

**SCHEMITZUN!**  
**Produced, Written & Directed by Kenneth A. Simon**  
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OPEN

NARRATOR: In September 1998, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation in Connecticut sponsored their Seventh Annual Feast of Green Corn and Dance at a tribe-owned farm in North Stonington, Connecticut.

About 2,000 dancers and 65 drum groups from North America competed for awards and recognition in the four-day competition.

It is the World Championship of Native-American song and dance.

LAUGHING WOMAN (Mashantucket Pequot Elder): Pow-wass is the gathering of people. Powwow --I don't know where that word came from, but is the gathering of Native Americans.

I think this is perhaps how Schemitzun got started: That we just wanted peoples to come, Native Americans united as one as the corn is so tightly woven together.

Peoples of the first light, to dance with us, to sing with us, to share in the eating of foods, the storytelling..

MICHAEL THOMAS (Mashantucket Pequot Councilor): To us it is a celebration that we're still here. It is an opportunity to again, as we once did very often, share intertribal culture with other tribes and scream from the highest mountaintop that we've never gone anywhere.

BOYE LADD (Powwow Consultant, Ho Chunk Nation): Powwow originated about 400 years ago among the Omaha people of the Central Plains.

We look to Schemitzun as perhaps being our national finals, our biggest championship for the year. Everyone looks forward to becoming the world champion. We come in and we win a championship and we go home we pride our people so that perhaps next year maybe we'll incorporate maybe two or three younger people that may want to chase the same dream.

GRAND ENTRY

BOYE LADD: The Grand Entry actually was created and evolved around rodeo. Everyone gets an opportunity to see who the competition is, the people coming into the circle. We also carry in the flag. You'll see the invocation. It's quite similar to that of rodeo, a chance to come in and warm-up, get preparation for the competition and go-arounds.

I have danced professionally as a fancy dancer for over 45 years. I'm just one of many, many champions that, you know, had our day one time or another, but now it's our turn to come in to teach, to get the young people, our children, to come forward and hopefully exemplify some of the same feelings and emotions that we have gone through, to enjoy the same highs as a champion.

JOHNNY WHITECLOUD (Fancy Dancer, Otoe-Creek): The culture, the tradition, the spirituality, the language preservation, the song and dance - it's all meaningful to all of us.

*Maz-ayre-os say juan-guz-a-duh* -- it means to be searching, grasping in the dark for something to latch onto. So this is how we hang onto our, all of our culture, spirituality and our traditions and still yet coexist, peacefully coexist in a dominant society.

There's an inner pride in us to say be proud of - know who you are and where you come from. Be proud of what you are, but at the same time never be arrogant, always walk in humbleness and humility and then in there always be bighearted and broadminded.

## THE WARRIOR'S DREAM

BOYE LADD: We have our warrior societies. I come from a warrior society that believes in accomplishment by warriors, the feathers that we wear, the color, the designs, just like the medals you see on a warrior's chest, it also reflects in our regalia. The name giving, the feather giving, the whistle - the giving of the whistle - many of the ceremonial aspects of powwow derive from what the warriors had seen in battle

JOHNNY WHITECLOUD: So in the old days there was fasting and there was preparation and the all night prayers. You put on your very best regalia that maybe your wife and your mother or your families made for you and then your paint that you acquired from the spirits from the vision, and then fix your horse up same way. If we should happen to die in battle to day we want to look our very best when we meet the Creator face to face. That's why you put on your very best.

Now, there's war journey songs they would sing, prayer songs to take them over there. Then there's homecoming veteran songs And the scouts would say, wan-wasser-shay. The warriors have come home. So they all come out to the center of the village and they start singing the drums. These drums. And there would be all types of emotion. There would be the mothers in grief and heavy-hearted because their son had got killed, maybe a wife or a husband got killed. Then the others attended to the wounded. And there are some that would really be happy because their sons came home all right.

So this Ha-dues-ka way would mean to get down off your horse and unbraid your hair and let your hair hang down and while they're hitting that drum, dance. Dance in a sacred manner and thank the Creator that you've made it home. Later on the contests came and there is big money involved now.

BOYE LADD: This is the biggest celebration in the country as far as finance. Today I kind of look at powwow as a contemporary version of war as well because here you'll have cultural pride, you'll have tribal affiliation, tribal contests, tribal competition where each champion from each nation or tribe coming together in the spirit of competitiveness without the fear of actually hurting somebody or counting coup on someone - that they come together dancing. Out of that comes pride, comes respect, comes this identity of being a member of a certain tribe maybe the world champion comes from.

MARVIN BURNETTE (Northern Traditional Dancer, Rosebud Sioux Lakota): And we as Native people whenever we go to a powwow usually our third song is always a veterans' honoring song. As warriors, we wear the eagle feather, we as veterans we respect the American flag, the red, white and blue. And everyone of our events includes the American flag, although I cannot forget that the first flag was the Indian flag, a single eagle feather on a wooden staff.

The status of being a veteran or a warrior has always been important to the Native American people because many, many years ago, going back hundreds of years, it was the Native Americans who defended this land indigenous to this great country. \*We defended a land. We defended a people. We defended a way of life.

In 1924 the American government gave us citizenship status to fight on behalf and defend their way of life. But we as Native people we've always been very proud who we fight, where we fight, how we fight, and we put ill feelings aside. Nonetheless, call it America, call it Turtle Island, Indian Island, it's always home to us, indigenous to us. Fight for home every day. Every day, because I can't forget what this eagle feather means that I'm wearing.

JOHNNY WHITECLOUD: So we have forgiveness and then we pray for the people that oppressed us and there the Creator's watching us and then he's going to bless our children accordingly. We forgive so that we can carry on and have our children grow up in a real good way and still hang onto their identity living in this dominant society

### GATHERING POINT

ADAM FORTUNATE EAGLE (Pipe Maker, Chippewa-Cree, Red Lake Band): As an old traditional dancer myself, I find powwows have been a mechanism to unify a large segment of Native people who have been broken apart by the system. Powwows are a gathering point. It is a cultural, a traditional event, it is a homecoming for the people, the indigenous people. We can all as Native people relate to a powwow. It's a reunion, it's a ceremonial time, it's many, many things all wrapped up in one: culture, art, tradition, ceremony.

### VOICES

GARY D. FARMER (Actor & Publisher, Cayuga, Six Nations): You know, powwows are astounding to me as a member of the community because they're so social. I mean, you see people you haven't seen in years and you're wheeling and dealing with your friends for items that mean a lot for whatever reason and then the dance and the song and the hand games, you know, it's perfect. It's a perfect world for us. It's also a way to economically keep, carry things on like this alive and whatever people do to survive, you know? It's a beautiful thing.

### MISS INDIAN WORLD

APRIL WHITTEMORE (Miss Indian World, Lumbee-Cheraw, Irish): I love powwows. I love to powwow. Powwows have helped me as a young person. When I was in junior high I had very low self-esteem because of the identity. I associated myself with a Hispanic because outside that's how I looked even though I knew I was Native American I said, well, I'm gonna hang with this group because this is what I look like. Okay, and I got into powwows, I learned about the elders, the veterans, the dancing, why you dance. Dancing's the least of the powwow, it's why you do it, why do you wear these colors, what has your grandmother or your grandfather, what have they taught you? So all of that just brought my self-esteem up. I said, well, I know who I am and I'm Indian and I'm proud, I'm Irish and I'm proud. So when I understood those things and my self-esteem just rose, my grades rose, and I had a direction in my life, so that helped me a lot.

### MIXECA

CITLALI SALINAS (Exhibition Dancer, Aztec): Mixeca. The name Aztec was given to us by the Spaniards but the real name is Mixeca. It's spelled M-i-x-e-c-a.

I started dancing when I was around 8. It's quite a responsibility because you're representing your family\*, you're representing your culture, your country. There's that misunderstanding that people have about the Aztec that they worship Gods, that they had a Rain God, that they had a Sun God. We only have one Creator. But all of our dances are done to honor different aspects of life and of nature.

KEITH RICHARD SHARPHEAD (Drummer, Canada): We met on the powwow trail and I saw Citlali and, well, what can I say? I fell in love. We were finished drumming for the afternoon and then her program came up and I've never seen anything like that before. And then after they danced I went over there to see hi and to compliment her on her dancing and then when I did she - she gave me the cold shoulder. She doesn't remember doing that.

CITLALI SALINAS: It was his idea actually to start traveling with me and I had already spoke with my mom and then when the time came he had to ask permission from my dad.

KEITH RICHARD SHARPHEAD: I was really nervous. Beyond belief I was nervous.

Throughout the years couples have met on the powwow trail and to do that it's - it's spiritual. There's like a bond that you have at this – at this powwow and you get to share that experience with your partner and you grow as a result of sharing the dance, the song. I have the best of two worlds. I have mine and hers.

### TWISTED STEEL

KIRK PATRICK JOHNSON (Rodeo Bullrider, Cheyenne River Sioux): Where I come from there are big, big ranches and all we got is land, you know, cattle - we don't have a casino - we don't have the people like you do here, it's just open. And we ranch, you know, run cattle. Well, you gotta be a cowboy, you know, run cattle. Indians, cowboy, you're brave anyway, you know, kind of a thing that Indian people do, you know, back home, count coup and whatnot, you know, the young braves and if you can do it and do it good and look good and have fun, it's a dream, living a dream.

I've always rode pretty good, you know, since the time I was 13. I won my first pro rodeo when I was 14, you know, my home town, and I never really had a problem with injuries. I was always in great shape and that's the main thing, you keep in shape for this sport. This ain't everybody's sport. If it was easy grandma be'd doing it. This ain't golfing or nothing like that. This ain't basketball, this ain't nothing. Football may be close, you know, but how many football players do you see that are 145\* pounds of twisted steel and sex appeal, huh?

BOYE LADD: Well, there are probably two different interpretations when we talk of powwow. There are the traditional interpretations as well as the contemporary. The traditional, yes, the foundation is based upon what the warriors' experience have been. The foundation of what we call respect. The contemporary version today evolves around materialism, money. Money does attract, yes, it does attract a lot of people. I don't hesitate to say that many of the champions and the regalia of today is probably the best I've ever seen in my lifetime. Money has carried professionalism to a higher standard but many times I tend to find that the higher standard sometime does erode the respect, the morals of our people because of materialism. Money to many of our nations is the root of all evil, but, again, I'm sorry to say that we can't live without it as well. I mean, there are some people that have developed dance into more than a profession, it is a way of life. So there is some good and there is some bad in that.

JOHNNY WHITECLOUD: Today it's all right to have the HELUSHKA arena and the contest, the prize money because you look out there the best in the country, in the United States, North America, this is the only dance that exist where there's not this type of dancing in England or France or Spain or Germany that are indigenous to those particular people. So this is like the only type of dancing that there is like this in the world. Competition. Competition, It's the pursuit of excellence and that's what we want all our children to strive to do, to be the very best that they can be as dancers, then from dancers have their pride of identity

TERRY FIDDLER (Northern Traditional Dancer, Cheyenne River Sioux): Our main goal as tribal people is to protect our sovereignty, our jurisdiction of our reservation and our way of life. For many years the government had banned our religious ceremonies, even our dancing. People had to sneak off and do the ceremonies and dances in secret. And I guess that's what laid upon each generation that comes is to protect what we have left and see that it's passed onto the next generations. My grandparents are the ones that taught me the dancing and singing. We used to powwow quite a bit, you know, growing up. And through my life everything I've done has been a result of my dancing, my singing, my culture. It's taken me, you know, all across the nation, overseas

I've got five daughters ...and uhm, my girls have been dancing since they've been able to walk. They've been at a powwow, every one of them, about every week in most of their life. And taking them they had the opportunity of uh of being taught by their great grandmother while she was still alive about the real traditional ways of our people and the dances, the proper way.

KENNY SCABBY ROBE (Grass Dancer, Blackfoot): The powwow means very much to me. It's my life as an Indian person. And I started dancing when I was 5 years old. To me, I know we need money nowadays but that's not really important. The important thing is that we continue on to dance and to sing, to be an example to our younger people that they'll pick it up.

We have younger generation that's coming up, I'm very proud of. I see a lot of little kids out there dancing they know that our Indian way of life is certainly the way to go.

#### THE MC

WALLACE COFFEY (Master of Ceremonies, Comanche): I've been fortunate to serve in this capacity for 30 years. It seems like a Master of Ceremonies has to be a jack-of-all-trades. You not only call the program for the dancers and the singers but you also entertain the audience. \* Sometimes you utilize a little bit of humor. Sometimes Indian humor is one of the best things we have. I think that everybody wants to understand what Indian spirituality is, you know, we don't belong to any denominations or any religious faiths - spirituality is inherent to us and it's inside and the best way to exercise your spirituality is to express it.

#### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

BOYE LADD: When people that are new to this powwow circle come to powwow, they have to come in with an open mind, open heart, listen to the music, listen to the beat. I ask them to come in and use their senses: touching, feeling, smell, listening. You do not have to be a native or an Indian to come in and appreciate the beauty. When you first come to powwow and you hear the music it all sounds the same. But there is a uniqueness. Each song is composed by composers themselves or different tribes and they all identify with various aspects of be it the warrior, the original version. Today a lot of the contemporary styles of music basically isolate a lot of what you hear in the contemporary music world whether you hear the lyrics of rap music or R&B or whatever.

#### THE DANCERS

BOYE LADD: As you see the dancers dance out there to the drum you notice that everyone's in harmony, everybody dances together, everybody's heartbeat is dancing to the same rate as that drum is out on the floor. What I look for in a champion is the smoothness, the degree of difficulty in footwork, the speed, the beauty of his regalia, his ability to keep in time with the drum and your endings. The dancer's ability to know the song and end on the last beat of that particular song or style of competition

and the respect, his character. As a professional dancer most of us will go out and dance with only one thing in mind, that's you and the drum, the music. I don't see people when I dance, all I see is a bunch of bodies because my mind is so focused on the music, the drum, that it becomes a part of you.

Many of the professionals we talk about jamming, in other words, feeling the music without letting out a planned format or our choreography. Some people will lay out choreography based on drum but then again you don't really get to enjoy the essence of the music, the freedom to go out and express yourself..

MARY ANNE ANQUOE (Southern Traditional Dancer, Kiowa): When you're out there and you're dancing the spirit is there. You could feel it. You could - your worst enemy, you could smile at him. That's how good you feel. And I'm not kidding when I say that. Your heart is just full, to me you're just full right here. Somebody go by that you don't really care for, you say hi, or smile at 'em or something, and it's there.

KEVIN HAYWAHE (Contemporary Traditional Dancer, Assiniboine First Nation, Carry-the-Kettle Band):

It comes from the heart for dancing. I could dance all day long, you know, go on and keep on enjoying myself for the people, from the life of that drum that they're giving and the singers around that drum, so that helps me a lot, that really encourages me

I like it to where you could see the people where they're really into the dancing part of it and put the money aside of it and that's what got me here, was my dancing to where I am today, to be ...picked up with many dancers to join a theater in New York City to travel the world and ...explain our culture

## VENDORS

MIKKI AGANSTATA (Food Vendor, Cherokee): I don't know how you'd have a powwow without having food. Native dishes of different types. I don't know. How could you have a festival, a celebration and not have special foods? .

Well, what I'm doing is tacos, Indian tacos which originated in the Southwest and there's quite a history to them, quite a history to the bread. This is the foundation of the Indian taco and what I'm frying right now is a regular fry bread and I also have some pumpkin fry bread which I'll probably fry a little later. Each stand is different. And we try to reflect not only our own heritage but the heritage of the locality.

Festivals are different everywhere, everywhere. And with the kind of weather we're getting here, maybe I should be doing some corn soup.

## STONECARVER

JOHN KESSLER (Stone Carver, Kispokotha Shawnee): I specialize in wildlife native to eastern woodlands, bears, buffaloes, cougars, eagles, turtles, what have you. I started this about five, six years ago and I started by making a traditional pipe. That's the first time I had ever carved stone. I had never carved much wood or anything other than a little bit of whittling and I fell in love with it, so I've kind of stepped from making little pipe carvings, I wanted to do bigger and better things, so here I am. I do all the way up to life sized pieces.

I use only hand tools, tools you see right here, carved every single piece here including the life sized pieces.

You don't find this same type of energy in a traditional or a standard white art show. There's plenty good energy at a regular art show, don't get me wrong, a lot of artistic energy but it's not the same. Here the energy is mixed with spirituality, much more. It's much more important, a lot more heart driven. It makes it a lot better for me. I like being around the people. You can't get this cross section of cultures in one place at one time at almost any other event.

## BONE CARVER

STONEHORSE LONE GOEMAN (Bone Carver, Onondaga Nation ): These little guys here are made from skulls of moose. This one here I'm really kind of fond of because it's a man, he's singing because his woman's going to give birth. He's honoring the power of the woman to give birth so now this old skull has life again. I can take this stuff and make it come back to life a little. These are all horn buffalo shinbone mush spoons. He's had the bark bowls and stuff like this and everything they use to scrape that mush. And these are old time hair combs. Comb it at the bottom and they put in a tuft and they put it in the hair like that and it sits in there. Those are all Iroquois pieces and we also make custom lamps. My wife does the baskets and the lampshades out of sweet grass and white ash, black ash.

## REGALIA

BOYE LADD: Traditionally long ago design and color and material, natural parts that were used for our regalia usually were attributed to respect to nature itself such as the grass dance

You see the deer hooves or the hooves of elk or moose, the bones, the various parts of each animal were incorporated into our regalia as well as the designs. Many of the designs you'll find today are out of respect to tribal affiliation or clan membership or perhaps a dream or a vision.

With the advent of the white man and a lot of the – the materials that they brought with them, the needle and the use of metal, seed beads, porcelain, many of these things were added onto what we call the traditional format of structuring and making things out of beauty. The fluorescent colors are very bright so naturally would get the judge's attention, catch their eye as they come spinning by.

Long ago you could identify a dancer by looking at his regalia and knew what tribe he came from. You look at our regalias, a lot of it might not necessarily be traditional as it is being – becoming more Pan American. In other words, everyone copies from one another, borrows from one another.

KEVIN HAYWAHE: My Indian name is Powerful Walking Wolf. As a little boy, I got to grow up dancing all my life since I was a little fellow. My friend here, he came to me in a dream when I was like young, maybe 15, 16, 17 years ago. He would come to me and talk to me. I used to give out offerings to him to come closer to my house, to my father's house They took me out in the wintertime and we tracked down these coyotes and we talked to them, they asked them - health and life, you know, from there we would chase them down on horseback. They made me jump on one. To take it myself. His own life with my life together, we were both together. So from there we went on and time came on to paint the face of the warriors of the red, yellow for the sun people, the young generation, the black for the elderly and the sick for the lonely people, the ones that are hurting and mourning.

Bustle is the circle of life and to our people at home each feather represents - these are your mother and your father, and each one was your brother and your sister and your family and your relatives. Each feather represents what you put on your bustle. And my breach cloth here, my drag here is I have an emblem here of a black tail that's kind of part of my Indian name going along with the wolf helping me in life. These here represent the tracks of this other friend of mine here, the 4 tracks that he has and walks through life with it, and I walk with him with - with that life. The tail feathers here, and I took the two

out there for my roach for the top of the veteran's - yellow dots on here of the warriors that did a feat in life and helped their tribe in anyway

### EAGLE FEATHER

MIKE MCGINNIS (Traditional Dancer, Tsu Tina): My grandfathers they said you never fool around with the feathers. You always look after it good, you know, make it straight, make it alive, just like you're going to dance with it, take care of it, and take care of it, like that. Get it straightened out. Because it was in a suitcase too long, 52 hours, and going back to, I guess, the same way it's going to be so.

BOYE LADD: It's believed in the Indian world that for every feather that's worn on top of the head by both the male or the female is a feather that was earned in battle or through years of service to our people. The notching the color, the design of each feather usually signifies something that was earned in battle and so every part of that kind of patriotism is expressed and shown through powwow.

MARVIN BURNETTE: When we receive eagle feathers from the tribal council or elders in the council or in the tribe, it's something that we earn by accomplishment: helping the people, the way of life, defending the warriors, defending the way of life even on foreign and domestic soil. So it's very important for Native people when we wear the eagle feathers to wear them in a very special way.

KEVIN HAYWAHE: Growing up they never let me wear Eagle feathers until I was a man, until I did a feat of some kind. I see a lot today kids wearing eagle feathers more than some of the men and they didn't earn the right to get that, you know, some of them just for the look of it, I think. It's just not right, you know. I tell people that sometimes and some of them understand it and some just don't agree with it.

### THE SONGS

BOYE LADD: Most all of competition dancers or professional dancers have to be up to date on the music and the change from one drum group to another because they all vary their styles. Now that there aren't that many war songs or wars being fought, there are a lot of songs that basically are around social attitude, social change, a lot of the feelings that are expressed within the family themselves, maybe an affection for someone. Some of the young people in particular take some of the melodies from even some of our rap songs, some of our contemporary songs and apply it to music.

LETTING BEAVER (Stoney Park, Stoney Tribe): When you look at every race, they use the drum, that's why today we call it "heartbeat of a nation", it doesn't matter which nation it is, we all use the same drum but in a different form though. Every human being that there is their heartbeat is right there.

COLE BEAVER (Stoney Park, Stoney Tribe): My dad started us off. My whole family's actually rodeo family and my dad set us off on this way, so. That's what my dad told me. He said this drum is gonna take you a long way. You're going to be singing in front of a big crowd, he said, take it, keep going, don't quit and give respect to your drum. I'm the drum-keeper and it's my job to keep all these guys in line, straight all the time. Just to keep the boys on the edge I usually throw them a new song about 5 minutes before we sing it so they can sit there, sit tight and sing it out. That's the way I usually do it. They pick it up pretty good and it's becoming a habit, too, now, so.

GREVES SNOW (Stoney Park, Stoney Tribe): Learn as you go. We've been on the trail for so long that everybody knows, you know, the song and all that, experience it you know

COLE BEAVER: But I enjoy this life. It's pretty good, you know and plus it's music, pumps you up. Yeah. That's what I like about it and making everybody dance, giving them a healing song and all that, doing all

kinds of different kinds of songs. It's a challenge when you do a different kind of a song\* for me because I have to lead that song off.

COLLIN STONECHILD (Stoney Park, Stoney Tribe): You sing for your long life, good health, you know, you sing for the people out there, you know, you sing to the drum and it's a healing tool for everybody. It's a lifestyle to everybody. For instance, like a basketball team they travel city to city, it's a job to them but it's a lifestyle, too. Like we're out powwowing every weekend, it's just a lifestyle, it's our culture. I look it like I'd rather be singing at a drum, you know, \* traveling powwow to powwow than be drinking, you know, drinking around, you know, or getting into trouble, you know.

BRANDON DANIELS (Stoney Park, Stoney Tribe): And I guess you can say we live on the road, we live on the trail, you know, heading different powwows, hosting here, competition there. All that. When you add all that together it's just mainly having fun. That's about it. Having a good time.

HARLAN BEAVER (Stoney Park, Stoney Tribe): I feel good make songs, make those people dance. I like medium speed and jivey ones, like tongue twisters, that's what I like about it. Also while I'm playing I feel good. I don't drink and I don't do drugs around the drum. I don't even do that. I like to get down with it. Makes me feel good to be who I am.

JEREMY KING (Stoney Park, Stoney Tribe): It makes me feel good to sit around a drum, get together with all my brothers here and joke around and play jokes on each other , go see different places, go all over, meet new people. You're in for the girls. These guys are here for the girls, half of them.

SAM SAULTEUX (Stoney Park, Stoney Tribe): It's a really beautiful thing to do -- powwow: sing, dance and mostly it's just being with my brothers going place to place. And this drum it's really powerful. It's two brothers there that make the sound and it makes all our hearts beat as one, all our voices as one, and it makes me feel good to sing, and it's a really good feeling to be singing with all my brothers. It's a really good feeling.

## SILVER CLOUD

RANDY WHITEHEAD (Silver Cloud, Blackfoot, Flathead, Lumbee): Everywhere we go people go, you guys are from New York City? You know, we go – we went to Denver this past, this – this March and people were like, you guys are from New York? And it never dawned on us we had to say “City”. You know, and then when we started saying City people were like, you guys are from New York City? You mean, like where they make that paste picanti sauce, where like the Yankees come from? Yep, that's us. We come from New York. \*Indians don't come from New York. Indians don't sing like you guys in New York. We do, you know, and now we're beginning to get a name.

In the beginning they looked down at us because we were an intertribal drum. We weren't, you know, we weren't one tribe, we weren't one nation. We looked like a pickup drum, we still dress like a pickup drum. You know, we're just a drum from New York City, we've played in almost every theater \*except for Carnegie Hall, and we did the soundtrack for Robbie Robertson. You know, and they sit there and they go, you know, you're *that* Silver Cloud. Yeah, we're that Silver Cloud. And they're like, wow

## TRADITIONAL/CONTEMPORARY

BOYE LADD: The traditional style of dance where you'll see the one single bustle on the back. It's a much slower version where is more solemn, more respectful. Each warrior you'll see sometimes integrate war paint on their face. Their style of headdress may vary a little bit but, in essence, they're telling a story with the use of their coup stick or the use of their fan, expresses a story as they dance. As they

feel the music they will try to tell a story maybe of either tracking the enemy or perhaps tracking some deer or buffalo on a hunt.

CECIL NEPOOSE (Northern Traditional Dancer, Cree): It's a display of yourself and your motion, your feeling and your spirit that takes you into a journey of being a warrior and you display your actions in battle and you display your being a protector and a provider for your tribe. Certain people have their own unique style of dancing and when they dance to the beat of the drum they just kind of go down and kind of look, you know, communicating some of the old time chicken dances and they kind of watch out, kind of watch for the enemy, kind of looking out - ready for action, kind of always being on guard.

### LADIES TRADITIONAL

BOYE LADD: The ladies traditional style of dance was a solemn dance. There are two different styles. One is what they call the stationary style where they'll dance in one place in time with the beat of the drum. On the honor beat you'll see them using their fan, acknowledging the spirit world as they raise it on the downbeat. The other style is what they call the stylized walk. It's kind of basically walking flat-footed keeping time with the beat of the drum and swaying their fringe, their shawl or their dress fringe in time with the beat of the drum.

MARY ANNE ANQUOE: They say women's dance is graceful; well, I don't like the word graceful walk because we're dancing hard as we can. You get out of breath, you get tired. When I get in that arena, get ready, there's only good thoughts. By any means are you out there to say I want people look at me, I'm out here, I'm dancing, you know, you just feel so great. You took a lot of time and care into dressing.

### GRASS DANCE

BOYE LADD: The oldest of all the powwow styles of dance today is the grass dance. The grass dance originated amongst the Omaha people of the Central Plains.

KENNY SCABBY ROBE: It's one of the most sacred dances that we have. And what they did is they took grass like this. They rolled it up like this and then they tied it, they wrapped the grass around. And they would make about 4, maybe 6, and they would tuck them under their belts here and they would send them out either to scout for buffalo or scouting for enemy. If they needed to build fire, if they were cold, they would use this and they would set a fire. Also it was used for protection. They would take this because Mother Earth is sacred to us.

I dance a long time grass and I was probably one of the few that held onto this dance. In the old days it was different. The dancers, it was much footwork, there was no spinning, just a lot of weaving. You weave like the grass. When you're dancing you symbolize that like you see the grass moving. How beautiful. When you go into the prairies, if you can go in the prairies with the long grass you'll see that when it blows and sometimes if you look at it from a distance you can see it waving. The Grass Dance today is much more like fancy dance. There's a lot of spinning and there's a lot of other things that they do that original Grass Dancers don't do.

### JINGLE

BOYE LADD: And the ladies style of dance the oldest is perhaps what we call the jingle dress style of dance. This originated among the Ojibwa people of the Great Lakes. The use of the metal snuff can covers were used as a medicinal dance to ward off many of the bad spirits.

MARY AHENAKEW (Jingle Dancer, Cherokee, Scataway): They're called jingles and made out of snuff can lids. They're curled. There should be 365 jingles on a dress representing the days of the year and 7 rows on a dress for the 4 directions, for the sky, Earth and for, you know, the spirit inside. There is a basic step but then everybody has their own originality and they come up with their, you know, own style and it's basically to really look graceful and try and do intricate footwork and, of course, to raise your fan during the honor beats and, of course, to stop when the drum stops, the last beat, and you try and make your outfit, you know, original.

I like to dance. It makes you feel good and you also dance to make other people feel good and there might be people who feel sick or their spirits are low so you try and dance to make people happy and feel good

### FANCY SHAWL

BOYE LADD: Next we have the fancy shawl dance which was created in the early 1960's. This is basically when women's lib came to Indian country when women start copying, utilizing motions and actions of many of the younger men such as the fancy dance. By draping a shawl over their shoulders, they would use this fringe as a way to, again, catch the judge's eye but also use it as an extension of their body to express their story, much like you would see a butterfly, an eagle as it flies through the heavens

### FANCY DANCE

BOYE LADD: The men's fancy dance was created as a result, a direct result of a lot of the Buffalo Bill Wild West Shows that toured overseas. And searching for something that was more spectacular, they started adding more and more feathers.

JOHNNY WHITECLOUD: It was like the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show and Indians would come out and chase the stagecoach and there'd be a fight between the cavalry and the Indians. And the Indians would get off their horses and dance, and the more that they danced fancy the more the crowd liked it from the traditional steps. Fancy dance is anything goes, and there's two sets of bustles. One set of bustles here, one set of bustles here, and they go for fanciness - anything that's shiny and glimmering and fantastic. It's a free-for-all. Once you get the basic steps down and you get your footwork then you come up with your own style.

BOYE LADD: Fancy dance exemplifies speed, agility, degree of difficulty, the color. You'll see a lot of fluorescence used in the regalia today to gather the judge's eye

### CREDITS