

## National Geographic Documentary Films Partners With Acclaimed Director Dawn Porter in Search of Justice and Peace 100 Years After Tulsa Massacre in New Feature Documentary *Red Summer* (working title)

Today, National Geographic Documentary Films announced it is partnering with acclaimed filmmaker **Dawn Porter** (“The Way I See It,” “Good Trouble: John Lewis”) and Trailblazer Studios on a feature documentary that sheds new light on a century-old period of intense racial conflict. **RED SUMMER** (working title) comes one hundred years from the two-day Tulsa Massacre in 1921 that led to the murder of hundreds of Black people and left thousands homeless and displaced. The film will premiere in June on National Geographic, commemorating Juneteenth when the last enslaved Black people in Texas received news of their emancipation, and will air globally in 172 countries and 43 languages.

Award-winning Washington Post journalist and Oklahoma native **DeNeen Brown** is at the heart of the film, reporting on the search for a mass grave in her native state. Digging into the events that led to one of the worst episodes of racial violence in America’s history, Brown reveals insights into racial conflict incidents that erupted in the early 20th century. Between 1917 and 1923, when Jim Crow laws were at their height and the Klu Klux Klan was resurging across the nation, scores of Black homes and businesses were razed, and hundreds of Black people were lynched and massacred with impunity.

Brown’s reporting highlights the revived call for justice for victims and survivors. Following a 2018 investigative report, Brown explores the current new anti-racism movement in the context of the Tulsa Massacre and the Red Summer. With access to family members of those killed, city officials, archeologists, and historians, the film reveals the decades-long effort by descendants and community members to find victims’ bodies and unearth truths that have been suppressed for nearly a century. **RED SUMMER** also untangles the role the media played in covering events at the time in order to reveal the full extent of the nation’s buried past.

“I’m interested in following the evidence where it leads while giving a voice to those directly affected by the tragic events in Tulsa and throughout the Red Summer. This is the time to tell this story, which is not only about Black victims, but also about Black resistance. There is so much our society is currently reckoning with, but seeking the truth about the damage wrought by unchecked mob violence against the Black community, is a starting point. Sadly, the racism motivating the Red Summer has not been eradicated. It is clear we must acknowledge these wrongs if healing is to begin,” said Dawn Porter.

DeNeen L. Brown added, “In Tulsa, there is an increased urgency to properly honor Black people who were murdered during the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. Black activists in Tulsa have been working for years to bring national attention to this horrific chapter in U.S. history, in which as many as 300 Black people were killed by white mobs and the prosperous Black community of Greenwood was destroyed. This year, as the city recognizes the 100th anniversary of the massacre, Tulsa finds itself at a point of inflection to learn from its horrific history and bring justice to survivors and

descendants who have been denied true justice for too long.”

Also being covered in a future issue of National Geographic Magazine, the excavation of a possible mass grave in Tulsa will continue early 20th century calls from Black newspapers which reported on the Red Summer era seeking justice for the dead. The excavation is just one part of the effort to reckon with the past.

National Geographic Documentary Films' **RED SUMMER** comes on the heels of its highly successful docuseries **CITY SO REAL**, continuing to shed light on social justice and racial equality in America. The banner's most recent films, **REBUILDING PARADISE**, from director Ron Howard, debuted at Sundance 2020 and **THE CAVE**, from director Feras Fayyad, was nominated for an Academy Award® for Best Documentary Feature in 2020. National Geographic Documentary Films previously released the Academy Award-, BAFTA- and seven-time Emmy® Award-winning film **FREE SOLO**; the Sundance Audience Award winner **SCIENCE FAIR**; Emmy winners **LA 92** and **JANE**, both of which were included in the top 15 documentaries considered for an Academy Award in 2017; and duPont Award winner **HELL ON EARTH: THE FALL OF SYRIA AND THE RISE OF ISIS**.

**RED SUMMER** is produced by Dawn Porter's Trilogy Films and Trailblazer Studios in association with National Geographic Studios. Porter serves as producer and director, with DeNeen Brown as contributing reporter and Lauren Capps as story producer. For Trailblazer Studios, Jeff Lanter and Ashleigh Di Tonto are executive producers. For National Geographic, Christine Weber is executive producer and Courtney Monroe is president, Content.

### **About National Geographic Documentary Films**

National Geographic Documentary Films is committed to bringing the world premium, feature documentaries that cover timely, provocative and globally relevant stories from the very best documentary filmmakers in the world. National Geographic Documentary Films is a division of National Geographic Partners, a joint venture between Disney and the National Geographic Society. Furthering knowledge and understanding of our world has been the core purpose of National Geographic for 132 years, and now we are committed to going deeper, pushing boundaries, going further for our consumers ... and reaching millions of people around the world in 172 countries and 43 languages every month as we do it. NGP returns 27 percent of our proceeds to the nonprofit National Geographic Society to fund work in the areas of science, exploration, conservation and education. For more information, visit [natgeotv.com](http://natgeotv.com) or [nationalgeographic.com](http://nationalgeographic.com), or find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Pinterest](#).

### **About Trilogy Films**

Trilogy Films specializes in creating award-winning, feature-length documentaries that elevate important issues and spark necessary conversations. Led by filmmaker Dawn Porter, Trilogy has produced content for some of the globe's largest content brands and distributors, while earning several of the industry's highest honors, including a Peabody Award for the 2016 documentary *Trapped* and Independent Spirit Award nomination for her 2013 film *Gideon's Army*. Recent projects include *John Lewis: Good Trouble* (Magnolia Pictures), about the late Congressman John Lewis and *The Way I See It* (Focus Features), about photojournalist Pete Souza, who served as Chief Official White House photographer for President Barack Obama and as an Official White House photographer for Ronald Reagan. Trilogy Films is currently producing an Apple TV multi-part documentary series with Oprah Winfrey and Prince Harry that focuses on mental illness and wellbeing.

### **About Trailblazer Studios**

Trailblazer Studios is an Emmy-winning entertainment, production, post and sound facility. Based in Raleigh, N.C., Trailblazer's nearly 20,000 sq. ft. facility boasts a soundstage, production offices, edit suites, picture finishing, sound mixing and other related services. Most recently, the company announced a first-of-its-kind television endeavor with Reuters to adapt its highly acclaimed, award-winning investigative series The Body Trade. Trailblazer, which delivered nearly 100 hours of original programming in 2020, is currently producing several announced blue-chip, natural-history and premium-documentary series for several networks, including National Geographic, OWN, Discovery and PBS. The company also assists clients with delivering content to HBO, Netflix, Amazon and numerous film festivals, including Sundance, Full Frame and Tribeca.

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