

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 24, 2008

ITVS-Funded Documentary
OPERATION HOMECOMING: Writing the Wartime Experience Receives Academy Award®
Nomination for Best Documentary Feature

Film Is Part of the Acclaimed AMERICA AT A CROSSROADS Documentary Series
About the Challenges Confronting the World Post-9/11

(San Francisco, CA)—Independent Television Service (ITVS) announced today that one of its acclaimed films, **OPERATION HOMECOMING: Writing the Wartime Experience**, a Documentary Group production for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a co-production of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and a presentation of WETA, was nominated for an Academy Award® for Best Documentary Feature.

OPERATION HOMECOMING is a unique documentary that explores the firsthand accounts of American servicemen and servicewomen through their own words. The film is built on a project created by the National Endowment for the Arts to gather the writings of servicemen and servicewomen who have participated in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and also the writings of their families. Through interviews and dramatic readings, the film transforms selections from this collection of writings into a deep examination of the experiences of the men and women who are serving in America's armed forces. At the same time, it provides depth and context to these experiences through a broader look at the universal themes of war literature.

“We are honored that the Academy has recognized the film with this nomination. It's a huge affirmation of the quality of independent films that ITVS strives to support, fund and present in partnership with PBS,” said Sally Jo Fifer, president and CEO of ITVS. **OPERATION HOMECOMING** has touched many who have seen it, and we are excited that the Academy has recognized this groundbreaking film and its impact in helping Americans understand the implications and harsh realities of war.”

OPERATION HOMECOMING aired as part of *America at a Crossroads*, a series of documentaries developed by the CPB that explores the challenges confronting the world post-9/11, including the war on terrorism, the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the experience of American troops, the struggle for balance within the Islamic world and Muslim life in America, and perspectives on America's role globally.

“This film highlights the best ideals of public television,” noted Sharon Percy Rockefeller, president and CEO of Washington, D.C.-based WETA, the series producer for *America at a Crossroads*. “With honesty and artistry, the filmmakers and writers have created a work that is compelling intellectually and emotionally, examining both individual stories and the broader human experience.”

-More-

The Academy Award nomination builds on ITVS's prior Academy nominations: **MY COUNTRY, MY COUNTRY**, by Laura Poitras and Jocelyn Glatzer (2007); **STREET FIGHT**, by Marshall Curry (2006); **ENRON: The Smartest Guys in the Room** (2006), by Alex Gibney; **WEATHER UNDERGROUND**, by Sam Green and Bill Siegel (2004); **DAUGHTER FROM DANANG**, by Gail Dolgin and Vicente Franco (2003); **PROMISES**, by B.Z. Goldberg, Justine Shapiro and Carlos Bolado (2002); **FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE**, by David Collier (1993); and **WHY CAN'T WE BE A FAMILY AGAIN**, by Roger Weisberg and Murray Nossel (2002).

Production and Funding Credits

OPERATION HOMECOMING: Writing the Wartime Experience is a Documentary Group production for the CPB and a co-production of the ITVS and is presented by WETA. The film was produced and directed by Richard E. Robbins and Tom Yellin of Documentary Group. Sally Jo Fifer was executive producer for ITVS.

About the Filmmakers

Tom Yellin

Executive Producer

Prior to founding Documentary Group, Tom Yellin spent almost three decades in network television, including 15 years as an executive producer at ABC News. Yellin is a respected executive producer in long-form nonfiction and has a lengthy list of award-winning credits. Yellin was the executive producer of *Peter Jennings Reporting* from its inception in 1990. Together he and Jennings collaborated on more than 50 hours of prime-time documentaries. He was also the executive producer of numerous award-winning programs and series, including *The Century* and *In Search of America, ABC 2000*—a 23-hour broadcast marking the millennium—and of several of Jennings's children's programs, town meetings and breaking news specials. From 1992 to 1995, Yellin was the executive producer of the prime-time news magazine *Day One*, which he created and which, under his direction, broadcast a landmark series of investigative reports on the tobacco industry.

Richard E. Robbins

Director, Producer and Writer

Richard E. Robbins is an award-winning producer and director who has been making documentaries for PBS, cable and network television for more than a decade. Robbins began his television career at ABC News in 1993, and throughout his time at ABC News he contributed to a wide range of programs and special events coverage, including presidential elections and the 24-hour millennium broadcast on January 1, 2000. He spent several years as a producer of independent documentaries and as an associate producer for the PBS series *Frontline*. The programs ranged from the historical to the political to present-day breaking news. From 1998 to 2004, he primarily made documentaries for Peter Jennings. In 2000, he traveled with Jennings to India, Pakistan and the disputed region of Kashmir to produce *Dark Horizon*, an in-depth look at the nuclear standoff on the subcontinent. He tracked down and interviewed militants affiliated with Al Qaeda who were fighting in the foothills of the western Himalayas.

-More-

Immediately following 9/11, Robbins produced a variety of ABC News programs, including the live Jennings special *Answering Children's Questions*, which won a DuPont Award from the Columbia School of Journalism. In the fall of 2001 and 2002, he spent time in Pakistan and Afghanistan covering the war for ABC News, contributing stories to *World News Tonight* and *Nightline*. In 2003, he relocated to Los Angeles, where he negotiated unprecedented access to the gang units of the LAPD. His film *Peter Jennings Reporting: LAPD* documented the struggle for reform in the worst neighborhoods of Los Angeles.

About Independent Television Service

ITVS funds and presents award-winning documentaries and dramas on public television, innovative new media projects on the Web, and the Emmy® Award-winning weekly series *Independent Lens* on Tuesday nights at 10:00 PM on PBS. ITVS is a miracle of public policy created by media activists, citizens and politicians seeking to foster plurality and diversity in public television. ITVS was established by a historic mandate of the U.S. Congress to champion independently produced programs that take creative risks, spark public dialogue and serve underserved audiences. Since ITVS's inception in 1991, its programs have revitalized the relationship between the public and public television, bringing television audiences face-to-face with the lives and concerns of their fellow Americans. More information about ITVS can be obtained by visiting itvs.org. ITVS is funded by the CPB, a private corporation funded by the American people. For more information about ITVS and its services, visit itvs.org.

About WETA

WETA TV 26 and Classical WETA 90.9 FM are public broadcasting stations serving Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia with educational, cultural and public affairs programming and related services. WETA is the third-largest producing station for the public television system and the flagship public broadcaster in the nation's capital. WETA's productions and co-productions include *The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer*, *Washington Week* with Gwen Ifill, *National Journal* and films by Ken Burns, such as *The War*, *JAZZ* and *The Civil War*. For more information about WETA and its services, visit weta.org. Sharon Percy Rockefeller is president and CEO of WETA.

About PBS

PBS is a media enterprise that serves 354 public noncommercial television stations and reaches almost 90 million people each week through on-air and online content. Bringing diverse viewpoints to television and the Internet, PBS provides high-quality documentary and dramatic entertainment and consistently dominates the most prestigious award competitions. PBS is a leading provider of educational materials for K-12 teachers and offers a broad array of other educational services. PBS's premier kids programming and website, PBS KIDS Online (pbskids.org), continue to be parents' and teachers' most trusted learning environments for children. More information about PBS is available at pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org sites on the Internet.

About the Corporation for Public Broadcasting

The CPB is a private, nonprofit corporation created by the U.S. Congress in 1967. The mission of the CPB is to facilitate the development of and ensure universal access to high-quality noncommercial programming and telecommunications services. It does this in conjunction with noncommercial educational telecommunications licensees across America.

Contact: Voleine Amilcar

415-356-8383 x 244

voleine_amilcar@itvs.org

###