

**Voices and Visions Symposium:  
Native American Women Look Forward**

<p><b>Voices and Visions Symposium NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN LOOK FORWARD</b></p>		
<p><b>Wednesday 3 Oct 2007 3 - 7pm</b></p> <p><b>OSU Student Union Theatre Stillwater</b></p> <p>Featuring in person:</p> <p><b>Devon Mihesuah Shelley Niro Annette Arkeketa Lily Shangreaux</b></p>	<p>Native American filmmakers and scholars gather to screen women-made movies and discuss responses to misrepresentations of Native Americans. Reception following.</p>	
	<p>OSU Women's Studies Program gratefully acknowledges the Fae Rawdon Norris Endowment for the Humanities, the Native American Faculty and Staff Association, and Women's Programs.</p>	
<p><i>Free and open to the public. For full schedule, bios, synopses, go to <a href="http://womensstudies.okstate.edu">http://womensstudies.okstate.edu</a></i></p>		

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Native American women filmmakers and scholars gather at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, to discuss women's responses to misrepresentations of Native Americans. Organized by the Women's Studies Program and funded by the generosity of the Fae Rawdon Norris Endowment for the Humanities, "Voices and Visions Symposium: Native American Women Look Forward" is free and open to the public, and co-sponsored by the Native American Faculty and Staff Association and Women's Programs. The symposium is scheduled for Wednesday, October 3, from 3pm to 7pm in the Student Union Theatre, including a refreshment break at 4:40 and a reception to follow in the Peggy V. Helmerich Browsing Room in the Edmon Low Library. The program begins with remarks from Dr. Devon Mihesuah, author of *American Indigenous Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism* and the Cora Lee Beers Price Professor at the University of Kansas, then continues with screenings of documentaries and narrative films by award-winning native filmmakers Lily E. Shangreaux, Shelley Niro, and Annette Arkeketa, who will be on hand to discuss their work. For schedule, biographies, and film synopses, go to <http://womensstudies.okstate.edu>.

## Speakers biographies

### **Devon Mihesuah**

Devon Abbott Mihesuah is a citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and is a historian by training. She received her Ph.D. in American History from TCU in 1989, and is the Cora Lee Beers Price Professor at the University of Kansas. She served as award winning editor of the *American Indian Quarterly* from 1998 through mid-2007 and has authored numerous award winning books and essays on indigenous histories and cultures, including *American Indigenous Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism*; *Recovering Our Ancestors' Gardens: Indigenous Recipes and Guide to Diet and Fitness*; *American Indians: Stereotypes and Realities*; *Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909*; *Natives and Academics : Researching and Writing about American Indians*; *So You Want to Write About American Indians? A Guide for Scholars, Students and Writers* and the novels *Roads of My Relations*; *Grand Canyon Rescue: A Tuli Black Wolf Adventure*; *The Lightning Shrikes*. While at Northern Arizona University, she received the Native American Students United Award for Outstanding Faculty; the President's Award for Outstanding Faculty, and the Outstanding Faculty Woman of the Year Award. She also is the recipient of grants, fellowships and awards from the Ford Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, Smithsonian Institution, American Council of Learned Societies, Arizona Humanities Council, the American Historical Association, Oklahoma Writers' Federation, American Educational Studies Association, Phi Alpha Theta, Westerners International, Arizona Writers' Association, Gourmand World Cookbook Awards and Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers.

### **Lily E. Shangreaux**

Lily Shangreaux (Oglala Lakota) was born and raised on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. In 1970 she was one of the first women admitted as a freshmen to Princeton University, where she earned a BA in psychology. Shangreaux began her video career in 1993, when she and Dan Bigbee founded BIG Productions. She serves as producer, writer and researcher for the company. Prior to establishing the company, Shangreaux worked for the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, as Development Associate. In this capacity she researched foundation and corporate prospects, developed proposals including budgets. Shangreaux assisted with the design of a 5 million dollar capital campaign for the IAIA Museum. Shangreaux was co-producer/writer for *The Great American Foot Race*, a one-hour documentary that aired on PBS in 2002. *Foot Race* received the "Best Made for Public Television" award at the Great Plains Film Festival, held in Lincoln, Nebraska, in 2003. Currently Shangreaux and her partner, Dan Bigbee, are developing a documentary for public television about the murders of wealthy Osage tribal members in the 1920s. The Osage Murders (working title) is a one-hour documentary that examines events that took place on the Osage Reservation in Oklahoma in the early 1900s. During this period the Osage were known as the wealthiest people on earth. They held the mineral rights to one of the largest oil fields in this country's history. They were also dying at alarming rates due to "poison whiskey", "accidental death," and other "natural causes." The Osage were convinced that they were the target of thieves and murderers, but no one was doing anything about it. "It's important to me, as a producer, to get it right when making video for and about Native people," Shangreaux explains. "Accuracy of information and a compassion for the people you're working with are two of the basic ingredients that go into a good film, no

matter what the subject. If I don't 'get it,' whatever 'it' is that people are trying to say, inevitably my story will fail to rise to the standards that I try to reach every time I tell a story."

### **Shelley Niro**

Shelley Niro was born in Niagra Falls, New York, and is a member of the Turtle Clan of the Mohawk. She grew up on the Six Nations Reserve and is a graduate of the Ontario College of Art, where she received an Honors Fine Arts degree in painting and sculpture before earning her MFA from the University of Western Ontario in London. Niro's first film, *It Starts With a Whisper*, was co-directed with Anna Gronau, and has screened around the world. *Honey Moccasin*, her second film, won Best Feature and Director at the Red Earth Native American Film and Video Fest. Storytelling through film and installation art, Shelley creates roles for Native women that give them a voice of strength and community. A resident of Brantford, Ontario, Niro advances the discussion of culture and identity beyond the metanarrative of "the colonizer and colonized" by employing photography, painting and film. She has exhibited widely, with installations showcased at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Lower Manhattan and at the 2003 Venice Biennale.

### **Annette Arkeketa**

Writer and filmmaker Annette Arkeketa is a member of the Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Oklahoma and received her Master of Art from Texas A & M University. She was named Writer of the Year for Playwriting by the Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers in 1998, and Mentor of the Year by that same organization in 2000. Her play *Hokti* has been produced by the Tulsa Indian Actors' Workshop in Tulsa Oklahoma (1997) and The Thunderbird Theatre of Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence Kansas (1998). *Hokti* is published in *An Anthology of American Indian Plays* (UCLA American Indian Studies Center, 1999). Her play *Ghost Dance* has been performed at public readings at the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma (2001); Tulsa University in Tulsa, Oklahoma (2002); and the American Indian Community House in New York City (2003). The Institute of American Indian Arts Drama Department produced the full length drama in the spring of 2004. *Ghost Dance* is published by *Keepers of the Morning Star: An Anthology of Native Women's Theater* (UCLA American Indian Studies Center, 2003). Recently, Arkeketa has been devoted to her work as a documentary producer and has formed her own production company, Hokte Productions. "Hokte" means "woman" in the Muscogee language. Her first documentary production is about Corpus Christi native visual artist Jimmy Pena, entitled *Intrinsic Spirit: The Artway of Jimmy Pena* (2002). *Muu-duu'kee: Put Them Back* (2004), is a documentary that follows Comanche Nation NAGPRA coordinator Jimmy Arterberry through the consultation process with Colorado state and federal institutions to repatriate the remains of his people. *Pahdopony: See How Deep The Water Is* (2005) is about Comanche artist, educator, activist, Juanita Pahdopony. Her most recent project *Indian'llectual* (2007) was included in the Looking Indian group exhibition (2007), Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Arkeketa's essay "Repatriation: Religious Freedom, Equal Protection, Institutional Racism" is published in the first philosophical reader anthology by American Indians, edited by Anne Water, titled *American Indian Thought* (2004). Annette's screenplay for a feature film, *A Good Day to Dance*, tells a story of dance, family love, and what it takes to win."

### Synopses of films to be shown

### **It Starts With a Whisper**

A film by Shelly Niro and Anna Gronau

Canada, 1993, 28 minutes, Color

*It Starts With a Whisper* follows a young woman who has grown up on a Reserve and her decision about which path to follow in life. Guided by her ancestral spirits - three matriarchal clowns who appear in the form of her three aunts - she comes to the realization that she may live her life in the present, while remembering and respecting the people of the past and traditional ways. Directed by Shelly Niro (Mohawk) and Anna Gronau and produced with an all-Native cast, *It Starts With a Whisper* blends traditional Iroquois imagery, music and themes with motifs from contemporary, secular life to celebrate the strength, wisdom, beauty and humor of Native women.

### **Clips from Stumblingbear, The Great American Foot Race, and The Osage Murders**

Big Productions, various dates

25 minutes

Lily Shangreaux will be screening several pieces. The first is a short entitled *Stumblingbear: the Video*, a music video starring a straight-dancing marionette. *Stumblingbear* has toured the country beginning in 1993 with the Shared Visions Film and Video series sponsored by the National Museum of the American Indian. In 1993 *Stumblingbear* was also screened at the Two Rivers Native Film and Video Festival in Minneapolis and the Second Annual First Nations Native American Film/Video Festival of Chicago. In 1994 *Stumblingbear* was screened at a film festival sponsored by the Southwest Museum, at Wind and Glacier Voices II, Native American Film and Media Celebration in New York, Dreamspeakers Festival in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada and won Best Animation at the 19th Annual American Indian Film Festival in San Francisco. *Stumblingbear* was where it all started for Shangreaux. The second piece will be an excerpt from *The Great American Foot Race*, a story about a Cherokee man who ran a foot race from Los Angeles to New York. The third segment is two pieces: a promotional video and interview select for *Osage Murders*, a work in progress.

### **Pahdopony: See How Deep the Water Is**

A DVD video production by Hokte Productions

22 minutes

This biographical documentary explores the philosophy and visual art of Pahdopony, an artist, educator, and activist with an important connection to the Comanche people. Rich in art, music, and oral tradition, this visual storytelling shares the cultural and community ties of Comanche life from its past to the continuously changing culture of present day. Narrated by Richard Ray Whitman (Euclidean) with music by Jon West (Cheyenne).