



Williams Lake
FIRST NATION

For Immediate Release

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Williams Lake First Nation-Focused film *Sugarcane* to premiere at Sundance Film Festival.

The Williams Lake First Nation (WLFN) community of Sugarcane is the focus of a documentary that is set to premiere at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. *Sugarcane* will be available to watch online through the festival's website between January 25 and 28, 2024, and in-person at the Utah festival between January 18 and 28, 2024.

The film follows several members of Williams Lake First Nation and neighboring communities in the context of WLFN's investigation into the abuse and disappearance of children at the former St. Joseph's Mission Residential School. Among others, the film highlights the first-hand experiences of Charlene Belleau, Julian Brave NoiseCat, Ed Archie NoiseCat, WLFN Kukwpi7 Willie Sellars, Anna Gilbert, and the late Rick Gilbert.

Sugarcane was made by filmmakers Julian Brave NoiseCat and Emily Kassie. Since their introduction to Kukwpi7 Sellars in June of 2021, the two got to know the extended Sugarcane community very well, capturing over 1000 hours of footage.

Julian Brave NoiseCat is a member of the Canim Lake Band and descendant of the Lil'Wat Nation of Mount Currie. Emily Kassie is a Canadian filmmaker and investigative journalist who has produced work for The New York Times, PBS, and Netflix.

Speaking of the film, Kukwpi7 Sellars notes:

It's everything we could have hoped for. I believe that this documentary could be a very important tool for reconciliation in this country and beyond, and that it will have a healing impact for generations to come. We extend a heartfelt thank-you to the filmmakers Emily, Julian, and Chris (Lamarca, Director of Photography), and to the community members who worked with them to see this project through. It is because of the bravery of the survivors of St. Joseph's Mission who told their stories that this film will shed important light on the atrocities that took place in the Canadian residential school system. Just as importantly, this film will also showcase how vibrant our culture still is, and how strong, resilient, and committed to healing our people are. We hope that everyone will try to see the film.

There are plans for a red-carpet screening of the film at a later date in the Cariboo. The details of this screening have not yet been released; follow WLFN on Facebook to find out more.

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