Joanelle Romero has made an outstanding contribution to the arts and science of motion picture in producing Native Indigenous content to the world.

Romero's family legacy in politics and the entertainment industry is historic and respected. Her mother Rita Rogers, Mescalero-Chiricahua Apache and Spanish-Sephardic, was signed to Universal Studios in the 1960's. She was featured in nine Elvis Presley movies, the Carol Burnett Show, and the Red Skelton Show. In the political realm, her Uncle was one of the most decorated politicians, Congressman Edward R. Roybal. In 1949, Roybal became the first Native Indigenous person to serve on the Los Angeles City Council since 1881 and was one of the highest-ranking Indigenous persons in California municipal government. He left the ladder down for others.

Romero's great-grandma Eufernia on her mother's side of the family was the sister of Congressman Edward R. Roybal's father, Baudilio. When Romero was a little girl, her mom used to take her to hear Uncle “Eddie” speak in downtown Los Angeles. She stood on the side of the stage to listen to him. She believes these early first impressions left her with a huge insight that informs the work she does today. She often states that she stands proud alongside ancestors.

Romero's career spans four decades in the entertainment industry, an American media proprietor, filmmaker, television producer, acclaimed actress in film and television, and film distributor, recording artist, singer/songwriter and humanitarian.

Romero's documentary American Holocaust: When It’s All Over I’ll Still Be Indian, was short-listed for an Academy Award in 2000, becoming the first Native woman director, producer to receive this recognition.

She is a recipient of the Location Managers Guild International ‘Trailblazer Award’ (2022), the Armin T. Wegner Humanitarian Award for “the vision to see the truth...and the courage to speak it” for American Holocaust: When It’s All Over I’ll Still Be Indian (2005), The American Indian Film Festival Award, The Fargo Film Festival, National Women’s History Month Awards, Romero received the award for Generations of Women Moving History Forward for development of Red Nation Television Network, Red Earth Awards / State Arts Council of Oklahoma for ‘Home, Home on the Rez’, first all native drama series (Drama/Indian produced 1997), ‘Melvin & John (Doc Short/Indian produced 1995), ‘Why Can’t You Take Me As I Am (Experimental/Indian produced 1995), ‘Where the Red Road Meets the Information Super Highway’ (Commercial/promotion/Indian produced 1995), ‘The Third Verse 500 Years the Land of the Children’ (Experimental/Indian produced 1994), State of California’s Resolution for American Indian Heritage Month in 2006, Numerous City of Los Angeles & New Mexico Proclamations (2000 to present), Resolution for the State of California from Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Through her organization Red Nation Celebration Institute (RNCI), now in its 27th year (RNCI will be celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2025) The Creative Enterprise by Natives delivering to all people the stories that shape our world is the longest-running Native Women-Led Indigenous Media Arts and Cultural non-profit enterprise in the history of the entertainment industry. Based in Los Angeles with offices in Santa Fe New Mexico, serving Indian Country & Entertainment Industry. Representing over 570+ Native Nations, amplifying more than 5000+ Native and Indigenous content creators through its streaming company Red Nation Television Network, supporting 2700+ Native Indigenous filmmakers through its Red Nation International Film Festival, including films directed by women through its Native Women in Film & Television in All Media, since 1995. In the last five years RNCI has screened 130 films directed by women. Natives in Charge of Their Narrative. RNCI’s Mission is to break barriers of racism by creating systemic change through media and pop culture in order to eliminate Native American stereotypes.
Our Vision for the future of cinema is one in which Native Indigenous perspectives are authentically pictured, recognized, and valued in a way that promotes strong authentic Native identities, economic outcomes, equity, and wellness for our Indigenous communities. Romero is deeply committed to amplifying Native-Indigenous Storytellers in mainstream media worldwide.

Red Nation Celebration Institute created and founded the American Indian Heritage Month in the City/County of Los Angeles in 2005 and officially recognized in 2006 by the State of California and the City of Los Angeles and in the State of New Mexico 2008. Red Nation Celebration Institute (RNCI) is the first American Indian & Indigenous nonprofit enterprise organization to be funded by The City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department in 2000.

Joanelle is born of Mescalero-Chiricahua Apache and Spanish-Sephardic. A relative of Pojoaque, Pawnee, Diné, Paiute, Southern Ute, Haudenosaunee and kinship to Lakota and Jicarilla Apache. Romero is also a mother of two children, (who themselves are graduates of Yale University and Berklee College of Music), and an active grandma of three.

WORK EXPERIENCE

ACTRESS Accomplishments 1977 - Present

• Romero's career spans over four+ decades as an accomplished actress in over 20 episodic television and feature film roles. Romero has worked and co-starred with some of the best in the business, i.e. Demi Moore, Willie Nelson, Raquel Welch, Alex Baldwin, Gary Busey, Russell Means. as well as notable directors: George Schaefer, Oliver Stone, Fred Schepisi, Gregory Hoblit, Charles Band, Mel Damski, Ricky Schroder, Aaron Lipstadt and Jonathan Wacks

• The Girl Called Hatter Fox (1977). First Contemporary American Indian Woman's story produced and first-time a native actress carried a leading role in a contemporary movie

• Powwow Highway (1989), directed by Jonathan Wacks. The first feature-film that changed the Native Narrative in the film industry

• Home Home on the Rez (1996). First Pilot all-Native Drama Series in the U.S.

• Wild Indian (2021) Cast by Director's request

RECORDING ARTIST & SINGER-SONGWRITER Accomplishments 1979 - Present

• The Legendary Leonard Cohen produced Romero's first records at A&M Records; the first artist Mr. Cohen produced

• Film Score credits include: Rockin' Warriors, a documentary film produced in Luxemburg for U.S. This film was broadcast in Europe and aired on the Ovation Network and the Arts Channel. Her music can also be heard in such films as American Holocaust: When It's All Over I'll Still Be Indian (short-listed for an Academy Award), Vendetta, a Roger Corman film, and PBS Series POSITIVE: Life With H.I.V. (broadcast nationally in 1996)

• Multiple Grammy Considerations (2002 - 2005)

• Toured with Sarah Mclachlan on the Lilith Fair Tour alongside Sinead O'Connor, The Indigo Girls and Natalie Merchant.

• Music Video credits include: Why Can't You Take Me Like I Am, I Left My Heart With You, Thunder in the River

• BILLBOARD Magazine featured Romero prominently in the first-ever special issue focusing on contemporary American Indian music. Since then, BILLBOARD Magazine has included Romero in every summer issue in their Native American Music interviews

• Also produced by: Henry Lewy, Roscco Beck, Richard T Bear, Ron Tyhson of The Temptations

• Romero has opened for notable artists as Rick Danko of The Band, Kris Kristofferson, Stevie Wonder, Eric Anderson, John Trudell, Paul Butterfield, Tin Machine, Freddie Fender, Ritchie Havens and Roseanne Cash

• Romero has been invited to perform by the Holiness Dalai Lama, The United Nations 60th Anniversary, Jane Goodall, Cesar Chavez National Holidays, Gandhi’s Grandson for Peace Day, Earth Day Celebrations and EMA Awards
FILM DIRECTOR

Accomplishments 1977 - Present

• First Native Woman Filmmaker to be short-listed for an Academy Award for her film American Holocaust: When It's All Over I'll Still Be Indian (2000)
• RNCI RED NATION AWARDS: The Only Native Awards Show, broadcast and live-streamed (2013 - present)
• RNCI and Red Nation Conversation Series: Native-Indigenous conversations with high-profile artists and industry professionals
• Let’s hear your funny: A Native-Indigenous Comedy Series
• Melvin & John – The First Story on Native Men Living with HIV/AIDS
• Romero is a Documentary Award-Winning Director whose filmography includes The Third Verse 500 Years: The Land of the Children

PRODUCER

Accomplishments 1977 - Present

• RED BLANKET - HOME, HOME ON THE REZ (1996), the first all-Native drama series produced in the U.S.
• The American Holocaust: A Film & Conversation Original Series dedicated to the Native Perspective (3 Episodes)
• RNCI Red Nation Awards Show, in-person and online (2013 to present)
• Red Nation Conversation Series (1995 to present)
• The Adventures Of Thomasina Sawyer (James Franco Film)
• The Third Verse 500 Years: The Land of the Children
• Melvin & John – The First Story on Native Men Living with HIV/AIDS
• Red Nation Celebration Concert Series (since 1995) and Other Numerous Concerts (since 1978)
• In 2007, produced the Mayor Reception welcoming in Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa in unifying the interests of 19 tribes in the Los Angeles area. The Mayor Reception was held in City Hall
• SAG-AFTRA, Romero produced numerous events including the panels “Where Are We (Native Americans) in Film, Television and Radio” (2000) and “Native Women in Film & Television” (2012)
• Warriors Against AIDS Concert Series (1993)
• Other credits: Why Can’t You Take Me Like I Am, I Left My Heart With You and Thunder in the River

CEO/FOUNDER/PRESIDENT

Red Nation Films

Accomplishments


• Joanelle Romero was instrumental in bringing American Indian dancers to Jackson’s music video, The “Black or White” this music video and song made history. Joanelle Romero was able to negotiate for the American Indian dancers to be paid over and above any dancers on any music video ever, due to the fact they were traditionally dressed (the wardrobe did not come from western costume). To date, they are the highest paid dancers in any music video! Also, this segment was the first clip of American Indian dancers in a music video without being a Native American music group/artist
• American Holocaust: When It All Over I’ll Still Be Indian. Short-listed for Academy Award
• Several Documentary Award-winning films
• Several TV Series Specials
CEO/OWNER/CHAIRWOMAN
Red Nation Television Network | rednationtv.com

Red Nation TV is inarguably the nation’s premier source of American Indian & Indigenous content (predating Netflix, Hulu and others). Reaching millions internationally, Red Nation Television Network “Native is Here” is the first international (including the U.S.) online streaming entertainment media company and distributed TV Channel exclusively devoted to American Indian and World Indigenous content. The company was established in 2006, cementing the name Red Nation Television Network as the first American Indian Television Channel. Red Nation Television Network is the Authentic Voice of American Indian and Indigenous content from around the world, and a pioneer Native Indigenous content provider.

Accomplishments
• Acclaimed as the first official streaming company (predating Netflix and others)
• Original Programming includes: TV Series, Comedy Shows, Conversation Series, Awards Shows, Documentaries and Red Nation News

CEO/FOUNDER/PRESIDENT
Red Nation Celebration Institute | rednationcele.org | rednationff.com | nativewomeninfilm.com

Community of over 5000+ filmmakers
Accomplishments

Red Nation Celebration Institute (RNCI), The Authentic Voice for American Indian & Indigenous Nations, founded 1995. The Creative Enterprise by Natives delivering to all people the stories that shape our world is the longest-running Native Women-Led Indigenous Media Arts and Cultural non-profit enterprise in the history of the entertainment industry. Based in Los Angeles with offices in Santa Fe New Mexico, serving Indian Country & Entertainment Industry. Representing over 570+ Native Nations, amplifying more than 5000+ Native and Indigenous content creators through its streaming company Red Nation Television Network, supporting 2700+ Native Indigenous filmmakers through its Red Nation International Film Festival, including films directed by women through its Native Women in Film & Television in All Media. In the last five years RNCI has screened 130 films directed by women.

Mission is to break barriers of racism by creating systemic change through media and pop culture in order to eliminate Native American stereotypes. Our Vision for the future of cinema is one in which Native Indigenous perspectives are authentically pictured, recognized, and valued in a way that promotes strong authentic Native identities, economic outcomes, equity, and wellness for our Indigenous communities.

• Red Nation International Film Festival - the Largest Native Indigenous Festival in the Country
• Red Nation International Film Festival ‘On the Road’ (New Mexico, Washington D.C., New York)
• Native Women in Film & Television and Native Women in Film & Television Festival - First and Only Native Indigenous women’s film festival in Los Angeles
• RNCI Crew - providing career pathways for below-the-line native-indigenous talent.
• The world’s first Native Film Commission (s) (State of California and State of New Mexico)
• Native Youth Matter - If I Can See It I Can Be It
• Native Indigenous Student Academy for Cinematic Arts
• Groundbreaking year-round programming at rednationcele.org
• Filmmakers includes (short-list) Danis Goulet, Sterlin Harjo, Loretta Todd, Alejandro González Iñárritu, Mark Williams, James Bird, Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers, Kyle Kauwika Harris, Katsitsionni Fox, Daniel Foreman, Alba Enid García, Klee Benally, Yvonne Russo, Randy Redroad, Jeffrey Palmer, Hepi Mita, Chelsea Winstanley, Taika Waititi including allies that have made Native and Indigenous themed films or have been presenters at RNCI Red Nation Awards Christian Bale, Scott Cooper, Benicio del Toro, Edward James Olmos, Ed Begley Jr., Chloe Zhao, A Martinez, Taylor Sheridan, Joe Berlinger, Rebecca Harrell Tickell, Josh Tickell, Susanna White, Stephen S. Campanelli, Brigitte Timmerman, Deborah Anderson, Kathleen Hepburn, Alma Martinez, Jaima Chevalier, Joanne Storkan, Haroula Rose, Lesley Johnson, Chris Writs, Mark Ruffalo, Jason George, Dolores Huerta and Dan Aykroyd.
FOUNDER
American Indian Heritage Month in the City of Los Angeles Honoring Our Ancestors
Accomplishments

• In 2005, Romero established American Indian Heritage Month in the City of Los Angeles. In 2006, it was officially recognized by the State of California and the City of Los Angeles.
• In 2006, City of Los Angeles Mayor’s Reception was produced by Red Nation Celebration Institute. Local Tongva Spiritual Leader Jimi Castillo officially recognized Joanelle Romero as “the First Lady of American Indian Heritage Month” for all Red Nations, due to her vision in founding and establishing the American Indian Heritage Month in the City of Los Angeles in 2006, in addition because she had succeeded in unifying the interests of 19 tribes in the Los Angeles area at Mayor Reception in City Hall.
• In 2006, established The Scared Life of Water Ceremony along the Los Angeles River and at Playa del Rey Ballona Wetlands. RNCI and with the support of City Council Member Bill Rosendahl is responsible for the returns of Tongva Ancestors to their right burial site.
• In 2007, American Indian Holocaust Memorial established by RNCI in The City of Los Angeles. The ceremony was held at The Los Angeles State Park in association with the City of Los Angeles reopening of Park.
• In 2008, Romero established American Indian Heritage Month in the State of New Mexico.
• In 2015, RNCI established The American Indian Holocaust Memorial in Washington D.C. in front of the White House with Native Community Leaders.

PRESIDENT/CEO/FOUNDER
Social Justice Campaigns
Accomplishments

• Ongoing campaigns: WHY WE WEAR RED, ONLY ONE WATER and NATIVE YOUTH MATTER

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Joanelle Romero has made an outstanding contribution to the arts and science of motion picture in producing Native Indigenous content to the world.

• ‘Trailblazer’ award from Location Managers Guild International 2022
• Short-listed for an Academy Award (2000)
• State of California’s Resolution for American Indian Heritage Month in 2006
• National Women’s History Month Awards, Romero received the award for Generations of Women Moving History Forward for development of Red Nation Television Network (RNTV)
• In 2005, Romero recieved the Armin T. Wegner Humanitarian Award for “the vision to see the truth... and the courage to speak it” for American Holocaust: When It’s All Over I’ll Still Be Indian (Producer, Director).
• In 2000 and 2003, The American Indian Film Festival Awards and The Fargo Film Festival awarded Romero for Best Documentary Short for American Holocaust: When It’s All Over I’ll Still Be Indian.
• Numerous City of Los Angeles & New Mexico Proclamations (2000 to present)
• Resolution for the State of California
UNIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

• SAG-AFTRA Member since 1977
• Member of The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts & Sciences since 2016. First Native-Indigenous woman to be invited
• SAG EEOC from 1998-2001
• Summit Entertainment’s Twilight: New Moon film screening partnership in 2009. Prior to its public premiere, this was a first for Summit Entertainment in regards to other screenings/partnerships with any film festivals.
• U.S. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland’s participation in WHY WE WEAR RED Call-To-Action Campaign, 2018 to present

Red Nation Celebration Institute (RNCI), Empowering Native Indigenous Storytellers

Who Tells The Story Matters

rednationcele.org
rednationff.com
rednationtv.com
nativewomeninfilm.com

Native Indigenous Student Academy for Cinematic Arts

RNCI Properties include: Red Nation International Film Festival, RNCI Red Nation Awards, Red Nation Television Network Native Indigenous Media Streaming Company (predating Netflix and all other streaming services), Native Women in Film & Television in All Media, RNCI Crew, California Native Indigenous Film Commission, New Mexico Native Indigenous Film Commission, American Indian Heritage Month in the City of Los Angeles, Native Studies Center, Native Indigenous Student Academy for Cinematic Arts and Native Youth Matter - If I Can See It I Can Be It.

Land | Language | Culture | Tradition | Identity