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## Vision Maker Media E-News - February 2018

[New Films Coming Soon](#) | [February Film Specials](#) | [Vision Maker Film Festival Public Media Internship](#) | [Open Call Deadline](#) | [Filmmaker Challenges](#) | [Film Festival Awards](#) | [POV Celebrates 30 Years](#) | [Highlights from Our Travels](#) | [Filmmaker Opportunities](#) | [Film Screenings](#) | [Find Us on the Road](#)

### Did You Know?

We have Viewer Discussion Guides for **56** of our films. [Check it out.](#)

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## 7 New Native Documentaries Coming Soon

[MANKILLER](#) explores the life of Wilma Mankiller, the first female Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation who led her people in building one of the strongest Indian Tribes in America. More than a biography, the program delivers an empowering message.

[Keep Talking](#) follows four Alaska Native women learning to teach their critically endangered language. Only 41 fluent Elders still speak Kodiak Alutiiq due to brutal assimilation policies at U.S. government run Indian boarding schools. The grit and resilience of these women helps them overcome historical trauma, politics and personal demons as they evolve into #languagewarriors.

[ATTLA](#) tells the gripping but virtually unknown story of George Atlla, an Alaska Native dogsled racer who, with one good leg and one outlandish dream, dominated the sport for five decades, becoming a rockstar figure for both Natives and whites.

[Ohiyesa: The Soul of an Indian](#) follows Kate Beane, a young Dakota woman, as she examines the extraordinary life of her celebrated relative, Charles Eastman (Ohiyesa). Biography and journey come together as Kate traces Eastman's path- from traditional Dakota boyhood, through education at Dartmouth College, and in later roles as physician, author, lecturer and Native American advocate.

[Moroni for President](#) examines the world of LGBTQ rights and the meaning of identity in the largest Native American tribe in the United States, following a heated primary election for the Presidency of the Navajo Nation.

[Words from a Bear](#) examines the enigmatic life and mind of Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Navarro Scott Momaday, one of Native America's most celebrated authors of poetry and prose. The film visually captures the essence of Momaday's writings, relating each written line to his unique American experience representing ancestry, place and oral history.

[Dawnland](#) explores how, amidst the echoes of genocide, an unprecedented truth commission attempts to heal the wounds of a foster care system devastating Native American families.

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## February Film Specials

### Films Focus on Native People Reclaiming Rights, Heritage



How do Native Americans preserve their culture? Explore stories about protecting ancient ties to the land, preserving human rights, inspirational leaders, the role language plays in preserving culture and health issues affecting Native American women.

Our February Specials allow viewers to embark on incredible journeys that result in healing the body and the spirit, and gain a better understanding of how policies can adversely affect the civil rights of our Native citizens.

[For the Rights of All:](#)

[Ending Jim Crow in Alaska](#)

Home ~~\$29.95~~ **Sale \$19.95**

EDU ~~\$225~~ **Sale \$125**

[Rising Voices](#)

Home ~~\$29.95~~ **Sale \$19.95**

EDU ~~\$225~~ **Sale \$125**

[Teacher's Guide](#)

[Silent Thunder](#)

Home ~~\$24.95~~ **Sale 14.95**

EDU ~~\$150~~ **Sale \$75**

[The Thick Dark Fog](#)

Home ~~\$29.95~~ **Sale \$19.95**

EDU ~~\$225~~ **Sale \$125**

[Viewer Discussion Guide](#)

[Young Lakota](#)

Home ~~\$25~~ **Sale \$19.95**

EDU ~~\$250~~ **Sale \$125**

[Viewer Discussion Guide](#)

**SHOP NOW**

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Join Us Opening Night for *RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked the World*  
**7th Biennial Vision Maker Film Festival April 20-26**



Vision Maker Media is bringing Native storytelling and film to life at the seventh biennial Vision Maker Film Festival. More than 30 new films by diverse filmmakers will showcase at the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center in Lincoln, Nebraska, April 20-26.

Opening night features the film [RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked the World](#), which explores how the Native American influence is an integral part of music history, despite attempts to ban, censor and erase Indian culture in the United States.

Many artists and musical forms played a role in the creation of rock, but arguably no single piece of music was more influential than the 1958 instrumental *Rumble* by American Indian rock guitarist and singer/songwriter Link Wray. *Rumble* was the first song to use distortion and feedback. It introduced the rock power chord-- and was one of the very few instrumental singles to be banned from the radio for

fear it would incite violence.

The stories of these iconic Native musicians are told by some of America's greatest music legends who knew them, played music with them and were inspired by them: everyone from Buddy Guy, Quincy Jones, and Tony Bennett to Iggy Pop, Steven Tyler and Stevie Van Zandt. *RUMBLE* shows how Indigenous music was part of the very fabric of American popular music from the beginning, but that the Native American contribution was left out of the story--until now.

Working with filmmakers of color on all levels is a key focus of this week-long film festival, from inspiring future filmmakers to polishing fine skills and providing knowledge of professional resources. Our partners in the [National Minority Consortia \(NMC\)](#) will each share their feature documentary films and bring filmmakers of color to Lincoln to work with emerging filmmakers. Local Native youth will learn from professional documentary producers during workshops open to the public, April 22-24.

Teachers, students and the public are encouraged to attend and learn about a variety of cultures. We are screening stories of social justice, hope and overcoming adversity throughout this powerful event.

[visionmakermedia.org/festival](http://visionmakermedia.org/festival)  
[Sponsors list](#)

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## **Nagle Named 2018 United States Artists Fellow**

United States Artists (USA) announced that [Mary Kathryn Nagle \(Cherokee\)](#), a playwright from Tulsa, Oklahoma, and a VMM board member, is among 45 artists and collectives across nine creative disciplines who will receive an unrestricted \$50,000 cash award.

USA Fellowships are awarded to artists at all stages of their careers, and from every corner of the United States, through a rigorous nomination and panel selection process. To date, USA has distributed over \$22 million to a diverse group of more than 500 artists working in all disciplines.

More: <http://www.unitedstatesartists.org/award/>

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## **Public Media Opportunity**

### **Apply for Internship Before March 30 Deadline**

Increasing opportunities for American Indian and Alaska Native youth in public broadcasting is the goal of Vision Maker Media providing the Public Media Internship to undergraduate or graduate students.

Interns can be located at Vision Maker Media's offices at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in Lincoln, Nebraska, or at a Public Television station in the United States. Vision Maker Media will contact Public Television stations in the states requested by interns in order to determine placement options. Deadline to submit your application is **March 30, 2018**. For assistance: 402-472-3522 or [visionmaker@unl.edu](mailto:visionmaker@unl.edu)

**APPLY**



Open Call Deadline March 1

## **Submit Your Film Projects**

Vision Maker Media invites proposals for programs intended for Public Television that represent the experiences, values and cultures of American Indians and Alaska Natives. **Deadline to submit proposals is March 1, 2018.**

Support for the Vision Maker Media Public Television Program Fund is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. For more information, please download and read the complete [guidelines](#).

Applicants will be required to create a user account and sign up. If you have any problems with the online application process, please contact Assistant Director, Rebekka Herrera (Ioway Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska) at [visionmaker@unl.edu](mailto:visionmaker@unl.edu) or 402-472-3522.

## Filmmaker Challenges

# Three Tips for Digital VOD Distribution

By Jason Brubaker\*

A few months back, I found myself in a passionate debate focused on digital video on demand (VOD) distribution and the importance of building your own audience. Despite the fact that the entire world of movie distribution is shifting away from a physical product and people are now watching movies on their small devices, there are still fuddy-duddies who believe we are years away from digital VOD distribution. These are the same "gurus" who believe that audience building is best left for the experts. This is silly talk.

### **You're a serious independent filmmaker.**

You will stop at nothing until your vision is realized and your movie is made. So why would you go the distance without creating a plan for reaching your audience?

*"I just want to focus on making movies and let someone else market them."*

While I encourage you to focus on becoming the next filmmaking success, crossing your fingers for an audience to magically appear doesn't work. Out of the thousands of films produced each year, most will not garner theatrical distribution. And with DVD on the decline, getting a deal for the vanishing video stores is rare... Even in foreign territories.

### **So I suggest you take a pragmatic approach to your movie making business.**

I'm suggesting you start thinking like a digital marketer. And the first step toward becoming a marketing success is making sure you know your audience.

### **While digital VOD distribution is exciting, your target audience is scattered all over the internet.**

Reaching people interested in your work is your biggest challenge. How will you do this? Answer the following questions:

**1. Why should someone care about your movie?** - If you can't tell me why I should watch your movie, you can rest assured I won't. Time is more valuable than money. Once spent, it never gets replenished.

**2. Who is your intended target audience?** - Most filmmakers never give any thought to this question. Or if they do, they say "everybody." Because everybody is nobody, that is very unrealistic.



**3. How much does your marketing cost?** - There are two ways to build an audience. You can spend a lot of time building your audience, or you can spend a lot of money building your audience. The choice is both. But you had better plan accordingly. This should go without saying--but I spend a lot of time looking for great movies. And the truth is, most movies are very poorly done, with no star talent or marketable hook. ***So please make a good movie.***

If you want more help on how to distribute your movie, check out the *Indie Producer's Guide to Distribution*: <https://howtosellyourmovie.com>

*\*Jason Brubaker is an expert in Video On Demand distribution. He is focused on helping filmmakers make, market and sell movies more easily by growing their fan base, building buzz and creating community around a title.*

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## VMM Films Continue to Garner Festival Awards

Two more Vision Maker Media films have received honors and praise.

[MANKILLER](#), produced and directed by Gale Anne Hurd and Valerie Red-Horse (Cherokee/Sioux), received Best Documentary Feature at the 2017 Rome International Film Festival and Best of Fest Selection at the 2018 Palm Springs International Film Festival. The film has been selection to screen at 20 film festivals.

[Tribal Justice](#), directed by Anne Makepeace, received the award for Documentary Director Award at the 2017 Cinetopia Film Festival, the Best Documentary Feature award at the 2017 American Indian Film Festival and the 2017 Charlotte Film Festival.

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## POV Celebrates Historic 30th Year

It's been called the crown jewel of public broadcasting and a series that sets a high bar by presenting award-winning independent documentary films. We're referring to POV, television's longest-running showcase for independent nonfiction films. POV Series Founder Marc Weiss, recalls that the series began 30 years ago with the filmmakers and the films.

"They were the reason POV was created, and they have kept it vital for 30 years. To be sure, there is the MacArthur Foundation, which has sustained POV since it began."

According to Weiss, the films, with their unique blend of passion and intelligence, with their emotional power and their humanity, have rallied support for the series.

He said, "It wasn't always that way. When POV was first proposed, PBS didn't want it. The NEA turned it down for funding. Other funders wouldn't even talk to us. There were even influential voices in the independent community that felt an acquisition series of independent documentaries was a bad strategy, a distraction, a ghetto."

Weiss claims that what propelled the series forward was the wonderful films being made by independent nonfiction filmmakers, and films that brought unique and powerful perspectives to important subjects. <http://www.pbs.org/pov/>

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*POV (a cinema term for "point of view") premieres 14-16 of the best, boldest and most innovative programs every year on PBS. Since 1988, POV has presented over 400 films to public television audiences across the country. POV films are known for their intimacy, their unforgettable storytelling and their timeliness, putting a human face on contemporary social issues.*

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## NETA and Sundance

# Highlights from Our Travels

**NETA Highlights:** More than 400 people attended the NETA Conference in Washington, D.C., last month. Two Vision Maker Media staff members attended for the first time. Key speakers included:

- David Callahan, founder and editor of Inside Philanthropy and author of [\*"The Givers: Wealth, Power and Philanthropy in a New Gilded Age"\*](#).
- J.D. Vance, author of the bestselling book [\*"Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis"\*](#).
- [\*Darryl McDaniels \(DMC\)\*](#), the legendary rapper, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame member, noted author, and co-founder of The Felix Organization.



Assistant Director Rebekka Hererra and Director of Communications attend the NETA Conference in Washington, D.C.

The three-day conference included 25 professional development sessions, including one featuring Vision Maker Media's Assistant Director Rebekka Hererra. The session, "Bridging the Divide: Creating Meaningful Community Conversations," featured presenters who have responded to hate violence, political, social and racial divides with programs and engagement initiatives. They shared vital content to bolster station-led efforts and support bridging divides in their community. Vision Maker Media presented a trailer of the upcoming film



[MANKILLER](#), a film about Wilma Mankiller, the first female Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation.

**Sundance Highlights:** Vision Maker Media's Director Shirley Sneve used to have a rule that the only time she could justify going to the Sundance Film Festival was if VMM funded a film in the festival. Last year, [RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked the World](#), funded by Vision Maker Media (VMM) and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, was an award winner. Unfortunately, this year VMM had no films in the festival. So now Sneve attends if one of the VMM filmmakers is in the festival, or if there's something showing that she would like to bring to the Vision Maker Film Festival, April 20-26.

This year, there were several films of interest. Christina King (Cherokee) was a producer on *We the Animals*, which won a NEXT award.

Christina and Elizabeth Castle are producing [Warrior Women](#) with VMM about the women of the American Indian Movement.

*The Violence of a Civilization without Secrets* by Adam and Zack Khalil (Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians) appeared in the Shorts program. Adam and Zack are in Research and Development on the VMM project *Ancestors in the Archives*.

*Akicita* directed by Cody Lucich (Estom Yumeka Maidu Tribe of Enterprise Rancheria) and produced by Heather Rae (Cherokee) Gingger Shankar and Ben-Alex Dupris (Colville/Minneconjou Lakota) chronicles the Standing Rock encampment and protest around the Dakota Access Pipeline. Heather directed [TRUDELL](#) with funding from what was then Native American Public Telecommunications. That was the first film Shirley saw at the Sundance Film Festival in 2005.

*The Miseducation of Cameron Post* was sold out. Turns out there's a Nebraska connection-based on a novel by UNL grad Emily M. Danforth:  
<https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/alumnas-novel-turned-film-earns-sundance-award/>

*And Breathe Normally* is based in Iceland, the director, Ísold Uggadóttir, won an award in the World Cinema Dramatic competition. Shirley traveled to Iceland last year with her cousins, and just like in the movie, it rained the whole time! We hope this gets broad theatrical release. It's a stunningly simple film about circumstance and relationships.

Shirley caught up with her fellow filmmaker friends and the Native Program folks-- former board member Bird Runningwater (Cheyenne/Mescalero Apache), and current VMM board Vice-chair Maya Solis, as well as another board member, Elizabeth Weatherford--formerly of the Film and Video Program at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, and now Indigenous Film Initiatives.

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# Filmmaker Opportunities

## **JOBS**

[Director of Engineering  
Network Operation & Distribution](#)

Nebraska - Open Until Filled

[Director of Engineering - Transmissions](#)

Nebraska - Open Until Filled

[Radio Network Director](#)

Nebraska - Open Until Filled

[President & CEO](#)

Vermont - Open Until Filled

[Satellite Maintenance Engineer](#)

Nebraska - Open Until Filled

## **FUNDING**

[ITVS Open Call](#)

Deadline: Feb. 9

[Hot Docs Deal Maker](#)

Deadline: Feb. 22

[Vision Maker Media Open Call](#)

Deadline: March 1

[CAAM Open Call](#)

Deadline: March 1

[ITVS Digital Open Call](#)

Deadline: March 2

[Docs in Action](#)

Deadline: March 19

[Hot Docs Distribution Rendezvous](#)

Deadline: March 20

[Enterprise Documentary Fund](#)

Deadline: April 1

[Just Films Inquiry](#)

Deadline: Ongoing

## **FELLOWSHIP/INTERNSHIP**

[Native American Fellowships:](#)

[Harpo Foundation](#)

Deadline: Feb 15

[Ucross Fellowship](#)

Deadline: March 1

[Vision Maker Media](#)

[Public Media Internship](#)

Deadline: March 30

## **FILM FESTIVALS**

[CineYouth Film Festival](#)

Deadline: Feb. 26

[New York Television Festival](#)

Deadline: March 12

[New York Radio Festival](#)

Deadline: March 16

[Montreal First Peoples Festival](#)

Deadline: March 19

[Calgary International Film Festival](#)

Deadline: June 1

[Facing Race Micro-Film Festival](#)

Deadline: March 31

## **TRAINING**

[LA Skins Native American TV Writers Lab](#)

Deadline: March 2

## **OTHER**

[New York Women in Film &](#)

[Television Filling in the Gap: Using Visual  
Metaphors for Documentaries](#)

New York City, New York

Event: Feb. 28

[James Aronson Awards](#)

Deadline: Feb. 15

[LACDA Int'l Juried Competition](#)

Deadline: Feb. 19

[Golden Eagle Awards for Independent &  
Emerging Media](#)

Deadline: March 30

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## Upcoming Film Screenings

Don't miss a chance to see one of our films when it comes to your area. Tell your friends.

[Keep Talking](#)

Big Sky Documentary Film Festival  
Missoula, Montana - Feb. 25

[Lake of Betrayal](#)

Drake Well Museum & Park  
Titusville, Pennsylvania - March 11

[MANKILLER](#)

Athena Film Festival  
New York City, New York - Feb. 24

Sedona Int'l Film Festival  
Sedona, Arizona - Feb. 28 & March 2

Abbe Museum  
Bar Harbor, Maine - May 19-20

[Metal Road](#)

Sedona Int'l Film Festival  
Sedona, Arizona - Feb. 26 & March 1

[Moroni for President](#)

Big Sky Documentary Film Festival  
Missoula, Montana - Feb. 23

[RUMBLE: The Indians Who  
Rocked the World](#)

Native Reel Cinema Fest  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida - Feb. 9

Canada Now - Cecut Tijuana  
Tijuana, Mexico - Feb. 17-24

Canada Now  
Cineteca Alameda  
San Luis Potosi, Mexico - Feb. 20-23

Canada Now  
Benemerita Universidad Autonoma de  
Puebla - Puebla, Mexico - March 1-7

Durango Independent Film Festival  
Durango, Colorado - March 2 & 4

[The Mayors of Shiprock](#)

Durango Independent Film Festival  
Durango, Colorado - March 1 & 3

Sedona Int'l Film Festival  
Sedona, Arizona - March 3

[Through the Repellent Fence:  
A Land Art Film](#)

St. Louis Art Museum  
St. Louis, Missouri - Feb. 9

Northwest Film Forum  
Seattle, Washington - Feb. 18

Utah Film Center  
Salt Lake City, Utah - Feb. 28

[Tribal Justice](#)

Hamline Midway Library  
St. Paul, Minnesota - Feb. 28

Las Cruces Int'l Film Festival  
Las Cruces, New Mexico - March 10

World Film Festival  
Tartu, Estonia - March 22

Nat'l Museum of the American Indian  
New York City, New York - March 22

Sebestopal Documentary Film Festival  
Sebastopol, California - March 24

Suffolk University Law School  
Boston, Massachusetts - April 3

[We Breathe Again](#)

Big Sky Documentary Film Festival  
Missoula, Montana - Feb. 19

[What Was Ours](#)  
Huntington Museum of Art  
Huntington, West Virginia - June 26

Canada Now - Universidad Michoacana  
Michoacan, Mexico - March 12-18

Canada Now - Instituto Sonorense de  
Cultura - Sonora, Mexico - March 12-20

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## **Find Us On the Road**

**European Film Market , Berlin - Feb 15-21**

**Big Sky Film Festival , Missoula, Montana - Feb. 22-25**

**Indian Gaming Trade Show , Las Vegas, Nevada - April 18-20**

**Vision Maker Film Festival, Lincoln, Nebraska - April 20-26**

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