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**“PACIFIC HEARTBEAT” IS BACK WITH ITS NINTH SEASON OF INDIE FILMS FROM THE
PACIFIC ISLANDS AND BEYOND ON PUBLIC TELEVISION**

***-Season Nine Features Three New Documentary Films—and Two Audience-Favorite Encores
—to Air on WORLD Channel and PBS Stations Nationwide in April, May and June-***

(Honolulu) - Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC) announced today the line-up for **season nine** of its flagship public television series, ***Pacific Heartbeat***, with three new documentary films and two encore presentations that chronicle the Pacific Islander experience from Hawai'i to Samoa, Kiribati, to Papua New Guinea, New Zealand and beyond. The new season will be available to viewers on U.S. public television and online, **beginning April 19, 2020**.

"There is only one signature series on television that showcases the lives and experiences of Pacific Islanders, here in the U.S. and around the world, and ***Pacific Heartbeat*** is back in 2020 for its ninth consecutive season", said Leanne Ferrer, Executive Director of Pacific Islanders in Communications. "The ***Pacific Heartbeat*** series enriches people's hearts and minds by sharing the stories of Pacific Islander history, culture and contemporary challenges on national PBS and with the world online."

Pacific Heartbeat is presented through a partnership between [Pacific Islanders in Communications](#) and [PBS Hawai'i](#), and is distributed by Boston-based [American Public Television](#) (APT) and **broadcast nationally on [WORLD Channel](#)** (distributed by APT in partnership with WGBH & WNET), **in addition to hundreds of scheduled broadcasts on local PBS stations.**

Now in its ninth consecutive season, *Pacific Heartbeat* is an anthology series that provides viewers a glimpse of the real Pacific—its people, cultures, languages, music, and contemporary issues. From revealing exposés to rousing musical performances, the series features a diverse array of programs that will draw viewers into the heart and soul of Pacific Island culture.

Films are selected each year from among numerous submissions, including projects funded by PIC with support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Pacific Heartbeat Season Nine Line-Up

[Anote's Ark](#)

Episode PH 901 (60 mins)
Coming April 2020
By Matthieu Rytz

The remote Pacific Island nation of Kiribati is one of the first countries in the world that must confront the effects of climate change. The imminent annihilation from sea-level rise is at their shores, and Kiribati's President Anote Tong must find a way to save his people. Set against the backdrop of international climate and human rights negotiations, Tong's struggle for global action is intertwined with the intimate story of Sermary, a young mother of six migrating from Kiribati to New Zealand to escape the rising tides. At stake is the survival of Sermary's family, the Kiribati people, and 4,000 years of Kiribati culture.

Power Meri

Episode PH 902 (60 mins)

Coming May 2020

By Joanna Lester

Power Meri follows Papua New Guinea's first national women's rugby league team, the PNG Orchids, on their journey to the 2017 World Cup in Australia. These trailblazers must beat not only the sporting competition, but also intense sexism, a lack of funding, and national prejudice to reach their biggest stage yet. Proud, strong and hopeful, these women have overcome more challenges than most to take the field in their much-loved national sport. But after years playing at grassroots level with no coaches, funding or support, they have just three months to transform themselves into a competitive national team to take up an invitation to compete on the world stage.

Born This Way

Episode PH 903 (40 mins)

Coming June 2020

By Mitchell Hawks

In New Zealand, Te Awarangi 'Awa' Puna is an openly transgender Maori teen attending her final year at Kapiti College in Wellington, New Zealand. This documentary follows her journey from male to female as we see the support of her family and the hurdles she must overcome.

The Rogers

Episode PH 903 (16 mins)

Double feature with *Born This Way*

Coming June 2020

By Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson

An intimate glimpse into the lives of those who formed the first visible group of transgender men in the Pacific Islands - The Rogers of Samoa – as they build an outside oven, seek romance, and prepare to perform a traditional men's dance in public. While still facing many obstacles, their stories illustrate the power that comes when those rejected by society create their own community.

Mele Murals

(Encore Presentation, May 2020)

Episode PH 601 (60 mins)

By Tadashi Nakamura and Keoni Lee

Mele Murals is a documentary about the transformative power of art through the unlikely union of graffiti and ancient Hawaiian culture. At the center of this story are the artists Estria Miyashiro (aka Estria) and John Hina (aka Prime), and a group of Native Hawaiian youth from the rural community of Waimea, HI. Together they create a mural that addresses the ill effects of environmental changes and encroaching modernization on their native culture. Mele Murals shows how public art combined with Native Hawaiian traditions transforms the students, the local community and, unexpectedly, the two artists as they rediscover their own identities and responsibilities as Hawaiian artists.

Prison Songs

(Encore Presentation, May 2020)

Episode PH 801 (60 mins)

By Kelrick Martin and Harry Bardwell

The people imprisoned in a Darwin jail are shown in a unique and completely new light in Australia's first ever documentary musical. Incarcerated in tropical Northern Territory, over 800 inmates squeeze into the overcrowded spaces of Berrimah Prison. In an Australian first, the inmates share their feelings, faults and experiences in the most extraordinary way – through song.

About Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC):

Established in 1991, Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC) is the only national public media organization that supports media content and its makers to work together to promote a deeper understanding of Pacific Islander history, culture and contemporary issues that define our communities. PIC addresses the need for media content that reflects America's growing ethnic and cultural diversity by funding independently produced media, and by providing hundreds of hours of innovative media by and about Pacific Islanders to American public television including its flagship series *Pacific Heartbeat*. For more information about Pacific Islanders in Communications and *Pacific Heartbeat*, visit www.piccom.org and follow us on social media: Twitter: @PICpacific | facebook.com/piccom | Instagram: @picpacific

About American Public Television (APT):

[American Public Television](http://www.aptonline.org) (APT) is the leading syndicator of high-quality, top-rated programming to the nation's public television stations. APT distributes one-fourth of the top 100 highest-rated public television titles in the U.S. Founded in 1961, among its 250 new program titles per year, APT programs include prominent documentary anthology series such as *Pacific Heartbeat* and *AfroPop*, performance, news and current affairs programs, dramas, how-to programs, children's series, and classic movies -- many of which are considered some of the most popular on public television. For the complete catalog, visit [APTonline.org](http://www.aptonline.org).

About WORLD Channel:

WORLD Channel tells stories that humanize complex issues. WORLD shares the best of public media in news, documentaries, and fact-based informational programming that helps us understand conflicts, movements and cultures that may be distinct from our own. WORLD's Emmy® Award-winning original content offers a national platform to makers examining issues too often ignored by mainstream media. These emerging and master filmmakers spotlight a diversity of voices, telling stories not heard elsewhere. Carried by 165 partner stations in markets representing almost 67% of US TV households, WORLD can also be experienced via [WORLDChannel.org](http://www.worldchannel.org) and social media platforms.

About PBS Hawai'i:

PBS Hawaii is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and Hawaii's sole member of the trusted PBS system. We advance learning and discovery through storytelling that profoundly touches people's lives. We bring the world to Hawaii and Hawaii to the world.

PBSHawaii.org | facebook.com/pbshawaii | @pbshawaii

About the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA):

Established by Congress in 1965, the NEA is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the NEA supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America.

About the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB):

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private, nonprofit corporation created by Congress in 1967, is the steward of the federal government's investment in public broadcasting. It helps support the operations of nearly 1,500 locally owned and operated public television and radio stations nationwide. CPB is also the largest single source of funding for research, technology, and program development for public radio, television, and related online services. For more information, visit www.cpb.org and follow us on Twitter [@CPBmedia](https://twitter.com/CPBmedia), [Facebook](https://facebook.com/CPBmedia), and [LinkedIn](https://linkedin.com/company/cpb), and [subscribe](mailto:info@cpb.org) for email updates.

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