



For Immediate Release:

April 24, 2009

Dance Camera West Presents
“Contemporary Sacred: Indigenous Dance Artists in Contemporary Culture”
A Program Featuring Two Films
- *Byron Chief-Moon: Grey Horse Rider*
- *Water Flowing Together*
At The Autry National Center of the American West
During DCW’s Eighth Annual Dance Media Film Festival
2:00pm - Sunday, June 21, 2009

LOS ANGELES, CA – **Dance Camera West (DCW)**, in conjunction with The Autry National Center, is honored to present “**Contemporary Sacred: Indigenous Dance Artists in Contemporary Culture**” on Sunday, June 21, 2009 at 2:00pm. The matinee program consists of two documentaries featuring First Nation and Native American artists. The first film, ***Byron Chief-Moon: Grey Horse Rider*** (48 minutes) includes a Q&A immediately following the screening with filmmaker Philip Szporer. The second film, ***Water Flowing Together*** (77 minutes), profiles the life of legendary dancer **Jock Soto** and his 25-year career with the New York City Ballet. The two films – both featuring openly gay artists – have won numerous awards and accolades. Admission is \$10 (or \$7 for Autry and DCW members), and seating is on a first come first served basis. Parking at the Autry is free. The Autry National Center of the American West is located at 4700 Western Heritage Way (Griffith Park Campus), Los Angeles, CA 90027, across from the Los Angeles Zoo. For more information on this venue please call 323-667-2000 or visit www.autrynationalcenter.org. For more information on Dance Camera West and to see its June 2009 festival schedule please visit www.dancecamerawest.org.

The Autry National Center explores the experiences and perceptions of the diverse peoples of the American West, connecting the past with the present to inform our shared future. Guests are encouraged to arrive early to explore this cultural treasure (free entrance for “Contemporary Sacred” ticket holders). Have lunch at The Golden Spur Café (open 9:00am – 4:30pm), before enjoying DCW’s matinee film program. Screened during Dance Camera West’s eighth annual Dance Media Film Festival, this program closes the June festival.

Byron Chief-Moon: Grey Horse Rider –

Directed by **Marlene Millar** and **Philip Szporer**, *Byron Chief-Moon: Grey Horse Rider*, a documentary film featuring First Nation artist Byron Chief-Moon, won “Best Documentary Short” at the American Indian Film Festival in San Francisco.

Byron Chief-Moon is a multi-talented actor, stuntman, dancer, choreographer playwright, founder of the Coyote Arts Percussive Performance Association, and member of the Blackfoot Confederacy, member of the Blood Band. Through his art and his life, Chief-Moon's story is one of cultural survival. Themes of his dance creations begin with his people's traditional stories, his attachment with the land and his community, as well as the inner conflict he faces in existing within the Aboriginal culture and the wider community. He is ensuring the preservation of his native language through its incorporation in his work. As well, he's firm in his resolve that the spoken legends of his people are communicated to the next generations in his society, and for the larger society too. His art and his life cross boundaries. Challenging the cultural construct is never easy, but Chief-Moon does so with steadfast determination and spirit. One of the main features is the name-giving ceremony for The Blood Nation of which until now has never been filmed.

Byron Chief-Moon: Grey Horse Rider is produced by Mouvement Perpétuel, with the participation of the Canadian Television Fund, SODEC (Société de développement des entreprises culturelles), and produced in association with BRAVO! Canada, a division of CHUM Limited and Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. The Q&A with filmmaker Philip Szporer is sponsored by Quebec Government Office-Los Angeles.

Water Flowing Together –

Water Flowing Together, written and directed by **Gwendolen Cates**, is a compelling, intimate portrait of one of the most recognized and influential modern ballet dancers. Jock Soto, who is Navajo Indian and Puerto Rican as well as gay, retired in June 2005 from the New York City Ballet after a 24-year career of physically demanding excellence with the company. While Soto is an important American artist who found his medium of expression in dance, this is not a film solely for a ballet audience. It is as much about the complexities of the man, about identity, heritage, transition and family, a fascinating and unique story accessible to a broad audience.

The film climaxes with his emotional retirement from ballet at age 40, the end of an era for the NYC Ballet. We learn of Soto's journey through his words and the voices of his family, choreographers, and dancers. Verite footage, an original visual presentation of dance, and unprecedented access to the New York State Theater provide a rare glimpse into an unseen world and the real and often grueling life of a dancer.

Barely 16 when he was selected by George Balanchine to join the company, Jock Soto became a force of the NYC Ballet that helped define the identity of that prestigious institution as much as it has defined him for more than two decades. His exceptional talent was recognized by Andy Warhol, who immortalized him on canvas. On the eve of his retirement the New York Times wrote: "Ballet is a man called Jock."

From his early roots on a remote Arizona reservation as the son of a Navajo Indian mother and a Puerto Rican father, and through his teenage years as a child of the New York City arts scene, we get a sensitive and unique insight into the influences and adventures of this fascinating artist. The title of the film is the name of his Navajo clan. Soto's relationship to his heritage is one of both inherent connection and uncomfortable disconnection that defies stereotypes in the same way that his dancing transcends the expected. This is a candid portrait of an artist and a man.

Dance Camera West's annual Dance Media Film Festival Los Angeles, recognized as one of the world's foremost celebrations of dance on film, celebrates its eighth year in June 2009, screening at venues throughout southern California. A unique cinematic experience that focuses on the intersection of cinematography and choreography, the month-long film festival features all forms of dance media. Chosen by *Los Angeles Magazine* as "Pick of the Month" for their June 2008 issue, Dance Camera West again partners with the city's most prestigious venues in offering a global perspective on a new visual language through a host of experimental shorts, documentaries, features, and symposiums with visiting international artists.

Dance Camera West events are supported in part by the Metabolic Studio of the Annenberg Foundation, Mortimer Levitt Foundation, James Irvine Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Los Angeles County Arts Commission and Quebec Government Office-Los Angeles.

Please visit DCW's website for continuous updates - www.dancecamerawest.org.

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For more information, photos, or to set up interviews, please contact Green Galactic's Lynn Hasty at 213-840-1201 or lynn@greengalactic.com.