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***American Masters* Season 33 Finale Explores the Life
of Pulitzer Prize-winning Kiowa Writer N. Scott
Momaday in *Words from a Bear***

*Features new interviews with Momaday, Robert Redford, James Earl Jones, Jeff
Bridges, Beau Bridges, U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo and others*

*Premieres nationwide Monday, November 18 at 9 p.m. on PBS in honor of Native
American Heritage Month*

American Masters examines the enigmatic life and mind of National Medal of Arts-winner Navarro Scott Momaday, the Kiowa novelist, short-story writer, essayist and poet, in the Season 33 finale. His Pulitzer Prize-winning novel “House Made of Dawn” led to the breakthrough of Native American literature into the mainstream. ***American Masters – N. Scott Momaday: Words from a Bear*** premieres nationwide Monday, November 18 at 9 p.m. on PBS (check local listings), pbs.org/americanmasters and the PBS Video app in honor of Native American Heritage Month.

The documentary delves into the psyche behind the celebrated author and visually captures the essence of Momaday’s writings. Original animation, historical photos and aerial landscapes complement interviews with indigenous authors Rilla Askew (“[Fire in Beulah](#)”) and Joy Harjo, the first Native American United States Poet Laureate; actors Robert Redford, Jeff

Bridges, Beau Bridges and James Earl Jones; and Richard West, founding director of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, to reveal Momaday's creative core.

"I describe my filmmaking as a personal exploration of Native American life in 21st-century America," said director Jeffrey Palmer, an Oklahoma native and member of the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma. "Much like N. Scott Momaday, I was a young Kiowa artist growing up in the shadows of the Wichita Mountains, dealing with issues of poverty, racism and marginalization. I also experienced the triumphs of using art to maintain the stories of my people, a feeling of respect and honor that I will always present in my work."

Born in 1934 in Lawton, Oklahoma, Momaday grew up on several reservations across New Mexico, including Jemez Pueblo, where his imagination ripened and he showed superior writing skills as a young mission student. In 1958, he earned a B.A. in political science from the University of New Mexico. The film covers Momaday's prolific years as a doctorate fellow at Stanford University, his transformative Pulitzer Prize for Fiction win in 1969 and his later works that solidified his place as the founding member of the Native American Renaissance in art and literature, influencing a generation of fellow Native American artists, scholars and political activists.

Although his heritage is a central theme, Momaday's work asks universal questions: what are our origins and how do we connect to them through our collective memories? ***American Masters – N. Scott Momaday: Words from a Bear*** illuminates how Momaday has grappled with these questions, his identity and the challenges of being a Native American artist in the 20th and 21st century.

The documentary world premiered at Sundance Film Festival 2019.

Launched in 1986 on PBS, ***American Masters*** has earned 28 Emmy Awards — including 10 for Outstanding Non-Fiction Series and five for Outstanding Non-Fiction Special — 14 Peabodys, an Oscar, three Grammys, two Producers Guild Awards, and many other honors. To further explore the lives and works of masters past and present, ***American Masters*** offers streaming video of select films, outtakes, filmmaker interviews, the *American Masters Podcast*, educational resources and more. The series is a production of [THIRTEEN PRODUCTIONS LLC](#) for [WNET](#) and also seen on the WORLD channel. The series is available for streaming simultaneously on all station-branded PBS platforms, including PBS.org and the PBS Video app, which is available on iOS, Android, Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV and Chromecast. PBS station members can view episodes via Passport (contact your local PBS station for details).

American Masters – N. Scott Momaday: Words from a Bear is a co-production of Rainy Mountain Media LLC, Independent Television Service Inc., Vision Maker Media, and THIRTEEN Productions LLC's ***American Masters*** for WNET. Produced and directed by Jeffrey Palmer for Rainy Mountain Media LLC. Executive produced by Sally Jo Fifer for ITVS, Shirley K. Sneve for Vision Maker Media, and Michael Kantor for ***American Masters***.

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Websites: <http://pbs.org/americanmasters>, [@PBSAmerMasters](http://facebook.com/americanmasters), <http://youtube.com/AmericanMastersPBS>, <http://instagram.com/pbsamericanmasters>, #AmericanMastersPBS

About WNET

WNET is America's flagship PBS station: parent company of New York's [THIRTEEN](#) and [WLIW21](#) and operator of [NJTV](#), the statewide public media network in New Jersey. Through its new [ALL ARTS](#) multi-platform initiative, its broadcast channels, three cable services (THIRTEEN PBSKids, Create and World) and online streaming sites, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than five million viewers each month. WNET produces and presents a wide range of acclaimed PBS series, including ***Nature***, ***Great Performances***, ***American Masters***, ***PBS NewsHour Weekend***, and the nightly interview program ***Amanpour and Company***. In addition, WNET produces numerous documentaries, children's programs, and local news and cultural offerings, as well as multi-platform initiatives addressing poverty and climate. Through THIRTEEN Passport and WLIW Passport, station members can stream new and archival THIRTEEN, WLIW and PBS programming anytime, anywhere.

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