

PRESS KIT

William

360 EXPERIENCE

WILLIAM360VR.COM

PRODUCED BY **NISH MEDIA**



Canada Council
for the Arts
Conseil des arts
du Canada



CANADA
MEDIA FUND



Conseil
des arts
et des lettres
du Québec

SYNOPSIS

WILLIAM TELLS THE STORY OF A NINE-YEAR-OLD TORN FROM HIS FAMILY IN 1960 AND PLACED BY FORCE IN ONE OF 139 INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS THAT EXISTED IN CANADA OVER A PERIOD OF A HUNDRED YEARS.

Each episode highlights one typical scene in the children's journey through the system, from their life on the land to their abduction by government agents, their arrival at the school, their experience in the dormitory, the classroom, and their return home. **WILLIAM's** six episodes allow the user to live this dark chapter of Canadian history in the first person.



Photo credit: Patrick Kaplin

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This series renders reality in its most intimate form by means of a fictional work grounded in historical fact. In its development, **WILLIAM** benefited from the same rigor that goes into making any truthful documentary. Much research went into developing and designing the six episodes.

The scenarios are based on the testimonies of residential school survivors. Scenes were selected to capture the archetypal moments that every child who went through the residential school system had to live out. The experience of William and his peers is the experience of thousands. By living it, we bear witnesses to a tragedy that was repeated each time the government abducted a child from family or their community.

This project is part of a movement trying to raise awareness and repair the harm done to Canada's Indigenous communities. It is doing this by putting the power of cinema and virtual reality in the service of education and awareness.

By embodying a character and living their story, the user actively participates in a movement that amplifies empathy and the desire to understand the experience of others.

SHORT SYNOPSIS



EPISODE 1 [8+]

HOME

Young William peacefully lives with his family on their ancestral land.



EPISODE 2 [13+]

THE DEPARTURE

Government agent shows up to take William away to residential school.



EPISODE 3 [13+]

THE ARRIVAL

Members of the clergy and a doctor put William and the other new students through the harsh arrival routine.



EPISODE 4 [13+]

THE DORMS

A glimpse of what happens at night in the boys dormitory.



EPISODE 5 [13+]

THE CLASSROOM

A stringent nun teaches English to William and his classmates.



EPISODE 6 [8+]

BACK HOME

After years away at residential school, William is finally back home.

SPECIFICATIONS

DURATIONS |

Episode 1_5m58sec (2022) Episode 2_5m58sec (2022)

Episode 3_6m26sec (2022) Episode 4_5m27sec (2022)

Episode 5_8m (2017) Episode 6_6m27sec (2022)

LANGUAGES | English, French

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN | Canada

GENRE | Drama

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SALES AND DISTRIBUTION

Jason Brennan | jason@nishmedia.tv
819-770-3281 ext.203

OUR OBJECTIVE



EDUCATE AUDIENCES ABOUT THE IMPACTS OF THE INDIGENOUS RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM BY USING VIRTUAL REALITY AS A TOOL FOR EMPATHY.

TARGET AUDIENCE

WILLIAM was firstly conceived for a Canadian anglophone and francophone audience. But since Canada's colonial legacy is just one instance of the global issue of colonization, the series is part of a worldwide effort to recognize the experience of Indigenous peoples around the world. It is therefore intended for the widest possible audience.



Photo credit: Patrick Kaplin

SCREENWRITER AND DIRECTOR

SONIA BONSPILLE BOILEAU

Sonia is a bilingual filmmaker of Kanien'kehá:ka-Quebec origin who has worked with Nish Media for over fifteen years to create Indigenous television and film content for audiences of all cultural backgrounds.

She is the recipient of a Gemini Award (*Last Call Indien*, 2011), the APTN Award of Distinction (2016) and the Women in the Director's Chair Feature Film Award (2017). In addition to creating several youth and documentary works, including *The Oka Legacy* (2015) and *Wapikoni* (2018), she has written and directed two fiction feature films, *Le Dep* (2015) and *Rustic Oracle* (2019).

Bonspille Boileau has written her first drama series, *Pour toi Flora* (2022), broadcast on Radio-Canada.



Photo credit: Randy Kelly

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

“The process surrounding this virtual reality project was inspired by my grandfather and his sisters’ long stay in a residential school for Indigenous people. This experience had a profound impact on my family and my identity in such a way that it has coloured my entire creative journey and is a testament to my desire to connect with the culture that the residential school took away from my forefathers. WILLIAM is part of a process of healing and coming to terms with the past, in an effort to share through which I wish to deliver the real in its most intimate form.”



Crédit photo: Patrick Kaplin

PRODUCER

JASON BRENNAN

Jason Brennan is a proud member of the KitiganZibi Anishinaabeg community and President of the Gatineau-based Indigenous filming production company Nish Media. Since 2005, Nish has produced over hundred hours of documentaries, dramas and children's programming for several Canadian English and French language channels. The movie *Le Dep*, *Rustic Oracle* and *L'Inhumain* have all been released in Canadian cinemas and selected for some of the world's most prestigious film festivals. Most recently, Brennan produced the mini series (6) *Pour toi Flora*, the first Indigenous written, directed and produced drama for the Radio-Canada, CBC. The series has been available since May 2022.



Photo credit: Randy Kelly

A WORD FROM THE PRODUCER

“In spring 2015, I started working on WILLIAM; on a VR project that would allow people to move from a passive to an active mode; from the status of viewer to the status of user.

In fact, I wanted to use VR to work on a subject as sensitive as Canadian residential schools. In my opinion, virtual reality can succeed in democratizing a topical subject in order to contribute to the enrichment of our community.”

WHO WE ARE

Based in Western Quebec, Nish Media is an Indigenous award-winning production company with over fifteen years of experience. From high level television documentaries, internationally successful television drama and even feature films, Nish is committed to producing some of the best Indigenous content around the world. Comfortable in English, French and some of Canada's Indigenous languages, we have a high degree of versatility, allowing us to tell the stories we want to tell - and to do it differently. Nish Media is focussed on giving filmmakers their own voice and the means to create compelling content on a wide variety of platforms. The topics covered to date have been explored from a new angle and with the goal of leaving an imperishable memory for viewers, which is the core objective of our production company. We have produced several television series as well as unique pieces for various channels such as APTN, IRC, TV5, CBC, Canal D, PBS and our productions have travelled across the globe.

In 2015, Nish Media started to produce feature films with *“Le Dep”*, a film by Sonia Bonspille Boileau. The micro-budget movie was presented in several cinemas in Quebec and across Canada and was chosen by some of the world's most prestigious film festivals. Two more films have since been produced and released, « *Rustic Oracle* » and « *L’Inhumain* ». Most recently Nish Media produced *“Pour toi Flora”* (“Dear Flora”) its first drama series, written and directed by Sonia Bonspille Boileau. This six-part series, which tells the story of an Anishinaabe family torn apart by Residential School, is currently airing on Radio-Canada and APTN and has been nominated for awards at the La Rochelle Drama Festival and at MIPCOM for the Diversify TV award.



Photo credit: Alexandre Lafontaine

PHOTOS

EPISODE 1 - HOME



Photo credit: Randy Kelly

EPISODE 2 - THE DEPARTURE



Photo credit: Randy Kelly

EPISODE 3 - THE ARRIVAL



Photo credit: Randy Kelly

EPISODE 4 - THE DORMS

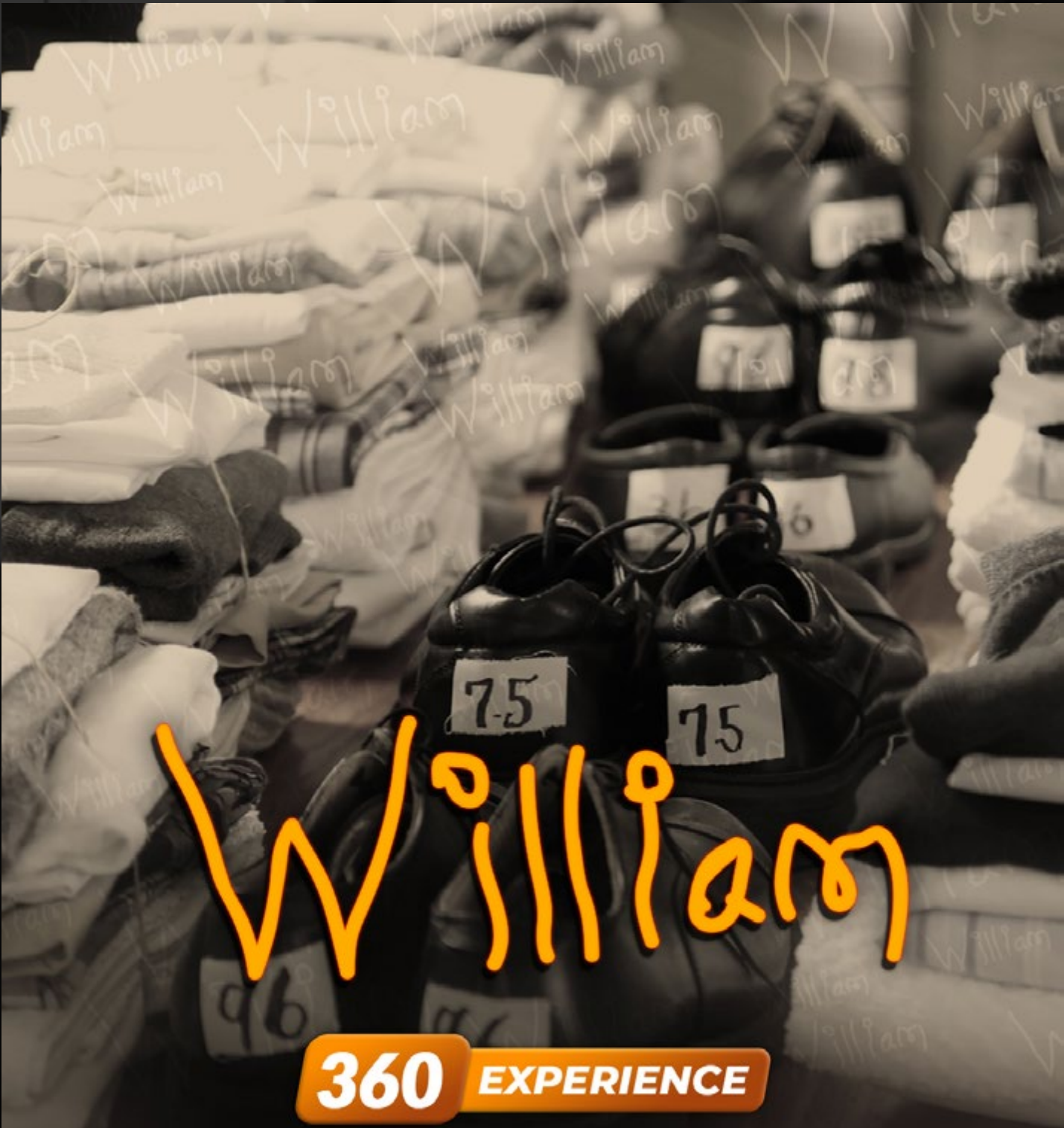


Photo credit: Randy Kelly

EPISODE 5 - THE CLASSROOM



Photo credit: Patrick Kaplin



WILLIAM360VR.COM

PRODUCED BY **NISH MEDIA**



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada



CANADA
MEDIA FUND



Conseil
des arts
et des lettres
du Québec