

Chapter 01 – Introduction

Announcer: A Norman, Oklahoma resident, Yancey Red Corn plays a former Osage chief in *“Killers of the Flower Moon.”* He traveled to Cannes Film Festival for the movie’s premiere.

Yancey’s ancestry includes a great-grandfather who was poisoned during the era when the Osage were dying mysteriously.

In this interview, Yancey talks about his experience of acting while Martin Scorsese is behind the camera. What it felt like to see himself on the big screen and his emotional reaction to seeing the entire film.

Listen for his answer to the question, “What is the film about?”

Listen to Yancey Red Corn on the oral history website and podcast of VoicesOfOklahoma.com.

Chapter 02 – 11:03 Poisoned

John Erling (JE): My name is John Erling and today’s date is June 29th, 2023. So, Yancey, would you state your full name, please?

Yancey Red Cord (YRC): Yancey Garfield Red Corn. And “Red Corn” is two words.

JE: Alright. But let’s go back to Yancey — unusual name. Where does that come from?

YRC: Actually, a lot of people would think that that’s a — well, they always ask me: “Isn’t that a Native American name?” And I’m like, “No, it’s a character

out of a book called *The Cimarron* by Edna Ferber.” And they made two movies — one in the late ‘30s and another in the 50s with Glen Ford playing Yancey Cravat (C - R - A - V - A - T). He was kind of one of the main characters in the book and my dad liked the name. He was a publisher for a newspaper called “*The Osage News*” back — I think that’s what it was called. It was up in the Osage reservation. It was kind of a — he had a lot of wanderlust. He liked living there and he liked being around the Indians. And he was kind of a person who protected and wrote stories about the — in favor of — the tribes back then. So that was the character, Yancey, out of the book *The Cimarron* that was made into two movies. And he just really liked the name, so he convinced my mom that they should name me Yancey.

JE: Well then I’m going to proceed to “Garfield.” Why Garfield?

YRC: Garfield is my great-great-grandmother’s middle name, from the Gray side. I’m half Red Corn and half Gray. My grandmother was a Gray — and they’re Osage, full-blooded Osage — and then my grandfather was a Red Corn. So, he named me Garfield after my great-great grandmother whose name was Jenny Garfield Gray.

JE: I’m in my studio here in Tulsa and we’re talking to you by phone, obviously. Where are you today?

YRC: I’m in Norman, Oklahoma.

JE: Your birthdate?

YRC: ... Is 12-05-1963. (December 5th, 1963)

JE: And your present age would be?

YRC: 59 years old.

JE: Okay, and where were you born?

YRC: Pawnee, Oklahoma. Just right outside the Osage reservation. I like to say I was born in the Osage reservation, but it's — they had an Indian hospital there, the Pawnee Indian Hospital — and I was born there.

JE: Okay. So let's talk a bit about your family genealogy because it also ties you to ... what's become known as the Reign of Terror and the book and film, "Killers of the Flower Moon". I think we go back to your great-grandfather, is it?

YRC: Yes. My great-grandfather was Raymond Red Corn, Sr. He was born in 1881. And his dad was [indiscernible], which meant "No sense, no regard for his safety." He was a great warrior. He was probably born in the 1850s. And it's spelt differently. Even if I spell it — with the way it sounds — it won't come off as people will read it. It means no self-regard, no sense for your safety. He was named after finding a neighboring tribe and fighting multiple ones. When he came back they gave him a new name and it was, like, he went in there and kinda took a bunch of warriors and came out and won. So they called him [indiscernible]. He had two sons. One was Raymond Red Corn, Sr., born in 1881 and the other one was ... He's called "Wakon Iron," but his other name was George Red Corn. He was born in 1885; he was the younger brother. But my great-grandfather was Raymond Red Corn, Sr.

JE: He's tied to this story, too, and you may talk about this — wasn't he poisoned?

YRC: Yes. He was poisoned during this Reign of Terror and my dad and his siblings — he had an older brother, two younger brothers and a younger sister. They never got to meet their grandfather because they were all born in the 30s and 40s. My dad was born in 1936. But his 3 sons, Raymond Red Corn II and Harold Red Corn — who was my grandfather — and Dudley Red Corn (Douglas Red Corn), they tried to get them to investigate. But just like the movie "Killers of the Flower Moon", it was a conspiracy and nobody was going to do anything. They just said it was an accident. And, so, they couldn't get anybody to investigate it.

JE: So you, to this day, know details of that poisoning of your great-grandfather?

YRC: No. Just that, before, he didn't trust his help; and he told his sons to not really come out there. It was kinda like he didn't really ... In my opinion, I think — I don't think that he was resigned. It was what I call "the invisible enemy." He didn't know who he could trust. And he knew that people were poisoning other tribal — other people in his tribe — so he was like, "Man, you can't trust anything around here." And it's not like he was paranoid. It was really happening. And, so, he was in good health. It was just one of those things. I mean, not "just one of those things," it was one of those — he was one of the victims of the Reign of Terror.

JE: And did he have a full headright?

YRC: Oh, yeah. I think he had a couple. He had a lot of land, too. A lot of land that was stolen. Him and his brother, Wakon Iron (or George Red Corn), their guardian stole a bunch of land from them and sold it. They had a lot of money. They just were taken advantage of by their guardian. Wakon Iron, he bought what was called the Duncan Hotel. And it's written in my dad's book, but they — my dad — doesn't mention any names. It's all called fictitious names. And he calls it "The Grand Hotel," but it was the Duncan Hotel in Pawhuska. In the book it's "The Grand Hotel" but in real life it was the Duncan Hotel, which it was a very nice, swank hotel. They used his money to buy it — to put up the loan. And then what they did — they bankrupted it and sold it to one of the guardian's friends. I think that's how it happened. And that happened a lot. So it was basically his hotel, but they used a move that a lot of guardians did back in the day.

JE: So, about when — what was the year of the poisoning of your great-grandfather?

YRC: This is the interesting part. It was 1931. And a lot of people, after they read "Killers of the Flower Moon" or they think "Well, the FBI came in ... " Back then they were the Bureau of Affairs — the federal government. But after that, that made a name for them. They became the Federal Bureau of Investigation under Hoover. But what was interesting was that after they solved this specific crime and convicted William Hale and Earnest Burkhart and the others, they just packed up and went back to D.C. The tribe actually had to pay 'em to come out and do the investigation. Kinda

like pulling teeth, but they finally came out to help out. And then they just picked it up and the killings just kept going on. It wasn't like they quit. My grandparents were paranoid in the 30s and they were helicopter parents over my dad and them. You know, they needed to know exactly where they were and what they were doing and where they were going. So there's a lot of generational — or intergenerational — trauma.

JE: Yep.

YRC: ... that comes from that. Yeah, my grandparents ... they lived through it, too, in the 20s, so they experienced all of that. You know, they didn't know who to trust. And, again, it goes back to me saying it was the invisible enemy. It was all around them. They didn't know who it was.

JE: Right. Because the invisible enemy included law enforcement officers, elected officials — that was part of that “invisible.”

YRC: The local pastors, the local mortician, the morgue... Like you said, the police officers, the government officials, the mayor, all the businessmen and — I'm not going to say all of the attorneys — but all of the attorneys all became guardians. That small town ... I don't know if it was 100 and something attorneys in that small town? And you know, they became guardians and they took care of it, and then they all became wealthy.

JE: Yeah.

YRC: They became holders of the land.

JE: We should point out that it was the federal government who felt the Native Americans, the Osage, didn't know how to handle their money, so the federal government says “Guardians must be appointed for each one of these people.” Isn't that true?

YRC: That's correct. Right.

JE: Right.

YRC: We were “incompetent.” Well, I mean, that’s what they state we are legally. We’re “incompetent.” And, actually, if you want your money to stay in trusts now — like your oil and gas royalties — as an Osage, and you want it to not be taxed, you still just say you’re “incompetent.” So I’m “incompetent.” You know, they’ve changed laws since then, so it’s been a lot better as far as the Osage being in control of their own headright and oil and gas royalties and such.

JE: Yeah. The book that your father wrote was “A Pipe for February,” and it was from the Osage perspective.

YRC: That’s correct.

JE: Right.

YRC: He wrote that; it was published in 2002.

JE: And Martin Scorsese actually mentioned it at the Cannes Film Festival.

YRC: Yes he did and we just republished the book. It just came out this month. And there’s a new forward in there by Martin Scorsese and then David Grann who wrote “Killers of the Flower Moon” wrote a blurb on it. So it got his approval. He thought it was a great book. And it helped Scorsese understand a little more of the — what the Osages were thinking and gave it a little color for “Killers of the Flower Moon,” which in its own right, is a great book.

JE: Yeah.

YRC: David Grann is just a great writer. And he just did some incredible research. My dad said that he kinda pinpointed it with his research.

Chapter 03 – 16:27

Rolling, Rolling, Action!

John Erling (JE): You are in the film and you play the part of a chief.

Yancey Red Corn (YRC): Yeah. I play Chief Bonnicastle. He was Chief of the Osages in the 1920s. He helped get the federal government out to start investigating.

JE: Let's go back to your acting experience that qualifies you to be an actor here. Didn't you have some experience at the Oklahoma City Theater Company?

YRC: Yes. I was in a — and this is in 2012 or 2013 — I was in a production of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and I played Chief Bromden who Will Sampson made famous in the movie. And it was quite an experience. It was rigorous work, because every night we had to rehearse. And I didn't have much experience — basically, I had none — and everybody around me had experience. And I thought that when I got the character, I didn't know that the play was different than the movie and Chief Bromden had a lot of lines. (Laughing)

JE: Oh, my!

YRC: So it was different than the movie, so I really had to bear down and memorize and I got a lot of help from my fellow actors. It was — I think it helped out as far as ... every night, you know, Thursday through Sunday, when we'd do the production, you couldn't mess up, so I think that helped out in *Killers of the Flower Moon*, as far as learning my lines and being ready when we were filming. I was even able to ad-lib if we needed to, kind of. So I was all set. I think that helped out.

JE: So, you decided to audition for the film *Killers of the Flower Moon*. What made you make that decision?

YRC: Well (Chuckling)... A friend of mine was a local casting guy that just did the local background cast, and he was in charge of getting all of the ... "cattle calls" is what they're called ... in Oklahoma City, and Tulsa, and Pawhuska, and all these different towns in Oklahoma. He would get the local hotel and they would set up and then... It was a "cattle call" because they would publicize it and say "Hey, we're having, for this movie, *Killers of the Flower Moon*, we're taking people that want to be in the movie to

come and audition.” And basically what it was was everybody showed up to that town — Oklahoma City, Tulsa, or Pawhuska — and it was just a line of a thousand people sitting out. And they waited. And when you went in, you put your name into a computer, and then they take your measurements, and then they take a picture of you. You state your name and then they say “Thank you.” The majority of them would just leave. And then, I was in Tulsa, working on a business meeting, and the guy that was in charge of that called me and said, “Man, you gotta do this. Just do it.” Because he knew I was in that theatre thing and he always said I should be an actor, so he was like, “just do it.”

And I go, “Man, I don’t wanna wait in line...” And he goes, “If you just show up, I’ll put you at the front of the line.” So I showed up, he put me at the front of the line, I did all of that. And then after they took my picture, some lady tapped me on the shoulder and said, “Follow me.”

And I followed her and I started off doing just a little bit of dialogue with another person and then they said, “Okay,” and then I went into another room and did a little more dialogue with another person, until at the very end it was in front of a camera. I didn’t realize it because of the dark — you couldn’t see the camera, but the lady I was doing the dialogue with — which, it was a lot longer dialogue — was Ellen Lewis and she’s one of the biggest casting directors around.

So they kinda get to filter you out as you go through that and then... And then I didn’t hear anything for, like, a year because COVID hit. And so I forgot all about it. And so then I got a call in November of 2021 and they said who they were and where they were from, and they said, “Are you available of March 2022 to September of 2022 — you can’t go on vacation or anything like that.”

And I said, “Yes.”

And they said, “This doesn’t mean anything; we just wanted to check that off of a box.”

And then I didn’t hear from them until January when they said, “Here, we want you to...” They emailed me a long — like a soliloquy — of ... It was a

council person talking to other council members and other people — tribal members. I forget. It was a page and a half or maybe two pages. And this was in January of 2022 and they said, “Just — if you have somebody videotape it, it has to be 1-minute and 30 seconds at the most.” And they said, “You can memorize it all and do it just like that, or you can make it your own, but if you make it your own, you have to do the first four or five sentences exactly like it’s written, and then your last four or five sentences exactly how it is.”

So I memorized it, and then I actually made it my own in the video audition I did. And I had a friend of mine video it. But I couldn’t get it down to 1-minute and 30; and finally, it just kept staying at 3 minutes. Finally, I said, “Man, what are the odds I’m going to get a speaking role in this movie? I’m kinda tired of just doing this; just email it to him.”

And then in February, they called me, and they said, “Hey, we need you to sign an NDA.” So I sent it to him — my partner, who’s an attorney, and told him to look it over real quick. He said, “Yeah; that looks fine.”

And I signed it, emailed it back, and then they called me. Like, I swear, it was just a — it was probably 2 minutes after the received my email and then it was the head casting person that called and said, “Hey, we wanted to congratulate you and say you have the role of Chief Bonnicastle.” It’s principally a speaking role in Flower Moon. And that’s how I got it.

And then I had to show up. And then I had to go for costume measurements. I had to drive out to Bartlesville because they rented out a big building there across from Conoco where the airport is. So I had to go up there for measurements, and meet the head costume person, and then makeup, and hair, and all that kind of stuff. And I think I started in March — end of March or first of April, I can’t remember. I’ll have to look at my records, but that was my first scene. And then, you know. It went on — off and on, off and on, off and on — until the end of September or 1st of October; I can’t remember that either. But that’s how that happened.

JE: But the thrill of finding out that you were going to have a speaking part. That had to be wonderful for you.

YRC: Yeah; it was crazy. I didn't know how to react. I found out later that a lot of people cry. You know, they're in a Scorsese movie. And I didn't really know how to react. I still was thinking, "Is this the background...?" It was just surreal. And then at the end of the call they go, "Well, the Apple lawyers are going to be calling you tomorrow and going over your contract." And I was like, "Okay, this is not a background role." (Laughing)

JE: (Chuckling) Right. Right.

YRC: But, yeah, it was quite an experience.

JE: So, then ... you know you're going to do your first scene. And what was that scene?

YRC: Let's see... I was supposed to do a roundhouse scene and that was going to be my first scene, but that's when Robert De Niro hurt his leg. And he had to stay in New York City to kinda get it back to where he was able to get around. And so they — I was already ready for that; I had everything memorized — and then that got called up in the last minute. And then they said, "Well, we're going to do your other scene then next — the next week." And I memorized that. It was with Jesse Plemons, who plays Tom White — a government official agent who J. Edgar Hoover picked to do the ... he's the old Texas Marshall. He's played by — his name's Tom White and he's played by Jesse Plemons, who's a great actor. I was Chief Bonnicastle. And we were having a meeting and I'm talking to him. That was my first one. I had all my lines memorized and it worked out really well, I thought.

JE: So then Martin Scorsese is there, watching you do this?

YRC: Yeah; he's behind the camera. It's crazy. That was my first really long speaking line. The other time, the first time I was on there, it was in another scene and I didn't have any speaking lines, but I was one of the main people in the background stuff. And I remember walking onto the set and going into a house.

"Marty," I called him. "Marty." I'm walking in, he sees me.

He goes, "Yancey! Yancey Red Corn! Man, I've been waiting to meet you. I

really like your voice.” And then he gives me a fist bump.

And then I go, “Man, it’s great to meet you.” And I keep walking in to get set up where I need to be in my scene. And I’m just going “this is really crazy.” And, like, he knew who I was. I mean, obviously, he saw my audition, and he was the main person that picked me, you know, in the end, so... So he’s brilliant — really, a genius, so.

JE: Bring us to the set. How do they do that? “Roll film!” or “Quiet on the set!” or how did they do that just before.;

YRC: Yeah, well, it starts. Yeah, you have “Quiet on the set!” and then it’s “Rolling! Rolling! Rolling! Rolling!” and then it’s “Action!” That’s what it is.

JE: Did you have to do many takes?

YRC: Yeah, well, yeah. You had to take a bunch of takes and do the lines over and over and over again because they would do the camera from one angle, then they’d do it from another angle, then another angle, and another angle. And then, you know, like, they’d be close up on the person that I’d be talking to.

You know, first, it’s a close-up of me talking; then it’s a close-up of the other person talking. And then they go further back, and then maybe they go up above us. You know — here, there... It’s just depending on how they felt like changing it. I mean, they did it from all sorts of angles. I mean, like, some — I did a thing for Reservation Dogs, like, 3 or 4 weeks ago for an episode. And I was amazed at how quick they moved. And it was so different from in the movie.

JE: Oh.

YRC: See, they’re on a different budget and they have to move quicker. So, I had to do my lines over and over and over again with the same person and the people in it, and they just did it from a different angle, which could kinda get — I mean, I’m not complaining — but it could kinda get...

There was some times I had to get out of the complete way and turn my

neck. And I was leaning against the camera, and the camera's hot, and it felt like it was burning my face when I was doing my lines — as the camera's doing the close-up on the other one. But I had to move close and it was really hot outside, and it was just really interesting. That was just one particular part, you know, they move the cameras all different around and even right beside me.

JE: You worked hard there and then you saw the other actors, and DiCaprio, and De Niro ... Aren't you impressed on how hard these actors work?

YRC: Yes. Yes. Starting from Scorsese, he was just working. He was in Pawhuska — I don't know where he lived, maybe Tulsa, or Bartlesville, or whatever — but he was there all the time and always working and re-writing the scripts. And then just the massive amount of memorization that DiCaprio and De Niro had to do and Lily Gladstone and Jesse Plemons — just the amount they had to do. And, what's more interesting with DiCaprio, De Niro, and Lily Gladstone, they had to learn Osage, because they speak Osage in the movie — not all the time, but they did — so they had to take lessons from our language consultant. Osage language consultants are teachers, because we have a really good program of an emergent school for Osages that teaches the language, so these teachers are really good.

For example, when I was out in Cannes, I was talking to Robert De Niro and he said, "How's Chris Kodie doing?" And he's an Osage language teacher. And he goes, "Man, tell him... Actually, videotape this and send it to him." So I videotaped him talking to my nephew Chris Kodie and he goes, "Man, thank you, Chris. You were very helpful as my language consultant and it really helped out."

To have to memorize the lines and also — DiCaprio, De Niro, and Lily Gladstone — all having to also learn how to speak Osage with the right accent and the right guttural accent that Osages have is just amazing. They're just brilliant. Brilliant.

JE: Did you have any scene where you'd interact with those three that you just mentioned?

YRC: Yes! I was in a big roundhouse scene and I was kind of the main person talking because I was the chief and it was a roadhouse scene. Ya know, I had to interact with everybody.

JE: So DiCaprio, De Niro, Gladstone ...

YRC: ... and Lily Gladstone.

JE: So you were interacting with these three. That had to be something to ...
(Laughing)

YRC: Yeah; I did a speech — and I don't know or not if it's in the movie, not all of it's in the movie. Scorsese asked me to do a little ad-libbing. He called it "scatting." And I did, and after — it was interesting. I walked on the ... He asked me to come out and talk to him, so I'm talking to him and he said, "Okay; I just want you to say whatever's coming to your mind. Scat. Scat it."

So, right when he tells me, I say, "Okay." And I'm walking in and I'm sitting down, and they're going "Rolling, rolling, rolling, action!" While they're saying "rolling, rolling, rolling," I'm going "I have no idea what I'm going to say."

But then I pretended I was my great grandfather during this time and what he was going through and just, you know, and just started talking to everybody like that. You know, what was going on at the time .. and how I was feeling and how I knew everybody else was feeling — kinda talking to everybody there. And after it was done, and they said "cut," Scorsese comes out and he said, "Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful!"

De Niro came out and patted me on the shoulder and said, "That was great."

And then as I was walking out, DiCaprio gave me a fist bump, and he said, "Man, that was a great speech!"

JE: (Laughing) Haha! Isn't that wonderful?! That's —

YRC: Thanks, yeah! And, as I was walking out, I don't remember what I said.

JE: (Laughing)

YRC: I mean, I don't have a clue. But it was, you know, it was maybe my great-grandfather enveloped me and — because I honestly had no idea what I was going to say.

JE: He was “channeling you,” as we say, I guess, right?

YRC: Yeah. Yeah.

JE: Well then, what you just talked about — that ad-lib — and you have seen the film, obviously... Did that make it into the film?

YRC: Some parts.

Chapter 04 – 9:06

Viewing the Film

John Erling (JE): Let's talk about first watching the film at the festival. You were nervous sitting in on this big — was it a huge auditorium? Kinda set the scene for us.

Yancey Red Corn (YRC): Well, it was a pretty big auditorium. And I don't know how many people were in there, you know, maybe 3,000? Something like that? That original premiere was a hard ticket to get. My cousin and I, Tahlee Red Corn, who has a big role. He and I are the same age and we grew up together. And his dad, Jim Red Corn who was a great artist, and my dad, Charles Red Corn, an author, they were best friends. They were only like a year apart. And so they were best friends. And so, he and I, we grew up together. I mean, we were together all the time. And we were the same age, so. We picked up and we got to ride together to the red carpet. And it was crazy — traffic, you had to just keep stopping, stopping, as we were going there. And my cousin asked the driver, he said, “What's the deal? Why is the traffic going so slow?”

And he goes, “It’s because of you guys and the red carpet.”

So, you know. We were some of the last people to walk on the red carpet before Lily Gladstone and Leo DiCaprio and Martin Scorsese. So they were behind us. It took us awhile to get to the red carpet, but when we got out, it was just bananas. People were asking for your autograph and taking photos and stuff before you got to the red carpet, and then you got to the red carpet, and they said to hold up. And then after everybody got there, the main people to go on the carpet, they said who was going out there with who. And I walked out there with Jesse Plemons, Tatanka Means, William Belleau, and then my cousin, Tahlee Red Corn.

JE: Hmm (In amazement).

YRC: But before we got out of the car, he and I were talking, we were like, “What are the odds that you and I, born on the Osage Reservation, we’re the same age, and we grew up in the Osage Indian Village in Pawhuska would be in this limo going to the red carpet — and our dads are best friends ... and what are the odds that would happen?” And we were just like — we were just completely dumbfounded.

But, before we got out, we said, “We’re going to walk in like we walk under arbor where we do our tribal dances — Osage In-Lon-Schka dances — like we belong there. Because we’ve been dancing since we were 3 years old. You know, so we go: “We’re gonna represent. We’re gonna walk in like we belong on the red carpet.”

JE: Yeah.

YRC: And that’s why we wore a blanket to give a shout-out or to show our respect to all our Osage tribal members. I’m wearing my blanket, my cousin Tahlee’s wearing a blanket that was given to him by his son and they’re like — we wore ‘em like the old Chiefs would wear ‘em. I wore mine one way and he wore his another. We just had our Osage tribal dances in June. The last one had just ended Sunday. And everybody I walked to that were Osage were just like — somepeople were in tears. They were like, “I wish my grandmother was alive to see that because you two represented

the Osage tribe and you represented us well.” And I had a lot of people thank me for it.

JE: That’s great. You also wore a Stetson hat. Why?

YRC: (Chuckling) Because my dad wore ‘em, and my grandfathers wore ‘em, and my great-grandfathers wore ‘em. I’ve got a picture of my great-grandfather wearing one in the 20s — 24, 25 — and he’s got one of ‘em on that looks basically exactly like the one I wore, so it was a nod to all of them, too.

JE: Good. Alright, so let’s bring you to... You’re sitting down, you’re going to watch the film. Who are you sitting — are you sitting near the stars when you’re watching?

YRC: Yep. The stars were in the first row right in front of me, and then in front of them was like an opening to where you’d have the orchestra seating as they say. There’s a big opening between that first row and then, you know, you have the other rows that are in front of them. And that’s where Scorsese’s sitting, De Niro’s sitting, Scorsese’s wife’s sitting, DiCaprio, Lily Gladstone, Jesse Plemons, and the sisters Janae Collins, Jillian Dion, Cara Jade Myers. Those three played the sisters. There was four of ‘em. Lily Gladstone and then the sisters. So they were there.

And then on the second row there was ... Me and my cousin Tahlee sat directly behind Scorsese and William Belleau and Tanaka Means. I think to the right of my cousin Tahlee was a couple of wives of some of the actors that were in front of us.

JE: Chief Standing Bear said he sat next to Robert De Niro?

YRC: Yes. He was to the ... There was Scorsese and to the left of him was his wife, then De Niro, then Chief Standing Bear. And then, like I said, we were behind Scorsese. At the end, there was a big, long ovation.

JE: This would be the first time you see it and it’d be the first time you saw yourself on the screen. Give us the feeling about that, and what it was you saw, and how you felt.

YRC: Well, when I saw myself on the screen, I'm like: "Wow, do I really look like that?" And then I'm like, "Wow, do I really sound like that?"

JE: (Laughing)

YRC: (Laughing) So, you know, I can see how actors are self-conscious. You know, it makes you really self-conscious. And also you think, "I could have done that better."

JE: Oh.

YRC: "I could have did that better, I could have did that better..." But, I'm not going to question Scorsese and Thelma Schoonmaker, who's the editor. What really pretty much brought me to tears at the beginning is there was a couple of scenes.

They used my dad's book at the beginning of the movie. And when I saw that, and my cousin Tahlee's in it, it was just — it was really overwhelming. I just wish my dad was around to see that because it's a great thing. And it's a great opening of my dad's book. And, you know, Apple paid us for it. It was well done, obviously, by Scorsese. So when it opened up, I was just like, "Wow."

JE: Yeah.

YRC: Then, you know, through the whole movie, it was just "Wow." And it's because Marty and his team, and one of the other producers, Marianne Bower, they really did their research. Like reading my dad's book, like reading other books ... And then, working with the community, using the Osage language consultants, using Osages to work on the costuming, using Osages for set design, using Osages for — the Osage ranchers they had and asking them, you know, they've been around there since 1920s and there families have and asking them, you know, "Is this what the horses would've looked like? Is this how they rode in the 20s? Is that kind of how it is?"

So they really used Osages as consultants. I was one of the consultants —

just one. They used elders that are more elder than I am. Like, they're in their late 70s, early 80s, and really had them around and using their expertise. So I think that really shows up in the movie.

JE: Was it tough to watch the entire film? Because your family and other families that you knew were involved in this, and didn't this make it difficult to watch?

YRC: Yes. Yes. I had a hard time reading Killers of the Flower Moon because it's so vivid. Yeah, the movie, you know, it made me cry several times through it because it's just so emotional. I knew my sister, who I took as my plus-one. And one of the reasons I took her as my plus-one is because my sister's a doctor and she could afford, because they weren't paying for my plus-one to go over there, but they gave me a plus-one ticket. And she took off to London to stay with one of her friend that she went to Dartmouth with and then she flew and met me in France when I got there and she just stayed with me and went to see it. But she didn't sit with me. The guests sat further back. Somehow, after the movie, she came down and found me and just couldn't stop crying. I mean, that's how emotional it was. She was just like, "Dad would have just loved this." And on, and on, and on. It was really, really emotional. So I'm sure it's going to be really emotional for all the other Osages when they see it.

JE: Right.

Chapter 05 – 8:00

What Is the Film About?

John Erling (JE): So if I ask this question, it's a pretty open question: What is the movie about?

Yancey Red Corn (YRC): Okay, I'm gonna give you a straight answer. It's about — and I mean this — it's about white supremacy. It's about colonialism. It's about the — and I say white supremacy because it was the whites that were in charge and they were the ones that were rigging it so they would get all the land and the money from the Osages because they felt the

Osages didn't deserve it, and a lot of them were doing it in the name of Jesus Christ, you know? In the name of Christianity. And, you know, it's better to civilize the Indian and they don't know how to handle this, they don't know how to handle money, they don't know how to do this, but we can take care of it and we can do this and we can do that with it, and it's best for them. It's best for the Osages that we take care of this and then tell them what to do and how to live. And it's about how a race or certain set of people can be so not-looking-at-others-as-their-equal but as somebody they have to control and somebody that, if they aren't controllable, they kill them in order to get what they want. And that's been happening for a long time. And that brings up, when I was walking around the hotel the day after that Sunday, these indigenous, these people from other countries, these people of color, and they were like directors from other countries. They were there for their own movies. And actors, too, for their own movies. It didn't have to do with anything because they were with Killers of the Flower Moon, but they got to get a ticket to the movie. And I got stopped by so many people of color that were, like, in tears going "This movie needed to be made. And this is a movie not just about the Osages; this is about my country in Africa. This is a movie about my country. This is a movie about my country in Malaysia or Indonesia or South America". So they were coming to me and saying that and they were, like, really emotional about it and why it needed to be said. And they were of the same thought as me. I mean, it is about colonialism and how it's still going on even now. So that's what I got out of the movie and I think that, since this show is Voices of Oklahoma, I think Oklahomans need to see this, you know, because it happened on the Osage reservation within Oklahoma and this is Oklahoma history. But, what you need to learn from it is, we need to treat each other equally and love each other. Everybody — we're all the same. You know? We should all just treat each other as we would treat, you know, ourselves. I was going to say "our neighbor" but in the Osages, when the Reign of Terror was going on, our neighbors were killing us.

JE: Yeah.

YRC: That wouldn't be a good thing for me to say (Laughing).

JE: No.

YRC: But, and I don't mean to be glib, but that's just what exactly what I think it was about.

JE: Yes. And then we can reference the 1921 Race Massacre. There are some similarities here, as well, and I think it's referenced in the film, isn't it?

YRC: Yes. I mean, that's — that things are going on in 1921... When some of the murders were going on, that was going on; that was the 1921 Race Massacre of Tulsa. You know, my relatives would go and go through Black Wall Street and shop and then go downtown to Tulsa and shop there. Probably got Osage prices there, too. You know, if it was brown people coming in to all the finer shops in Tulsa, they'd jack up the prices for the Osages, you know?

JE: Because you were so wealthy.

YRC: Yeah.

JE: What do you want people to take with them, and maybe you've already said it, after viewing the film? What is it we should take away from this?

YRC: Well, and I did already say it, I want them to take away — I want all local Oklahomans to watch it. Whether you're a liberal democrat, whether you're a republican, whether you're a libertarian. Whoever you are, whether you're a baptist, a catholic, a buddhist, I want everybody to go see this movie and I hope they get out of it that we shouldn't repeat what happened in the 1920s. But we keep repeating stuff like that over and over again and it's almost like we're getting ready to repeat it again, but I hope that when people come out...I just think that everybody needs to watch this and come out with a loving heart to all beings. And that's what I hope comes out of this. And I know that's what Marty wants to come out of this, too.

JE: Yeah. The film is three-and-a-half hours long and I'm wondering if some think, "Oh, is it that long? I don't know if I want to go watch that." But, did you feel that it was long? How did it feel to you?

YRC: Even though I knew the story, it didn't feel long to me. And from everybody else I've talked to at Cannes, they loved it, and they loved the length, and they thought it needed to be that long to really get into the depth of what was going on. I think if it was two hours, it wouldn't have been able to come across.

JE: I just recently watched The Titanic film, and that was 3 hours and 12 minutes, and it obviously won many, many Academy awards. So, the length didn't hold it against that. And speaking of Academy awards, don't you think there will be many that will come as a result of this film?

YRC: Yeah, I don't see how it can't. I don't see how it can't be up for best picture, best cinematography, best music, and then best actor and actress with Lily Gladstone. De Niro was great as Hale. And so, I mean, there's a lot of — and there will be best supporting actors in it, too. Yeah, I don't see how it can't be up for all the awards.

JE: Yeah. Well, since I'm a voting member, I'm going to vote for you, how's that?

YRC: (Laughing)

JE: (Laughing)

YRC: Well, I'll take that. (Laughing)

JE: Alright. Well, Yancey, I sure appreciate this insight going behind the scenes and I want people to listen to this and other interviews I've done with Chief Standing Bear, with Joe Conner there in Fairfax, and I've interviewed David Grann — I'm putting them all together so they can listen to all this before they even see the film, so it's great background for that viewing.

YRC: That's great. Yeah. David Grann's a great friend. And I know Joe Conner, and I know Geoffrey Standing Bear, so those are all well picked.

JE: Yeah. Okay.

YRC: They're all knowledgeable.

JE: Well, I hope to meet you someday, Yancey, and I do appreciate you visiting with me this morning.

YRC: Okay! Well, I appreciate it, too, sir.

JE: Alright. Thank you!

YRC: Have a great day.

JE: You too.

YRC: Uh-huh.

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