



# Children of The Amazon

a film by Denise Zmekhol

## [Synopsis]

**CHILDREN OF THE AMAZON** follows Brazilian filmmaker Denise Zmekhol as she travels a modern highway deep into the Amazon in search of the Indigenous Surui and Negarote children she photographed fifteen years ago. Part road movie, part time travel, her journey tells the story of what happened to life in the largest forest on Earth when a road was built straight through its heart.

For countless generations, the Amazon rainforest provided a home to the Surui and Negarote people who lived in what they called “forest time”—utterly beyond the realm of contemporary human life. Their only contact with the “outside” world was through rubber tappers, who first settled the forest in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and whose work did no harm to the trees.

And then . . . everything changed. Footpaths gave way to a road and then a highway cutting through 2000 miles of forest. With the coming of this connection to the rest of Brazil, the world of “forest time” was overrun by farmers, loggers, and cattle ranchers. Lush forest was clear-cut and burned, deadly diseases killed off thousands of Indians, and “forest time” suffered an irreversible transformation.

Zmekhol's cinematic journey combines intimate interviews with her personal and poetic meditation on environmental devastation, resistance and renewal. The result is a unique vision of the Amazon rainforest told in part by the Indigenous people who experienced first contact with the modern world less than forty years ago. The film's central characters are the now grown children Zmekhol photographed more than fifteen years earlier; Itabira and Almir, Surui navigating a risky course between cultural preservation and economic survival; and Chico Mendes, the legendary rubber tapper who organized a non-violent movement to save the forest and was assassinated by cattle ranchers.

As she nears the end of her journey, Zmekhol discovers how the combined efforts of Indigenous people, rubber tappers, and their allies have begun to safeguard the rainforest. Ultimately we grasp our own intimate connection to this remote forest and its people: We are—all of us—**CHILDREN OF THE AMAZON**—breathing the same air, walking the same planet, and in some sense that we have yet to understand, sharing the same fate.



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## [About the Director/Producer]

### DENISE ZMEKHOL

Working on social issue documentaries as well as in commercial arenas, Zmekhol combines a public affairs sensibility with a commercial director's visual acumen.

A Sao Paulo native, Zmekhol studied social communication and journalism in Brazil, and completed her studies in photography, film and broadcasting at San Francisco State University. She speaks Portuguese, Spanish, French, and English. Early in her career, Zmekhol worked as a news cameraperson in San Francisco and later as Associate Producer on the acclaimed documentary *Landscape of Memories*.

When she returned to Brazil in 1987, Zmekhol assisted on numerous documentaries filmed in the Amazon. In addition to her film work, she photographed extensively, producing the photo exhibition *Children of the Amazon*, and shooting the last photographs of the renowned rubber tapper and environmental activist Chico Mendes before his assassination. Her photos of Mendes appeared in *Time Magazine* and other publications worldwide.

During the 90s, Zmekhol worked as a freelance producer for various Sao Paulo production companies, creating marketing and public relations projects for Kelloggs, Max Factor, Pepsi, General Motors, Fiat and others. She quickly advanced to commercial directing, working on political and consumer spots.

In 1998, Zmekhol returned to the United States to co-produce and co-direct *DIGITAL JOURNEY*, an Emmy award winning public television series exploring emerging technologies in their social, environmental and cultural contexts. Zmekhol has recently completed her film project *Children of the Amazon*, an ITVS co-production about the destruction of the Amazon rainforest and its hope for the future. She is currently producing a video with Google Earth Outreach to train Indigenous Amazonian tribes how to use Google Earth to create maps to record cultural traditions and to monitor the forest against illegal logging.



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## [ Director's Statement ]

I traveled to the Brazilian Amazon on several occasions between 1987-1990 to assist on television documentaries. During my journeys, I had the opportunity to visit many Indigenous communities, always with my camera by my side. What caught my eye were the children. Born to parents who had relied on the rainforest for their survival, these children were growing up surrounded by new ways—ways that were destroying the forest.

I was also drawn to the children of the rubber tappers...the people who harvest the wild rubber trees. The trees they relied on were also being cut down. I photographed the legendary rubber tapper Chico Mendes and his family. Chico had become renowned the world over for his nonviolent resistance movement to protect the rainforest.

15 years later—and a world away—I returned to these slides, which were never printed, never shared. The images brought back a particularly searing memory: a phone call from Chico in December 1988, asking me to film his funeral. I told him he was crazy, he wasn't going to die, he had too much work to do. Two weeks later he was shot dead by a rancher. Stirred by faces of the children in my photographs and haunted by Chico's untimely death, I was inspired to travel to the Amazon again—this time, to make a movie.

While I expected change, I was not prepared for the extent of it. So much of the forest had been destroyed. My response to the loss is the creation of CHILDREN OF THE AMAZON—a tribute to a people struggling to save their forest home. But the goal of the film is more than to bear witness. I hope to offer insight to a distant and remote land while simultaneously drawing connections to our own lives. For we are—all of us—CHILDREN OF THE AMAZON breathing the same air, walking the same planet, and in some sense that we have yet to understand, sharing the same fate.

~ Denise Zmekhol



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## [ Amazon Rainforest History ]

The Amazon is the world's largest tropical forest and has the greatest biodiversity on the planet. Profoundly abundant in natural resources, it is a rich source of medicinal plants, hosts the greatest number of species on Earth, and provides home to diverse Indigenous peoples.

Roughly the size of the forty-eight contiguous United States and spanning nine Latin American countries, the Amazon is instrumental in regulating global weather patterns. It is a biological factory that transforms carbon dioxide in the atmosphere into oxygen, significantly stemming the effects of global warming.

Sixty percent of the Amazon forest is located in Brazil and is home to more than half of its Indigenous population. Prior to the arrival of European settlers in the 1500s, Indigenous peoples numbered two to four million. For centuries, the Amazon acted as a natural barrier, protecting the forest inhabitants from colonizers. But as the barrier has been weakened, so have the forest dwelling populations.

In the 1960s, Brazil embarked one of the most ambitious public-works project in the country's history: BR-364—a two-lane highway spanning 2,000 miles from state of Mato Grosso to the state of Acre. A joint effort between Brazil's government and multilateral development banks, the road gave hundreds of thousands of landless farmers and poor laborers access to cheap land. In the decades that followed, clashes between the new settlers and the forest dwellers over land rights have been frequent and violent.

Contact with outsiders has decimated Indigenous communities. Exposure to disease and violent conflicts over forest resources reduced the Amazon Indians to about 10 percent of their pre-European population. They have experienced immense cultural loss and witnessed irreversible damage to their forest home.

In 1988, after decades of displacement and relocation, Brazil began recognizing Indian rights to reclaim original lands and preserve their way of life. Government land surveyors have demarcated hundreds of Indian reserves. However, protection often exists only in theory, and Indigenous Areas are regularly plundered by illegal ranching, mining and logging operations.



Today, despite dire warnings, the rainforest continues to be razed for pasturelands and logged to meet the worldwide demand for hardwoods. Nearly 300,000 square miles of forest have been obliterated since 1970 in Brazil alone (estimate from Brazil's National Space Research Institute).

Recent declines in deforestation offer hope that increased enforcement and government conservation initiatives are working. But monitoring efforts have achieved only partial success. If deforestation continues at its present rate, within a few years it will be the single-greatest contributor to climate change.

## **RUBBER TAPPERS & CHICO MENDES**

Today, the destruction of Amazonia not only threatens the lives of rubber tappers and Indians, it threatens also the lives of all of the people who live on this planet. It is the young people who must take this fight forward and keep alive this resistance movement in defense of Amazonia until the end. — Chico Mendes. 1988

At the end of the 19th century, in response to a growing demand for rubber in the US and Europe, a wave of workers from Northeastern Brazil came to the Amazon to tap the wild rubber trees. Over the course of the next 100 years, as the price of rubber rose and fell in the world market, rubbers barons deserted their estates while the tappers remained to eke out a living through a sustainable practice of extracting latex from trees. Since the 1970s, with the expansion of highway BR-364 and government programs subsidizing ranchers, millions of acres of rainforest were destroyed for pastureland. Uprooted and without jobs, homeless rubber tappers drifted to the cities becoming part of the urban poor.

In response to the loss of land and work, a rubber tapper named Chico Mendes began to organize his fellow workers to resist large-scale deforestation. In 1985, the National Council of Rubber Tappers was formed. The Council originated the idea of government protected extractive reserves devoted to sustainable use of the rainforest by rubber tappers and Indigenous people. While Mendes's work generated international support, his efforts also provoked brutal responses from vested interests. In 1988, Chico Mendes was assassinated by a cattle rancher at his home. In the 20 years since his death, 65 reserves covering twenty-seven million acres have been established.

## **THE NEGAROTE AND SURUI BACKGROUND**

In the 1960s, highway BR-364 bulldozed through the state of Mato Grosso and the homelands of the Nambiqwara Indians, the parent tribe of the Negarote. Their forest existence cultivating small gardens, hunting with bows and arrows, and sleeping on the ground under makeshift palm shelters, was devastated as lands were clear-cut for thousands of new settlers. Many Nambiqwara died from sudden exposure to the measles and influenza. Those that remained were forcibly removed to a small, barren reserve. Unable to sustain themselves on the inadequate reserve, the surviving Nambiqwara set off on a 200-mile walk back to their homelands. Thousands died along the way from starvation and disease. By 1975, only 530 Nambiqwara Indians remained—90 percent of their population had been decimated.

The Negarote were forced to work for no pay by rubber barons and ranchers who invaded their homelands. Today, they live on a small reserve 15 percent of the size of their traditional lands, which continues to be threatened by logging operations. Their response to the exploitation of the forest is varied. Some are adamantly opposed to any logging concessions, while others, lured by profit, are complicit in the illegal harvesting of their trees. At least eighteen truckloads of wood a day leave a remote logging site deep inside the Negarote reservation, often free from tribal supervision.



For centuries the Surui (known in their own language as the Paiter or “True People”) were among several large groups of Indians who roamed the Amazon forest along the borders of what are now Rondônia and Mato Grosso states. They lived in longhouse communities hunting, fishing, and harvesting small gardens.

In 1969, government agents contacted the Surui hoping to minimize conflicts between the Indians and the influx of settlers brought by BR-364. Exposure to disease nearly decimated the tribe. In the early 70s, settlers inadvertently purchased false titles to Surui land and established small farms. A decade of violence followed, ending with the forced removal of the farmers by the Brazilian army. The Surui reclaimed their traditional land and began harvesting the coffee trees left by farmers.

In 1983, Surui land was officially recognized as an Indigenous Area. Yet government agencies proved ineffectual at stopping illegal logging and, despite the protective status of the land, all hardwood trees have been cleared from the area. Today, a movement to preserve Surui culture and the rainforest they inhabit has led to projects supported by various international organizations. Throughout Brazil, however, the Surui and other advocates of rainforest preservation continue to clash with loggers and ranchers over forest resources.



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## [ Characters ]



### CHIEF ALMIR SURUI

Almir Surui was elected village chief by tribal elders at the young age of 17. As the first member of the Surui people to attend college, he has dedicated his leadership skills to protecting the natural resources of the Amazon and preserving the culture of his people. His accomplishments include successfully lobbying the government to improve medical care and education for Indigenous tribes, steering World Bank funds directly to Indian programs, uniting other chiefs in a ban against logging, and convincing his fellow tribes people that their culture has value. Almir is working with the nonprofit organization Amazon Conservation Team on a massive ethno-mapping project that utilizes modern technologies to document his tribe's history, traditions and landscape. For his work he has received international recognition. He has also received death threats.



### CHIEF ITABIRA SURUI

Itabira has first hand experience of the tenuous future of his tribe. He is a survivor of contact with the outside world in which 500 of his 700 tribal members died from disease. For 18 years he lived in the modern world with access to an automobile, a washing machine and other conveniences. Inspired to preserve his culture and landscape, he moved from the city of Ca-coal and returned to his native homeland. He recognizes the need to understand the changing world in order to protect the future interests of the Surui people. At the same time, Itabira revives traditional rituals that bring the community together and ensure cultural survival.





## **WEITA SURUI**

A tribal elder whose facial tattoos identify her with age-old traditions, Weita is one of the few remaining Surui people who survived first contact. Rooted in ancient traditions, she practices the customary art of spinning and speaks only her native Monde, a language that has no written expression. She relies on her children to translate for her and uses storytelling to pass on her extensive knowledge of forest culture to younger generations. Yet despite nostalgia for her pre-contact past, Weita has not escaped the influences of modern contact. She attends the village church established by Christian missionaries. Weita personifies the challenges faced by numerous tribes throughout the forest whose lives straddle two, very different worlds.



## **ARILDO SURUI**

Arildo Surui is part of a new generation coming of age in a rapidly changing world. He has moved 300 miles outside of his tribal village to Porto Vehlo, the capital of Rondonia, where he attends college. He studies biology, with a focus in biodiversity. His goal is to develop sustainable rainforest economies so that his people can survive financially while preserving their surrounding rainforest. Arildo's western studies are complimented by his attention to traditional customs, and he hopes to be influential in his people's future. But Arildo struggles with financial difficulties and an emotional longing for both his family, still living in the village, and his Indian language and songs.



## **CHICO MENDES**

Chico Mendes, a union leader and environmental activist with no formal education, began tapping rubber trees when he was eight-years-old. Opposed to the clear-cutting that threatened both his forest home and his livelihood, Chico founded a National Council of rubber tappers and organized nonviolent protests to stop rampant deforestation for pasturelands. He advocated for the creation of "extractive reserves"—vast protected areas where rubber, wild fruits, and medicinal plants could be harvested without damaging the forest, guaranteeing the preservation of both the forest and its people. National environmental organizations sponsored Mendes to champion his cause before the US Senate. His work garnered international support and recognition, including the United Nations Global 500 Award and the Better World Society Prize. But his efforts also inspired the wrath of Brazil's ranchers. In 1988, Chico was murdered outside his home by a rancher opposed to his activism. Today, over 4% of the Brazilian Amazon has been established as sustainable reserves.



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## [ Film Credits ]

<b>Producer, Director, Narrator:</b>	Denise Zmekhol
<b>Editor:</b>	Jennifer Chinlund
<b>Writers:</b>	Michael J. Moore Ellen Bruno Olivia Crawford Denise Bostrom
<b>Cinematographer:</b>	Antonio Luiz Mendes
<b>Sound Recordist:</b>	Nicolas Hallet
<b>Production Coordinator:</b>	Tania Carneiro
<b>Original Music:</b>	Badi Assad, Naná Vasconcelos
<b>Art Director:</b>	Terry Green
<b>Graphic Designer:</b>	Monte Thompson
<b>Illustrations:</b>	Lais Dias
<b>Researchers:</b>	Stela Grisotti, Sula Vlachos
<b>Associate Producers:</b>	Jane Greenberg Eduardo Poiano
<b>Sound Design:</b>	Berkeley Sound Artists: Patti Tauscher Jim LeBrecht



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## [ Reviews ]

### **The Kathmandu Post: Films for change**

April 26, 2011

"Denise Zmekhol's Children of the Amazon was received well by Nepalis when screened at the fifth International Indigenous Film Festival on Sunday."

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2011/04/26/et-cetera/films-for-change/221051.html>

### **Huffington Post: "Film Review: Children of the Amazon"**

by Stewart Nusbaumer, April 21, 2010

"...nothing is simple in this tale of traditional society battered by the modern forces of economy and culture. Children of The Amazon handles this complex story with subtlety and charity. Hope is tempered with realism as the children of 15 years ago become the Amazon tribal leaders of today..."

[http://myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news\\_details&news\\_id=30695](http://myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=30695)



### **Sacred Fire Magazine: “Born into Chaos”**

Interview and Review by Sharon Brown, April, 2010

I am haunted by their singing.

Days after viewing Children of the Amazon, I still hear the children’s voices—pure, lifting into joyful refrain. Then, at the end of the melody, the angelic voices slide—trailing off into a minor key and empty silence. Exquisite beauty, followed by a dive into the abyss. Such is the feeling I carry with me from the film, which at its best captures the poignancy of lost innocence, not just for a generation but for all humanity.

<http://www.childrenoftheamazon.com/wp-content/uploads/downloads/sacred-fire-review.jpg>

### **San Francisco Examiner: “Children of the Amazon on PBS during Earth Month”**

by Valeria Sasser, April 13, 2010

“After fifteen years since she first photographed the children in the tribes Surui and Negarote in the heart of Amazon, [Denise Zmekhol] decided to return to check how life has been to those people: she was shocked to find a whole different world, with a 2000-mile highway, cattle farmers, loggers, and the modification men bring, not always for good... Zmekhol filmed her experience, and she shares it with her beautiful Children of Amazon...”

<http://www.examiner.com/brazilian-community-in-san-francisco/film-children-of-amazon-on-pbs-during-earth-month>

### **Cine Source Magazine: “The Amazon Goes Digital”**

by D. Blair, April 3, 2010

“Denise Zmekhol, a photographer and now filmmaker out of Berkeley, takes us back to the Amazon where she photographed indigenous children and activists like Chico Mendes, of the rubber tappers union, who was brutally murdered shortly after her photo of him was taken 15 years ago...”

[http://cinesourcemagazine.com/index.php?/site/comments/mis\\_en\\_scene\\_april\\_10/](http://cinesourcemagazine.com/index.php?/site/comments/mis_en_scene_april_10/)

### **Cine Source Magazine: “CS Selects: Children of the Amazon”**

March 10, 2010

“...a stunning documentary on the environmental and emotional decimation exacted upon the Surui and Negarote tribes of the Amazon rainforest as a result of logging and highway development. What makes the film powerful is the touchingly gentle presentation of layers of tormented history in the Amazon, which encircles the viewer in gorgeously shot, intimate depictions of people and the still-strong natural abundance. Using sobering fixed-camera shots, the director presents the grown children who lived through the many plagues of illness, cultural disruption and even murder. Beyond moving, the gravity of Zmekhol’s film will necessarily give pause to it’s viewers as it plainly reveals the vicissitudes accompanying the rise of industrial development.”

<http://www.childrenoftheamazon.com/wp-content/uploads/downloads/cine-source-coa.jpg>

## **Journal of Latin American Geography: Children of the Amazon (Jan/Feb 2010)**

by Stephen Aldrich

“Children of the Amazon is a far cry from these cable “edutainment” channel staples, which is immediately refreshing... Zmekhol uses her wonderful photographs, video footage from the early 1990s, and interviews with the young people she photographed as children to show how life for the Surui people has changed visibly in 15 years...”

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal\\_of\\_latin\\_american\\_geography/v009/9.1.aldrich.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_latin_american_geography/v009/9.1.aldrich.html)

## **The Indie: Children of the Amazon**

by Alex A. Kecskes, February 1, 2010

“Sao Paulo-born filmmaker and photographer Denise Zmekhol can capture the soul of a subject and bring it to life with compelling, palpable emotions. Her recent documentary, Children of the Amazon, underscores her talent and unique voice as an auteur with a gift...”

[http://www.theindiefest.com/I\\_Frame\\_01.aspx?art=010](http://www.theindiefest.com/I_Frame_01.aspx?art=010)

## **Peace Review, A Journal of Social Justice: Recommended Books and Films**

by Andrea E. Smith, April 2009

“Glowing images of Surui and Negarote children in their forest home provide a poignant reminder of how much they and their forest world have changed in the fifteen years between Zmekhol's first visits to the Amazon in 1988–1990, when she originally photographed the children of the forest, and her return trip in 2002, when she finds the Surui lands almost devoid of trees and the children, now young men and women, facing life in a very different and much less hospitable world....”

<http://www.childrenoftheamazon.com/wp-content/uploads/downloads/coa-peace-studies.pdf>

## **Variety: Children of the Amazon (October 30, 2008)**

by Dennis Harvey

Packing a lot of human interest as well as historical and informational content into 72 minutes, the handsomely shot doc somehow never feels rushed, in part due to the personal affection Zmekhol evinces for her tribal subjects. (And for Mendes, a close friend who asked her to photograph his funeral when rising threats made his imminent death seem inevitable.) Tech/design contribs are accomplished.

<http://www.variety.com/review/VE1117938869?refcatid=31>

## **SF Weekly (September, 2008)**

Indiewood North - By Michael Fox

Everybody talks about the destruction of the rainforest, but East Bay-by-way-of-Brazil filmmaker Denise Zmekhol returned after 15 years to document the changes in the heart-stopping Children of the Amazon.

<http://www.sfweekly.com/2008-09-24/calendar/indiewood-north/>

## **Pacific Sun (September, 2008)**

Feature: The reel world

Curtains rise on the 31st Mill Valley Film Festival - by Mal Karman

If you recall director Michael Apted's 7 Up series, in which he interviewed the same group of British subjects every seven years beginning in 1964, you will be moved by Berkeley filmmaker Denise Zmekhol's Children of the Amazon (Oct. 4, 7:15pm and Oct. 5, 4pm). "Between 1987 and 1990, I traveled to the Brazilian rain forest on several occasions and photographed the children of the indigenous Surui and Negarote tribes," she says. Among her subjects were Chico Mendes, renowned for his nonviolent resistance to destructive development, and his family.

[http://www.pacificsun.com/story.php?story\\_id=2419](http://www.pacificsun.com/story.php?story_id=2419)

## **YNOT at the Movies (September, 2008)**

The 31st Mill Valley Film Festival

This year is no exception. For eleven days starting from October 2, the 31st Mill Valley Film Festival will bring more than 200 films from about 50 countries to Bay area film lovers. Although I have only seen very limited number of films in this year's program, I am already impressed by many of them. Some of them easily have become the top films I have seen this year.

After she took photos of children of Amazon, Brazilian filmmaker Denise Zmekhol goes back to the forests and makes a film "Children of the Amazon" (US/Brazil 2008, 72 min.). This politically charged documentary examines the cultural and environmental impact from the "development" and native tribes' struggle on preservation of their culture and living hood.

<http://ynotmovies.blogspot.com/2008/09/31st-mill-valley-film-festival.html>



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## [ Articles ]

### **Cine Source Magazine: Child of the Amazon**

by Don Schwartz, May 16, 2011

"My narration guides the audience," Zmekhol responded, when asked about her approach to the film. "But I used the forest people to tell their stories. There's no politicians, anthropologists, historians, or loggers. I didn't want to do anything journalistic. I just wanted to let them tell their stories, to give them voice."

[http://cinesourcemagazine.com/index.php?/site/comments/denise\\_zmekhol\\_child\\_of\\_the\\_amazon/](http://cinesourcemagazine.com/index.php?/site/comments/denise_zmekhol_child_of_the_amazon/)

### **Republica: Call of the Amazon** by Dikshya Karki, April 20, 2011

"People often come to me after watching the film and ask me what they can do? I tell them, a big initiative is not required. We can work with the little things in our lives and let nature work in its own course."

[http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news\\_details&news\\_id=30478](http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=30478)

### **Todos somos niños de la Amazonia**

by Alejandra Martins, BBC Mundo, February 20 2011

"En su nuevo viaje, la directora descubre no sólo como cambió la vida de aquellos niños, sino la profunda transformación de la selva amazónica."

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/noticias/2011/02/110217\\_amazonia\\_documental\\_am.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/noticias/2011/02/110217_amazonia_documental_am.shtml)

## **Google Lat Long Blog: “Children of the Amazon airs on PBS on Earth Day”**

by Tanya Keen, Google Earth Outreach, April 22, 2010

“In 2008, Brazilian filmmaker Denise Zmekhol joined the Google Earth Outreach team to train the Surui people of the Brazilian rainforest on Google tools to help preserve their way of life. One year later, in 2009, another team went back to the Amazon to teach the indigenous people how to use GPS-enabled mobile phones and mobile data collection tools... to show the world where and when illegal logging is taking place within their protected territory...”

<http://google-latlong.blogspot.com/2010/04/children-of-amazon-airs-on-pbs-on-earth.html>

## **Link TV, Earth Focus Episode 20: “Technology and the Environment”**

March 25, 2010

“In this episode of Earth Focus, see how Google Earth helps Brazil's Surui people preserve their culture and protect the Amazon rainforest...”

<http://www.linktv.org/video/5145/%20earth-focus-episode-20-technology-and-the-environment>

## **BBC World News: “Amazonian Chief on how the Internet has changed life for good”**

Produced by Pablo Uchoa, March 17, 2010

“Amazonian Chief Almir Surui explains how the Internet has empowered the Surui people. “When we use something for the good, you don't change, yourself, your soul, your roots, your history... what defines you is your culture, our history, and how you give continuity to it...”

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8573168.stm>

## **BBC World Service: “Rainforest Roadway”**

interview by Ritula Shah, November 9, 2009

“Forest time’ is the name indigenous people of the Amazon gave to life before modern times. But these days ‘forest time’ is a term of nostalgia – life in the Brazilian rainforest has changed forever since a new highway cut through its heart.. Denise Zmekhol spoke to Ritula Shah and told her what she found...”

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/programmes/2009/11/091120\\_outlook\\_amazon\\_road.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/programmes/2009/11/091120_outlook_amazon_road.shtml)

## **Dot Earth Blog - NYTimes.com (December, 2008)**

**The Uncertain Legacy of Chico Mendes** - by Andrew C. Revkin

I have to finish a print story Monday, but will be adding more reflections on the legacy of Chico Mendes below as time permits. First in line is Denise Zmekhol, a Brazilian-born photographer and filmmaker who spent time roaming the Amazon in the 1980s and who met and photographed Mendes and his wife and two young children just weeks before he was killed.

<http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/12/22/the-uncertain-legacy-of-chico-mendes/#more-597>

## **Smithsonian Magazine (March, 2007)**

**Rain Forest Rebel** - by Joshua Hammer

"In the Amazon, researchers documenting the ways of native peoples join forces with an embattled chief to stop illegal loggers and developers from destroying the earth's most precious wilderness."

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/people-places/10023991.html>

## **Mongabay.com (October, 2008)**

**Children of the Amazon' looks at cultural loss of Amazon tribe confronted by deforestation** -by Rhett Butler Rhett

'Children of the Amazon', a new documentary by Denise Zmekhol, looks at the cultural transformation of the Surui and Negarote tribes following the development and improvement of a highway that penetrates deep into the Amazon rainforest of western Brazil.

<http://news.mongabay.com/2008/1005-surui.html>

## **San Francisco Chronicle (June, 2007)**

**Google to harness satellite power for an Amazon tribe** - by Jack Epstein

"When the Brazilian government failed to defend his tribe against loggers and miners, the leader found a high-tech ally"

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2007/06/10/MNGR0QC65E1.DTL>

## **National Public Radio, Living on Earth (August, 2007)**

**Children of the Amazon** - with Bruce Gellerman

"Filmmaker Denise Zmekhol talks with Bruce Gellerman about the Surui people of the Amazon, the subjects of her new PBS film "Children of the Amazon."

<http://www.loe.org/shows/segments.htm?programID=07-P13-00034&segmentID=5>



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**JULES VERNE AWARD** Best Film/France

**JULES VERNE** Youth Choice Award/France

**DC ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL** Link TV Award for

Outstanding Environmental Film/USA

**SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**

Best Documentary/USA

**SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM**

Audience Choice Award/USA

**THE INDIE FEST AWARD** Best Film/USA

**LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION** Award of Merit

**NEPAL INT INDIGENOUS FILM FESTIVAL** Bronze Drum Award

**THE ACCOLADES FILM AWARDS** Best Show

**ACCOLADES FILM AWARDS** Award of Excellence Cinematography

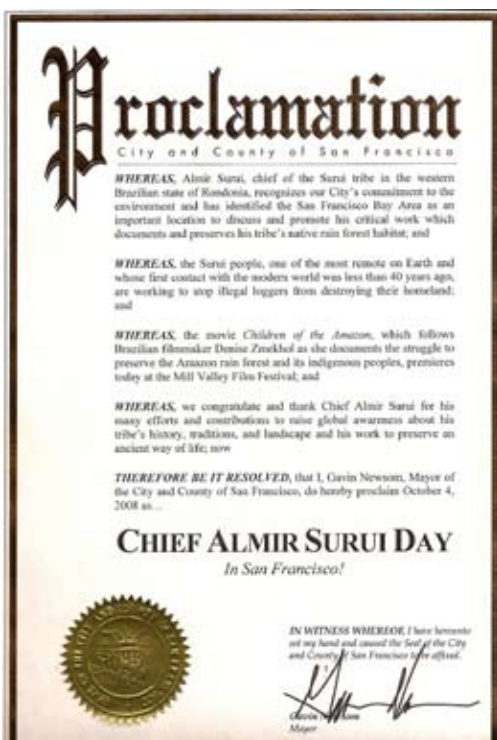
**ACCOLADES FILM AWARDS** Honorable Mention Original Score

**ACCOLADES FILM AWARDS** Honorable Mention Content Message

## CHIEF ALMIR SURUI DAY IN SAN FRANCISCO

In celebration of the premier of Children of the Amazon and in recognition of the visit of Chief Almir Surui, Mayor Gavin Newsom has declared October 4, 2008 as Chief Almir Surui Day in San Francisco.

## [ Awards ]





*Children of The Amazon*  
a film by Denise Zmekhol

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