

INDIANLAND



PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY LIZ IRONS
ironfly100@gmail.com

CONTENTS

THE STORY

FEATURING

ABOUT THE FILM

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

LINKS

POSTER

THE STORY

**In 1969, Indians took over Alcatraz Island.
...50 years later, they're back.**



On the night before the big 50th-year reunion, Jonny BearCub sits focused on what will unfold in the following days. The next morning, veterans of the 1969 “Indian Takeover” – the ones who are still alive and willing to make the trek – will meet on Alcatraz Island to share what they remember about living on the Island; some taking the stage, and some just there to listen and see old friends. Decades ago, these young Indian students were brought together by urgency, desire, fire and anger at the US policies of Indian Termination and Relocation. In *Indianland*, their stories, observations, achievements and yet-to-be dreams are revealed and intertwined, and at the end of the week, it’s clear that what started a long time ago has yet to be finished.

FEATURING

Jonny BearCub Stiffarm

David Leach

Herb Butler

Geneva Seaboy

William Patrick Ryan, Sr.

Rosemary WhiteWater

Janice Ochoa

Buffy Sainte-Marie

and others



ABOUT THE FILM

A few years after **Alcatraz** closed its gates as a prison, a group of high-spirited **young Indians – mostly students** crossed the San Francisco Bay and took over Alcatraz Island. Despite the bitter cold and the lack of water and electricity, they stayed and **controlled Alcatraz for 19 months**, governing themselves and creating a modern Indian **cooperative** village while they negotiated with the government about their treaty rights to the land.

– Now it's November, 2019, and some of the veterans of the occupation reconvene for a reunion on Alcatraz. Filmed on Alcatraz at the 50th anniversary of the takeover, the interviews in *Indianland* associate jarred memories and personal stories with a dose of education on treaty rights and a dash of whispering ancestral knowledge – all spoken in strong, modern voices.

ABOUT JONNY BEARCUB STIFFARM

Jonny BearCub Stiffarm is an enrolled member of the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Nations. A regular lecturer at Fort Peck Community College, she is passionate about her tribes' work in the restoration of bison and tribal sustainable herds. Jonny is semi-retired from Native, Inc. where she still serves as the Director of Business Development. In addition to being an occupier during the American Indian takeover of Alcatraz Island (1969-71), Jonny is a co-producer of the 2022 film, *Indianland*, which documents recollections of the time there. She holds a Juris Doctorate from the Univ. of Minnesota School of Law and Bachelor of Sciences from Brigham Young University. Her greatest joy is her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Jonny BearCub
Stiffarm is an enrolled
member of the Fort



A close-up portrait of Liz Irons, a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with green foliage and a hazy sky.

LIZ IRONS, DIRECTOR

A Los Angeles native, Irons has worked in TV, film and music since she was a kid. She has worked with major studios as well as some teeny-tiny production companies, making a reputation for finding the universal humanity in individuals, cultures and situations. *Indianland* is Irons' second feature-length doc. It follows the 2016 film, *Wolf Point Red Road Stories*, which she co-directed with True Archdale and Kelli R. Clark.

ABOUT KELLI R. CLARK



A bit after finishing her first documentary, ***Wolf Point: Red Road Stories***, Kelli retired from a successful 22-year career in 20th Century Fox's Engineering Department, and now continues to use her experience and skills as a Solutions Architect in the Media and Entertainment industries. Kelli follows her love of photography and light using the latest camera and image acquisition technologies on projects like *Indianland*, and others. This is the second feature collaboration for Kelli R. Clark and Liz Irons.

LINKS

facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/indiansonalcatraz>

Trailer:

<https://vimeo.com/zillymo/indianlandtrailer>

Irons' portfolio website:

<https://vimeo.com/zillymo>

FAQ

Q: How long did it take to make the film?

A: Almost 3 years. Our timing with Covid-19 was pretty poor. I really had to rethink what I was going to do. I ended up doing all the post myself.

Q: Where does the title come from?

A: There's a recording of a "Radio Free Alcatraz" Interview where John Trudell, says, "Welcome to Indianland, Alcatraz Island..." It really stuck with me; the sound of it. It can have many meanings.

Q: What made you want to make this doc?

A: I met Jonny BearCub on another film, and the Alcatraz Occupation came up. Any documentation I found on it was mostly focused on just a few people. The 50th anniversary seemed a good time and place to pad the historical record with even more voices.

IN 1969, AMERICAN INDIANS TOOK OVER ALCATRAZ ISLAND.
...50 YEARS LATER, THEY'RE BACK.

INDIANLAND

A LIZ IRONS FILM



PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY LIZ IRONS
CO-PRODUCED BY JONNY BEARCUB STIFFARM AND KELLI R. CLARK

WITH MUSIC BY NAKOA HEAVY RUNNER

COMING SOON