

A NOMAD'S LIFE (9:23 minutes)

Directed & Produced by Lynn True & Nelson Walker

Co-Produced by Tsering Perlo & Keefe Murren

Winner of the Sustaining Traditions Award

Supported by Green Mountain Coffee Roasters Foundation



About the Film

A Nomad's Life was conceived as part of the Kham Film Project, an association of American and Tibetan filmmakers working together to improve the quality and diversity of knowledge about Tibet by engaging Tibetans in the creation of documentary films. In making A Nomad's Life, Nelson Walker and I partnered with Rabsal, a local Tibetan NGO dedicated to using film and multimedia as a means of Tibetan self-representation. Tsering Perlo, the founder of Rabsal and an emerging documentary filmmaker himself, is a principal collaborator on the project. Perlo grew up in the nomadic community depicted in A Nomad's Life and he provided rare access to this place seldom seen by outsiders.

Historically, Tibetan nomads have thrived in an extreme environment where few other humans dared to live. Until China's occupation of Tibet in 1959, the basic patterns of life had changed little since the first nomads domesticated the yak and took to the pastures over 8,000 years ago. But now, unprecedented challenges are confronting this traditional lifestyle. A Nomad's Life captures the struggles of a young nomadic family as their pastoral way of life is threatened by a fast-approaching globalization.

The film follows the family of Locho, Yama and their infant daughter (whom they call "Jiatomah" -- loosely translated as "spiky brown-haired baby") who spend the summer in the pastures of Jomtod Valley in Tibet's Kham region 15,000 feet above sea level. The Chinese call this region "Wu-Zui" or "5 Most" for its reputation as the highest, coldest, poorest, largest and most remote area in Kham. Neither crops nor trees grow here; only hearty alpine grass sustains the family's herd of yaks -- the treasured animals that enable Locho and Yama to carve an existence from one of the harshest habitable environments on earth.

Filmmaker Bios

Lynn True, Director & Producer

Lynn True is a New York-based filmmaker and editor. She later moved on to make independent film projects and her work has screened nationally on PBS, Sundance Channel and Current TV, as well as at venues such as the Museum of Modern Art and the Brooklyn Academy of Music and at film festivals and conferences around the world. Lynn traveled to Tibet for the first time in 2006 when she was a documentarian for the Kham Geotourism Project -- a collaborative initiative between the Tibetan Himalayan Digital Library and the Maysles Institute. She recently founded the Kham Film Project, an organization that uses documentary film to contribute to the diversity and quality of Tibetan cultural representation.

Lynn also recently helped complete the documentary about Michigan asparagus farmers and their struggle with globalization, *Asparagus! (Stalking the American Life)*, which is the feature length version of Media that Matters FOCUS: Good Food participant film, *Asparagus! (A Stalk-umentary)*.

Nelson Walker, Director & Producer

Nelson Walker III's directorial debut -- *iThemba/Hope*, a documentary about an HIV+ choir from South Africa – won the Health Advocacy Award in the fourth annual Media That Matters Film Festival in 2004 and aired on the Sundance Channel in 2005. Nelson has worked extensively in Tibet as a visiting instructor at Tibet University in Lhasa and contributor to the Tibetan Himalayan Digital Library. Nelson and Lynn's last film, *Lumo*, a documentary feature about a young woman in the Democratic Republic of Congo recovering at a hospital for rape survivors, won the President's Award at the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, a Student Academy Award and was broadcast on PBS's P.O.V. series.

Take Action

The Kham Aid Foundation (http://khamaid.org/alternate_index.htm)

The Kham Aid Foundation has been set up to help the natives of the Eastern Tibetan Plateau thrive during tumultuous times of our changing world while still preserving their cultural heritage. They provide health education, economic development, disaster relief and environmental programs in an effort to ease the transition into modern life. You can help out by volunteering, donating much needed supplies or sponsoring a child through school.

Students for a Free Tibet (<http://www.studentsforafreetibet.org>)

Through education, outreach, and non-violent activism, Students for a Free Tibet seeks to ensure that the people of Tibet have access to political freedom and social justice. Training camps, conferences and even concerts have been organized around the country by people like you. Find a solidarity event in your area or find out how you can organize one yourself!

Tibetan Photo Project (<http://www.tibetanphotoproject.com>)

The Tibetan Photo Project takes a unique perspective by showcasing the struggles of the Tibetan people through their own eyes. Rather than relying on western imagery, members of the Project provide equipment and training so Tibetans can document their own stories through photographs and video. Visit the site to take a look through the eyes of a Tibetan.

For extended information about *A Nomad's Life* and its filmmakers, as well as about the rest of films from the eighth annual Media That Matters Film Festival, visit www.mediathatmattersfest.org or contact us at festival@artsengine.net.

