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RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked the World **Premieres on *Independent Lens*** **Monday, January 21, 2019 on PBS and PBS.org**

An Electrifying Look at the Native American Influence in Popular Music Despite Attempts to Ban, Censor and Erase Indian Culture



Link Wray.

Credit: Bruce Steinberg, courtesy of
LinkWray.com

(San Francisco, CA) — A musical celebration of how Native American musicians transformed blues, jazz and rock, ***RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked the World***, will premiere on *Independent Lens* Monday, January 21, 2019, 10:00-11:30 PM ET (check local listings) on PBS, and will also be available simultaneously for online streaming at pbs.org. As the film reveals, early pioneers of the blues such as Charley Patton had Native as well as African American roots, and one of the first and most influential jazz singers, Mildred Bailey, had a voice trained on Native American songs. As the folk rock era took hold in the '60s and '70s, Native Americans such as Robbie Robertson and Buffy Sainte-Marie helped to define its evolution, and Native guitarists and drummers like Link Wray, Jimi Hendrix, Jesse Ed Davis and Randy Castillo

forever changed the trajectory of rock and roll. The film is directed by Catherine Bainbridge (*Reel Injun*), co-directed by Alfonso Maiorana, executive produced by legendary rock guitarist Stevie Salas (Apache) and Tim Johnson (Mohawk), and produced by Christina Fon, VP and Executive Producer of Rezolution Pictures.

RUMBLE brings the music and musicians to life using innovative re-creations, archival concert footage and interviews. Their stories are told by some of the music legends who knew them, played with them and were inspired by them, including George Clinton, Taj Mahal, Slash, Jackson Browne, Taboo (Shoshone/Mexican), Buddy Guy, Quincy Jones, Derek Trucks, Tony Bennett, Iggy Pop, Steven Tyler and Stevie Nicks. Also featured are Native American poet and activist John Trudell, rock critic David Fricke, director Martin Scorsese and many more.

"Anyone who loves contemporary music will hear something they connect with in *RUMBLE*," said Lois Vossen, *Independent Lens* executive producer. "From Link Wray's iconic guitar riff that made an indelible mark on the evolution of rock, to how Jimi Hendrix's part-Cherokee heritage shaped his genius, to the spoken music of John Trudell, and Tony Bennett being 'completely influenced' by jazz improviser Mildred Bailey, American music is steeped in Native American sounds from Native musicians. History never sounded so good."



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Visit the *RUMBLE* page on [INDEPENDENT LENS](#), which features more information about the documentary.

About the Major Native American Musicians Featured

Charley Patton (Choctaw/African American, 1887 est.–1934) was a seminal influence on the careers of Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf and by extension an influence on rock, most notably the Rolling Stones. He spent his formative years with his family at Dockery Farms in Mississippi, and is a product of the little known mixture of cultures that found stable work and secure living conditions on plantations like Dockery. He raucously played the 1920s delta roadhouses and juke joint scenes and, in an era where the U.S. government banned drums and dance for Native and African Americans, creatively used the guitar as a percussive instrument.

Mildred Bailey (Coeur d'Alene, 1907–1951) has been praised as the first non-African American jazz singer to successfully adapt the rhythms and improvisational flavors of Dixieland and ragtime into swing jazz. Mildred started out with some of the best jazz musicians in New York City, where she was a regular act at the first integrated speakeasies. Her unique style of singing, now a standard for jazz singing, is uncannily similar to the type of singing that Mildred heard on visits to the Coeur d'Alene Indian reservation with her Native American mother.

Link Wray (Shawnee, 1929–2005) originated a raw guitar sound shaped by volume, distortion and simple song structures that became a hallmark of rock and roll. He is almost universally credited with inventing the “power chord” and inspired such major rock figures as the Who's Pete Townshend, MC5's Wayne Kramer, Guns N' Roses' Slash and other guitar legends. His “Rumble” was an instrumental song that was banned from radio for fear that it would incite teenage violence.

Buffy Sainte-Marie (Cree, b. 1941) was one of the most influential folk singers of the 1960s. She developed her style first in college cafes and later as a member of the Greenwich Village circle that included Peter La Farge and Bob Dylan. Her ballads about Native history carried on La Farge's tradition, and her social commentary during the Vietnam War era with songs such as “Universal Soldier” earned her attention as a notable voice of conscience.

Jimi Hendrix (Cherokee/African American/Scottish, 1942–1970) is widely considered the most influential guitarist in music history. His Native ancestry was inherited from his paternal grandmother, the first traveling performer in the family, following the vaudeville circuit across the country.

Robbie Robertson (Mohawk, b. 1943) was already an accomplished songwriter and guitarist when Bob Dylan hired him and his friends from the Hawks for the historic tour where Dylan went “electric.” Robbie went on to be one of the founders of the iconic The Band, which became a commercially successful roots-music vehicle, groundbreaking in the world of Americana for its eclectic instrumentation, purity of sound and pop refrains sung in a unique, angelic tonality.

Jesse Ed Davis (Kiowa/Comanche, 1944–1988) grew up in a family of musicians in Oklahoma, where he was conscious of the racial boundaries that made him feel “a little weird being Indian,” especially when it came to pursuing rock and roll. Sought after by the biggest stars in rock because of his unique soulful sound, he was the lead guitarist for Taj Mahal.

Brothers Pat (b. 1939) and Lolly (1939–2010) Vegas (Yaqui/Shoshone) formed **Redbone** in 1968, after almost a decade in the music industry. During that time, the duo kept trying different gimmicks to stand out in the L.A. music scene, including surf music and Cajun music. It was Jimi Hendrix who told them to just “do the Indian thing, man,” and they launched it as Redbone. Their classic hit “Come and Get Your Love” earned them a permanent place among the most memorable song makers of the ‘70s.

About the Filmmakers

Catherine Bainbridge (Director/Writer/Executive Producer/Producer) has brought her signature enthusiasm and passion for storytelling to countless documentary, drama, comedy and interactive media projects, notably *Reel Injun* (*Independent Lens*), the Peabody Award-winning documentary about Native stereotypes in Hollywood films. Her role as director on *RUMBLE* encapsulates her love and devotion to music, history, politics and bringing important Indigenous stories to the mainstream.

Alfonso Maiorana (Co-Director/Writer/Director of Photography) based in Montreal, Maiorana has DP experience on Hollywood films, independent features, movies of the week, and television series, and brings a distinctive look and feel to the films he shoots. His directing credits include *The Big World* which premiered at the Montreal International Film festival.

Stevie Salas (Executive Producer) is also a world-renowned guitarist and producer of music, film and television. As a guitar player, Salas has recorded, written and produced with artists as diverse as George Clinton, Mick Jagger, Public Enemy, Justin Timberlake, T.I. and Rod Stewart. A major label recording artist who has sold over two million solo albums around the world, Salas has been named one of the top 50 guitarists of all time by Guitar Player magazine. He was music director and consultant on “American Idol” from 2006 to 2010. He is also an accomplished composer credited with providing the score for several films, including the guitar score for *Bill and Ted’s Excellent Adventure*. A Native American (Apache), Salas has been involved in prominent projects that support Indigenous communities, including serving as the Advisor for Contemporary Music at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian and co-creating the music exhibit “Up Where We Belong: Native Musicians in Popular Culture,” which had successful runs in Washington, DC and New York City. For his efforts in support of Native American culture, Salas received the Native American Music Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2009.

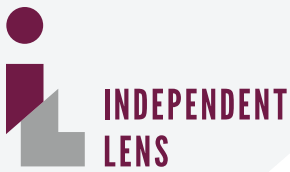
Tim Johnson (Executive Producer) is an experienced museum executive who recently led the development of two public memorials that honor First Nations’ contributions to Canada. As the

former associate director for Museum Programs at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, Johnson (Mohawk) managed the museum's largest organizational group in both Washington and New York. In 2009, he enlisted Stevie Salas to collaborate on advancing the museum's contemporary music program. Their creative partnership resulted in an exhibit that focused on Native musicians who achieved popular music fame or influence, and which collectively formed a legacy not widely acknowledged in music history. Thus was born the Smithsonian exhibition "Up Where We Belong: Native Musicians in Popular Culture," which inspired *RUMBLE*. Active in his home community of Six Nations of the Grand River, and with several prestigious art and education institutions for more than 35 years, Johnson received the Dreamcatcher Foundation Award for Art and Culture in 2016.

Christina Fon (Executive Producer/Producer) has brought her dynamic and award-winning formula to the production of Canadian film and television for the past 20 years. A Peabody and five-time Canadian Screen Award winner, Fon has permanently changed the landscape of the industry. Her ability to negotiate successful production deals has delivered the greenlight to projects that continue to shape film and television as we know it. From the Sundance and three-time Canadian Screen Award-winning *RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked the World*, to the four-time Canadian Screen Awards nominated dramatic series "Mohawk Girls," Fon has demonstrated time and time again that she is a producer who can turn visions into reality. This has not gone unnoticed by major international broadcasters, including HBO Canada, CBC, Radio Canada, APTN, PBS and ARTE, with whom Christina has established valuable relationships on the international landscape.

CREDITS

In memory of	John Trudell
Dedicated to the Work of	Brian Wright-Mcleod
Executive Producer	Stevie Salas
Executive Producer	Tim Johnson
Directed by	Catherine Bainbridge
Co-Directed by	Alfonso Maiorana
Produced by	Christina Fon
Produced by	Catherine Bainbridge
	Linda Ludwick
	Lisa M. Roth
Written by	Catherine Bainbridge & Alfonso Maiorana
Edited by	Benjamin Duffield
	Jeremiah Hayes
Executive Producers	Catherine Bainbridge
	Christina Fon
	Diana Holtzberg
	Linda Ludwick
	Jan Rofekamp



Ernest Webb
Ray Halbritter

About Independent Lens

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS Monday nights at 10:00 p.m. The acclaimed series, with Lois Vossen as executive producer, features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by ITVS, the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more, visit pbs.org/independentlens. Join the conversation: facebook.com/independentlens and on Twitter @IndependentLens.

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