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## TRIBECA FESTIVAL 2025 ANNOUNCES LINEUP FOR INAUGURAL STORYTELLING SUMMIT

*11-Day Industry Event Launches with Talks from Leslye Headland, Nia DaCosta, David Leitch & Kelly McCormick, Lucy Liu, and More*

*Previously Announced Headliners Include Steve Buscemi, Wren Arthur, Jeremy O. Harris, Jane Rosenthal, Julio Torres, and Christine Vachon*

Storytelling Summit Badges Available at [TribecaFilm.com/storytellingsummit](https://TribecaFilm.com/storytellingsummit)



**NEW YORK, NY (May 7, 2025)** – The 2025 Tribeca Festival, presented by OKX, today announced the full lineup for its inaugural **Storytelling Summit**, a new 11-day industry gathering designed to empower independent filmmakers and the creative community through keynotes, workshops, panels, case studies, and curated networking events. Taking place June 5-15 at Spring Studios, this “festival within a festival” builds on Tribeca’s 20+ year legacy of artist development and expands access to the Festival’s creative and professional network.

For \$250, the Storytelling Summit offers emerging and mid-career creators the opportunity to engage directly with industry leaders and attend curated sessions, exclusive events, networking opportunities, and select Tribeca Festival screenings.

The Summit runs daily from 11am–7pm and features six thematic tracks plus a daily meetup:

- **Luminaries:** In-depth talks with visionary artists, including boundary-pushing filmmaker and Tribeca alum **Nia DaCosta** (*Little Woods*, TF ‘18), as she reflects on her career trajectory—from reimagining the iconic *Candyman* to joining the Marvel Universe with

*The Marvels*. Also featured are creative powerhouses **David Leitch** and **Kelly McCormick**, who will discuss their collaborative advocacy for stunt design as a vital storytelling tool, and their highly anticipated sequel, *Nobody 2*.

- **Industry Now:** Practical guidance on producing, financing, and distribution, such as Emmy®-nominated **Leslye Headland** (*Russian Doll*) and Emmy Award-winning documentary filmmaker and Tribeca alum **Michèle Stephenson** (*Black Girls Play*, TF '23), as they share how they choose their stories—and the mediums that best bring them to life.
- **Case Studies:** Deep dives into standout Tribeca Festival projects, including a conversation with celebrated actor and producer **Lucy Liu**, director **Eric Lin** and cast member **Lawrence Shou** of *Rosemead*, an Official Selection of the 2025 Tribeca Festival.
- **Connect:** Targeted networking with talent reps, buyers, funders, and more, including “Distributors Ask Me (Almost) Anything,” featuring senior executives from **Focus Features** and **Searchlight Pictures**.
- **Next Wave:** Dissections on the future of storytelling from gaming, AI, podcasting, and immersive media.
- **Speed Sessions:** Quick-hit expert takes on hot-button issues including AI and ethical storytelling.
- **Storytelling Summit Wrap-Up:** Each day concludes with a casual meetup for creators to meet and continue conversations sparked during the day.

“Building on Tribeca’s 24 year legacy of supporting independent filmmakers, our inaugural Storytelling Summit opens the doors even wider to the festival’s unrivaled creative community and catalytic networking ecosystem for everyone with a story to tell,” said **Tribeca Festival Director and SVP of Programming Cara Cusumano**. “As our industry continues to face unprecedented headwinds, Tribeca remains a steadfast homebase for independent voices to connect, uplift, and inspire one another.”

Since its founding, the Tribeca Festival has supported thousands of emerging and underrepresented artists, and the Storytelling Summit represents the festival’s continued commitment to this tradition. Storytelling Summit badges include access to this full slate of programming, a networking lounge within Spring Studios, access to the Festival’s rush line, and complimentary day-of tickets to select screenings and events. For the complete schedule and to purchase a badge, visit: [TribecaFilm.com/StorytellingSummit](https://TribecaFilm.com/StorytellingSummit)

Learn more about the Tribeca Festival programming team at [TribecaFilm.com](https://TribecaFilm.com).

The full Storytelling Summit lineup for the 2025 Tribeca Festival is detailed below. For more updates on programming follow @Tribeca and #Tribeca2025 on [Instagram](#), [X](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#). A Tribeca Membership or 2025 Tribeca Festival passes and ticket packages can be purchased at [tribecafilm.com](https://tribecafilm.com).

### **ABOUT TRIBECA FESTIVAL**

The Tribeca Festival, presented by OKX, brings artists and diverse audiences together to celebrate storytelling in all its forms, including film, TV, music, audio storytelling, games, and immersive. With strong roots in independent film, Tribeca is synonymous with creative expression and entertainment. Tribeca champions emerging and established voices, discovers award-winning talent, curates innovative experiences, and introduces new ideas through exclusive premieres, exhibitions, conversations, and live performances.

The Festival was founded by Robert De Niro, Jane Rosenthal, and Craig Hatkoff in 2001 to spur the economic and cultural revitalization of lower Manhattan following the attacks on the World Trade Center. The annual Tribeca Festival will celebrate its 24<sup>th</sup> year from June 4–15, 2025 in New York City.

In 2019, James Murdoch's Lupa Systems bought a majority stake in Tribeca Enterprises, bringing together Rosenthal, De Niro, and Murdoch to grow the enterprise.

### **ABOUT THE 2025 TRIBECA FESTIVAL PARTNERS**

The 2025 Tribeca Festival is presented by OKX and with the support of our partners: AT&T, Audible, Bulleit Frontier Whiskey, Canva, CHANEL, City National Bank, DIRECTV, Don Julio Tequila, Fiji Water, Indeed, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, NBC4 and Telemundo 47, NYC Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, National CineMedia, New York Magazine, Purina, Spring Studios New York, The Wall Street Journal, Variety, Vulture, and Whalar.

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## **2025 STORYTELLING SUMMIT**

### **THURSDAY, JUNE 5**

#### **Welcome to the Tribeca Storytelling Summit - 11am - 12pm**

Learn all about the new festival-within-the-Festival and how to best take advantage of it from Cara Cusumano, Tribeca Festival Director and SVP of Programming, and Zach Mandinach, Storytelling Summit Coordinator.

#### **Where Does My Story Fit? - 1pm - 2pm**

When stories can be seen (and heard) every which way, from big screens to small screens, from live theater to audio drama, how do you decide which will best serve your project? Hear from those who make work in a variety of formats and consistently break boundaries with their projects.

**Featuring:**

Leslye Headland - writer (*Bachelorette*); co-creator (*Russian Doll*); playwright (*Cult of Love*)  
Michèle Stephenson - director (*Going to Mars: the Nikki Giovanni Project*; "Black Girls Play")

**Luminaries: Nia DaCosta** - 3pm - 4pm

Since premiering *Little Woods* at Tribeca in 2018, Nia DaCosta has carved a unique path. After her take on *Candyman* and her entry to the MCU, there's the upcoming *Hedda*, based on the classic Ibsen play, and *28 Years Later: The Bone Temple*. Level-ing up like that can be a wild ride. Hear from DaCosta on how she navigates it all.

**Featuring:**

Nia DaCosta - director (*Little Woods*; *Candyman*; *The Marvels*; *Hedda*, *28 Years Later: The Bone Temple*)

**What Are You Selling?** - 5pm - 6pm

What does a sales agent do at Tribeca Festival? Top sales agents will be on hand to talk about what it is a sales agent does (or doesn't) do, the film(s) they're representing at the Festival, and how the filmmaker & sales agent relationship works.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 6**

**Luminaries: Julio Torres** - 11am - 12pm

In 2024, Julio Torres wrote, directed, starred in and produced *Problemista*, an A24 release, along with creating, writing, directing, starring and executive producing *Fantasma*, his latest show for HBO. How does he wear so many hats and stay creatively inspired? Hear from Julio himself on his prolific creativity.

**Featuring:**

Julio Torres - director (*Problemista*); creator (*Fantasma*; *Los Espookys*)

**30 Years of Killer Films: A Conversation with Christine Vachon** - 1pm - 2pm

How do you stay true to your creative mission amidst an ever-evolving film and media landscape? Christine Vachon has done just that with Killer Films, which she co-founded in 1995 and continues to be a standard-bearer for independent film, from the work of Todd Haynes to Celine Song.

**Featuring:**

Christine Vachon - Co-Founder, Killer Films; producer (*Past Lives*)

**Distribution Case Study: *The Long, Long Night*** - 3pm - 4pm

In 2023, Barret O'Brien and Mark Duplass brought *The Long, Long Night* to Tribeca as a World Premiere. Now, this project—an independent series—is making its way into the world thanks to a plan as creative as the project itself. Hear from the team behind its release and the lessons they're learning.

**Featuring:**

Emily Best - Founder and CEO, Seed & Spark  
Christie Marchese - Founder and CEO, Kinema

**Distributors Ask Me (Almost) Anything** - 5pm - 6pm

Each year, distributors descend upon Tribeca in search of acquisitions titles at the Festival. In this candid conversation, top buyers in the market will be on hand to detail what distributors are (or aren't) looking for, their perspectives on the market in 2025, and how they work at premiere festivals.

**Featuring:**

Marielle Membreño - Director, Acquisitions; Searchlight Pictures

Joe Toto - VP, Production & Acquisitions; Focus Features

**Storytelling Summit Daily Wrap-Up** - 6pm - 7pm

Join us for music and networking with your fellow Summit attendees to debrief on the day's programming and plan the night ahead!

**SATURDAY, JUNE 7**

**Luminaries: Steve Buscemi & Wren Arthur** - 11am - 12pm

As collaborators through their Olive Productions, Steve Buscemi and Wren Arthur have done a bit of everything. They've made short-form web-series, collaborated with Arcade Fire, and made feature films, including *The Listener*, the 2022 Tribeca Festival Official Selection that Buscemi directed. What's their secret, and what makes a good collaborator?

**Featuring:**

Wren Arthur - producer ("Park Bench with Steve Buscemi"; *The Listener*)

Steve Buscemi - actor (*Reservoir Dogs*; "Boardwalk Empire"); director/producer (*The Listener*)

**Short Successes: Tribeca Shorts at the Academy Awards** - 1pm - 2pm

Tribeca Festival is proud to be an Oscars-qualifying festival, allowing for Tribeca-selected short films to be considered for the Academy Awards. Hear from Tribeca alumni whose shorts were nominated and, in some cases, won an Oscar. What impact did being in the awards race have on their work since?

**Featuring:**

Sophia Nahli Allison - director ("A Love Song for Latasha")

Marshall Curry - director ("The Neighbors' Window")

Carol Dysinger - director ("Learning to Skateboard in a War Zone (If You're a Girl)")

Sami Khan - director ("St. Louis Superman")

**Luminaries: Jane Rosenthal** - 3pm - 4pm

Being a Co-Founder of Tribeca Festival and CEO Tribeca Enterprises, Jane Rosenthal has a storied career of championing bold, groundbreaking work. With a resume that includes producing Hollywood hits and award-winning features and series, what is Jane's perspective on the changing landscape for creatives and storytellers? What does the future of storytelling look like?

**Featuring:**

Jane Rosenthal - Co-Founder of Tribeca Festival; CEO, Tribeca Enterprises

**Your Team: Agents & Managers** - 5pm - 6pm

How do you build out your team of representatives? What are they looking for when they meet with a potential client? What's the difference between an agent and a manager? Listen to talent reps & managers at the Festival for some clarity and motivation on finding your team.

**Storytelling Summit Daily Wrap-Up - 6pm - 7pm**

Join us for music and networking with your fellow Summit attendees to debrief on the day's programming and plan the night ahead!

**SUNDAY, JUNE 8**

**Luminaries: David Leitch & Kelly McCormick - 11am - 12pm**

David Leitch and Kelly McCormick have continually provided necessary jolts to action movies with their work at 87North. In anticipation of their highly anticipated upcoming sequel, *Nobody 2*, David and Kelly will talk through their creative philosophy, supporting new voices in the genre, and their collaborative process.

**Featuring:**

David Leitch - director (*The Fall Guy*); producer (*Nobody 2*)

Kelly McCormick - producer (*The Fall Guy*; *Nobody 2*)

**Tribeca '25 Case Study: *Rosemead* - 1pm - 2pm**

Led by an exceptional Lucy Liu, *Rosemead* is a powerful debut feature premiering in our US Narrative Competition. Hear from director Eric Lin with actors Lucy Liu and Lawrence Shou on their approach to authentic representation in cinematic storytelling and their journey of making, and premiering, *Rosemead*.

**Featuring:**

Eric Lin - director (*Rosemead*)

Lucy Liu - actor, producer (*Rosemead*)

Lawrence Shou - actor (*Rosemead*)

**Speed Sessions: Ethical AI Storytelling - 3pm - 4pm**

How compatible is AI with creative storytelling? In this unique session, hear from four creatives who will detail, in lightning round conversations, what their experience is with AI and how artists should (or shouldn't) be taking advantage of revolutionary technology.

**Featuring:**

Ellie Foubi - director (*Our Father, the Devil*)

Kris Lefcoe - director ("Booked a Room")

Gary Hustwit - director (*Eno*)

Bryn Mooser - producer (*Ascension*); Founder and CEO, Astoria Film Co. and XTR

**Another Direction: Alternative Distribution - 5pm - 6pm**

It doesn't have to be one size fits all when it comes to distribution. In this conversation, hear from those who help projects reach audiences in a variety of ways: creative theatrical releases, direct-to-consumer methods, alternative streaming services. There's more than one way to reach your audience.

**Storytelling Summit Daily Wrap-Up - 6pm - 7pm**

Join us for music and networking with your fellow Summit attendees to debrief on the day's programming and plan the night ahead!

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11**

**Luminaries: Geeta Gandbhir - 11am - 12pm**

Geeta Gandbhir has established herself as a unique documentarian whose work spans TV series, short films, and feature films. This year, she's being deservedly celebrated as her latest film, *The Perfect Neighbor*, premieres and is released by Netflix. Hear from Geeta, a Tribeca alumnus, about her creative inspirations and evolutions.

**Featuring:**

Geeta Gandbhir - director (*The Perfect Neighbor*)

**Sweat & Equity: Indie Financing & Producing - 1pm - 2pm**

What makes a good pairing when it comes to a producer and financier? In any film, the relationship between a financier and producer can make, or break, the project. In this session, hear from those who've produced, who've financed, and some who've done both.

**Featuring:**

Brad Becker-Parton - producer, Seaview Productions

Jessamine Burgum - Founder & CEO, Pinky Promise

Kara Durrett - President and Head of Film, Pinky Promise

**Introducing the Ethics Resource Library - 3pm - 4pm**

Filmmakers encounter ethical dilemmas on every project, yet there's no one-stop-shop to seek guidance: until now. The Documentary Producers Alliance is proud to introduce this necessary, free, industry-shifting resource. Hear from Tribeca '25 filmmakers on how they addressed dilemmas in their work in this frank, judgement free dialogue. **Co-Hosted with The Documentary Producers Alliance.**

**Short Form Work, Long Term Support - 5pm - 6pm**

Amidst the oceans of short-form content in front of us, it can be overwhelming to think about how your work can stand out. Thanks to these distinguished panelists, artists can find in-depth creative and strategic support to help make and release short work that connects with audiences.

**Featuring:**

Arno Mokros - Co-Founder & Co-Director, Untitled Filmmaker Org (UFO)

**Storytelling Summit Daily Wrap-Up - 6pm - 7pm**

Join us for music and networking with your fellow Summit attendees to debrief on the day's programming and plan the night ahead!

**THURSDAY, JUNE 12**

**The State of Indie Documentaries – 1pm - 2pm**

In this session, documentary filmmakers and executives will discuss their thoughts on the challenges faced by nonfiction storytellers today. How has documentary evolved, how can documentaries affect change, and where do documentaries go from here? Hear from select filmmakers with docs premiering at Tribeca 2025 alongside industry veterans in nonfiction.

**Co-Hosted with American Documentary (AmDoc)**

**Featuring:**

Cecilia Aldarondo - director (*Dear Ms. A Revolution in Print*)  
Erika Dilday - Executive Director, American Documentary  
Jon-Sesrie Goff - filmmaker; Program Officer, Ford Foundation  
Jess Kwan - SVP, Concordia Fellowship  
Keri Putnam - producer and former Sundance Institute CEO  
Angela Lynn Tucker - director (*The Inquisitor*)

**Generous Support: Doc Funders - 5pm - 6pm**

Documentary funders are helping bring critical and cinematic nonfiction works into the world. But what are these funders looking for? How are documentary funders responding to the times we're living and how does the way in which they support projects, and artists, continue to evolve?

**Storytelling Summit Daily Wrap-Up - 6pm - 7pm**

Join us for music and networking with your fellow Summit attendees to debrief on the day's programming and plan the night ahead!

**FRIDAY, JUNE 13**

**Boundless Storytelling: Up Next for New Media - 11am - 12pm**

The mediums available to today's storytellers provide a spectrum of possibilities. Film, Literature, Podcast, Games, and more. What does it mean to leverage the choices offered in one versus another? Hear from those leading the charge on multipronged medium execution in efforts to deliver culturally impactful stories.

**Featuring:**

Rashad Relic - Co-Founder and Chief Creative Officer, Brass Lion Entertainment  
Bryna Dabby Smith - Co-Founder and CEO, Brass Lion Entertainment

**New Frontier Unlocked: Games Adaptations with Story Kitchen - 1pm - 2pm**

Games adaptations have always come and gone, but lately the ways acclaimed game experiences have come to life has left many wondering what's next. The team from Story Kitchen (*Sonic the Hedgehog*) and our friends from BAFTA will discuss bringing stories to life for both new audiences and devoted fans. **Co-Hosted by BAFTA.**

**Taking Your Project to Markets and Labs - 5pm - 6pm**

To get the momentum rolling for your work, some say you have to take part in support programs. But, they can be hard to differentiate and incredibly selective. Get an inside look from key artist

supporters on how their programs support artists as they navigate creative and strategic challenges.

**Storytelling Summit Daily Wrap-Up - 6pm - 7pm**

Join us for music and networking with your fellow Summit attendees to debrief on the day's programming and plan the night ahead!

**SATURDAY, JUNE 14**

**Location, Location, Location: Producing in NYC - 1pm - 2pm**

New York City-set films have long been a favorite at Tribeca Festival, but how do you really make work in the five boroughs? Producers behind *The Scout*, a 2025 Tribeca Festival Official Selection, and last year's *A Different Man* will be on hand to talk about making movies in NYC.

**Featuring:**

Paula González-Nasser - writer, director, producer (*The Scout*)

Gabriel Mayers - producer (*A Different Man*)

**Luminaries: Jeremy O. Harris - 3pm - 4pm**

Since bursting onto the scene with *Slave Play*, Jeremy O. Harris has done a bit of everything. He's acted in hits and indies, produced acclaimed work on the stage, and directed an award-winning documentary that premiered at Tribeca last year. So, how does he do it all? And what's next?

**Featuring:**

Jeremy O. Harris - playwright (*Slave Play*); actor ("Emily in Paris"); director (*Slave Play. Not A Movie. A Play.*)

**Premieres: a Festival Conversation - 5pm - 6pm**

At Tribeca, we know full well the transformative impact a festival screening can have on your work and career. In this session, hear from festival programmers from around the world on their curatorial approach, how they work with filmmakers, and the evolving role festivals play for filmmakers in this moment.

**Storytelling Summit Daily Wrap-Up - 6pm - 7pm**

Join us for music and networking with your fellow Summit attendees to debrief on the day's programming and plan the night ahead!

**SUNDAY, JUNE 15**

**Distribution Case Study: *The Graduates* 11am - 12pm**

In this distribution-focused deep dive, hear from Pinky Promise, the company behind Hannah Peterson's debut feature, *The Graduates*, and the distribution team that has helped the film

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reach audiences after its premiere at Tribeca in 2023. Curious about distribution? This group will tell you: it takes a village.

**Featuring:**

Caryn Coleman - Founder, The Future of Film is Female

Sarah Mather - Production Executive, Pinky Promise

Madeleine Schumacher - Director of Distribution, Giant Pictures

**Parting Words - 5pm - 6pm**

Hear from industry insiders and artists on what they're excited about when it comes to the future of creativity. We'll wrap out the inaugural Storytelling Summit on a note of inspiration and motivation to keep the fires burning.

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