



For Immediate Release

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## P.O.V. Celebrates 20th Anniversary on PBS in 2007

### American Television's First and Longest-Running Independent Documentary Series Launches 20th Season on Tuesday, June 19

Season Premiere Coincides With U.N.'s World Refugee Day; Films by Michael Apted,  
Freida Lee Mock and Documentary Genre's Most Innovative Filmmakers  
Grace the 2007 Schedule; Limited-Edition Anniversary DVD Collection Now Available

When **P.O.V.** (a cinema term for 'point of view') emerged on PBS' national schedule in 1988 with the film **American Tongues**, the Big Three networks — ABC, CBS and NBC — dominated television programming, and cable was in its infancy. Public television was the only place where independent film had a shot at a national broadcast. Two hundred fifty films and countless awards later, P.O.V. has become the nation's longest-running television showcase for independent documentary storytelling. P.O.V. celebrates its 20th anniversary with a new slate of PBS films beginning **Tuesday, June 19, 2007**, and a limited-edition DVD collection.

P.O.V. has provided a showcase for the early efforts of documentary superstars like Errol Morris, Jonathan Demme, Michael Moore and Freida Lee Mock, and introduced new generations to legendary films like Albert and David Maysles' **Salesman**, Fred Wiseman's **High School** and Mel Stuart's **Wattstax**. P.O.V. has won every coveted industry award, including 18 Emmys, 11 George Foster Peabody Awards, eight Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Broadcast Journalism Awards, four Independent Spirit Awards, three Academy Awards®, 36 Cine Golden Eagles, the Prix Italia and the Webby.

P.O.V.'s 2007 broadcast schedule will feature 16 films by established and emerging filmmakers. The season's first two films, **Rain in a Dry Land** and **Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars**, are scheduled to coincide with the United Nations' World Refugee Day (June 20), and chronicle the hopes, struggles and achievements of refugees from Africa. Other films look at the enduring social and political legacy of the 1960s, with two focusing on events that took place in New Jersey: the Newark riots of 1967 and the "Catholic Left" Vietnam War protests of 1971 in Camden. From the Canadian Yukon to South Dakota to Montana, California and New York, P.O.V. filmmakers capture stories of individuals who challenge the powers-that-be and our prevailing culture to reclaim their environment, native traditions and economic independence, and the world's vanishing species. Award-winning documentaries by acclaimed directors conclude the season as primetime specials this fall and winter: Michael Apted's newest installment of his beloved "7 Up" series, **49 Up**; and Freida Lee Mock's Sundance Official Selection, **Wrestling With Angels: Playwright Tony Kushner**. P.O.V. is broadcast **Tuesdays** at 10 p.m. (check local listings), June through September on PBS, with primetime specials during the year.

The DVD set **P.O.V.'s 20th Anniversary Collection** is produced in partnership with Docurama, a division of New Video Group. The collection contains 15 titles reflecting the range and diversity of P.O.V. films, from the series' inaugural broadcast, **American Tongues** by Louis Alvarez and Andrew Kolker, to Arthur Dong's **Licensed to Kill** (1998) through Eric Daniel Metzgar and Nell Carden Grey's

**The Chances of the World Changing** from the 2007 broadcast season. With subjects ranging from immigration to civil rights, culture and the environment, the collection represents the intersection of art and social issues that has become P.O.V.'s trademark.

"We are thrilled to celebrate our 20th anniversary with our DVD collection, new season on PBS and continuing community outreach," said P.O.V. Executive Director Simon Kilmurry. "After 20 years, P.O.V. remains dedicated to discovering and presenting the works of filmmakers who push the boundaries of the documentary genre and challenge the way we see the world."

P.O.V.'s 20th season premieres on **June 19** with **Rain in a Dry Land** by Anne Makepeace, whose first film, **Baby It's You**, kicked off the series' 11th season in 1998. How do you measure the distance from an African village to an American city? What does it mean to be a refugee in today's global village? The film provides eye-opening answers as it chronicles the fortunes of two Somali Bantu families, transported by relief agencies from years of civil war and refugee life to Atlanta and Springfield, Mass. As the newcomers confront racism, poverty and 21st-century culture shock, the film captures their efforts to survive in America and create a safe haven for their war-torn families. Their poetry, humor and amazing resilience show us our own world through new eyes. *A co-production with the Independent Television Service (ITVS).*

Also paying tribute to World Refugee Day is **Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars** by Zach Niles and Banker White, broadcast on **June 26**. If the refugee is today's tragic icon of a war-ravaged world, then Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars, a reggae-inflected band born in the camps of West Africa, represents a real-life story of survival and hope. The six-member Refugee All Stars came together in Guinea after civil war forced them from their native Sierra Leone. Traumatized by physical injuries and the brutal loss of family and community, they fight back with the only means they have — music. The resulting documentary is a tableau of tragedy transformed by the band's inspiring determination to sing and be heard. *A Diverse Voices Project co-production.*

**Standing Silent Nation** by Suree Towfighnia and Courtney Hermann follows on **July 3**, in time for Independence Day. What does a family have to endure to create a future for itself? In April 2000, Alex White Plume and his Lakota family planted industrial hemp on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota after other crops had failed. They put their hopes for a sustainable economy in hemp's hardiness and a booming worldwide demand for its many products, from clothing to food. Although growing hemp, a relative of marijuana, is banned in the U.S., Alex believed that tribal sovereignty, along with hemp's non-psychoactive properties, would protect him. But when federal agents raided the White Plumes' fields, the Lakota Nation was swept into a Byzantine struggle over tribal sovereignty, economic rights and common sense. *A co-presentation of Native American Public Telecommunications.*

Marylou Tibaldo-Bongiorno's **Revolution '67 (July 10)** is an illuminating account of events too often relegated to footnotes in U.S. history — the black urban rebellions of the 1960s. Focusing on the six-day Newark, N.J., outbreak in mid-July, the film reveals how the disturbance began as spontaneous revolts against poverty and police brutality, and ended as fateful milestones in America's struggles over race and economic justice. Voices from across the spectrum — activists Tom Hayden and Amiri Baraka, journalist Bob Herbert, Mayor Sharpe James, and officials, National Guardsmen and Newark citizens — recall lessons as hard-earned then as they have been easy to neglect since. *A co-production with the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and American Documentary | P.O.V. in association with WSKG.*

A decade ago, after an epiphany at a New York restaurant, Richard Ogust began dedicating his time and resources to rescuing endangered turtles — confiscating hundreds bound for Southeast Asian food markets. When filmmakers Eric Daniel Metzgar and Nell Carden Grey catch up with the 50-year-old writer in **The Chances of the World Changing (July 17)**, he is sharing his Manhattan loft with 1,200 turtles, including five species extinct in the wild. But his growing "ark" and preservation efforts are

threatening to exhaust him, both mentally and financially. With luminous images and a haunting musical score, the film documents two years in the life of a man who finds himself struggling to save hundreds of lives, including his own.

California takes the spotlight in P.O.V.'s next three films. In the 1990s, at the height of the prison-building boom, a prison opened in rural America every 15 days. Katie Galloway and Po Kutchins' **Prison Town, USA**, airing on **July 24**, tells the story of Susanville, one California town that tries to resuscitate its economy by building a prison — with unforeseen consequences. Weaving the stories of a laid-off mill worker turned guard, a struggling dairy owner and an inmate's family stranded in Susanville, the film illuminates the legacy of an industry that is transforming rural America. *A co-production with the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and KQED/Truly California.*

Thirty years after making a celebrated student short about a four-year-old child of free spirits living in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district at the height of the 1960s, Ralph Arlyck attempts the kind of revelation only documentary film can provide. In **Following Sean (July 31)**, he goes in search of the impish, barefoot kid who delighted or horrified audiences, reflecting the hopes and fears of a turbulent, utopian era. In discovering what has become of Sean, Arlyck finds a complex reality — and experiences pure cinematic surprise. As the filmmaker comes to grips with his own midlife conflicts, **Following Sean** may reveal as much about Arlyck and his generation as it does his subject. *A co-presentation with KQED/Truly California.*

An encore presentation of Mel Stuart's award-winning **The Hobart Shakespeareans** will air on **Aug. 7**, as part of PBS's Pledge drive. Rafe Esquith has a point of view — a very strong one — about educating children of immigrants. Teaching in Los Angeles at one of the nation's largest inner-city grade schools, Hobart Elementary, Esquith leads his class of fifth graders through an uncompromising curriculum. At the end of the semester, every student participates in a full-length Shakespeare play — in this case, "Hamlet," with advice from actors Ian McKellen and Michael York. Despite language barriers and poverty, these "Hobart Shakespeareans" go on to attend outstanding colleges, motivated by a teacher honored with a National Medal of Arts. *A co-presentation with Thirteen/WNET New York.*

On **Aug. 14**, also during PBS's Pledge drive, P.O.V. presents an encore of Elizabeth Westrate's **A Family Undertaking**. Prior to the 20th century, most Americans prepared their dead for burial with the help of family and friends, but today most funerals are part of a multi-million-dollar industry run by professionals. Our increased reliance on mortuaries has alienated Americans from life's only inevitability — death. This poignant film explores the growing home-funeral movement by following several families in their most intimate moments as they reclaim the end of life, forgoing a typical funeral to care for their loved ones at home. *An Independent Television Service (ITVS) co-presentation.*

Filmmakers head north for P.O.V.'s next two films. In Andrew Walton's **Arctic Son**, broadcast on **Aug. 21**, the clash of tradition and modernity puts a Native father and son at odds in the remote village of Old Crow, 80 miles above the Arctic Circle. Stanley Jr., raised in Seattle, is drifting deeper into drinking and partying. Stanley Sr., a distant, philosophical figure to his son, keeps the ways of his Gwitchin ancestors alive by hunting, fishing and living by his wits in the harsh arctic environment. After a lifetime apart, the two are reunited in the raw, quiet beauty of the Canadian Yukon in a story that captures the dialogue between a father and son from vastly different worlds.

Nestled below the rugged peaks of the Northern Rockies in Montana—as iconic a representation of America's "purple mountain majesties" as one can find—lies one of the worst cases of community-wide exposure to a toxic substance in U.S. history. In the small town of Libby, many hundreds of people are sick or have already died from asbestos exposure. Drury Gunn Carr and Doug Hawes-Davis' **Libby, Montana**, airing on **Aug. 28**, takes a long working day's journey into a blue-collar community and finds a different reality — one where the American Dream exacts a terrible price.

Los Angeles is now the country's center for apparel manufacturing, but many of its factories bear an eerie resemblance to New York's early 20th-century sweatshops. **Made in L.A.**, by Almudena Carracedo and Robert Bahar, is a portrait of this "other" California, where immigrant laborers work 14-hour days, earning as little as \$3 an hour. The film, airing the day after Labor Day, **Sept. 4**, is even more the intimate story of three Latina garment workers — María, Maura and Lupe — who join the growing struggle for better working conditions, and who must persist over a tumultuous three-year battle to bring a major clothing retailer to the negotiating table.

P.O.V.'s next film also profiles ordinary people who find themselves in the crosshairs of the establishment. How far would you go to stop a war? Anthony Giacchino's **The Camden 28**, airing on **Sept. 11**, recalls a 1971 raid on a Camden, N.J., draft board office by "Catholic Left" activists protesting the Vietnam War and its effects on urban America. Arrested on site in a carefully planned sting, the protesters included four Catholic priests, a Lutheran minister and 23 others. **The Camden 28** reveals the story behind the arrests — a provocative tale of government intrigue and personal betrayal — and the ensuing legal battle, which Supreme Court Justice William Brennan called "one of the great trials of the 20th century." Thirty-five years later, the participants take stock of their motives, fears and the costs of their activism — and its relevance to America today.

P.O.V. returns to present-day Africa, where the continent's agonies are deeply etched in the bodies of many women, for the film **LUMO** by Bent-Jorgen Perlmutter, Nelson Walker III, Louis Abelman and Lynn True (**Sept. 18**). In eastern Congo on the Rwandan border, vying militias, armies and bandits use rape as a weapon of terror. Lumo Sinai was just over 20 when marauding soldiers attacked her. A fistula, a medical condition common among victims of violent rape, rendered Lumo incontinent and threatens her ability to bear children. Rejected by her fiancé and cast aside by her family, she awaits reconstructive surgery. **LUMO** is her story, tragic in its cruelties but also inspiring for the struggle she wages and the dignity she displays, with the help of an extraordinary African hospital, to overcome shame, fear and the affliction that robs her of a normal life.

Award-winning fall and winter special broadcast presentations conclude P.O.V.'s 20<sup>th</sup> season in 2007. In one of documentary cinema's more remarkable enterprises, Michael Apter's **49 Up** makes its U.S. broadcast premiere in October (date to be announced) as the seventh in a series of films that has profiled a group of English children every seven years, beginning in 1964. Renowned director Michael Apter ("Coal Miner's Daughter," "Gorillas in the Mist," "Amazing Grace") has doggedly pursued the series as the children have grown into adults, navigating the divide between childhood dreams and adult realities. **49 Up** revisits questions of love, marriage, career, class and prejudice — discovering unexpected turns in individual lives and surprising views of the "Up" film series itself.

Tony Kushner, whose epochal "Angels in America" won a Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award, has emerged as one of the country's leading playwrights — and one of its fiercest moral critics. In the film **Wrestling With Angels: Playwright Tony Kushner**, airing in Winter 2007 (date TBA), Oscar-winning director Freida Lee Mock (P.O.V.'s **Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision**) followed Kushner for three tumultuous years, from Sept. 11, 2001 to the 2004 presidential election, to delve into the passions that keep him reaching for the great American play. Actresses Marcia Gay Harden, Meryl Streep, Tonya Pinkins and Emma Thompson, directors Mike Nichols and George C. Wolf, and writer/artist Maurice Sendak are seen collaborating with Kushner on such landmark works as "Angels in America," "Caroline, or Change" and "Homebody/Kabul."

***TAPE REQUESTS: Please note that broadcast versions of these films are available upon request, as the films may be edited to comply with new FCC regulations.***

## POV | 20

Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and celebrating its 20th season on PBS in 2007, the award-winning P.O.V. series is the longest-running showcase on television to feature the work of America's best contemporary-issue independent filmmakers. Airing Tuesdays at 10 p.m., June through September, with primetime specials during the year, P.O.V. has brought more than 250 award-winning documentaries to millions nationwide, and now has a Webby Award-winning online series, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. Since 1988, P.O.V. has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. More information about P.O.V. is available at [www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov).

### ***P.O.V. Interactive*** ([www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov))

P.O.V.'s award-winning Web department produces special features for every P.O.V. presentation, extending the life of P.O.V. films through filmmaker interviews, story updates, podcasts, streaming video, and community-based and educational content that involves viewers in activities, information and feedback on the issues. P.O.V. Interactive also produces our Web-only showcase for interactive storytelling, *P.O.V.'s*

*Borders*. In addition, [www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov) houses *Talking Back*, where viewers can comment on P.O.V. programs, engage in dialogue and link to further resources and information. The P.O.V. Web site and P.O.V. archives, including special sites from previous broadcasts, form a unique and extensive online resource for documentary storytelling.

### ***P.O.V. Community Engagement and Education***

P.O.V. provides Discussion Guides for all films as well as curriculum-based P.O.V. Lesson Plans for select films to promote the use of independent media among varied constituencies. Available free online, these original materials ensure the ongoing use of P.O.V.'s documentaries with educators, community workers, opinion leaders and general audiences nationally. P.O.V. also works closely with local public-television stations to partner with museums, libraries, schools and community-based organizations to raise awareness of the issues in P.O.V.'s films. *Youth Views*, P.O.V.'s youth-engagement initiative, expands these efforts by working directly with youth-service organizations.

Major funding for P.O.V. is provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Ford Foundation, the Educational Foundation of America, PBS and public television viewers. Funding for P.O.V.'s *Diverse Voices Project* is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. P.O.V. is presented by a consortium of public television stations, including KCET Los Angeles, WGBH Boston, and Thirteen/WNET New York.

### ***American Documentary, Inc.*** ([www.americandocumentary.org](http://www.americandocumentary.org))

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation. Simon Kilmurry is executive director of American Documentary | P.O.V.

Media Sponsor:



### **P.O.V. 2007 AT-A-GLANCE**

(All programs air Tuesdays at 10 p.m. unless otherwise indicated; check local listings.)

**June 19**

**June 26**

**July 3**

**July 10**

**July 17**

**July 24**

**July 31**

**Aug. 7**

**Aug. 14**

**Aug. 21**

**Aug. 28**

**Sept. 4**

**Sept. 11**

**Sept. 18**

**October Special (Date/time TBA)**

**Winter Special (Date/time TBA)**

**Rain in a Dry Land**

**Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars**

**Standing Silent Nation**

**Revolution '67**

**The Chances of the World Changing**

**Prison Town, USA**

**Following Sean**

**The Hobart Shakespearians (Encore)**

**A Family Undertaking (Encore)**

**Arctic Son**

**Libby, Montana**

**Made in L.A.**

**The Camden 28**

**LUMO**

**49 Up**

**Wrestling With Angels: Playwright Tony Kushner**