

PRIMAL QUEST

A REALITY-BASED FEATURE FILM



The first anthropological expedition of Africa's San Bushmen to the United States drives the *Primal Quest* story. The San are among the most studied and photographed people in the world. A San hunter-shaman asks our filmmakers "Why do so many people come to film us?" Our answer is to invite a delegation of San to explore our technology-based culture. In the process, we see our own fascination with the primal as part of the universal search for meaning. We create a dynamic between primal and scientific cosmologies that illuminates our planetary crisis and suggests a way forward for both shaman and the scientist, hunter and businessman.

Primal Quest is a feature length (120 minutes), High Definition Television (HDTV) documentary that will look at our world through the eyes of present-day hunter-shaman of the San people. Ancillary project components contribute to a total package designed for both the mass audience and educational applications (both distance and close learning). These include:

- Scholarly and popular format books
- Robust Web site
- Enhanced interactive DVD
- Soundtrack CD



In a real sense we are all Africans, and we were hunters. Scientists tell us that the oldest remains of modern Homo sapiens come from rock shelters on the Southern African coastline. These earliest humans first appeared 125,000 years ago. Today's San Bushmen are their closest relatives. Some still survive as hunter-gatherers, living on the edge of starvation in the vast sand desert of the Kalahari. The last practitioners of a shamanically guided hunting-gathering way of life are now fighting for land, hunting rights, and a livelihood.

The planet is also in crisis. We live in times of great confusion. Never before has the future evolution of life on earth depended so directly on human understanding and choice. Western science defines our crisis and tells us about it with the same precise reliability that allows us to splice genes, rocket men to the moon, and communicate electronically. It is also science that reminds us of what we have forgotten in our indoor lives--we are made by wilderness, an African wilderness whose custodians for millennia have been the Bushmen.

Primal Quest takes the viewer on a journey back through Bushman history, deep into the shared past of all humanity, and then forward into the possibility of an equally shared future. It brings together the world's oldest culture and the world's newest—the Bushman shaman and the Western scientist. Both need to learn from each other, both need to change in order to advance the human condition.

STORYTELLING AND VISUAL APPROACH



Primal Quest emphasizes unique storytelling, thought-provoking themes, and memorable characters. The San delegation is carefully selected and provided with background training on film production so that they have a meaningful role in the telling of their story.

San “anthropologists” travel the continent, explore our great cities and meet a startling diversity of characters as they begin to sort out the implications of post-modern culture. They meet ordinary citizens, politicians, scientists and scholars. They meet indoor people and those who still have a passion for wild places and hunting. Our explorations include both high and popular culture, areas of crisis and those with healing potential.

We experience their world and ours through HDTV photography and the spectacular locations that comprise our stage: the Great Kalahari, South Africa’s Garden Coast, cityscapes from New York to Los Angeles, America’s farm and wilderness regions. In the far north we join an Inuit hunting expedition, traveling by dogsled across the frozen tundra. In the middle of the Pacific Ocean, from the 14,000-foot summit of Mauna Kea, Hawaii’s highest peak, we see the birthplace of stars through the magic of the Keck Observatory.

On return to their desert home, the hunter/anthropologists reveal their view of our civilization to the village. Traditional Bushmen culture gives vivid examples of a way of life tuned by the experience of intimate connection to the mystery of the natural world. Their politics are a politics of democracy with the whole of creation. Archaic approaches are seen to have a new relevance to our current crisis.

The diversity of interactions illuminates conflicting views, brings San humor and wisdom to the fore, and signals areas of convergence in understanding our shared human condition. Our goal is to entertain both visually and viscerally as we confound and enlighten.



PRODUCTION NOTES

Primal Quest is an ambitious sequel to the internationally acclaimed award-winning film, *The Great Dance-A Hunter’s Story*, which documented, for the first time, the rarely practiced “running hunt” of the Kalahari Bushman. *The Great Dance* is the first film ever to be made in full collaboration, throughout production and post-production, with the San. For more information, visit www.senseafrica.com

Filmmakers Craig and Damon Foster will use their decade long involvement with Southern Africa’s Bushmen communities to produce *Primal Quest*.

Cosmic Africa, the Foster brother’s most recent project is a feature-length, HDTV documentary, produced by the Carl Sagan Cosmos Foundation, telling the extraordinary story of African astrophysicist Thebe Medube and his connection to Africa’s ancient astronomical traditions.

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