

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT

Voleine Amilcar, ITVS
Mary Lugo
Cara White

415-356-8383 x 244
770-623-8190
843-881-1480

voleine_amilcar@itvs.org
lugo@negia.net
cara.white@mac.com

For downloadable images, visit itvs.org/pressroom/photos/
For the program companion website, visit pbs.org/independentlens/missnavajo

**“MISS NAVAJO”
TO AIR ON THE PBS SERIES *INDEPENDENT LENS***

Film Offers A Different Take On What It Means To Be Beautiful

(San Francisco, CA)—**MISS NAVAJO**, an affectionate and engaging look at the annual Miss Navajo pageant, will be broadcast on the Emmy Award-winning PBS series *Independent Lens*, hosted by Terrence Howard, on Tuesday, November 13, 2007 at 10:00 PM (check local listings). Directed by Billy Luther, whose own mother was crowned Miss Navajo 1966, the film reveals the inner beauty of the young women who compete in this “celebration of womanhood.” Not only must contestants exhibit poise and grace as those in typical pageants, they must also answer tough questions in Navajo and demonstrate proficiency in skills essential to daily tribal life: fry-bread making, rug weaving — and sheep butchering.

The film follows the path of 21-year-old Crystal Frazier, a not so fluent Navajo speaker and self-professed introvert, as she undertakes the challenges of the pageant. It is through Crystal’s quiet perseverance that we see the strength and power of Navajo womanhood revealed. No matter who takes the crown, this is a journey that will change her life.

Interspersed with pageant activities are interviews with former Miss Navajos, whose cheerful recollections of past pageants break the tension the current contestants are undergoing. Their memories provide a glimpse into the varying roles Miss Navajo is called upon to perform: role model, teacher, advisor, and Goodwill Ambassador to the community and the world at large.

For the past 50 years, Miss Navajo Nation has celebrated women and their traditional values, language and inner beauty. As winners of the pageant, women are challenged to take on greater responsibility, becoming community leaders fluent in the Navajo language and knowledgeable about their culture and history. The film reveals the importance of cultural preservation, the role of women in continuing dying traditions, and the surprising role that a beauty pageant can play.

-More-

To learn more about the film and the issues, visit the **MISS NAVAJO** companion website (pbs.org/independentlens/missnavajo) which features detailed information on the film, including an interview with the filmmaker and links and resources pertaining to the film's subject matter. The site also features a Talkback section for viewers to share their ideas and opinions, preview clips of the film, and more.

MISS NAVAJO will be the featured November film for ITVS COMMUNITY CINEMA, the monthly screening series featuring upcoming selections from the *Independent Lens* season. Presented in partnership with local public television stations and leading community organizations, ITVS Community Cinema holds preview screenings in select markets across the country making a real contribution on a range of current social issues by connecting communities with organizations, information, and the opportunity to get involved. For more information, visit itvs.org/outreach.

About the Filmmaker

Filmmaker Billy Luther studied film at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts where he began writing and directing short films. Luther worked as an assistant for the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian-Native American Film and Video Festivals in New York. **MISS NAVAJO** is his first feature documentary.

About World of Wonder Productions

Award-winning film directors and producers (and Executive Producers of **MISS NAVAJO**) Randy Barbato and Fenton Bailey are the founders of World of Wonder Productions. Based in both Los Angeles and London, World of Wonder is best known for award-winning films and documentaries *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*, *Party Monster* as well as the documentary series *Andy Warhol: The Complete Picture* (Channel 4 UK) *Show Biz Moms & Dads* (Bravo), *One Punk Under God* (Sundance Channel). Recent productions include *Tori & Dean: Inn Love* (Oxygen), and *Children Of God: Lost and Found* (Cinemax and Slamdance), and *The Minor Accomplishments of Jackie Woodman* (IFC). World of Wonder is also a pioneer in on-line television with its own IPTV site wowtv.tv. More information can be found at worldofwonder.net.

About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing Tuesday nights at 10:00 PM on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement and unflinching visions of their independent producers. *Independent Lens* features unforgettable stories about a unique individual, community or moment in history. Further information about the series is available at pbs.org/independentlens. The series producer is Lois Vossen.

###