

NEWS

AWARD-WINNING DOCUMENTARY *SUGARCANE* ADDS OSCAR NOMINEE LILY GLADSTONE AS EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

AS THE GRANDDAUGHTER OF A BOARDING SCHOOL SURVIVOR,
GLADSTONE PUTS HER PERSONAL SUPPORT BEHIND THE FILM THAT IS
BEING LAUDED BY CRITICS AS 'MUST SEE' AND 'STUNNING'

From Directors Julian Brave NoiseCat and Emily Kassie and Oscar-Nominated
Producer Kellen Quinn, *SUGARCANE* Will be Available To Stream on Disney+ and
Hulu Later This Year



[DOWNLOAD LILY GLADSTONE PHOTO HERE](#)
[WATCH TRAILER HERE](#)

(LOS ANGELES – Oct. 18, 2024) Today, National Geographic Documentary Films announced Oscar®-nominated actress Lily Gladstone boarded the acclaimed documentary **SUGARCANE** as executive producer. Raised on the Blackfeet Reservation, Gladstone is of Piegan Blackfeet, Nez Perce and European heritage. Gladstone was the first Native American to win the Golden Globe® Award for Best Actress in a Motion Picture – Drama and be nominated for the Academy Award® for Best Actress for their work in “Killers of the Flower Moon.”

Previously, Gladstone was honored at 2023’s Variety’s Power of Women event for her work as an advocate for Indigenous women’s rights. The actor works closely with the National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center (NIWRC), a nonprofit that aims to end violence against Indigenous women. The NIWRC has created a database that allows individuals to search for legislation regarding missing and murdered Indigenous women across states.

“You’re not going to find any Indigenous person in North America, Canada, the US, elsewhere, or really Indigenous people worldwide that didn’t go through some kind of program like this,” Gladstone told [Vanity Fair](#). “My grandmother, who I lived with from age 11 until she passed away two summers ago—she’s a boarding school survivor. I don’t know if my grandmother ever allowed for that space to open up enough for her to heal from it. I think she was surviving from whatever it was she witnessed,” Gladstone said. Adding of the film, “There’s no mincing words. There’s nothing edited out. You’re talking to survivors and you’re confronting that grief and you’re confronting that reality in a way that needs to be done because it’s a hard thing for people to palate.”

From first-time director and TIME100 Next honoree Julian Brave NoiseCat and Emmy®- and Peabody-nominated investigative journalist, director, producer and cinematographer Emily Kassie, **SUGARCANE** opened theatrically in the U.S. in August 2024 and will stream later this year on [Hulu](#) and [Disney+](#). This week, the film was nominated for eight Critics Choice Awards — the most of any film — including Best Director, Best New Documentary Filmmakers, Best Cinematography, Best Editing, Best Historical Documentary, Best Political Documentary, Best True Crime Documentary, and Best Documentary Feature.

“Enlightening and infuriating” (Variety), **SUGARCANE** is an epic, nuanced and sensitive cinematic portrait of a community during a moment of international reckoning. Amidst the groundbreaking investigation into abuse and deaths at an Indian residential school in Canada, the film’s courageous participants break cycles of intergenerational trauma by facing painful, long-ignored truths and rebuilding broken family bonds.

After making its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival earlier this year — where it won the U.S. Documentary Competition Directing Award — the film went on to receive the Center for Documentary Studies Filmmaker Award from the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival and the 2024 Filmmaker Award from the Margaret Mead Film Festival. To date, **SUGARCANE** has won 17 awards, including Best Documentary Feature awards from Mountainfilm, the San Francisco International Film Festival, the San Luis Obispo International Film Festival and the Sarasota Film Festival, along with Special Jury Prizes at the Seattle International Film Festival and the International Film Festival of Boston.

SUGARCANE has been celebrated by critics, calling it “the product of humane and insightful filmmakers who are determined to never let anyone forget” (Variety) and “as much a piece of art about the sins of the past as it is about living with the memory of those sins in the present” (IndieWire).

Alongside the film’s theatrical release, the filmmakers have conducted a screening tour of First Nations and Tribal communities across North America. These [“Rez Tour” screenings](#) offer Indigenous communities an accessible, intimate and safe way to watch the film prior to its

streaming release. Each screening is organized in coordination with First Nations and Tribal community leaders and highlights local or regional resources and health support for Indigenous Peoples and families who have been impacted by residential schools in Canada and Indian boarding schools in the United States. The **SUGARCANE** “Rez Tour” began just weeks after the Department of the Interior released its most recent [Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report](#), which found that nearly 1,000 children died at the more than 400 schools funded by the U.S. federal government.

The Kassie Films and Hedgehog Films production, in association with Impact Partners and Fit Via Vi, was produced by Kassie and Oscar nominee Kellen Quinn. The director of photography for **SUGARCANE** is Christopher LaMarca, and the cinematographer is Emily Kassie. The film was edited by Nathan Punwar and Maya Daisy Hawke, with music by Mali Obomsawin. Carolyn Bernstein is executive producer for National Geographic Documentary Films. Executive producers for the film are Bill Way, Elliott Whitton, Jenny Raskin, GERALYN White Dreyfous, Tegan Acton, Emma Pompetti, Grace Lay, Sumalee Montano, Sabrina Merage Naim, Douglas Choi, Adam and Melony Lewis, Meadow Fund, JanaLee Cherneski and Ian Desai, David and Linda Cornfield, Maida Lynn, Robina Riccitiello, Nina and David Fialkow. The co-executive producers are Kelsey Koenig, Lauren Haber, Meryl Metni and Jennifer Pelling.

Since its inception in 2017, National Geographic Documentary Films has been lauded around the world for telling timely, gripping and globally relevant stories. It released the Academy, BAFTA and seven-time Emmy Award-winning film “Free Solo,” the Academy Award-nominated and Peabody Award-winning “Bobi Wine: The People’s President,” the Academy and BAFTA Award-nominated and Peabody and DGA Award-winning “Fire of Love,” and the Academy Award-nominated and Emmy-winning film “The Cave”. In recent years, the film banner’s slate has also included the duPont-Columbia Award and two-time Sundance Award winner “The Territory;” BAFTA nominees “The Rescue” and “Becoming Cousteau;” Emmy Award winners “The First Wave;” “LA 92” and “Jane” and many other critically acclaimed features and shorts.

###

About Julian Brave NoiseCat — Director

Julian Brave NoiseCat is a writer, filmmaker and student of Salish art and history. His first documentary, Sugarcane, directed alongside Emily Kassie, follows an investigation into abuse and missing children at the Indian residential school NoiseCat’s family was sent to near Williams Lake, British Columbia. Sugarcane premiered at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival where NoiseCat and Kassie won the Directing Award in the U.S. Documentary Competition. A proud member of the Canim Lake Band Tsescen and descendant of the Lil’Wat Nation of Mount Currie, he is concurrently finishing his first book, We Survived the Night, which will be published by Alfred A. Knopf in North America, Profile Books in the United Kingdom and Commonwealth, Albin Michel in France and Aufbau Verlag in Germany. NoiseCat’s journalism has appeared in dozens of publications including The New York Times, The Washington Post and The New Yorker and has been recognized with many awards including the 2022 American Mosaic Journalism Prize, which honors “excellence in long-form, narrative or deep reporting on stories about underrepresented and/or misrepresented groups in the present American landscape.” In 2021, NoiseCat was named to the TIME100 Next list of emerging leaders alongside the starting point guard of his fantasy basketball team, Luka Doncic.

About Emily Kassie — Director, Producer, Cinematographer

Emily Kassie is an Emmy® and Peabody®-nominated investigative journalist and filmmaker. Kassie shoots, directs and reports stories on geopolitical conflict, humanitarian crises, corruption and the people caught in the crossfire. Her work for The New York Times, PBS Frontline, Netflix, and others ranges from drug and weapons trafficking in the Saharan desert, to immigrant detention in the United States. In 2021, she smuggled into Taliban territory with PBS Newshour correspondent Jane Ferguson to report on their imminent siege of Kabul and targeted killing of female leaders. Her work has been honored with multiple Edward R. Murrow, World Press Photo and National Press Photographers awards. Her multimedia feature on the economic exploitation of the Syrian and West African refugee crises won the Overseas

Press Club Award and made her the youngest person to win a National Magazine award. She previously oversaw visual journalism at Highline, Huffington Post's investigative magazine, and at The Marshall Project. Kassie was named to Forbes 30 under 30 in 2020 and is a 2023 New America fellow. Her first documentary, *I Married My Family's Killer*, following couples in post-genocide Rwanda, won a Student Academy Award in 2015.

About National Geographic Documentary Films

National Geographic Documentary Films, part of a joint venture between The Walt Disney Company and the National Geographic Society, is committed to bringing the world premium, feature documentaries that cover timely, provocative and globally relevant stories from the very best documentary filmmakers. Its award-winning and critically acclaimed films reach 300 million people worldwide in 180 countries and 33 languages across the global National Geographic channels and direct-to-consumer platforms Disney+ and Hulu. Recent films include Oscar® nominated *Bobi Wine: The People's President*, Oscar®- and BAFTA nominated *Fire of Love*, three-time Emmy-award winner *The First Wave*, two-time Sundance-award winner *The Territory*, BAFTA nominees *The Rescue* and *Becoming Cousteau*, and Oscar®- and BAFTA winner *Free Solo*. For more information visit films.nationalgeographic.com, or find us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).