A Valhalla Entertainment and Red-Horse Native Productions documentary for Vision Maker Media with major funding by the Corporation of Public Broadcasting

Directed and Produced by Valerie Red-Horse Mohl
Executive Produced by Gale Anne Hurd

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Not yet Rated, 74 min, Color
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MANKILLER is the powerful story of Wilma Mankiller, who found her voice in San Francisco’s civil rights movement and returned to lead the Cherokee Nation as the first woman to be elected Principal Chief. As a Native American woman myself, I am honored and humbled to be directing and producing this documentary in collaboration with my tremendous production team, especially Executive Producer Gale Anne Hurd (THE TERMINATOR trilogy, ALIENS, ARMAGEDDON, THE ABYSS, THE WATERDANCE). Despite her incredibly busy production schedule (she currently Executive Produces AMC’s THE WALKING DEAD, and the AMC companion series, THE WALKING DEAD), her creativity has enabled us to produce our third Native American themed documentary together. Through crowdfunding, we were able to raise more than half our budget for MANKILLER from supporters around the world! We have fostered trust within Native communities as filmmakers who are true to our subjects, fair and honest in our portrayals and accurate in our storytelling. As we complete this film with news of world events unfolding around us, we realize how Wilma Mankiller’s leadership style, her focus on consensus building and her ability to organize a community with quiet influence and humility, are all qualities that are extremely topical. I truly believe we can learn rich and valuable lessons from her story and her legacy. I see this film as so much more than a biography; I believe it actually is a wakeup call. Wilma lived her life with the philosophy of “Ga-Dugi” which translated means “in a good way” – and our goal is that we embody “Ga-Dugi” on this project to honor her.

Gale Anne Hurd

MANKILLER Executive Producer

Hurd’s career as a Producer was launched when she produced and co-wrote THE TERMINATOR. Hurd’s additional feature credits include the Academy Award winning films THE ABYSS, TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY, and THE GHOST AND THE DARKNESS, as well as the Academy Award-nominated ARMAGEDDON, THE INCREDIBLE HULK, TREMORS, DANTE’S PEAK, Aeon Flux, THE PUNISHER, DICK, and THE WATERDANCE. She has also produced two other documentaries on Native American subjects, TRUE WHISPERS: THE STORY OF THE NAVAJO CODE TALKERS and CHOCTAW CODE TALKERS. Hurd is currently an Executive Producer on THE WALKING DEAD, which reigns as the most watched television drama in the 18–49 demographic for six consecutive years, as well as the AMC companion series, FEAR THE WALKING DEAD. Hurd is also an Executive Producer on the Amazon original series, LORE, and Producer of CBS Films newest horror movie, HELL FEST. In 2015, Hurd was awarded the prestigious David O. Selznick Award for Achievement in Motion Pictures by the Producers Guild of America, and she was inducted into the NAWBO (National Association of Women Business Owners) Hall of Fame in 2008. In addition to her entertainment expertise, Ms. Hurd is an investment banker serving as owner/founder of Red-Horse Financial Group, Inc.; she holds seven FINRA securities licenses and has raised/structured over $3 billion in capital for American Indian Tribal Nations. Red-Horse Mohl is a member of the Directors Guild and Screen Actors Guild and was inducted into the NAWBO (National Association of Women Business Owners) Hall of Fame in 2008. In addition to her entertainment expertise, Ms. Red-Horse is an investment banker serving as owner/founder of Red-Horse Financial Group, Inc.; she holds seven FINRA securities licenses and has raised/structured over $3 billion in capital for American Indian Tribal Nations. Red-Horse Mohl is also the founder of three non-profit organizations.

Valerie Red-Horse Mohl

MANKILLER Director/Producer

A filmmaker of Cherokee ancestry, Red-Horse Mohl’s body of work spans over three decades of film and television content creation and production. A graduate of UCLA’s Theater/Film Program, she has produced, directed and written over a dozen award winning films and television programs including, NATURALLY NATIVE (Sundance Feature), TRUE WHISPERS: THE STORY OF THE NAVAJO CODE TALKERS (PBS-also with Hurd), CHOCTAW CODE TALKERS (PBS-also with Hurd), POP HUNTER’S DEW DROP INN (PBS), DIVERSITY IN THE DELTA (PBS), MY INDIAN SUMMER (PBS) and BEAUTY (NBC). Red-Horse Mohl is a member of the Directors Guild and Screen Actors Guild and was inducted into the NAWBO (National Association of Women Business Owners) Hall of Fame in 2008. In addition to her entertainment expertise, Ms. Red-Horse is an investment banker serving as owner/founder of Red-Horse Financial Group, Inc.; she holds seven FINRA securities licenses and has raised/structured over $3 billion in capital for American Indian Tribal Nations. Red-Horse Mohl is also the founder of three non-profit organizations.
Synopses

LONG FORM SYNOPSIS
This is the story of an American hero. One who stands tall amongst the likes of Robert Kennedy, Harriet Tubman and Martin Luther King, Jr. Someone who humbly defied the odds and overcame insurmountable obstacles to fight injustice and gave a voice to the voiceless. And yet few people know her name. This is the story of an American legend, Wilma Mankiller, who overcame rampant sexism and personal challenges to emerge as the Cherokee Nation’s first woman Principal Chief in 1985.

MANKILLER examines the legacy of the formidable Wilma Mankiller and reunites the documentary team of Gale Anne Hurd and Valerie Red-Horse Mohl for their third and most powerful film.

As a child, Wilma’s family was relocated from Oklahoma to San Francisco, and although the move was traumatic, it was in the Bay Area during the turbulent 1960s that she became involved in the fight for civil rights and joined the Alcatraz Occupation.

Wilma brought this passion back to the Cherokee Nation where she was re-elected by her people to serve three terms as the Cherokee’s highest leader. While in office, she provided the foundation for the Nation’s current economic and cultural status as one of the most successful tribes in America.

Although she considered herself a liberal Democrat, as Deputy Chief she was chosen by a conservative Republican and was known as a uniter of all people. Wilma launched many cutting edge initiatives that substantially improved living conditions during her tenure, and in 1990 she signed an unprecedented Cherokee Nation self-determination agreement with the federal government, in which the Nation took control of its funding, programs and services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In 1998, recognizing her impressive leadership and achievements, President Bill Clinton awarded her the Medal of Freedom. A stalwart activist for women’s rights, Wilma Mankiller was cited by the organizers of the January 2017 Women’s March on Washington as one of the most important leaders in America’s movement for equality. MANKILLER reminds audiences of the true meaning of servant leadership and serves as a wake-up call to take action for positive change.

MEDIUM SYNOPSIS
In 1985, after serving as Deputy Chief under a conservative leader, Wilma Mankiller took office as the Cherokee Nation’s first woman Principal Chief. Having relocated from Oklahoma to San Francisco earlier in her life, Mankiller worked with both the nascent Black Panther and the Alcatraz occupation movements, eventually bringing the passion and experience she gained there back to her people. During her decade-long tenure as Principal Chief and beyond, Mankiller’s leadership enabled the Cherokee Nation to become one of the most economically and culturally successful tribes in America.

Through rare archival footage and intimate interviews with activists including Gloria Steinem, as well as with Wilma herself, MANKILLER gives us insight into how this remarkable woman successfully navigated through the minefield of bipartisan politics.

SHORT SYNOPSIS
MANKILLER examines the legacy of the formidable Wilma Mankiller, who defied all odds to become one of the most influential leaders in the United States. Mankiller overcame rampant sexism and personal challenges to emerge as the Cherokee Nation’s first woman Principal Chief in 1985. Through rare archival footage and intimate interviews with activists including Gloria Steinem, as well as with Wilma herself, MANKILLER gives us insight into how this remarkable woman successfully navigated through the minefield of bipartisan politics.
Recognition

Best Documentary Feature
Rome International Film Festival

Best Documentary Feature
Tulsa American Film Festival

Best Documentary Feature
Maoriland Film Festival

Best of Fest
Palm Springs International Film Festival

Festivals & Screenings

Best Editing
United Nations Association Film Festival

Spirit Award
Bozeman International Film Festival

Centerpiece Screening
Athena Film Festival

Reviews

"Mankiller Is March’s Must-See Documentary... a supremely moving story"
— Eve Macsweeney, VOGUE
https://www.vogue.com/article/mankiller-documentary-pbs-review

"The question now is whether Hollywood can turn the telescope around and discover a new kind of heroine, capable of evolving beyond muscles..."
— Ann Hornaday, The Washington Post

"Hurd and Red-Horse Mohl have skillfully woven together footage of the turbulent times that tried Wilma’s and her people’s souls..."
— Herbert Paine, Broadway World

"Mankiller is that rare documentary that is informative and moving, but will make you laugh, too."
— Enka W. Smith, Bust Magazine

In wake of Standing Rock, Native storytelling gets more screen time by PBS News Hour’s Courtney Norris
https://www.pbs.org/newshour/arts/in-wake-of-standing-rock-native-storytelling-gets-more-screen-time

The Movies at the San Diego International Film Festival by FOX 5 San Diego

LAFF Review by Hollywood Progressive
http://hollywoodprogressive.com/mankiller/

Close up Your guide to the 2017 Tulsa American Film Festival by The Tulsa Voice’s Joe O’Shansky

Mankiller’s Life Lessons: A Must-See Documentary on a Modern-Day Superhero by HoneySuckle’s Jaime Lubin
https://honeysucklemag.com/mankiller-life-lessons/
Credits

Front Credits

Editors
Ken Schneider
Joe LaMattina
Lisa LaMattina

Producers
Stacy Mahoney
Charlie Soap
Kristina Kiehl

Executive Producer
Gale Anne Hurd

Director/Producer
Valerie Red-Horse Mohl

End Credits

Co-Producers
Gina Olaya
Felicia Olaya

Associate Producers
Philip Robyanski
Dawn Jackson

Valhalla Entertainment
Julie Thomson
Marisa Stotter

Red-Horse Native Productions
Chelsea Red-Horse Mohl
Kendall Woirhaye

Unit Publicist
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Directors of Photography
Tarin Anderson

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Jesse Friedman

Theme Composed by
Tyler Strickland

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Corey Soap
Silvia Soap
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Justin Branch
Amanda Cuellar
Matt Klueter
Stephanie Moore
James Becker
Melissa Sweeney

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Aaron Merrill
Mary Helen Phelan
Daniel Pico

Clearances
Elizabeth Kuriakose

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Adria Schneider
Kenneth Regua

Post Production Services
Tree Falls Post

On Camera Interviewees

Ada Deer
Betty Parent
Bob Blackburn
Bob Friedman
Candessa Tehee
Cara Cowan Watts
Chad Smith
Charles “Chief” Boyd
Charlie Shell
Charlie Soap
Chris Carlsson
Chuck Garrett
Corey Soap
David Walkingstick
Dean Chavers
Donna Shell
Dr. Thomas Dullien
Eloy Martinez

Ernie Stevens, Jr.
Felicia Olaya Wing
Frinda Vann
Gina Olaya
Gloria Steinern
Gwen Grayson
Ilka Hartmann
Ira Phillips
Jay Hannah
Joe Byrd
Joe Grayson
Kimberly Teehee
Kristina Kiehl
Lou Kerr
Mark Downing
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Mary Smith

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William J. Clinton Presidential Library
Wilma Mankiller Foundation
WNET
Woolaroc Museum; Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Music

“Cherokee Morning Song”
Arranged by Rita Coolidge, Priscilla Coolidge and Laura Satterfield
Walela appearsCourtesy of Rich-Heape and Espy Music Group
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“Fortunate Son”
Written by John Cameron Fogerty
Performed by Creedence Clearwater Revival Published by Jondora Music
Courtesy of Fantasy Records
By arrangement with Concord Music Group, Inc.

“Your Legacy”
Written and Performed by Joanne Shenandoah

Top Left: Gloria Steinem being interviewed for MANKILLER.
Bottom Left: On location in Oklahoma, the Mankiller Documentary crew interviews Chad Smith, former Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation. Pictured from left to right: Robert Swanson (B-Camera Operator), Chad Smith (Interview Subject), Tarin Anderson (Director of Photography), Phillip Kobylanski (Associate Producer) and Andy Theiss (Audio Mixer). Photo by Evan Taylor.
Wilma Mankiller was sworn into office as Principal Chief in 1987. Pictured Left to Right: Wilma Pearl Mankiller, Charlie Soap (Wilma’s husband) and then Chief Justice of the Cherokee Nation Philip Viles. Photo courtesy of Wilma Mankiller Foundation.

Wilma Mankiller and Charlie Soap wave during a parade while she is Principal Chief. Photo courtesy of Wilma Mankiller Foundation.

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