

## Jordan Fein

New York, NY

[www.jordanfein.com](http://www.jordanfein.com)



It's a rocky sandy road, through wild lands, crossing ancient washes. It's Native land, it's untouched land. It's a home to creatures of endurance (both animal and people). It's not easy to prepare for living in a way largely foreign to our modern experience. Untethered from connectivity.

I am a filmmaker in both unscripted-documentary and the interpreted narrative space. My work is steeped in the presentation of unique perspectives, the projection of the personal and the illumination of worlds un-explored and under-represented. In its simplest form, my concentration is on human nature. To reside at the Montello Residency, the person to study was myself.

I choose to use my time to complete a screenplay that is a story of isolation and the notion of what we call "home". As a working director, I am typically moving from project



Still from *The Blessing*. The film, directed by Jordan Fein, follows a Navajo coal miner raising his secretive daughter as a single father, struggling with his part in the irreversible destruction of their sacred mountain at the hands of America's largest coal producer.

to project almost daily, so allowing myself a prolonged uninterrupted opportunity to dedicate to a singular project was a privilege I haven't had in recent years. The result was that I surpassed the writing I intended to do and the self-study was truly revealing.

When first settling into the modest homey shelter in Montello, the silence was the first of many adjustments I'd make. Coming from New York City, the contrast was felt almost immediately. But then came the calls of crows, the scurry of the chipmunk and the desert shrew, the rush of warm wind that filled the ears like an aural hug.

The Second adjustment was to a vast desert landscape. I've long been drawn the American Southwest, having spend much time in various rural sites, but never have I seen land with virtually no interruption. No high tension power lines or pin-straight railways bifurcating sage brush and red earth. The land slowly revealed how time can change it. There is the light stretching shadows, and a late-day glow like fire. The powder sugar sprinkling of stars filled the night sky, and for my lucky timing, I watched the rise of the full harvest moon.

A final adjustment, and perhaps my own personal undertaking was a need to reclaim my attention span, turns out the mind can provide most all the entertainment, information and revolution we need.

As a documentarian, I couldn't help myself from exploring what the people of Montello, Nevada might reveal. A stop into the town watering hole, The Cowboy Bar, lead to a conversation with Victor, a self proclaimed gypsy, a wise man who left a life on the road to settle near his gold-miner son. I received tremendous hospitality from Tony and Lupe, the nearest neighbors, who work tirelessly on their homestead perfected "Game Island" -- a joy-filled oasis of classic and invented beanbag toss games that one day will belong to their grandchildren. I was sponsored to become a proud "member" of Area 52, another local hangout and private hunting club. It was there I witnessed the elderly owner fulfill a decade long wish of retrieving a 200 pound geode with the help of the annual visiting elk hunters.

Back home now, I listen for the wind, watch the light, and quiet the mind to day-dream of a simple desk in the Great Basin where work is done.

