

NATIVE AMERICA, New Four-Part Series, Premieres Tuesdays, October 23, 30, and November 13, 2018

– Series Combines Modern Science and Scholarship with Native American Traditions and Oral History to Bring to Life the World Created by America’s First Peoples –



Clockwise: Comanche artist Jhane Myers and archaeologist Severin Fowles in Rio Grande Gorge, New Mexico; Kwakwaka'wakw dancers at a Potlatch ceremony in Fort Rupert, Canada; Tadodaho Sid Hill (Onondaga) with the Hiawatha Wampum Belt at Onondaga Lake, New York; Amah Mutsun conduct a controlled burn outside Santa Cruz.
Credit: Providence Pictures

ARLINGTON, VA – **NATIVE AMERICA**, a new four-part series from Providence Pictures, premieres Tuesdays, October 23 and 30, 9:00-10:00 p.m. ET, and November 13, 9:00-11:00 p.m. ET ([check local listings](#)) on PBS. Weaving history and science with living Indigenous traditions, the series brings to life a land of massive cities connected by social networks spanning two continents, with unique and sophisticated systems of science, art and writing. Made with the active participation of Native American communities and filmed in some of the most spectacular locations in the hemisphere, **NATIVE AMERICA** illuminates the splendor of a past whose story has for too long remained untold.

Recent discoveries informed by Native American oral histories have led to a bold new perspective on North and South America – that through social networks spanning two continents ancient people shared a foundational belief system with a diversity of cultural expressions. This and other research is leading to revelations that will forever change how we understand Native America. The series highlights intimate Native American traditions and follows field archaeologists using 21st century tools such as multispectral imaging and DNA analysis to uncover incredible narratives of America’s past, venturing into Amazonian caves containing the Americas’ earliest art and interactive solar calendar, exploring a massive tunnel beneath a pyramid at the center of one of ancient America’s largest cities, and mapping the heavens in celestially aligned cities.

Narrated by Robbie Robertson (Mohawk and member of the famed rock group The Band), each hour of **NATIVE AMERICA** explores Great Nations and reveals cities, sacred stories and history long hidden in plain sight. In what is now America’s Southwest, indigenous people built stone skyscrapers with untold spiritual power and transformed deserts into fertile fields. In upstate New York, warriors renounced war and formed America’s first democracy 500 years before the Declaration of Independence, later inspiring Benjamin Franklin. Just outside Mexico City, the ancient city of Teotihuacan is home to massive pyramids built to align with the sun and moon. On the banks of the Mississippi, rulers also raised a metropolis of pyramids and drew thousands to their new city to worship the sky. And in the American West, nomadic tribes transformed a weapon of conquest — the horse — into a new way of life, turning the tables on European invaders and building a mobile empire.

The producers of **NATIVE AMERICA** were given remarkable access to Native American communities, going behind the scenes at special events, including a pilgrimage to ancestral ruins at Chaco Canyon in

New Mexico, a trek across lost territories in the American West and an investiture ceremony for a chief in the Pacific Northwest, surrounded by cedar totem poles and centuries of tradition. Tribal members and descendant communities, whose ancestors built this world, share their stories, revealing long-held oral traditions as the thread that runs through the past to these living cultures today.

“I can no longer look at this land without thinking of the millions of Native Americans who created a world in which people lived as family with all living things, and that their way of life still has the power to make a more just and sustainable future,” said executive producer and director Gary Glassman.

Inventive animations by Academy Award-nominated artists and 3D computer modelling bring ancient ruins to life, enabling viewers to experience the pre-Columbian world in an immersive way. The result is a new window into a 15,000-year-old story that unifies North and South America and resonates to this day.

Numerous Native American musicians provided music for the series. Clark Tenakhongva (Hopi) performs traditional singing with drum and rattle in Episode One: **“From Caves to Cosmos.”** Featured in Episode Two, **“Nature to Nations,”** is the music of Grammy Award winner Joanne Shenandoah of the Oneida Nation, part of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy. Timothy Nevaquaya (Comanche), son of the legendary artist and musician Doc Tate Nevaquaya, created original flute music for Episode Four, **“New World Rising.”** Other songs in **“New World Rising”** are performed by the Comanche Native Tribal Chanters, Wild Band of Comanches and Northern Cree group.

An expansive companion website on pbs.org and a robust community engagement and education campaign will accompany the series. Classroom resources thematically relevant to the series will be available on PBS LearningMedia (pbslearningmedia.org). Teachers can use these free resources and support materials to jump-start classroom conversations and help students delve more deeply into the history of Native American culture and innovation.

THE EPISODES

Episode One: “From Caves to Cosmos” - Tuesday, October 23, 9:00-10:00 p.m. ET

Combine ancient wisdom and modern science to answer a 15,000-year-old question: who were America’s First Peoples? The answer hides in Amazonian cave paintings, Mexican burial chambers, New Mexico’s Chaco Canyon and waves off California’s coast.

Episode Two: “Nature to Nations” - Tuesday, October 30, 9:00-10:00 p.m. ET

Explore the rise of great American nations, from monarchies to democracies. Investigate lost cities in Mexico, a temple in Peru, a potlatch ceremony in the Pacific Northwest and a tapestry of shell beads in upstate New York whose story inspired our own democracy.

Episode Three: “Cities of the Sky” - Tuesday, November 13, 9:00-10:00 p.m. ET

Discover the cosmological secrets behind America’s ancient cities. Scientists explore some of the world’s largest pyramids and 3D-scan a lost city of monumental mounds on the Mississippi River; native elders reveal ancient powers of the sky.

Episode Four: “New World Rising” - Tuesday, November 13, 10:00-11:00 p.m. ET

Discover how resistance, survival and revival are revealed through an empire of horse-mounted Comanche warriors, secret messages encoded in an Aztec manuscript and a grass bridge in the Andes that spans mountains and centuries.

NATIVE AMERICA will stream for free following each broadcast and be available for four weeks on all station-branded PBS platforms, including PBS.org and PBS apps for iOS, Android, Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV and Chromecast. Following the four weeks, PBS station members can view all episodes via Passport (contact your local PBS station for details).

NATIVE AMERICA will be available on DVD at ShopPBS.org. The series will also be available on Digital HD.

Funding for **NATIVE AMERICA** is provided by Anne Ray Foundation and PBS.

NATIVE AMERICA is executive produced and directed by Gary Glassman for Providence Pictures. Julianna Brannum (Comanche) is series producer and talent liaison. Producers/directors: Joseph C. Sousa and Scott Tiffany. Producer/editor: Rob Tinworth. Edited by Sean Sandefur, with music by Ed Tomney. Coordinating producers: Maureen Barden Lynch and Ben Sweeney. Animation by Handcranked Productions. Sacred Story animations by Daniel Sousa, with 3D animation by Mitch Butler.

About Providence Pictures

[Providence Pictures](#) believes television has the power to change the world. For twenty years, Providence Pictures has produced programs for the most prestigious international broadcasters — PBS, Discovery, History, National Geographic, BBC, and Arte. Through stunning photography, dramatic narrative, meticulous research, innovative animation, and elegant cinematic re-enactments, Providence Pictures crafts complex ideas into compelling, intelligent stories. Their films have won and been honored with nominations for television's most prestigious awards — six Emmys, two Writers Guild Awards, the AAA Science Journalism Prize, International Archaeological Film Festival, the CINE Golden Eagle Special Jury Award, and many more.

About PBS

[PBS](#), with nearly 350 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and digital content. Each month, PBS reaches over 90 million people through television and 30 million people online, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS' broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry's most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. Decades of research confirms that PBS' premier children's media service, PBS KIDS, helps children build critical literacy, math and social-emotional skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. Delivered through member stations, PBS KIDS offers high-quality educational content on TV – including a 24/7 channel, online at [pbskids.org](#), via an array of mobile apps and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at [www.pbs.org](#), one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, or by following [PBS on Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or through our [apps for mobile and connected devices](#). Specific program information and updates for press are available at [pbs.org/pressroom](#) or by following [PBS Pressroom on Twitter](#).

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