



For Immediate Release

September 22, 2021

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**Breakthrough Launches 'OUR STORIES IN VIVID COLOR', A Documentary Short Film Series and Story Archive For BIPOC Girls and Gender Nonconforming Youth During Hispanic / Latinx Heritage Month**

*The series explores the lived experiences, joys and dreams of youth artists and activists who are making a difference.*

New York, NY - September 22, 2021 — [Breakthrough](#), a leading culture-change and media organization, launches an unprecedented initiative: [Our Stories In Vivid Color](#) comprises a documentary short film series, a creative incubator for young writers and artists, and a user-generated story archive to amplify the lived experiences and dreams of young women, girls and gender non-conforming youth of color, ages 14 - 24. The docu-series premieres **October 4, 2021** on [Youtube](#), with two new episodes every week.

The short films are directed by **Moni Vargas**, an AfroLatina, Emmy-nominated filmmaker who also serves as Breakthrough's creative and program director. "We're at a pivotal moment in history and young girls of color are transforming the world with their astonishing courage, activism and artistic expression. They're using their creativity to advocate for racial justice, gender equity, disability and LGBTQ rights while finding joy and building community in the process. By amplifying the nuanced, lived experiences of young, BIPOC storytellers, we hope to build deeper understanding and change the way we think of youth of color in America today."

Authentic, insightful and celebratory, each short documentary is an independent work of art. The activism begins with the production process. Diverse representation on both sides of the camera underscores Breakthrough's commitment to inclusive practices and makes a strong comment on an industry resistant to change. In this first season, filmed on location in 2019 and early 2020, our storytellers share dreams, aspirations and identity, illuminating the ways in which a generation is navigating the social landscape, pre-pandemic. The project has continued through the pandemic, with certain themes -- activism, wellness, and self-care -- taking on even deeper meaning.

The [Our Stories In Vivid Color](#) platform invites all BIPOC girls and gender non-forming youth across the United States, Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico to step forward in numbers and share their stories, through a variety of mediums: video, audio, photography and written word.

"I'm not a man, I'm not a woman; I am something completely different," says **Indigenous storyteller Charlie**, in a gentle voice that belies a journey to liberation fraught with challenges. "It's really special to be heard and have a space to speak out," shares **Diana, a nonbinary, immigrant artist living in Los Angeles**.

With over twenty years of groundbreaking human rights campaigns, Breakthrough is a pioneer in using 'culture to change culture'. With *Our Stories In Vivid Color*, Breakthrough continues its radical journey of



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innovation as it collaborates with activists, artists' collectives, media-makers and storytellers on the road to social justice.

## OUR STORIES IN VIVID COLOR



### Diana:

Diana Castro (they/she), 21, is a young, nonbinary, artist, actor, and performer of Peruvian descent living in Los Angeles, California. Diana uses art to explore their identity as a double-immigrant, and connect with their family's heritage and culture.



### Cheyenne:

Cheyenne (she/her), 24, is a Latina woman model, actress, writer, student, and disability rights advocate. As a wheelchair user, she has competed in the Jr. Paralympics in track for 12 years and has a passion for media representation.



## OUR STORIES IN VIVID COLOR



### **Kailey:**

Kailey (she/ her), 17, is a Dominican-American woman living in Queens, New York. Kailey, who is passionate about family, community, and diverse media representation, reflects on her experience growing up as a person of color navigating two cultures.



### **Tomiko:**

Tomiko (she/ her), 15, is a dancer, activist, and community leader. She has been dancing since the age of 6 with the non profit organization Culture Shock L.A., and founded her own club, "Girls Can Create," at Eagle Rock High School, which inspires young women to express themselves through art, activism and entrepreneurship.



### **Brittany:**

Brittany (she/her), 23, shares her story through the COVID-19 pandemic as someone with a disability, along with her passions for self-care and mental health awareness.





## OUR STORIES IN VIVID COLOR

**"MY FILIPINO-AMERICAN BACKGROUND... MAKES UP THE MAJORITY OF MY WORK AND WHO I AM."**

OUR STORIES IN VIVID COLOR by breakthrough



### **Eutalia:**

Eutalia (she/ her), 23, is an artist and illustrator based in New Jersey. Eutalia's work emphasizes her background as a Filipina American and the bridge between the two cultures.

**"WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE QUEER, TRANS AND DINÉ IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY?"**

OUR STORIES IN VIVID COLOR by breakthrough



### **Charlie:**

Charlie (they/ them), 24, is a Diné (Navajo) scholar born and raised within the central part of the Navajo Nation. Charlie reflects, analyzes, and critiques what it means to be queer, trans, and Diné in the 21st century on their personal blog, [dineaesthetics.com](http://dineaesthetics.com).

**"THE BODY IS POLITICAL. I'M NOT THE FIRST ONE TO EVER SAY THAT, AND I DEFINITELY WON'T BE THE LAST."**

OUR STORIES IN VIVID COLOR by breakthrough



### **Ta'Lor:**

Ta'Lor (they/ them), 20, is an actor, model, writer, and artist living in New York City. Ta'Lor's finds community by surrounding themselves with other queer people of color, and finds joy in providing a safe space for folks to express themselves.



## OUR STORIES IN VIVID COLOR



### Nia:

Nia (she/her), 19, is an actor, poet, activist, and performer. She often explores themes of women's rights, racial and social justice. In her beautiful, searing poem, "Where Is My Independence Day?" Nia expresses what The 4th of July holiday means to her.



### Vladonna:

Vladonna Rose (she/her), 19, is an actress, model, and proud trans, Latina woman from Los Angeles, California. Vladonna shares her experience coming out as a young trans woman, and also stresses the importance of being involved in her community.



### Summer:

Summer (she/her), 24, is a multi-racial singer, songwriter and actor of Armenian, Jewish & Japanese descent. After moving from Hawaii to attend university, the racial makeup of her school caused her to examine race more critically.



### **About Breakthrough**

For twenty years, Breakthrough has harnessed media and popular culture to spark narrative change at the intersection of gender, sexuality, racial justice, and immigrant rights. Through nuanced, authentic storytelling, the organization uplifts the voices and experiences of marginalized people, challenging systemic barriers and building their cultural power. It is known for its impactful advocacy on immigrant rights and global campaigns against gender-based violence, meeting people where they are and moving them to action.