



2019 Board of Directors

## **VIRGINIA KASSEL**

Kassel's WCC activities –a member for over twenty years. For two years she served as co-chair of the Civic Awards Dinner, was co-chair of the Communication Committee also for two years, and was a member of the Infrastructure and Environmental and Development committees. She was the founder and presided over the WCC Film Group for ten years. She was also a member of the Public Affairs Committee (concentrating on Homeless and Housing), and the Public Programs Committee. She is currently a member of the Board of Directors, Governance Committee and Development Committee.

**Virginia Kassel** has produced and written award winning drama specials, series, public affairs documentaries, live event coverage, music, dance, children's programs, nightly news programs and live events. She has been Vice President for Production and Development for international production and distribution companies; Executive Producer, Producer, Writer, and Coordinator of National Programming for national and international production organizations. The companies include Primetime Ltd., London; GREAT PERFORMANCES, the PBS performance series; CBS Cable; London Weekend Television; WGBH, Boston; WNET, New York.

A Bryn Mawr College graduate, in 1958 she began her career at WGBH where she was the Production Assistant on PROSPECTS OF MANKIND, a monthly interview series hosted by Eleanor Roosevelt and produced by Henry Morgenthau III.

At WNET, she developed and produced THE ADAMS CHRONICLES, the thirteen-hour Bicentennial drama series that drew record audiences for a public television series. It won the Peabody and two Ohio State awards, twenty-seven Emmy nominations, four Emmy awards, and first prize at the Virgin Island International Film Festival.

In management capacities at WNET, she had responsibility for performance programs. Among the series and programs under her supervision were NET PLAYHOUSE; USA ARTS; the seventy-two part series THE CREATIVE PERSON; the New York Shakespeare Festival production of KING LEAR starring James Earl Jones. On special assignment in April and May 1968, she conceived and produced a five-part series underwritten by the Ford Foundation; entitled ONE NATION INDIVISIBLE? The series studied issues following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., and was broadcast directly into public schools the week prior to the summer holiday.

At CBS Cable she was the Senior Producer responsible for the service's studio production throughout the service's 14-month existence. She supervised installation of the origination studio, oversaw all editing operations, and produced the service's presentation material.

In 1988, she returned to WNET as Associate Director of Performance Programs and Production Executive for GREAT PERFORMANCES. She had production oversight for BALANCHINE IN AMERICA; Kevin Kline's HAMLET; HARRY CONNICK, JR., AND THE BIG BAND SOUND. Other activities included structuring and funding a four year drama development fund; making international co-production arrangements for performance programs; dealing with foundation and corporate underwriters.

She developed a multi-part documentary series entitled THE SOONG CONNECTIONS examining U.S./Chinese relations during the Nationalist Period, 1911 until 1949. The family biography serves as a guide through the complexities of America's alliances with the Kuomintang and the results of those relations. In 1980 she was one of a four member negotiating team to visit the People's Republic of China.

A frequent reviewer for the National Endowment for the Humanities, she has published in professional journals, speaks about and teaches television production, and was a member of a three-person delegation sent to New Delhi by the Indo-U.S Subcommission on Education and Culture.

In addition to awards for her programs, she received a special award from American Women in Radio and Television "in recognition for her creativity, tenacity of purpose and professional accomplishment," a Distinguished Service Award from the National Association of Educational Broadcasters, and a citation from the U.S. Congress. She is a member of the Writers' Guild of America/East, New York Women in Film and Television, and the British Academy of Film and Television Arts.