



**15th Edition Native Women in Film Festival**  
**The Matriarchs of Cinema™ | Women of Influence**  
**Decolonizing The Entertainment Industry**  
**The Week Leading to The Academy Awards®**

[Watch NWIFTV Trailer](#)

LOS ANGELES, California; February 25, 2024 — [NWIFTV Native Women in Film Festival](#) opens March 1st - 8th, featuring 45 films directed by women from a Native perspective – the largest number of films to date among film festivals this year.

Every year, RED NATION CELEBRATION INSTITUTE celebrates the accomplishments of Native Women in Film & Television in All Media — with NWIFTV Festival, spanning from March 1 to 8 and strategically aligned with the week preceding the Academy Awards, stands as an exclusive showcase for films meticulously crafted by Native women directors. Amid the jubilant atmosphere of this cinematic celebration, Lily Gladstone emerges as a true victor, clinching

prestigious awards like the SAG Award, Golden Globe Award, and Gotham Award.

Her exceptional work, a beacon of cinematic brilliance, first graced the screen at the 28th [Red Nation International Film Festival](#) in November 2023. The film, titled "The Unknown Country," not only captivated audiences but also earned nominations in distinguished categories, including Best Picture, Achievement in Directing, Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role, Outstanding Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role, and Best Original Screenplay. As the festival unfolds, the excitement intensifies, especially with the much-anticipated screening of "[The Unknown Country](#)" on March 5th - opening night. This festival is poised not just to showcase but to honor and elevate these outstanding cinematic achievements.

45 films directed by women will screen at the AMC The Grove 14 and stream on [Red Nation Television Network](#). Over the course of the last seven years, NWIFTV have wholeheartedly championed the screenings of an impressive 177 films directed by women.

This laudable initiative serves as a resounding testament to our unwavering commitment to promoting inclusivity within the film industry. In a remarkable feat, we have even surpassed prominent film festivals like *Toronto*, *Cannes*, *Sundance*, *Tribeca*, & the *Oscars* in terms of the sheer numbers of women-directed films featured.

The Festival presents a diverse array of feature [films, documentaries, and shorts](#) that delve into pertinent issues of today, resonating not only within Indian Country but on a global scale.

As a highlight of the closing night, films like "[Bad River](#)" (World Premiere) and "[American Holocaust: When It's All Over I'll Still Be Indian](#)" will grace the screen. The latter, recognized for its excellence, stands proudly shortlisted for an Academy Award.

Adding to the enriching experience, several filmmakers will be present, engaging in Q&A sessions to provide deeper insights into the narratives and creative processes behind their impactful works.

The festival is set to kick off virtually with the captivating Matriarchs in Indian Country presentation on March 1st and 2nd. Following this, an engaging and thought-provoking dialogue unfolds with 'The Conversation Series' on March 3rd and 4th, skillfully hosted by Joanelle Romero. It promises to be a dynamic exploration of ideas, insights, and perspectives within the Indigenous narrative space.

The NWIFTV Festival will culminate on March 8 at the Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles Beverly Hills with the [NWIFTV Brunch](#), themed "Matriarchs of Cinema/Women of Influence Decolonizing the Entertainment Industry." This event aims to bring together prominent women, executives, actresses, and filmmakers from our industry for a vital conversation. It underscores the significance of representation, firmly establishing Native and Indigenous women at the forefront of our industry.

Esteemed attendees will include **Rena Owen** (*Once Were Warriors*), **Mary McDonnell** (*Battlestar Galactica*, *Dances With Wolves*), **Erica Gimpel** (*Mayfair Witches*), **Tonantzin Carmelo** (*The*

English, LA Brea), **Rebecca Brando** (RNCI Board member), **Susan Masten** (RNCI board member), **Daria Overby** (Starz), and **Cyndy McCrossen** (Albuquerque Film Office). Special guests to TBA Soon!

This year's [NWIFTV Native Women Media Impact Award](#) recipients are **Bonnie Abaunza**, whose life has been dedicated to humanitarian work, human rights, and social justice advocacy, and **Talei Fernandez**, daughter of Giselle Fernandez, chosen by Pope Francis as the U.S. Ambassador for the Pelota de Trapo program in America. The NWIFTV Brunch promises to be a powerful celebration of women's influence and impact in the entertainment industry.

**"I attended last year's brunch and was blown away by the mother of one of the filmmaker's who closed the afternoon with a prayer. It was the first time I felt I was hearing the indigenous language of this land being spoken. The room became silent. There was a mutual feeling of profound gratitude and respect for all the women present... A special shared moment in time," Erica Gimpel (Mayfair Witches)**

NWIFTV Festival is sponsored by Apple TV, Starz, Novo Foundation, National Empowerment for the Arts, Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation, Albuquerque Film Office, Abaunza Group, AMC Networks, Red Nation Films, Red Nation Television Network.

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#### **ABOUT Native Women in Film & Television in All Media (NWIFTV)**

RNCI designed this program to connect people with deeply moving stories of those within our community to lead the entertainment industry to become more inclusive of our storytellers. In 2018, NWIFTV launched a media campaign [WHY WE WEAR RED](#) bringing a global awareness to the lack of inclusion of Native Women in Film & Television, which is directly linked to the epidemic of Murdered and Missing Native Women & Girls.

Founded in 1995 as a Native Women in Music Festival in Santa Fe by actress/producer Joanelle Romero, the festival went on to have its own program of screenings at the Red Nation International Film Festival (The largest Native Indigenous Film Festival in the world) annually in November.

In 2003, the Native Women in Film & Television became a stand-alone film festival that runs in the week leading up to the Academy Awards. This year marks the 15th year for the Native Women in

Film Festival.

#### **ABOUT Red Nation Celebration Institute ([RNCI](#))**

The Creative Enterprise by Natives delivering to all people the stories that shape our world. Is the longest-running successful Native Women-Led Indigenous Media Arts and Cultural non-profit enterprise in the history of the entertainment industry. Serving over 575+ Native Nations in the U.S. and collectively on the planet 1200. Based in Los Angeles with an office in Santa Fe New Mexico.

Founded by Joanelle Romero in 1995 with the mission to break barriers of racism by creating systemic change through film television in all media in order to eliminate American Indian stereotypes. Our vision for the future of cinema and the arts is one in which Native Indigenous perspectives are authentically pictured, recognized, and valued in a way that promotes strong authentic Native identities, economic outcomes, equity, and wellness for our Indigenous communities.

#### **ABOUT Red Nation Television Network ([RedNationTV](#))**

**Red Nation Television Network holds the distinction of being the world's first streaming company, predating not only Netflix but all others, and stands as the longest-running Native Indigenous television network. The station delivers distinctive content encompassing Native Indigenous culture, heritage, education, entertainment, and lifestyle.**

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