



WE SHALL REMAIN ReelNative film workshops to spotlight Native American voices

-PBS's AMERICAN EXPERIENCE trains Native Americans to produce short films relaying personal stories-

BOSTON, MA – [We SHALL REMAIN](http://pbs.org/weshallremain) (pbs.org/weshallremain), a groundbreaking five-part miniseries from PBS's [AMERICAN EXPERIENCE](#) exploring five pivotal moments in U.S. history from the Native American perspective, has launched [ReelNative](#), a unique short film project that trains Native Americans of all ages to produce personal video stories. The completed films will be distributed to film festivals nationwide, and several will be screened daily at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC, throughout November 2008, coinciding with American Indian Heritage Month. Beginning in fall 2008, ReelNative films will be showcased online at pbs.org/weshallremain.

The first ReelNative pieces have already captured the attention of leading contemporary art and culture institutions, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York City and The Pompidou Center in Paris, France, where two of the pieces were screened earlier this year.

Rebecca Nelson (Salt River Pima), one of the first workshop participants whose film, *A Freeway Christmas*, was selected by the Pompidou Center, was flown to Paris by her tribe for a three-day whirlwind of screenings and sightseeing, her first trip outside the United States.

"It was hard to tell the world something I keep so close to my heart, while wondering if people will understand what the film is really trying to share and teach," Nelson explains. "But then I remembered the reason I agreed to participate in the first place—I knew my story needed to be told. It needed to be told the way it should be told, directly from me."

Led by veteran filmmaker Angelica Brisk (*Hyman Bloom, Never Met Picasso*), new media artist Ravi Jain, *American Indian Graffiti* producer/director Tvli Jacob (Choctaw), and WNYC's senior culture producer Benjamin Walker, each ReelNative workshop includes in-class intensive seminars that focus on narrative storytelling, filming techniques, and editing basics, followed by individualized coaching in story development and production.

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WE SHALL REMAIN IS AN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PRODUCTION
IN ASSOCIATION WITH NATIVE AMERICAN PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS FOR WGBH BOSTON.



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The first ReelNative workshop, held at the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona, in April 2007, resulted in a series of thoughtful and provocative short films, shot on video-capable cell phones. They include an experimental meditation on urban life by a Choctaw poet; an account of a journey out of homelessness to success as a painter and gallery owner from a Navajo artist; and a Pima Salt River woman's bittersweet look at how she used a tribal payout to create the best-Christmas-ever for her younger brother.

In February 2008, participants in a second workshop in New England used mini-DV cameras to tell their stories. The storytellers include a Shinnecock woman who honors a dead whale beached along the shores of her nation, now known to most Americans as South Hampton; and a Nipmuc teenager who describes her childhood fantasy of taking back a mountain that used to be at the heart of her people's land but is today a popular Massachusetts ski resort. A third workshop is scheduled to take place January 2009 in Oklahoma.

"By asking people to share their experiences, we are opening up a creative opportunity for a population that is underrepresented in American media. I hope that these participants' voices, and the stories we are telling on other platforms, will come together to create a mosaic of the Native American experience," says Sharon Grimberg, executive producer of WE SHALL REMAIN.

"ReelNative gives AMERICAN EXPERIENCE an opportunity to bridge the gap between the past and the present in a way that a historical documentary can't always accomplish," says Mark Samels, executive producer of AMERICAN EXPERIENCE. "Through WE SHALL REMAIN's five broadcast documentaries, we will tell fundamental stories from the past, but ReelNative will carry these stories into today, showcasing the diversity and perseverance of Native culture across the country."

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ABOUT AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

Television's most-watched history series, AMERICAN EXPERIENCE has been hailed as "peerless" (*Wall Street Journal*), "the most consistently enriching program on television" (*Chicago Tribune*), and "a beacon of intelligence and purpose" (*Houston Chronicle*). On air and online, the series brings to life the incredible characters and epic stories that have shaped America's past and present. Acclaimed by viewers and critics alike, AMERICAN EXPERIENCE documentaries have been honored with every major broadcast award, including twenty-five Emmy Awards, four duPont-Columbia Awards, and fourteen George Foster Peabody Awards, one most recently for *Two Days in October*.

ABOUT WGBH BOSTON

WGBH Boston is America's preeminent public broadcasting producer. More than one-third of PBS's prime-time lineup and companion Web content as well as many public radio favorites are produced by WGBH. The station also is a pioneer in educational multimedia and in access technologies for people with disabilities. For more information visit wgbh.org.

For more information about AMERICAN EXPERIENCE and WE SHALL REMAIN visit pbs.org/weshallremain

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