


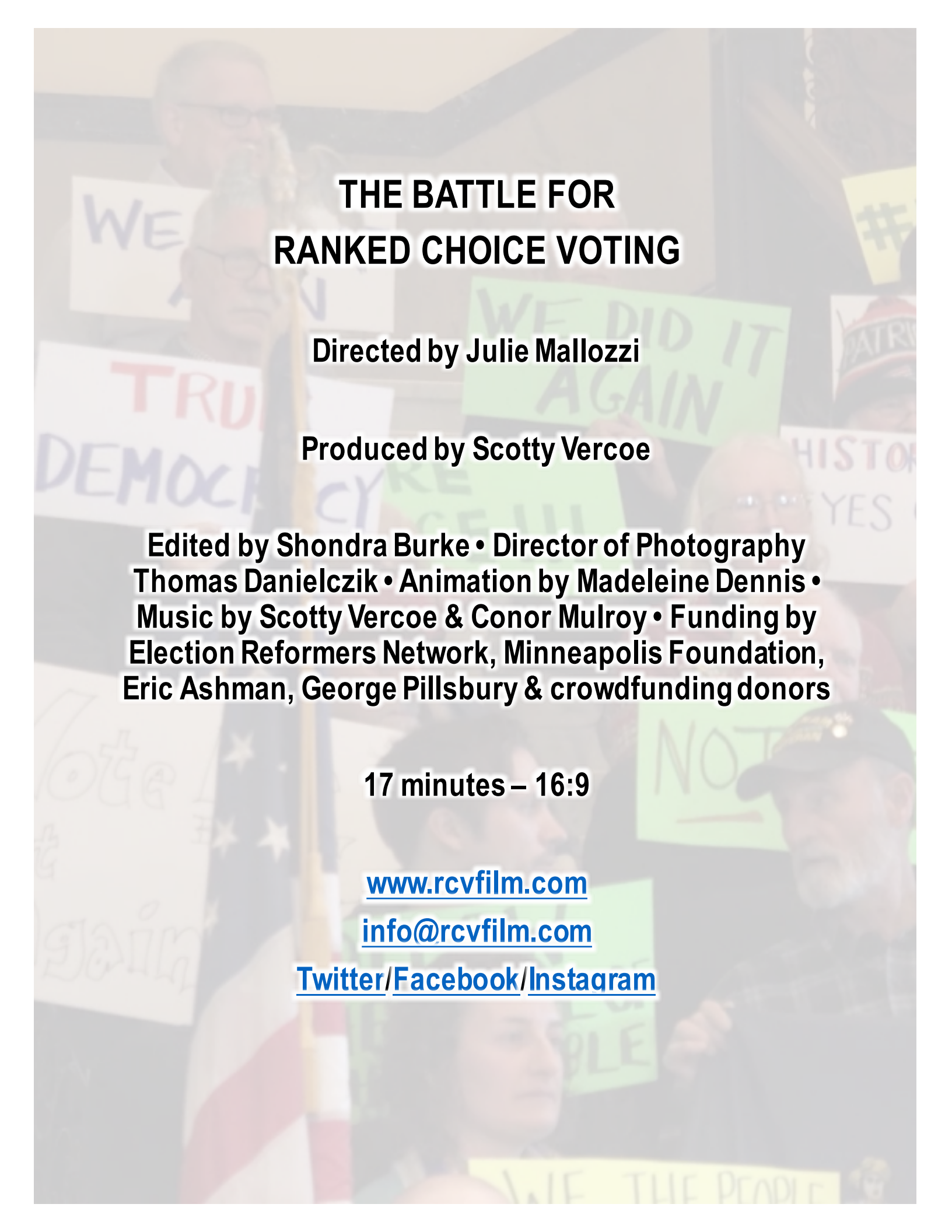
...beautiful and compelling... Against all odds,
the people in Maine force politicians to listen.
If only 'as Maine goes, so goes the Nation'!

— Lawrence Lessig



THE BATTLE FOR RANKED CHOICE VOTING

DIRECTED BY JULIE MALLOZZI • PRODUCED BY SCOTTY VERCOE • RUNTIME 17 MINUTES

The background of the entire page is a faded, grayscale image of a protest. Several people are visible, holding various signs. Some of the legible text on the signs includes "WE DID IT AGAIN", "TRUMP", "DEMOCRACY", "NOT", "WE THE PEOPLE", and "HISTORY".

THE BATTLE FOR RANKED CHOICE VOTING

Directed by Julie Mallozzi

Produced by Scotty Vercoe

**Edited by Shondra Burke • Director of Photography
Thomas Danielczik • Animation by Madeleine Dennis •
Music by Scotty Vercoe & Conor Mulroy • Funding by
Election Reformers Network, Minneapolis Foundation,
Eric Ashman, George Pillsbury & crowdfunding donors**

17 minutes – 16:9

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

Facing increasingly divisive politics, citizens across America are coming together to change the way we vote. Maine leads the way, fighting entrenched interests to enact a reform that reduces negative campaigning, eliminates the “spoiler effect,” and opens races to minority and third-party candidates.

SYNOPSIS

Most Americans agree that our political systems are failing us. Despite sharing many values, we’re forced to pick a side or vote for the lesser of two evils from parties that neglect our interests. The result is a system that polarizes the public and rewards negative campaigning.

Dissatisfied citizens nationwide are clamoring for free and fair elections through Ranked Choice Voting (RCV), a simple but powerful reform where voters rank their candidates in order of preference. Cities and towns that have enacted the reform see increased voter turnout, improved voter satisfaction, higher representation of women, minority and third-party candidates, and less mudslinging.

Our story unfolds as voters in Maine fight to make their state the first in the nation to enact Ranked Choice Voting statewide. Frustrated after decades of electing governors without a majority, Maine’s citizens approved a ballot measure in November 2016 to use RCV for all federal and state elections. But legislators effectively killed the bill, claiming it was unconstitutional. As one RCV advocate says in the film, “When people come to power under a particular system and understand how to win in a particular system, they are loathe to change it.”

Fortunately, the people of Maine have final say through a process called the People’s Veto. The film follows their scrappy campaign to collect over 60,000 signatures in 90 days during a brutal Maine winter. We shadow leaders of the movement, activists on the ground, doubtful legislators and those tasked with implementing the reform as they do battle in the streets, the Statehouse, the courts and back again.

FILMMAKERS' NOTE

Our film highlights the struggle to open up our political system to improve fairness. RCV strengthens voters' voices, particularly from minority and third-party constituencies. Directed by a woman of color, this film shows how RCV increases representation of women and minorities in elected office.

Amid the din of the 2016 election, Maine's unlikely story of Ranked Choice Voting largely flew under the national news radar. Because of the ballot measure, most Maine voters are at least aware of the reform. However, many Americans have never considered that the way they vote could be part of the problem. This film will help educate the public on the problems with our current plurality voting and spread the word about Ranked Choice Voting.

The Battle for Ranked Choice Voting puts Maine's story in the context of America's 100-year flirtation with RCV – including the breaking of Tammany Hall's grip on power in New York City, the election of some of the country's first Black politicians, and a backlash steeped in racism and the Red Scare. Enlivened with colorful hand-drawn animation, pointed archival footage and an original score, the film drops in on cities like Memphis, Minneapolis, San Francisco, and Santa Fe that have adopted Ranked Choice Voting, and takes viewers on a whirlwind tour of non-plurality voting systems dominant throughout the world.

Maine's battle for fair elections has deeply motivated blossoming RCV movements in states like Massachusetts, Minnesota and Virginia. Despite huge hurdles, Mainers never gave up in their fight for fair elections. Their inspiring story as told in this film will serve as part of a viral campaign for RCV nationwide, going beyond legal precedent to tell the personal stories of those fighting this battle.

THE TEAM

Director **Julie Mallozzi**'s films explore the ways cultural traditions from around the globe intersect, hybridize, and are turned to new social purposes far from their original context. Her films have won awards at festivals around the world and have screened in museums, universities, and on public television.

Julie also produces videos and transmedia projects for community organizations, and actively works as a freelance producer and editor in Boston's lively documentary community.

Producer/Composer **Scotty Vercoe** was keyboardist and founding member of the groups Hyptonic and Zen Bastards, and produced the diverse album project The Invisible Movie Soundtrack featuring vocalist Lydia Harrell. Scotty composed silent film scores for the National Film Preservation Foundation's acclaimed Treasures from the Archive series. Since 2011, he has scored over two dozen 48 Hour Films, winning multiple Best Music awards and a premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in 2016. He recently scored the documentary feature film, The Man in the Cowboy Hat, about peace activist Carlos Arredondo.

Editor **Shondra Burke**'s credits include main editor of Errol Morris's award-winning documentary Fast, Cheap, and Out of Control and all episodes of his First Person series, which aired on Bravo. In addition to collaborating with Mallozzi on many documentaries and short videos, Burke edited Jocelyn Glatzer's The Flute Player, I Can't Breathe, directed by Pete Favat, and Tom Curran's Adrift.

Director of Photography **Thomas Danielczik**'s narrative and documentary work has appeared on numerous network and cable TV channels including History, Discovery, National Geographic, PBS, A&E, ABC, AMC, MSNBC, and TLC.