

**‘America ReFramed’ Announces Addition of *By Water*,
an Animated Experimental Short Film,
directed by Iyabo Kwayana and an Official Selection of the
Animation Short Film Program at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival**

The film will debut in February as part of Season 11 of the award-winning television and streaming series produced by WORLD Channel and American Documentary



An unlikely hero's journey into his own memories becomes a vehicle for reconciliation and healing for himself and his sibling.

Park City, UT — Friday, January 20th, 2023 — [America ReFramed](#), the award-winning series produced by WORLD Channel and American Documentary, announced today the addition of the short film [By Water](#), directed by Iyabo Kwayana and produced by BlackStar Projects' founder and Chief Executive & Artistic Officer and former American Documentary board member, Maori Karmael Holmes. The film is an official selection of the Animation Short Film Program at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival. A co-production of WORLD Channel and BlackStar Projects, ***By Water*** will debut as part of the 11th Season of the television and streaming series launching February 2023 on WORLD Channel.

“America ReFramed has a long legacy of supporting, showcasing, artist-driven films spanning American culture, race, healthcare, politics, civil rights and religion,” said Erika Dilday, executive director/executive producer of American Documentary | POV. “With the addition of Iyabo Kwayana’s visual work, **By Water** to our catalog, the series has another form of storytelling to present to our audience.”

“Presenting **By Water** in America ReFramed is an exciting opportunity that enhances WORLD’s partnership with Iyabo Kwayana and BlackStar Film Festival,” said Chris Hastings, executive producer for WORLD Channel at GBH in Boston. “Ten years ago, WORLD Channel partnered with American Documentary to create America ReFramed, shaped by a desire to tell the many stories of a diverse and changing America. **By Water** is a proof point for this success, as recognized by Sundance. We are thrilled to be able to share this film with audiences across the country.

By Water, will be the first animated experimental film to appear on America ReFramed. This short film follows an unlikely hero’s journey into his own memories and becomes a vehicle for reconciliation and healing for himself and his sibling. Based on a true story, the film was written and inspired by Iyabo Kwayana’s personal experience. After an unexpected voicemail 3 years after his disappearance, Kwayana made the decision to heed the instructions of her brother’s message and create **By Water** as a way to ‘complete’ her brother’s story.”

In 2020, WORLD Channel partnered with BlackStar Film Festival for the second annual BlackStar Pitch, an annual grant focused on documentary short projects. Kwayana’s **By Water** won the top prize and a \$25,000 co-production deal from WORLD Channel. The award was handed out at a ceremony held during the festival.

Iyabo Kwayana is an independent filmmaker and cinematographer who uses sensorial and immersive techniques in cinematography, directing and editing in order to amplify the more discreet, often hidden aspects of film narratives, compelling viewers towards an immersive, supra-sensorial, and transformative experience.

A tentpole program of public television’s WORLD Channel, America ReFramed brings to life compelling stories, personal voices and experiences that illuminate the contours of our ever-changing country. Since 2012, the anthology series has premiered 179 films from more than 380 filmmakers, including works from established artists like **Shola Lynch, Deann Borshay Liem** and **Marshall Curry** and featured broadcast debuts of **Nicholas Bruckman, Ursula Liang** and **PJ Raval**. More than half of these documentaries were helmed by female filmmakers and a third are credited to BIPOC filmmakers. The series has centered the stories of the LGBTQ community, people with

disabilities, the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated, veterans, seniors, immigrants and people from a myriad of backgrounds.

America ReFramed, a series co-produced by [WORLD Channel](#) and [American Documentary](#), airs every Thursday at 8pmET/7C on WORLD Channel. America ReFramed is available on [worldchannel.org](#), [amdoc.org](#), [WORLD Channel's YouTube Channel](#) and on all station-branded PBS platforms, including [PBS.org](#) and the [PBS Video app](#), available on iOS, Android, Roku streaming devices, Apple TV, Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO. Episodes of America ReFramed also roll out weekly on-air and online on [Link TV](#) (Direct TV channel 375 & Dish Network channel 9410).

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Credits

Director/Editor: Iyabo Kwayana
Executive Producer: Chris Hastings
Producers: Chris Hastings, Maori Karmael Holmes, Nevo Shinaar
Animation Director: Charlotte Bee Her Hong
Animator: Iona Waller
Additional Producer: Giuliana Foulkes
Animation Assistants: Georgia Reid, Sarah Oh, Joshua Davis
Additional Animation: Mira Ram, Joshua Davis
Key Collaborator: Luther Clement Lam
Co-Creator: Alaf Kwayana
Sound Design: Josh Ascalon
Sound Mixer: Jim Sullivan
Year: 2022
Language: English
Country: USA
Run Time: 12min

About the Filmmakers

Iyabo Kwayana, Director, ***By Water***

Kwayana is an independent filmmaker whose career spans from serving as director/DP of fiction films, to director/(co)cinematographer of award-winning documentaries. Her work has been licensed by both Criterion Channel and the World Channel-PBS and has screened widely both domestically and internationally on the festival circuit.

Maori Karmael Holmes, Producer, ***By Water***

Maori is a curator, filmmaker and writer. She founded BlackStar in 2012 and serves as its Chief Executive & Artistic Officer. As a director, her works have screened internationally including her feature documentary *Scene Not Heard: Women in Philadelphia Hip-Hop*. She has directed and produced works for Colorlines.com, Visit Philadelphia, as well as the musicians India.Arie, Mike Africa, Jr., and Wayna. She is a founding member of Lalibela Baltimore and is a member of Brown Girls Doc Mafia, The Community Board, and Programmers of Colour Collective. Maori was a 2019-2020 Soros Equality Fellow, a 2021 DOC NYC Documentary New Leader Honoree, and named as one of the Kennedy Center's #Next50 List. In 2019, she was included in *Essence Magazine's* Woke 100 List and in 2022 she was included among *Philadelphia Magazine's* 100 Most Influential Philadelphians as well as the "Best Film Mogul". She additionally serves as Mediamaker-in-Residence at the Annenberg School for Communication at University of Pennsylvania and Curator-at-Large at Penn Live Arts at Annenberg Center.

About America ReFramed

America ReFramed is a co-production of [WORLD Channel](#) and **American Documentary, Inc.** The series curates a diverse selection of independent documentaries that brings to national audiences compelling stories which illuminate the changing contours of our ever-evolving country. Viewers will be immersed in stories that span the spectrum of American life, from the streets of towns big and small to its exurbs and country roads. The documentary series presents an array of personal voices and experiences through which we learn from our past, understand our present and are challenged to seek new frameworks for America's future.

America ReFramed received a Peabody Award for [Deej](#) and an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award for [Class of '27](#). The series has earned several Christopher, GRACIE, Telly and Cine Golden Eagle Awards, as well as multiple nominations for Emmy, Independent Documentary Association and Imagen Awards.

About American Documentary, Inc.

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These activities are designed to

trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.

Major funding for POV is provided by PBS, the Open Society Foundations, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Wyncote Foundation, Reva & David Logan Foundation, Park Foundation, and Perspective Fund. Additional funding comes from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, Sage Foundation, Chris and Nancy Plaut, Ann Tenenbaum and Thomas H. Lee and public television viewers. POV is presented by a consortium of public television stations, including KQED San Francisco, WGBH Boston and THIRTEEN in association with WNET.ORG.

About BlackStar Projects

BlackStar Projects is the producer of the BlackStar Film Festival, an annual celebration of the visual and storytelling traditions of the African diaspora and global communities of color—showcasing films by Black, Brown, and Indigenous people from around the world. In addition to the acclaimed festival, BlackStar presents an array of programming across film and visual culture year-round, including the twice-annual journal *Seen*, the podcast *Many Lumens*, the William and Louise Greaves Filmmaker Seminar, and the Philadelphia Filmmaker Lab, among other initiatives.

About WORLD Channel

WORLD shares the best of public media in news, documentaries and programming. WORLD's original series examine the issues and amplify the voices of those often ignored by mainstream media. The multicast 24/7 channel helps audiences understand conflicts, movements and cultures from around the globe. Its original work has won a Peabody Award, an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Award, an IDA Documentary Award, a National News and Documentary Emmy Award, two Webby Awards and many others honoring diversity of content and makers. WORLD is carried by 191 member stations in markets representing 74% of US TV households. Funding for WORLD Channel is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts and Artworks. WORLD is produced by GBH in partnership with WNET and is distributed by American Public Television (APT). Find out more at WORLDChannel.org.

