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SUMMER PASTURE, A RARE AND INTIMATE GLIMPSE INTO THE LIFE OF A NOMADIC TIBETAN FAMILY, PREMIERES ON INDEPENDENT LENS ON THURSDAY, MAY 10, 2012 AT 10 PM

(San Francisco, CA) — Filmed in the austere, beautiful, and windswept high grasslands of eastern Tibet, [*Summer Pasture*](#) provides a rare and intimate glimpse into the life of a young nomadic couple and their infant daughter during a time of great transition. With unprecedented access to a place seldom visited by the outside world, the film transports viewers inside the lives of Locho and Yama, hardworking yak herders who carve their existence from the land as their ancestors have for generations. But as traditional nomadic life confronts rapid modernization, *Summer Pasture* becomes a moving and compassionate portrait of a family at a crossroads, revealing the difficult choices and profound sacrifices the parents will make to ensure their daughter's future. A universal tale of family survival, *Summer Pasture* is a collaborative project, initiated by American filmmakers Lynn True and Nelson Walker, who partnered with emerging Tibetan filmmaker Tsering Perlo. The critically acclaimed film premieres on the Emmy® Award-winning PBS series *Independent Lens*, hosted by Mary Louise Parker on Thursday, May 10, 2012 at 10 PM (check local listings).

Locho (30), his wife Yama (27), and their infant daughter live in Zachukha, in eastern Tibet, a place nicknamed “5-most” by the Chinese for being the highest, coldest, poorest, largest, and most remote county in Sichuan Province, China. During the summer months, Locho and Yama make their home in a high valley pasture, over 15,000 feet above sea level. Neither crops nor trees grow here, but the scrubby alpine grasses that do grow make ideal grazing for their herd of yaks and horses. Locho and Yama depend almost entirely on their animals for survival, just as their ancestors have for generations.



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Summer Pasture evolves as an intimate exploration of Locho and Yama's personalities, relationship, and the complicated web of circumstances that surrounds them. Over the course of the film we witness their travails with illness, infidelity, and the dissolution of their community as more and more nomads leave for the city.

Based on their own hard lives and difficulties, Locho and Yama come to believe that sending their daughter to school in a nearby town will afford her the most opportunity. But they also realize that if she goes to school it is unlikely she will choose to live as a nomad. And if they do eventually send her, the couple will be forced to decide between the life they've always known or moving into town to be with their daughter.

Through its subtle observation of Locho and Yama's character, *Summer Pasture* provides a deeply personal account of what it means to be a nomad in a swiftly modernizing world and the universal human struggles families endure.

To learn more about the film, visit the *Summer Pasture* interactive companion website (www.pbs.org/independentlens/summer-pasture/), which features detailed information on the film, including an interview with the filmmakers 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.

About the Filmmakers

Lynn True (Director/Producer/Editor) is a New York-based filmmaker with a particular interest in nonfiction storytelling. After growing up in South Korea, India, Chicago, Washington D.C., Arizona's Hopi reservation, and suburban Oregon, True and her family settled in New York City. She received a joint degree in Urban Studies & Architecture from Brown University and began her film career as an assistant editor at NBC News and PBS. She has since gone on to make independent films including *iThemba|Hope* (2005), about an HIV+ choir from South Africa, and *LUMO*, a documentary that intimately follows a young woman in the Democratic Republic of Congo and her process of recovery after being violently raped. True is also an independent curator at New York's Maysles Cinema in Harlem, where she and Nelson Walker are co-founders and directors of the *Tibet in Harlem* and *Congo in Harlem* film festivals aimed at presenting and promoting the works of established and emerging Tibetan and Congolese filmmakers and artists. *Summer Pasture* has screened at dozens of festivals and venues around the world, garnering multiple accolades including nominations from the IFP Gotham Independent Film Awards and the Film Independent Spirit Awards.

Nelson Walker (Director/Producer/Cinematographer) began his career working on documentaries for Discovery Channel, History Channel, and PBS's NOVA. His directorial debut, *iThemba|Hope*, a documentary about an HIV+ choir from South Africa, aired on the Sundance Channel in 2005. Walker has worked extensively in Tibet as a visiting instructor at Tibet University in Lhasa and contributor to the Tibetan & Himalayan Library. His most recent film, *LUMO* — about a young Congolese woman recovering from a traumatic fistula — won a Student Academy Award, the President's Award at the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival,

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and aired nationally on PBS's P.O.V. series in 2007. Walker holds a B.A. from Brown University and an MFA in Film Directing from Columbia University.

Tsering Perlo (Co-Producer/Co-Director) founded Rabsal, a local Tibetan NGO that engages Tibetans in filmmaking to preserve and regenerate their culture and customs. He lives in Dzachukha (Shiqu) County, Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and graduated from the Sichuan Province Tibetan School (SPTI). Perlo has worked with numerous organizations, including the Tibet Fund, the Bridge Fund, and the Tibetan & Himalayan Library at the University of Virginia. Perlo is the first recipient of the Machik Fellowship, a program designed to support dynamic Tibetan change-makers working to strengthen their communities and environments. *Summer Pasture* is his first film. A lifelong resident of Kham, Perlo grew up in the nomadic areas depicted in the film and granted the team rare access to film in this highly insular community.

About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing 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 unique individuals, communities, and moments in history. Presented by the Independent Television Service (ITVS), the series is supported by interactive companion websites and national publicity and community engagement campaigns. *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series producer is Lois Vossen.

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