

The Adachi Fund

A STORYTELLING PROJECT
CREATED BY THE
SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC DEFENDER

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

EVEN ODD & COMPOUND



OVERVIEW

The Adachi Fund will be a vital first-of-its-kind media program of the Office of the San Francisco Public Defender developed in partnership with Compound, and award-winning San Francisco based cultural creative studio and production company, Even/Odd.

Our goal is to illuminate timely stories and unseen perspectives of the US criminal legal system through seminal documentary film, videos and photojournalism that inform an understanding of the human impact of “justice” on our communities, and influence our vision for an equal and just society.



GENESIS

We created the Adachi Fund in honor of the late Jeff Adachi, San Francisco's elected Public Defender from 2003 until his unexpected passing in 2019. It was under Jeff's leadership that the Office of the Public Defender rose in prominence to be one of the most effective and influential public defender offices in the US.

As many of his colleagues and constituents were aware, Jeff was an accomplished attorney but also an award-winning documentary filmmaker. He often compared shooting a film to preparing for trial, and frequently found a way to merge both of those talents into compelling stories for the public, as well as the justice system. The Fund is borne from this inspired history.



HOW IT WORKS

The Adachi Fund will be comprised of three complementary forms of documentary media, created by local artists and producers:

- 1) It will create cinematic-quality **short films** that spotlight stories from our criminal legal system, as discovered through the unique lens and experience of public defenders and their clients.
- 2) Our vision is for the Fund to use vibrant **photojournalism** to capture “micro-stories” of the legal system so as to draw attention to details of daily life that contribute to the larger narratives we depict in films and sentencing videos.
- 3) The Fund will produce video biographies, or “**sentencing videos**,” that are used by public defenders to introduce courts to illuminate the often overlooked human side of their clients during sentencing.



I MPACT

As public defenders, our role is to ensure that all people are afforded their constitutional right to defense within our criminal legal system; it is our responsibility to balance the narrative in and outside the courtroom, and make certain that it isn't just those with means who have the opportunity to be heard, but that all people are given a fair and equal chance to tell their story.

This is the duty and spirit by which the Adachi Fund was created. We see a human side of justice that is often overlooked by the public, and ignored by the courts. And we often ask ourselves, "what would be the impact if everyone had access to the stories we hear?" "How different would our justice system be if policies were based on people, not just statistics?"

The Adachi Fund will bring that vision to life. Our goal: re-humanize a system that has evolved to inherently dehumanize people it affects.

Key Partners Who Will Collaborate with Public Defender's Office:

Compound | Communications and Impact Strategy, The Adachi Fund

Compound is a San Francisco- and Seattle-based creative communications studio whose role is to manage and direct the Fund's communications and impact strategy. Led by Santhosh Daniel, the studio's current and past partners include Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Virgin America, Medium, U.S. Department of State, Smithsonian, Oakland Museum of California and Umpqua Bank; and productions such as the Open Account podcast and film Liquid Flow. Daniel also brings experience as former head of The Global Film Initiative; advisor to media funds such as the California Documentary Project and California Arts Council Public Media Grants; board member of California Humanities and Found Sound Nation; and advisor to the Quentin Cooks professional program (San Quentin State Prison), to his role with the Adachi Fund.

Even/Odd | Creative Direction and Production, The Adachi Fund

Even/Odd is an award-winning San Francisco and Los Angeles based cultural creative studio, research team and production company whose role is to lead the Fund's creative direction and production of all content. Led by Mhhammad Gorjestani and Malcolm Pullinger, the studio has earned a Cannes Lion, The Tribeca X Award, 4 Webby Awards, The Grand Jury Prize at SXSW, Clio Awards, and has been featured by outlets including The Guardian, New York Times, The Atlantic, VICE, The New Yorker, and more. They are a proud, minority-owned studio with industry leading inclusivity practices providing platform for diverse and urgent voices, and Gorjestani and Pullinger bring over 20 years of collective creative multi-disciplinary experience to their role with the Adachi Fund. See the work — www.evenoddfilms.com

POTENTI AL
STORIES & THEME
EXAMPLES

JURY NOT OF MY PEERS

Nearly 40 percent of people booked into the San Francisco County Jail are black. Meanwhile, San Francisco's black population has declined at an astonishing pace as the City has become younger, more educated, and more affluent — leaving Black defendants frequently asking, “How is this a jury of my peers?”

What is the human impact of this? This is what we will explore by revealing what happens when a fundamental American value and guarantee is not offered to our own citizens, through intimate stories from all sides of this issue — defendants, lawyers, and jurors.

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Photo by Alex Welsh

I INNOCENT, PLEADING GUILTY.



The United States Supreme Court has recognized that our system is “for the most part a system of pleas, not a system of trials,” and that plea bargaining is not “some adjunct to the criminal justice system; it is the criminal justice system.” Yet, the public generally thinks that all people who plead guilty to a crime are actually guilty, and that all innocent defendants reject prosecutors’ plea offers — proceeding to trial, secure in the belief that their innocence will protect them from conviction. The reality, however, is that only a small portion of cases ever go to trial. Do innocent people really plead guilty, and if so, what pressures does the criminal legal system place on them to do so?

THANK YOU!

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A storytelling
project from The
San Francisco
Office of the
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and Compound

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