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## **Native Filmmakers Erin Lau and Shaandiin Tome Workshop Short Films at Sundance Institute Lab this Month in Santa Fe, NM**

### **Institute Supports Indigenous Filmmakers Through 19 Years of Native Labs**

**Los Angeles, CA** — Two emerging Native storytellers, **Erin Lau** (Native Hawaiian) and **Shaandiin Tome** (Diné) will participate in the **2017 Sundance Institute Native Filmmakers Lab**, continuing the Institute's year-round work in the discovery and development of artists from diverse backgrounds.

The Lab takes place May 14-19 in Santa Fe, NM. During the Lab, Fellows work with a cast, crew, and supervising producer to shoot workshop versions of scenes from their short films under the expert creative mentorship of Program alumni and other established industry professionals and Program staff. The Lab encourages Fellows to hone their storytelling and technical skills in a hands-on and supportive environment. After the Lab they will receive targeted support from supervising producers, grants to fund the production of their short films and will attend the annual Native Forum at the January 2018 Sundance Film Festival for ongoing support on their projects.

**N. Bird Runningwater** (Cheyenne/Mescalero Apache), director of the Institute's Native American and Indigenous Program, said, "We welcome Erin and Shaandiin to the Sundance Institute family and look forward to watching them create and collaborate with the advisors in this unique space. Supporting Native and Indigenous storytellers is crucial to the Institute's mission and has helped launch the careers of some of the most innovative Native storytellers working today."

Three generations of Native artists have been supported since the founding of the Institute, with the goal of identifying and further uplifting Indigenous voices of the fourth generation within film and culture. The Native Program has built and sustained a unique support cycle for Indigenous artists through grants, labs, mentorships, fellowships, the platform of Sundance Film Festival, and screenings in Native communities to inspire new generations of storytellers. The Institute has established a rich legacy of commitment to Native filmmaking, supporting more than 300 Native and Indigenous filmmakers over the years, including Taika Waititi (Te Whānau-ā-Apanui), Chris Eyre (Cheyenne/Arapaho), Sterlin Harjo (Seminole/Muskogee), Billy Luther (Diné/Hopi/Laguna Pueblo), Andrew Okpeaha MacLean (Iñupiaq), Aurora Guerrero (Xicana), Sydney Freeland (Diné), Blake Pickens (Chickasaw), Ciara Lacy (Kanakanaka Maoli), Razelle Benally (Oglala Lakota/Dine) and Lyle Mitchell Corbine Jr. (Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe).

The filmmakers serving as Creative Advisors for this year's Native Lab include: Andrew Ahn (*Spa Night*), Bernardo Britto (*Yearbook*), Sydney Freeland (Diné) (*Drunktown's Finest*, *Deidra & Laney Rob a Train*) and Blackhorse Lowe (Diné) (*Shimasani*; *5th World*; *Chasing the Light*).

### **Artists and projects selected for the 2017 Native Filmmakers Lab:**

***The Moon and the Night***  
**Erin Lau** (Native Hawaiian)



Set in rural Hawai'i, a teen is forced to confront her ex-convict father after he enters her beloved pet in a dogfight.



Native Hawaiian Filmmaker Erin Lau received her bachelor's degree in film production from the Academy for Creative Media at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UH) in 2014. During her time there, she wrote and directed several shorts, including *Little Girl's War Cry*. The script, which focused on domestic violence against women and children, was selected out of a 1,000+ submissions by the Film Raro Competition to be one of six fully funded and produced films in the Cook Islands. Once completed, the film went on to win the 2013 Eurocinema Student Film Award and has screened around the world including festivals located in New Zealand, France, Guam, Fiji and Canada. Erin also crafted a short documentary titled, *Ka Pua* (The Flower), which focused on the life of her great grandmother who, until her death at the age of 94, cared for her mentally handicapped granddaughter. She is currently pursuing her MFA in Film Directing at Chapman University's Dodge College of the Arts and will graduate in Spring of 2018.

***Mud (Hast'ishnii)***  
**Shandiin Tome** (Diné)

On the last day of her life, a woman struggles to accept the extent to which her life has been affected by addiction.



Shandiin Tome graduated cum laude from the University of New Mexico with a BFA in Film and Digital Media Production. She is an alumna of the 2016 Sundance Full Circle Fellowship. As an aspiring new filmmaker, her experience ranges working in small roles to key positions in major motion pictures, documentaries and independent films. In the past year, Tome resided in Los Angeles, working on several productions and learning more about independent film by interning with Sundance Institute. She currently lives in Albuquerque, aiming to bring resonating imagery in convergence with story while illustrating her perspective as a Diné woman. Tome is this year's Sundance Institute | Native Arts and Cultures Foundation Fellow.

The Sundance Institute Native American and Indigenous Program is supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Surdna Foundation, Time Warner Foundation, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation, SAGindie, Comcast-NBCUniversal, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the Embassy of Australia, Indigenous Media Initiatives, The White Feather Foundation, Fenton Bailey and Billy Luther, and Pacific Islanders in Communications.

**Sundance Institute**

Founded in 1981 by Robert Redford, Sundance Institute is a nonprofit organization that provides and preserves the space for artists in film, theatre, and new media to create and thrive. The Institute's signature Labs, granting, and mentorship programs, dedicated to developing new work, take place throughout the year in the U.S. and internationally. The Sundance Film Festival and other public programs connect audiences to artists in igniting new ideas, discovering original voices, and building a community dedicated to independent storytelling. Sundance Institute has supported such projects as *Boyhood*, *Swiss Army Man*, *Manchester By the Sea*, *Brooklyn*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *Life, Animated*, *Sonita*, *20 Feet From Stardom*, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Fruitvale Station*, *Sin Nombre*, *Spring Awakening*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* and *Fun Home*. Join [Sundance Institute](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

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