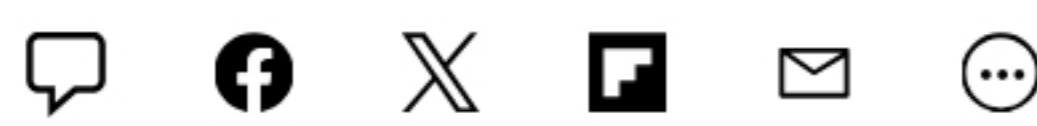


Starz Announces Year Three Writer's Intensive with NewFilmmakers Los Angeles and NALIP

By [Andrés Buenahora](#) ▾



Starz

Starz, NewFilmmakers Los Angeles (NFMLA) and The National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP) have announced the participants for Season 3 of the Starz Take the Lead Writers' Intensive.

Set to begin on Oct. 14, this year's program will feature writers [Alyssa Katalyna](#), [Eric De La Rosa](#), [Justin Omori](#) and [Nneka Samuel](#).

Starz has tailored a series of strategic sessions aimed at helping its participants gain knowledge and establish connections with experts in the television field, spanning across the entire industry.

"The collaboration between Starz, NALIP and NFMLA clearly demonstrates our dedication to joining forces to develop and maintain impactful programs aimed at uplifting the next generation of staff writers in premium cable. The Starz Take the Lead Writers' Intensive serves as a unifying force in the entertainment industry, supporting emerging voices and contributing to the narrowing of the representation gap. We are immensely proud of the work we are doing in partnership with Starz, a true leader and innovator in the television space," said Diana Luna, Executive Director of NALIP and Larry Laboe, Co-Founder and Executive Director of NFMLA.

Among the participating members this year are Starz's president of original programming Kathryn Busby, "Hunting Wives" showrunner and executive producer Rebecca Cutter, Starz vp of original programming Sebastian Arboleda, Starz director of original programming Tara Roy, TV writer and "P-Valley" producer Ian Olympio, 20th Television executive director of drama development Melissa Lora, ABC Hulu at Disney general entertainment content manager of drama development Julio Castro, Point Grey Pictures svp of TV development Loreli Alanís, writer and story editor Julian Johnson, writer Rae Benjamin, Valor Entertainment Partner and co-founder Carlos Bobadilla, TV writer and executive producer Eduardo Cisneros, TV writer and executive producer Claudia Forestieri, Grandview literary manager Faisal Kanaan and more. These members will help the cohort of writers gain deeper insight into the world of television and support them as they continue on their artistic journeys.

Learn more about the season three finalists below.

Alyssa Katalyna

Alyssa Katalyna is a Latina filmmaker who specializes in "the weird." As a director, her podcast "Jack and Lou: A Gangster Love Story" starring Lisa Kudrow was a winner of the 2022 Best Audio Fiction Series and Best Ensemble of an Audio Fiction at the Indie Series Awards. Alyssa has also been awarded the George Lucas Scholarship at USC, was a 2022 NALIP Emerging Content Creators Inclusion Initiative Scholarship winner, multiyear National Hispanic Foundation of the Arts Scholar and a 2024 Tomorrow's Filmmakers Today Fellow. Most recently she produced the American Pavilion's Best Emerging Filmmaker Documentary at Cannes 2024, Jury Award at the 28th DGA Student Film Awards, Epic Unreal Mega Grant, The Project Paradise Fund. Alyssa is currently producing ChikaBOOM!, the 2023 R&D Innovation Grant winner of the Entertainment Technology Center.

Eric de La Rosa

Eric J. De La Rosa, a queer Latinx TV/Film major from the University of Texas, has worked for several entertainment companies including: The Jim Henson Company, MGM, Dreamworks, Warner Brother and Fox. In his spare time, Eric writes television pilots from his place in Glendale, CA. "Gush's White Whale" – Jim Henson's Splash and Bubbles (06-12-2018) "Motel of Miracles" – Finalist, Shore Scripts TV Pilot Contest 2020, Quarterfinalist Final Draft – Big Break 2022

Justin Omori

Justin Omori was instilled with a love for art and storytelling while carrying his father's camera equipment across the lava fields of Hawai'i Island. After receiving his degree in Creative Media from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, he made the move to Los Angeles. He has worked as a Writers' Assistant on projects like Netflix's "The Fall of the House of Usher" and "Something is Killing the Children." In 2018, he co-wrote "The Moon and The Night" which was shortlisted for the Student BAFTA Awards and featured on the Criterion Channel. In 2022, he was named a Film Independent Project Involve Screenwriting Fellow and subsequently the Disney Studios Content Fellowship. That same year, he wrote "Inheritance," a short film supported by Tribeca Studios, Netflix and Gold House. The short premiered at the 2022 Tribeca Film Festival. He was a finalist for the SFFilm Rainin Screenwriting Grant in 2023.

Nneka Samuel

Nneka Samuel is an award-winning film and television writer who lives to tell untapped stories. Recently, she was staffed on the second season of Showtime's Flatbush Misdemeanors. Prior to, she developed a comedy series called Rejig with AwesomenessTV and Reform Media Group. Nneka also wrote for TV One's NAACP award-winning music docuseries *Unsung*. In addition to being a 2019 WeForShe WriterHer List and Bitch List alum, Nneka's work has been recognized by the Austin Film Festival and Hollywood Black Film Festival. As a freelancer, her writing has been featured in numerous print and online publications, including *Uptown*, *Heart & Soul* and *MadameNoire*. Nneka holds a BA in Cinema Studies from USC and MFA in screenwriting from UCLA, where she was awarded the Zaki Gordon Award for Excellence in Screenwriting for her feature script *Do Nothing Til You Hear From Me*, the NBC/NAACP Fellowship, the Felicia D. Henderson Scholarship and Carl David Memorial Scholarship in Film and Video. She was also a Screenwriters Showcase finalist. Nneka is repped by Verve.