‘POV’ Reflects on Aging and Transformation As a Woman With Dementia Reinvents Herself in *Wisdom Gone Wild*

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Debuts on PBS Television Nationwide Monday, November 20, 2023 and Streaming on PBS.org and the PBS App Until February 20, 2024

New York, N.Y. – September 21, 2023 – Multi Emmy® Award and Peabody Award winning series, POV, presents the vibrant cine-poem *Wisdom Gone Wild* directed by Rea Tajiri (*History and Memory, Strawberry Fields*) and produced by Sian Evans and Tajiri. The documentary tells the remarkable story of Rose Tajiri, a Nisei woman who at the end of her life, following the onset of dementia, reinvents herself through her interactions with her daughter/care partner, bestowing a new name and identity on herself, altering her past along with her present. *Wisdom Gone Wild* renders a new look at dementia and presents a
daughter’s evolution towards compassionate caregiving. The film is produced in association with The Center for Asian American Media (CAAM).

*Wisdom Gone Wild,* makes its national broadcast premiere on *POV,* Monday, November 20, 2023 at 10pm (check local listings) and available to stream without PBS Passport membership until February 20, 2024 at [pbs.org](http://pbs.org), and the [PBS App](http://pbs.org).

In keeping with the night’s theme of transformative parent/child relationships, accompanying the premiere of *Wisdom Gone Wild* is the *POV* Shorts broadcast premiere of *Still Waters* directed by *POV* alumni Aurora Brachman (*Joychild,* *POV* Shorts Season 4) and produced by Brachman and Mariales Diaz. Through a series of extraordinarily honest and intimate conversations, filmmaker Aurora examines the intergenerational fallout of experiences her mother endured as a child. Together, they forge a path forward that offers them a new beginning.

In addition to closed captioning for all films, *POV,* in partnership with audio description service, [DiCapta](http://dicapta.com), provides real time audio interpretations for audiences with sensory disabilities. *POV,* currently in its [36th season](http://pbs.org), is America’s longest running non-fiction television series.

Director Rea Tajiri ‘s *Wisdom Gone Wild* offers a different story about aging, and about living with dementia. Rather than centering a disease, the film centers the form and content of Rose’s perspective, telling the story of a life to be valued rather than a problem to be willed away.

At 93, Rose Tajiri is a history keeper and a chronicler of Japanese American experience. Diagnosed with dementia at the age of 76, Rose’s non-chronological access to key historical events is cued through daily encounters and reminiscences. Embarking on a
fifteen-year odyssey, Rea gains wisdom by listening to the metaphors in her mother’s conversations. Rose’s allegories reveal her incarceration in a World War II concentration camp and a childhood as the daughter of Nikkei farmers in California’s strawberry fields. These stories help caregivers understand Rose’s needs and revise their care. Rea learns to identify Rose’s hopes and fears as they create a unique relationship based on play, improvisation and humor. The two travel together towards the end of life, each transformed by a journey through memory and the mind.

“With this film, I draw audiences to the possibilities of connection and intimacy with loved ones who live with dementia,” said director Rea Tajiri. “Through a portrayal of intimacy, I wish to normalize witnessing and listening to elders; to value their stories, their wisdom and their lived experience.”

"A born storyteller, Director Rea Tajiri’s Wisdom Gone Wild disrupts the usual tale of a child caring for a parent living with dementia" said Chris White, Executive Producer, POV. "Her decision to capture the experience from her mother's perspective was a risk, but the embracing approach is inspiring and tenderly reveals the complexity of a mother/daughter bond. I know this film will resonate with our viewers."

_Wisdom Gone Wild_ made its world premiere at the 2022 BlackStar Film Festival where it won the Audience Award and Jury Award, Honorable Mention for “Best Documentary.” The film played in International Competition at the 2022 International Documentary Film Festival of Amsterdam (IDFA) and the Documentary Competition, at the 2022 Seattle Asian American Film Festival. Additional 2022 accolades include: “Best Documentary Feature,” and “Audience Choice, Best Documentary,” at the Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival; and the Grand Jury Prize at the San Diego Asian Film Festival. In 2023, the documentary took home the New Cinema Award at the Berwick Film and Media Festival.
Wisdom Gone Wild was an official selection of CAAMFest 2023, Retrospective Spotlight; 2023 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival; 2023 FREEP Film Festival; 2023 Asian American Showcase, Chicago, IL; 2023 Diaspora Film Festival, Incheon, South Korea; 2023 Slamdance Film Festival, Unstoppable Section; 2023 DisOrient Asian American Film Festival; Seattle Asian American Film Festival 2023; New York Asian International Film Festival 2023; DOC NYC 2022, American Lives Section; and 2022 San Diego Asian Film Festival, Centerpiece.

“...Without falling into self-centered trappings of nostalgic family documentaries, Wisdom is a patient meditation on life, time, and love, and a confrontation with monumental loss… Blurs the lines by which we define ourselves and the roles we play in love… a slow burn that singes but doesn't sever.”

- Bedhatri Choudhury, Hyperallergic

“...a vérité portrait of a mother who, in her dementia, maintains a sense of humor, a stubborn autonomy, and occasionally a glimpse of who she once was…The complex dynamics of an immigrant family are revealed…”

- Pat Aufderheide, Documentary Magazine

Wisdom Gone Wild is produced in association with The Center for Asian American Media (CAAM). The film is directed by Rea Tajiri and produced by Sian Evans and Tajiri. The executive producers are Stephen Gong, Center for Asian American Media and Erika Dilday and Chris White for American Documentary | POV.

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Credits

Director: Rea Tajiri
Producers: Sian Evans, Rea Tajiri
Executive Producers: Stephen Gong for Center for Asian American Media, Erika Dilday and Chris White for American Documentary | POV
Cinematographers: Christian Bruno, Dru Mungai, Rea Tajiri
Editors: Catherine Hollander
Composer: Shakuru Tajiri
Country: USA
Year: 2022

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Photos

Download Wisdom Gone Wild photos here.
About the Filmmakers

Rea Tajiri, Director, Producer, *Wisdom Gone Wild*

Rea Tajiri, a Philadelphia based documentary filmmaker and interdisciplinary artist whose critically acclaimed career spans over 35 years. Poetic, subtly layered and politically engaged, her work advances the exploration of forgotten histories, multi-generational memory, landscape and the lives of the Nikkei.

Tajiri’s films have screened in several Whitney Biennials, the Venice Film Festival, Rotterdam, Slamdance, Seattle International Film Festival, MOMA/NY, Yamagata and DOC NYC. She is a 2023 Chicken & Egg Award winner and a 2022 Ford Foundation JustFilms grantee. Tajiri currently resides in Philadelphia where she is an Associate Professor in the Film Media Arts Department of Temple University.

Sian Evans, Producer, *Wisdom Gone Wild*

Sian Evans/Farthest Films is a documentary filmmaker and producer of films on topics as diverse as solar observatories, New York City’s Potter’s Field, Maine’s home movies and a child’s sense of home. She has produced for PBS, A&E, Discovery, ABC, and the UNDP. Sian writes and produces for other filmmakers as Farthest Films.

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About POV
Produced by American Documentary, POV is the longest-running independent documentary showcase on American television. Since 1988, POV has presented films on PBS that capture the full spectrum of the human experience, with a long commitment to centering women and people of color in front of, and behind, the camera. The series is known for introducing generations of viewers to groundbreaking works like *Tongues Untied, American Promise, Minding The Gap* and *Not Going Quietly*, and innovative filmmakers
including Jonathan Demme, Laura Poitras and Nanfu Wang. In 2018, POV Shorts launched as one of the first PBS series dedicated to bold and timely short-form documentaries. All POV programs are available for streaming concurrent with broadcast on all station-branded PBS platforms, including PBS.org and the PBS App, available on iOS, Android, Roku streaming devices, Apple TV, Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO. For more information about PBS Passport, visit the PBS Passport FAQ website.

POV goes “beyond the broadcast” to bring powerful nonfiction storytelling to viewers wherever they are. Free educational resources accompany every film and a community network of thousands of partners nationwide work with POV to spark dialogue around today’s most pressing issues. POV continues to explore the future of documentary through innovative productions with partners such as The New York Times and The National Film Board of Canada and on platforms including Snapchat and Instagram.

POV films and projects have won 46 Emmy® Awards, 27 George Foster Peabody Awards, 15 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards, three Academy Awards® and the first-ever George Polk Documentary Film Award. Learn more at pbs.org/pov and follow @povdocs on social media.

About POV Shorts
POV Shorts launched in 2018 as one of the first PBS series dedicated to bold and timely short-form documentaries. The series is known for its curation, and for broadcasting award-winning titles, including: Emmy® nominated Earthrise, Water Warriors, The Changing Same, Emmy® winner The Love Bugs and the Oscar® shortlisted A Broken House and Agilas. It won Best Short Form Series at the IDA Documentary Awards in 2022 and 2020.

About American Documentary, Inc.
American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.

Major funding for POV is provided by PBS, the Open Society Foundations, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Wyncote Foundation, Reva & David Logan Foundation, Park Foundation, and Perspective Fund. Additional funding comes from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, the Chasing the Dream and Peril and Promise public media initiatives of The WNET Group, Chris and Nancy Plaut, Ann Tenenbaum and Thomas H. Lee and public television viewers. POV is presented by a consortium of public television stations, including KQED San Francisco, WGBH Boston and THIRTEEN in association with WNET.ORG.
About PBS

PBS, with more than 330 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and digital content. Each month, PBS reaches over 120 million people through television and 26 million people online, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS’s broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry’s most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. Decades of research confirm that PBS’s premier children’s media service, PBS KIDS, helps children build critical literacy, math and social-emotional skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. Delivered through member stations, PBS KIDS offers high-quality educational content on TV – including a 24/7 channel, online at pbskids.org, via an array of mobile apps and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at www.pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, or by following PBS on Twitter, Facebook or through our apps for mobile and connected devices. Specific program information and updates for press are available at pbs.org/pressroom or by following PBS Communications on Twitter.

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