

A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a vibrant green velvet dress with long sleeves and a high collar. She is adorned with extensive turquoise jewelry, including a large circular pendant, multiple necklaces, a wide belt with turquoise accents, and several rings and bracelets. She stands in a rugged, rocky landscape with tall, jagged rock formations in the background under a cloudy sky. The text "THROUGH INDIAN EYES: NATIVE AMERICAN CINEMA" is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**THROUGH INDIAN EYES:  
NATIVE AMERICAN CINEMA**



# THROUGH INDIAN EYES: NATIVE AMERICAN CINEMA

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SERIES CURATORS: *Jan-Christopher Horak, Dawn Jackson (Saginaw Chippewa),  
Shannon Kelley, Paul Malcolm and Valerie Red-Horse Mohl (Cherokee).*

ASSOCIATE CURATOR: *Nina Rao.*



# TRANSMITTING THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ANCESTORS: NATIVE AMERICAN FILMMAKERS TODAY

## I.

In his seminal film, *Imagining Indians* (1993), Victor Masayesva, Jr. discusses a litany of complaints made by Native Americans about how they are perceived by mainstream American society, given the 100+ year history of racist imagery emanating from the Hollywood filmmaking establishment: All Indians are blood thirsty savages; The genocide of Native Americans has disappeared into history; All Indians who are not savages are dead or doomed to die; Americans have a romantic love of images of Indians as noble savages; Indians are never individualized, especially Indian women, but rather objectified as objects, or like animals, rather than humans; Indians are never depicted in modern dress; White people are better actors in Indian roles than Indians; All Indians look like plains Indians without tribal or regional differences; All tribal customs are the same for all Indians; White people go insane if they live with Indians; White men are inherently superior, while Indians are inherently stupid; Since these old stereotypes are no longer politically correct, Indians are now completely invisible.

While these polemically formulated statements are essentially true even today of the American media industry, Native Americans over the past twenty-five years have fought back and "talked back," producing an amazing array of films. After being almost totally excluded from any meaningful role in the production of their own images for close to a century since the invention of film in 1895, Native Americans have seized the means of production. Film making became affordable to Native communities, thanks to the invention of digital cameras and the technical revolution in computer based digital editing systems in the 1990s, which resulted in an accompanying drop in production costs. Yet this phenomenon was not sui generis. Indeed, since the 1970s, Native communities have worked incrementally to take command of both their destinies and their representation, often in tandem with public institutions, like the National

Film Board of Canada and the Smithsonian Institution, and private ones such as Sundance Institute, in order to establish film training programs, local Native television networks and other distribution platforms. However, the success of filmmaker Chris Eyre's *Smoke Signals* (1998), the first all Native American film to break Hollywood's stranglehold on the domestic, commercial film market, opened the gates for numerous other indigenous filmmakers. Some of the resulting films have been financed independently through Native American tribal councils, others through non-Native sources. They have all been guided by Indian eyes, i.e. directed by Native Americans. Far from being relegated to a particular genre, the films of Native American filmmakers include comedies, dramas, shorts, documentaries, and experimental and animated works.

UCLA Film & Television Archive has a long-standing commitment to internationalism and multi-culturalism, and to making invisible cinemas and their makers visible. Beginning in the early 1990s, the Archive has organized a yearly program of Iranian cinema. Other programs have featured Brazilian, Mexican, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Asian Indian cinema. In 2011, we presented a series commemorating "L.A. Rebellion," the first generation of independent African-American filmmakers in this country. With this series, "Through Indian Eyes: Native American Cinema," the Archive is addressing the concerns of a significant ethnic and cultural community, both in California and throughout North America. As a mainstream, non-Native institution, which has shown and continues to show Hollywood Westerns, this exhibition has been an intense learning process for programming Archive staff, sensitizing us to many issues that previously had remained invisible.

This program had its genesis approximately two years ago, when the Archive was approached by UCLA graduate and prominent filmmaker, Valerie Red-Horse, who wanted to bring together UCLA-trained Native American directors for a film screening. We seized the opportunity and asked her and her



colleague, Dawn Jackson, a veteran film producer and Los Angeles Native American Indian Commissioner, to join our curatorial committee, which consisted of myself, head programmer Shannon Kelley, and programmer Paul Malcolm, with programming assistant Nina Rao curating a children's program. Our collective goal was to present a retrospective of films made by Native Americans, essentially as a partnership between UCLA as a mainstream cultural institution and our Native American neighbors, in order to amplify their voices above a cacophony of mainstream media, thus bringing the diversity and richness of Native American culture to audiences which have previously received little exposure to American Indians and their tribal communities. Secondly, we address the industry, exclaiming that it no longer needs to traffic in the racist and demeaning stereotypes of Native Americans that have been its shameful legacy. An intermediate goal is to make the film industry in Los Angeles and elsewhere aware of the incredible Native American talents that are blossoming in tribal communities. We hope, then, that our 2014 presentation of this program in Los Angeles, and its touring edition to select North American cultural institutions in 2015 and 2016, will ultimately result in creating economic opportunities for Native American filmmakers, if they wish to engage mainstream audiences.

Every such programming initiative at the Archive requires devoted funding from generous partner agencies, commensurate with the scale of the project. San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association and Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation provided significant funding in support of our inaugural program's research and implementation, while the subsequent tour has been generously supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. We are extremely grateful to these funders for their support of this important work.

In organizing our research, we set out to compile as complete a list as possible of Native American film productions in the United States and Canada over the past twenty-five years. While Indigenous festivals and cultural organizations often track production activities in Latin America and the South Pacific, we decided to focus intensively on the activity and the saga of filmmakers and communities situated in these two North American countries, acknowledging distinctions between their funding and exhibition structures, as well as their artistic traditions, but also parallels in their historic, cultural and linguistic contexts. Utilizing sources like the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian website, which lists every film screened there since 1995, as well as Sundance Film Festival catalogs, we identified hundreds of films that were directed by Native Americans. Reflecting our goal for the original program, to present a broad representation of work from the past quarter-century in a selection of representative genres, this touring edition of the program does the same, and presents work representing the contributions of 20 different Indian nations.

## II.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the U.S. government implemented a policy of genocide against Native Americans, which has ever since been morally justified as an inevitable historical necessity imbedded in "Manifest Destiny." By the end of the century, the last Indian wars had been fought, but the survivors in the 20th century were subjected to a policy of cultural genocide, which segregated Native Americans into economic dead zones, i.e. reservations, but simultaneously enforced total assimilation by forcibly removing all children from their parents, their traditional culture, and their language by placing them in reservation schools. The result was total alienation, the loss of identity, and the acceptance of inferiority, undergirded by a steady diet of media stereotypes of Native Americans as violent or "noble" savages, doomed to extinction. The

destruction of Native American customs and rituals weakened the community, making it susceptible to land appropriation, rampant alcoholism, and a legacy of poverty and violent crime. Analogous stories riddle the histories of Aboriginal communities in Canada, where territorial disputes and government assimilation programs are painfully recent social phenomena. Not until the 1970s with the founding of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and other self-help grassroots political organizations, many advocating at the local tribal level, did many Native Americans begin to regain their self-respect as a people. Those first steps then led to the establishment of Native American media organizations and efforts by individuals to produce films and television that reflect the reality of Native Americans and communicate elements of their various tribal cultures.

Hollywood's continuing legacy of stereotyping Native Americans, making them invisible in depictions of contemporary life, has created a negative space which of necessity forms the backdrop to every Native American film production. Even if we discount simplistic stimulus response theories on the effectiveness of stereotyping, we can't ignore the sheer all-pervasiveness of radio-film-television media within the larger context of social, political, and ideological messages directed against Native Americans. Only then can we understand the degree to which a Native American collective imaginary, even with numerous tribal differences, must have withered away in the onslaught of negative imagery. And without such a collective vision and belief system, no society or nation can expect to survive. Anecdotal evidence of Native American children rooting for the white heroes on television shows suggests the validity of such theories. The creation of a Native American cinema in the last few decades, a renaissance that finds its parallels in other indigenous arts, then, becomes part of a larger social project to recuperate Native American stories, languages, traditions and values, to rebuild a collective imaginary that is positive and forward-looking, rather than negative and wholly materialistic. These new films by

Native American voices must therefore be understood collectively as an act of sovereignty against the backdrop of over a century of racist imagery, "talking back" and declaring a people's independence. Our approach has been to select multivarious films, which speak to history in many different ways, some from an absolute outsider perspective, others from within the system, still others with a more radical bent.

What we are in fact witnessing is evidence of a "national" cinema in formation, as individual filmmakers grapple with the destruction of tribal traditions, and with legacies of alcoholism, poverty, and the appropriation of tribal lands, while attempting simultaneously to recuperate tribal languages, spirituality, and community. The very act of documenting Native American arts and culture, traditions and religions, as well as creating stories in locations that are recognizable to Native American audiences, allows those audiences to locate their own world within a system of values; these films thereby promote identity formation on an individual and group level. Simultaneously, moving images created by Native Americans offer a window to non-Natives into their world. As Elizabeth Weatherford and Beverly Singer have each noted, Native filmmakers today have taken over the role of oral storytellers, transmitting knowledge which is not simply their own, but belongs to the community.

What we also see is the beginning development of a Native American film aesthetic. Quoting Maori filmmaker Barry Barclay, Michelle Raheja defines Native American cinema as a "Fourth Cinema," which in contradistinction to our First cinema, Europe's Second cinema, and Third Cinema's post-colonial, liberation politics, is based on Indigenous aesthetics. While some films respond to American genres (*Smoke Signals*, *Johnny Tootall*), others seem more in dialogue with international traditions (*Atanarjuat*, *5th World*). Indigenous films offer different ways of perceiving space and time. Stories are often circular rather than linear, as in Western First Cinema; geographies are integrated into

narrative, constructing landscapes both real and allegorical. The increasing use of Native American languages is another indicator of Fourth Cinema. Finally, there is anecdotal evidence that Native American filmmakers prefer longer shots, keeping humans and their environment in the same frame, rather than classical Hollywood's invisible editing principles that encode and valorize an individual protagonist's point of view. As Houston Wood reminds us, quoting Victor Masayesva Jr., Native American film aesthetics often involve the sacred. At the same time, conflicts between the sacred and the profane, between tradition and modernity are also visible on screen, reflecting similar conflicts within the community. It remains to be seen to what degree such aesthetic forms continue to develop in the next twenty-five years.

Having said that, we must be conscious of the fact that the concept of a Native American cinema is and always will be an artificial construct. The fact is that cultural differences between members of different tribes can be just as great as between non-Native and Native peoples. As a non-Native viewer and English speaker, I will always only be privy to some of the messages and meanings inherent in Native American films, while local tribal audiences may read the work in completely different ways. Sam Pack demonstrates in his Native American reception study that Native American filmmakers received negative comment, when they treated subjects not related to their own tribal membership. We must also understand that indigenous people may make films for themselves and their own people, not necessarily for Western eyes. Indeed, some films produced with the cooperation of the tribe are in fact not distributed outside their limited community. Indeed, only a portion of Native filmmakers have ambitions of entering mainstream media distribution. Phil Lucas' *The Honour of All* (1986), for example, was probably only made for internal circulation and discussion, but gives rare insight into the self-healing processes of Native American communities.

Finally, the efforts of Native American filmmakers have been accompanied by a strong surge in academic interest within Native American and film studies. The recent publication of numerous books on Native American Cinema indicates that the time is indeed propitious for a major retrospective of this particular Fourth Cinema. Certainly, our understanding of these films has benefitted from this growing literature, including Neva Jacquelyn Kilpatrick's *Celuloid Indians: Native Americans and Film* (1999), Beverly Singer's *Wiping the War Paint off the Lens: Native American Film and Video* (2001), Dean Rader's *Engaged Resistance* (2011), M. Elise Marubbio and Eric L. Buffalohead's anthology, *Native Americans on Film* (2013), which includes essays by Wood, Singer, Pack, and others, Michelle H. Raheja's *Reservation Realism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty and Representations of Native Americans* (2013), and Lee Schweninger's *Imagic Moments: Indigenous North American Film* (2013).

We are therefore grateful to all the participating filmmakers and their communities for allowing us to partner with them on this important program. We also hope that UCLA Film & Television Archive can be instrumental in assisting Native American communities to preserve their work far into the future for all our children's children.

*Dr. Jan-Christopher Horak*  
Director, UCLA Film & Television Archive

## INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM

The adventure that our curatorial team at UCLA Film & Television Archive has enjoyed in researching and planning the film series *Through Indian Eyes: Native American Cinema*, and the occasion of the program's North American tour, have inspired us to reflect anew on the astounding phenomenon that the series documents. It was already our assumption that Native American cinema represented a social and artistic fact of significant proportions, evident from exciting new work that circulated each year in festivals, and that such a body of work deserved a repertory program of this kind. The wealth of films we encountered, however, revealed a richness, diversity and ferment that we little anticipated.

The figure of the American Indian has been a crucial component of American entertainment since the dawn of cinema, animating screens and providing a key obstacle against which the European push for westward expansion could be dramatically intensified. It is greatly pleasing, and a little breathtaking, then, to encounter a Native American cinema, writ large, that is so little invested in this grand narrative, and so resourceful at thematically upending and dispensing with it.

One might indeed expect Native-directed media to be distinguished by matters of content; key topics and themes. But if this is true to a point, it is also evident that distinct fascinations give rise to distinct forms. And so among the films featured here, one encounters alternatives to mainstream narrative models, in favor of others that present richly drawn internal states and metaphorical suggestions, whether in the oblique, poetic imagery of Victor Masayesva Jr.'s *Itam Hakim, Hopiit* (1984) or Alanis Obomsawin's stately and measured telling of a violent, contemporary story in the documentary *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance* (1993).

Though divergent in their respective forms, these stimulating works, among many others, share a sensitivity to the theme of returning, whether to home, harmony, balance, self-knowledge, or social order. These are journeys reflecting different philosophical values from those which mainstream cinema often privileges, but no less fascinating in the dramatic turns to which they give rise. In other Native films that emphasize a character's forward drive, again the goal could be enlightenment or inner peace, though the attendant circumstances may be turbulent, as in Shelley Niro's *Kissed By Lightning* (2009), a fascinating example of the hero's journey. Not that Native filmmakers don't make use of American genres, adapted to accommodate culturally specific situations: witness the charged melodrama of *Naturally Native* (1999) by Valerie Red-Horse and Jennifer Wynne Farmer, or Chris Eyre's iconic road picture *Smoke Signals* (1998), whose generic structures fit their given stories like comfortable old clothes.

Documentary occupies a place of importance in any identity-based film culture, as an activity for reflecting on past legacies and possible destinies. Documenting cultural losses, transitions, and attempts at cultural renewal, Arlene Bowman's introspective *Navajo Talking Picture* (1985) evokes, through pacing, cinematography and other means, the past still living within the present. Gil Cardinal's *Tikinagan* (1991) (1986) distinguishes itself by a rare quality of listening in a realm of storytelling where things are often overexplained. Heather Rae in *Trudell* (2005) freely experiments with documentary form, by way of responding to the radicalism and unconventionality of her fascinating subject.

Short films are an equally vital staple of expression, at their best, acting as distillations of complex cultural experience. Again, we see here culturally specific settings and situations, enlivened by formal excellence and experimentation.



Kevin Lee Burton's aural (and visual) deconstruction of language in *Nikamowin (Song)* (2007), Sandy Osawa's and Yasu Osawa's superbly felt *A Bentwood Box* (1985) and Helen Haig-Brown's uncanny invocation of the hereafter in *?A?ENX: The Cave* (2009) dazzle with their inventiveness and mastery of the short form.

Flashing forward, we are greatly pleased to offer a number of new and exciting works, still rolling out in their festival and commercial exhibition journeys. Examples include Sterlin Harjo's penetrating documentary *This May Be the Last Time* (2014), Sydney Freeland's moving drama *Drunktown's Finest* (2014), and Jeff Barnaby's impressive and chilling feature *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* (2013).

Even in so relatively large a film series, showcasing numerous landmark works, we are acutely aware that many of the artists we celebrate here have established long careers, and are already counted as leaders in the fields of Indigenous media and international cinema. The existence of these legacies is of course a joy, and we hope this series may hint at the riches that await attentive audiences. We are pleased to play a part in encouraging dialogue among film professionals, artists and audiences, about the meaning and the future of Native American Cinema.

*Shannon Kelley*

Head of Public Programs, UCLA Film & Television Archive

**PROGRAMS** (in alphabetical order):

ATANARJUAT: THE FAST RUNNER

DRUNKTOWN'S FINEST  
SHIMASANI

THE HONOUR OF ALL: PART I  
TIKINAGAN

ITAM HAKIM, HOPIIT  
NAVAJO TALKING PICTURE

KANEHSATAKE: 270 YEARS OF RESISTANCE  
**Preceded by:** LYE

KISSED BY LIGHTNING  
**Preceded by:** ?E?ANX:THE CAVE

NATURALLY NATIVE  
COW TIPPING: THE MILITANT INDIAN WAITER

RHYMES FOR YOUNG GHOULS

SMOKE SIGNALS  
**Preceded by:** CARRYING FIRE

THIS MAY BE THE LAST TIME  
A BENTWOOD BOX

TRUDELL  
NIKAMOWIN (SONG)

**Directed by** Zacharias Kunuk (Inuit).

Igloodik Isuma Productions. **Producer:** Paul Apak Angilurq, Zacharias Kunuk, Norman Cohn, Germaine Wong. **Screenwriter:** Paul Apak Angilurq. **Cinematographer:** Norman Cohn. **Editor:** Norman Cohn, Zacharias Kunuk, Marie-Christina Sarda. **With:** Natar Ungalaaq, Sylvia Ivalu, Peter-Henry Arnatsiaq, Lucy Tulugarjuk, Madeline Ivalu. Blu-ray, color, 170 min.



## ATANARJUAT: THE FAST RUNNER 2001

Enacting an Inuit legend said to be over 1,000 years old, a mysterious shaman invokes a curse that twenty years later affects the chief of the clan, Tulimaq, and his two sons, Amaqjuaq, the Strong One and Atanarjuat, the Fast Runner. Hot-headed Oki, son of the camp leader, becomes profoundly jealous when Atanarjuat wins Atuat, who had been previously promised to him. Thus begins a bloody conflict that ends in the death of the Chief and Amaqjuaq, while Atanarjuat must flee naked over the barren ice sea, facing certain death by exposure.

This is the first Native American narrative feature to be wholly shot in an indigenous language. Taking place in the same mythical past as Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922), Kunuk's film is a far cry from the gentle innocence of *Nanook*, presenting instead a violent and brutal environment in stark and breathtakingly beautiful images. The landscape is again central to the drama and to an indigenous world view. Yet even as nature forces the Inuits to live by a harsh code, there are acts of kindness and peaceful resolutions, the latter a modern twist to the legend. Indeed, as Darrell Varga has argued, that the film

should not be seen as a simple revenge adventure narrative, but rather as a highly allegorical work suggesting a moral lesson about the importance of the community over the individual.

Kunuk began by recording tribal elders' different versions of the Inuit legend, then compiling a script which would speak to the past, as well as today's youth. Budgeted at two million Canadian dollars, the film was financed and supported by the Inuit community. And indeed, Inuit audiences read the film as not only a true depiction of their traditional way of life, but also as directly addressing the ethnographic stereotypes of Eskimos that have been circulating in Western culture since *Nanook*. The biggest Canadian box office success of 2002, this first Inuktitut-language feature film, and the first Native American feature to be wholly shot in an indigenous language, won prizes at over twenty international film festivals, including the Camera D'Or at Cannes, and was supported by the Sundance Institute's Native American and Indigenous Program.

*Jan-Christopher Horak*

## HONORING SUNDANCE INSTITUTE'S COMMITMENT TO NATIVE AMERICAN CINEMA

*Tonight's program honors Sundance Institute's Native American and Indigenous Program, which since 1994 has built and sustained a unique circle of support for Indigenous film by identifying noteworthy filmmakers, offering grants and labs to support their work, exhibiting significant films at the Sundance Film Festival, connecting filmmakers with audiences in a variety of settings, and taking filmmakers and their works back to Native lands to inspire new generations of storytellers.*

**Directed by** Sydney Freeland (Navajo).

Indion Entertainment Group. **Producer:** Chad Burris, Mateo Frazier.  
**Screenwriter:** Sydney Freeland. **Cinematographer:** Peter Holland.  
**Editor:** Harry Yoon. **With:** Jeremiah Bitsui, Carmen Moore, Morningstar Angeline Wilson, Tailinh Agoyo, Loren Anthony.  
HDCAM, color, 89 min.

## DRUNKTOWN'S FINEST 2014

In her impressive first feature, Sydney Freeland unfurls a suite of stories about contemporary life among Navajo youth. Her astute drama presents a small, reservation-adjacent town in which epic, individual stories churn.

The film follows three residents of the town of Dry Lake, and its environs. Each of these three is on a journey informed by very different forces. Nizhoni is a young woman bound for college, but with unfinished emotional business at home. Adopted as an infant by a White, Christian family, she longs to find and connect with her birth parents, and undertakes a clandestine search, surmising that social services and her adoptive family would only block her. Sickboy, a new father, plans to join the military in order to support his family but must make it to his deployment date without getting into trouble. Unfortunately, trouble threatens his plan, as alcohol, fighting and scrapes with the law have long represented his normalcy, and reach out to him now for a last dance. Felixia is a transgender woman living with her traditional grandparents, nursing a dream of being featured in a newly-announced calendar of Navajo women, while secretly turning tricks on the side. Skating on the razor's edge of emotional disclosure and concealment, she little realizes the deep respect traditionally accorded to differently-gendered individuals within her own culture.

Cutting every which way through received stereotypes of Native life, *Drunktown's Finest* updates and diversifies this catalog of images, accounting for years



of accumulated history that have brought modern and traditional cultures into a rich and complex dialogue. Supported by the Directors Lab, Screenwriters Lab and Native American and Indigenous Program of the Sundance Institute, Freeland brings a firsthand authority to bear from her own Reservation upbringing, along with a perspective that pinpoints the beauty in each of her characters without judging their choices or circumstances. Premiering at the Sundance Film Festival in 2014, the film has continued a vigorous festival tour, and garnered major awards at Outfest in Los Angeles and at the Albuquerque Film and Media Experience.

*Shannon Kelley*

**Preceded by:**

### **SHIMASANI 2009**

**Directed by** Blackhorse Lowe (Navajo). **Producer:** Nanobah Becker, Chad Burris, Heather Rae, David Stevens. **Screenwriter:** Blackhorse Lowe. **Cinematographer:** Smokey Nelson. **Editor:** Blackhorse Lowe. **With:** Brigadier Brown, Carmelita B. Lowe, Noelle Brown, Larry A. Lowe, Mark Camrud. Blu-ray, b/w, 15 min.

This elegiac period piece set in 1934 captures a moment of decision for two restless sisters living with their grandmother on the reservation.

**Directed by** Phil Lucas (Choctaw).

**Producer:** Phil Lucas. **Screenwriter:** Phil Lucas, Janet Tanaka.

**Cinematographer:** Peter Von Puttkamer. **Editor:** Peter Von Puttkamer, Phil Lucas. **With:** Tommy Harry, Roland Harry, Richard Dick, Joe Dick, Robert Chelsea.

Beta SP, color; 57 min.



## THE HONOUR OF ALL: Part I 1986

When the seven year old daughter of Andy Chelsea, Chief of the Alkali Lake Indian Band, tells her father she wants to move away from home, because of her parents' alcoholism, the Chief realizes something has to change. First, he and his wife sober up. Then, slowly, they win more and more converts. When members of the community decide to go into treatment, the tribe remodels their home while they are gone to give them a more positive attitude for their post-treatment sobriety. Chelsea also works with the local police to stop the flow of illegal alcohol into the reservation and even kicks the Catholic priest, who is himself an alcoholic, off the reservation. After almost two decades of hard work, the Alkali tribe goes from a 100% alcoholism rate to 95% sober thanks to intense community support and strong leadership. And so concludes this amazing, true story.

Told mostly in the first person by Chief Andy Chelsea and his wife, Phyllis, the film recounts the long hard road to recovery for the tribe, by reenacting important events in the tribal community. In utilizing almost exclusively ama-

teur actors, who are actual participants in the drama, this remarkable documentary is a work of profound healing. Funded by the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program of the Canadian government's Health and Welfare Department, the film functions as a model for other Native American and First Nations communities, plagued by alcohol abuse.

It was produced and directed by Phil Lucas, who is one of the pioneers of the Native American filmmaking. An Emmy Award winning director for the television mini-series, *The Native Americans* (1994), Lucas was born in Phoenix, Arizona in 1942 and died in Seattle in 2007. Beginning in the 1970s, he wrote, produced or directed over 100 films and television programs, including *Images of Indians* (1980), the groundbreaking television series on Hollywood's history of racial stereotyping.

*Jan-Christopher Horak*



**Directed by** Gil Cardinal (Métis).

Tamarack Productions, National Film Board of Canada. **Producer:** James Cullingham, Peter Raymont, Dale Phillips. **Cinematographer:** James Jeffrey. **Editor:** Gerald H. Wilson. **With:** Gil Cardinal, Angus Chapman, Wally McKay.  
Beta SP, color; 59 min.



## TIKINAGAN 1991

In northwestern Ontario, Tikinagan, a child services agency run by First Nations people, works to support children and overcome the legacy of mistrust caused by provincial child welfare agencies. Taking its name from the cradleboard traditionally used to swaddle and carry babies, Tikinagan is a revolutionary program: a native-run child services agency that seeks to keep children within their own communities, by providing support to young families and promoting extended family or close community members as caregivers and alternate placements.

Gil Cardinal's candid documentary observes the efforts of Tikinagan workers to ensure safe, supportive homes for children in communities beset with challenges—gas sniffing and alcoholism are major problems—and to foster a strong partnership between communities and the Tikinagan agency. The

legacy of years of disenfranchisement and conflict with provincial child welfare agencies and children's aid societies—which removed children from their communities and disconnected them from family, traditions, and stability—lingers in the communities Tikinagan serves. Though Tikinagan workers have roots in these communities, the memory and repercussions of harm inflicted by past policies has left a mistrust of child services that Tikinagan strives to overcome. Following along on home visits and program placements, this clear-eyed documentary explores the heart-rending struggles facing Native youth and their communities, and the endeavors of community-based child services to rebuild relationships, alleviate the wrongs of the past, and attend to the needs of the present.

*Nina Rao*

**Directed by** Victor Masayesva, Jr. (Hopi).

ZDF Television, IS Productions. **Cinematographer:** Victor Masayesva, Jr.

**Editor:** Terry Skinner; Robert Frisk. **With:** Ross Macaya (storyteller).

Beta SP, color, 85 min.



## ITAM HAKIM, HOPIIT 1984

A man in sneakers and denim carries a pair of steel buckets over rocky ground to a watering hole. Shot in a low angle, tight composition, we see him only from the knees down but on the soundtrack, we hear his voice, speaking in Hopi. As he speaks, he dips a second bucket into the water and bursts out laughing. The joke goes untranslated, intended only for those who also speak the native language of Ross Macaya, the elder storyteller at the center of Hopi filmmaker and photographer Victor Masayesva Jr.'s first long-form film, *Itam Hakim, Hopiit*.

Although soon after this, an English translation of Macaya's stories is offered in voiceover (a concession Masayesva added later) the early moments of *Itam Hakim, Hopiit* are marked by these layers of cinematic refusal: of an establishing shot, of a close-up of Macaya, of the reason for his laughter. In many ways, these refusals resonate with the film's opening recognition of the tricentennial of the Pueblo revolt of 1680, when Hopi and Pueblo peoples drove the Spanish of their lands in a violent uprising.

For Masayesva, who has gained international recognition for his films and photography while working exclusively in the village of Hoatvela on the Hopi Reservation, *Itam Hakim, Hopiit* stands as an act of visual sovereignty that makes few if any concessions for non-Hopi audiences in its evocation of Hopi history and myth and its upending of traditional documentary form.

At the same time, Masayesva has acknowledged how deeply implicated photographic and moving image technology has been in exploiting and appropriating indigenous cultures, including the Hopi. In this context, *Itam Hakim, Hopiit* is equally informed by Masayesva's ambivalence about the cinema and his own respectful reticence, perhaps, in exposing Macaya to his own camera.

From these tensions, Masayesva draws a powerful, poetic interaction between the cinematic and the oral storytelling tradition as Macaya shares memories of his boyhood, his father's struggle with mental illness, the origin myth of the Hopi people, the history of the Pueblo revolt and Hopi prophecy. A flowing, kaleidoscopic montage of the natural beauty of the Hopi reservation, scenes of contemporary reservation life, as well as historical photographs and highly aestheticized reenactments of historical events, do not illustrate Macaya's stories so much resonate with them. Past and future collapse into a layered present as Masayesva works to construct a visual language to document and expresses Hopi experience.

*Paul Malcolm*

**Directed by** Arlene Bowman (Navajo).

Women Make Movies. **Producer:** Arlene Bowman. **Cinematographer:** Arlene Bowman, James Mulryan. **Editor:** Arlene Bowman, James Mulryan.

**With:** Arlene Bowman, Ann Ruth Biah.

Digital video, color, 40 min.



## NAVAJO TALKING PICTURE 1985

While a film student at UCLA, Arlene Bowman set out to document her grandmother's life raising sheep on the Navajo reservation. When her grandmother refuses to participate mid-way through the project, Bowman is drawn more deeply than she seemingly expected into an encounter with her personal history, her Navajo heritage and her own motives as a filmmaker. As Bowman struggles to complete her project in opposition to the will of her fiercely independent grandmother, filming every step and misstep along the way, *Navajo Talking Picture* grows ever more fascinating, not only for the complex issues that Bowman grapples with but also for the multiple poses that she herself seems to assume in the process.

Is Bowman a naive, would-be ethnographer stumbling through the pitfalls of representation or is she, in fact, assuming this role to dismantle from the inside the presumptions of those well-meaning outsiders who, for centuries, have assumed the right to "preserve" the cultures of Native peoples? The thoroughness with which Bowman undermines the whole ethnographic project suggests the latter even as the increasingly uncomfortable position into which she forces her viewers as complicit interlopers means we can never be quite sure. (At several points we witness Bowman filming her grandmother as she explicitly refuses her permission to be filmed.)

On one level, Bowman illuminates the fissures and chasms that inevitably exist between any documentarian and their chosen subject but she also uses the specifics of her own story to make the point powerfully personal. Even though Bowman herself is Navajo, she must nevertheless negotiate the generational and geographical differences between her grandmother, who remained on the reservation, and herself, who sought other opportunities in urban areas. Most strikingly, Bowman reveals how the camera itself is a charged object for the tensions that exist between them. Where for Bowman the camera might represent a chance to reconnect with her culture, for her grandmother it is a cutting reminder of a traumatic history of cultural theft.

Ultimately, Bowman offers up her own difficulties in negotiating such divisions as an object lesson in the responsibilities and sensitivities required in representing Native peoples no matter who's behind the lens.

*Paul Malcolm*

**Directed by** Alanis Obomsawin (Abenaki).

National Film Board of Canada. **Producer:** Wolf Koenig, Alanis Obomsawin. **Screenwriter:** Alanis Obomaswin. **Cinematographer:** Philippe Amiguet, François Brault, Zoe Dirse, Andre-Luc Dupont, Salvas Kalogeras, Jean-Claude Labrecque, Barry Perles, Roger Rochat, Jocelyn Simard, Susan Trow. **Editor:** Yurij Luhovy.  
**With:** Alanis Obomsawin.  
HDCAM, color, 119 min.

## KANEHSATAKE: 270 YEARS OF RESISTANCE 1993

Alanis Obomsawin's landmark documentary chronicles the cataclysmic 1990 confrontation between the Canadian Army, Quebec police, and members of the Mohawk Nation at the community of Kanehsatake, determined to defend their land against rampant and unprincipled appropriation. Originating as a supposedly simple municipal matter, the "Oka crisis" of 1990, instigated by the mayor of the city of Oka in Quebec province, entailed the planned encroachment of a luxury housing development and golf course into wooded areas (including burial grounds) comprising part of a land parcel promised to the Mohawk by successive British and French colonial powers, and a traditional home since time immemorial.

Coming on the heels of successive land grabs occurring well into the 20th Century, this latest outrage sparked a 78-day standoff at Kanehsatake, replete with barricades, armed confrontations and fraught negotiations between Mohawk statesmen and government and Army representatives, as well as courageous acts of solidarity by Mohawk compatriots at the nearby community of Kahnawake.

Obomsawin went to Kanehsatake to cover the early stages of the confrontation for the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) and soon assumed a position behind Mohawk lines with the warriors, as negotiations hardened into impasse and siege. She stayed there through the climax of the crisis more than two months later, offering an Aboriginal point of view that was breathtakingly novel. Her exclusive footage revealed tenacity and resolve behind the lines, petty

cruelties, mental torments and unprincipled tactics undertaken by officialdom in the midst of its feigned search for a negotiated outcome (read: capitulation), and appalling views of Canadian citizens wantonly persecuting elderly and very young Mohawk leaving the scene for their own safety.

An erstwhile singer and storyteller, and director (by then) of several NFB shorts, Obomsawin brought an extraordinary dignity to the finished film, privileging the Mohawk story as worthy of sustained, honest attention, without descending into polemic. Her measured and beguiling narration constructs both history and anecdote with the patience and momentum of indeed, a master storyteller, wonderfully supported by the spare but stirring music of Francis Grandmont and Claude Vendette. This film would be the first of four by Obomsawin to analyze the Oka crisis and its place in Canadian political history.

*Shannon Kelley*

### **Preceded by:**

#### **LYE 2005**

**Directed by** Dax Thomas (Laguna/Acoma).  
Beta SP, color, 5 min.

Dax Thomas' impressionistic short, appropriating existing footage, deconstructs the inexorable images of empire and its violent expansion.







**Directed by** Shelley Niro (Mohawk).

Kissed By Lightning Productions. **Producer:** Annie Frazier Henry, Stephen Paniccia, Norman Denver, Shelley Niro. **Screenwriter:** Shelley Niro. **Cinematographer:** Kim Derko. **Editor:** Jeremy Munce. **With:** Kateri Walker, Eric Schweig, Michael Greyeyes, Rachele Whitewind, Monique Mojica.  
HDCAM, color, 89 min.

## KISSED BY LIGHTNING 2009

Mavis Dogblood is a Mohawk painter from Canada, haunted by the tragic death of her husband, who was hit by lightning. She paints the stories he used to tell her, but she seemingly can't come to grips with her loss, even though there is a new boyfriend, Solomon "Bug" King, waiting in the wings. He, like her husband, is a musician, and tries to get closer to her, but she resists. Only during a drive to New York City, where she has an art opening for her large format paintings, does Mavis reconcile herself to her new life.

Mavis is depressed not only because of the loss of her partner for life. She feels cut off from her family, even though she lives with and around extended family members, including her husband's ex-wife. On her journey across ancient tribal lands (and a US-Canadian border that artificially divides those lands), where she sees Mohawk warrior spirits running through the cold, snowy woods in the dark of night, Mavis is connected to the larger family of her clan. Her great-grandmother even reminds Mavis that it is okay to start a new family with Bug, who, like Mavis, is also rooted there. Both Mavis and Bug are visited by ancestors in their dreams, suggesting an experience of time, familiar from Native storytelling, that is non-linear, intertwining past, present, and future.

Shelley Niro began writing the script for *Kissed by Lightning* in 1998 and spent eleven years completing the picture, garnering the award for Best Indigenous

Film at the 2009 Santa Fe Film Festival. Niro also painted the portrait series of the "Peacemaker's Journey," visualizing the Iroquois legend of Hiawatha and the Peacemaker, that are on display as Mavis's work. Beautifully photographed, with haunting images and sounds, Niro's proto-feminist film meditates on loss of identity, Indian traditions, and the role of Native American women in keeping families and traditions alive.

*Jan-Christopher Horak*

**Preceded by:**

### **?E?ANX: THE CAVE 2009**

**Directed by:** Helen Haig-Brown (Tsilhqot'in). National Film Board Canada. **Producer:** Adrian Cox, Leena Minifie, Natalia Tudge. **Screenwriter:** Helen Haig-Brown. **Cinematographer:** Randy Che. **Editor:** Alec MacNeill Richardson. **With:** Edmond Lulua, Elaina William, Kelly William, Loni Solomon, Daana Gilpin.  
DigiBeta, color, 11 min.

A man going about his daily business accidentally sees scenes not meant for his eyes... not yet.

**Directed by** Valerie Red-Horse (Cherokee), Jennifer Wynne Farmer.

Red-Horse Native Productions. **Producer:** Valerie Red-Horse, Dawn Jackson, Yvonne Russo. **Screenwriter:** Valerie Red-Horse. **Cinematographer:** Bruce Finn. **Editor:** Lorraine Salk. **With:** Valerie Red-Horse, Irene Bedard, Kimberly Norris Guerrero, Pato Hoffmann, Floyd Red Crow Westerman. 35mm, color, 107 min.

## NATURALLY NATIVE 1999

This remarkable feature presents a moving tale of Native American self-betterment and triumph. The disarming drama concerns three adult sisters, raised separately in foster homes following the death of their alcoholic mother, who now seek a new destiny as a reunited family, and as entrepreneurs in a shared business venture drawing on their indigenous heritage.

Each of the sisters in this trio wishes for a new way forward. Karen, having recently earned her MBA, seeks a meaningful place to apply her skill set. Vickie, living the suburban dream with a great husband and two kids, professes deep Native pride but often expresses this as unmitigated anger at a racist society. Tanya, the youngest, carries a deep wound of shame in her own heritage, and sublimates her sorrow in a flight from Native identity and into the arms of (usually) non-Native men.

One auspicious day, the sisters realize that a received family legacy of herbal remedies, if developed into a marketable product line, might provide a way for them all to bond, heal and prosper. The way to success, however, is strewn with practical, cultural and personal obstacles: racist potential business partners, byzantine government grant programs, and a shared ambivalence about their Native identity, (owing to their having been raised outside of any Native community) all wreak havoc on the sisters' plans and their confidence. But answers are closer than they realize, both inside of them and all around.

Itself a noteworthy achievement by Native American women, the film, starring Irene Bedard, Kimberly Norris Guerrero and triple-threat Valerie Red-

Horse (who contributed the screenplay, and co-directed with Jennifer Wynne Farmer) presents a drama rich with emotion, and with cultural information heretofore rarely treated on cinema screens. Readily accessible to a general audience—after all, the sisters have all experienced assimilation, and move in a multicultural world—the drama offers Native ideals and experiences (sovereignty and alcoholism are significant plot elements) that are simply part of the weave of modern life. Financed by the Mashantucket tribe and premiering at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival, the film also enjoyed a limited theatrical release.

*Shannon Kelley*

**Preceded by:**

### **COW TIPPING: THE MILITANT INDIAN WAITER 1991**

**Directed by** Randy Redroad (Cherokee). **Screenwriter:** Randy Redroad. **Cinematographer:** Frank Perez. **Editor:** Randy Redroad. **With:** M. Cochise Anderson, Rachael Bones, Hilary Hallett, Tim Marbeck, Richard Register. Digital video, color, 17 min.

Randy Redroad's hilarious short illustrates an interminable, impossible situation: the confrontation of cultural insensitivity and cultural oversensitivity, leading to a seemingly endless cycle of the same old, same old.





**Directed by** Jeff Barnaby (Mi'g Maq).

Prospector Films. **Producer:** John Christou, Aisling Chin-Yee.

**Screenwriter:** Jeff Barnaby. **Cinematographer:** Michel St. Martin.

**Editor:** Jeff Barnaby. **With:** Kawennáhere Devery Jacobs, Glen Gould, Brandon Oakes, Mark Anthony Krupa, Roseanne Supernault.  
Blu-ray, color, 85 min.

## RHYMES FOR YOUNG GHOULS 2013

Indigenous peoples rarely fare well in the representational hands of Hollywood genres—the Western being the most obvious—as dominant cultural forces work out their self-sustaining, colonialist fantasies at the expense of the Other in broad, stereotypical terms. With his ferocious and wildly entertaining feature debut, writer-director Jeff Barnaby seizes the generic reins and turns the table on those colonialist tropes. Drawing from the tragic history of Canada's Indian Residential Schools as well as social and economic neglect directed at First Nations people, Barnaby fuels a full-throttle action revenge fantasy with no time for quaint notions of feel good empowerment.

Steeped in a post-apocalyptic atmosphere of dread and instability, *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* is actually a period piece, set on the fictional Red Crow Mi'g Maq reservation circa 1976. The law of the land makes it compulsory for all Mi'g Maq children under the age of 16 to attend St. Dymphna's, the government-run, brutally authoritarian boarding school. The only way out is to pay a "truancy tax" to the reserve's sadistic Indian agent, Popper. Already world-weary at the age of 15, Aila (Devery Jacobs) has been on her own since she was little

when her mother committed suicide and Popper dragged her father off to jail all on the same night. Slings dope for her uncle to stay out of St. Dymphna's, she draws and paints images of avenging Mi'g Maq spirits, building an imaginary world-within-a-world for herself in order to survive. When her father finally returns home he hardly recognizes the fierce, withdrawn young woman as his daughter. Their reunion, however, is interrupted when an unexpected police raid leaves Aila unable to pay the truancy tax and she's forced to fight for her freedom.

Throughout, Barnaby breathes life into his dark vision with a graphic sense of composition and lighting that seems informed as much by comic books as Aila's own artistic outlets. No mere escapism, Aila's personal history, not to mention newcomer Jacobs' powerhouse performance, keeps Barnaby's flights of fatalism rooted in real emotions and trauma that give the film a particularly personal, if disturbing, edge.

*Paul Malcolm*





**Directed by** Chris Eyre (Cheyenne/Arapaho).

ShadowCatcher Entertainment. **Producer:** Scott Rosenfelt, Larry Estes.

**Screenwriter:** Sherman Alexie. **Cinematographer:** Brian Capener.

**Editor:** Brian Berdan. **With:** Adam Beach, Evan Adams, Irene Bedard, Gary Farmer, Tantoo Cardinal.

35mm, color, 89 min.

*35mm print courtesy of the Sundance Collection  
at UCLA Film & Television Archive.*

## SMOKE SIGNALS 1998

Chris Eyre's monumental first feature announced the advent of a major talent in American independent film, and of an extraordinarily powerful voice in the Native American filmmaking community. The first feature to be produced, written, directed and acted by Native talents and to receive a general theatrical release, the film went on to be embraced by both indigenous communities and the general filmgoing public, who gravitated to the sharply drawn characters and the universal themes and emotions that Eyre and *Smoke Signals* brought to life so irresistibly on the screen.

Written by poet, writer and filmmaker Sherman Alexie (and based on his short story, "This Is What it Means To Say Phoenix, Arizona"), the film presents two families with intertwined histories. Victor Joseph is an angry young man raised by his mother and abandoned by his father, Arnold Joseph. Victor is deeply affected upon receiving news that Arnold has died, many miles away, and that a stranger is offering his ashes to the family. Victor decides to undertake the journey, but lacks the necessary bus fare. Help comes from his childhood friend Thomas, a nerdy and cheerful fellow given to flights of spontaneous storytelling. It happens that, as a baby, Thomas was rescued by Arnold Joseph from a roaring house fire that killed his parents. Thomas' eccentricities annoy Victor to no end, but he grudgingly accepts the offer of help and companionship on the journey, coaching Thomas in the manner and look of a

true Native man, as the obliging Thomas gently admonishes Victor to let go of his deep-seated anger. When they reach their destination and meet Arnold's last friend, the beautiful Suzy, they learn more about the demons that drove Arnold away from the life he had known. All of this brings renewed pain, as well as a chance of lasting peace.

Nimbly shifting between deeply emotional passages and sunny comedy, Eyre's sure-handed storytelling offers an extraordinary catharsis, conjuring experiences of forgiveness and rebirth with exceeding grace. An audience award winner at the Sundance Festival, the film went on to garner several other awards and much critical praise, beginning its apotheosis into film legend, as an indispensable emblem of Native America.

*Shannon Kelley*

**Preceded by:**

**CARRYING FIRE** Canada 2009

**Directed by** Marie Burke (Cree/Dene). The fire of spiritual wellness and self-knowledge is powerfully shared among individuals and generations in this striking short film.

DigiBeta, color, 4 min.



**Directed by** Sterlin Harjo (Creek/Seminole).

**Producer:** Sterlin Harjo, Matt Leach, Christina D. King. **Cinematographer:** Sterlin Harjo, Matt Leach, Shane Brown. **Editor:** Matt Leach. **With:** Jimmy Anderson, Nelson Harjo, Hoy Harjo, Wotko Long, Eugene Harjo.  
HDCAM, color, 90 min.



## THIS MAY BE THE LAST TIME 2014

Pete Harjo, Sterlin Harjo's grandfather, disappeared in 1962 after his car crashed on a rural bridge in Sasakwa, Oklahoma. The Seminole Indian community searched for his body for days, but nothing was found. The community sang their own religious songs, as they searched, finding solace in the hymns of faith that had sustained the community for more than 150 years. Harjo's latest film explores the mystery of his grandfather's death and the role Native song played in his family's grief.

The Creeks and Seminoles had been Christianized at the end of the 18th century. Their ceremonial music dates back to the early 19th century, combining Creek, Scottish, and African influences, when they still occupied their land in the Southeastern United States. However, President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act (1830), and conspired with Southern States to steal Indian land for cotton cultivation, despite the fact that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled twice in favor of Native complaints against the illegal land appropriation. The result was the "Great Trail of Tears" in 1836, during which Federal troops drove 15,000 Creek people from their lands in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi to Oklahoma; nearly 25% perished on the journey. In their grief, the Creek sang their songs. As director Harjo himself notes of these hymns, "they are intrinsic to our culture. In times of tragedy and hardship, we often turn to hymns as a way of seeking emotional and spiritual support." Who knew that the Muscogee Creek and Seminole nations developed their own hymn books

and music tradition, akin to the culture of Negro spirituals? Indeed, as historian Hugh Foley posits in the film, the Creek hymns may be "the first true American music, due to its multicultural composition."

Narrated in first by the director, Harjo's personal documentary weaves together personal and community history. Harjo's career as a filmmaker took off when he was named one of five inaugural Annenberg Film Fellows in 2004, receiving funding and attending professional workshops that contributed to his first feature, *Four Sheets to the Wind* (2007). His new film premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in January 2014.

*Jan-Chrisopher Horrak*

**Preceded by:**

### **A BENTWOOD BOX 1985**

**Directed by** Sandy Osawa (Makah), Yasu Osawa. Upstream Productions.  
**Producer:** Sandy Osawa (Makah), Yasu Osawa. **With:** Duane Pasco.  
DVCAM, color, 5 min.

This enthralling short film illustrates the creation of a carved wooden box, using perfect modulations of duration and focal distance to inscribe both the act of creation, and the film's act of observation, as reverential.

**Directed by** Heather Rae (Cherokee).

Appaloosa Pictures. **Producer:** Elyse Katz, Heather Rae.

**Cinematographer:** Gilbert Salas. **Editor:** Gregory Bayne, Rongotai Lomas, Heather Rae. **With:** John Trudell, Robert Redford, Kris Kristofferson, Sam Shepard, Amy Ray, Val Kilmer.  
35mm, color, 80 min.

*35mm print courtesy of the Sundance Collection  
at UCLA Film & Television Archive.*



## TRUDELL 2005

Heather Rae's documentary about American Indian activist and poet John Trudell (Santee Sioux) admirably meets its multi-faceted subject with a complexity worthy of the man. Approaching the illustrious activist, poet, actor and recording artist with a combination of archival sources, exclusive interviews, and flights of poetic abandon in both image and sound, Rae constructs Trudell as an amalgam of convictions and energies; political, philosophical and spiritual.

Recounting Trudell's rise from humble beginnings in Northern Nebraska, the film tracks his phenomenal rise to intellectual maturity and leadership as a young man, choosing the activist's path following a four-year enlistment in the U.S. Navy. As spokesperson for the Indians of All Tribes occupation of Alcatraz Island in 1968-1969, Trudell projected a clarion voice and consciousness to a public both bewildered and dazzled by this landmark, revolutionary political action. When this occupation was quelled by the U.S. government, Trudell next leant his talents to the American Indian Movement (AIM) from the mid-to late-1970s, giving voice and inspiration to the group, decrying the government's history of bad faith in the prosecution of its treaties and dealings with Indian nations, and providing a moral vision during the brutal crackdowns on Oglala Sioux people of Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

Trudell's voice expands to a new arena, that of spoken-word performance, following the tragic loss of his partner, the activist Tina Manning, and their three children in a catastrophic fire that followed closely on the heels of his own burning of an American flag in front of FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C. The film powerfully illustrates the respected statesman's new commitment to poetry, performance, acting and recording. Collaborations with numerous artists bring him an expanded audience, and praise from the likes of Jackson Brown, Bonnie Raitt, Kris Kristofferson and Robert Redford (who are all interviewed here, among others). Employing her subject's captivating voice and crafting visual metaphors to interact contrapuntally with his poetry, Rae has powerfully evoked the moral and visionary force of a leader who continues to instill the American scene with a sterling note of conscience.

*Shannon Kelley*

**Preceded by:**

**NIKAMOWIN (SONG) 2007**

**Directed by** Kevin Lee Burton (Swampy Cree).  
Digital video, color, 11 min.

A thrilling and complex deconstruction of the sounds and rhythms of Native language.



Dean Teri Schwartz and the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television congratulate **UCLA Film & Television Archive** for its unwavering achievements and support its new groundbreaking program

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Photograph from *Second Weaver* (1966) by Alta Kahn. (See page 25).

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