

STOLEN SPIRITS



A FILM BY
ANNE WORTHINGTON

36 mins / 2022 / English / Australia



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AWARDS & FILM FESTIVALS

BEST SHORT DOCUMENTARY – LA FILM AWARDS, US

AMERICAN INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL, US

SYNOPSIS

In 2021, in the small rural town of Genoa Nebraska, a harrowing search commenced to locate the graves of Native American children who were taken from their tribes and sent to the Genoa U.S Indian Industrial school, one of America's largest and longest running boarding schools for indigenous children. The Genoa school was part of a vast network of institutions for Native American children set up in the 19th and 20th centuries across the USA. Their purpose was to assimilate indigenous children into the white man's world. By 1926, it's estimated more than 80 per cent of Native American children were enrolled in these institutions. Many of these children left the school their culture broken, some didn't return home at all. Last year, the discovery of more than a thousand graves of children at the sites of former boarding schools in Canada pushed the USA to examine its own history. Presented by ABC journalist Stan Grant, whose family was impacted by Australia's assimilationist policies, *Stolen Spirits* is a powerful and haunting story of one community's attempts to uncover the truth about a painful past.

DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

The discovery of mass graves in Canada pushed the USA to examine its own boarding school history.

As a journalist in Australia this story resonated with me as it had so many similarities with our own country's history of forcibly taking indigenous children from their families in an attempt to break culture, assimilate and colonize.

Over a period of 6 months, I worked tirelessly to gain the trust of the Nebraskan tribes who bravely shared their personal stories and spoke of their determination to fight for justice and bring their lost children home. It was an honor and privilege to make this important film.

Anne Worthington

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Anne Worthington is an award-winning journalist with nearly 20 years of experience in public interest journalism. She has worked at the ABC since 2011 across the broadcaster's flagship programs, including as a researcher for *Four Corners* and a producer at *Q&A*. She is currently a producer with the ABC's international current affairs program *Foreign Correspondent*. Follow Anne on Twitter @alwortho82

PRODUCTION CREDITS

PRESENTER	Stan Grant
PRODUCER & WRITER	Anne Worthington
CAMERA	Greg Nelson ACS
EDITOR	Leah Donovan
ADDITIONAL CAMERA	Michael Werner
GRAPHICS	Andrés Gómez Isaza
ASSISTANT EDITOR	Tom Carr
ARCHIVAL RESEARCH	Michell Boukheris
ARCHIVE	
U.S. National Archives	
Yale University Library	
Library of Congress	
Denver Public Library Special Collection	
U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center	
NAA, Smithsonian Institution	
SPECIAL THANKS	
Genoa U.S. Indian School Foundation	
History Nebraska	
Nebraska Public Media	
SENIOR PRODUCTION MANAGER	Michelle Roberts
RESEARCH	Victoria Allen
DIGITAL PRODUCER	Matt Henry
SUPERVISING PRODUCER	Lisa McGregor
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER	Matthew Carney

Foreign Correspondent
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