

WE SHALL REMAIN

APRIL 2009 ON PBS

From PBS's acclaimed history series, AMERICAN EXPERIENCE, in association with Native American Public Telecommunications (NAPT), comes WE SHALL REMAIN, a groundbreaking mini-series and provocative multi-media project that establishes Native history as an essential part of American history. Five 90-minute documentaries spanning three hundred years tell the story of pivotal moments in U.S. history from the Native American perspective. WE SHALL REMAIN will premiere in April 2009 on PBS. A companion public radio documentary series, focusing on contemporary Native issues, will be distributed to public radio and Native broadcasters to coincide with the television program.

Beginning in the 1600s with the Wampanoags, who used their alliance with the English to strengthen their position in Southern New England, and ending with the bold new leaders of the 1970s, who harnessed the momentum of the Civil Rights Movement to forge a pan-Indian identity, WE SHALL REMAIN upends two-dimensional stereotypes of American Indians as simply ferocious warriors or peaceable lovers of the land.

Chris Eyre, director of the first three episodes of WE SHALL REMAIN, has been involved with the series from its onset. "You can't understand America in the 21st century if you don't understand the Native experience," he says. "What connects these five films is the resolve of their characters. This country is founded on people striving, being tenacious and moving forward... this is a look at that, through Native eyes."

The five-part documentary series is the product of a tremendous collaboration between Native and non-Native filmmakers, advisors, historians, and community leaders, placing Indian voices at the heart of the series. The creative forces behind WE SHALL REMAIN include Benjamin Bratt, series narrator (*Law & Order*, *The Cleaner*), Emmy Award-winner Ric Burns (*Eugene O'Neill*, *Andy Warhol*, *New York: A Documentary Film*), Chris Eyre (*Smoke Signals*, *A Thousand Roads*), Sharon Grimberg (*Two Days in October*, *Walt Whitman*) and Mark Samels, executive producer, AMERICAN EXPERIENCE (*Two Days in October*, *A Brilliant Madness*). A complete list of production credits and project participants is available upon request.

"The tale of European settlement of North America has been told countless times, but not from the perspective of the land's original inhabitants," explains executive producer Sharon Grimberg. "WE SHALL REMAIN tells the story, not from the point of view of the white people looking West, but of Native people looking East."

"AMERICAN EXPERIENCE has a track record of taking on difficult and contested history," says series executive producer Mark Samels. "In the case of WE SHALL REMAIN, it's a history that has also been marginalized, distorted, and often forgotten. In bringing these little-known stories to the forefront, we want to break through the stereotypes that have defined Native Americans for centuries."

more

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



Native American
Public Telecommunications

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WE SHALL REMAIN

Episode 1: After the Mayflower

Directed by Chris Eyre

Written by Sharon Grimberg, Anne Makepeace, and Mark Zwonitzer

Episode one, *After the Mayflower*, begins in New England in the 1620s, at the time of the so-called “first Thanksgiving.” In March of 1621, Massasoit, chief of the Wampanoag, negotiated a diplomatic alliance with a scraggly band of English settlers for the benefit of his people. It was a gamble that paid off for several decades, as Indians and colonists coexisted in relative peace. A half-century later, as a brutal war flared between the English colonists and a confederation of New England Indians, the wisdom of Massasoit’s choice seemed less clear.

Episode 2: Tecumseh’s Vision

Written and produced by Ric Burns

Directed by Ric Burns and Chris Eyre

Episode two, *Tecumseh’s Vision*, tells the story of the Shawnee leader Tecumseh and his brother, Tenskwatawa, known as the Prophet. In the years following the American Revolution, the Prophet led a spiritual revival movement that drew thousands of followers from tribes across the Midwest. His brother forged a pan-Indian political and military alliance from that movement, coming closer than anyone since to creating an independent Indian state.

Episode 3: Trail of Tears

Written and produced by Mark Zwonitzer

Directed by Chris Eyre

Episode three, *Trail of Tears*, explores the resolve and resilience of the Cherokee Nation, who resisted removal from their homelands in the Southeast in every way they knew: assimilating, adopting a European-style government and legal system, accepting Christianity, and even taking their case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Episode 4: Geronimo

Written, produced, and directed by Dustinn Craig and Sarah Colt

The fourth episode, *Geronimo*, takes place at the end of the Indian Wars, near the close of the nineteenth century. Here, desperate times catapulted a controversial character to the leadership of an Apache band. To angry whites, Geronimo was an archenemy, the perpetrator of unspeakable savage cruelties. To some Apaches, he was a stubborn troublemaker whose actions needlessly brought the enemy’s wrath upon them. To his supporters, he remained the embodiment of proud resistance, leading the last Native American fighting force to surrender to the United States government.

Episode 5: Wounded Knee

Produced and directed by Stanley Nelson

Written by Marcia Smith

Co-produced by Julianna Brannum

Episode five, *Wounded Knee*, tells the gripping story of the 1973 siege of Wounded Knee, examining the broad political and economic forces that led to the emergence of the American Indian Movement (AIM) in the 1960s. For 71 days, activists engaged in a standoff with the U.S. government, bringing the nation’s attention to the desperate conditions on Indian reservations. Perhaps even more important, the siege united Native people across tribes, creating a pan-Indian identity and a new path into the future.

For WE SHALL REMAIN, Executive Producer Sharon Grimberg

Coordinating Producer, Cathleen O’Connell

Series Narrator, Benjamin Bratt

Series Composer, John Kusiak

For Native American Public Telecommunications, Shirley Sneve

For AMERICAN EXPERIENCE, Executive Producer Mark Samels