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[i]NDEPENDENTLENS 

## RACE IS THE PLACE PROVOCATIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF RACE BY THOSE WITH A LOT TO SAY

***"Independent Lens,"* a Film Festival in Your Living Room  
Hosted by Edie Falco, on PBS  
Tuesday, November 22, at 10 PM (Check Local Listings)**

(San Francisco)—Funny, angry and profound, **RACE IS THE PLACE** is a visual and verbal riff on race in America from the point of view of a wide variety of artists, poets, rappers, performance artists and stand-up comedians. Featuring established artists as well as up-and-coming young talent, who have in common their use of language to get their message across, **RACE IS THE PLACE** is a one-hour jam that combines racially slanted clips from old Hollywood movies with interviews and performances that dare to examine the most emotionally explosive issue in American life. From a hilarious bit by comic Ahmed Ahmed on the joys of flying as an Arab American, to Danny Hoch's biting monologue about a harassed Bronx street vendor, to Hawaiian poet Haunani-Kay Trask's angry meditation on American imperialism, to Kate Rigg's funny and explosive diatribe against the stereotyping of Asian women, **RACE IS THE PLACE** yanks off the muzzle of political correctness to speak the often ugly truths that lie beneath the rosy talk of "multiculturalism" and "diversity." Produced by Raymond Telles and Rick Tejada-Flores (**THE FIGHT IN THE FIELD**), **RACE IS THE PLACE** will air nationally on the PBS series Independent Lens on Tuesday, November 22, 2005, at 10 PM (check local listings).

**RACE IS THE PLACE** offers the perspectives of a wide group of artists from different backgrounds—Native Americans, African Americans, Latinos, Arab Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders and many with mixed backgrounds—on the often unspoken issue that has defined our country since its inception and continues to separate us: race. And as **RACE IS THE PLACE** shows, racism and stereotypes are not just a white/nonwhite issue; they pervade every ethnic and racial community. From Mayda del Valle, a Puerto Rican artist who questions her community's denial of its African heritage, to the comedy troupe Culture Clash's set about Asian American "homeboys" who address each other with the "N" word, **RACE IS THE PLACE** busts stereotypes by using humor and poetry to say the things that are traditionally left unsaid.



In addition to the performers, **RACE IS THE PLACE** features the work of visual artists who also explore race, including Michael Ray Charles, Ben Sakoguchi, Enrique Chagoya, Betye Saar, Faith Ringgold and Paula de Joie. The original soundtrack was composed by Jon Jang and Wayne Wallace and performed by them and a group of multicultural musicians.

**RACE IS THE PLACE** is a co-production of Paradigm Productions and KERA/Dallas-Fort Worth, in association with Independent Television Service (ITVS). It is a presentation of KERA, ITVS, Latino Public Broadcasting, Pacific Islanders in Communications, the National Asian American Telecommunications Association, Native American Public Telecommunications and the National Black Programming Consortium. Major support for **RACE IS THE PLACE** was provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Additional support comes from the Akonadi Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, the LEF Foundation, Kit Miller and the Nu Lambda Trust.

CREDITS

Directors/Producers	Raymond Telles and Rick Tejada-Flores
Editor	Herb Ferrette II
Cinematographers	Vicente Franco Robert Shepard Emiko Omori
Associate Producers	Rosalia Valencia Monica Lam
Original Score	Wayne Wallace/Walaco Music, BMI Jon Jang/Zhang Music, ASCAP

PARTICIPANTS

**James Baldwin**, novelist, essayist and author of *Go Tell It on the Mountain* and *The Fire Next Time*

**Amiri Baraka**, writer, activist and former Poet Laureate

**Kate Rigg**, Canadian-Indonesian writer and performer now living in New York; tours comedy clubs and colleges with her show *Kate's Chink-o-Rama*

**James Luna**, Native American writer and performance artist

**Piri Thomas**, Puerto Rican-Cuban writer, poet and performer born and raised in New York; author of *Down These Mean Streets* and several volumes of poetry

**Danny Hoch**, writer, performer and founder of the New York Hip-Hop Festival

**Raymond "Boots" Riley**, hip-hop artist and poet

**Haunani-Kay Trask**, Hawaiian poet, professor, documentarian and activist

**Ric Salinas, Herbert Siguenza** and **Richard Montoya**, members of the 15-year-old comedy troupe *Culture Clash*

**Andy Bumatai**, Hawaiian-Filipino comedian and writer; frequently performs on stage and television in Hawaii and on the mainland

**Ahmed Ahmed**, Egyptian-born comedian now living in Los Angeles; winner of the Richard Pryor Award for Ethnic Comedy in 2004



## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS



**Beau Sia**, Chinese American performer and writer; appeared in *Def Poetry Jam* on Broadway

**Eduardo "Lalo" Guerrero**, performer and writer; father of Chicano music

**Barry "Shabaka" Henley**, actor and writer of *Jungle Bells*; makes frequent appearances in film and television; currently starring in the Showtime series *Barbershop*

**Mayda del Valle**, Puerto Rican poet; appeared on *Def Poetry Jam* on Broadway and is the reigning National Poetry Slam champion

### **Raymond Telles** (Producer/Director)

Telles's 20-year career in film and television includes the production of numerous documentaries and news magazine segments. He has produced and directed for public and network television, including ABC's *Turning Point* and NBC's *Dateline*. His independent productions include films for the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities and ITVS.

Telles co-directed and produced **THE FIGHT IN THE FIELDS: César Chávez and the Farmworkers' Struggle**, a feature documentary on César Chávez and the farmworkers' movement, which was in documentary competition at the 1997 Sundance Film Festival. Telles has produced more than 30 documentaries, including the PBS *Frontline* program *Children of the Night*, which won a DuPont-Columbia Gold Baton Award as well as a number of other honors. For PBS, he directed *In Search of Law and Order*, a three-hour series on juvenile justice, which was broadcast nationally in 1999. Telles recently produced *Eye on the Universe* for Discovery Networks International, *Miracle Babies* for *MSNBC Investigates*, and segments for *Life 360* (PBS) and ABC's *Nightline*.

Telles has won numerous awards, including three Emmys, two PBS Programming Awards for News and Current Affairs, the Ohio State Award, an ALMA Award, a NATAS Community Service Award, top honors in the San Francisco, American Film and Video Association, Chicago, and New York film festivals, and two CINE Golden Eagles. He has an M.F.A. in film from UCLA and is a member of the Writers' Guild of America and the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. Telles is currently an adjunct assistant professor in UC Berkeley's department of ethnic studies.

### **Rick Tejada-Flores** (Producer/Director)

Tejada-Flores began working in television in 1969, in the newsroom at KQED (PBS affiliate in San Francisco). He went on to co-produce and co-direct *¡Si Se Puede!* (winner of a CINE Golden Eagle) for the United Farm Workers of America in 1973. He served as coordinating producer for the Latino Consortium at KCET in Los Angeles, where he packaged and distributed the weekly series *¡Presente!* to public television stations. In 1984, he produced *Low 'n' Slow, the Art of Lowriding* (PBS), and in 1985, he profiled Latino poets in *Go Chanting, Libre*, produced for KRCB (PBS). His film *Elvia, the Fight for Land and Liberty*, which aired in 1988 as part of the PBS *Vistas* series, focused on farmworkers and land reform in Honduras. *Rivera in America*, a documentary on the work of Mexican artist Diego Rivera in the United States, and *Jasper Johns, Ideas in Paint* aired on the PBS series *American Masters*. *Rivera in America* won Best Film for TV in the National Latino Film and Video Festival.

Tejada-Flores created six interpretive films on New Mexico history and culture for the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History. They were featured in the *American Encounters* exhibition. Tejada-Flores co-produced and co-directed **THE FIGHT IN THE FIELDS: César Chávez and the Farmworkers' Struggle**, which aired in 1997, and **THE GOOD WAR AND THOSE WHO REFUSED TO FIGHT IT**, which aired in 2002.

## ABOUT INDEPENDENT LENS

## ABOUT ITVS

## ABOUT PBS

The images found in this release and more are available to the press as high resolution downloadable photos with captions and credits at [www.itvs.org/pressroom/photos/](http://www.itvs.org/pressroom/photos/)



A film festival in your living room, *Independent Lens* is an Emmy Award-winning weekly series airing Tuesday nights at 10 PM on PBS. Hosted by Edie Falco, the acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement and unflinching visions of independent producers, which has prompted *Television Week* to call it "entertaining as hell and better than any other documentary series around."

Presented by ITVS, the series is supported by interactive companion websites and community engagement campaigns. Further information about the series is available at [www.pbs.org/independentlens](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens). *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.

Independent Television Service 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 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 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 [www.itvs.org](http://www.itvs.org). ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people.

PBS, headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, is a private, nonprofit media enterprise owned and operated by the nation's 349 public television stations. Serving nearly 90 million people each week, PBS enriches the lives of all Americans through quality programs and education services on noncommercial television, the Internet and other media. More information about PBS is available at [www.pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org), the leading dot-org Web site on the Internet.

### PAGE 1:

**Left:** Raymond "Boots" Riley performing.

Photo: Joe Hakim / ITVS

**Center:** Squaw, artwork by Ben Sakoguchi

Photo: Courtesy of Ben Sakoguchi / ITVS

**Right:** Mayda del Valle performing at Nuyorican Poets' Café.

Photo: Robert Huber / ITVS

### PAGE 2:

**Left:** Beware, artwork by Michael Ray Charles.

Photo: Michael Ray Charles, Courtesy of the Tony Shafrazi Gallery / ITVS

**Center:** Culture Clash--Herbert Siguenza, Richard Montoya, Ric Salinas.

Photo: Rick Tejada-Flores, Courtesy of the Tony Shafrazi Gallery, New York / ITVS

**Right:** Rick Tejada-Flores (Producer/Director) and Ray Telles (Producer/Director) of RACE IS THE PLACE.

Photo: Joe Hakim / ITVS



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