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THE TRIBECA FESTIVAL™ BECOMES THE FIRST MAJOR FESTIVAL TO INCLUDE OFFICIAL PODCAST SELECTIONS

The Inaugural Tribeca Podcast Program to Include World Premieres and Discussions with Influential Voices and Creators

Tribeca Podcast Advisory Board Members Include: Jad Abumrad, Alex Blumberg, Conal Byrne, Nikole Hannah-Jones, Sarah Koenig, Tanya Somanader, and Connie Walker

NEW YORK, NY – May 4, 2021 – The 2021 Tribeca Festival, presented by AT&T, announced today that it will welcome podcasts for the first time in the Festival’s history. As the first major festival to premiere Official Selection podcasts, Tribeca has once again demonstrated why it is at the forefront of championing all forms of storytelling. The 20th anniversary celebration will take place city-wide June 9-20 and will be the first major film festival to host in person events.

The first-ever Tribeca Podcasts lineup will feature world premieres of fiction and nonfiction stories from some of today’s most exciting emerging creators, as well as special events that include live recordings, discussions and more with the most influential names in audio including: **Jad Abumard** discusses his work on *Radiolab*, *More Perfect*, *Dolly Parton’s America* and more with Academy Award-nominated filmmaker, **Jason Reitman**; *Ear Hustle*, co-founded by bay area artist, **Nigel Poor** alongside **Earlone Woods** and **Antwan Williams**, is the first podcast created and produced in prison and features stories of the daily realities of life inside California’s San Quentin State Prison; and the new Apple TV+ podcast about Siegfried & Roy, produced by **Will Manalti** and **Steven Leckart**.

“The past few years have seen an explosion in the popularity of podcasts, making this the perfect time to introduce our inaugural Tribeca Podcast Program,” said Jane Rosenthal, Co-Founder and CEO of Tribeca Enterprises and the Tribeca Festival. “We look forward to welcoming the creative forces behind this year’s most anticipated new programs.”

“2020 saw so many people seek new forms of entertainment as theaters, sports arenas, and museums had to temporarily close their doors. For so many podcasts became not only a source of entertainment,

but also a source of comfort,” said Paula Weinstein, Chief Content Officer of Tribeca Enterprises. “We’re thrilled to launch Tribeca Podcasts at this year’s Festival.”

“From Immersive in 2013, to TV in 2016, Tribeca has always been at the forefront of embracing new modes of cinematic storytelling,” said Cara Cusumano, Festival Director and Vice President of Programming for the Tribeca Festival. “Now with Tribeca Podcasts, we are once again expanding the scope of our programming to spotlight the innovative creators and stories happening in the audio form.”

Tribeca welcomes Audible, Inc. as the first-ever Exclusive Audio Entertainment sponsor of the Tribeca Festival. Audible, Inc. will celebrate the Tribeca creative community and showcase bold creators who are developing innovative, cinematic audio entertainment through Juneteenth programming and the premiere of queer action comedy Audible Original *Hot White Heist*, produced by Broadway Video and Club Cumming Productions, written, created, and produced by Adam Goldman, directed and produced by Alan Cumming, and starring an ensemble of queer performers including Bowen Yang, Cynthia Nixon, Jane Lynch, and Bianca del Rio.

The Tribeca Podcasts program is curated by Leah Sarbib, Manager, Audio Storytelling, along with the counsel of an advisory board whose members have greatly contributed to and influenced the podcast industry. They include:

- **Sarah Koenig:** Host and co-creator of the groundbreaking *Serial* podcast, and Executive Producer of Serial Productions.
- **Jad Abumrad:** Host and creator of *Radiolab*, *More Perfect*, and *Dolly Parton’s America* (a collaboration with OSM Audio’s Shima Oliaee). He’s been called “master of the radio craft” for his unique ability to combine cutting edge sound-design, cinematic storytelling, and a personal approach to explaining complex topics—from the stochasticity of tumor cells to the legal underpinnings of the war on terror. He composes much of the music for *Radiolab*, and has composed music for film, theater and dance. He’s received three Peabody Awards, and the prestigious MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship.
- **Nikole Hannah-Jones:** Pulitzer Prize-winning creator of *The 1619 Project* and a staff writer at The New York Times Magazine. She has spent her career investigating racial inequality and injustice, and her reporting has earned her the MacArthur Fellowship, known as the Genius grant, a Peabody Award, two George Polk Awards and the National Magazine Award three times. Hannah-Jones also earned the John Chancellor Award for Distinguished Journalism and was named Journalist of the Year by the National Association of Black Journalists and the Newswomen’s Club of New York. In 2020 she was inducted into the Society of American Historians and in 2021, into the North Carolina Media Hall of Fame. She also serves as the Knight Chair of Race and Investigative Reporting at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- **Alex Blumberg:** Co-host of the Spotify podcast *How to Save a Planet* produced by Gimlet Media, the company behind hit podcasts like *The Journal*, *Homecoming*, *Stolen: The Search for Jermain* and more. Prior to founding Gimlet, Blumberg worked for years in public radio. He is an award-winning radio journalist known for his work as a producer on the wildly popular podcasts *This*

American Life and *Planet Money*, which he co-founded at NPR. In 2014, he hosted the first season of the Gimlet podcast *StartUp*, which was about the founding of the company. Blumberg's work has won every major award in broadcast journalism, including the Polk, the duPont-Columbia, and the Peabody. His award-winning documentary on the housing crisis, *The Giant Pool of Money*, was named one of the last decade's top ten works of journalism by the Arthur L. Carter School of Journalism and New York University. It's also the first podcast ever put in the Smithsonian. Alex holds a BA in Political Science and Government from Oberlin College.

- **Connie Walker:** Started her career at CBC in Canada, where she was an award-winning investigative reporter. In 2016, Walker created *Missing & Murdered*, a CBC podcast that captivated listeners around the world and was downloaded more than 30 million times. *Missing & Murdered: Finding Cleo* was featured in *The New York Times*, *The Rolling Stone*, *The Columbia Journalism Review* and won the inaugural Best Serialized Story award at the Third Coast International Audio Festival in 2018. Walker is Cree from Okanese First Nation in Canada.
- **Conal Byrne:** Chief Executive Officer of the iHeartMedia Digital Audio Group, which includes the company's fast-growing and high-profile podcasting business and #1 podcast publisher globally according to Podtrac, as well as the industry-leading iHeartRadio digital service; the company's digital sites, services, newsletters and programs; and its digital advertising technology companies, including Jelli, RadioJar, Unified, Voxnest and the recently-announced Triton Digital acquisition, upon its completion.
- **Tanya Somanader:** Chief Content Officer of Crooked Media, Tanya oversees political and content strategy for the progressive media company. In the last 4 years, she has led Crooked's transformation from a niche political podcast company with a few flagship shows into a robust player with 15 podcasts and counting, digital initiatives like Vote Save America, as well as television and film projects.
- **Shereen Marisol Meraji:** Reporter focusing on race for the NPR Code Switch team. Her stories center on the real people affected by the issues, not just experts and academics studying them. Those stories include a look at why a historically black college in West Virginia is 90 percent white, to a profile of the most powerful and most difficult-to-target consumer group in America: Latinas. Prior to her time with Code Switch, Meraji worked for the national business and economics radio program *Marketplace*, from American Public Media.

The 2021 Tribeca Podcast Program:

Special Events:

Ear Hustle: Launched in 2017 from Radiotopia and PRX, this is the first podcast created and produced in prison. The show features stories of the daily realities of life inside California's San Quentin State Prison, shared by those living it, as well as stories from the outside, post-incarceration. *Ear Hustle* was co-founded by Bay Area artist Nigel Poor alongside Earlonne Woods and Antwan Williams, who were incarcerated at the time. Rahsaan "New York" Thomas joined the team as a co-host inside San Quentin in 2019. Heard by listeners more than 50 million times across the globe, in 2020, *Ear Hustle* was named

a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize in audio reporting, the first time the category was recognized, for bringing audiences “a consistently surprising and beautifully crafted series on life behind bars.” *Ear Hustle* has also received recognition from the Peabody Awards, the duPont-Columbia awards, the Third Coast International Audio Festival, and more. Hosts Earlonne Woods and Nigel Poor will sit down together to discuss their years of collaboration, share behind-the-scenes stories from their show, and speak about what’s next.

Preview: *Hot White Heist*: In this new scripted podcast from Audible a group of LGBTQIA+ contemporaries attempts to steal the U.S. government’s sperm-bank deposits from some of history’s most brilliant minds — in the hopes of selling the genetic material on the black market to buy an island for a new queer paradise. Tribeca's premiere event will include an exclusive preview and a live performance.

Juneteenth Celebration: A special celebration featuring influential Black voices in audio entertainment. Programming will be announced next week.

Jad Abumrad with Jason Reitman: Since his early days composing film scores, award winning audio producer Jad Abumrad has always had an exceptional ear. He has been called “master of the radio craft” for his unique ability to combine cutting edge sound-design, cinematic storytelling, and a personal approach to explaining complex topics. He’ll discuss his work on *Radiolab*, *More Perfect*, *Dolly Parton’s America* and more with Academy Award nominated filmmaker, Jason Reitman. Reitman’s films include *Tully*, *Juno*, *Up in the Air*, *Thank You for Smoking*, and the highly anticipated upcoming *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* slated to release November 2021.

Preview: *Red Frontier*: In *Red Frontier*, a forthcoming Spotify Original fiction podcast from Gimlet, Commander Taylor Fullerton is haunted by the mysterious tragedy that killed her crew as she alone endures their one-way mission to colonize Mars against all odds. Tribeca will present an exclusive preview of this highly anticipated fiction podcast from Spotify and Gimlet Media, followed by a conversation with the cast and creators.

Live Recording: *Resistance*: *Resistance* is a widely acclaimed narrative nonfiction podcast from Gimlet Media and Spotify. It was released last fall by a homegrown team inspired by the extraordinary movements for Black lives sweeping the country. *Resistance* takes listeners to the frontlines to hear stories from the generation fighting for change. Host Saidu Tejan-Thomas Jr. and guests are coming to Tribeca to do a special live recording of a Fuck Your Water Fountain Episode, a segment on the podcast that celebrates little known stories of historical resistance.

Preview: Apple TV+ *Siegfried & Roy* original podcast: The Siegfried & Roy original podcast from Apple TV+ presents the first, compelling in-depth podcast series about Siegfried & Roy, the most famous, controversial magicians in history, who were widely misunderstood, frequently satirized and feverishly criticized, hosted by veteran investigative journalist and Emmy-winning filmmaker Steven Leckart. The podcast goes behind the velvet curtain to examine the pop culture icons, lionized by a global fan base

for more than 40 years, to deconstruct the illusions they created, the empire they constructed, and the story behind what really happened on the night that a tiger attack ended their reign. The podcast is executive produced by Will Malnati of award-winning podcast production company AT WILL MEDIA, and Leckart. Tribeca will present an exclusive preview of the podcast, followed by a conversation with the creative team.

Official Selections:

The following will be eligible for the inaugural juried Fiction Podcast Award and Narrative Nonfiction Podcast Award.

Anomaly, created by Heather Taylor, Hillary Nussbaum (United States) – World Premiere, Fiction
After an earth-changing event causes civil war along the east coast, 17-year-old Kory Hernandez is sent to live with a host family in a small Illinois town battling the impact of climate change. Unsure of her place in this new world, she wonders: what, and who, can one trust in a world turned upside down?

Brooklyn Santa, created by Jordan Crafton (United States) – World Premiere, Fiction
Slide and his friends are risking it all for a Christmas miracle, as they look for "Black Santa" of the Brooklyn projects. Slide's love for sixteen-year-old Gianna has him and his friends willing to risk it all for a Christmas miracle. But first, they must receive a pardon from "Frosty the Snowman" to travel through "Jack Frost's" Projects. This Christmas tale is like none else. It's a holiday story with a modern twist.

Blind Guy Travels, created by Matthew Shifrin (United States) - World Premiere, Narrative Nonfiction
Blind Guy Travels invites you into life without sight. Join host Matthew Shifrin as he experiences a Marx Brothers comedy, crafts a TED Talk, and then a Hinge profile, collaborates with LEGO to develop instructions for blind builders, and prepares for college graduation. Blind Guy Travels is a production of Radiotopia from PRX.

Earth Eclipsed, created by Nicholas Prufer, AJ Churchill, Victor Lee (United States) – World Premiere, Fiction
A neuroscientist on the brink of a galaxy-changing discovery that will save millions of lives has her work interrupted when she's kidnapped by a renegade miner. Set in the distant future, this immersive audio series explores what it means to live in a utopian society and the great lengths one must go to preserve humanity.

Guardians of the River, created by House of Pod and Wild Bird Trust (United States, Angola, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa) – World Premiere, Narrative Nonfiction
This is the story of the guardians of the Okavango water system, a network of rivers spanning three countries in Africa, and home to some of the most endangered animals on the planet. These guardians have a monumental task: trying to protect a remote, near pristine environment facing threats from all sides. This podcast follows what happens when worlds connect, and at times collide, with the common goal of protecting a place.

I'll Never Be Alone Anymore - The Story Of The Skala Eressos Lesbian Community, created by Cecile C. Simon, Anais Dupuis, Anais Carayon (France) – World Premiere, Narrative Nonfiction

The story of a lesbian community that is situated in a remote village in Lesbos, Greece. Created in the 70s, it welcomed thousands of women before declining in the 2000s. Nowadays, the community is formed by older lesbians. But they are not your typical 60 year old women. They party, they have sex and they speak their minds. What they say about themselves is a precious testimony of a vanishing community that once changed so many women's lives.

The Imperfection, created by Alex Kemp (United States) – World Premiere, Fiction

Charlie and Amber both suffer from a rare condition that causes them to wildly hallucinate. When their psychiatrist suddenly goes missing, they rally together with the doctor's other patients to search for him. Along the way, they encounter secret societies, half-human half-spider centaurs, and a hidden borough of New York under the East River. But how do you find the truth when you can't tell what's real?

Monster, created by Tommy Bertelsen (United States) – World Premiere, Narrative Nonfiction

A sonic memoir about confronting a real demon while making a horror movie in Latvia.

Mother of Maricopa, created by Leah Henoach, Katie Henoach, Sydney Fleischmann (United States) – World Premiere, Narrative Nonfiction

In 2011, police raided a Tantric temple in Phoenix, Arizona and arrested its founder, Tracy Elise, on 100 counts related to prostitution, money laundering, and more. What the state saw as a brothel, Elise saw as a house of worship. In *Mother of Maricopa*, sisters Leah and Katie Henoach explore the story of the Phoenix Goddess Temple and the compelling questions that lie beyond Elise's guilt or innocence.

Something Strange Is Happening, created by Tessa Bartholomew, Christina Kingsleigh Licud (United States) – World Premiere, Fiction

This scripted horror anthology podcast is built around one terrifying premise: When immigrants came to America, we brought our languages and cultures, but there's one thing we miscalculated: we brought our monsters, too. Set in LA's Historic Filipino Town, Season One features monsters and evil spirits of Filipino folklore, back for vengeance in modern times. Each season travels to a different immigrant town for an American horror story like you've never heard.

Un(re)solved, created by FRONTLINE PBS (United States) – World Premiere, Narrative Nonfiction

What prompted the FBI to reinvestigate over one hundred unsolved civil rights era murders? And what does justice look like for families whose loved ones were killed? Reporter James Edwards seeks answers to these questions, reflecting on his own family's experiences along the way.

Vermont Ave., created by James Kim, Brooke Iskra (United States) – World Premiere, Fiction

John walks down Vermont Ave. to clear his head before a big decision. This is an atmospheric and intimate portrait of a thirtysomething in LA during the end of 2020. The fiction piece highlights the things that are unsaid and how the silence between two people can be louder than words. Captured in

one long take using 3D sound from Sennheiser Ambeo binaural in-ear microphones, it places the listener directly in the main character's shoes.

Passes and Tickets for the 2021 Tribeca Festival

Festival passes are on sale now. Tribeca at Home tickets go on sale Monday, May 3 @ 11:00am EST. Tickets to attend the outdoor in-person screenings / events are available starting Monday, May 10 @11:00am EST. Visit: <https://www.tribecafilm.com/festival/tickets>

Press Credentials

Credentialing for the 20th Festival is now open through May 12, 2021.
<https://www.tribecafilm.com/press-center/festival>

About the Tribeca Festival

The Tribeca Festival, presented by AT&T, brings artists and diverse audiences together to celebrate storytelling in all its forms, including film, TV, VR, gaming, music, and online work. With strong roots in independent film, Tribeca is a platform for creative expression and immersive entertainment. Tribeca champions emerging and established voices; discovers award-winning filmmakers and creators; curates innovative experiences; and introduces new technology and ideas through premieres, exhibitions, talks, 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. Tribeca will celebrate its 20th year June 9 – 20, 2021. www.tribecafilm.com/festival

In 2019, James Murdoch's Lupa Systems, a private investment company with locations in New York and Mumbai, bought a majority stake in Tribeca Enterprises, bringing together Rosenthal, De Niro, and Murdoch to grow the enterprise.

About the 2021 Tribeca Festival Partners

The 2021 Tribeca Festival is presented by AT&T and with the support of our corporate partners: Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Audible, Bloomberg Philanthropies, CHANEL, City National Bank, CNN Films, Diageo, DoorDash, FreshDirect, Hudson Yards, Indeed, Montefiore-Einstein, NYC Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, P&G, PwC, Roku, Spring Studios New York.

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