Native Americans in the 21st Century: the Crew

Native Americans in the 21st Century will focus on the struggle for identity as told through two dramatic narrative documentaries about specific tribes or, in the case of the cities, the struggle to keep specific tribal identities alive. These two films will be character driven, and will, in the course of 90 minutes, reveal many of the themes facing Indian people today including gaming, sovereignty, language preservation, blood quantum, treaty rights, health and efforts to restore traditional culture. These themes will be seen from the inside of the narrative out by the following production crew:

THE SENIOR PRODUCING TEAM

Frank Blythe (Eastern Band of Cherokee/Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota)
Executive in Charge of Production
Blythe is the founder and Executive Director of NAPT. Production credits include Storytellers of the Pacific, a documentary co-production with public broadcasters in Canada, Australia, New Zealand the USA; and Native America Calling, the nation’s first live daily radio call-in show for the AIROS Network. Blythe currently serves on the President's Advisory Committee on Public Interest Obligations for Digital Television Broadcasters.

Carol Patton Cornsilk (Cherokee)
Executive Producer/Project Director
Cornsilk, an award-winning producer/writer, is responsible for all of NAPT's television programming and production operations, including management of NAPT’s program fund for public television, program acquisitions for PBS distribution, and new media television projects. Her twenty-year career has garnered an Emmy nomination for scripting the documentary Impressions of Normandy; a National Educational Telecommunications Association award for the concert performance series Recital Hall; an Emmy for TBS’ The Native Americans; and Chicago and New York Film Festival awards for Austin City Limits.

Phil Lucas (Choctaw)
Senior Producer
Lucas is founder and President of Phil Lucas Productions, Inc., one of the first native-owned production companies in the USA. In a career that spans four decades, he has written, produced and directed more than 80 projects, including feature films, television series and documentaries. Credits include the ground-breaking 1980 PBS series Images of Indians hosted by actor Will Sampson, The Native Americans series for TBS, and The Honor of All, a 1987 docu-drama which won the prestigious international public television INPUT award. Mr. Lucas was honored for his distinguished career at the 1999 Sundance Festival.

Hanay Geiogamah (Kiowa)
Senior Producer
Geiogamah is a writer, director and producer with thirty years experience working in American Indian performing arts, theater, media and culture. He is Professor of Theater at UCLA and Artistic Director of the American Indian Dance Theater. He served as producer for the Turner Network Television Native American project’s feature films, which include Geronimo, Lakota Woman, and Crazy Horse. He was principal writer for the six-hour 1994 documentary series, The Native Americans, for Turner Broadcasting System. Geiogamah wrote, co-produced and co-directed the American Indian Dance Theatre’s second Great Performances’ Dance in America special, Dances For The New Generations, which was nominated for a 1993 prime-time Emmy Award.

Sam Hurst  
**Consulting Producer/Post-Production Supervisor**  
Hurst began his broadcast career as a news producer in Los Angeles and rose to National Producer of NBC’s Today Show over the next seven years. A Nieman Fellow at Harvard University, Hurst has produced many documentaries for public television and cable including Turner’s The Native Americans, A Falconer’s Memoir, Hooked for PBS and The Coming Plague, as well as Paul Ehrlich and the Population Bomb for KQED. He is the recipient of a Cable ACE for Best Documentary Writing. He resides in South Dakota with his family where he also owns and operates the South Swell Buffalo Ranch and Wild Idea Buffalo Company.

Learn more about the individual productions and their respective crew members:

- **EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS**
- **URBAN INDIANS OF LOS ANGELES**

To ensure efficiency in all aspects of this project, NAPT hired Eleshia Bledsoe as Production Coordinator.

Bledsoe joins NAPT and NA21 as production begins on a series of two documentary programs in Los Angeles and in Cherokee, North Carolina. Bledsoe will be responsible for coordinating the production arrangements and budgets involved in a bi-coastal shoot. Bledsoe comes to NAPT after working in television production with Cox Communications.