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Oscar Nominees All White for Second Year in a Row **No good news for Natives and other minorities**

Once again, Hollywood is talking about the lack of diversity in the Oscar nominations. The 20 nominated actors were all white; the group excluded such highly-touted names as Idris Elba, Michael B. Jordan, and Will Smith.

Or is it simply a reiteration that no Native actors were nominated despite their sterling performances in *The Revenant*. The Academy doesn't seem to be aware that incredible Native films such as *Songs My Brother Taught Me* and *Mekko*, and documentaries "*Children of the Arctic*," and "*Paya The Water Story of the Paiute*," are winning awards at the prestigious Red Nation Film Festival in Los Angeles.



Native nominations for an Oscar have been few and far between: Chief Dan George for best supporting actor in 1970, Buffy Sainte-Marie for best song in 1982, and Graham Greene for best supporting actor in 1990 and 1999 and Joanelle Romero (actor/director/founder of Red Nation Film Festival) to date is the only native filmmaker to make the Academy's Documentary shortlist in a preliminary round of voting for her film *American Holocaust: When Its All Over I'll Still Be Indian* – This is the first and only film that addresses the American Indian and Jewish Holocausts.

Natives and other people of color are out there working—writing, directing, and producing—but not getting much recognition.

This has started to change in television with such popular shows as *Empire*, *Scandal*, *Grey's Anatomy* and the recent "*Blood & Oil*." Cable and On-line steaming networks have given us *Longmire*, *Hell on Wheels*, *House of Cards*. But where's the diversity in our movies? Why aren't Natives being nominated?

Indigenous stories have proven to be bankable and marketable, with *Dances with Wolves*, *Pocahontas*, *The Twilight Saga*, *Avatar*, *Pow Wow Highway*, to name a few. *The Revenant* is further evidence of this. Because of its wins at the Golden Globes, expect to see more Native films and TV shows created.

"I don't believe we'll have to wait another 26 years to win a Golden Globe or Oscar," says Joanelle Romero, founder of Red Nations Films and its film festivals. "With all the talented Natives creating and sharing their stories, a revolution in Native-themed films is just around the corner."

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