



PACIFIC
HEARTBEAT

SEASON 10 DISCUSSION GUIDE

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Now in its TENTH 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.

Pacific Heartbeat is presented by [Pacific Islanders in Communications](#) in partnership with [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.

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](#).

EPISODES

THE AUSTRALIAN DREAM

Directed By: Daniel Gordon
Themes: Racism, Belonging, Indigenous, Identity, Sport

Premiere: May 1st
Country: Australia

FOR MY FATHER'S KINGDOM

Directed by: Ve'a Mafile'o
Themes: Family, Heritage, Culture, Charity, Church, Tongan

Premiere: May 8th
Country: Tonga

STAN

Directed By: Mitchell Hawkes
Themes: Health, Cancer, Music, Māori, Faith

Premiere: May 15th
Country: New Zealand

TOKYO HULA

Directed By: Lisette Marie Flanary
Themes: Hula, Culture, Commodity, Appropriation, Hawaiian

Premiere: May 22nd
Country: Japan, U.S./ Hawai'i



A Note on Our Tenth Anniversary Season

The Pacific Heartbeat series takes viewers on a journey to the heart of the Pacific Islands through the stories of our communities. And we make these stories widely available to U.S. viewers on PBS and online. This year marks our tenth anniversary season and it once again exemplifies the intimate and compelling gaze of our communities across the Pacific and beyond.

Whether it's feature length content for the Pacific Heartbeat TV series in May, brand new shorts available online throughout the year, or an anytime-is-the-right-time exploration of the beauty and majesty of the Pacific Islands, our signature series and other curated content are here to enrich the public television experience all year long.

Leanne Ferrer
Executive Director

Cheryl Hirasa
Managing Director and
Series Producer

THE AUSTRALIAN DREAM

Directed by: Daniel Gordon

Themes: Racism, Belonging, Indigenous, Identity, Sport

[Preview Here](#)



The Australian Dream tells the story of sports legend Adam Goodes and the abrupt end to his career in the Australian Football League (AFL). Goodes' love for the sport is homage to his Indigenous culture, which created the first football game known as Marn Grook. But when he objected to racial abuse from fans, an all-too-familiar experience for Indigenous athletes, Goodes became the target of a sustained boo-ing campaign that drove him from the game. His story raises critical issues of race, identity, and belonging in contemporary Australia.

BACKGROUND

On January 26th, 1788, Britain's First Fleet sailed into Sydney Harbor, marking the first day of European colonization which led to the modern nation of Australia. It was a day that changed the lives of the local Indigenous population forever. The date, commonly celebrated in the country as Australia Day, is mourned by many Indigenous people as Invasion Day.

[Source](#)

The colonization of Australia had devastating effects on Indigenous people, despite their continued resistance. Colonial policies dispossessed Indigenous people from their land and separated families, creating wounds that have lingered across generations. The devastating effects of colonization are apparent in the country's quality of life measures, which show Indigenous people more likely to be incarcerated as youth, struggling with homelessness and unemployment, and living shorter lives. [Source](#)

FACTS

- Indigenous Australians are 2.8 percent of Australia’s population, and 11 percent of the Australia Football League (AFL). [Source](#)
- Marn Grook was a traditional Indigenous game where players punted and caught an animal skin filled with charcoal. Many acknowledge it as the inspiration for Australian football. [Source](#)
- Australia is the only Commonwealth nation where a treaty doesn’t exist between the colonizers and Indigenous people. [Source](#)
- For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people born in 2015-2017, life expectancy was estimated to be approximately 8 years less than for non-Indigenous Australians. [Source](#)

QUESTIONS

What did football mean to Adam Goodes? How did he describe the way it made him feel?

How did it feel to hear the accounts of racism from Goodes and the other Indigenous athletes in the film?

Have you had a conversation with a child about racism? If so, what did you say?

Were the Indigenous oral histories shared in Australian Dream familiar to you? Have Indigenous people in your country been similarly treated?

What does patriotism mean to you? How do you practice it?

ACTIVITIES

[See the images](#) of Nikki Winmar in 1993 alongside Goodes’ photo remake.

Watch a video about the history of [Marn Grook](#), Indigenous football.

Educate yourself by taking an [Aboriginal Studies course](#) or [learning more online](#).





FOR MY FATHER'S KINGDOM

Directed by: Ve'a Mafile'o

Themes: Family, Heritage, Culture, Charity, Church, Tongan

[Preview Here](#)

In this deeply personal film, director Ve'a Mafile'o raises thorny questions about the relationship between money and the church in Tongan culture, questions that caused her Kiwi/Tongan family great pain. Her father, pensioner Saia Mafile'o's dedication to raising large amounts of money for Misinale (an annual church celebration), upset his children and splintered his marriage. Ve'a returns to Tonga with her father and siblings to attend the Misinale and learn why the financial sacrifice matters so much to him.

BACKGROUND

Tonga is two roughly parallel chains of around 170 islands in the southwestern Pacific. Tongan culture and customs date back 3000 years to the earliest of Polynesian settlers. European explorers arrived in the 17th century bringing Christianity with them. Today, the religion is an integral part of the modern Kingdom of Tonga. [Source](#)

Misinale is the Tongan word for the traditional, annual celebration of donations of money to the church. It is practiced today as a Tongan tradition of generosity, a community-building activity, and for spiritual connection. A misinale includes small groups of about 6-8 families, called a *kalasi 'aho*, that plan their giving activities. [Source](#)

FACTS

- Tongans officially adopted Christianity as the national religion in the early to mid-1800s when Tonga's King George I converted to Christianity. The Tongan coat of arms has the words 'Otua mo Tonga Ko hoku tofi'a - 'God and Tonga are my inheritance'. [Source](#)
- Each June, Tonga celebrates a series of conferences for the main Protestant Churches—Church of Tonga, Free Church of Tonga, Constitutional Church, and the Free Wesleyan Church—which attract thousands of visitors from the Tongan communities overseas each year. [Source](#)
- The Pacific island of Tonga is the most obese country in the world. Up to 40 percent of the population is thought to have type 2 diabetes and life expectancy is falling. [Source](#)

QUESTIONS

How did Saia Mafile'ο and his family describe the Tongan way of life?

What motivated Saia Mafile'ο to give? Is donating to charity something that you do or would like to do?

What feels like home for you? Where do you feel belonging?

Is food a significant part of your culture? If so, what traditional food does your family cook?

What expectations did Saia Mafile'ο have of his children? What did they expect from him?

ACTIVITIES

[Watch an interview](#) with filmmaker Ve'a Mafile'ο and [see her digital art installations](#).

Download the [Tongan Language Week](#) resources.

Learn how to cook a heart-healthy recipe for [Lu Sipi](#) (Steamed Taro Leaves and Coconut Milk with Mutton Flaps).





STAN

Directed by: Mitchell Hawkes

Themes: Health, Cancer,
Music, Māori, Faith

[Preview
Here](#)

Australian Idol Stan Walker was born with a gene that gave him—and most of his family—cancer. The film Stan documents his tumultuous journey through recovery from a surgery that removed his stomach. He leans on his mom, his faith, and his Māori culture to cope. But the fate of his family’s health and the future of his singing voice weighs heavily on Stan’s mind. In an intimate look at health and healing, Stan invites the viewer in to contemplate their own relationship with their body.

BACKGROUND

In 2009, Stan Walker won the seventh and final season of Australian Idol, a music competition show set to return in 2022. He was the first person born in New Zealand of Māori descent to win the title. His rapid rise into stardom thrust him into a whirlwind music industry that encouraged him to downplay his Māori identity. But Walker’s desire to be an example for young people and his experience battling stomach cancer reconnected him to his Māori culture. The single he released in 2020, *Bigger/Tua*, was released in both English and te reo Māori. Walker has said the song was a tribute to his *tūrangawaewae*, a powerful Māori concept that translates to “a place to stand.” [Source](#)

FACTS

- Walker has released two Extended Play albums after his cancer surgery: Stan in 2018 and Faith Hope Love in 2019. [Source](#)
- Cancer is a significant, often avoidable mortality for Māori people with more than a quarter of all deaths among Māori attributable to the disease. [Source](#)

QUESTIONS

How did Walker cope with the challenges of a serious health condition?

What is your relationship to faith and culture? Are these sources of resilience for you?

What do you do to manage grief? Do you use humor for healing?

Have you been a caretaker for someone going through illness? If so, how did that experience affect you?

What did you hear Walker say about his music? What did his voice mean to him?

ACTIVITIES

Listen to Walker on [Spotify](#).

See Walker sing [Amazing Grace](#) on YouTube or watch his [2009 Australian Idol](#) performances.

Share your [Covid-19 story](#) with the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum.





TOKYO HULA

Directed by:
Lisette Marie Flanary

Themes: Hula, Culture,
Commodity, Appropriation,
Hawaiian

[Preview
Here](#)

Tokyo Hula explores the phenomenal popularity of the hula dance in Japan from both Native Hawaiian and Japanese perspectives. An estimated two million people dance hula in Japan – a figure greater than the entire population of Hawai‘i. With more people dancing hula in Japan than in Hawai‘i where the native art was born, this explosive growth has created a multi-million dollar industry based on culture as a commodity. Through interviews with Hawaiian master hula teachers and Japanese students, Tokyo Hula asks important questions about what happens to culture when it is exported.

BACKGROUND

A hula dance is a choreographed interpretation of poetic stories and chants, combining pictorial hand and arm gestures, and rhythmic lower-body patterns. The dance originated in Hawai‘i and early records indicate it was present at Indigenous religious and coronation ceremonies. For a short time, hula was discouraged on the island under Christian missionary influence in the 1800s, but the patronage of Hawaiian royalty and the growing tourist industry in the 1900s revived the tradition. It was the Hawaiian Renaissance that gave hula vibrant new life, and attracted global attention. In the early 1960’s, a group of Hilo business people instituted a hula competition at the Merrie Monarch Festival, which still attracts global tourists today. [Source](#)

FACTS

- There are an estimated two million hula dancers in Japan, compared to an estimate of less than 50,000 across Hawai'i. [Source](#)
- Tuition for hula classes can be, on average, 20 percent higher in Japan than in Hawai'i. [Source](#)

Translations for Hawaiian words in the film include: Kumu - master teacher; Hula - dance; Hālau - school; Wāhine - female; Kūpuna - elders

QUESTIONS

What did you learn about hula in the film? Did anything surprise you?

What did you hear the Japanese students say about their motivations for dancing hula?

How did Native Hawaiians participate in the cross-cultural exchange?

How was hula translated into Japanese culture?
Do you think authenticity is important in cross-cultural exchange?

What were some of the concerns raised in the film regarding the exportation of hula to Japan? Do you share those concerns?

ACTIVITIES

Take a [Hula dance class](#) on YouTube.

Try a [smile exercise](#), or face yoga, demonstrated in Tokyo Hula.

Follow King Kamehameha Hula Competition in Japan on Instagram:
[@kkhulacompetition](#)



PACIFIC PULSE: SEASON 3

PACIFIC PULSE is a collection of short films that celebrates bold, innovative and beautifully told stories that explore diverse perspectives of the Pacific Islander experience. New short films are released on the Pacific Heartbeat YouTube channel throughout the year.

Subscribe now:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/PacificHeartbeat>



STANDING ABOVE THE CLOUDS

Directed by: Jalena Keane-Lee

Themes:
Women, Environment

[Preview Here](#)

Standing Above the Clouds follows Native Hawaiian mother-daughter activists as they stand to protect their sacred mountain Mauna Kea from the building of the world's largest telescope.



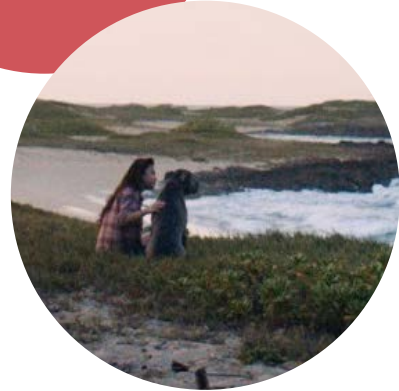
QUESTIONS

What did you hear the Mauna Kea Protectors say about the sacred mountain?

How did it feel to see generations of women standing together to protect the Mauna?

Is there a place in your land that you consider sacred? What is it about that place that makes it special?





THE MOON & THE NIGHT

Directed by: Erin Lau

Themes:
Father-Daughter,
Relationships

[Preview
Here](#)

This tear-jerking short takes place in rural Hawai'i following the life of a young girl, Mahina, and her main companion - her dog, Pō. As Mahina's struggling father rejects her pleas to keep her beloved pet out of dog fights, she realizes how far he may go. But will a daughter's sorrow be enough to sway a father's greed?

QUESTIONS

How would you describe Mahina's relationship with her father?

What role did the Hawaiian countryside play in the story?

Do you / have you had a special relationship with an animal?

What aspects of that bond are unique and difficult to convey to others?

ABOUT US

PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN COMMUNICATIONS

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
Twitter: [@PICpacific](https://twitter.com/PICpacific) | facebook.com/piccom | Instagram: [@picpacific](https://instagram.com/picpacific)

AMERICAN PUBLIC TELEVISION

American Public Television (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 www.APTonline.org

WORLD CHANNEL

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. 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 worldchannel.org

PBS HAWAII

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.

www.PBSHawaii.org | facebook.com/PBSHawaii | Instagram [@PBSHawaii](https://instagram.com/PBSHawaii)

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

Established by Congress in 1965, the **National Endowment for the Arts (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. www.arts.gov/

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

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 managed 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.

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