

*Alive Mind* CINEMA

# A GOOD DAY TO DIE

2011 / US / Color / 90 min. / 16:9 / English

An Alive Mind Cinema Release  
from Kino Lorber, Inc.  
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# Alive Mind C I N E M A

## LONG SYNOPSIS

Dennis Banks co-founded the American Indian Movement (A.I.M.) in 1968 to call attention to the plight of urban Indians in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The film presents an intimate look at Dennis Banks' life beginning with his early experience in boarding schools, through his military service in Japan, his transformative experience in Stillwater State Prison and subsequent founding of a movement that, through confrontational actions in Washington DC, Custer South Dakota and Wounded Knee, changed the lives of American Indians forever.

## SHORT SYNOPSIS

American Indian Movement (AIM) co-founder and leader Dennis Banks looks back at his life and the confrontational actions that changed the lives of Native Americans – and all indigenous peoples – forever.

## PRESS QUOTES

*"A wonderful, sorrowful, compelling film. From classrooms of fear and forced assimilation, to the climactic stand off at Wounded Knee, it is an essential chapter in the all-too-infrequently-told tale of those who can truly call this continent home."* - Ken Burns, filmmaker

*"About time someone looked in depth at that part of our history. The Banks documentary taught me a million fascinating things I never knew, and I followed the events at Wounded Knee quite closely at the time."* - Michael Fitzgerald, Producer (*Mister Johnson, The Pledge, The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada*)

*"Dramatic and absorbing"* - Barry Roche, *The Irish Times*

*"A beautifully made film, from the camera work to the editing to the music. The rare footage the filmmakers found of the BIA occupation, the Custer, South Dakota riot, and the Wounded Knee battle alone are worth the price of admission. This film goes a long way towards giving an inside glimpse into the murky events of one of the most important periods in modern American Indian history."* - Kevin Cloud Brechner, Director-Writer-Producer, *First Americans In The Arts Awards, The Longest Walk Through Hollywood, An Evening With Walter Cronkite*

*"[A] riveting documentary, incorporating never-before-seen footage."* - Twin Cities Film Festival, 2010

*"The best documentaries examine the overlooked. For "A Good Day To Die", filmmakers David Mueller and Lynn Salt opened up a chapter of American history rarely read by anyone."* -Matthew Carney, *The Oklahoman*, 2010

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## CREDITS

*Produced and Directed by*  
David Mueller & Lynn Salt (Choctaw)

*Executive Producer*  
Yocha Dehe Wintum Nation

*Co-Producers*  
Tashina Banks (Lakota-Ojibwa)  
Takeo Koshikawa

*Associate Producers*  
Bob Hicks (Creek-Seminole)  
Matt Martinez (Ohkay Owingeh)

*Editor*  
Robert McFalls

*Cinematographer*  
David Mueller

*Production Sound*  
Lynn Salt (Choctaw)

*Archival Researcher*  
Loris Sofia Gregory

*Music Composed by*  
Michel Tyabji

*Sound Mixer*  
Rosa Costanza Tyabji

*Photographers*  
Michael Abramson  
Dick Bancroft  
Richard Erdoes  
Erich Erdoes  
Takeo Koshikawa  
Kevin McKiernan  
Michelle Vignes

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## *Archival Film Sources*

ABC News VideoSource  
John A. Bacich  
BBC Motion Gallery  
CBS News Archives  
Cucchino Film  
Richard Erdoes / Yale Collection  
Cyril J. Griffin  
Fumio Kamai / JDF  
KOTA Territory News  
Kevin McKiernan  
Minnesota Historical Society  
National Archives  
NBC News Archives  
Universal Newsreel  
Vanderbilt Film and Television Archives

## *Archival Photo Sources*

Thomas Amble  
Dennis Banks Family  
Darla Banks  
Tashina Banks  
Edwin C. Hirscholl  
Wayne Hoglund  
George Mitchell  
Corbis  
Library of Congress  
Minnesota Historical Society  
National Archives  
Pennington County Sheriff's Office  
The Post Standard  
Still Photos US Air Force

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## *Interviewees*

Larry Anderson (Navajo)  
Dennis Banks (Ojibwa)  
Tashina Banks (Lakota-Ojibwa)  
Zinzii Banks (Ojibwa)  
Clyde Bellecourt (Ojibwa)  
Sydney Bird (Dakota)  
Lehman Brightman (Lakota-Creek)  
Jerry Brown  
Brenda Child (Ojibwa)  
Frances Fairbanks (Ojibwa)  
Leonard Foster (Navajo)  
De Glassgow  
Eda Gordon  
Cyril Griffin  
LaDonna Harris (Comanche)  
Russell Hawkins (Dakota)  
Bob Hicks (Creek-Seminole)  
Charlie Hill (Oneida)  
Cora Jones (Dakota)  
Roselyn Jumping Bull (Lakota)  
Marshall McKay (Yocha Dehe)  
Wilmer "Stampede" Mesteth (Lakota)  
George Mitchell (Ojibwa)  
Lyle Rustad  
Wes Studi (Cherokee)  
Dorothy Sun Bear (Lakota)  
George Tennyson  
Rick Thomas (Dakota)  
Ken Tilsen  
Leonard Wabasha (Dakota)  
Della Warrior (Otoe-Missouria)  
Jay WhiteCrow (Seneca)  
Joann WhiteCrow (Cherokee)  
Marshall Young

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## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

### DAVID MUELLER

David has been directing and producing films for more than 20 years. He recently co-wrote and directed "Beautiful Wave" (2011) starring Aimee Teegarden ("Prom", "Friday Night Lights"), Lance Henriksen ("Dog Day Afternoon", "Aliens", "Millennium"), Pat Richardson ("Home Improvement", "Ulee's Gold") and Helen Slater ("Supergirl", "The Secret of My Success").

In 2010 he produced and directed--with his partner Lynn Salt--"A Good Day To Die" about Dennis Banks and the rise of the American Indian Movement about which Ken Burns said: "A wonderful, sorrowful, compelling film. From classrooms of fear and forced assimilation, to the climactic stand-off at Wounded Knee, it is an essential chapter in the all-to-infrequently-told tale of those who can truly call this continent home." The film has won 7 "Best Documentary" festival awards to date.

In 2007 David co-produced and filmed "Dalai Lama Renaissance" featuring the His Holiness the Dalai Lama and narrated by Harrison Ford. The film was selected by forty film festivals and garnered twelve awards, including two Grand Jury and three Audience awards and was released in the US and Germany in 2008. Critics called it "a stunning tour-de-force" (Amy Wong, LA Yoga Magazine), "provocative, enlightening... fascinating, ravishingly beautiful" (John Griffin, 'Montreal Gazette'), "startlingly original... a revelatory documentary" (Kyoto Journal), "Spellbinding" (Diane Ladd), "an extraordinary portrait of His Holiness at work... some of the best comic scenes in any new film out there..." (Bob Graham, SF Bay Times).

David began directing principal actors on second unit for Universal Pictures on the episodic television shows "New York Undercover" (Fox) and "The Wright Verdicts (CBS). He has produced and directed thirteen documentaries including the award-winning shorts: "Coach", "Gazos Creek: The Majestic Forest", "The Spirit of Peace" and "Bolsa Chica: The Endangered Jewel". He has directed segments for "Dateline NBC" in India including the acclaimed one-hour special "Tibetan Medicine: A Cure for Cancer" as well as "Living Off The Land" on cowboys in the Australian outback for the National Museum of Australia. He directed national commercial spots for Panasonic and Pacific Bell. He has been a member of the Directors Guild of America since 1996.

Prior to making films, David led dropout prevention programs in inner-city Brooklyn, NY and co-founded both "Project Nepal" (1979) and "World Service" (1988), two international rural development projects in Asia, Africa and South America. He mustered cattle and trained horses in Australia's Northern Territory from 1986 to 1988 and studied theater and drama in London and Bretton Hall, U.K. in 1989. David holds a Certificate of Film and a Masters degree in International Education from New York University and a degree in Anthropology from UCLA.

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## LYNN SALT

Lynn produced and directed "A Good Day to Die" (2010), a feature documentary about American Indian Movement leader Dennis Banks, with her partner David Mueller. The film has won 7 "Best Documentary" awards. Lynn co-wrote and co-produced--with her partner David Mueller-- "Beautiful Wave" (2011) a coming-of-age feature film starring Aimee Teegarden and Lance Henriksen. Lynn is a member of the Directors Guild of America and has worked in the motion picture industry for more than 20 years.

As a screenwriter Lynn sold her original screenplay "The Haworth Bells", based on the lives of the Bronte sisters ("Jane Eyre", "Wuthering Heights"), to Disney Studios where she worked with writer- director-producers Charles Shyer and Nancy Meyer on script revisions. Lynn was then hired to analyze and develop screenplays for a writer-producer with projects at RKO, Lifetime Channel and Imagination Worldwide. She created and developed beat-sheets, sub-story breakdowns, scene revisions, character development and dialogue. She was hired to write the script for the First Americans in the Arts Awards Shows in Los Angeles 2005-2007.

Lynn Salt (Choctaw Nation) was a member of the American Indian Registry for the Performing Arts (AIRPA) in Los Angeles and worked with Executive Director, Bob Hicks (Creek Nation) writing monthly newsletters and teaching acting and interview techniques to help members obtain employment in the entertainment industry.

From 1988 to 1999 she was an assistant to the President of the Paul Kohner Agency where she analyzed screenplays and books and attended booksellers conventions and key film festivals (Sundance, Cannes, Telluride) to acquire rights to literary and film properties for agency representation. In 2001 Lynn developed a plan for an Ecology Film Festival at UC Davis to promote the work of prominent environmental scientists from around the world.

Lynn is based in Los Angeles with her partner David Mueller.

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## FESTIVALS AND AWARDS

WINNER

"Best Documentary"  
Deadcenter Film Festival

WINNER

"Grand Jury Prize - Spirit of Action"  
Santa Cruz Film Festival

WINNER

"Juried Award - Best Documentary"  
Frozen River Film Festival

WINNER

"Best Documentary"  
American Indian Film Festival

WINNER

"Best Documentary"  
Dreamspeakers Film Festival

WINNER

"Best Documentary"  
Winnipeg Aboriginal Film Festival

WINNER

"Best Documentary"  
International Cherokee Film Festival

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OFFICIAL SELECTION  
Starz Denver Film Festival

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
Corona Cork Film Festival

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
Salem Film Festival

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
Durango Film Festival

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
Imagine Native Film Festival

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
Twin Cities Film Festival

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
LA Skins Fest

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
Wairoa Maori Film Festival