



THE POINT



THE POINT



Log line

When a strong, but naïve, teenage pioneer and her family push into the west -
an unyielding Dakota Chief reaches his breaking point. Their violent clash
upends worlds.

SYNOPSIS

The story begins with two juxtaposed quotes over the rippling reflection of cottonwoods and deep green oaks in the water surrounding The Point. The first quote is a romantic but grounded Willa Cather quote about the responsibility of pioneers who love and understand the land, followed by a Sioux quote about the folly of any person laying claim to any land since it can't be owned. The quotes dissolve into the water as the image expands and shifts to reveal an elderly woman scanning the horizon. Her contemplative eyes dissolve to her twelve-year-old optimistic self traversing the new frontier with her family—a collision of people and time in this holy place.

Twelve-year-old Abbie Gardner is precocious, perceptive, and quick-witted, much to the chagrin of her mother, Frances, who is desperately trying to control her children while simultaneously calming her eldest daughter, Mary, and her husband, Harvey's nerves. They are lost and waiting for the return of their patriarch.

As Abbie and her family search to settle on their “Land of opportunity”, Inkpaduta and his family scan the land they have stewarded for generations. While at the same time, Henry Lott and his nefarious family are given title to land that the Dakota people had shared together with friendly farmer, Curtis Lamb.

The two stories play out simultaneously as Abbie's family settles nearby and Inkpaduta and his people continue to be abused and pushed further and further off their land; land that was protected by treaty with the US Government but strategically and illegally reclaimed in an attempt to push tribal peoples onto reservations.

As Abbie's family collides with the culture they don't understand, Inkpaduta is wrongly imprisoned while Henry Lott brutally kills Inkpaduta's brother's family. Seeing the mounted head of his brother nailed to the Webster County, Iowa's Attorney's office, Inkpaduta's mournful cry reverberates hundreds of miles into the air of the Lake Okoboji region of Spirit Lakes. Abbie, hearing the cry cannot see the story unfolding but will undoubtedly feel it soon enough.

ABIGAIL “ABBIE” GARDNER



Abigail “Abbie” Gardner (13 at the time up to the attack, then up to late '70s in subsequent episodes) A bright, headstrong but dutiful daughter to tee-totaling, idealistic, and poorly prepared pioneers. Abbie has a deep personal strength with the ability not only to adapt and change to survive her captivity but also to adapt and change her opinions once she is free to navigate a world that no longer knows what to do with her.

After the brutal killing of her family and fellow captives under Inkpaduta’s band, not to mention the horrific torture and violations she endured herself at the age of 13, Abbie returns to a world where those injuries marked her as much physically as they did socially (even if it wasn’t discussed among polite company). Abbie is forced into a marriage just a few months after being ransomed at the age of 14. Abbie later separates from the husband she tried to make her refuge and the children she will never be able to protect, to return to the place where her youth was stolen and her identity forever altered. In the process, she finds a renewed hope and faith to sustain her in the least likely place for renewal... the place where it all fell apart and came together again...THE POINT.

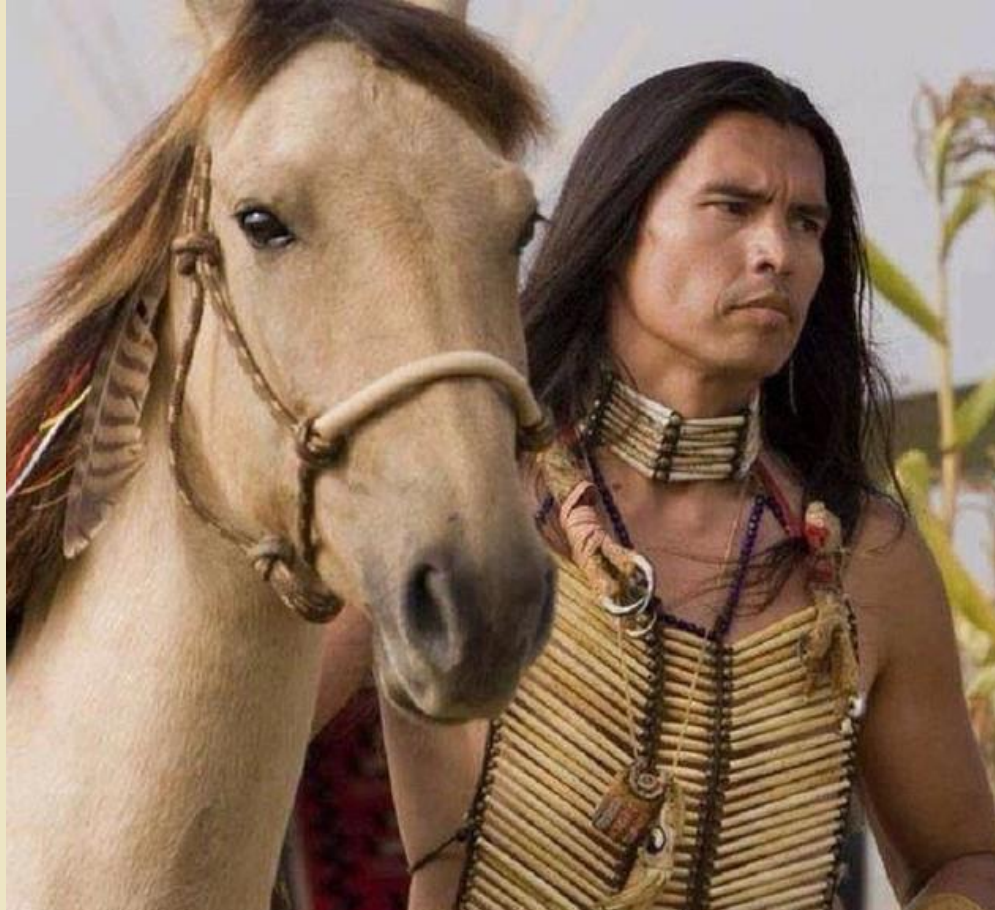
INKPADUTA



Inkpaduta is either the greatest monster who ever lived (according to those who failed to subdue him) or the last man standing in a war in which the victor has determined the telling of his history. He is a naturally intimidating figure with his smallpox-scarred face and tall stature, not to mention his finely tuned skills of destruction.

Despite the nihilistic reputation he receives from outsiders, Inkpaduta is well respected by his tribal community and the multiple cultures that comprise the Sioux nation, an uncommon thing among a sometimes-contentious tribal community. He is fiercely loyal, a devoted father, and a keen warrior. However, his facility with the instruments of death never sufficiently erases the pain of his memories. No matter who the author of his story is, there is no denying that Inkpaduta's desperation to restore his people and avenge the death of his family crosses a point he can never come back from. Through the course of the series, he makes the difficult choice to orient what is left of his life around the destruction of the White Man's world since there is no hope that the world he loves will ever return.

SOUNDS THE GROUND AS HE WALKS & WHITE EARTH



The eldest set of Inkpadata's twin sons. They follow in their father's footsteps and defy the advances and entitlements of the White settlers and the ever-advancing U.S. Government. They are equally dangerous on the battlefield despite their wildly disparate interests: White Earth was fond of making trades and foot-racing, while his brother was more interested in trinkets, red leggings, and jewelry.

Both children fervently protect their father and carry his precedents with them to their deaths on battlefields that were once only known to them as "home." Fierce in battle and even fiercer of spirit, their individual leadership as adults will continue their Father's mission to fight and sustain the Dakota people and their way of life.



HENRY LOTT



Henry Lott is not a nice man. He takes what he wants, whether it is his widowed wife's inheritance or the prime hunting grounds of the Dakota people who have been in this area for generations. There are no rules, decorum, or honor when it comes to obtaining his desires. He is brutal and ambitious to the core, and now he has been humiliated - an act his feeble ego cannot abide, and he will do whatever it takes to even the score in his favor—including feigning friendship to lure Sidominadota and his sons into a hunting excursion where they are the prey. He makes easy work of the Tribal Leader and his sons with shots to the back and an axe to make the point very clear. His crimes ignite the fire that will fuel Inkpaduta's rage across the Spirit Lakes region to rain terror on any settler bearing a similar countenance.

ADDITIONAL CHARACTERS



MRS. THATCHER



Sidominadota



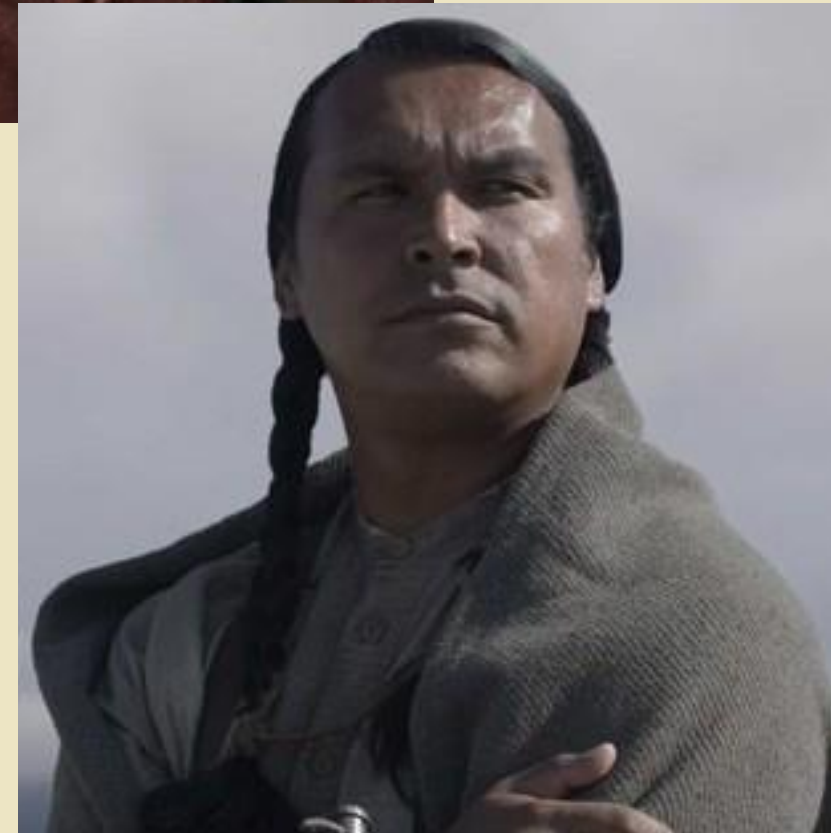
WAKAU
OYATE
(SPIRIT
WATER)



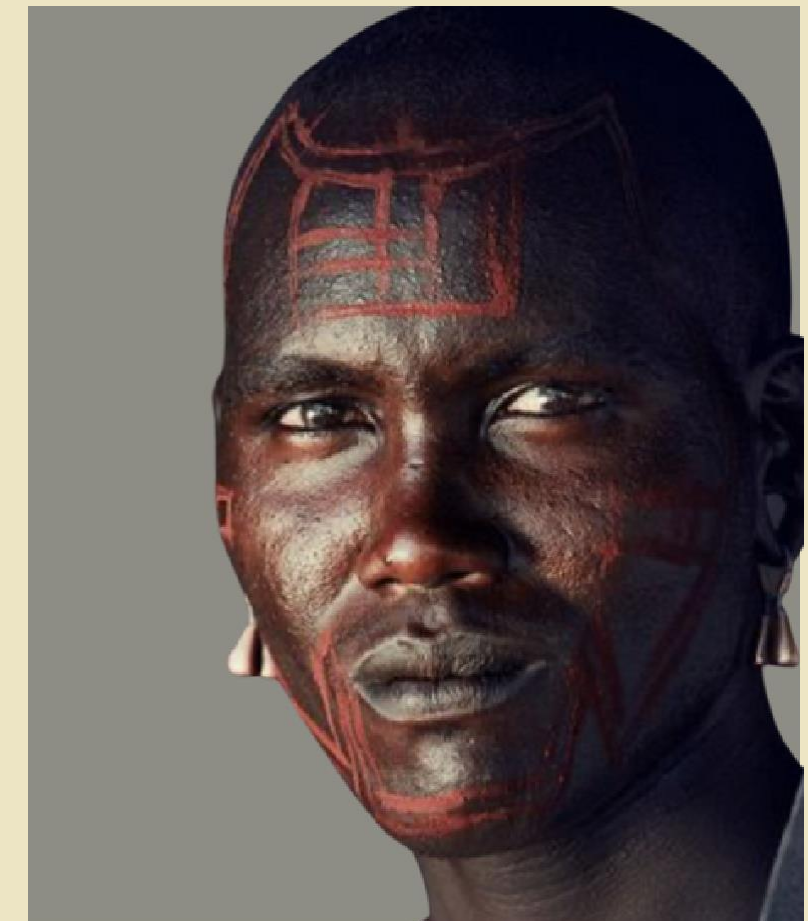
CHARLES FLANDRAU



LT. ARMISTEAD



ANPETUTOPEKA
"JOHN OTHER DAY"



CATE SICAPI

OVERVIEW

The story continues down the same converging track, like two freight trains headed straight for each other, as Inkpaduta gets pushed further and further to the breaking point. When Inkpaduta reports the crime to the authorities, they let Lott disappear unpunished, and the County seat of Webster County nails Sidominadota's head to a house. As a result, Inkpaduta becomes a reluctant Chief, still attempting to keep peace with the settlers when he can, but after a desolate and freezing winter, continued affronts against him and his people by the settlers, and the US Government's aggressive push to snap up tribal lands married with their stream of broken promises and refusal of rations to Inkpaduta's band, Inkpaduta resolves to enact his own revenge with the tools of feigned kindness that lured his brother to his untimely death.

Inkpaduta and Abbie converge in what was called The Spirit Lake Massacre and Abbie's captivity. These multi-viewpoints allow us to explore the brutality and resilience as they play out in each of their perspectives. We see Inkpaduta struggling through trauma and rage to lead his people down a revenge path they can't come back from. Later, Abbie is rescued with the help of tribal members from other bands and a military unit that will use this event to justify their ends and continued push to relieve the Sioux of their lands and resources. Abbie does return home to a community of people who laud her survival but don't know what to do with her. They marry her off a few months later, just after her fourteenth birthday. Abbie is trapped in a world where she is celebrated and alienated, while Inkpaduta is now billed as the monster behind every settler attack, both real and imagined. He is isolated and demonized by his own people as much as the settlers, a poster for the wrong kind of Indian; even if in private, his community still regards him as a hero. He continues to wage war on the settlers who have tricked and stolen from his people, whether that is advocating for or joining in rebellions and uprisings.

Ultimately, the world we see looks very different than the one we started with. Rather than a revisionist version of the history that built such tragedies, we find the truth that unifies us beyond it. Abbie's strength becomes more resilient and Inkpaduta's defiance worth honoring without ignoring the lives lost in their wake. But perhaps now we will see these stories as Abbie would have us see them, as a tool toward understanding one another rather than a tool for continued condemnation and her ultimate healing; an opportunity for faith, forgiveness, and revelation over shared identity and responsibility to history and the stories that made this country.



COMPARISONS

Tonally, the series continues the reimagining and auditing of our stories and imagination around the American West, interrogating and investigating the violence and the white-washed sins of the age in an unflinchingly honest view of this complicated moment in our history, western expansion, and treatment of Indigenous people.

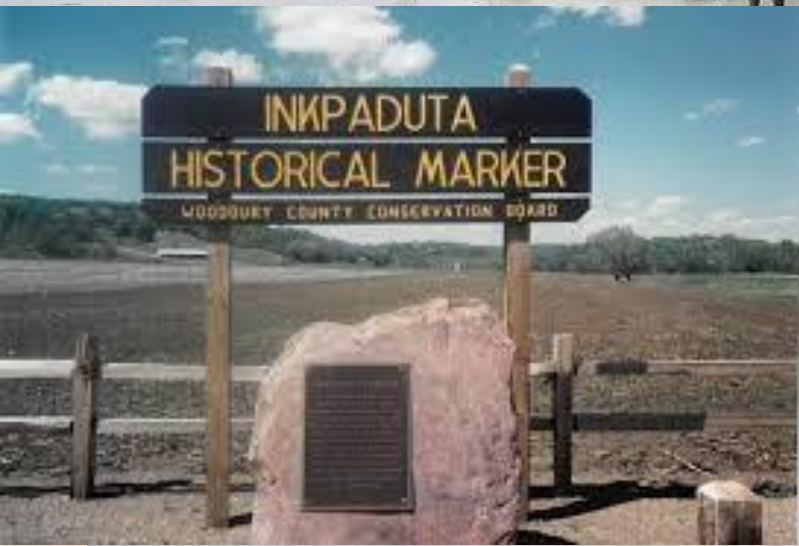
It has the scale and feel of the film *Hostiles* and limited series' *1883* and *Godless* with an approach to structuring time and memory like the anthology series *True Detective* (Season One) and the revisionist limited series *The English*.



THEMATIC QUESTIONS

How will we ever understand history if we never look beyond ourselves? Abbie Gardner's quest to understand her past and what caused the wars within her home and now within herself are played out against her would-be antagonist, Inkpaduta, who is struggling to find a way past his own inconceivable loss of loved ones and identity. With wrongs on every side: raping, pillaging and bloodshed; retribution and revenge; when does it end and who is the “most right” when you get there? What do we value and why? And if we lose it, do we lose ourselves?

Is it ownership that gives life meaning, or is there something we share that transcends the “things” of life—pain, trauma, love, hope, and humanity itself? When everything and everyone is wrong, how do we find common ground and grace for the future? Our story investigates these questions through two very different perspectives, illuminating two versions of the same truth.



THE HISTORY

The population of Iowa was growing exponentially with white settlers moving in to take land that was still in contention between the US government's questionable treaties and agreements with the Native American population. Despite that strain there were still working relations between the Native American inhabitants and the White Settlers encroaching on their land. As of March 1857, the people of Iowa were coming out of an extremely severe winter that only amplified the desperation among all parties. Distrust between local government and the Dakota Sioux only intensified when a local white settler, Henry Lott was allowed to escape unscathed after the brutal axe-murder of local Chief Sidominadota and his entire family. With no support from local authorities in the settler community, continued skirmishes between settlers and the Dakota and being denied rations as a result of Inkpaduta's refusal to sign over land to the government, Inkpaduta resolved to defend his people and fight the enemy: the white settler.

Unfortunately, none of this information was passed along to the settlers who would soon fall prey to vengeance they didn't necessarily stir, but were definitely, even if inadvertently, party to. In the nearby Spirit Lakes region at Pillsbury Point, young Abigail "Abbie" Gardner and her family are settling into land still considered sacred by the Dakota Sioux. If they had only known what that day held for them.

Over the course of the next 4 days, Abbie's family would be some of the more than 32 settlers (men, women and children) murdered at the hands of Inkpaduta and his band. Abbie would be one of four hostages, two of whom were killed, one voluntarily traded and one ransomed. It would be known as the Spirit Lake Massacre.

P I L L S B U R Y P O I N T



“This place is most sacred to me on all the earth. Around it gather life’s sweetest and saddest memories”. - Abbie Gardner



No. 50. Sunset Scene off Pillsbury Point



Pillsbury Point is located in Arnolds Park, Iowa, United States. It was the home of 13-year-old Abigail Gardner and her family and the location of the Spirit Lake Massacre of 1857, in which almost forty settlers were killed, and four women were taken hostage by the Dakota tribe, one of which was young Abbie. It was also considered a neutral territory among the Native American population, where all Nations could quarry the catlinite, or "pipestone," traditionally used to make ceremonial pipes vitally important to traditional Plains Indian religious ceremonies. Archeologists believe the site has been in use for over 3000 years, with Minnesota pipestones found inside North American burial mounds dated much earlier than that.

Until their deaths, the Rev. Samuel Pillsbury and his wife made their home in a home near the log cabin of the Indian Massacre, seeking to bring life and light to a place where death still stained the walls. The Point’s great triangle of land juts out into West Okoboji, and it is now what has become their memorial. The Point was not always a beautiful property, with steep banks where very little could take root and grow, but perhaps its rocky shores were a better place for faith and hope to be nurtured instead.



PILLSBURY POINT

WOKOBOJI LAKE, IOWA

D-447

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MASON CITY, IA

Legend posits that the deep lake surrounding the Point, Lake Okoboji, was named after a Great Chief, Chief Okoboji. Okoboji is thought to translate to ‘place of rest possibly.’ Although the events of the Spirit Lake Massacre are anything but restful, the place itself is now the unintentional resting place for all of the once hopeful settlers and for people like Abbie Gardner, who returned to it in search of some respite for her troubled soul until she could take that final rest alongside her family. Pillsbury Point is not only the site of acts that would render a tragic point of no return for Inkpadata, the “Scarlet Point” himself, but a point of revelation for those who heed Abbie Gardner’s plea to “continue in the good works which God has given us all and that there is no difference between us in our Father’s house.” Finding that place in between revelation and tragedy is the point itself.

Netflix Acquires U.S. Rights to Mark Duplass and Mel Eslyn's Indie Series 'Penelope'

The streamer will serve as the U.S. distributor to the independently financed and produced young-adult series co-written by Duplass and director Eslyn and executive produced by Jay Duplass and Shuli Harel.

BY ABBEY WHITE  MAY 5, 2024 4:36PM



'It's a completely new day': the rise of Indigenous films and TV shows

Ms

Successes such as *Prey* and *Reservation Dogs* highlight an important shift for a community who have been demonised and under-represented on screen



As the TV Drama Bubble Bursts, Producers Look to Indie Film for New Models

With the era of easy money long gone, producers are looking to co-production, financing and distribution models pioneered by the independent film industry.

BY SCOTT ROXBOROUGH  APRIL 17, 2023 7:32AM



Morfydd Clark of Amazon's 'The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power.' PASCAL LE SEGRETAIR/GETTY IMAGES

Home > TV > News

Mar 11, 2024 12:35pm PT

What Is Indie TV? How Mark Duplass Is Using His 'Morning Show' Paychecks to Launch a New Model for the Small Screen

By Selome Hailu 

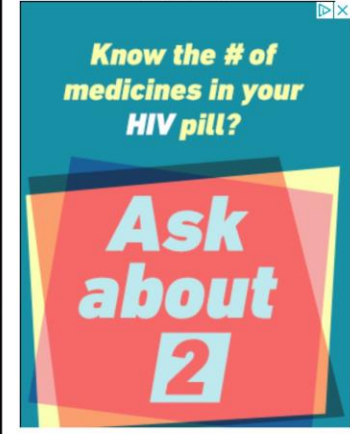
    




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P U R P O S E & P R O F I T

There has never been a better time to tell this story. Native communities can tell their story. Female representation is boldly represented. Treated as property in every direction and left to live in the aftermath of other people's version of their truth. The articles reflected here are evidence of change but also that the stories that reflect and compel those changes are making money. Hollywood is often thought of as leaning toward liberal initiatives, but more than any political or ethical impetus, Hollywood is about profit generation.

Films such as *Killers of the Flower Moon* (net profit: \$156,424,331) and television programs such as *The English* and *Reservation Dogs* have proven there is an audience, there is a desire, and these programs make money and win awards (2024: 6 Emmy Nom, 10 Oscar Nom). *The Point* enriches and clarifies the complexity of the displacement story for our region of Iowa with authentic storytelling and commitment to having our stories benefit our community. Iowans should have a say in their story and a share in the profits of telling them.

We are also in the midst of a significant upheaval in the film and television industry. The studios have priced themselves out of the market with series such as the recent *Game of Thrones* reboot nearing half a billion dollars to produce one season. More and more producers are looking for new ways to get a story to market as well to have a positive impact of the audience. Using a not-for-profit entity that seeks to produce stories from the mid-west of lessor known historical status combined with a faith based perspective and a great hope of redeeming storytelling. We seek to do provide a proven incentive model via a tax deductible charitable contribution and apply it to television. This promises a more secure return on investment as well as an even more important and lasting result – an awareness and example of faith applied in real life in a way that film can rarely promise.

Further, with production committed to filming in and around the region, we bring a wave of commerce that future productions can replicate. This project is as much a testament to our stories as it is to the beauty of our land and the opportunities it offers filmmakers and production companies from all over.

There are incentives and investment levels to match any gift, and our 501-C3 status offers the opportunity to receive tax incentives. We look forward to sharing the project with you and collaborating on investment in the stories of our beautiful home.

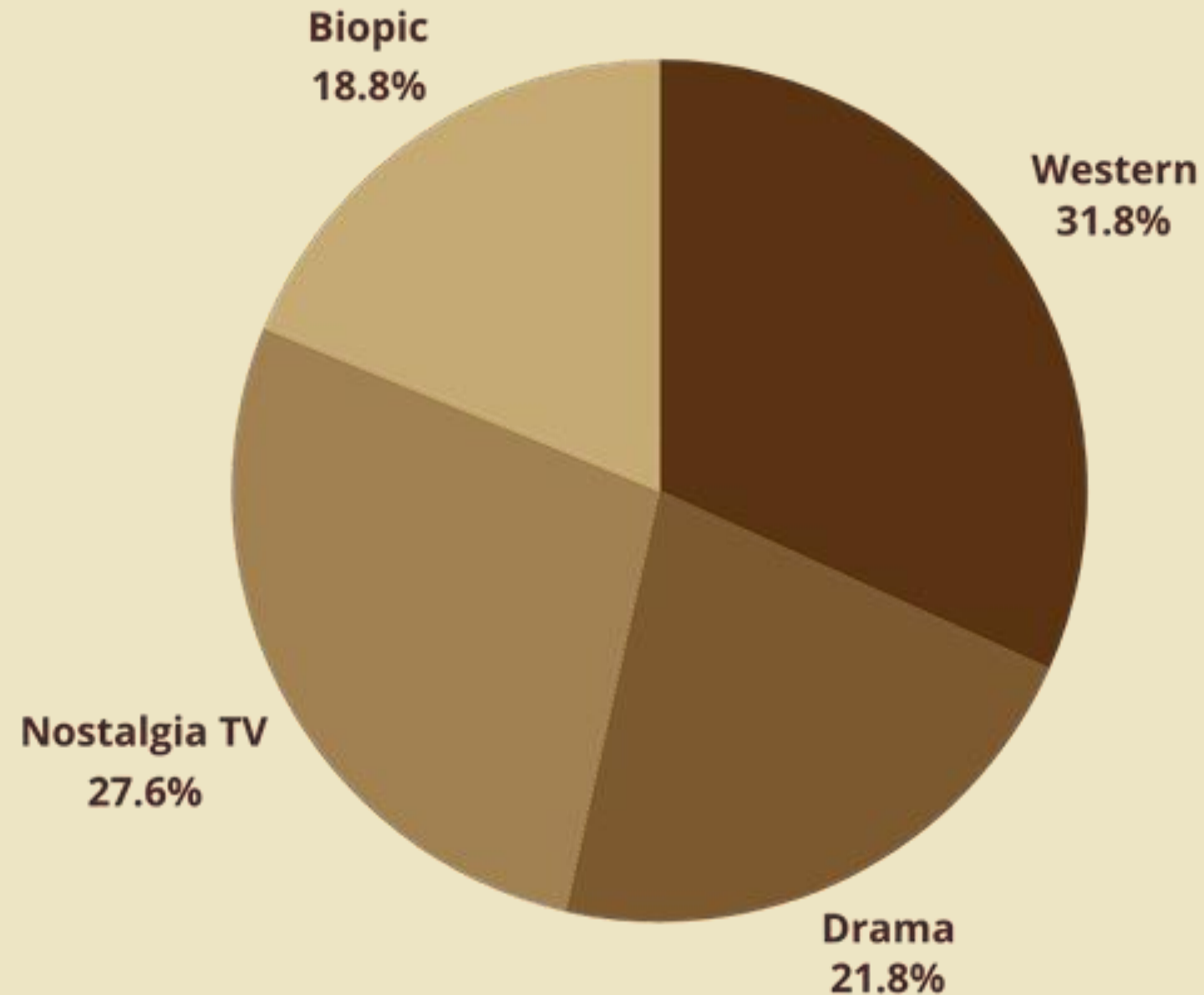
AUDIENCE

BioPic -

Overwhelmingly female and range from teenagers to upwards of 60 years old, the most desired and heavily monetized demographic.

Nostalgia TV-

There has been a huge resurgence of nostalgia TV series' since 2018. 75% of programmers have generated nostalgia driven content with huge retention of viewership. Vintage episodics are seeing re-boots and serialized TV formats adapting back to beloved prime time formats and stories viewers find comfort in, while allowing them to ground themselves in the present uncertain and often chaotic times



Western

Westerns are one of the oldest, most enduring and flexible genres and one of the most characteristically American genres in their mythic origins.

According to a recent CMA report Millennials make up 57% of viewership and as a whole the market is up 13% year on year since 2020.

Faith - Based Drama-

54% of the audience is in the key 18-49 age demographic. 31% of viewers have graduated with at least a 4 year degree from a university or college. Their average HHI is \$80,331 and 3 out of 5 homes that are watching are directly owned by their occupants.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

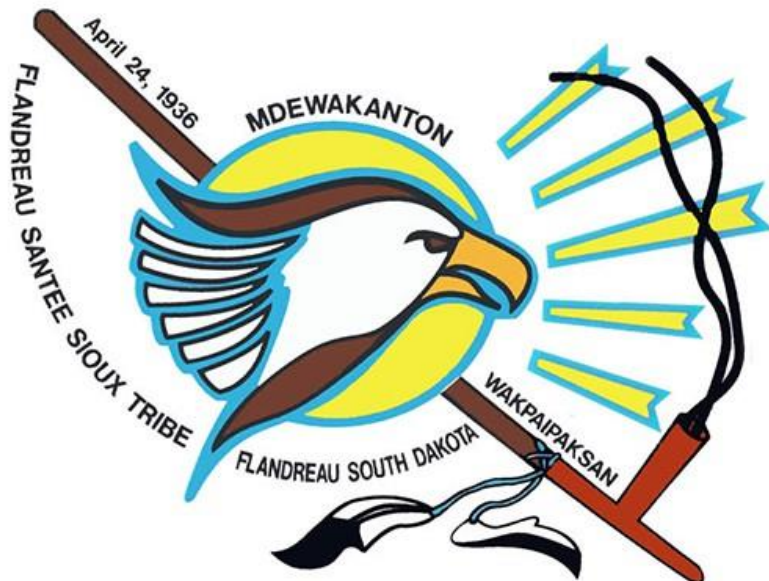
THE CREATIVE TEAM

Anita Bomgaars & Santee Sioux Consultant

Anita Bomgaars is a story researcher and originator, a dedicated community leader, and a staunch advocate for preserving and promoting Iowa's stories and people. She serves on numerous boards and public agency coalitions and is the president of the Friends of the Abbie Gardner Cabin Organization, an organization she helmed to restore the Abbie Gardner Cabin and Museum in Arnolds Park.

Anita's advocacy for Abbie Gardner Sharp's story stems from her deep-seated belief that Abbie still has much to teach us. Anita wants to help spread that message, "It's important to save this site because of its tremendous historical significance to our region and the fact that it's one of the few historical stories that shows us how to reconcile," Bomgaars said. "It's something we can all still learn from."

In her effort to have the story told authentically and accurately, she has partnered with a local community leader and trustee with the Flandreau Santee Sioux, who is also a descendant of famed scholar and advocate Ohiyesa (Charles Eastman), to advise and assist the professional writing team she has assembled to dramatize this pivotal story in Iowa's history.





THE CREATIVE TEAM

Jordan Dykstra – Producer

Film Bridge International (FBI). Jordan joined FBI in 2014 and oversees all of FBI's in-house productions, acquisitions and overall sales strategy for its slate of feature films and television. Most recently, Jordan has produced, "Classified" starring Aaron Eckhard ("The Dark Knight") and Tim Roth ("Pulp Fiction") which was released by Sony Pictures, "Assassin Club" for Paramount Pictures starring Henry Golding ("Crazy Rich Asians") and "Killing Faith" starring Guy Pearce ("The Brutalist").



Robert Ballo – Producer

Shadowboxer Films. Robert is a passionate creative hands-on filmmaker, having produced over 65 feature films with all movies having received domestic and world-wide distribution. At USC's School of Cinematic Arts (also his alma mater) he taught for 20 years. A past member of the International Cinematographers Guild as a Director of Photography for 10 years. He is a voting member (Emmy's) of the Academy of Television Arts and Science. In addition to his fictional movie credits, Robert has produced countless documentary and non-fiction programming including the daytime Emmy winner, "Hope Has Got a Home" (Indiana PBS).

"We come and go, but the land is always here. And the people who love it and understand it are the people who own it -- for a little while."

— Willa Cather,
O PIONEERS! 1913



"The Land was put here for us by the Great Spirit and we cannot sell it because it does not belong to us. You can count your money and burn it within the nod of a buffalo's head, but only the great Spirit can count the grains of sand and the blades of grass of these plains.

As a present to you, we will give you anything we have that you can take with you, but the land, never."

— Crowfoot, Chief of the Blackfeet. 1885