



American **Selfie(s)**

A One-Hour Anthology Series

To describe America to Americans.

INTRO

American Selfie(s) is an original, scripted, anthology series with each episode taking place in one of the fifty United States.

Fifty original, one-hour narratives that promise to take the viewer to every state in the union and capture something essential from each one - a story fundamental and distinctive about that state and the characters depicted there.

American Selfie(s) aims to be bold, intimate, and cinematic. Each stand alone episode will use new stories, settings, and characters. The diverse nature of each state will be revealed through these memorable characters, uniquely American themes, and music.

The substance and authority of American Selfie(s) will come from the mosaic effect that the individual shows will have in giving us a portrait of America. Taken together, these fifty episodes will reflect the core beliefs and values that connect Americans to their fellow countrymen and women. They will reveal commonalities and convictions that bridge geography, gender, occupation, race and religion - an indication that what unites Americans to one another is more powerful than what divides them.



CONTEXT

This has never been done.

No one has ever endeavored to create a portrait of the nation in narrative form before. The closest attempt might be the WPA American Guide series done in the late 1930's. But that was a physical description and history of each state. Of its manufacturing, agriculture,

topography, and culture. American Selfie(s) is original in its intent of using the narrative form to “describe America to Americans.”

When we travel through the United States, whether for work or as a tourist, we meet people and learn about the area we are traveling in. Very often, the single most defining personal quality remains where you’re from - which more than anything means your home state.

The fifty states differ in landscape, topography, and weather; in political outlook, cultural preference, and social ideals: in accents, temperament, and sense of humor. Our states stubbornly resist blending into a single undifferentiated whole.

The purpose of this series is to provide the audience with a mosaic narrative portrait of the nation one state -one story- at a time.

Stories remain the most powerful way connect people. Empathy is the way we stand in each others shoes. The stories in American Selfie(s) hope to increase our common humanity and challenge the idea that we Americans are so deeply divided. The collective effect of the series will demonstrate that we are one people and we are not as divided as the pundits would lead us to believe in the name of profit, ratings, and clicks.

We hope to begin delivering episodes in late 2020. The Presidential election of Fall 2020 and the zeitgeist conversation around it will heighten the marketing of American Selfie(s) as a must-watch, event series.

STORIES

*“I hear America singing,
The varied carols I hear.”*

— Walt Whitman

Each state’s episode will tell a story derived in part by the distance we find between the American Dream and our American Reality. This conflict is universal in theme if different in the specifics.

In describing America to Americans we will necessarily find a number of themes that should resonate with viewers. These themes will reflect the values we all share originally outlined in our founding documents:

Freedom. Faith. Truth. Justice. Diversity. Community. Self-Reliance. Tolerance. Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.

The scripts for each show will be written by writers native to that particular state. Scott Rosenberg might write the screenplay for Massachusetts while Lauren Groff would write another screenplay for Florida. Some may be written by screenwriters sent to a state they've never been to, to get a sense of the place as only a writer with a map and a fresh set of eyes

can discover. State by state, job by job, character by character, the series will explore and celebrate our states.

Each state will be the title of its own show with a parenthetical appropriate to the theme or story of that particular show: Texas- Let Freedom Ring Maine- The Turning Wheel, Vermont- Short Dog Justice, etc.



[TONE and STYLE](#)

The visual strategy/tone of each show will be unique to each State – each story. Photography will be consistently cinematic and bold; lighting, composition, and color deployed to deliver heightened emotional impact. Where possible, directors for each show will be native that state as well.

In Kentucky there might be a search for bones in a river. Up in New York someone chases a fortune on Wall St. while out in Hawaii we find a middle aged wife getting a new tattoo. A twelve year old girl learns duck hunting in northern Michigan and so on... The diversity of each state delivers an abundance of themes, characters' and plot lines that make the mind spin. The fifty episodes will represent a provocative and surprising atlas of the

country's values - one that paints a complex picture of what it means to be American at this moment in history.

MUSIC

The soundtrack of the show should also reflect the amazing diversity of the country. Mixing old and new music from the American songbook, the music will feel familiar yet appropriate to every show. Nostalgic but not sentimental, music will serve to emotionally underline the core theme of each episode. Classic works of American classics of Woody Guthrie, Ray Charles, Bob Dylan, Patsy Cline, Sam Cooke, Bruce Springsteen, Al Green- will only be heard as source music from radios, TVs or juke boxes.

Contemporary, native composers will deliver the original score for each episode and reflect the musical traditions of that particular state.

RELEVANCE

That we are living in what some call a "post literate" world makes it all the more urgent to create stories that reflect who we are. Americans are increasingly looking to understand their reality through the media. Too often this media, driven by commercial concerns, can overwhelm and confound us. Narratives - fiction in particular - serve to depict values in meaningful ways and present and organize experience through character and empathy. Stories are and have been the best way to understand and reflect the world we live in.

American Selfie(s) aims to be an entertaining and thought provoking way to honor that tradition.