

## **James M. Fortier Short Bio**

James M. Fortier is Métis (pronounced “May-Tee”), of French Canadian and Ojibway descent, born in Nipigon, Ontario, and raised in suburban Chicago. James is an accomplished documentary filmmaker and website producer. For the past 25 years he has written, produced, directed and shot numerous productions for Fortune 500 Companies, broadcast and cable television, PBS and APTN. With strong ties to his Ojibway family in Canada, including the Pic River Ojibway First Nation, James’ documentary work has focused primarily on Native American and First Nations communities and issues. He has won numerous awards including 3 Emmy Awards and most recently the DuPont Columbia Award for his contribution as episode producer and director for *Bad Sugar*, part of the national PBS health series *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?* James’ first documentary, *Alcatraz Is Not An Island* screened at the prestigious Sundance Film Festival in 2001 and aired nationally on PBS and APTN in Canada. Other documentary works include the six hour PBS Ojibwe series *Waasa Inaabidaa: We Look In All Directions, Voices for the Land, Indian Country Diaries: Spiral of Fire, Playing Pastime: American Indians, Softball, and Survival, Green Green Water*, and two documentaries for the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, *Pulling Together*, and *Gathering Together*. James was the Artist in Residence at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in 2009 where he conducted a four week video production lab for the American Indian Studies Department course, *American Indian Stereotypes in Film*, and presented several of his documentaries for students and faculty. James is currently developing several documentary projects and working on a screenplay adaptation of *Alcatraz Is Not An Island*.