Video iPods give people a way to watch movies in places the filmmakers never imaged, like on a subway. They've also opened up the option for filmmakers to make movies specifically to be viewed in nontheatrical venues — such as the fields around the town of Groton.

Liz Canner and some students at the Groton School have done exactly that, crafting five short films for visitors to the Groton Historical Society to watch outdoors. The "Hidden Tribe" project narrates a walking tour through the Massachusetts town, focusing specifically on the history of the area's Native American Nipmuc tribe.

In a Globe story last month, Ty Burr wrote that although iPods generally are "a godawful way" to watch many movies — an attack scene in "Lawrence of Arabia" looked like "an insurrection on an ant farm" — there are plenty of films that adapt to the iPod's 2½-inch screen.

Canner worked the other way around: She adapted her filmmaking to the constraints of the iPod format, using more closeup shots, big-type graphics, and brightly lit scenes.

She first shot footage of the Nipmuc story 12 years ago. "I grew up in Groton, on a river, and as a kid I was always obsessed about Native Americans," she says. "This town holds its history near and dear, but there's lots of mythologizing about Colonial times."

The footage sat while she worked on other things, but she always wanted to return to it. When she became an artist in residence for a week at the Groton School, the idea of making the portable films "seemed like a good way to get people out to visit this beautiful town." Featured are interviews with Nipmuc leader Chief Wise Owl and tribal member David White, who talks about how the Nipmucs farmed and used the land.

The films can be downloaded onto iPods from www.astreammedia.org. The Groton Public Library also plans to have a preloaded iPod on hand for borrowing. Meanwhile, an exhibit of other digital public art work by Canner, who lived in Boston and Somerville for 10 years and now resides in New Hampshire, is on display at the Groton School's Brodigan Gallery through tomorrow.