

NYWIFT || New York Women in Film & Television

January 21, 2020

For Immediate Release:

MEDIA ALERT

NEW YORK WOMEN IN FILM & TELEVISION (NYWIFT) CELEBRATES THE WOMEN OF THE 2020 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL WITH TWO SPECIAL EVENTS

WHAT: New York Women in Film & Television (NYWIFT), the preeminent professional association in the country dedicated to equality for women in the entertainment industry, will hold two special events in Park City, Utah, during the Sundance Film Festival. First, in partnership with AMC Networks, Women in Film LA (WIF) and ReFrame, NYWIFT co-presents **“Women on the Front Lines: Changing the Game.”** Sundance Institute reports that 46% of directors competing in this year’s festival are women, up 6% from 2019. While there’s still further to go, these statistics show that progress is possible when concerted efforts are made to address systemic biases. The panel will bring together leading women from the front lines in entertainment to discuss gender parity, inclusion and the way forward. Then, NYWIFT will celebrate the women of the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, including 15 projects by NYWIFT members, with a **cocktail reception at SundanceTV HQ**. The event will also feature a special tribute to IFC Films in celebration of its 20 years championing independent cinema and supporting women filmmakers.

WHEN: Friday, January 24, 2020
1 – 2 PM: “Women on the Front Lines: Changing the Game” Panel
5 – 7 PM: NYWIFT Reception Celebrating the Women of Sundance and IFC Films

WHERE: SundanceTV HQ
268 Main Street
Park City, UT 82930

WHO: **Panel: “Women on the Front Lines: Changing the Game”:**
Cynthia Lopez (Opening Remarks), Executive Director of New York Women in Film & Television

Kirsten Schaffer (Opening Remarks), Executive Director of Women in Film, Los Angeles

Ekwa Msangi (Panelist), Writer / Director, *Farewell Amor*

Haifaa al-Mansour (Panelist), ReFrame Rise Director, Director of *The Perfect Candidate*

Arianna Bocco (Moderator), EVP, Acquisitions and Production for IFC Films, and IFC Midnight

****Additional panelists to be announced.**

NYWIFT and IFC Films Cocktail Reception:

NYWIFT will celebrate the women of Sundance, including the 14 films at Sundance featuring the work of 15 of its members, with a cocktail reception at SundanceTV HQ:

***Farewell Amor* (U.S. Dramatic Competition)**

Director & Screenwriter – **NYWIFT Member Ekwa Msangi**

Reunited after 17 years, an Angolan immigrant is joined in the U.S. by his wife and daughter. Now strangers sharing a one-bedroom apartment, they discover a shared love of dance that may help them overcome the distance between them.

***Never Rarely Sometimes Always* (U.S. Dramatic Competition)**

Advisor – **NYWIFT Advisory Board Member Caren Spruch**

A pair of teenage girls in rural Pennsylvania travel to New York City to seek out medical help after an unintended pregnancy.

***Save Yourselves!* (U.S. Dramatic Competition)**

Producer – **NYWIFT Member Mandy Tagger**

A young Brooklyn couple head upstate to disconnect from their phones and reconnect with themselves. Cut off from their devices, they miss the news that the planet is under attack.

***The 40-Year-Old Version* (U.S. Dramatic Competition)**

Producer, Director, Screenwriter, & Starring – **NYWIFT Member Radha Blank**

A New York comedy about a down-on-her-luck playwright who thinks the only way she can salvage her voice as an artist is to become a rapper...at 40.

***Wander Darkly* (U.S. Dramatic Competition)**

Producer – **NYWIFT Member Shivani Rawat**

New parents Adrienne and Matteo are forced to reckon with trauma amidst their troubled relationship. They must revisit the memories of their past and unravel haunting truths in order to face their uncertain future.

***A Thousand Cuts* (U.S. Documentary Competition)**

Producer – NYWIFT Member Carolyn Hepburn

A look at how Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte uses social media to spread disinformation.

***Us Kids* (U.S. Documentary Competition)**

Producer – NYWIFT Member Lori Cheadle

Students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida speak out against the national gun-violence epidemic after a mass shooting at their school kills 17 people.

***Tesla* (Premiere)**

1st Assistant Director – NYWIFT Member Joan Bostwick

The intriguing life of Nikola Tesla, as a young man in NYC.

***Black Bear* (Next)**

Producer – NYWIFT Member Julie Christeas

Production Accountant – NYWIFT Member Patricia Beaury

A female filmmaker at a creative impasse seeks solace from her tumultuous past at rural retreat, only to find that the woods summon her inner demons in intense and surprising ways.

***I Carry You With Me* (Next)**

Screenwriter – NYWIFT Member Heidi Ewing

An epic love story spanning decades is sparked by a chance encounter between two men in provincial Mexico. Based on a true story, ambition and societal pressure propel an aspiring chef to leave his soulmate and make the treacherous journey to New York, where life will never be the same.

***La Leyenda Negra* (Next)**

Producer – NYWIFT Member & Intern Alicia Herder

In Compton, a soon-to-be undocumented teenager fights for her right to stay in America while risking her family, her friendships, and her first love.

***Embrace* (Indie Episodic)**

Executive Producer – NYWIFT Member Amy Emmerich

Against the backdrop of Oakland, California, Iranian American medical student Kat tries to save her Iranian family by taking on a surprising side hustle. The show is a culturally diverse, quasi-surrealist dramedy that

captures the ever-increasing need for human connection and the subsequent commodification of it.

Meats (Shorts Program 2)

Director, Screenwriter, Producer & Actress – **NYWIFT Member Ashley Williams**

A pregnant vegan struggles with her newfound craving for meat.

Love Fraud (Special Events)

Director & Executive Producer – **NYWIFT Member Heidi Ewing**

Series examines how Richard Scott Smith preyed on unsuspecting women, luring them in with charm and promises before robbing them and vanishing.

The event will also feature a special tribute to IFC Films in celebration of its 20 years championing independent cinema with a particular focus on the work they have done to elevate women filmmakers. *Attendance is invite only*

ABOUT NYWIFT

New York Women in Film & Television (NYWIFT) advocates for equality in the moving image industry and supports women in every stage of their careers. As the preeminent entertainment industry association for women in New York, NYWIFT energizes women by illuminating their achievements, presenting training and professional development programs, awarding scholarships and grants, and providing access to a supportive community of peers. NYWIFT brings together 2,500 women and men working both above and below the line. NYWIFT is part of a network of 50 women in film chapters worldwide, representing more than 15,000 members. NYWIFT is a nonprofit 501c3 public charity.

For more information visit www.nywift.org.

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