

IllumiNative, Sundance Institute and The Black List collaborate for second Indigenous List of screenwriters

LOS ANGELES – The Black List has announced its second annual collaboration with IllumiNative and the Sundance Institute to craft The Indigenous List, highlighting the very best Indigenous screenwriters from both feature films and television.

Launched in 2020, the inaugural edition of The Indigenous List set out to provide a platform for Indigenous writers to elevate their scripts to new levels of opportunities within the industry.

With the rising popularity of Indigenous-created and -led stories such as *Rutherford Falls* and *Reservation Dogs*, this moment in the film and television landscape has seen an unprecedented interest in and an increased demand for Indigenous talent and their work.

Here is an update on the writers and scripts selected from the inaugural list:

- Blake Pickens’ episodic pilot *The Wildest West* is currently being developed by Populace and he has since been staffed on the upcoming Paramount+ reboot of *Rugrats*.
- Also on last year’s list was Alika Maikau’s feature *Moloka’i Bound*, which was recently selected for Ava DuVernay’s *ARRAY* and Google’s \$500,000 Feature Film Grant.
- Similarly, both Bryson Chun and Miciana Alise were also chosen as fellows for Sundance Institute’s 2021 Native Lab.
- Blackhorse Lowe directed two episodes of *Reservation Dogs* and has joined Erica Tremblay in the writers’ room for the show’s second season.
- Tremblay will also co-create and executive produce *Yellow Bird*, a one-hour drama series based on Sierra Crane Murdoch’s Pulitzer Prize finalist *Yellow Bird: Oil, Murder and a Woman’s Search for Justice in Indian Country*.

The project hails from *Reservation Dogs* co-creator and Indigenous List writer Sterlin Harjo and writer-director Tremblay, Beau Willimon and Jordan Tappis’ Westward Productions and Michael London’s Groundswell Productions.

In keeping with this momentum, filmmakers and content creators are invited to submit a script for consideration by uploading it to The Black List website. Submissions will be accepted until **Feb. 4, 2022** (evaluation purchase deadline: Jan. 4, 2022). Submissions are now open for this partnership via blcklst.com.

Requirements for the 2022 Indigenous List include:

- Native American, Native Hawaiian and Alaskan Native film artists working in the U.S. are eligible to submit scripts to this partnership.
- Any kind of story is eligible and will be considered.
- Feature film scripts, half-hour scripts and one-hour episodic scripts will be considered for this partnership –no web series or documentaries.
- All levels of experience considered for submitting writers.
- Scripts submitted should be as free of attachments as possible.
- Submitting writers should be prepared to answer the following question: What is your Tribal Nation/First Nation? Please describe how your Native culture has supported your ideas and process as a screenwriter.

Writers selected for The Indigenous List will be notified of their placement in spring 2022, with a public announcement to follow. Selected Indigenous List writers will have the option of taking general meetings with major Indigenous creators

in the industry as well as other benefits to be announced.

“We’re in a moment like none before and I’m proud to continue with our partners in co-creating a base for what is already a new age for Indigenous artists within the industry. The success of last year’s list is a testament to what happens when you give Indigenous artists the space to be visible and how the needle gets pushed when Indigenous artists are heard,” said Adam Piron, interim director for Sundance Institute’s Indigenous Program

“I should probably just admit that this is all an elaborate ploy to create the conditions where more shows as good as *Reservation Dogs* are available for me to watch. It’s incredibly inspiring to see the progress both the screenwriters and the projects on last year’s list have already made in such a short time and we’re excited to be conspiring with IllumiNative and Sundance Institute to catalyze a new batch,” said Franklin Leonard, founder and CEO of The Black List

“We must support Native creatives as they tell their own stories. IllumiNative is proud to support opportunities for Native storytellers to share their talent and skills with the industry on a platform like The Indigenous List. We are grateful to partners like The Black List, the Sundance Indigenous Program and Bird Runningwater, who continue to support the next generation of Native storytellers,” said Crystal Echo Hawk, founder and CEO of IllumiNative.

The Indigenous List follows Black List partnerships with GLAAD, CAPE, Latinx and Muslim organizations, and organizations for people with disabilities to identify and celebrate great screenplays and writers from communities traditionally underrepresented in front of and behind the camera.

For more information, contact Kate Hagen at kate@blcklst.com.



Happy 9th Birthday, Amia! We love you!



Happy 9th Birthday, Leelin! You are the best son and we are so proud of you! You are awesome!

Love, Mom, Dad, Buck and Cinnamon

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