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## **“PACIFIC HEARTBEAT” IS BACK WITH A SLATE OF NEW INDIE FILMS FROM THE PACIFIC ISLANDS AND BEYOND, IN MAY 2019**

**-- Season Eight Features Four New Documentary Films—and One Memorial Encore—to Air on WORLD Channel and PBS Stations Nationwide for Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month--**

(Honolulu) - Pacific Islanders in Communications announced today the line-up for **season eight** of its flagship public television series, “**Pacific Heartbeat**,” with four new documentary films (and one encore) that chronicle the Pacific Islander experience from Hawai‘i to the continental USA, Tonga, Australia, Easter Island, London, England, and beyond. The new season will be available to viewers on U.S. public television and online, **beginning April 29, 2019**.

"We are thrilled to present the eighth season of this signature series that showcases the lives and experiences of Pacific Islanders, here in the U.S and around the world," 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 this growing global diaspora with the world."

*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 eighth 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.

This season’s films include an encore broadcast *Let’s Play Music! Slack Key with Cyril Pahinui and Friends*, to honor the memory of the “[crown prince of Hawaiian Slack-Key](#),” Cyril Pahinui, who passed away on November 17, 2018. This episode originally aired on *Pacific Heartbeat* in 2013.

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 Eight Films (5 x 60 mins.):**

#### **Prison Songs**

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.

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### **Leitis in Waiting**

Episode PH 802 (60 mins)

By Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu, Dean Hamer, Joe Wilson

Leitis in Waiting tells the story of Tonga's evolving approach to gender fluidity through a character-driven portrait of the most prominent leiti (transgender) in the Kingdom, Joey Mataele, a devout Catholic of royal descent. Over the course of an eventful year, Joey organizes a beauty pageant, mentors a young leiti who is rejected by her family, and attempts to work with fundamentalist Christians regarding Tonga's anti-sodomy and cross-dressing laws. Her story reveals what it means to be different in a deeply religious and conservative society, and what it takes to be accepted without giving up who you are.

### **Te Kuhane o te Tupuna**

Episode PH 803 (60 mins)

By Leonardo Pakarati and Paula Rossetti

This documentary film is a journey from Easter Island to London, in search of the lost Moai Hoa Haka Nanaia, a statue of significant cultural importance. It explores the social and political landscape of the island of Rapanui as the people attempt to claim back what is rightfully theirs: their land and a lava-rock image of tremendous presence, representing one of the world's most extraordinary cosmological views.

### **Corridor Four**

Episode PH 804 (60 mins)

By Stephen Tringali and Maria Bissell

A nationally recognized K9 Unit Officer, Isaac Ho'opi'i is responsible for saving numerous people from the Pentagon during the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Countless articles were written about his heroism following 9/11. He was photographed by Richard Avedon for a spread in USA Today. He appeared on NBC's Today Show. And he ran the Olympic Torch on its way to Salt Lake City for the 2002 Winter Olympics.

Corridor Four is a documentary that illustrates Isaac's story in the aftermath of 9/11. After all the news cameras had turned off and all the lights had dimmed, Isaac was left only with the horrific images he had seen and the memory of those he was unable to save. His is a story not of a hero basking in the glory of his past deeds, but of a human being filled with regret that he couldn't change something completely out of his control.

### **Let's Play Music! Slack Key with Cyril Pahinui and Friends**

Episode PH 805 (60 mins)

By Na'alehu Anthony

Master slack key musician Cyril Pahinui, jams with some of the most revered and talented musicians in Hawai'i in intimate kanikapila style backyard performances. Cyril was the son of Gabby "Pop" Pahinui, who is considered the "Godfather" of Hawaiian slack key guitar and whose music was featured prominently in the Academy Award winning film, *The Descendants*.

[Cyril Pahinui passed away on November 17, 2018](#); this encore broadcast is dedicated to him.

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**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](http://www.piccom.org)

**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:**

The WORLD Channel delivers the best of public television's nonfiction, news and documentary programming, including original content by and about diverse communities, to U.S. audiences through local public television stations and streaming online at [worldchannel.org](http://worldchannel.org). WORLD reached 35.8 million unique viewers 18+ last year (55% adults 18-49) and over-indexes in key diversity demographics. Online, the WORLD Channel expands on broadcast topics and fuels dialogue across social media, providing opportunities for broad and diverse audience interaction. For more information about The WORLD Channel, visit [www.worldchannel.org](http://www.worldchannel.org).

**About PBS Hawai'i:**

PBS Hawaii is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and Hawaii's sole member of the trusted Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). 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](http://PBShawaii.org) | [facebook.com/pbshawaii](https://www.facebook.com/pbshawaii) | [@pbshawaii](https://twitter.com/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](http://www.cpb.org) and follow us on Twitter [@CPBmedia](https://twitter.com/CPBmedia), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CPBmedia), and [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cpb), and [subscribe](#) for email updates.

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