

Four Nights and a Fire

Written & Directed by: Alex Nystrom

Producers: Alex Nystrom, Jeremy Charles, Jeff Walker, Lisa Normand, Matt Leach, Rudy Jones, Chelsea Polumbus, Cary McQueen, Don & Nancy Trosvig

Cast: Benny Wayne Sully, Clem Sully

Format: Digital

Length: 12 minutes, 37 seconds

Versions available upon request:

Theatrical:

4K DCP, 5.1, 24 fps

Digital:

4K .MOV, 5.1 or Stereo, 24 fps

1080p .MOV, 5.1 or Stereo, 24 fps

Broadcast:

4K MXF, 5.1 or Stereo, 24 fps

1080p, Stereo, 29.97 fps

Logline

A departed Ojibwe journeys to the afterlife, while a surviving relative finds resilience in the departed's footsteps.

Short Synopsis

A young Ojibwe photographer stubbornly takes on the responsibility of keeping a sacred fire alive for four consecutive days and nights in mourning of his father. His father's spirit tries to reach him from the other side.

Medium Synopsis

Robert, a young Ojibwe photographer, stubbornly takes on the responsibility of keeping a sacred fire alive for four consecutive days and nights in mourning of his father. Meanwhile, the Spirit of his father finds the flame and seeks to console his son, though he is only able to watch, and grieves that he cannot comfort him. As Robert fights to keep the flame alive and reckon with the loss of his father, the spirit fights his fear of the inevitable transition to the afterlife.

Long Synopsis

Robert, a young Ojibwe man, prepares for a sacred fire ceremony in the woods where his father used to hunt, desperate to feel close to him one last time. Having just lost his dad, Robert buries himself in his photography, putting a barrier between himself and the reality of his loss, and the emptiness in front of him. He stubbornly takes on the responsibility of the sole firekeeper, a role usually shared to avoid fatigue in keeping a sacred fire alive for four consecutive days and nights. Meanwhile, the Spirit of his father finds the flame and seeks to console his son, though he is only able to watch, and grieves that he cannot comfort him. As Robert fights to keep the flame alive and reckon with the loss of his father, the spirit fights his fear of the inevitable transition to the afterlife.

Director Bio

Alex Nystrom is an Ojibwe director, writer and producer from Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is an enrolled member of the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians. Alex's work focuses on exploring native identity in the context of contemporary stories. Alex currently lives and works in Los Angeles, his most recent experience being director's assistant to Amman Abbasi, director of *Dayveon* (Sundance Film Festival '17). As a writer, Alex was a fellow in the 2021 NATIVE AMERICAN MEDIA ALLIANCE'S TV WRITER'S LAB in association with LA SKINS FEST, and developed a pilot called *Between*, a supernatural mystery that follows a headstrong native man who protects his disappearing island from evil forces beyond his control. *Between* was most recently selected for the second annual Indigenous List (2022) on THE BLACK LIST in partnership with ILLUMINATIVE and the SUNDANCE Indigenous Program, which highlights the top up-and-coming Indigenous film and television writers in the U.S. He was recently selected to write a feature film in the 2023 NATIVE AMERICAN MEDIA ALLIANCE'S FEATURE FILM WRITER'S LAB. As a director, Alex Nystrom's short film *Four Nights and a Fire* was one of 10 short films chosen to be a recipient of a production grant via VOICES WITH IMPACT 2022 and was also selected for Vision Maker Media's Creative Shorts Fellowship 2022. It is currently on the festival circuit, and has played several festivals including Palm Springs International Shortfest 2023. As a producer, his last credit is on the documentary short, *Udaan (Soar)*, for HINDSIGHT 2020 via FIRELIGHT MEDIA, which premiered at AFI DOCS and resides at PBS. He's also currently producing Abbasi's upcoming feature film *Yasmeen's Element*.

Lead Actor Bio

Benny Wayne Sully is an actor based in LA. He is an enrolled member of the Sicangu Lakota Oyate, hailing from the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. Film credits include the ABC TV pilot *Prospect*, directed by Randall Einhorn, and Joey Clift's award-winning short film *My First Native American Boyfriend*, for which Benny received the Best Actor award from LA Skins Fest. He is a part of Native Voices at the Autry's ensemble and also a proud member of Actors' Equity Association. He was 1 of 20 selected from over 11,000 applicants for the inaugural 2022 WarnerMedia Access Talent Spotlight Training Program, created to provide undiscovered and underrepresented actors an opportunity to receive coaching and exposure.

Most recently, Benny was in the cast of Jiehae Park's Off-Broadway hit *Peerless*. You can find him on social media @thedoophus.

Producer Bios

Jeremy Charles is a Cherokee filmmaker and founder of Pursuit Films, Indigenous representation in film is Jeremy's mission. He is a co-creator, director and producer for "[Osio, Voices of the Cherokee People](#)", a docu-series which has earned 16 regional Emmys, including Best Director in 2017. His narrative short "[Totsu \(Redbird\)](#)" premiered in 2020 and went on to win top honors at [L.A. Skins Film Festival](#), [Phoenix Film Festival](#), and [deadCenter Film Festival](#). In 2019, he began work on an original animated series in the Cherokee language "Inage'i (In The Woods)" and is a 2021 alumni of [Native American Media Alliance TV Writers](#) fellowship. In 2020, he was a finalist in Oklahoma Film Office's Pitch-a-thon with SeriesFest. He was recently Co-executive Producer on The Girl Scout Murders true crime series on FOX, and continues developing a slate of projects focusing on Indigenous themes. The groundbreaking album of contemporary Cherokee music "[Anvdyneisgi/DO:ŋʌlʌw/Performers](#)" was released in October 2022, and is available on all music platforms.

Jeff Walker is an independent film producer whose work includes screenings and awards at Outfest, Sundance, SXSW, and Champs-Élysées Film Festival to name a few. In 2018, Jeff was invited to the Cannes Producers Network and is a fellow of Film Independent, The IFP/Gotham Narrative Labs, The San Francisco Film Society, the IFP/French In Motion US & French Connection program, and is a graduate of the Venice Biennale Cinema College.
<https://jeffwalkerfilm.com/>

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