goals, and her friends did not pursue professional lives. While studying journalism at Simmons College in Boston, Ruth spent summers working in New York. There, she met legendary fashion publicist Eleanor Lambert, the pioneering organizer of Press Week, precursor to today's New York Fashion Week. While working as Lambert's Girl Friday—a junior assistant entrusted with a wide range of tasks—Ruth was exposed to the fashion industry and cultivated an idea. She would create a clearing house that would help fashion event presenters and attendees avoid preventable conflicts and competition and maximize exposure to the press. The *Fashion Calendar* was born.

## *Ruth's Family*

**"After my husband died, I'd go in there and look at the kids sleeping, and I'd be so happy to see three terrific kids there. You know, I wouldn't let myself be depressed by what had happened to me. And I always believed in looking at the happy side. And too many people don't know how to do that."**

RUTH FINLEY

Married at 23 to a man 17 years her senior, she divorced Hank Green after having their two sons, Joe and Jim. When she was 39 in 1954, her second husband, Irving Lein, with whom she had her third son, Larry, died of a heart attack. Ruth never remarried, and she raised her sons and built her career from home. She ran the Fashion Calendar while being a soccer mom and president of the Parent Teacher Association. Over the years, Ruth identified her happiness as realized by career and family equally, staying close with her sons, daughters-in-law, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. She viewed the Fashion Calendar as a family business, and never considered selling it.



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## *The Ever-Changing World, and Then The New World*

**"I really think she is the Steve Jobs of our industry. No question. And the next one, the next Ruth Finley? 100 years? I don't know."**

FRANÇOIS DAMIDE  
CEO, Crafting Beauty

But the story gets messier. Ruth's vision and hard work were celebrated when her industry needed her. Her role became more and more obstructive against the continuing explosive growth of the internationalized New York fashion industry in the convergence of commercialism, technology, and globalization. Ruth could not keep up with an increasingly complicated calendar of events and a rapidly growing number of shows.

The Council of Fashion Designers of America, first led by Stan Herman and Fern Mallis and later by Steven Kolb and Diane von Furstenberg, had for many years wanted to prepare the rapidly expanding New York fashion industry to catch up with the changing global media, technology, and consumer landscape. The leaders of CFDA had hoped for the Fashion Calendar to be online, be scalable, and be nimble to cater to the multiplied quantity and demands of shows. They had wanted the CFDA to take control of New York Fashion Week from Ruth's office of two editors.

Ruth had been reluctant and slow to adapt to technology. She was loyal to her supporters who respected her and were holding on to her personal touch. She had considered hers a family business, even if her sons and grandchildren had not thought it was possible or had wanted to take it over. Once a beloved problem solver and industry buffer, as the multi-billion dollar industry grew, Ruth became a bottleneck. In 2014, after several years of negotiation, CFDA acquired the Fashion Calendar and began to publish digitally.

Ruth Finley helped build an industry that became so powerful, commercialized, and globalized that it outplayed her and had to leave her behind. Her retirement signaled the inevitable end of an era of her one-on-one personal relationship style. Celebrated as a trailblazer in her time, in the new world, she became the old-fashioned, the old guard.

An emotionally intense journey, we capture Ruth as she handed over the fashion scheduling baton to the CFDA and its leaders Steven Kolb and Diane von Furstenberg. And as the Fashion Calendar entered the digital world and into online engagement and management, the fashion world wondered how it would fare without the central and accessible role of Ruth Finley.



## *The Ruth Finley Legacy*

**"You want to know what I like about you? Nobody hates you in the fashion industry."**

MONIKA TILLEY  
Designer, Emeritus Board  
Member, CFDA

Ruth Finley passed away in August 2018 at the age of 98.

Fashion scholar Harold Koda described her as one of the three most important women in the American fashion industry along with Eleanor Lambert and Diana Vreeland, "but who was Oz-like and never creating the kind of archetypal persona of the other two." Indeed, due to her integrity and credibility, she was a deeply admired figure of New York's fashion history but unknown to those outside of it.

In her time, Ruth was the kind and relentlessly positive face. She had seen through 70 years of New York fashion history, insisted that business was conducted at a personal level, refused to be commercial beyond what was sensible for the core function of the business, and her drive kept the most commercial of industries together.

The Ruth Finley Collection, consisting of 69 years of Fashion Calendars and letters, is housed at the Fashion Institute of Technology.

After selling her calendar in 2014 to the end of her life, Ruth remained a beloved and trusted friend to the Council of Fashion Designers of America, and a mentor to both seasoned and young designers.

### **THE TITLE**

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The film's title *Calendar Girl* reframes the term's outdated "pin-up" definition, instead celebrating Ruth Finley's role as a female icon and her influential and impactful 70-year career shaping the Fashion Calendar.

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## INTERVIEW SUBJECTS

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Fashion designers

DENNIS BASSO  
THOM BROWNE  
CAROLINA HERRERA  
BETSEY JOHNSON  
NANETTE LEPORE  
NICOLE MILLER  
JAMES MISCHKA  
RALPH RUCCI  
TADASHI SHOJI

CFDA's current and former  
executives and board  
members

PETER ARNOLD  
JEFFREY BANKS  
STAN HERMAN  
STEVEN KOLB  
FERN MALLIS  
MONIKA TILLEY

Editors

MICKY BOARDMAN  
MARY HACKLEY  
MARYLOU LUTHER  
ERIC WILSON

Curators and scholars

DAVID BENJAMIN  
HAROLD KODA  
VALERIE STEELE  
KAREN TRIVETTE

Fashion industry insiders

NANCY CHILTON  
BILL CUNNINGHAM  
FRANÇOIS DAMIDE  
JULIE MANNION  
MARIE PANARIELLO  
JUDY RICE  
ELLIN SALTZMAN  
ALAN SEALOVE  
AUDREY SMALTZ  
EDIE WEINER

Her three sons

JIM GREEN  
JOE GREEN  
LARRY LEIN

Her boyfriend

JOE SIEGEL

## THE FILMMAKERS

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### CHRISTIAN D. BRUUN

director, producer, cinematographer



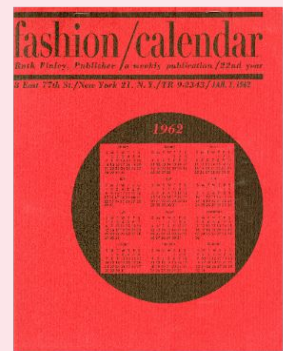
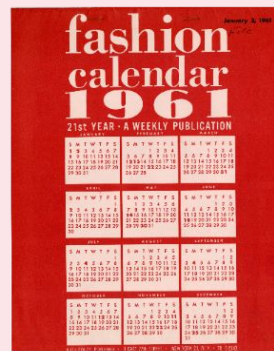
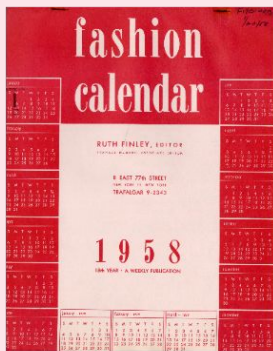
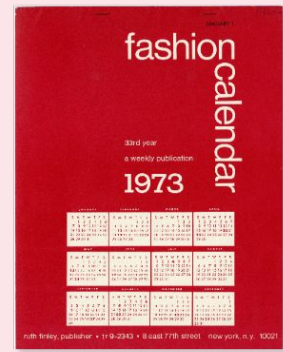
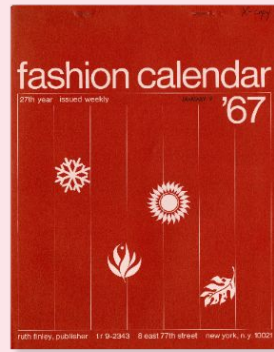
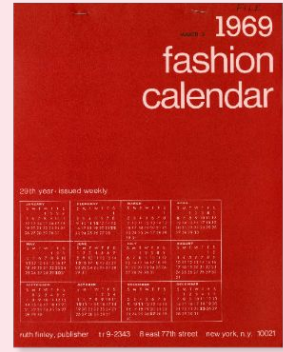
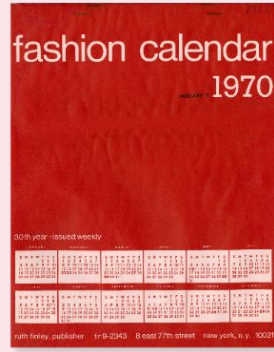
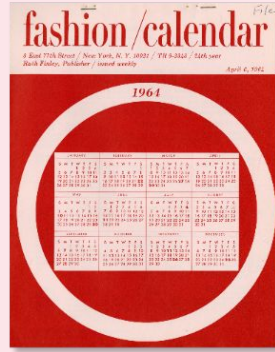
Christian D. Bruun is a director, producer, and cinematographer of documentary and narrative film and television. His films have had international theatrical and television distribution and been in official selection at Sundance, Tribeca, Berlin, Locarno, IDFA, and Hot Docs festivals. In addition to directing *Calendar Girl*, Christian recently produced civil rights drama *Son of the South* (to be released November 2020, produced by Spike Lee, directed by Barry Alexander Brown, starring Brian Dennehy). Christian is developing narrative film *Candy* about transgender Andy Warhol muse Candy Darling and directing documentary film about contemporary art gallerist Marian Goodman. He recently completed *The Burning Child* and award-winning documentaries *Please Hold the Line*, *Secondo Me*, and *The Road Movie*, winner of British National Film & TV Awards. Christian produced *The Man Who Saved the World*, winner of the Danish Film Academy Awards and the Danish Film Critics Awards for best documentary film. He directed, produced, wrote, and shot *Blue Gold: American Jeans*, acquired by Netflix.

### NATALIE NUDELL

producer, writer



Natalie Nudell is a historian and curator of fashion and textiles, and is a faculty member in the Department of History of Art at the Fashion Institute of Technology, SUNY in New York City. Her research interests include the wartime and post-war American fashion industry, labor, gender, and digital humanities, and she is the foremost expert on the Fashion Calendar. In addition to writing and producing *Calendar Girl*, Nudell has contributed articles on the topic to scholarly journals and popular publications. She was the co-curator and exhibition designer of "Runway Moments: New York Fashion Week" held at the 80WSE Gallery, and is associate editor of the *Fashion Studies Journal* and a founding member of the Fashion Studies Alliance. She holds a B.A. with Honors in History from Concordia University, Montreal, Canada, and an M.A. in Visual Culture and Costume Studies from New York University.



# Calendar Girl

*For general information*

**CHRISTIAN D. BRUUN**

director, producer

[chrditlev@gmail.com](mailto:chrditlev@gmail.com)

*For world sales*

**ALEKSANDAR GOVEDARICA**

Syndicado

[aleksandar@syndicado.com](mailto:aleksandar@syndicado.com)

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[www.calendargirlfilm.com](http://www.calendargirlfilm.com)