



QUEER WOMEN OF COLOR MEDIA ARTS PROJECT

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- Filmmaker Training
- Queer Women of Color Film Festival
- Distribution

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For Immediate Release

**TWO-SPIRITS: LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, QUEER NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN
Queer Women of Color Film Festival**

San Francisco — When Columbus arrived in the Americas, Two-Spirits: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) Native Americans, were revered and honored in their cultures as ambassadors, treaty negotiators and spiritual leaders. Early Spanish colonists destroyed Two-Spirits by tearing them apart with dogs. English settlers, whose religious beliefs were intolerant of LGBT people, coercively reshaped long-held Native American cultural traditions. The “discovery” of the Americas marks the beginning of the destruction of Native American societies and the important spiritual and cultural position of Two-Spirits.

Although their histories were forcibly silenced, Two-Spirit people have continuously fought to reclaim their voices. Their often-unheard stories place a different spin on notions like “traditional values” and issues like same-sex marriage and immigration. These narratives are also a source of healing for Two-Spirits and the larger Native American and LGBTQ communities.

On Saturday, June 12, 2010, the FREE 6th annual Queer Women of Color Film Festival focuses on “Two-Spirits: Reclaiming Remembrance” in partnership with Native American filmmakers, artists and community organizations. Festival Focus events honor the stories of queer Native American, Indigenous, First Nations women through a Featured Screening, a performance and celebration with Two-Spirit artists and a special community reception at the Brava Theater in the heart of San Francisco’s Mission District.

The Featured Screening ‘**Reclaiming Remembrance**’ showcases films made by Two-Spirit filmmakers including *Two Embrace*, a powerful film by Dine' Navajo/Oneida Iroquois activist Carrie House. This animated short illustrates the Border Tribes and Two-Spirit Peoples' first

encounter with the original immigrants to the Americas: European Christians. *To Be Salvadorian Is To Be Half-Dead*, by Margareth Ramos, explores the ethnic identity of Salvadorans born after the infamous 1932 "La Matanza" Indian massacre. Apache writer Rope Wolf examines American Indian connection to the Bay Area urban Reservation in *Two Spirits: Belonging*. Dine' Navajo educator Esther Lucero and Seminole professor, Dr. Melinda Micco, center their film, *Killing the 7th Generation*, on American Indian women who were sterilized without their consent. Chiricahua Apache elder Ruth Villasenor explores the legacy of colonization that created California's Prop 8 in *Traditional Indigenous Values*.

The celebrations of Two-Spirit Native American artists include performances from poets, singers, drummers, dancers and musicians. Artists include poets Chrystos (Menominee), Reid Gomez (Navajo) and Aja Couchois Duncan (Ojibwe), playwrights Jewelle Gomez (Ioway/Wampanoag) and Cherie Moraga, as well as Danza Azteca and Sweet Medicine Singers. Native American quilts about marriage equality will form the backdrop for the songs of Sundance Two-Spirit Drummers. Two-Spirit elders will open the day with a blessing and a special free reception will be held after the performance.

Festival Focus events are funded by: the California Story Fund of the California Council for the Humanities, California Arts Council, San Francisco Arts Commission Cultural Equity Grants, the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice and other funders. The public is invited to attend the upcoming free 6th annual Queer Women of Color Film Festival. QWOCMAP is excited to celebrate Two-Spirits' stories and 10 years of creating films, filmmakers and community.

What: Queer Women of Color Film Festival Focus:
"Two-Spirits: Reclaiming Remembrance"

When: Saturday, June 12, 2010

4:00 pm: Performance with Two-Spirit Artists

6:00 pm: Special Community Reception

7:00 pm: "Two-Spirits: Reclaiming Remembrance" Screening

Followed by Q&A with filmmakers

All Queer Women of Color Film Festival events are FREE and open to the public.

Where: Brava Theater, 2789 24th Street, San Francisco, CA

~About Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project~

The free annual Queer Women of Color Film Festival is one of many artistic programs that Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project (QWOCMAP) offers to queer women of color and the larger community. QWOCMAP creates, exhibits and distributes new films that authentically reflect the lives of queer women of color and address the vital social justice issues that concern American communities.