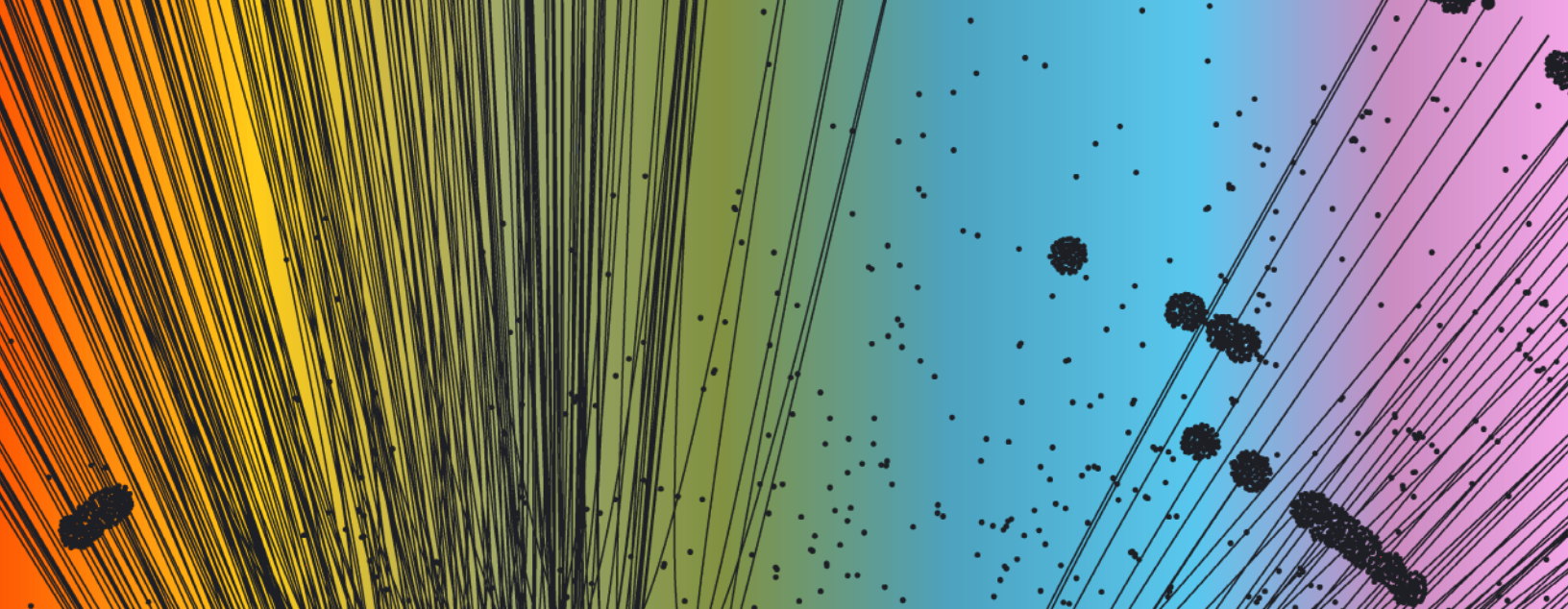


2023

Entertainment Diversity Progress Report

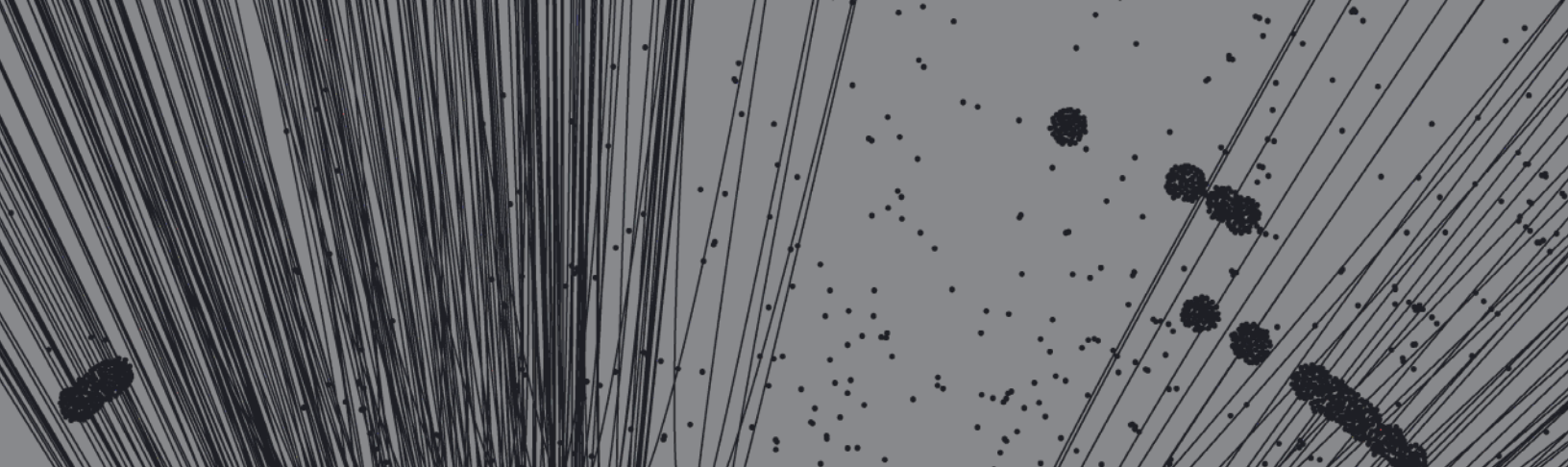
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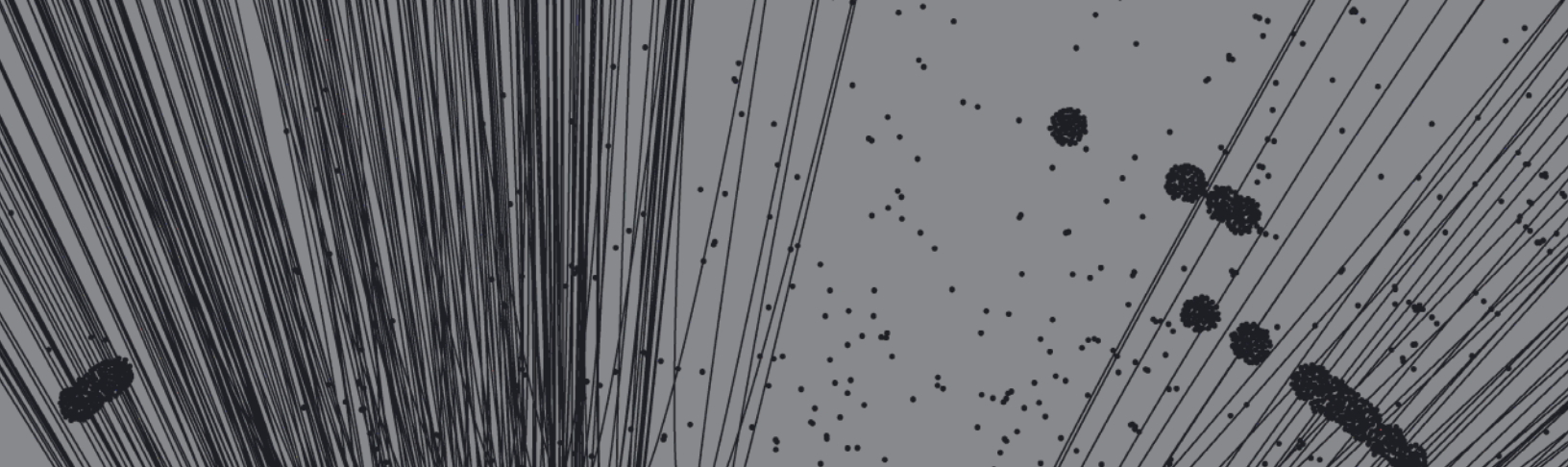
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Methodology

Data was compared for two time periods: Calendar Year 2021 vs Calendar Year 2022. Both series and movies were assigned to a given year based upon when they were first premiered (i.e. if a season premiered in November of 2021 and ran through March of 2022, it would be attributed to 2021).

- The analysis only includes scripted, live action projects originating from the United States, UK and Canada.
- These were broken down into two categories: episodic (inclusive of linear TV and digital-only distribution) and film (regardless of how released: in-theater or digital).
- The metrics used to quantify diversity include:
 - Number of projects with representation
 - Number of roles
- For episodic content, both metrics count each season of a given show as a unique project, to account for the investment made in additional content.
- This analysis is only focused on series regulars and series creators for episodic content and main title cast members and directors for films.
- All classification of talent is based on what each individual has publicly shared or identified as. This includes racial/ethnic heritage, as well as gender and various LGBTQ+ identities. As such, there are some actors who remain uncategorized within the dataset and were excluded from this analysis.
- Nonbinary gender classification is inclusive of: gender nonconforming, two-spirit, genderfluid, genderqueer, agender, androgynous, questioning and gender expansive.
- Actors with intersectional identities are included in the counts for each diverse group that they identify as. For example, a multiracial or multiethnic actor who identifies as Black and Latin/Hispanic would be included in the counts for both groups. Further, if that actor identified as LGBTQ+, they would also be included in that count.
- Disability classification is categorized into three areas, which include: 1) physical disabilities (visible and non-visible), 2) d/Deaf (encompassing hearing loss and hard of hearing), and 3) neurodiversity (including autism spectrum disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, ADHD, and others).



Exec Summary

Since our last publishing of this report in late 2021, the latest data shows that one of the biggest trends pertaining to diversity and representation on screen is the creation of stories that reflect intersectionality. The idea that each individual is defined by multiple identities across race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, etc., is a reality that seems to be increasingly taken into consideration by Hollywood's content creators, allowing films and series to better explore and reflect the nuances of the human experience.

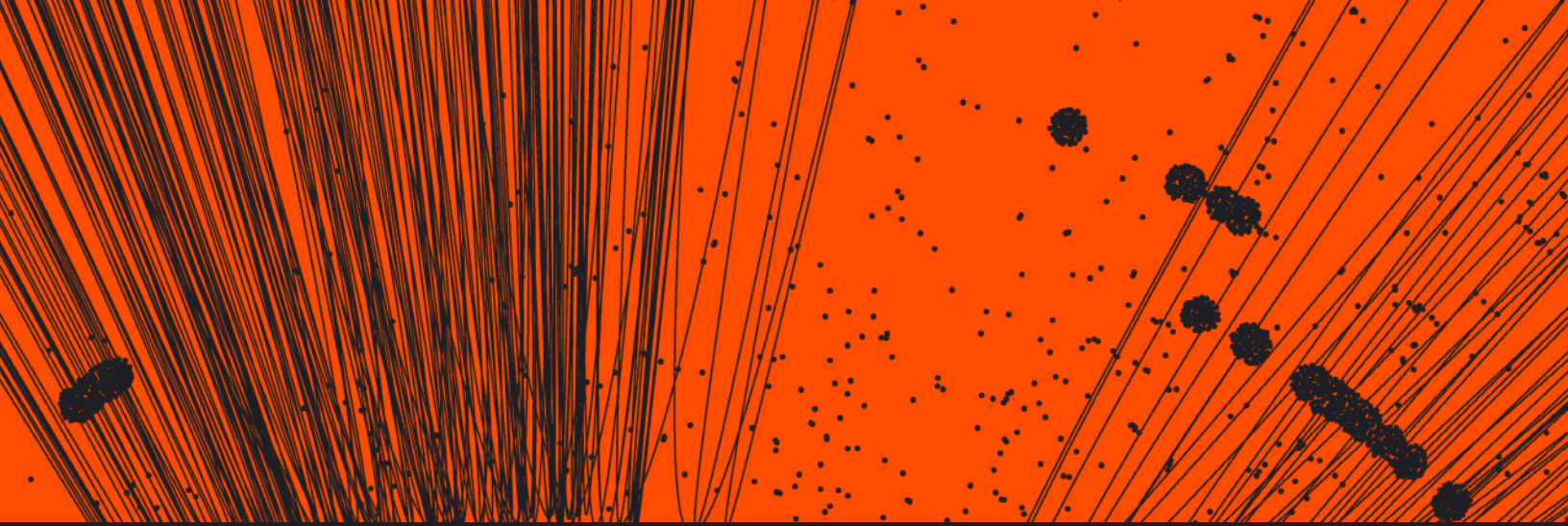
For example, some of the biggest standouts in Black representation in film were centered around the stories of Black women (see *Woman King* and *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*). Hulu's *Fire Island* is another great example that showcases a broad spectrum of the queer experience, including cast members who identify as gay, nonbinary, bisexual and from a full range of racial and ethnic backgrounds.

The other clear trend that has emerged is the proliferation of non-English language content availability in the United States. The growth of available "primetime" content in languages like Spanish, Korean, Arabic, and Japanese has meant a marked increase in the representation of talent from those backgrounds and has provided multilingual audiences with relevant content. However, this doesn't fix the problem of lack of diverse

domestic casting and potentially risks segregation of talent from various racial/ethnic backgrounds to non-English-language content.

Streaming platforms are the core of what's driving the foreign-language content. Netflix is having an outsized impact on this representation, driven largely by its ability to distribute foreign language films in the United States as well — constituting anywhere from 17-28% of all series regular roles for Latin/Hispanic, Asian, and Middle Eastern/North African talent. Both Amazon and Disney+ have also premiered foreign language content in the past two years, several of which have 6+ series regular roles played by actors from the respective racial/ethnic groups (Asian, Latin/Hispanic, etc).

The following report presents the data behind the aforementioned trends, plus others, in an effort to objectively show where Hollywood stands in regards to representation. More specifically, our goal is for this progress report to be used as a reference point to see where and how improvements already have been and still need to be made as studios, networks, streamers and production companies continue to make promises surrounding the increased cultural conversations about the need for more nuanced diversity on and behind the screen.

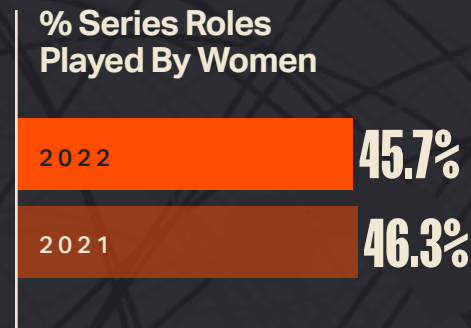
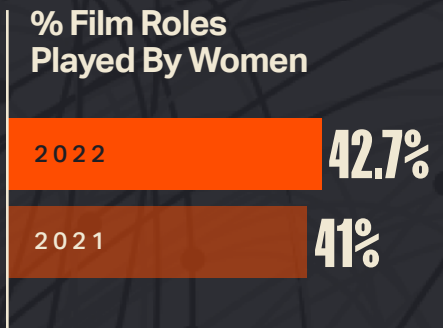


PART 1

Gender Representation

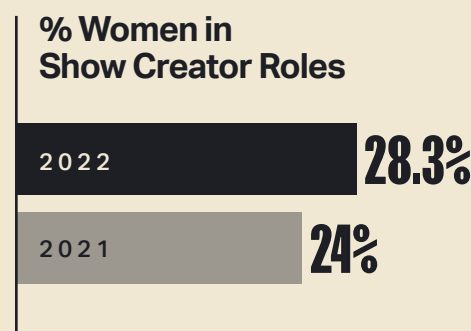
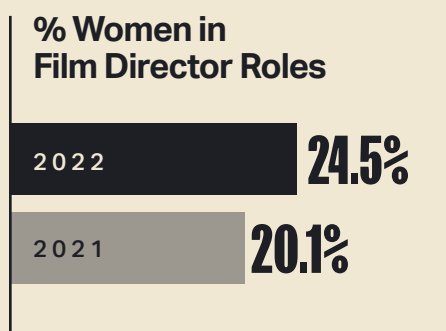
ON SCREEN

Gender diversity on screen has seen mixed success at parity over the past two years. From 2021 to 2022, the percentage of main title film roles played by women increased from 41% to 42.7% of the total roles that existed, while the percentage of series regulars played by women has decreased from 46.3% to 45.7%.



BEHIND THE CAMERA

Behind the camera, we have seen the most progress for women since the last publishing of this report. Women went from 20.1% of film director roles in 2021 to 24.5% in 2022, and similar progress was seen in series. In 2021 only 24% of show creators were women, which increased to 28.3% in 2022.



NONBINARY TALENT

For talent who identify as nonbinary, the story is not as optimistic. Only 0.5% of main title cast roles in film were played by nonbinary actors (flat vs 2021), and only 0.8% of series regular roles were played by nonbinary actors. If we look at how many films had a nonbinary main title cast member, there was minimal growth year over year (18 films in 2021; 21 films in 2022). The

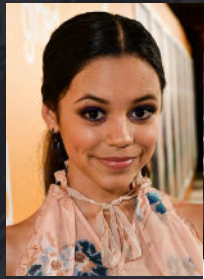
number of series that had a nonbinary series regular was flat, with 25 series in both 2021 and 2022. There was some progress behind the camera, but only in film. There were no nonbinary directors in 2021 and only 5 in 2022, meaning that only 0.7% of film directors were nonbinary. In the series, there were no creators who identify as nonbinary in either of the years we looked at.

0.5%

main title cast roles in film played by talent who identify as nonbinary (flat vs 2021)

0.8%

series regular roles were played by talent who identify as nonbinary in 2022



Jenna Ortega

Scream VI
8 female main title cast



The Accursed
8 female main title cast



The Falling World
9 female main title cast



American Horror Story
11 female main title cast in 2021; 4 in 2022



WOMEN IN HORROR: STRONG REPRESENTATION (WHILE THEY LIVE)

One area that is leading the charge on gender representation may surprise you: the Horror genre. Over the past two years, horror films like *The Falling World* (9 female main title cast), *The Accursed* (8 female main title cast), and *Scream VI* with Jenna Ortega (8 female main title cast) have

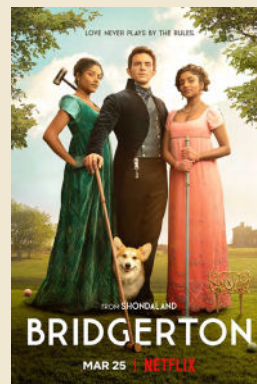
had an overwhelming amount of female representation.

On the series side, *American Horror Story* is another example of how women were serving scares and representation; the 2021 season featured 11 female series regulars, and the 2022 season featured 4.

SHONDA RHIMES

Any discussion of representation has to include Shonda Rhimes. *Bridgerton* alone had 15 female series regulars in its second season — second only to Netflix’s *Control Z* that had 17 female series regulars, but which also had 36 series regulars overall. The diversity of the show also highlights intersectional identities. A third of the women who are series regulars in *Bridgerton*’s second season are women of color, including one who identifies as a lesbian.

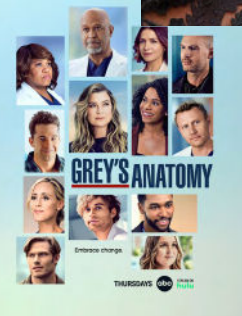
It helps that most of Ms. Rhimes’s shows are built around ensemble casts; for instance *Grey’s Anatomy* was another of the 21 series over the past two years that had at least 10 female series regulars, hitting that exact threshold.



Bridgerton
Season 2:
15 female series regulars

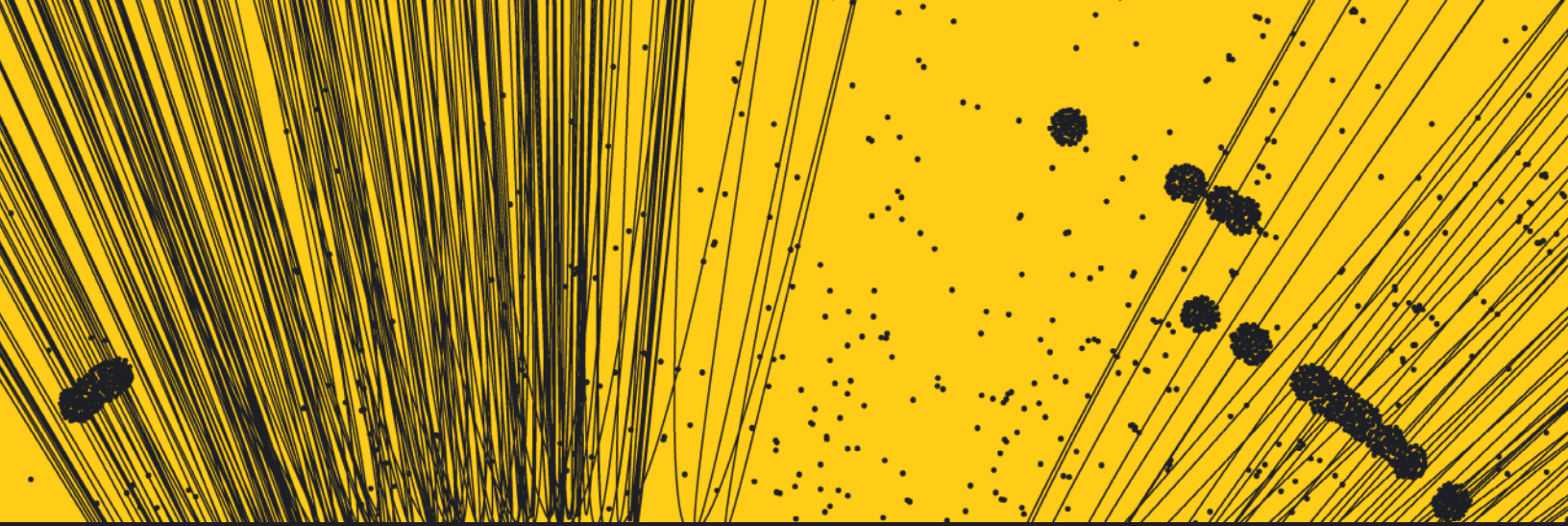


Shonda Rhimes



Grey’s Anatomy
Season 18:
10 female series regulars





PART 2

LGBTQ+ Representation

FILM 🎬

While LGBTQ+ representation on film is growing, it still remains very low. The number of main title roles in film increased from 3.4% in 2021 to 3.9% of all main title roles in 2022. However, when you look at the percentage of movies that have a main title LGBTQ+ actor, it decreased from 18.3% in 2021 to 17% in 2022. Furthermore, the

% LGBTQ+ Main Title Film Roles



number of films where the actual stories depicted were about LGBTQ+ characters

% of Films with LGBTQ+ Talent



decreased as well — down from 6.1% in 2021 to 4.5% in 2022.

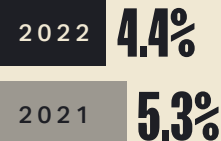
SERIES 📺

In series, LGBTQ+ visibility is shrinking across every metric we tracked — 4.4% of series regulars in 2022 identified as LGBTQ+, down from 5.3% in 2021. This also means that the number and percentage of series with LGBTQ+ talent has decreased year over year (only 26.7% in 2022 vs 31.1% in 2021), giving queer audiences less opportunity to see themselves in the content they view. In absolute terms, there were 7 fewer series with

LGBTQ+ series regulars, while the number of total series released increased by 46.

Additionally, series that feature LGBTQ+ stories decreased by over 30% in 2022, with only 32 shows featuring an LGBTQ+ narrative. This also means that there were likely straight, cisgender actors depicting at least one of those narratives instead of those roles being filled by queer talent.

% LGBTQ+ Series Regulars



% Series with LGBTQ+ Talent



BEHIND THE CAMERA 🎥

As is often the case, regardless of the community in question, representation is even poorer behind the camera. While there was some growth in the number of film directors who identify as LGBTQ+ (up to 3.5% in 2022 vs. 3.1% in 2021), the overall number of directors remains very low at 25. LGBTQ+ talent only represented 4.4% of creator roles on series in 2022, down from 5.3% in 2021.

3.5%

film directors who identify as LGBTQ+ (vs. 3.1% in 2021)

4.4%

LGBTQ+ creator roles on series in 2022, down from 5.3% in 2021



Bros
7 main title cast identify as LGBTQ+

Billy Eichner



Fire Island
9 main title cast identify as LGBTQ+



FIRE ISLAND + BROS

Perhaps the two highest profile LGBTQ+ movies, Hulu's *Fire Island* and Universal's *Bros*, were also the two that brought the most queer representation in film with 9 and 7 main title cast who identify as LGBTQ+. Part of the marketing surrounding *Bros* included the fact that creator Billy Eichner made the conscious choice to only cast queer talent in every

acting role of the film — the first time a major studio had done something like that.

Fire Island provided a unique perspective into the community, by focusing on a diverse group of friends (7 of the 11 main title cast are people of color) and their experience as "outsiders" in a Fire Island party scene that is often dominated by white cisgender gay men.

FX'S POSE + AMERICAN HORROR STORY

POSE continues to be the shining example of queer storytelling, with 9 of its 10 series regulars in its final season identifying as LGBTQ+, 4 of which identify as trans and 8 as part of communities of color. And as the series gave its finale sashay in 2021, *American Horror Story's* 2022 season continued FX's contribution to queer representation with 7 of its 10 series regulars identifying as LGBTQ+.

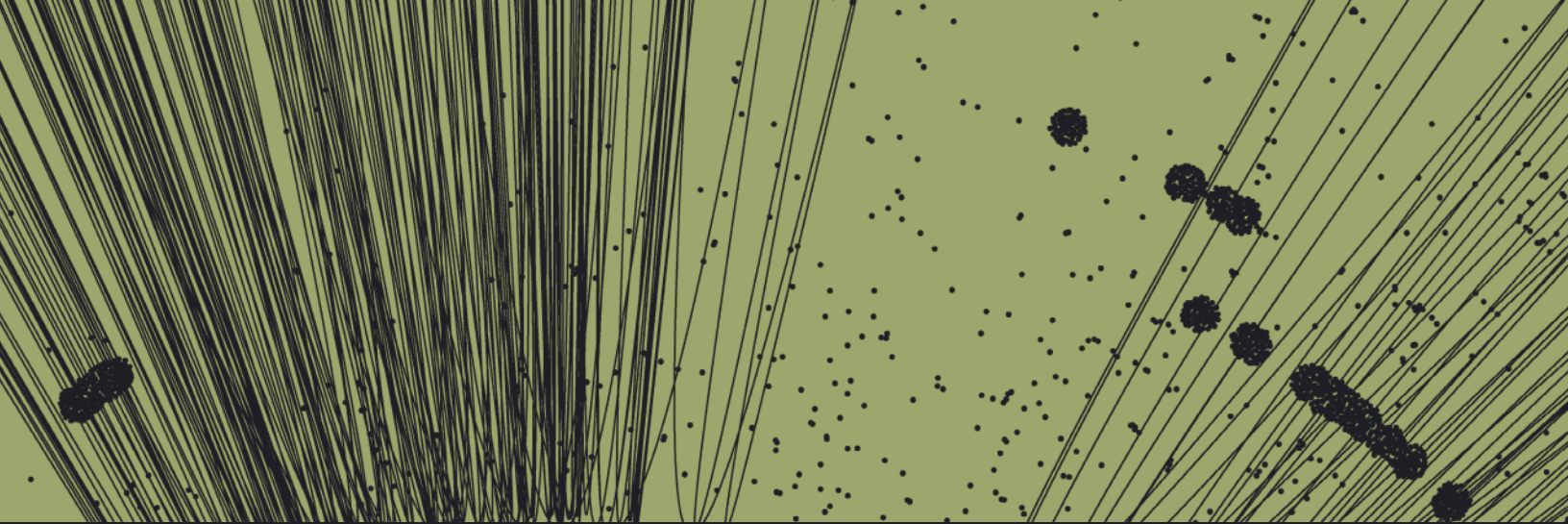


American Horror Story
2022: 7 LGBTQ+ series regulars



POSE
Final Season:
9 LGBTQ+ series regulars





PART 3

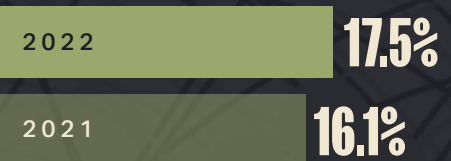
Black Representation

FILM

Black representation is still seeing the benefits of studio commitments made in 2020 to fund more projects with Black talent. Both in front of and behind the camera, film made strides in 2022. The number of main title roles held by Black talent increased by over 20% in 2022, resulting in 17.5% of total main title roles being held by Black talent. The number of films with at least one Black main title talent increased even more, up 30.1%. But what is perhaps the most interesting trend we saw when analyzing

the films released across these two years, is that the absolute number of movies with Black stories at the forefront decreased by 16.7%, meaning that there were only 35 movies with Black stories (5.3% of overall movies released in 2022). While on the one hand it is a good sign that there are more opportunities for Black talent in film and increasingly in films that aren't being type-cast specifically around Black narratives, it is disheartening to see fewer films depicting Black narratives.

% Main Title Roles Played by Black Talent



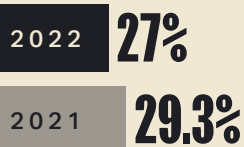
% Films with Black Stories at Forefront



SERIES

In 2022 not only did Black talent have a smaller share of total series regular roles (27% vs 29.3% in 2021), but the percentage of series with a Black series regular decreased as well (72.5% vs 75.5% in 2021). And just like in film, we saw fewer series that centered Black stories in 2022 (19.3% vs 22.4% in 2021).

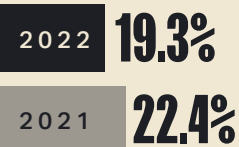
% Black Series Regulars



% Series w/ Black Talent



% Series w/ Black Stories



BEHIND THE CAMERA

Black directors also increased their share of films made in 2022, up to 8.6% from 7% in 2021. The percentage of series creators who are Black also increased in 2022 (14.8% vs 14% in 2021). However, while overall representation remains higher in series, not all of the trends are positive.

8.6%

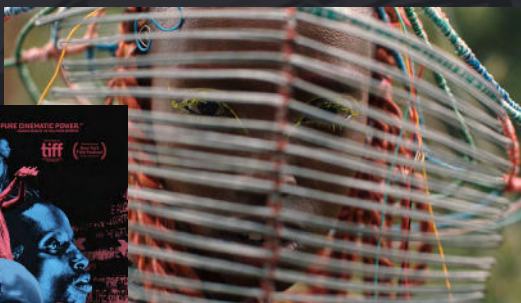
% of Black directors in 2022, up from 7% in 2021

14.8%

% of Black series creators in 2022 vs 14% in 2021



Neptune Frost
10 main title Black
cast members



Black
Panther:
Wakanda
Forever
8 Black main
title cast



The Woman King
5 Black main title cast



AFRICAN STORIES

In the past two years it was specifically African films and narratives centered on women that lead the charge in Black representation on screen. *Neptune Frost*, the film with the most Black/African representation in 2021 with 10 main title Black/African cast members, is an international film set in a village in Burundi and features a main character that is intersex. Marvel's *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*, while produced by an American studio, still centers on the fictional African nation of Wakanda and features 8 of 10 Black and African main title cast — 7 of which are women. The film was the first of

the Marvel Cinematic Universe to earn an Oscar nomination for acting, proving that Angela Bassett (who was nominated for Best Supporting Actress) truly did the thing.

Finally, *The Woman King*, in which 5 of 6 main title cast were Black and African and 4 of which were Black and African women, focused on the historical Agojie women warriors in West Africa. While it may not have earned Viola Davis an Oscar nomination, she would go on in 2023 to join the illustrious club of EGOT winners when she took home a Grammy for the recording of her memoir, *Finding Me*.

TYLER PERRY + CARL WEBER

Were it not for Tyler Perry and Carl Weber, there would be markedly less Black representation on TV. Over the past two years alone they have contributed a combined 12 shows across 21 seasons and 206 Black series regular roles. In both 2021 and 2022 their casts have accounted for over 10% of all Black series regulars on TV. Shows like Carl Weber's *The Family Business* (15 Black series regulars) and Tyler Perry's *Ruthless* (14 Black series regulars) delivered narratives that depict the Black experience and provided an overwhelming number of acting opportunities for Black talent.



Ruthless
14 Black
series
regulars

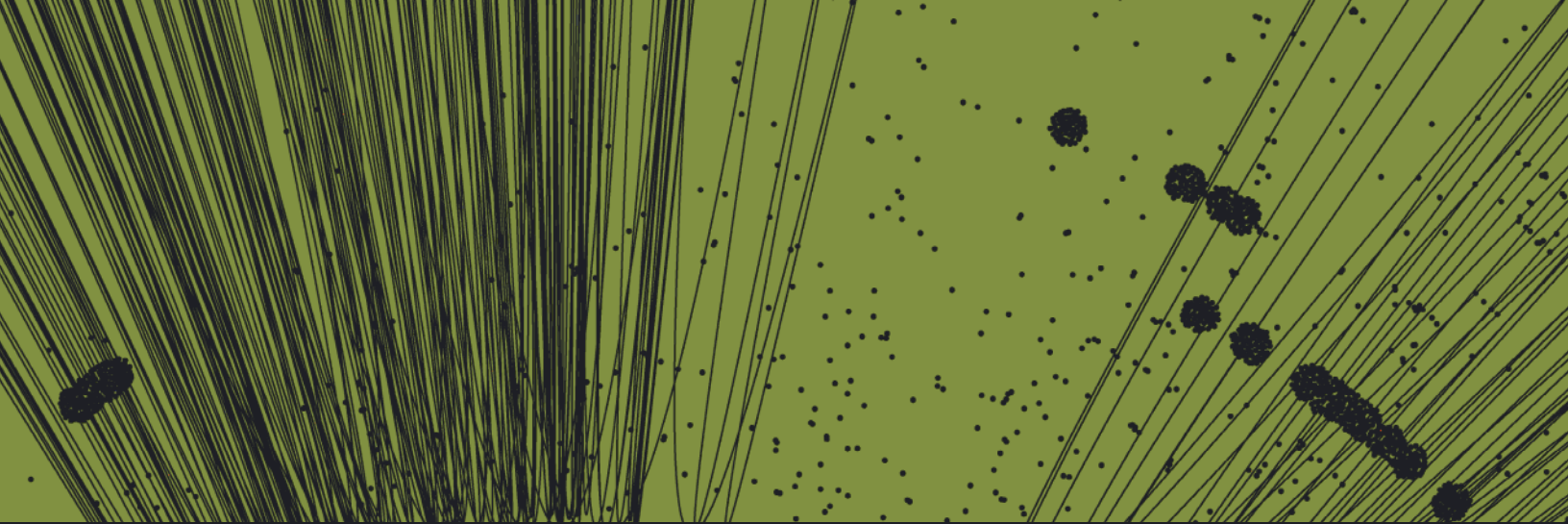


Tyler Perry



The Family
Business
15 Black
series
regulars





PART 4

Latin/Hispanic Representation

OVERVIEW

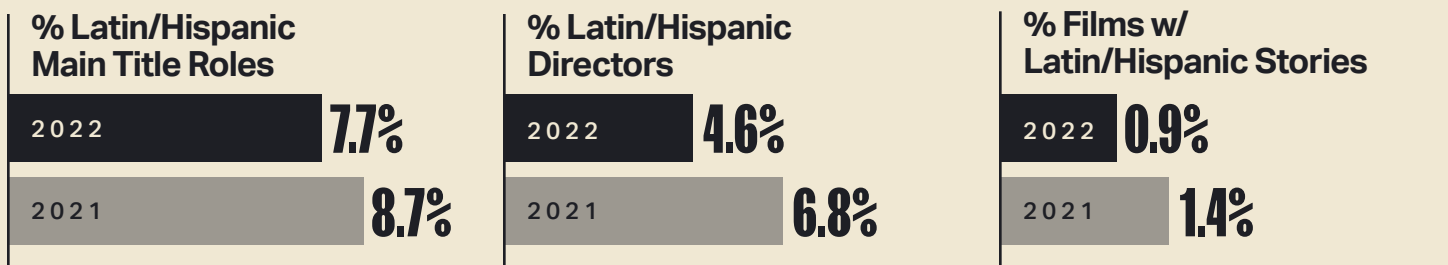
Despite being one of the fastest growing communities of the U.S. population, Latin/Hispanic representation has seen decreases across the board: on screen, behind the camera, in film and in series. And over the past two years, over 31.6% of all roles held by Latin/Hispanic series regulars were in exclusively Spanish language content — meaning there is even less opportunity for Latin/Hispanic consumers to see themselves in English language content.

31.6%

% of all roles held by Latin/Hispanic series regulars were in exclusively Spanish language content

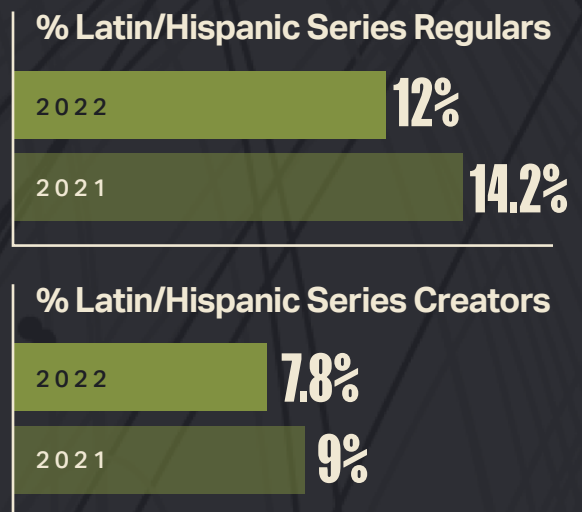
FILM 🎬

In film, main title roles held by Latin/Hispanic talent decreased to 7.7% (down from 8.7% in 2021) and director roles held by Latin/Hispanic talent decreased to 4.6% (down 6.8% in 2021). None of these are even close to reaching the rate of the U.S. population that identifies as Latin/Hispanic or Latino (18.9% in the latest 2021 population projections from the U.S. Census Bureau). The number of movies that actually center Latino narratives is even lower, with 6 films in 2022 or only 0.9% of all movies released that year.



SERIES 📺

Series representation — while marginally higher than Film — also decreased. The percentage of series regular roles held by Latin/Hispanic actors decreased from 14.2% in 2021 to 12% in 2022. This was caused by a decrease in the total number of these roles held by Latin/Hispanic actors, while the overall number of roles in series increased. The same trend held for series creators as well (in 2022 7.8% were Latin/Hispanic, vs 9% in 2021). It should then come as no surprise that there were only 15 series that centered the Latin/Hispanic experience, or only 3.1% of all series in 2022.





Control Z
31 Latin/Hispanic series regulars



Ilosi, El Espia Arrepentido
14 Latin/Hispanic series regulars



Money Heist
21 Latin/Hispanic series regulars



Monarca
18 Latin/Hispanic series regulars



SPANISH LANGUAGE (ON NETFLIX)

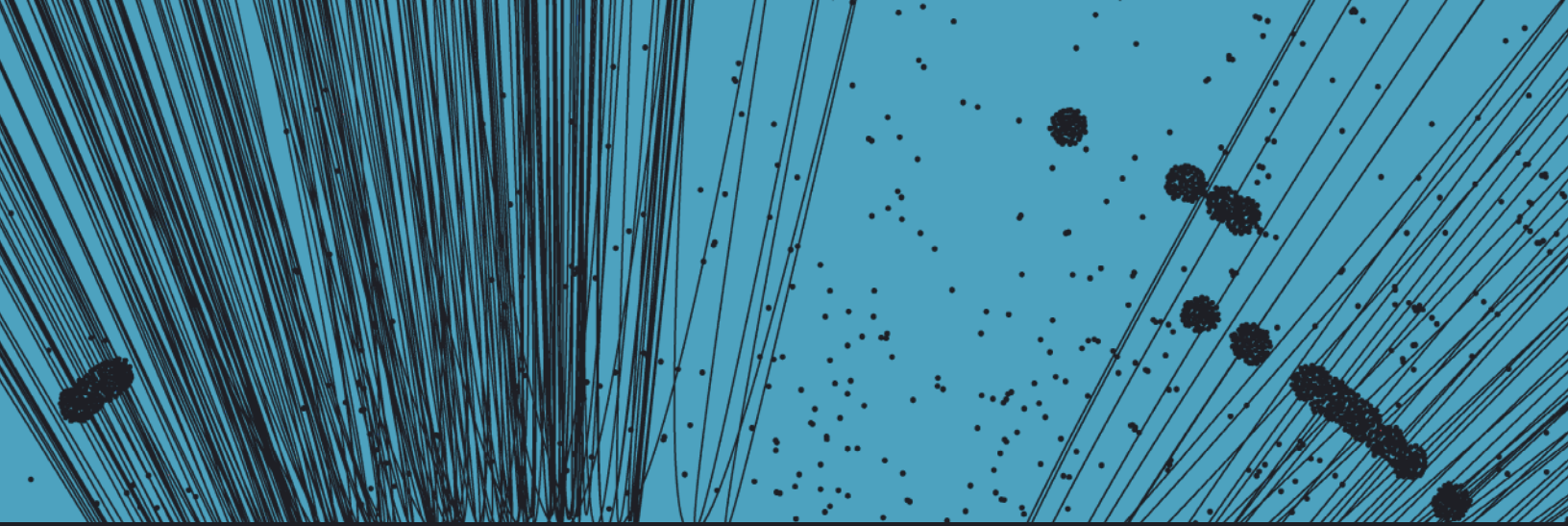
Over the past two years, 12 seasons of TV shows featured 15 or more Latin/Hispanic talent on screen. 11 of them were on Netflix, and 10 of those were Spanish language content (largely imported from Spanish-speaking countries). The talent in these 12 seasons represented 22% of all Latin/Hispanic talent in series over the past two years. The one show of the top 12 that wasn't on Netflix was Amazon's *Ilosi, El Espia Arrepentido*, another Spanish language show.

Overall, Netflix premiered 27 Spanish language seasons over the past 2 years, which featured 282 Latin/Hispanic series regulars or 28.6% of all Latin/Hispanic series regulars on TV in that time. The truth is, without Netflix's serious investment in Spanish language content — shows like *Control Z*, *Money Heist*,

and *Monarch* — there would be markedly less content with Latin/Hispanic talent.

Control Z is another example of intersectionality on display — 31 series regulars in a large ensemble story, 17 of whom were women. The story also follows a central character who is trans but is outed at school by a hacker. Because of the large scale of the cast, there are more opportunities to show the spectrum of Latin/Hispanic stories.

But the plethora of Spanish-language content only draws into sharper focus the lack of opportunities for Latin/Hispanic talent in English-language content, and illustrates Hollywood's inability to find roles for them in a way that isn't tokenized or relegated to only being viewed by a primarily Latin/Hispanic audience.



PART 5

Asian Representation

FILM

Asian representation in film and series has been able to keep pace with the overall growth in roles and production in the industry, and in some places make meaningful strides in representation. And like the trend seen with Latin/Hispanic talent, the growth in Asian representation in series is being heavily propped up by Netflix's investment in in-language content, largely Korean.

The total number of Asian main title cast and directors in film increased in 2022 (18.5% and 13.5% respectively). This meant that Asian talent represented 7.7% of all main title cast roles and 5.9% of directors roles. And certainly when it comes to critical success of these films, the 2022 release of *Everything, Everywhere, All at Once* set the bar. Despite this one very visible film's ability to tell a multidimensional story (both meta physically and emotionally) about an Asian-American family, there is still plenty of progress to be made in representing Asian stories in film. Only 1.8% of all movies released in 2022 centered on Asian stories.

18.5%

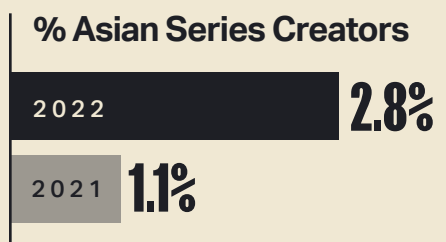
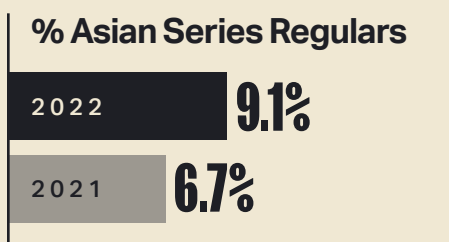
% Asian main title cast in 2022 films

13.5%

% Asian directors in 2022 films

SERIES

Asian visibility in series also grew, with Asian talent representing 9.1% series regulars in 2022 (up from 6.7% in 2021). Behind the camera, there were far fewer opportunities for Asian creators. Only 2.8% of series creators in 2022 were Asian, though that number was also up from only 1.1% in 2021. The brightest spot was perhaps that 38.4% of all series that premiered a season in 2022 had at least one Asian series regular, again a modest growth from 36.5% the year prior.





Squid Game
9 main title Asian
cast members



Money Heist: Korea — Joint Economic Area
13 main title Asian cast members



The Journalist
17 main title Asian
cast members



Big Bet
7 Asian main
title cast



Rookie Cops
6 Asian
main title
cast



NETFLIX AND ASIAN IN-LANGUAGE CONTENT

After the success of Netflix’s South Korean Drama *Squid Game* in 2021, it debuted a total of 6 additional in-language series in 2022. These shows included titles like *The Journalist* (Japanese, 17 Asian series regulars), *Money Heist: Korea — Joint Economic Area* (South Korean, 2 seasons in 2022 and 13 Asian series regulars in both seasons). Disney+ also followed suit and premiered two Korean-language series in 2022: *Rookie Cops* (6 Asian series regulars) and *Big Bet* (7 Asian series

regulars). This influx of in-language content meant that while *Squid Game* was the only Asian in-language series in 2021 thus only 3.7% of all Asian series regulars were from that type of content, in 2022 there were a record 8 series of Asian in-language shows that premiered in 2022 across Japanese, Korean, and Hindi. This also meant that in 2022 17% of all Asian series regulars had their roles from in-language series.

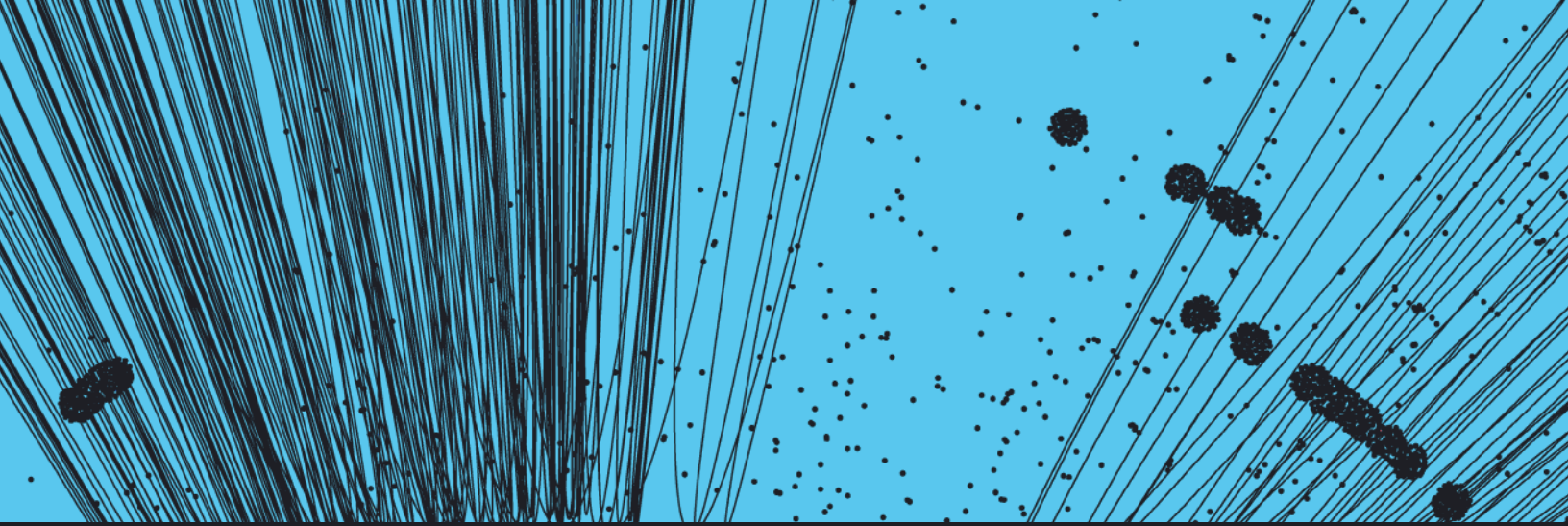
EVERYTHING, EVERYWHERE, ALL AT ONCE

A24’s *Everything, Everywhere, All at Once* set the bar for Asian representation and compelling Asian narratives. Not only were 5 of the 7 main title cast Asian, but this movie quickly became a critical darling after its release at SXSW. It would go on to sweep the 2023 Academy Awards and take home 7 Oscars, including Best Actress, for Michelle Yeoh; Best Supporting Actor, for Ke Huy Quan; and Best Picture, Hollywood’s most coveted prize.



Everything, Everywhere, All at Once
5 Asian main title cast





PART 6

Indigenous Representation

FILM 🎬

Indigenous representation remains at remarkably low levels across both film and series.

In film, representation became marginally better with 1.7% of main title cast identifying as Indigenous (up from 1.5% the year before). Behind the camera no one could argue the opportunities are almost non-existent for Indigenous talent: there were only 3 Indigenous film directors in 2021 and only 4 in 2022. And in terms of getting Indigenous talent and stories in front of audiences, in 2022 only 8% of films had at least one Indigenous main title cast member and only 3 films actually centered an Indigenous story in a way that wasn't exploitative or tokenized. This leaves Indigenous movie fans with an embarrassingly low number of opportunities to see themselves on screen.

1.7%

% Indigenous main title cast in 2022 films

4

Indigenous directors in 2022 films

3

Films centering around Indigenous stories in 2022

SERIES 📺

Representation in series wasn't much better. Only 2.3% of series regulars in 2022 identified as Indigenous (up from 2% in 2021), and there were 10 Indigenous series creators in 2022 (representing 2.2% of all series creators). There were also a larger number of series that featured at least one Indigenous series regular, a total of 58 in 2022 or 11.9% of all seasons that premiered that year. Unfortunately, only 3 of those series actually centered an Indigenous narrative.

% Indigenous Series Regulars

2022 **2.3%**

2021 **2%**

% Indigenous Series Creators

2022 **2.2%**

2021 **1.8%**

% Series w/ Indigenous Talent

2022 **11.9%**

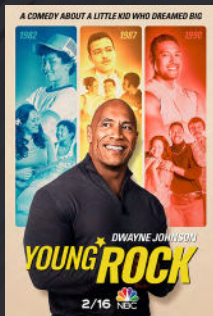
2021 **11.6%**



Rutherford Falls
2 Indigenous series regulars



Reservation Dogs
4 Indigenous series regulars



Young Rock
5 Indigenous series regulars

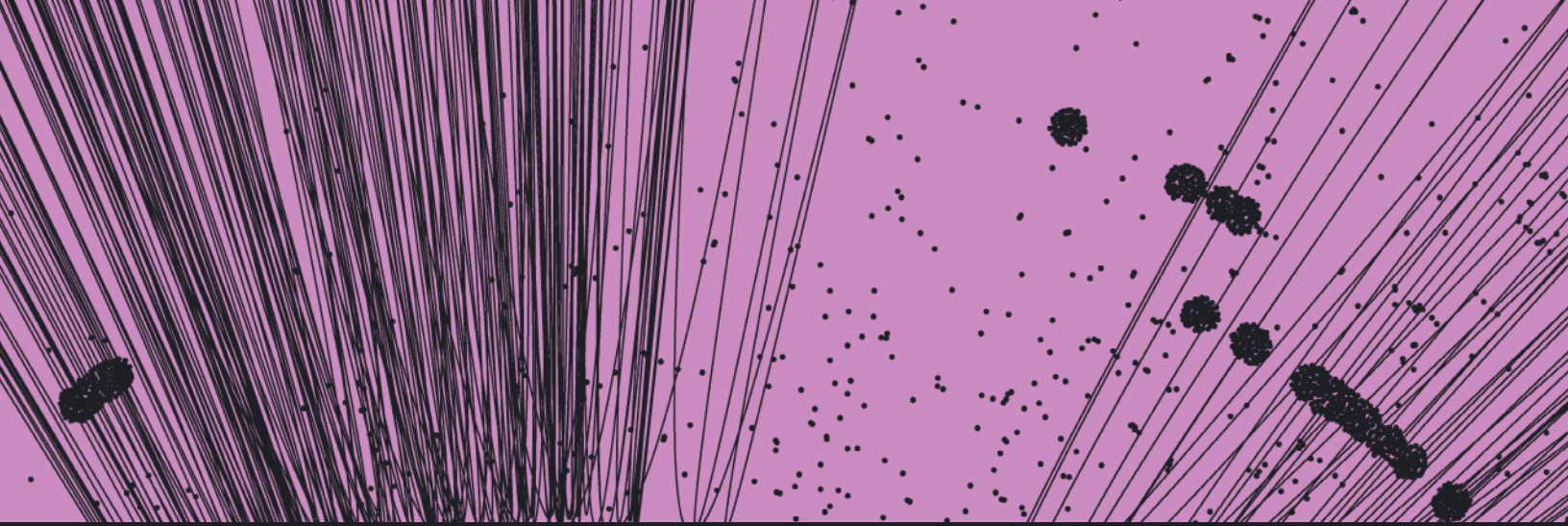


INDIGENOUS STORIES

The three series in the past two years that featured an Indigenous storyline show different angles of the lived experience of Indigenous people. NBC's *Young Rock* follows the fictional storyline of Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson running for president in 2032, but flashes back to stories based on actual moments in the actor's life growing up as a Black, American Samoan man in America. The series features 5 Indigenous series regulars. NBC had another series it premiered as a Peacock original, *Rutherford Falls*. The show ran for two seasons and featured central character Reagan Wells (played by Indigenous actress Jana Schmieding) whose story arc involves fighting for a cultural center

dedicated to her (fictional) Minishonka Nation people, despite the town being focused on a fight over a statue of the town's founder who was known for attacks on Indigenous people. The show credits 2 Indigenous series regulars.

Lastly, FX's *Reservation Dogs* (from Indigenous creators Sterlin Jarjo and Taika Waititi) centers on 4 Indigenous teenagers as they come of age as part of a reservation community in Oklahoma. All four friends are depicted by Indigenous actors: Paulina Alexis, Lane Factor, Devery Jacobs, and D'Pharaoh Woon-A-Tai. The show has had two seasons, one each in 2021 and 2022, and has been renewed for a third.



PART 7

Middle Eastern and North African Representation

FILM

Representation of Middle Eastern and North African talent in film and series remains minimal. Of films that were released in 2022, only 1.8% of all main title cast roles were held by Middle Eastern or North African actors (vs 1.6% in 2021), and only 1.7% of all film directors that year were of that background (down from 1.9% in 2021). What's worse, only one film was released across all of 2021 and 2022 that centered a Middle Eastern or North African narrative.

1.8%

Main title cast film roles held by Middle Eastern or North African actors in 2022 (vs 1.6% in 2021)

1.7%

Middle Eastern or North African film directors in 2022 (down from 1.9% in 2021)

SERIES

Middle Eastern and North African representation in series was also down, with only 2% of all series regular roles held by actors from that community (vs 2.2% in 2021). The number of series creators that identify as Middle East or North African was up to a paltry 5 (1.1% of all creators in 2022), vs the singular Middle Eastern creator that had a season premiere in 2021.



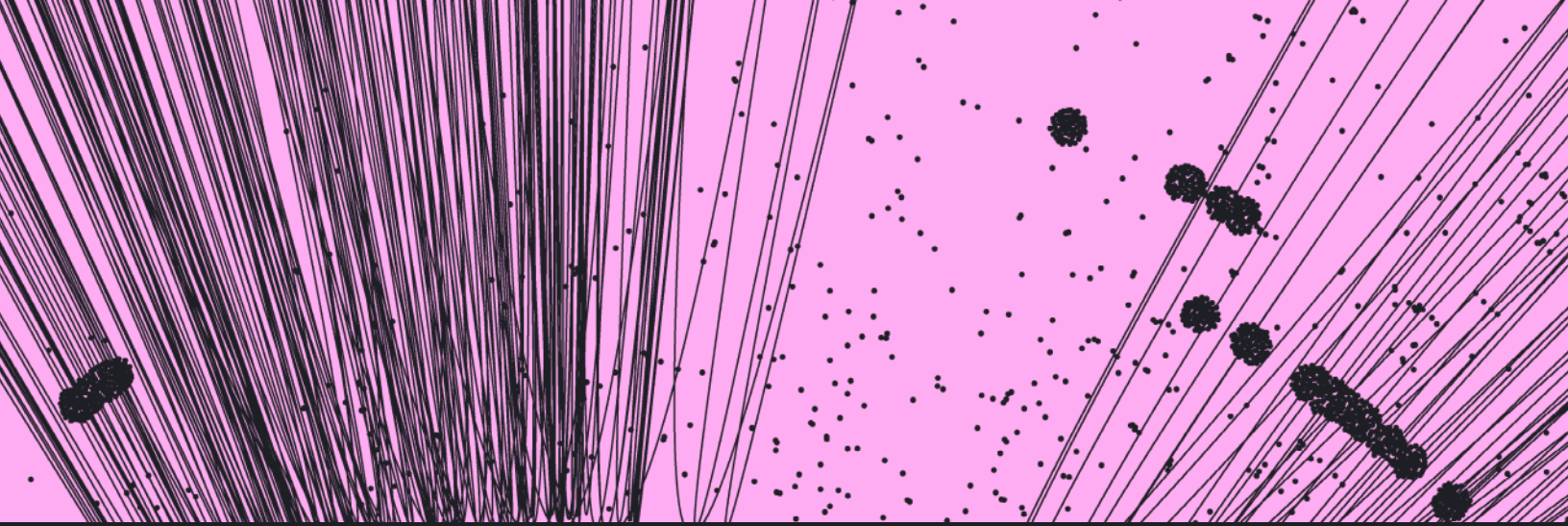
50M2
10 MENA series regulars

Finding Ola
6 MENA series regulars

NETFLIX FOREIGN CONTENT

Yet again, Netflix's impact on the representation is helped by its importing of foreign content into the United States. Three of the shows that premiered on the streamer in the U.S. in the past two years were from the Middle East and either in Turkish or Arabic — shows like Turkey's *50M2* or Egypt's *Finding*

Ola. But Netflix also imported shows from Sweden, Belgium, France, and Spain that all featured Middle Eastern or North African series regulars. Combined, these foreign-language films contributed over 1 in 5 of all Middle Eastern/North African series regulars seen on TV in the past two years.



PART 8

Disability Representation

FILM

Visibility for the Disabled community is by far and away the worst out of all the groups we analyzed. In part, this is because disability is not something that is always visible or that film and series talent openly discuss or identify with. So while our data set is reliant on talent publicly identifying as part of a given community, the numbers are still tragically low.

For example, there were only 8 main title cast roles over the past two years for people who identify as having a disability. It's hard to make a comment about progress one way or the other with a number that small, but it did decrease from 5 roles in 2021 to 3 in 2022. This meant that only 0.5% of films in the past two years had a main title cast member with a disability.

There wasn't a single film director in the past two years that openly identified as having a disability.

Hollywood's inability to hire disabled talent didn't stop it from making movies about these communities though. It released a total of 15 films that centered disabled narratives. The big question that this raises is why studios and networks wouldn't hire the people from this community whose stories are being used to make money.

0.5%

% films with main title cast roles for people with a disability

0

film director roles for people with a disability

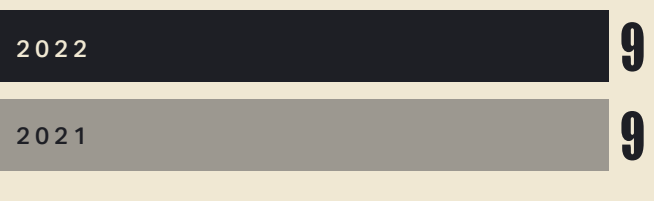
15

films that centered disabled narratives

SERIES

The numbers are equally as disheartening in series. Over the past two years there were 18 series regulars who identify as having a disability (9 each in 2021 and 2022). And there was only one series creator who identified as having a disability in that same period: *Special's* Ryan O'Connell.

Series Regulars Who Identify as Having a Disability




RYAN O'CONNELL

If it seems like Ryan O'Connell is carrying the weight of disabled visibility on his back, it might be because he is. He alone accounts for over 10% of series regular roles that went to actors with a disability over the past two years — for his role in Peacock's reboot of *Queer as Folk*, and then for Netflix's *Special* in which he is both the creator and leading actor. Ryan is open about his journey as a gay man with Cerebral Palsy, a story he explores both in his show *Special* and his book the show is based on called *I'm Special: And Other Lies We Tell Ourselves*. As the only openly disabled creator in any series over the past two years, his voice has been critical to centering the experiences of the disabled community.



 **Queer as Folk**
1 disabled series regular



 **Special**
Ryan O'Connell created and stars in this Netflix show and is the sole disabled series regular



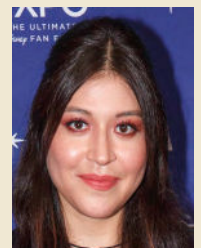
IT TAKES TWO

Casting for actors with disabilities is not as simple as putting a token actor on screen. There are multiple roles that are required to provide the full spectrum of visibility. Some roles require the character's disability to be central to the storyline and cannot be unlinked from the narrative; the other side of the spectrum requires casting teams and directors to see the ability of any role to be filled by an actor with a disability.

Alaqua Cox's role in Disney+'s *Hawkeye* is a great example of the first side of the representation spectrum. Cox, who was born deaf and is part of the Menominee and Mohican Indigenous nations, played the role of Echo. The role called for an actress with both of these identities (Indigenous and deaf) as they are a central and functional part of the

character's storyline. This kind of storytelling meaningfully displays the lived experience of someone from these communities and changing the identities of the character would substantively change the story.

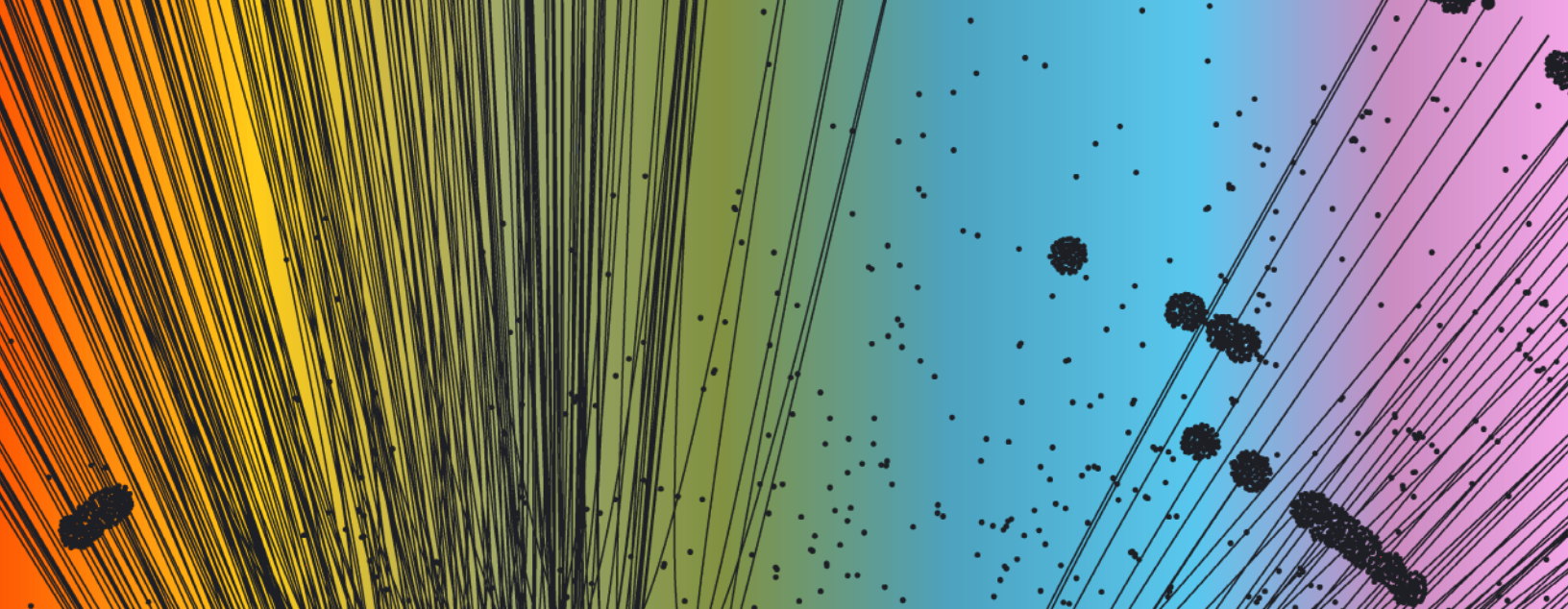
The other (and equally as needed) kind of role is demonstrated deftly by Lauren Spencer in HBO Max's *Sex Lives of College Girls*. Spencer plays fellow freshman on campus Jocelyn, a role that could very easily been written for an able-bodied actor with minimal impact on the overall narrative. But by having Spencer in the role, the show consciously chooses to create a world where the inclusion of people with disabilities is a no-brainer. And even more to the show credit (and Spencer's), Jocelyn isn't excluded from the sexual exploits because of her disability.



Alaqua Cox



Lauren Spencer



About Luminate

Luminate is the preeminent entertainment data and insights company, unleashing access to the most essential, objective, and trustworthy information across music, film and television, with data compiled from hundreds of verified sources. Today, the company maintains its more than 30-year legacy of accurate storytelling by powering the iconic Billboard music charts, while also acting as the premiere database for the television and film industries. Working closely with record labels, artists, studios, production companies, networks, tech companies, and more, Luminate offers the most valued source of comprehensive, independent, and foundational entertainment data that drives industry forward. Luminate is an independently operated company and a subsidiary of PME TopCo., a joint venture between Penske Media Corporation and Eldridge.