

Sundance Institute Holds Native Forum at Sundance Film Festival

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah – The Sundance Institute held a Native Forum program during the 2003 Sundance Film Festival in January in Park City, Utah, highlighting films made by Native Americans and indigenous peoples.

This year's Native Forum opened with the U.S. premiere of Alanis Obomsawin's new documentary *Is The Crown At War With Us?* It also included three feature-length and seven short films, and is a blend of new projects from such established filmmakers as Randy Redroad and Shirley Cheechoo, and such emerging filmmakers as Ivan Sen, Darlene Naponse, Shane Hannigan, Puka Moeau, and Nicholas Boseley.

With four world premieres and four U.S. premieres, the ninth annual Native Forum continued to emphasize innovation in Native filmmaking and give life to the rich history of artistic expression and storytelling inherent to indigenous life.

In addition to the 11 films screened in the Native Forum program, the institute also presented two seminars. "Indigenous Documentary Filmmaking," with acclaimed documentarian Alanis Obomsawin, explored the specific challenges faced by indigenous filmmakers and their responsibility to their communities and the story. Renowned New Zealand filmmaker and screenwriter Merata Mita led "Screenwriting From The Indigenous Perspective," a screenwriting seminar that focused on the unique forms of storytelling used by indigenous filmmakers.

Selections for the 2003 Sundance Film Festival Native Forum were:

Program I

Moccasin Flats by Randy Redroad (Western Cherokee), USA, World Premiere – This short film is about Native youth experiencing the love and harshness of modern inner-city life.

Admirational by Shane Lee Eagle Hannigan (Yakama Nation), USA – A short drama with spoken-word narrations over images of a young man falling in love with a girl and realizing he has choices in life.

Sailing The Master Home by Gilbert Salas (Tarahumara), USA – A short documentary that takes viewers on a sailing journey through the South Pacific, navigating by the stars.

Withdrawl by Dax Thomas (Laguna Pueblo), USA, World Premiere – A visual flurry of images representing sex, identity, and ongoing conflicts as seen through the eyes of a young Laguna Pueblo man.

Program II

Is The Crown At War With Us? by Alanis Obomsawin (Abenaki Nation), Canada, U.S. Premiere – A feature documentary offering a gripping portrait of the Esgenoopetitj Mi'gmaq First Nation during the summer of 2000 as the Canadian government appears to wage war on the community for exercising its inherent and court-affirmed fishing rights.

Program III

Pikutiskwaau (Mother Earth) by Shirley Cheechoo (James Bay Cree), Canada – A feature-length documentary tracing the Cree philosophy of Mother Earth and the responsibilities of the Cree people to honor her and those who continue to give life to the Cree people.

Bundle In Good Standing by Gabriel Whiteturkey (Eastern Delaware), USA, U.S. Premiere – This short documentary is about the filmmaker's grandmother and her ceremonial responsibilities within Lenape society.

Program IV

Cradlesong by Darlene Naponse (Whitefish Lake Ojibway), Canada, World Premiere – A musically driven feature with original songs that create a journey through the consequences and realities of a rural Native community leading up to one character's moment of madness.

Rangimarie by Puka Moeau (Rongowhakaata/Mahaki), New Zealand, World Premiere – A short documentary about kapa haka (traditional Maori dance) champions Rangimarie, their kaupapa (philosophy), and their messages of peace to the world.

Program V

Beneath Clouds by Ivan Sen (Gamilaroi), Australia, U.S. Premiere – A story of two youth who meet while hitchhiking on the road to Sydney. Both are indigenous Aborigine, though Lena is blonde and blue-eyed and Vaughn is "black" by Australian standards. Their brief journey leads to changed perceptions about their own lives and destinations.

Shit Skin by Nicholas Boseley (Arrernta), Australia, U.S. Premiere – A short drama where a grandson guides his grandmother back to the land and the people she was stolen from as a child.

Presenting sponsors for the 2003 Sundance Film Festival included Entertainment Weekly; Zenith Electronics Corporation; Volkswagen of America, Inc.; and Hewlett-Packard Company. Leadership sponsors were American Express; The Coca-Cola Company; DirecTV; Microsoft, Inc.; and the Sundance Channel.

Sustaining sponsors were ABC 4; AT&T; Bonterra Vineyards; CESAR Food For Small Dogs; DEJ Productions, Inc.; *The New York Times*; Park City Visitors Bureau and Film Commission; SKYY Vodka; Sony Electronics, Inc.; and the Utah Film Commission.

Founded by Robert Redford in 1981, the Sundance Institute is dedicated to developing artists of independent vision and exhibiting their new work. Since its inception, the institute has grown into an internationally recognized resource for filmmakers and other artists.

Majestic Mortgage Helps Homebuyers

Majestic Mortgage, a Portland-area firm specializing in creative lending, has positioned itself as a resource for Indian Housing Authorities.

Liz Hamilton (Choctaw/Cherokee) works with first-time homebuyers, plus debt consolidation and refinance clients, utilizing the first-time homebuyer assistance program offered to tribal members under HUD's Indian Housing Block Grant program.

While many lenders struggle with how to structure the NAHASDA grant money toward down payments, Majestic Mortgage has adopted program guidelines to fund quickly and efficiently. Despite credit challenges such as bankruptcy, Majestic can refinance the existing loan and pull cash out for a number of uses, such as debt consolidation, home improvements, vacations, or working capital for a business. Investment properties can be either owner- or non-owner-occupied.

For self-employed people, Majestic has non-income-verifying home loans and SBA financing available. Most pre-qualifications are done in 24 hours and with no charge for the initial call. Majestic Mortgage is an equal opportunity lender and can originate home loans in any state where licensing laws allow.

For more information, contact Liz Hamilton at 503-397-9769; collect calls accepted.