

## **Press Release: US film The Return of Navajo Boy receives special Yellow Oscar**

Quebec / Rio de Janeiro / 10th May 2015 - The annual International Uranium Film Festival had its first edition May 2011 in Rio de Janeiro. It awards every year the best and most important films with its Yellow Oscar and the special achievement awards. In addition a special yellow Oscar will be given now to the film "The Return of Navajo Boy" and its director Jeff Spitz: The SOCIAL CONSCIENCE YELLOW OSCAR 2015.

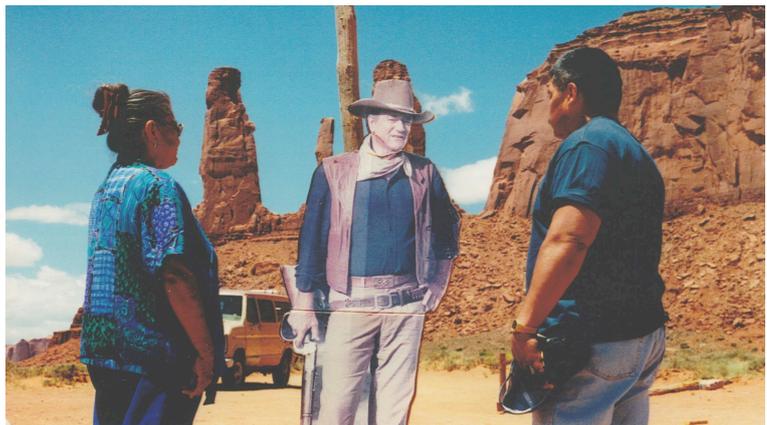
"The 2000 produced moving documentary The Return of Navajo Boy, with its Epilogue and webisodes, demonstrates how a skilful film made with a social conscience - and a social impact campaign - can change the world", says the Uranium Film Festival Jury.

### **About the award winning film**

#### **The Return of Navajo Boy**

USA 2000/2008, 57 min and 15 min Epilogue / Documentary, Director: Jeff Spitz, Produced by Jeff Spitz and Bennie Klain, [www.navajoboy.com](http://www.navajoboy.com)

The film chronicles an extraordinary chain of events, beginning with the appearance of a 1950s film reel, which lead to the return of a long lost brother to his Navajo family. Living for more than six decades in



Monument Valley (on the Arizona/Utah border), the Cly family (rhymes with "sky") has an extraordinary history in pictures. Since the 1930's, family members have appeared as unidentified subjects in countless photographs and films shot in Monument Valley including various postcards, Hollywood Westerns and a rare home-movie by legendary director John Ford. But it is the sudden appearance of a rarely seen vintage film that affects their lives the most. With the return of "Navajo Boy," Elsie Mae Cly Begay seizes the opportunity to tell her family's story for the first time, offering a unique perspective to the history of the American west. Using a variety of still photos and moving images from the 40s and 50s and telling their family story in their own voices, the Cly's shed light on the Native side of picture making and uranium mining in Monument Valley.

The Return of Navajo Boy, an official selection of the Sundance Film Festival and PBS, is an internationally acclaimed documentary that reunited a Navajo family and triggered a federal investigation into uranium contamination. It tells the story of Elsie Mae Begay, whose history in pictures reveals an incredible and ongoing struggle for environmental justice. A powerful new epilogue (produced in 2008) shows how the film and Groundswell Educational Films' outreach campaign create news and rally supporters including Congressman Henry Waxman (D-CA). The Chairman of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform mandated a clean-up plan by the five agencies that are responsible for uranium contamination (Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Energy, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Indian Health Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs).

The documentary, epilogue and now 15 webisodes have leveraged several remarkable impacts: Bernie Cly, one of the Navajo family featured, has been awarded \$100,000 in compensation from the US government; the EPA demolished a dangerous house made out of uranium which was featured in the film and completed its \$8 million dollar clean up of the abandoned uranium mine located in the backyard of the Navajo family featured in the documentary. The most recent webisode in April 2014, informs viewers that the Navajo tribe won the largest environmental settlement in American history, \$1 billion payout from Kerr-McGee, the corporate contaminator exposed by the documentary. Film website: [www.navajoboy.com](http://www.navajoboy.com)



Photo: Jeff Spitz

### **About the Yellow Oscar**

The Yellow Oscar is a piece of art produced by Brazilian waste material artist Getúlio Damado, who lives and works in the famous artist quarter Santa Teresa in Rio de Janeiro where the first International Uranium Film Festival was held in May 2011. Getúlio creates the "Yellow Oscar" from waste material, that he finds in the streets of Santa Teresa. He uses also old watches to remember the first atomic bomb dropped over Hiroshima. Watches in Hiroshima stopped exactly at 8:15 in the morning when the A-bomb exploded on August 6th, 1945.



*The 5 Yellow Oscars 2015*

## ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

The International Uranium Film Festivals has reached its 5th year. In his short history it screened hundreds of nuclear and atomic films in Rio de Janeiro and other cities. The festival already traveled to 3 continents and 6 countries. It was guest in the capitals Amman, Berlin, Lisbon, New Delhi, Washington, Window Rock and important cities like New York, Santa Fe, Munich, Mumbai, Hyderabad or São Paulo.

Now in 2015 the 5th International Uranium Film Festival has been for the first time in Canada, Quebec. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) was the major partner for this year's festival in Canada, which drew some serious star power, with Quebec superstar Karine Vanasse and Hollywood actor/environmentalist Ed Begley, Jr. in attendance for the Festival's opening gala. "We have seen that the more people learn about uranium and the nuclear chain, and the more we listen to the stories of those who have been affected by this industry, the more we are convinced that the risks brought by uranium are simply unacceptable, both today and for future generations", stated Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come. In addition he personally thanks the festival founder und general director Norbert G. Suchanek for his hard work and creative vision: "We were honoured to host the International Uranium Film Festival in Quebec."

The next International Uranium Film Festivals this year are planned in Rio de Janeiro, July 9th to 19th in the Cinemateque of Rio de Janeiro's Modern Art Museum ([www.mamrio.org.br/cinemateca](http://www.mamrio.org.br/cinemateca)) and in Berlin, September 24th to 30th. 2015, in the Brotfabrik Filmtheatre ([www.brotfabrik-berlin.de](http://www.brotfabrik-berlin.de)).



## **Support the Festival**

Art, Cinema, Science and Awareness: The challenge of the International Uranium Film Festival is to inform about all issues of nuclear power: from uranium mining to nuclear waste, from nuclear weapons to radioactive accidents, from Hiroshima to Fukushima. The festival stimulates the production of nuclear films and the discussion about the nuclear question.

A further important achievement of the festival is the creation of a film library and film documentation centre dedicated to all films about the whole nuclear fuel chain and radioactivity: The "Yellow Archives", an international centre for the preservation, study and exhibition of nuclear and atomic films from all over the world and to make them available for education and science purposes. Since our start in 2010 we have already collected about 200 „atomic“ films from more than a dozen countries.

The International Uranium Film Festival independent from institutions or companies. Both, the Festival and the "Yellow Archives" are only made possible with financial support from individual donors and volunteers. Generous gifts from donors provide the financial and moral support needed to continue. Support the Uranium Film Festival. The legal organizer of the Festival is the non-profit arts and cultural organization "Arquivo Amarelo" (Yellow Archives), based in Rio de Janeiro and registered as Brazilian charity.



One dollar for nuclear awareness! Just one dollar of each person concerned about nuclear power or interested in nuclear & atomic films would be enough. Make a donation via bank transfer or just put 1 \$ (or your local currency) in an envelope and send it to the Uranium Film Festival office. Of course one dollar is only a suggestion.

### **Thank you!**

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