

PITCH: April Fournier had never really fitted in. A curvaceous, dark skinned woman with Navajo ancestry, she grew up in Maine, New England, surrounded by white girls, white families and white teachers. They didn't know, or care, what it meant to be part of Native American culture in the modern United States. Her mother, Laurie, who April is very close to, was adopted off the Navajo reservation in Arizona at just 4 years old to a white couple living in Southern California. Although they loved and cared for her, Laurie's native language was completely lost, as was all celebration of her culture. Once Laurie had children of her own she wanted to help them celebrate their Native American ancestry, but she didn't really know how to. This, teamed with growing up in Maine, meant April had never felt a sense of belonging.

Then, three years ago, April was watching a roller derby match on TV. It's an all female contact sport played on roller blades, which has been experiencing a modern revival in the United States since the early 2000s, with teams now forming all over the world from Iran to South Africa to the Philippines. April had been doing roller derby as a hobby on evenings and weekends, and was excited to see a game on TV. Watching the team playing - called Gotham - April clapped eyes on Melissa Waggoner. She was the only member of the Gotham team who also appeared to be of Native American descent, and April had never seen another woman from an indigenous community on a roller derby team. She was phenomenal on the track, and April got in touch with her afterwards to say so. They discovered they had similar ancestry. They bonded over the fact that so few women playing roller derby were from indigenous tribes, and over their shared sense of feeling lost in the world.

Fast forward to today, and April and Melissa have decided to create Team Indigenous, a team of women from indigenous communities across the globe who will compete in the upcoming Roller Derby World Championships in Manchester, UK, in February 2018. This has not only helped April find a place where she feels she belongs, but has helped her and her mother to rediscover their ancestry in a way they never thought would be possible. At 37 years old and with 4 children of her own, feeling lost because of her culture is not something April is willing to put up with. She doesn't want to pass it on to her own children.

This documentary will follow April as she brings the team of women from indigenous communities across the globe together, from training in the USA to sharing stories over video chats, and finally to all meeting in person and celebrating their indigenous cultures at the World Cup in the UK in February.

This will be an upbeat but poignant documentary, shot in observational style. The film will start in Maine, New England, following April in her home as she prepares for training sessions, driving through her town on the way to matches and spending time with her mother as they explore and discover their Navajo ancestry. We'll join April on video chats with the rest of Team Indigenous, sharing stories from across the globe of what it means for them to be part of the team, and to be women from indigenous tribes living in colonised lands. The story will then jump to the UK, where we'll film the entire team as they meet in person for the first time, practising together, and then competing in the adrenaline-fueled world cup in Manchester, where thousands of fans will gather to cheer on their teams from across the globe. We'll intersperse April's story with the backdrop of TV and radio coverage from the USA from the past year or so, including the Standing Rock Reservation protests, and the petition to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day, which April was involved in and petitioned for.

<p>Main characters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - April - April's mother - Melissa Waggoner 	<p>Crew:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Producer/ Director: Harriet Constable - Producer/ Shooter: Rachel Clara Reed - Additional shooter: TBC if needed
<p>Filming locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maine, New England - Manchester, UK 	<p>Shooting timeline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jan 2018 Maine, New England - Early Feb 2018 Manchester, UK

Edits complete: end of March 2018