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POV Kicks Off 25th Season with ‘My Reincarnation,’ an Intimate yet Epic Story Of Spiritual Struggle Between Father and Son, Thursday, June 21, 2012 on PBS

High Tibetan Buddhist Teacher and Scholar Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche Believes his Italian-born Son, Yeshe, Is the Reincarnation of a Buddhist Master, but Yeshe Just Wants to Live a Normal Italian Life

“A remarkable documentary.”— Daniel M. Gold, The New York Times

MEDIA ALERT – FACT SHEET

National Dates: **My Reincarnation** opens POV’s 25th anniversary season on **Thursday, June 21, 2012**, at 10 p.m. on PBS. The season continues on Thursdays at 10 p.m. through Oct. 25 and concludes with fall and winter specials. (Check local listings.) American television’s longest-running independent documentary series, POV is the winner of a Special Emmy for Excellence in Television Documentary Filmmaking, two IDA awards for Best Continuing Series and the NALIP award for Corporate Commitment to Diversity.

The Film: Filmed over 20 years by acclaimed documentarian Jennifer Fox, **My Reincarnation** chronicles the epic story of exiled Tibetan Buddhist master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and his Western-born son, Yeshe. As Norbu rises as a teacher in the West, Yeshe, recognized from birth as the reincarnation of a famed Buddhist master, breaks away to embrace the modern world. Can the father convince his son to keep the family’s spiritual legacy alive? With intimate access to both the family and H.H. the Dalai Lama, Fox distills a decades-long drama into a universal story about love, transformation and destiny.

Fox began filming Namkhai Norbu in 1988 when, as a filmmaker and student of the Dzogchen tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, she took a four-year sabbatical from filmmaking and worked as his secretary. She started out recording his everyday life, including his work, family and travels, documenting a spiritual life to which she’d been given unusual access. She returned 13 years later, and periodically after that, until 2009, amassing more than 1,000 hours of footage shot in Italy and places all over the world where the family traveled, including Venezuela, Russia and the United States (in Massachusetts and New York).

My Reincarnation is a co-production of Zohe Film Productions, Buddhist Broadcasting Foundation, Lichblick Film, Ventura Film and Vivo Film.

Embed a trailer, download press materials and learn more at www.pbs.org/pressroom.

POV Website: POV's website for **My Reincarnation** www.pbs.org/pov/myreincarnation/ offers a broad range of exclusive online content to enhance its broadcast. Watch the full film online for free for a limited time following the broadcast (June 22, 2012 to Sept. 20, 2012), download the discussion guide, lesson plans and other viewing resources, view photos from the film, and interact with the filmmaker through video interviews and an online Q&A soon after the documentary airs on POV.

Outreach: POV works with public television stations and national and community groups across the country to foster dialogue around the issues presented in our films. For a list of upcoming screening events go to <http://www.pbs.org/pov/outreach>. POV and nationally recognized media educator Dr. Faith Rogow have developed a discussion guide with background information to help event organizers. Cari Ladd, M.Ed., has created a lesson plan. Educators may record and show **My Reincarnation** in their classrooms for one year following the premiere broadcast.

Summer Tour: Meet the film's protagonist, Tibetan Buddhist Master Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, in-person during his 2012 U.S. Summer Teaching Tour. For more information, visit www.tsegylgar.org. Read more: *The Crystal and the Way of Light* by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche (Snow Lion Publications, www.snowlionpub.com).

Filmmaker's Statement: "For all that is so interesting about Tibetan Buddhism in today's world, I was always drawn by the universal father-son struggle," says director Fox. "Namkhai Norbu wants to save his traditional culture and faith by passing them onto Yeshe. But Yeshe wants nothing more than to be modern. What is extraordinary for Yeshe is that questions of personal identity become entangled in the fate of a 2,500-year-old spiritual tradition.

"The father-son story is a narrative that we can all relate to, as the protagonists discover that love often doesn't look the way we expect it to look," she continues. "By the same token, the film is an entry into this world of esoteric Buddhism, which acknowledges that there is so much more to the universe than what we see. On a deep level, most religions share the core of this belief. I've been really gratified that **My Reincarnation** has inspired people to talk about their spirituality, to open up conversations among Tibetan Buddhists, rabbis, shamans and priests. It's been an incredible journey in faith."

Filmmaker Bio: [Jennifer Fox \(Director, Co-producer, Cinematographer\)](#)
Jennifer Fox is an internationally acclaimed director, producer, camerawoman and educator. Her first film, *Beirut: The Last Home Movie* won seven international awards, including Best Documentary Film and Best Cinematography at the 1988 Sundance Film Festival and Best Documentary at the 1988 Cinema Du Reel Festival, Paris.

She produced, directed and shot the groundbreaking ten-hour PBS/BBC/ARTE series *An American Love Story*, which received a Gracie Award for Best Television Series and was named "One of the Top Ten Television Series of 1999" by *The New York Times*, *Time Out*, *The Boston Globe*, *Time* magazine and the *New York Daily News*. Fox also co-produced, directed and shot the Danish co-production/Sundance Channel's internationally acclaimed six-part film *Flying: Confessions of a Free Woman*. Fox's credits include serving as executive producer of many award-winning films including *Love & Diane* (POV 2003); *On the Ropes*; *Double Exposure*; *Cowboys, Lawyers and Indians*; *Absolutely Safe?*; *Project Ten: Real Stories From a Free South Africa*; and the dramatic feature *Upstate*. She has consulted on numerous documentaries, including Sundance Grand Prize winner *Southern Comfort* and the Slamdance Grand Prize winner *Stone Reader*.

Fox, who was born in Philadelphia and now lives in New York and Zurich, lectures and teaches filmmaking nationally and internationally.

Related Stories: "China Detains Hundreds After Tibet Immolations," Voice of America, May 31, 2012. <http://tinyurl.com/ccfa9sw>

“First Person, ‘My Reincarnation’ Director on Her 20 Years in the Making Spiritual Doc,”
Indiewire.com, Oct. 28, 2011. www.indiewire.com/article/first_person_my_reincarnation

“Buddhist Samaya and the Making of ‘My Reincarnation’,” by Jennifer Fox, *The Huffington Post*, May 23, 2011. <http://tinyurl.com/7jkdwav>

Credits: Director: Jennifer Fox
Co-producers: Jennifer Fox, Babeth M. Vanloo, Carl Ludwig Rettinger, Andres Pfaeffli, Elda Guidinetti, Marta Donzelli, Gregorio Paonessa
Executive Producers: Dan Cogan, Adrian Melnikov, Joanna Plafsky
Cinematographer: Jennifer Fox
Editor: Sabine Krayenbuhl
Original Music: Jan Tilman Schade, Moe Jaksch
Running Time: 86:46

POV Series Credits:

Executive Producer: Simon Kilmurry
Co-Executive Producer: Cynthia López
VP, Production & Programming: Chris White
Series Producer: Yance Ford
Coordinating Producer: Andrew Catauro

Awards & Festivals:

Top 20 Audience Award, International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, 2010
Golden Eagle Award, CINE Golden Eagle Film & Video Competition, 2010
Silver Palm Award, Mexico International Film Festival, 2011
Official Selection, Hamptons International Film Festival, 2011
Official Selection, Sydney Film Festival, 2011
Official Selection, Asian Buddhist Film Festival, 2011
Official Selection, Hot Docs Canadian International Film Festival, 2012
Official Selection, DocPoint-Helsinki Documentary Film Festival, 2012

Pressroom: Visit POV’s pressroom, www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom, for press releases, downloadable art, filmmaker biographies, transcripts and special features.

POV: Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and celebrating its 25th season on PBS in 2012, the award-winning POV is the longest-running showcase on American television to feature the work of today’s best independent documentary filmmakers. POV has brought more than 325 acclaimed documentaries to millions nationwide and has a Webby Award-winning online series, *POV’s Borders*. Since 1988, POV 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. Visit www.pbs.org/pov.

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