

One Sky Project

Feature Film Script



<https://oneskyproject.org>



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The Forge of Artemis (Greece)

Isabelle Pruneau-Brunet, Sébastien Gauthier, Ryan Wyatt

0:35 Imagine yourself a long time ago...

0:39 Before electricity and television, before the Internet and social media...

0:45 What stories would you tell?

0:48 What stories do you think your ancestors told?

0:56 For millennia, people and cultures from around the world have looked to the sky for constancy, for resiliency, for a glimpse into eternity.

1:08 And they have told stories!

1:27 Many stories we hear today came from ancient Greeks, thousands of years ago.

1:35 Let me tell you one of them, the tale of the great hunter Orion... who was punished for his vanity.

2:00 Atop Mount Olympus in Greece, powerful gods and goddesses made their home.

2:06 Including the fiery Artemis.

2:14 Goddess of the Moon, protector of children and nature, Artemis was as wild as the animals she protected.

2:22 She preferred to stay away from humans.

2:30 In her temple, she gave birth to living creatures.

2:33 She rejoiced in taking care of them.

2:37 She took pride in seeing them come to life.

3:07 Thanks to her, peace reigned in the animal kingdom.

3:13 But one day, a mighty hunter called Orion invited himself onto the land of Artemis and jeopardized everything.

3:28 Boasting of his hunting skills, Orion threatened to kill all Earth's creatures.

3:55 Obviously, the goddess could not bear this.

4:00 To stop Orion, she removed him from Earth and placed him in the sky as a reminder to humans that nature is not their own.

4:10 But they are part of nature...

4:20 Because stars live for an extraordinarily long time and move slowly relative to one another, you can search for the same patterns your ancestors saw, millennia after their stories were first told.

4:37 We can still see this group of stars we now call the Orion constellation.

4:44 But every culture around the world saw something different through the centuries.

4:50 Many shared their stories, found common threads and wove similar tales, but everyone made the sky their own.

5:00 No matter where we live in the world, we all share one sky.

Thunderbird (Navajo Land, USA)

Version 1.7 • 15 December 2021

5:55 Here in the American southwest, in *Diné Bikeyah*, winters are cold and dry.

6:04 During the long nights, we take time to remind ourselves how the sky and earth are connected.

6:40 For us, the *Diné*, or Navajo people, there is a whole world of living beings who help us here on earth. They whisper to us when to plant seeds, when to expect the return of spring... The sky connects us to changes on earth.

7:03 One important story in the sky is *li'ni* the Thunderbird...

7:13 Last thunder sound, time for life to slow down. The bear will start its hibernation, the gila monster will hide underground. Everyone prepares for the long, cold nights...

7:34 But the Thunderbird will help us mark the cycle of the seasons.

7:38 The essence of the Thunderbird is a gigantic feather — so gigantic that it transcends space and time.

7:49 When the feather crosses the entire sky, we know that the thunder will return. And with it, life — with all its diversity and abundance.

8:10 As the harvest winds down, we look for the crescent Moon, rising just before the Sun.

8:18 And one morning in October, before the sky grows too bright, we find the star Denebola in the east.

8:27 *li'ni be ets'os Ghaají biyii'ji silahagi.*

8:32 Its appearance marks the separation between seasons, the time to store crops and to save seeds for planting next year.

8:50 When the next crescent Moon appears, Denebola is spending more time in the sky before the morning light, and we can look for another star to join it. After several days, we spot Arcturus, appearing briefly at dawn.

9:06 *li'ni be ets'os Nitchitsósi biyii'ji silahagi.*

9:12 The days are growing shorter and colder. We spend more time inside, telling stories about Mother Earth and Father Sky.

9:22 Moon after Moon, we watch new bright stars rising in the east.

9:30 Alphecca appears in December. *Nitchitsoh be ets'os.*

9:37 Vega in January. *Yasnilt'ees be ets'os.*

9:45 Deneb in February. *Atsa Biyáázh be ets'os.*

9:53 Days are now longer and warmer. Faint in the glow of the March morning sky, we can find Sheat, the final star in the Thunderbird's feather. *li'ni be ets'os Wóózhch'ijid biyii'ji silahagi.*

10:12 From the east to the west, the feather now fills the entire sky above us, connecting the Thunderbird to the cosmos.

10:23 It is time for the thunder to return and awaken the living world.

10:55 The time for winter stories has ended.

11:01 Time to honor spring and the seasonal cycles of life on earth.

11:06 Time to call the animals out of hibernation. Time for the seeds to grow. Time to celebrate the season of abundance and the diversity, generosity, and the fertility of life.

11:41 If we rise before the Sun one spring morning and observe the sky again we will see a new constellation — *li'ni*, the Thunderbird!

11:53 And *li'ni* is not alone in the sky — just to the South, we can see *Shash*, the Bear. Awakened by the spring thunder, the bear has come out of hibernation.

12:09 Life is everywhere — in the sky, on Earth, and inside us.

12:18 The Thunderbird and other constellations manifest the intricate connection of Earth and sky, of seasons and life — animals and plants, humans, lightning, and thunder.

Jai Singh's Dream (India)

Final Version 3.2 • 22 January 2022

Ryan Wyatt — Antonin Gaud — Sébastien Gauthier — Samir Dhurde

13:22 My story is a story of bringing the stars down to Earth.

13:30 I lived more than three centuries ago, in a region called Amber, in what is now known as India.

13:37 From the age of thirteen, I led my people and ruled in my country. All of us had a deep connection to the stars, but as the Maharajah, I also had the privilege and luxury of studying the sky.

14:11 My name is Jai Singh. I always admired the order and predictability of the heavens.

14:25 Welcome to the Ram Yantra, one of my instruments for observing the sky.

14:36 Here, over many long nights, I contemplated the heavens and delighted in the slow choreography of the stars.

14:50 The chaos that reigned in my country was in stark contrast to the purity and consistency of the cosmos.

14:59 Could I use my skills of predicting the positions of the stars, to master time and regulate society? My people would benefit from the order this would bring to their lives.

15:23 I read books from India and Egypt, from Arabia and Europe — about geometry and astronomy. I learned to calculate the locations of stars and planets. But I noticed discrepancies — the mathematics didn't always match my observations.

15:46 Most astronomical devices of my time were not precise enough, too small and made from metal — which expands with the heat of the day and contracts in the cold of the night.

16:02 I began to imagine new tools... What if astronomers could be inside large instruments to make more precise observations? And what if these huge observatories were made of sandstone and plaster, instead of metal?

16:22 I drew the plans myself.

16:30 To fulfill my dream of perfection — and to achieve an accuracy unheard of at that time — observations had to be made at multiple longitudes.

16:41 I built observatories in Ujjain, Mathura, Varanasi, Delhi, and Jaipur. I want to tell you about two special instruments in Jaipur.

17:05 The Samrat Yantra is known as the King of Instruments. With a height of 22 meters, it is the biggest sundial in the world. Its architecture points north, perfectly aligned with Earth's axis.

17:27 As Earth rotates, the shadow of the gnomon tower moves across the dial.

17:35 With this instrument, we can measure time with a precision of two seconds. The fine engravings allow anyone to read the time, because my observatories are accessible to all.

18:07 At the Jai Prakash Yantra, we record the position of the Sun by day and measure the position of the stars by night.

18:30 Each inverted dome represents one half of the celestial vault.

18:37 Individually, the instruments measure time and space, and together they reveal the movement of the stars with unprecedented precision.

18:54 The results of these observations can be used by my people to fix important dates such as harvests and religious festivals.

19:15 My passion for the stars has helped bring harmony to my country. I have fulfilled my dream to bring the perfection of the heavens down to Earth.

19:31 I invite you to visit my observatories, which still stand after 300 years. You can still read the time and contemplate the order of the heavens.

Celestial Canoe (Innu Land, Canada)

Version 1.8 • 2 October 2021

Laurie Rousseau-Nepton, Ryan Wyatt, Sébastien Gauthier

20:45 Last night I dreamed about the canoe in the sky...

21:03 Kuei! My name is Laurie, I'm an astronomer and member of the Innu nation. I grew up in Quebec, eastern Canada, not far from here.

21:18 This land and the sky are very important to me; they are part of the Innu identity.

21:29 People used to travel great distances through the seasons, relying on hunting and fishing. As they moved around the land, the stars moved in the sky.

21:50 In the late autumn, the Sun sets earlier and earlier, and nights are growing longer.

21:57 I like seeing the reflection of the sky on the water, it's like a mirror of the world above us.

22:07 And yes, there is a canoe up there in the stars with very special paddlers inside. Learning about this canoe taught me many different things.

22:24 Long after sunset, when the sky is quite dark, you can watch these three bright stars neatly lined up.

22:35 People used to see these stars as part of a larger group, the Wolverine spirit *Kuekuatsheu*, steering an enormous canoe.

22:47 The Wolverine is not alone. In the north, at the front, we see a small furry animal, *Ucheck*, the Fisher.

23:00 This celestial canoe is gigantic, much larger than any canoe you've ever seen.

23:08 Canoes on earth move through the water, but this canoe moves through the sky, more slowly and more predictably.

23:31 As winter arrives, the Wolverine makes its appearance earlier and earlier each evening.

23:38 By the time the nights are at their longest, soon after sunset, the celestial canoe is now floating on the horizon. It will remain visible all night.

23:53 In the modern world, we care about minutes and seconds... But here, what matters is the cycle of seasons and the changes in nature.

24:05 If you watch the canoe night after night, you'll notice something...

24:54 The Wolverine appears higher each night.

24:58 A canoe on earth slows down when it turns strongly in the water. Similarly, at the beginning of the night, when the canoe in the sky starts tipping toward the horizon, it announces that the days will also slow down and get longer. Spring is coming!

25:26 For centuries, our ancestors used the celestial canoe, with its Wolverine in the back and its Fisher in the front, to measure time.

25:48 People used to share this ancestral knowledge between friends and loved ones. But not any more...

25:56 It's only recently that I was lucky enough to read about it.

26:02 I'm worried that all of this will be completely lost if we don't hold onto it.

26:09 Perhaps it should be taught in school.

26:28 I'm glad I could share this story with you.

26:31 Each of us can do our own part to keep this knowledge alive and pass it along to future generations, so that we can all navigate our way back to the sky.

The Samurai and the Stars (Japan)

Version 1.1 • 2 October 2021

27:40 I find great comfort looking up at the stars.

27:44 Sometimes, I think about the past. Images in the sky remind me of stories I heard as a child, and experiences I had.

27:58 In this part of the sky, I look for the shape of *Tsuzumi Boshi*, a traditional Japanese drum.

28:10 Its wide top and bottom...

28:14 And these three stars mark the cord at the drum's narrow waist. I can even imagine the cord being stretched and pulled to change the pitch of the *Tsuzumi*.

28:26 I can almost hear it...

28:40 It reminds me of when I was a child and went to see a play that took place during the war between the Heike and the Genji nearly a thousand years ago.

28:52 The drum was a symbol of the rivalry between two brothers, and sounds of the drum seemed both familiar and strange.

29:05 The play also mentioned a great archer I knew from anime — the great marksman Nasu No Yoichi!

29:18 He was only sixteen years old when he performed an impossible feat for the Genji clan — shooting an arrow through a small fan on the mast of their enemy's ship!

29:40 I imagined what it would be like to live in such a time, for a young man to earn such respect from his family...

29:52 You can even see the colors of the two warring sides in the colors of the stars.

30:00 The Heike clan fought under a red flag, while the Genji clan carried a white flag.

30:09 Eventually, the emblems of the clans were added to the flags. The Heike's red flag showed a white butterfly, while the Genji's white flag sported violet wildflowers and bamboo leaves.

30:29 The *Tsuzumi Boshi* has two especially bright stars, one red and one white...

30:37 At the top of the drum, the bright star *Heike Boshi*, or Betelgeuse, is bright red like the Heike flag.

30:49 At the bottom of the drum, *Genji Boshi*, or Rigel, shines white like the Genji flag.

31:13 These also remind me of the colors of the reversible caps we wore in elementary school — one side red, one side white — for when we would separate into teams.

31:27 Once a year, we would also have *Undokai*, or sports day at my school. Students divided into red and white teams and competed in many games, relay races, and even a tug of war.

31:46 I always wished there would be an archery competition so I could shoot arrows like Nasu No Yoichi!

32:04 When life becomes busy or stressful, I sometimes find relief as I gaze at the night sky.

32:15 My thoughts expand, and I can remember the past and imagine the future.

32:22 I imagine that everyone sees something different. But all of us look up and see the same sky.

Hawaiian Wayfinders (Hawai‘i, USA)

Version 1.5 • 1 October 2021

33:14 ‘O Paanaakalā Tanaka ko‘u inoa. ‘O Hawai‘i ko‘u one hānau...

33:23 I am Paanaakalā Tanaka. I come from Hawai‘i, a chain of islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, far from continents in any direction, the most isolated land mass in the world.

33:39 My ancestors voyaged throughout these waters for generations, finding patterns in the night sky to help them navigate their journeys, making landfall and also returning home.

33:54 When I travel far in the spring or summer across this deep ocean called *Moananuiākea*, and see the four stars of Hānaiakamālama rise upright in the south at just the right distance above the horizon, I know I am in my home waters.

35:00 My father was a Hawaiian Wayfinder who recognized many such patterns in the night sky, and he taught me how to see them, too.

35:14 Like children, we can all connect the dots.

35:18 My ancestors gave meaningful names to the stars in the night sky. Sometimes we use one name, sometimes another. And some generations find their own stories in the stars with names as different as the people who create them.

35:39 When I see this tiny group of stars, I think of *Makali‘i*, a Hawaiian chief.

35:49 In this account he was no hero, but a greedy leader who took food from his people. He collected it, gathered it into one big fishing net, and placed it in the sky where no one could reach it!

36:06 *Makali‘i* translates to mean “tiny eyes,” which can also refer to a fishing net with fine, tiny mesh.

36:14 The small cluster of stars represents the net holding in all that food, leaving nothing for people to eat.

36:24 The hero is a tiny little *‘iōle*, or rat, who volunteered to go up into the sky and retrieve the food.

36:37 The rat wiggled inside the net and nibbled at the fibers, and chewed until the net came undone. All the food fell back to earth! You can imagine how thankful the people were, and what a feast they had to celebrate!

36:54 That’s why we call this group of stars *Makali‘i*. When *Makali‘i* rises in the east, just as the Sun sets in the west, the season of heavy rains begins.

36:06 This is when we mark the start of a new year with feasts and celebrations.

37:20 In addition to telling time, these patterns form a compass that guides me and navigators like my father across vast expanses of open ocean.

37:41 As ocean wayfinders, we observe the stars called *Kaheiheianākeiki* rising nearly due east and setting nearly due west.

37:54 Oceanic travel to the east is always in the direction of *Kaheiheianākeiki* rising.

38:18 *Kaheiheianākeiki* is a central part of the Oceanic Sidereal Compass, marking the path of the equator in the nighttime sky.

38:31 My ancestors used this enormous compass to explore *Moananuiākea*, and I now use it on my journeys throughout the Pacific and beyond!

38:47 Over centuries, travel and trade routes connected widely dispersed communities. From Hawai'i to Tahiti, Aotearoa to Rapa Nui, and the many many islands in between.

39:03 This region is vast and diverse. But our cultures share the knowledge of the navigators who traversed these waters. And we share the same night sky that continues to guide our lives as individuals and as communities.

39:48 “*When losing the sight of land you discover the stars*” — Kalepa Baybayan

Epilogue

40:08 It's impressive to realize how many stories we can find in the stars. I have one more I would like to tell you.

40:18 If we look near the three bright distinctive stars, a keen eyed observer might spot something different — a hazy patch of light unlike the point-like stars nearby.

40:32 Are you seeing it? Let's get closer.

40:41 This is the Orion Nebula. And using telescopes, astronomers have figured out what it looks like up-close.

40:52 If we could fly to the Orion Nebula, we would find a majestic birthplace of stars.

41:25 If we look closely around some of the fainter stars, we see teardrop shapes sculpted in the same powerful radiation.

41:34 The stars inside have dark disks surrounding them. These are tiny solar systems taking shape.

41:44 Watching this is like witnessing the birth of our own Solar System billions of years ago.

42:02 Modern astronomy has introduced us to this place. This is our story in the stars. A story uncovered by human ingenuity. The same ingenuity people have focused on the stars for millenia.

42:31 When you look at this part of the sky, perhaps you can think about stars being born far far away. Or, you can look for other patterns in these stars. A mighty hunter, a banging drum, or a game with string.

42:48 Or you can find your own shapes, your own patterns in the stars.

42:54 Everyone sees something a little bit different, but we all share *One Sky*.