

RETURN

Native American Women Reclaim Foodways for Health & Spirit

A SINGING WOLF DOCUMENTARIES Production • *Lead Directors of Photography* DYLAN MCLAUGHLIN (Diné) and TRISTAN LOVE • *Edited by* GIACOMO LAMPARIELLO • *Music by* JOHN RANGEL & musicians SHELLEY MORNINGSONG (N. Cheyenne/Dutch) and FABIAN FONTENELLE (Zuni/Omaha) • *Artistic Advisor* ROXANNE SWENTZELL (Santa Clara Pueblo) • *Story Consultant & Co-Writer* FERNANDA ROSSI • *Written, Directed, and Produced by* KAREN CANTOR • ReturnDocumentary.com

A Documentary Film TRT: 28 Minutes

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Press photos are available via bit.ly/ReturnPressPhotos

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SYNOPSIS

Native American Women Reclaim Foodways for Health & Spirit.

When influential American Indian women seek well-being, members of their communities join them in reviving traditions and improving their health.

RETURN features Roxanne Swentzell from Santa Clara Pueblo, New Mexico. She champions the health benefits of eating a pre-contact diet – what her people ate prior to the Spanish coming. The heartbreaking history of Native Americans in the United States has left a wake of issues including high incidences of diabetes and related illnesses. Believing that reclaiming ancient foods can be the way to regain health, Roxanne's efforts are echoed by Native American women across the continent. *RETURN* features five of them. Along with restoring health and markedly reducing incidences of diabetes, all of their journeys yield a greater sense of cultural identity and deeper spiritual connections.



L- R: Salmon dying after swimming upstream - Alaska; Roxanne Swentzell (Santa Clara Pueblo, NM) shelling beans; Buffalo in South Dakota field

FEATURED CHARACTERS



ROXANNE SWENTZELL (Santa Clara Pueblo, NM) – Sculptor & Founder of Flowering Tree Permaculture Institute. Re-introduced a pre-contact diet.

KIBBE CONTI (Oglala Sioux, SD) – Nutritionist, heads up efforts to directly confront the diabetes epidemic with tribe-specific guidelines for healthy eating.



JENNIFER GAUTHIER (Menominee, WI) – Community Development Educator, focuses on returning to gardening as complementary to reinstating the Menominee language.

DESIREE BERGERON JACKSON (Tlingit, AK) – Nutritionist, focuses on readily available traditional foods for every age – starting with pregnant mothers.



ANDREA JOHN (Seneca Nation, NY) – Exercise Specialist, uses her training to encourage her community to be more active and eat a diet rich in fruits, grains, and vegetables

VALERIE SEGREST (Muckleshoot, WA) – Nutritionist, is reviving fishing and berry-picking endeavors in the context of government – tribal, state, and national – policy.



...also

CHASTITY SANDOVAL SWENTZELL (Santa Clara Pueblo, NM) – Coordinator of Pueblo Food Experience

MARIAN NARANJO (Santa Clara Pueblo, NM) – Founder/Director of Honor Our Pueblo Existence (HOPE)

PORTER SWENTZELL (Santa Clara Pueblo, NM) – Historian

COMMENTS & REVIEWS

*The film also touches on the emotional and spiritual benefits of a return to a pre-contact diet, and the relationship between food sovereignty and tribal sovereignty.... Her purpose in making the film, Cantor says, was to communicate some of the positive things happening in the Native American community. She hopes the takeaway for viewers will be the awareness that ‘they can make a difference in their own lives and in their wider communities – and that part of the difference comes from something as basic as food.’ — Patricia West-Barker, “The politics of dinner: ‘Return: Reclaiming Native American Foodways for Health and Spirit,’” *Pasatiempo**

What an engaging film. By the end I was thinking about how I could eat better.

The geographic range of the stories lets me know the film is telling a truly national story.

RETURN is an important and well-done documentary – engaging, intriguing, and valuable.

Regaining ‘food sovereignty’ seems such a great portal through which to reclaim at least some of Native Americans’ stolen past.

Such a respectful, inspiring and powerful piece!

PRODUCTION TEAM

KAREN CANTOR, *Producer / Director / Writer.*

Karen Cantor has been at the helm of three acclaimed documentary films over the last 15 years: *The Danish Solution* (2003) about the rescue of the Danish Jews in 1943; *Last Rights: Facing End-of-Life Choices* (2009) follows four families as they recount grappling with the final days of beloved family members; and *Invitation to the Muse* (2011) looks at artists' inner journeys.

Known for her industrial and artistic photographs her career paths included marketing for high-tech firms, teaching photography and entrepreneurship at Elon College and American University, and making her first full-length documentary film after becoming a grandmother. Her eclectic experiences have each made significant contributions to her skills and worldview as an established filmmaker.

Karen Cantor received a BA cum laude from Goucher College, studying anthropology and fine arts; later getting an MBA from Wake Forest University. She has studied documentary filmmaking at American University, Georgetown University, Maine Media Workshops and George Washington University's Historical Documentary Filmmaking Program.



Producer/Director Karen Cantor



Top - bottom: DP Tristan Love on Buffalo shoot; Director Karen Cantor with Desiree Jackson and shooter Jeremy Blake on beach in Alaska; Archival researcher Amy Johanson, Director Karen Cantor with Impact Producer Lisa Allen

FERNANDA ROSSI, *Co-Writer & Story Editor*

Internationally renowned author, speaker and story analyst Fernanda Rossi has collaborated on more than 500 fiction scripts, documentaries and fundraising samples, including two documentaries nominated for the Academy Award® and many that received funding. She has given her lectures in more than 12 countries and at world markets, such as Hot Docs and Sheffield Doc/Fest. In addition, she is a trainer for special programs and grant evaluator for foundations. Her book *Trailer Mechanics: How to Make Your Documentary Fundraising Demo, 2nd Edition*, is according to industry professionals the bible on demo production. www.documentarydoctor.com

MARY PAGANELLI VOTTO, *Lead Associate Producer*

Mary Paganelli Votto is an author, writer, chef, recipe tester, food stylist, photographer and editor. She is the Founder and Editorial Director of *Native Foodways* Magazine, the first consumer magazine dedicated to showcasing Native American foodways. Paganelli Votto is the co-author, with Elder Frances Manuel, of the seminal book on Tohono O'odham foodways, *From I'toi's Garden: Tohono O'odham Food Traditions*. She was the Production Assistant for the Emmy award winning PBS Series *Seasoned With Spirit: A Native Cook's Journey*, (Tohono O'odham episode), Culinary Consultant to UK Discovery Channel's *Marooned with Ed Stafford*; and featured on the nationally syndicated television program *Flip My Food* with Chef Jeff where she provided food styling, production and development support. She is a graduate of Vassar College, and holds Master Certificates in Cooking and Baking from the New School for Social Research. She externed at the Food Network.

TRISTAN LOVE, *Co-Director of Photographer*

Tristan Love is an award-winning filmmaker and editor based in New York City and New Mexico. He received his BA cum laude in film from the College of Santa Fe, and studied at the prestigious Film and Television School of the Academy of Performing Arts (FAMU) in Prague. His work has screened on television and in festivals worldwide including SXSW, Indie Grits Film Festival, 60 N Film Festival, The Santa Fe Film

Festival, PBS, Cartoon Network and Canal+. As a young filmmaker, Tristan has worked and studied under filmmaking greats Terrence Malick, David Gordon Green and Jaromir Šofr. He is also a founding member of filmmaking collective Color Chart, a group based in NYC.

DYLAN MCLAUGHLIN DP, *The Pueblo Food Experience*.

Based in Albuquerque, NM, and the owner/operator of Red Scarlet Dragon, Dylan McLaughlin (Diné) is a digital media artist and filmmaker, primarily focusing on documentary, narrative video and photography. His work ranges from co-organization of the Attention Span 30 Second Film Festival, documentary style artist and community portraits, narrative short filmmaking, to more experimental interactive works and video installation. He received his BFA in New Media Arts from the Institute of American Indian Arts in 2011.

GIACOMO LAMPARIELLO, *Editor*

Giacomo Lampariello studied film at L'Aquila. While studying, he edited the award-winning documentary *Onna'44* at the Festival for the Historical Documentary of Rome. In 2007, Giacomo moved to Milan where he started his career at Class CNBC working as an editor with Harris Nexio Velocity. He collaborated on web TV and news editing at ANSA, the major Italian news agency. He has edited on-air commercials for Toyota, Samsung, Nastro Azzurro, Eni and others. In 2014 he moved to New York and started working with TheCreativeShake, Awen Films, and Luminous Studio as well as such as The Weather Channel, Nvidia, MSNBC, and Zillow. Giacomo has edited music videos, documentaries, promo videos, mini-docs, and the short film, *Without*.



Composer John Rangel

JOHN RANGEL, *Composer*

John Rangel, a multi-faceted active musician, composer, and producer, has written over 400 compositions for Jazz Quartet, Quintet, Big Band, String Quartet, Chamber Orchestra, Solo Piano works and others. In creating the soundtrack for *RETURN*, John worked with Native American musicians Shelley Morningsong (N. Cheyenne/ Dutch) and Fabian Fontenelle (Zuni/Omaha). Winner of the Native American Record of the Year 2011 out of New York State, Shelley Morningsong, released in January 2015 her long-awaited album *Love Medicine*. Fabian Fontenelle is an original member of the American Indian Dance Theatre and is also an educator on the history of Native America and has done consulting work and acting for the History Channel.

QUOTES

ROXANNE SWENTZELL

“Win ourselves back by claiming ourselves from this colonization. You haven’t killed us yet; you haven’t crushed us completely yet. Show them that you’re not gone yet. Make it be a food revolution.”

“The things that we learned have been more than just this is pretty good food, it’s been, oh my god, we are the descendants of the people that figured this out.”

DESIREE JACKSON

“There was a lot of shame because traditional foods were associated with not having money, because they were something that you harvested.”

“I needed to really focus on getting kids a taste for traditional foods for life. How have we not already grasped on to this concept?”

VALERIE SEGREST

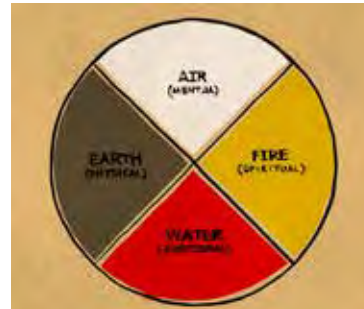
“Without our food, we would be nobody. A Muckleshoot person without a plate of salmon doesn’t exist.”

“Food sovereignty is a way of living together in a community of people who you are bound to for life and being able to define and have the right to eat the food that you want to eat.”

“It’s feeding your spirit, it’s feeding the people, it’s feeding who you are. It’s helping you to remember who you are and the land that you come from and that is the medicine that we’re after.”

KIBBE CONTI

“Our lands were taken; our people were confined to reservations and our health began to suffer. We lost the buffalo so we no longer could migrate.”



Clockwise from top left: Roxanne Swentzell chaffing beans; roasted corn, Medicine wheel, Valerie Segrest (Muckleshoot, WA) showing traditional food containers; Desiree Jackson (Tlingit, AK) feeding baby

“My father’s generation was the first generation to witness the diabetes epidemic. The Native Americans are the canary in the coal mine - we are the ones who first experienced the harmful effects of processed foods and sedentary lifestyle.”

“We’re relearning though food sovereignty that we have the wisdom to prevent diabetes; it’s right there in front of us. We just have to look back to what our grandmothers were doing.”

PORTER SWENTZELL

“The food that we eat today is nothing like the food that we ate in the past. Things like fry bread don’t have much of a history at all.”

JENNIFER GAUTHIER

“A lot of us grow up with the teaching that you only take what you are going to eat and you use every part of everything that you grow, every part of everything that you hunt and every part of everything that you gather.”

“If there’s one thing I could change is to let our community know that they’re powerful people. We’ve been here for ten thousand years and there’s a reason. We’re a very strong people and we persevered and we’ll continue to persevere.”

CHAS SWENTZELL

“It’s more of like a community; tight knit. You become helpful to one another, you learn from one another. You grow food together, you share meals together.”

MARIAN NARANJO

“As indigenous people we have the right to feed ourselves our diet and choose those foods that are accustomed to our own DNA... [and] our cultural life ways.”



Top - Bottom: Dakotas Pow-Wow; Menominee kids with pumpkins

SUPPORTERS

Fiscal Sponsorship

MOONBEE ALLIANCE

Film Production & Post Production

THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION PRESIDENT'S GRANT FUND
OF THE PRINCETON AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

ERICA ELLIOTT

CLAUDIA & ELIOT FELDMAN

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PETER & ROSE SILVERSMITH

Sponsorship of the Premiere

THE MARSHALL L. and PERRINE D. McCUNE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

CREDITS

Producer / Director

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Writers

KAREN CANTOR & FERNANDA ROSSI

Story Editor

FERNANDA ROSSI

Editor

GIACOMO LAMPARIELLO

Creative Consultant

ROXANNE SWENTZELL

Score

JOHN RANGEL with SHELLEY
MORNINGSONG (N. Cheyenne/Dutch) and
FABIAN FONTENELLE (Zuni/Omaha)

Lead Associate Producer

MARY PAGANELLI

Associate Producers

MORGAN CAPPS
CARRIE HOUSE
HANES MOTSINGER
NEEBINNAUKZHIK SOUTHALL

Main Characters in Order of Appearance

ROXANNE SWENTZELL – Santa Clara Pueblo
DESIREE JACKSON - Tlingit
ANDREA JOHN – Seneca Nation
VALERIE SEGREST – Muckleshoot
JENNIFER GAUTIER – Menominee

KIBBE CONTI – Oglala Sioux
CHASTITY SWENTZELL – Santa Clara Pueblo
PORTER SWENTZELL – Santa Clara Pueblo
MARIAN NARANJO – Santa Clara Pueblo

Camera operators

New Mexico
DYLAN MCLAUGHLIN – Pueblo Food
Experience
TRISTAN LOVE – Lead DP
MORGAN CAPPS
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SETH FULLER
GRANT MACALLISTER
JACOB OSTRÆT ANDERSON
MATT SCHULZE (DIGITAL VISIONS)
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JEREMY BLAKE

North/South Dakota – Washington State – New
York State

MORGAN CAPPS

Wisconsin - Menominee

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FORREST ELI HURLEY

Original Drawings

AVANSGUARDI

Archival Producer

AMY JOHANSON

Sound Mix

JOHN RANGEL
LUIGI PORTO



SCHEDULE

September 5, 2018 | 5:30 p.m.

Citivan Club Monthly Dinner Meeting
Pecos Trail Inn, Santa Fe, NM
Private event

October 3, 2018 | 4:15 p.m.

and October 4, 2018 | 1:15 p.m.

Screenings at the Seeds of Native Health Conference: Third Annual Conference on Native American Tradition Mystic Lake Center, Prior Lake, Minnesota
Valerie Segrest, featured in the film, will conduct Q&A along with Mary Paganelli. *Sponsored by Arizona Cactus Ranch.*

October 15, 2018 | 7:00 p.m.

Screening at the University of Northern Iowa Center for Multicultural Education
Cedar Falls, Iowa
Sponsored by the Dorothy Pearlman Finkel Memorial Film Series.

Stay tuned for future screenings and events!
www.returndocumentary.com/watch/

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

by Director Karen Cantor

1. Why did you choose to make *RETURN*?

Spending time in New Mexico beginning in 2010, I became more and more aware of Native Americans and some of the health problems so many were suffering. I was curious as to what was being done to confront the negative health issues. I'd just finished a film about artists that I made when I was a resident at the Santa Fe Art Institute – *Invitation to the Muse* and I was thinking about my next documentary.

2. How did the final film differ from your original concept?

Originally I wanted to focus on three powerful women who had made a great difference. The three were Roxanne Swentzell, dancer Rulan Tangan, and Navajo physician Dr. Lori Alvord. As I told people about the project, I kept on hearing “stay with the food issues – that’s what’s so critical.” And so I did.

3. How did you find characters?

I found Roxanne through reading about her online. She was extraordinarily receptive when I contacted her just at the time she was launching the Pueblo Food Experience. In 2014 I attended the FUZE.SW 2 conference highlighting how New Mexico’s diverse heritages have intersected to create unique culinary traditions. It was there I met Mary Paganelli, the editor-in-chief and founder of *Native Foodways*. As I sought to locate Native American women who were influencing their communities to change their eating habits, Mary was a great source. Through her I was introduced to Kibbe Conti, Valerie Segrest, and Desiree Jackson. I found Jennifer Gauthier through an article about the head of the distribution center on the Menominee reservation. Andrea Johns was referred by a dietician in North Dakota who had worked with Kibbe Conti.



Top - bottom: Roxanne Swentzell and Rose Simpson collecting grasshoppers; Parching wild rice (Menominee, WI); Berries on Bush (Muckleshoot, WA)

4. Do you have a favorite character?

That's like asking me if I have a favorite child (I have three) or favorite grandchild (there are eight!). Each one is unique, bringing special qualities. For instance where Jennifer Gauthier (Menominee) has a calm strength, Andrea Johns' (Seneca Nation) energy is exemplary. Kibbe Conti (Oglala Sioux) presents in-depth knowledge of nutrition while Valerie Segrest (Muckleshoot) complements her plant knowledge with a well-honed sense of how to affect policy. Desiree Jackson (Tlingit) focuses on diverse ages and Alaskan cultures and Roxanne Swentzell's (Santa Clara Pueblo) charisma and knowledge is noteworthy.

5. What went well and what challenges did you encounter?

Working with each of the subjects was a great pleasure. Every one was particularly receptive and warm. My sense is that each wanted to get the message out that health was within reach. The logistics were never easy – making arrangements (the subjects are all very busy women), assembling the creative team, and travel to each site. Perhaps the biggest challenge was finding the film's arc. How to put together diverse stories that told the story of Native American women reclaiming their heritages to find health for their communities.

6. What was left “on the cutting room floor?”

Lots! In particular there was a lovely man in the Dakotas who had begun an orchard in the shape of a medicine wheel. His name is Robert Whitemountain. When I first spoke with him and told him I was seeking women who had made a difference in their communities he said, “but I am a man.” I told him I knew that, but maybe there was a woman who had influenced him. He said yes, the mythological Buffalo Calf Woman. He was reverent and assured me that it was because of her that he worked to confront poverty and social dysfunction in his community.

7. For those who changed their eating patterns, in five years what would you like to ask them?

What kind of resistance did they, themselves, experience? What were the specific changes they made in their own lives? Did what they learned about eating make a difference in their lives in other ways as well? Ultimately, do they feel different about being Native American than they did before they changed their diets?

8. What impact would you like *RETURN* to have?

Whether in the States or abroad, indigenous people worldwide have suffered social disruption and resultant dysfunctions. I hope *RETURN* inspires both Native peoples and non-Natives to value the pasts of Indigenous peoples, and makes way for Natives to reclaim and take charge of their own heritages and health.

9. Before you embarked on this project, how much did you know about Native Americans?

Not much! However, I've never forgotten the truths of what I learned as an anthropology major at Goucher College when I did an Honors thesis on the Gypsies living in Baltimore. Different cultures approach the world according to their concepts and every culture is to be respected for how they do it. It was a great gift to do this film. I thank all the interviewees for giving their time and knowledge to be part of *RETURN*.

10. What's the difference between First Peoples, Indigenous People, Native Americans and American Indians?

This was a really important question for me. What I found was that the terms are somewhat interchangeable in the States while in Canada, the original inhabitants are often referred to as “First Peoples.” My sense is that older people are okay with being called “Indians” while the youth prefer “Native Americans.”

In Loving Memory of Donald J. Silversmith (1942-2014)



Rose Simpson, Marian Naranjo, and Roxanne Swentzell dancing on salt flats