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**TRIBECA STUDIOS AND LILLY ANNOUNCE WINNERS OF INAUGURAL
VITAL STORIES FILMMAKER PROGRAM**

Jury members Yvette Nicole Brown, Amanda Farrand, Stacey Walker King, and Lina Polimeni select three short films for production and a world premiere at the 2026 Tribeca Festival



New York, NY, March xx, 2026 – Tribeca Studios today announced the three short films selected to be produced as part of the inaugural **Vital Stories filmmaker program**, an initiative with Eli Lilly and Company to empower emerging filmmakers to more accurately and authentically represent disease in content. *RUN IT BACK* (Abby Pierce, Tiny Cruz), *Do I Know You From Somewhere?* (Angela Wong Carbone, Alan Scott Neal), and *Reconstructing Charlie* (Lara Everly) were selected by an expert jury comprised of **Yvette Nicole Brown** (Actor, Writer, Producer), **Amanda Farrand** (Executive Vice President of Brands and Business Development at Imagine Entertainment), **Stacey Walker King** (Chief Brand Officer at MACRO), and **Lina Polimeni** (Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, Consumer at Eli Lilly and Company).

The selected winners were chosen following a Creative Summit hosted by Tribeca Studios in Fall 2025 in New York City, which convened 19 film teams for mentorship, workshops, and industry guidance from both the entertainment and medical fields. The three winning projects will receive end-to-end production support, including development funding, mentorship from Tribeca Studios and industry leaders, and a guaranteed world premiere at the 2026 Tribeca Festival. Following their premieres, the projects will be supported through advanced development as longer-form features and/or series.

“This dynamic work with Lilly has enabled us to move beyond conversation and into real creative action,” said **Bryce Norbitz, Vice President of Tribeca Studios & Artist**

Development. “The projects that emerged from this year’s program reaffirm what Vital Stories is all about — championing bold, nuanced, and genuinely entertaining work that reflects lived experiences too often missing from our screens.”

Vital Stories was launched in 2025 in response to a [study](#) sponsored by Lilly – in line with its ongoing commitment to the health and wellbeing of patient communities and individuals affected by disease, as well as efforts to challenge misperception around and underrepresentation of disease – in partnership with Dr. Stacy L. Smith and the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. The study revealed that while millions of Americans live with a health condition or disease, characters with five of the most prevalent conditions, including obesity, cancer, dementia, diabetes, and atopic dermatitis, rarely appear on screen in film and television. When they do, they are often reduced to stereotypes or one-dimensional roles.

The **Vital Stories** filmmaker program provides creative development and mentorship to a select group of emerging screenwriters and directors dedicated to authentic portrayals of disease. Program participants will also have access to a new content creation [toolkit](#) launched by Lilly and the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative in response to the study’s findings. Created with guidance from industry experts and patient advocacy organizations, the toolkit is intended to help storytellers craft more accurate, empathetic, and inclusive portrayals of real patient experiences.

“As a medicine company that puts health above all, Lilly is committed to engaging where culture shapes how people understand disease,” said **Lina Polimeni, Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, Consumer at Lilly**. “The Vital Stories filmmaker program with Tribeca Studios reflects our commitment to equipping storytellers with the research, tools and guidance needed to portray patient experiences with empathy and nuance. When storytelling captures the human realities of living with disease, it can reduce stigma and inspire earlier action – and the work we’ve seen reinforces the importance and impact of aligning creative expression with the patient perspective.”

Inaugural Vital Stories Filmmaker Program Winners:

***RUN IT BACK* – Co-written by Abby Pierce and Tiny Cruz, Directed by Abby Pierce, Produced by Hannah Welever**

Sweet Tea’s first day out after serving a five-year bid unravels fast: a wild welcome-home party, an awkward boyfriend, spiking blood sugar, and a parole officer who reminds her that her freedom is conditional.

***Do I Know You From Somewhere?* – Written by Angela Wong Carbone, Directed by Alan Scott Neal, Produced by Grace Merriman and Yoko Kohmoto**

Facing her mother’s Alzheimer’s diagnosis and the crushing cost of care, struggling actor Kimmy takes a clandestine, lucrative side gig impersonating strangers’ loved ones. As her mother’s symptoms and the dangers of her job escalate, Kimmy must decide who she’s willing to become to keep her mother safe.

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***Reconstructing Charlie* – Written and Directed by Lara Everly, produced by Claudia Chakmati**

Charlie's long-awaited "post-divorce glow-up" gets hijacked by a breast cancer diagnosis, leading her to move in with her picture-perfect sister for recovery. The two decide to have one wild "last night out for the boobs!", sending both their lives on a crash course in sisterhood, second chances and letting go.

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About Tribeca Enterprises:

Tribeca Enterprises is a multi-platform media and entertainment company that owns and operates the Tribeca Festival, content division Tribeca Studios, film distribution label Tribeca Films, and production company m s s n g p e c e s. With strong roots in independent film, Tribeca is synonymous with creative expression and entertainment. Founded in 2003 by Robert De Niro, Jane Rosenthal, and Craig Hatkoff, Tribeca Enterprises brings artists and audiences together to celebrate storytelling in all its forms, including film, TV, music, audio storytelling, games, and immersive. 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. 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.