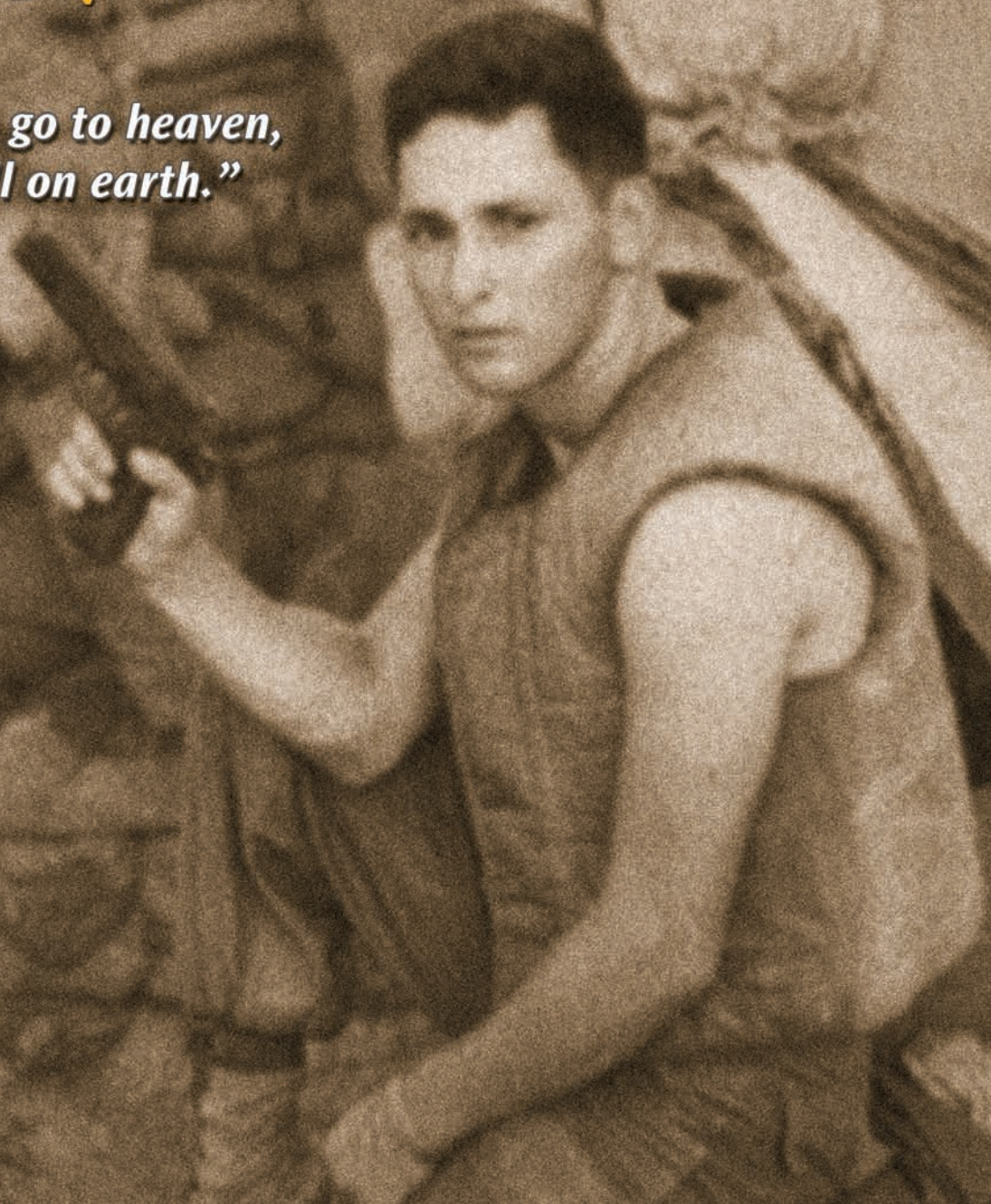
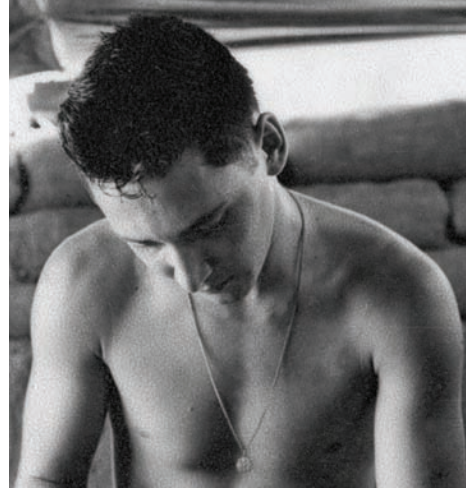


A film by Alanis Obomsawin

Gene Boy Came Home

*"I'm sure to go to heaven,
I did my hell on earth."*





Gene Boy Came Home

THE FILM

Eugene "Gene Boy" (pronounced Genie Boy) Benedict was raised by his great uncle and aunt on the Odanak Indian Reserve an hour and a half east of Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He left home at age 15 to work in construction in New York State. At 17, adrift and beginning to lose his way, he accepted a dare and enlisted in the U.S. Marines. A few months later, he was on his way to the frontlines of the Vietnam War.

Gene Boy Came Home is the harrowing and deeply moving story of his two years of service in Vietnam and his long journey back to Odanak afterwards.

At this critical point in the world's history, celebrated filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin turns her camera on the ugliness of war through the eyes of one survivor. Her new documentary will resonate with all those who have been touched by war, and with anyone who has had to travel the painful path of healing that eventually leads home.

WRITTEN, DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY **ALANIS OBOMSAWIN**
EDITOR **ALISON BURNS**
CAMERA **PHILIPPE AMIGUET**
LOCATION SOUND **RAYMOND MARCOUX**
ORIGINAL MUSIC **FRANCIS GRANDMONT**
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER **RAVIDA DIN**

ABOUT THE FILMMAKER

Alanis Obomsawin, a member of the Abenaki Nation, is one of Canada's most distinguished documentary filmmakers. Obomsawin began her career as a singer, writer and storyteller. She started making films in 1967 with **Christmas at Moose Factory**, which she wrote and directed. Since then, working at the National Film Board of Canada, Obomsawin has made more than 30 documentaries on issues affecting Aboriginal people.

Obomsawin's films have won dozens of international awards and have been seen on television and at festivals around the world. In 2002, she was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada, in recognition of her dedication to the well-being of her people and the preservation of the First Nations' heritage through her filmmaking and activism.

Her best known work, **Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance**, won 18 awards worldwide.

RUNNING TIME: **24 MIN 30 S**
ORDER NUMBER: **C 9107 206**

www.nfb.ca/geneboycamehome

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Canada **1-800-267-7710**
USA **1-800-542-2164**
International **514-283-2703**
Web site **www.nfb.ca**



ALANIS OBOMSAWIN

BIOGRAPHY

Alanis Obomsawin, a member of the Abenaki Nation, is one of Canada's most distinguished documentary filmmakers. Her latest film is the 2007 National Film Board of Canada documentary ***Gene Boy Came Home***, in which Ms Obomsawin turns her camera on the ugliness of war through the eyes of one survivor, Vietnam War veteran Eugene "Gene Boy" Benedict, from her home community of Odanak.

Her films

The people of Odanak and their stories are also the subject of her award-winning 2006 feature documentary ***Waban-Aki: People from Where the Sun Rises***. Obomsawin's 2005 drama ***Sigwan*** focuses on a young girl who is aided by the animals of the forest. Her 2003 NFB documentary ***Our Nationhood*** chronicles the determination and tenacity of the Listuguj Mi'gmaq people to use and manage the natural resources of their traditional lands. The Mi'gmaq of Esgenoopetitj (Burnt Church), New Brunswick were the subject of her 2002 documentary, ***Is the Crown at war with us?***, a powerful and painstakingly researched look at the conflict over fishing rights.

The 2000 NFB release ***Rocks at Whiskey Trench*** was Obomsawin's fourth film in her series about the 1990 Oka crisis. The first, ***Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance*** (1993), was a feature-length film documenting the 1990 Mohawk uprising in Kanehsatake and Oka, which has won 18 international awards. It was followed by ***My Name is Kahentiiosta*** (1995), a film about a young Kahnawake Mohawk woman who was arrested after the 78-day armed standoff, and ***Spudwrench – Kahnawake Man*** (1997), profiling Randy Horne, a high-steel worker from the Mohawk community of Kahnawake.

Obomsawin began her career as a singer, writer and storyteller, but dove into filmmaking in 1967 with ***Christmas at Moose Factory***, which she wrote and directed. Since then, Obomsawin has made over 30 uncompromising documentaries on issues affecting Aboriginal people in Canada. Her other films include: ***Incident at Restigouche*** (1984), a powerful depiction of the Quebec police raid of a Micmac reserve; ***Richard Cardinal: Cry from a Diary of a Métis Child*** (1986), the disturbing examination of an adolescent suicide, and ***No Address*** (1988), a look at Montreal's homeless.

Joining the NFB

In 1960, Obomsawin made her professional debut as a singer in New York City. In 1967, NFB producers Joe Koenig and Bob Verrall saw Obomsawin on TV. They invited the singer/storyteller to the Film Board to work as an advisor on a film about Aboriginal people.



Obomsawin went on to direct films of her own, while continuing to perform and fight for justice for her people.

For almost 40 years, Obomsawin has directed documentaries at the NFB with strong social content, inspired by the desire to let the voices of her people be heard. In 1983, she was made a member of the Order of Canada, in recognition of her dedication to the well-being of her people and the preservation of the First Nations' heritage through her filmmaking and activism.

Music and art

As a singer/songwriter, Obomsawin has toured Canada, the United States and Europe performing for humanitarian causes in universities, museums, prisons and art centres, as well as at folk art festivals. Her 1988 album *Bush Lady* features traditional songs of the Abenaki people, as well as original compositions.

For over 25 years, Obomsawin has worked as an engraver and print-maker, with exhibitions in Canada and Europe. Mother and child imagery is prominent in her work, which also combines material from her own dreams with animal spirits and historical events. Her work was exhibited at the Maison Lacombe in Quebec in 2007.

Early years

Alanis Obomsawin was born in New Hampshire on Abenaki Territory. When she was 6 months old, her mother returned to the Odanak reserve north east of Montreal where Alanis lived until she was 9. Théophile Panadis, her mother's cousin, initiated Alanis into the history of the Abenaki Nation and taught her many songs and legends. Obomsawin and her parents then left Odanak for Trois Rivières, where they were the only Native family. Cut off, speaking little French and no English, Obomsawin held fast to the songs and stories she had learned on the reserve.

Awards and honours

Obomsawin is the subject of the first-ever book on Native filmmakers, *Alanis Obomsawin: The Vision of a Native Filmmaker*, by Randolph Lewis, published in 2006 by the University of Nebraska Press.

In March 2001, Obomsawin received the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts. An Officer of the Order of Canada, Obomsawin's many honours also include the International Documentary Association's Pioneer Award, the Toronto Women in Film and Television's (TWIFT) Outstanding Achievement Award in Direction, the Canadian Native Arts Foundation National Aboriginal Achievement Award, and the Outstanding Contributions Award from the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association (CSAA). The latter marks the first time that the CSAA has honoured someone who is not an academic in the field of sociology and anthropology.

Obomsawin also received a fellowship from the Ontario College of Art, an Honorary Doctor of Letters from York University, an Honorary Doctor of Laws from Concordia University and an Honorary Doctor of Literature from Carleton University. She has taught at the Summer Institute of Film and Television in Ottawa.

Obomsawin has chaired the Board of Directors of the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal and sat on the Canada Council's First People's Advisory Board. She was also a board member of



Studio 1, the NFB's Aboriginal studio, and a former advisor to the New Initiatives in Film, a Studio D program for women of colour and women of the First Nations. As a member of the Board of Aboriginal Voices, she was part of an initiative to obtain a radio licence for the organization. A lifetime member of the Board of Directors for the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, Ms Obomsawin is also a Member of the Board for the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) in Vermont and National Geographic International.



ALANIS OBOMSAWIN

FILMOGRAPHY

2007	Gene Boy Came Home	Director/Writer/Producer
2006	Waban-Aki: People from Where the Sun Rises	Director/Writer/Producer
2005	Sigwan	Director/Writer/Producer
2003	Our Nationhood	Director/Writer/Producer
2003	For John , dir. Dale Montour	Producer
2002	Is the Crown at war with us?	Director/Writer/Producer
2000	Rocks at Whiskey Trench	Director/Writer/Producer
1997	Spudwrench – Kahnawake Man	Director/Writer/Producer
1995	My Name is Kahentiiosta (Je m'appelle Kahentiiosta)	Director/Writer/Producer
1993	Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance (Kanehsatake: 270 Ans de Résistance)	Director/Writer/Co-Producer
1991	Walker (Playing Fair series)	Director
1991	Le Patro Le Prévost: 80 Years Later (Le Patro Le Prévost: 80 Ans Après)	Director/Writer/Co-Producer
1988	No Address (Sans adresse)	Director/Writer/Co-Producer
1988	A Way of Learning	Director/Writer/Producer
1987	Poundmaker's Lodge: A Healing Place	Director/Writer/Co-Producer
1986	Richard Cardinal: Cry from a Diary of a Métis Child (Richard Cardinal: le cri d'un enfant métis)	Director/Writer/Co-Producer
1984	Incident at Restigouche (Les Événements de Restigouche)	Director/Writer/ Co-producer/Narrator
1980	Canada Vignettes: June in Povungnituk	Director/Writer
1979	Sounds from Our People (a six-part series of half-hour films)	Director/Producer/Writer
	Old Crow	
	Gabriel Goes to the City	
	Cold Journey	
	Cree Way	
	Mother of Many Children	
	Amisk	
1979	Canada Vignettes: Wild Rice Harvest, Kenora	Director/Writer
1977	Mother of Many Children (Mère de tant d'enfants)	Director/Producer/Writer
1977	Amisk	Director/Producer
1976	L'ilawat (multimedia kits)	Director/Producer
1973	Manowan (multimedia kits)	Director/Producer
1971	Christmas at Moose Factory	Director/Writer



ALANIS OBOMSAWIN

AWARDS

Is the Crown at war with us?

Best Documentary Feature
28th Annual American Indian Film Festival, San Francisco 2003

Award of Distinction
Indian Summer Festival, West Allis, Wisconsin 2003

Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance

Toronto-City Award for Best Canadian Feature Film
Festival of Festivals, Toronto 1993

Feature Documentary Award
Vancouver International Film Festival 1993

Best Documentary Feature Film
18th Annual American Indian Film Festival, San Francisco 1993

Best Full-Length Documentary
Mediawave Film Festival, Hungary 1997

Distinguished Documentary Achievement
IDA 19th Annual Awards Competition, Los Angeles 1993

Special Jury Award, Documentary Category
13th International Amiens Film Festival, Amiens, France 1993

Wind and Glacier Award
Native American Film and Media Celebration, New York 1994

Special Jury Award: Film and Video Category
Special Jury Award: Current Events Category
37th San Francisco International Film Festival, Golden Gate Award 1994

Special Jury Prize Award
Mountain Film Festival, Telluride, Colorado 1994

Award of Excellence for Best Editing
Atlantic Film Festival, Halifax 1993

Sesterce d'argent Special Jury Prize
25th International Documentary Film Festival, Nyon, Switzerland 1993



Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance — continued

“We Are Sovereign” Award
Two Rivers Film Festival, Minneapolis 1993

Second Place Award, Indian Produced Feature Length Documentary
7th American Indian Film and Video Competition, Oklahoma 1994

Special Award
Aotearoa Film Festival, Whakatane, New Zealand 1993

Mother of Many Children

Special Jury Prize Award
Mountain Film Festival, Telluride, Colorado 1994

Grand Prize
First International Festival of Films on the Arctic, Dieppe, France 1983

Best Semi-Documentary Award
American Indian Film Festival, San Francisco International Film Festival 1978

My Name is Kahentiiosta

Second Place Award, Indian Produced Documentary
9th American Indian Film and Video Competition, Oklahoma 1996

No Address

Wind and Glacier Award
The Native American Film and Media Celebration, New York 1992

From Dream to Reality
Two Rivers Native Film Festival 1991

Best Documentary Award
14th Annual American Indian Film Festival, San Francisco 1989

Honorable Mention, Social Studies Category
37th Annual International Film Festival, Birmingham, Alabama 1989

Nomination, Golden Sheaf Awards
International Short Film and Video Festival, Yorkton, Saskatchewan 1989



Playing Fair Series

Silver Cindy Award
Cindy Competition, New Orleans 1993

Best Film, Guidance and Counselling Category
International Educational Film and Video Festival, Birmingham, Alabama 1992

Award of Merit, Videotape – Government Media Agency Category
AMTEC Media Festival, Victoria, British Columbia 1992

Poundmaker's Lodge: A Healing Place

Bronze Apple Award, Health/Drug and Alcohol Addiction Category
19th National Educational Film and Video Festival, Oakland, California 1989

Certificate of Honorable Mention, Health and Medicine: Addiction, Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco
Category
36th Annual International Film Festival, Columbus, Ohio 1988

Richard Cardinal: Cry From a Diary of a Métis Child

Prize for Best Documentary
11th Annual American Indian Film Festival, San Francisco 1986

Special Award for Educational Visual Anthropology to Children and Youth
International Visual Anthropology, Parnu, Estonia 1991

Crystal Apple Award, Human Relations: Teen Suicide Category
19th National Education Film and Video Festival, Oakland, California 1989

Red Ribbon Award, Current Concerns Category
30th American Film and Video Festival, New York 1988

Rocks at Whiskey Trench

Best Native American Director
Festival of Festivals, Palm Springs, California 2002

Spudwrench – Kahnawake Man

Dreamspeakers Festival 1998
Best Documentary over 30 minutes

Dreamspeakers Festival 1998
Best Director, Documentary



Waban-Aki: People From Where the Sun Rises

Best Documentary Award
imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, Toronto, October 2006

Walker (Playing Fair Series)

Gold Apple Award, Sexuality and Self-Esteem: Grades 4-6 Category
22nd National Educational Film and Video Festival, Oakland, California 1992

Wind and Glacier Award
Native American Film and Media Celebration, New York 1992

**PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS
PRESENTED TO ALANIS OBOMSAWIN**

Special Homage, Abenaki Annual Celebration, Odanak, Quebec, July 2006

Walk of Honour, Dreamspeaker Festival, Edmonton, June 2006

IDA Pioneer Award, International Documentary Association, Los Angeles, December 2004

The Milestone Award, imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, Toronto, October 2004

Life Achievement Award, Parallel Culture Awards, Hungary, May 2003

Highest Distinction, Advancement of Women Awards, Women's Y Foundation of Montreal, April 2003

Honoured by Femmes du cinéma, de la télévision et de la vidéo à Montréal for outstanding contributions to the development of the film and television industry, April 2003

Officer of the Order of Canada, February 2002

Prix Dr. Bernard Chagnan Assiniwi, Life Time Achievement Award
Festival Land Insights, June 2001

Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts, March 2001

Honorary Doctor of Laws, Trent University, June 2000

Honorary Doctor of Laws, Queen's University, June 2000

Lifetime Achievement Award
Aboriginal Film Festival, June 1999

Defender of Human Rights through Film
50th Anniversary of Human Rights Celebration, May 1999

Lifetime Achievement Award, Taos Talking Picture Festival, New Mexico, 1997



**PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS
PRESENTED TO ALANIS OBOMSAWIN – cont'd**

Honorary Doctor of Literature, Carleton University, November 1994

Honorary Doctor of Letters, York University, June 1994

Outstanding Contribution Award, Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association, June 1994

Fellow of the Ontario College of Arts, May 1994

Special Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the advancement of Aboriginal Filmmaking, Dreamspeakers Festival, Edmonton, Alberta, 1994

Award for Outstanding Achievement in Direction, Toronto Women in Film and Television, Director of the Year, 1994

Honorary Doctor of Laws, Concordia University, Montreal, 1993

National Aboriginal Achievement Award, 1993

Order of Canada, Confederation, 1992

Pour son apport à la reconnaissance des droits de la femme amerindienne, Le Salon de la Femme, Montreal 1989

Order of Canada, June 1983

The 12 Arts and Humanities Education Award, NYU, March 1982

Outstanding Canadian of the Year, *Macleans Magazine*, 1965

AWARDS PRESENTED IN HONOUR OF ALANIS OBOMSAWIN

The annual Alanis Obomsawin Best Documentary Award inaugurated by the imagineNATIVE International Media Arts Festival, Toronto, October 2002

Alanis Obomsawin Award given each year by the Reel Aboriginal Film Festival for Best Documentary, June 2000

Alanis Obomsawin Award given each year by the Dreamspeakers Film Festival for Best Documentary, 1994

