P.O.V.’s “Arctic Son,” Tuesday, Aug. 21 on PBS

Canadian Yukon Is Spectacular Setting for Reunion Between Troubled Young Man and Estranged Father Pursuing Traditional Native Life

“[An] intimate doc that required extraordinary access . . . [a] beautiful slice-of-life” – Andrea Meyer, IndieWIRE

**MEDIA ALERT – FACT SHEET**

Summary: The P.O.V. series (a cinema term for “point of view”) celebrates its 20th year on PBS in 2007. It is American television’s longest-running independent documentary series. P.O.V. is broadcast **Tuesdays at 10 p.m.** (check local listings), June through September on PBS, with primetime specials in the fall and winter.

Airdate: P.O.V.’s Arctic Son by Andrew Walton airs nationally **Tuesday, Aug. 21 at 10 p.m. on PBS.** (Check local listings.)

Description: In Arctic Son, the clash of tradition and modernity puts a Native father and son at odds in the remote village of Old Crow, 80 miles above the Arctic Circle. Stanley Jr., raised in Seattle, is drifting deeper into drinking and partying. Stanley Sr., a distant, philosophical figure to his son, keeps the ways of his Gwitchin ancestors alive by hunting, fishing and living by his wits in the harsh arctic environment. After a lifetime apart, the two are reunited in the raw, quiet beauty of the Canadian Yukon in a story that captures the dialogue between a father and son from vastly different worlds.

In Old Crow, there are no strip malls, restaurants, bars, movie theaters or even roads in or out. What Old Crow does have plenty of is natural beauty, a punishing climate and isolation. As Stan Sr. says, “there are two kinds of people in Old Crow, those who want to be here and those who can’t afford to live anywhere else.” He is one of the former. After youthful experiences with urban modernity “down south,” which included his own bouts with alcohol and drugs, he returned to Old Crow.

This tiny village, population 250, would enable Stan Sr. to live the traditional fishing and hunting life of his First Nations’ Gwitchin people. Now he’s hoping to instill these same traditions in his adult son to help give him a new direction and repair their distant relationship. Stan Jr., despite a flair for art, is a self-described “black sheep.” He views going to Old Crow with an amused cynicism. Yet there’s also the sense that he wants to be rescued — above all by the father he’s lacked till now.

Filmmaker’s Statement: “Arctic Son is the result of 10 years of hard work and was inspired by my chance meeting with a former Gwitchin Chief named Johnny Abel,” says director Andrew Walton. “Johnny felt that a film about the Gwitchin lifestyle could be a valuable tool in preserving the culture. I didn’t plan to tell this story through a father and son who had been estranged for most of their lives, but this story emerged as one of the strongest cultural lessons I witnessed.”
Andrew Walton, Director
Since beginning his career in 1997 by directing a project for MTV, Andrew Walton has avidly pursued a humanistic style of storytelling using evocative portraiture and stylized realism. He has directed commercials, short films and Internet content for some of the world’s top ad agencies and brands: The Nature Conservancy, McDonald’s, Ford Motor Company, Kimberly Clark, Teach for America, Eli Lilly and The United Way, among others. Arctic Son is his first documentary feature. Walton grew up in Grosse Pointe, Mich., where he began experimenting with film and video cameras at a young age. He attended the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and lives in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Length: 86:46

Festivals: Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, Durham, N.C., 2006 – World Premiere
Hot Docs Film Festival, Toronto, 2006 – Canadian Premiere
Independents Night by IFP & the Film Society of Lincoln Center, New York, 2006
Independent Film Festival of Boston, 2006
Seattle International Film Festival, 2006
Newport International Film Festival, 2006
National Geographic’s All Roads Film Festival, Los Angeles; Washington, D.C.; Santa Fe, 2006

Credits:
Director: Andrew Walton
Producers: Dallas Brennan Rexer and Elizabeth Mandel
Cinematographers: Jonathan Furmanski and Jeff Stonehouse
Editor: Bryan Gunnar Cole
Original Score: Michael Rohatyn

Arctic Son is a production of New York-based Arts Engine, Inc./Big Mouth Films.

P.O.V. Web: The Arctic Son companion Web site (www.pbs.org/pov/arcticson) offers a streaming video trailer of the film, an interview with filmmaker Andrew Walton (video, podcast and text); a list of related Web sites, organizations and books; a discussion guide and classroom activity; and this special feature:

Additional Scenes
Watch edited videos of footage not included in the film, including a history of the Gwitchin Tribe and Old Crow, an expanded look at Stan Jr.’s artwork, an explanation of the Gwitchin people’s 20-year campaign to protect the calving grounds of the porcupine caribou herd, and a look at the "zen" and art of skidoo maintenance.

Outreach: P.O.V. is working with public television stations and national and community-based groups across the country to foster community dialogue around the issues presented in Arctic Son. For a list of upcoming screening and discussion events, go to http://www.amdoc.org/outreach_news.php

P.O.V. also works with nationally recognized media educator Dr. Faith Rogow to develop a facilitation guide with discussion questions and background information to help event organizers carry out discussions around the film’s content. Cari Ladd has created the lesson plan. In addition, the American Library Association and P.O.V. have created a multimedia resource list of related fiction and nonfiction books and videos that further explore the issues. The materials are available free of charge at www.amdoc.org/outreach.


P.O.V.: Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and celebrating its 20th season on PBS in 2007, the award-winning P.O.V. series is the longest-running showcase on television to feature the work of America’s best contemporary-issue independent filmmakers. P.O.V.
has brought more than 250 documentaries to millions nationwide, and has a Webby Award-winning online series, *P.O.V.’s Borders*. Since 1988, P.O.V. has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. More information about P.O.V is available at [www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov).

Major funding for P.O.V. is provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Ford Foundation, the Educational Foundation of America, PBS and public television viewers. Funding for P.O.V.’s *Diverse Voices Project* is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, with additional support from JPMorgan Chase Foundation, the official sponsor of P.O.V.’s 20th Anniversary Campaign. P.O.V. is presented by a consortium of PBS stations including KCET Los Angeles, WGBH Boston, and Thirteen/WNET New York.

**TAPE REQUESTS:** Please note that broadcast versions of the films are available upon request, as the films may be edited to comply with new FCC regulations.