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COMING-OF-AGE JOURNEY OF NAVAJO NATION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IS THE FOCUS OF COMPELLING NEW DOCUMENTARY “SCENES FROM THE GLITTERING WORLD,” PREMIERING MAY 16, 2022 ON PBS

Documentary Chronicles Adolescence for Three Indigenous Students as They Navigate Their Futures and Journey to Connect with Navajo Homeland and Culture

(San Francisco, CA) April 5, 2022— Somewhere within the 17 million acres around the borders of Northwest Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah, lies one of the most remote high schools in the country: Navajo Mountain High School, home to Indigenous students of the Navajo Nation. In the tender documentary “[Scenes from the Glittering World](#),” filmmakers follow the daily life of three Indigenous students as they experience ubiquitous teen trials and triumphs, while working to reconnect with their Navajo homeland and culture.

INDEPENDENT LENS, the award-winning PBS documentary anthology series presented by ITVS, will premiere “Scenes from the Glittering World” for its U.S. broadcast debut on May 16, 2022, at 10:00 p.m. ET (check local listings). The film will also be available on the PBS Video app.

From documentarian and director Jared Jakins, “Scenes from the Glittering World” is a coming-of-age story told through the lens of the unique experiences of teens from the Navajo community who must maneuver through the complications of adolescence while at a small school with shrinking resources, maintain hope to realize their dreams, and live up to community expectations.

The film follows Granite Sloan, a 14-year old struggling to find purpose and peace both at school and at home, following the death of his younger brother; freshman Ilii Neang, who is new to the school after moving from Las Vegas and is unsure if her community will accept her queerness; and Noah Begay, a senior who although is at risk of not graduating, remains confident in his passions.

Throughout the film, audiences are greeted by stunning footage of the vast landscapes that encompass Navajo Nation. Reflective and vivid, “Scenes from the Glittering World” is an intimate



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portrait of the resilience of young people in the Navajo Nation as they prepare to enter the harsh realities of adulthood, and attempt to find their way back home to their native culture and traditions.

“The film’s three central figures are at times quiet, introspective, often hilarious, still unsure of what they want and why,” said director Jared Jakins. “As a director I was drawn to their humor and their youthful melancholy, but ultimately their understated but remarkable frankness inspired me to collaborate closely with them in crafting this film. My approach to the formal qualities of the film was directly influenced by these collaborations. This process ultimately made Granite, Ilii, and Noah active participants in forging their own representations. The result is a spectrum of vibrant familial life and carefully observed moments of catharsis. Our aim was to provide an intimate and lasting contemporary portrait of these beautiful and resilient young people. I hope audiences are moved by our characters’ survival, the love of their families and the healing of their sacred lands.”

“What ‘Scenes from the Glittering World’ accomplishes is an honest and holistic witness to what growing up in the Navajo Nation looks like,” said Lois Vossen, executive producer of INDEPENDENT LENS. “In filming the lowly routine of school and work, Jakins captures the already complex pressures of adolescence, and offers the additional expectations of Indigenous people to reconnect with their cultures, take back what was once stolen, and harness traditions for generations to come.”

Visit the “[Scenes from the Glittering World](#)” page on INDEPENDENT LENS for more information about the film.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS:

Jared Jakins (Director)

Jared Jakins is a South African-born documentarian. His work has screened in major film festivals around the world, garnering numerous jury awards, and has been curated by publications such as *The Atlantic*. Jared is interested in portraiture of cultural intersections and the transformations of land and people throughout the American West. He seeks to document images of community and identity emerging from collisions between mythic and material. He is the film curator at Granary Arts Center in Ephraim, Utah. “Scenes from the Glittering World” is his feature debut.

CREDITS:

Director

Jared Jakins



Cinematographer	Jared Jakins
Executive Producers	Roger Fields Scott Christopherson
Producers	Roni Jo Draper Hunter Phillips Carly Jakins Kelyn Takeaki Ikegami

ABOUT INDEPENDENT LENS:

INDEPENDENT LENS is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly PBS series airing Monday nights at 10:00 p.m. ET. The acclaimed series, with Lois Vossen as executive producer, features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by ITVS, the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from Acton Family Giving, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more visit pbs.org/independentlens. Join the conversation: facebook.com/independentlens and on Twitter @IndependentLens.

ABOUT ITVS:

ITVS is a San Francisco-based nonprofit organization that has, for over 25 years, funded and partnered with a diverse range of documentary filmmakers to produce and distribute untold stories. ITVS incubates and co-produces these award-winning films and then airs them for free on PBS via our weekly series, INDEPENDENT LENS, as well as on other PBS series and through our digital platform, OVEE. ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, The National Endowment for the Humanities: American Rescue Plan, Acton Family Giving, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, Wyncote Foundation. For more information, visit itvs.org.

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