

Anna

*An animated historical drama produced by
Michael Burton, Kwakiutl Dreher, and William G. Thomas III*

11 minutes

annwilliamsfilm.com

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Anna is a twelve-minute film about one woman's quest for freedom in early Washington, D.C. It is also the story of one of the most dramatic events in the history of American slavery and a searing account of the moral consequences of slavery in the United States.

In November 1815, Anna leapt from the third floor window of George Miller's F Street tavern in Washington, D.C., after she was sold to Georgia traders and separated from her family. She suffered a broken back and fractured her arms, but she survived. For two hundred years, her identity remained a mystery.

In 2015, William G. Thomas III uncovered original documents about her at the National Archives and began putting the pieces of her story together. Her name was Ann Williams. She and her husband kept their family together and had four more children. Then she sued George Miller for her freedom. And won. *Anna* is based on these remarkable sources.

Margarette Joyner delivers a riveting performance as Anna, and powerfully narrates what led Anna to the window and her awful moment of decision.

The screenplay by nationally acclaimed creative writer Kwakiutl Dreher takes audiences on a wrenching journey as a mother tries to hold her family together in the face of violence, cruelty, and deception. Animator and artist Michael Burton creates visually compelling scenes that take us into Anna's world of

tobacco plantations, loom houses, and slave pens. Blending hand-painted and stop-motion rotoscoping animation with live action footage shot on location in Richmond, Virginia, *Anna* pioneers new animation methods to achieve a unique visual style--beautiful, naturalistic, subtle, and haunting. Burton's exquisite craftsmanship quietly pays homage to the precision and detail found in nineteenth-century etchings of early Washington, D.C.

Up-and-coming New Orleans jazz saxophonist Khris Royal created an original score that beautifully evokes the tragedy of the slave trade and the determination of one woman to resist its horror.

Years before Solomon Northrup's gripping account of his own kidnapping in Washington, D.C., in 1841—made famous in *Twelve Years a Slave*—Anna's extraordinary act in the face of her sale and the breakup of her family made her one of the most well-known figures in antislavery and abolition circles. Despite the notoriety of her leap from the F Street tavern window, Anna's full story has remained hidden. Until now.