

FREEDOM & UNITY:

The Vermont movie

The logo for 'The Vermont movie' features the words 'The Vermont movie' in a stylized, blocky font. The letters are arranged in a slightly staggered manner. A pink flower with green leaves is positioned to the right of the word 'movie', partially overlapping the letter 'o'.

Synopsis: Freedom & Unity: The Vermont Movie — One state. Many visions.

Freedom & Unity: The Vermont Movie is the first documentary series ever made about the many voices, cultural and political traditions that give the Green Mountain State its egalitarian ideals and bold, iconoclastic spirit. The six-part film is a collaboration of three-dozen critically acclaimed Vermont filmmakers, as well as historians, editors, archivists, animators, composers, and writers.

From 1777 to the present, Vermont has been a beacon, a haven, a refuge, an idea, a symbol, a state shaped by independent and courageous decision-makers, thinkers, political leaders, workers, artists, immigrants and innovators. It was the first state to outlaw slavery, to allow same sex civil unions, to call for the impeachment of President Nixon, and to protect the environment with Act 250. This is a state in which conservatives and liberals are not only neighbors — they frequently depend on each other for survival. And yet, as we see in town meetings and legislative debates, the pursuit of freedom has, on occasion, threatened the state's unity.

In this collaborative film dozens of filmmakers use cinema verite, personal stories, rare footage, compelling interviews and original re-enactments to create a fresh, living testament that explores the history and contemporary culture of the Green Mountain State. This groundbreaking, six-part journey reveals the stories of Vermonters past and present — from Abenakis and early settlers, runaway slaves and farmers to historians, politicians, newcomers and activists moving “back to the land.”

To many outsiders, Vermont is either an idyllic landscape of villages and farms, or a seething hotbed of radical left-wing politics. But the story is more nuanced. **Freedom & Unity: The Vermont Movie** examines Vermont's legendary grass roots politics, but also dares to explore the disturbing legacy of eugenics and racial myopia. The film explores life lived at a local level and asks, how is a state's identity created? And, how does the past inform the present?

Vermont's motto, Freedom & Unity, was chosen as the title not only because it hints at the intriguing, and at times controversial themes of this project, but also because it mirrors the production process. Each filmmaker was encouraged to tell the story they wanted, and express it in their own cinematic voice. Nora Jacobson, the series director and editor, whose documentary *Delivered Vacant* premiered at the New York Film Festival and competed at Sundance, has woven together a compelling, enjoyable work that holds viewers' attention with its intelligence, vigor, and intimacy.

For more information, visit www.thevermontmovie.com.