

JIMMY NELSON

🕒 21 May 2020, 12:42 (CEST)

SOS - Save Our Sentinels

A short film on the life lessons from the last indigenous cultures

Today, on United Nations World Day for Cultural Diversity, renowned Indian director Senthil Kumar and photographic artist Jimmy Nelson send out a worldwide call to preserve global cultural heritage by portraying the world's last indigenous cultures as the sentinels, the guardians, of our planet. By presenting a never-seen-before compilation of images and the intimate stories of some of the last indigenous communities of the world, Nelson and Kumar proclaim that it is now time to acknowledge and celebrate indigenous peoples as our new role models; they are the living example of how humans can live in perfect harmony with themselves and the natural world.

Planet earth is at risk of losing the cultural identities of many of the world's most unique indigenous peoples. This is a global issue and a result of many escalating factors, including industrialization, ecocide and globalization. Together these aspects cause a homogenization and westernization of the originally diverse cultures of this world. The world's cultural colors are fading fast and elementary natural wisdom is on the brink of being lost.

With this knowledge disappearing, a part of the memory of humanity is threatened with extinction. All knowledge that is lost, every ancestor that goes out, is a book that burns, or a library that disappears. Indigenous peoples are the guardians of ancestral knowledge that draws from the environment the solutions of everyday life. These solutions are priceless. It is a treasure for all those who have to face climate disorders because it helps them cope with the worst of its consequences, such as droughts, floods and hurricanes. Where indigenous peoples on the Pacific Islands know which plants can protect them against possible epidemics, the elders in the Sahel know where to find hidden flows in times of ultimate drought.

We, in the dominant world, have imposed ourselves on the planet and have the habit to take - they on the other hand, have integrated themselves with the planet and are one. We can learn from this.

Indigenous communities are ready to share their traditional knowledge. They are the wise ones, the wisdom keepers, who can (re)teach humankind on how to live in harmony with nature and each other.

“There has never been a better time than now than to bow and acknowledge the superheroes of the natural world. They can guide us out of these dark times into the light of a healthy future.”

— Artist Jimmy Nelson

Today Jimmy Nelson, together with Senthil Kumar, is sending out his first call to action. With this short film, he invites the viewer to join him on his mission to safeguard the world's last cultural identities.

Watch the full film here:



SOS - Save Our Sentinels

English Transcript of the Multilingual Musical Narrative:

Life Lessons from the Last Indigenous Tribes.

Respect Your Family Trees

Trees are the Cathedrals of our Culture.

We grow on their shoulders

and learn the lessons of life

We breathe in what they breathe out

We are connected in the cycle of life.

Forests are the Children Of Mother Nature

They stand still and rooted to the mother

They are the oasis of every indigenous culture

We may lose everything and have nothing
We never lose sight of the mother.
Return to innocence. Return to the cradle.

Fight Fire with Fire

Learn to move to nature's beat
to run faster than the wind
to dig a trench ahead of the fire
fan the fire from the opposite direction
And let fire consume the fire
to save the forest.

The Earth does not belong to us.

We are saving it for our children and their children.
We are all visitors to this time, this place.
We are just passing through.
Our purpose here is to observe
to learn, to grow, to love
and then we return home.
Who will look after it for generations to come.

Guard the Guardians of our Future

The elders of a universal truth
The protectors of our mother
The sentinels of our souls
ancestors connecting to our true being
keepers of the cosmic universe
They are the wise ones
The teachers, the guardians
of ancient rituals and knowledge

One with the mother is the meaning of life

Bring me the curious child
the one seeking answers
Bring me the seekers of the light
who turn dark shadows

into pale insignificance

The children of Mother Nature.

The guardians of our culture.

The guardians of our future.

Save Our Sentinels.

Blink. And They're Gone.

The Indigenous soundtrack is a multilingual musical expression with lyrics from ancient tribal sayings and forgotten folk songs recorded on location from almost all the indigenous tribes featured in the film.

The musical narrative includes Indigenous influences from Africa, Siberia, India, South America and the Aborigines Of Australia. Vocals Singers include Grammy Award Winner Richard Bona and traditional gypsy tribal singers from Duala - Cameroon, Siberia & India.

Life Lessons from the Last Indigenous Cultures



**World Day for Cultural Diversity
for Dialogue and Development**

The time is now to acknowledge and celebrate the worlds last indigenous communities as our new role models. They are the living example of how humans can live in perfect harmony with themselves, their unique cultures and the natural world.

Blink. And they're gone.

A short film made from the rarest footage and original documented photographs of the last 36 indigenous tribes left in the world. Captured during repeated journeys across five continents over twenty years by photographer Jimmy Nelson and his team.

An indigenous musical expression with lyrics from ancient tribal songs. The sound track includes Indigenous Tribal Musical influences from Africa, Siberia, India, South America and the Aborigines Of Australia. Vocals include Grammy Award Winner Richard Bona and tribal singers from Duala - Cameroon, Siberia & India.

ABOUT JIMMY NELSON

Jimmy Nelson (UK, 1967) started working as a photographer in 1987. Having spent ten years at a Jesuit boarding school in the North of England, he set off on his own to traverse the length of Tibet on foot (1985). The journey lasted a year and upon his return his visual diary, featuring revealing images of a previously inaccessible Tibet, was published.

Soon after (1987) he was commissioned to cover a variety of culturally newsworthy themes for many of the world-leading publications ranging from the Russian involvement in Afghanistan and the ongoing strife between India and Pakistan in Kashmir to the beginning of the war in former Yugoslavia.

*In early 1994 he and his Dutch ex-wife Ashkaine Hora Adema produced *Literary Portraits of China*. A coffee-table book about all indigenous cultures in China and their translated literature. From 1997 onwards, Jimmy undertook commercial advertising assignments for many of the world's leading brands. Meanwhile, he spent his whole life accumulating images of indigenous cultures.*

*In 2010 he began his journey to create the artistic document that became *Before They pass Away*, which was published in October 2013. Its success and the responses to it have enabled and encouraged Jimmy to continue this journey. In October 2018, Nelson published the first interactive book *Homage to Humanity*, for which he visited another unique 34 indigenous cultures around the globe. The book is accompanied by the 2019 Webby Award-winning mobile application that makes it possible to scan every image in the book and bring them to life with exclusive films, interviews and 360° film material. This allows people to see the making of the work and to understand the process behind it.*

*Today Jimmy is using an 8x10 analogue plate camera to bring the project to its next level. Jimmy strongly believes that if you change the way you look at people, the people you look at change. And if that change is powerful enough, it will gather momentum to affect the whole of humanity. A message that today he is promoting through talks at international conferences and museum exhibitions. With the proceedings of his art projects, the *Jimmy Nelson Foundation* was set up to take it a step further in supporting the communities on the ground.*

JIMMY NELSON

Jimmy Nelson