

LA FiLM FESTiVAL

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LA FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES WINNERS AND THANKS ITS GENEROUS SPONSORS

LOS ANGELES (June 22, 2017) – Today the LA Film Festival, produced by Film Independent, announced the winners of the 2017 Festival at the Awards Reception presided over by Festival Director Jennifer Cochis and Film Independent President Josh Welsh. The Festival’s juried awards include the U.S. Fiction Award, U.S. Fiction Cinematography Award presented by Aputure, World Fiction Award, Documentary Award, LA Muse Awards, and Nightfall Award, as well as the Short Fiction Award and the Short Documentary Award. Audience awards are presented for Fiction Feature Film, Documentary Feature Film, Short Film and Web Series. Festival Guest Director Miguel Arteta (*Chuck & Buck*, *The Good Girl*, *Beatriz at Dinner*) was awarded the Spirit of Independence Award at the event for his work advancing the cause of independent film and championing creative freedom. Film Independent President Josh Welsh also took the opportunity to thank the more than 60 generous sponsors, funders and media partners without whom the Festival would not be possible.

“This year the LA Film Festival stretched all across our city, from downtown to the beach,” said Festival Director Jennifer Cochis. “We’re so grateful to the film lovers who packed our theaters in support of our storytellers. Today we celebrate the winners of the LA Film Festival Awards!”

“Producing the LA Film Festival is a huge undertaking, with filmmakers from all across the globe, venues all across the city, and hundreds of volunteers helping us pull it off,” said Film Independent President Josh Welsh. “We truly could not do it without the extremely generous support of our many sponsors.”

The **U.S. Fiction Award** went to **Elizabeth Rohrbaugh and Daniel Powell** for *Becks*, which made its World Premiere at the Festival. The **U.S. Fiction Cinematography Award presented by Aputure** went to cinematographers Christian Sorensen Hansen and Pete Ohs for *Everything Beautiful is Far Away*, which made its World Premiere at the Festival. Jury Members: Duncan Birmingham, Riley Stearns and Emily Ting.

The **World Fiction Award** went to **Diego Ros** for ***The Night Guard (El Vigilante)***, which made its North American Premiere at the Festival. Jury Members: Caroline Graham, Lincoln Jones and Javier Fuentes-León.

The **Documentary Award** went to **Amanda Kopp and Aaron Kopp** for ***Liyana***, which made its World Premiere at the Festival. Jury Members: Katherine Fairfax-Wright, Paul Federbush and Matt Holzman.

The **LA Muse Awards** were given to two films, one fiction and one documentary. The **LA Muse Documentary Award** went to **Mark Hayes** for ***Skid Row Marathon***, which made its World Premiere at the Festival. The **LA Muse Fiction Award** went to **Savannah Bloch** for ***And Then There Was Eve***, which made its World Premiere at the Festival. Jury Members: Susan Burke, Juan Iglesias and Kimrie Lewis-Davis.

The **Nightfall Award** went to **Amanda Evans** for ***Serpent***, which made its World Premiere at the Festival. Jury Members: Jimmy Tsai, Clarke Wolfe and Andrew Curry.

The **Award for Short Fiction** went to ***A Funeral for Lightning***, directed by **Emily Kai Bock**. The **Award for Short Documentary** went to ***Black America Again***, directed by **Bradford Young**. Jury Members: Kim Adelman, Jonni Cheatwood and Naomi Ladizinsky.

The **Audience Award for Documentary Feature Film** was given to ***Skid Row Marathon***, directed by **Mark Hayes**.

The **Audience Award for Fiction Feature Film** went to ***The Keeping Hours***, directed by **Karen Moncrieff**.

The **Audience Award for Short Film** went to ***Swim*** directed by **Mari Walker**. The **Audience Award for Web Series** went to ***High & Mighty***, directed by **Carlos Lopez Estrada**.

Announced earlier were the winners of The Danny Elfman Project: Rabbit and Rogue competition:

13, Justine Quinones
***The Bridge*, Matt Eckholm**
***Dandelion*, Catherine Fauteux**
***A Day for Manuel*, JB Minerva**
***Gamelan*, Cornelia Nicolăeasa**
***A Glory Sewn*, Travis Dixon**
***Lakesong*, Douglas Gibbens & Konstantina Mantelos**
***Natural Promotion*, Sean Oliver**
***Urge*, Pieter Coudyzer**

Elfman offered free licenses of his *Rabbit and Rogue* album to filmmakers on indi.com as the catalyst and soundtracks to their short films. The winning films screened at the Festival. The jury was comprised of Gus Van Sant, McG, Rob Minkoff, Sam Taylor-

Johnson, Paul Haggis and Suzanne Todd.

The LA Film Festival kicked off on Wednesday, June 14 with the World Premiere of Colin Trevorrow's *The Book of Henry* and will close later today with the LA Premiere of Matt Spicer's *Ingrid Goes West*. Special Screenings included Sofia Coppola's *The Beguiled*, Ric Roman Waugh's *Shot Caller*, Dave McCary's *Brigsby Bear* and featured conversations with Fred Armisen and Carrie Brownstein of *Portlandia*, Ava DuVernay, Amanda Marsalis, DeMane Davis, Kat Candler and Cheryl Dunye of *Queen Sugar* to list but a few of the events this year. The Festival also celebrated producer Nina Yang Bongiovi (*Roxanne Roxanne*, *Songs My Brothers Taught Me*, *Fruitvale Station*, *Dope*) at the Women Who Lead Luncheon.

The Festival's five competitions featured 37 World Premieres, 2 International Premieres and 9 North American Premieres. Across the competition categories 42% of the films are directed by women and 40% are directed by people of color.

Awards were given out in the following categories:

U.S. Fiction Award

Winner: *Becks*, directed by **Elizabeth Rohrbaugh and Daniel Powell**

Screenwriter: Elizabeth Rohrbaugh, Daniel Powell, Rebecca Drysdale

Producer: Alex Bach, Elizabeth Rohrbaugh, Daniel Powell

Cast: Lena Hall, Mena Suvari, Christine Lahti, Dan Fogler, Rebecca Drysdale, Hayley Kiyoko, Michael Zegen

Film Description: After a crushing breakup, an aimless singer-songwriter moves in with her ultra-Catholic mother and strikes up an unexpected friendship with the wife of an old nemesis. *World Premiere*

U.S. Fiction Cinematography Award presented by Aputure

Winner: *Everything Beautiful is Far Away*, cinematography by Christian Sorensen Hansen and Pete Ohs

Directors: Pete Ohs and Andrea Sisson

Country: USA

Screenwriter: Pete Ohs

Producer: Saul Germaine, Andrea Sisson, Pete Ohs

Cast: Julia Garner, Joseph Cross, C.S. Lee

Film Description: This arthouse science fiction fable is set on an isolated desert planet, where a man who is looking for parts to repair his robotic companion teams up with a young woman who is searching for an imaginary lake. *World Premiere*

Aputure is a company that believes creators should never have to compromise their vision because of a budget. Offering professional-grade equipment affordable to filmmakers everywhere, Aputure sells in over 100 countries offering filmmakers and photographers LED lights, monitors, microphones and lens adapters. In partnering with the LA Film Festival to present the Aputure Cinematography Award, they are awarding \$4,000 in lighting equipment to the winning film's director of photography.

The U.S. Fiction Jury awarded the following special mentions:

Special Mention for Breakout Performance: Auden Thornton of *Beauty Mark*

Country: USA

Director: Harris Doran

Screenwriter: Harris Doran

Producer: Harris Doran, Penny Edmiston, Gill Holland, Kiley Lane Parker, Bridget Berger, Corey Moosa

Cast: Auden Thornton, Catherine Curtin, Laura Bell Bundy, Jeff Kober, Madison Iseman, Deirdre Lovejoy

Film Description: Inspired by true events, when a poverty-stricken young mother and her three-year-old son are evicted, she turns to the only person she knows with any money – the man who abused her as a child. *World Premiere*

Special Mention for Directing: Bruce Thierry Cheung of *Don't Come Back from the Moon*

Country: USA

Screenwriter: Bruce Thierry Cheung, Dean Bakopoulos

Producer: Jay Davis, Lauren Hoekstra

Cast: Jeffrey Wahlberg, Zackary Arthur, Alyssa Elle Steinacker, Cheyenne Haynes, James Franco, Rashida Jones

Film Description: The men of a small town on the edge of nowhere mysteriously disappear, one by one, leaving women and children behind to fend for themselves in a desolate and dreamlike world. *World Premiere*

World Fiction Award

Winner: *The Night Guard (El Vigilante)*, directed by Diego Ros

Country: Mexico

Screenwriter: Diego Ros

Producer: Diego Ros

Cast: Leonardo Alonso, Ari Gallegos, Lilia Mendoza, Héctor Holten

Film Description: A security guard at a construction site learns about a crime that took place the night before and becomes entangled in a series of mysterious events that unravel over the course of a single night. *North American Premiere*

The World Fiction Jury awarded the following special mention:

Special Mention for Excellence in Storytelling: *On the Beach at Night Alone (Bamui Hae-Byun-Eoseo Honja)*, directed by Hong Sangsoo

Country: South Korea

Screenwriter: Hong Sangsoo

Producer: Hong Sangsoo

Cast: Kim Minhee, Seo Younghwa, Kwon Haehyo, Jung Jaeyoung, Song Seonmi, Moon Sungkeun, Ahn Jaehong, Park Yeaju, Karl Feder, Mark Peranson, Bettina Steinbrügge

Film Description: Younghee is an actress who is stressed by a relationship with a married man in Korea. On the beach she wonders: Is he missing me, like I miss him?

North American Premiere

Documentary Award

Winner: *Liyana*, directed by **Amanda Kopp and Aaron Kopp**

Country: Swaziland / USA / Qatar

Producer: Amanda Kopp, Aaron Kopp, Sakheni Dlamini, Daniel Junge, Davis Coombe

Featuring: Gcina Mhlophe

Film Description: The epic tale of a young Swazi girl on a dangerous quest to save her twin brothers is brought to life with captivating animation from the imaginations of five talented orphan children in Swaziland. *World Premiere*

LA Muse Fiction Award

Winner: *And Then There Was Eve*, directed by **Savannah Bloch**

Screenwriter: Savannah Bloch, Colette Freedman

Producer: Jen Prince, Jhennifer Webberley

Cast: Tania Nolan, Rachel Crawl, Mary Holland, Karan Soni, Anne Gee Byrd, John Kassir

Film Description: After the sudden disappearance of her husband, a woman enlists the help of his coworker to fill in the missing pieces. *World Premiere*

LA Muse Documentary Award

Winner: *Skid Row Marathon*, directed by **Mark Hayes**

Screenwriter: Mark Hayes

Producer: Gabriele Hayes, Doug Blush

Cast: Judge Craig Mitchell, Ben Shirley, Rafael Cabrera, Rebecca Hayes, David Askew

Film Description: On LA's Skid Row, a criminal court judge organizes a running club comprised of homeless, recovering and paroled men and women who seek to rediscover their sense of self-worth and dignity. *World Premiere*

The LA Muse Jury awarded the following special mentions:

Special Mention for Acting: John Carroll Lynch of *Anything*

Country: USA

Director: Timothy McNeil

Screenwriter: Timothy McNeil

Producer: Louise Runge, Ofrit Peres, Micah Hauptman

Cast: John Carroll Lynch, Matt Bomer, Maura Tierney, Margot Bingham, Micah Hauptman

Film Description: After the death of his wife, a man moves from Mississippi to a run-down Hollywood apartment, where he meets someone new. *World Premiere*

Special Mention for Excellence in Storytelling: *The Classic*, directed by Billy McMillin

Country: USA

Screenwriter: Billy McMillin

Producer: Christopher Leggett, Rafael Marmor, Timm Oberwelland, Billy McMillin

Cast: Mario Ramirez, Joseph Silva, Sammy Hernandez, Stevie Williams, Javier Cid, Lorenzo Hernandez, Alfred Robledo

Film Description: Two predominantly Latino high schools square off annually in one of the oldest and most heated football rivalries in the country: the East LA Classic. It doesn't get more American than this. *World Premiere*

Nightfall Award

Winner: *Serpent*, directed by **Amanda Evans**

Screenwriter: Amanda Evans

Producer: Greig Buckle

Cast: Sarah Dumont, Tom Ainsley

Film Description: When a young couple take a getaway aimed at reviving their romance, they find themselves trapped in a tent with a venomous snake and a backlog of secrets, and realize that only one of them can make it out alive. *World Premiere*

The Nightfall Jury awarded the following special mention:

Special Mention for Acting: Kate Nhung of *The Housemaid*

Country: USA/Vietnam

Director: Derek Nguyen

Screenwriter: Derek Nguyen

Producer: Timothy Linh Bui

Cast: Nhung Kate, Jean-Michel Richaud, Kim Xuan, Rosie Fellner, Phi Phung, Kien An

Film Description: After an orphaned Vietnamese girl is hired to be a housemaid at a haunted rubber plantation in 1953 French Indochina, she unexpectedly falls in love with the French landowner and awakens the vengeful ghost of his dead wife. *North American Premiere*

Award for Short Film

Winner: *A Funeral for Lightning*, directed by **Emily Kai Bock**. USA/Canada.

Film Description: Seven months pregnant and stuck in a sleepy corner of Tennessee, a young woman begins to question the promises made by her charismatic husband.

The Shorts Jury awarded the following special mentions:

Special Mention for Excellence in Storytelling: *Balloonfest*, directed by Nathan Truesdell. USA

Film Description: Cleveland attempts to overcome its nickname, "The Mistake by the Lake," by launching a bunch of balloons.

Award for Documentary Short

Winner: *Black America Again*, directed by Bradford Young. USA

Film Description: Inspired by Common's Black America Again, this portrait is a celebration of the beauty, strength, perseverance and spirit of the black community in these troubling times.

Audience Award for Fiction Feature Film

Winner: *The Keeping Hours*, directed by Karen Moncrieff

Producers: Jason Blum, John Miranda

Cast: Lee Pace, Carrie Coon, Sander Thomas, Amy Smart, Ana Ortiz, Ray Baker

Film Description: Years after the death of their son and their subsequent estrangement, a couple reunites under supernatural circumstances. *World Premiere*.

This award is given to the fiction feature audiences liked most as voted by a tabulated rating system. Select fiction feature-length films screening in the following sections were eligible for the Audience Award for Best Fiction Feature: U.S. Fiction, World Fiction, LA Muse, Nightfall and Premieres.

Audience Award for Documentary Feature Film

Winner: *Skid Row Marathon*, directed by Mark Hayes

Producers: Gabriele Hayes, Doug Blush

Featuring: Judge Craig Mitchell, Ben Shirley, Rafael Cabrera, Rebecca Hayes, David Askew

Film Description: On LA's Skid Row, a criminal court judge organizes a running club comprised of homeless, recovering and paroled men and women who seek to rediscover their sense of self-worth and dignity. *World Premiere*

This award is given to the documentary feature audiences liked most as voted by a tabulated rating system. Select documentary feature-length films screening in the following sections were eligible for the Audience Award for Documentary Feature: Documentary LA Muse and Premieres.

Audience Award for Short Film

Winner: *Swim*, directed by Mari Walker

Country: USA

Film Description: As summer draws to a close, a young trans girl finds freedom in a secret midnight swim.

This award is given to the short film audiences liked most as voted by a tabulated rating system. Short films screening in the Shorts Programs or before feature films in the Festival were eligible for the Audience Award for Short Film.

Audience Award for Web-series

Winner: *High & Mighty*, directed by Carlos Lopez Estrada

Country: USA

Description: Perpetually stoned, drunk, and unemployed, Chelo Chavez is an unlikely superhero.

This award is given to the web-series audiences liked most as voted by a tabulated rating system.

In closing out the 2017 edition, the Festival also thanks the many sponsors whose support makes the program possible including Presenting Media Sponsor the Los Angeles Times and Host Venue the ArcLight Cinemas. Platinum Sponsors are Alfa Romeo, American Airlines, EFilm | Company 3, HBO and Marker's Mark. Supporter Level Sponsors are Classic Party Rentals, Directors Guild of America, Dolby, Focus Features, Kona Productions, Showtime Documentary Films and Smartsources Rentals.

Generous support has also been provided by Affiliate Level Sponsors ATK Audiotek, designer8*, The Culver Studios, IFC, Konsonant Music, Kraft-Engel Management, Ovation TV, SAGindie, Snapsound and Twentieth Century Fox Film. Other sponsors include BMI, ESPN Films, Image Nation Abu Dhabi, Ketchum, Twin Cities Film Fest, USA Network and Writers Guild of America, West.

Additional support is provided by Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Time Warner Foundation, Lisa Argyros/Argyros Family Foundation, Jason Delane Lee and Yvonne Huff Lee | Lagralane Group, UCLA Latin American Institute, Korean Cultural Center of Los Angeles, Employees Community Fund of Boeing California and the Members of Film Independent's annual giving group, Arts Circle.

The Festival also thanks official industry resource IMDbPro, official card Citi, official beer Golden Road Brewing and official water, Essentia Water.

Alfa Romeo

Since its foundation in Milan, Italy, in 1910, Alfa Romeo continues to design and craft some of the most stunning and premium vehicles in automotive history, all while building on a racing heritage that includes some of the most talented and storied drivers and victories. www.alfaromeousa.com

American Airlines

American is committed to the community in Los Angeles through local partnerships and community projects and, as the preferred airline of the entertainment industry, has formed an advisory council of influencers from leading entertainment corporations to shape future decisions. American offers up to 225 flights per day from LAX to 70 destinations worldwide.

EFILM | CO3

Post facilities EFilm | Company 3, part of Deluxe's creative group of companies, are known for creative color artistry, pioneering technology and global reach. Recent features include blockbusters *Beauty & the Beast* and *Wonder Woman* and indies such as *The Bachelors*, *The Book of Henry*, *A Crooked Somebody* and *Out of State*.

HBO

Home Box Office, Inc. is the premium television programming subsidiary of Time Warner Inc. and the world's most successful pay TV service, providing the two television services – HBO® and Cinemax® – to approximately 134 million subscribers worldwide. The services offer the popular subscription video-on-demand products

HBO On Demand® and Cinemax On Demand®, as well as HBO GO® and MAX GO®, HD feeds and multiplex channels. HBO NOW®, the network's internet-only premium streaming service, provides audiences with instant access to HBO's acclaimed programming in the U.S. Internationally, HBO branded television networks, along with the subscription video-on-demand products HBO On Demand and HBO GO, bring HBO services to over 60 countries. HBO and Cinemax programming is sold into over 150 countries worldwide.

Maker's Mark

Maker's Mark® is one of the finest Kentucky Bourbons with a soft, smooth flavor stemming from the use of red winter wheat. Today, Maker's Mark® makes its bourbon the same way its founder, Bill Samuels, Sr., did over 60 years ago, in small batches by craftsmen who hand-dip each bottle.

Essentia Water

We're here to put a flag in the ground and tell the world that a better you starts with a better water. Supercharged ionized alkaline water, Essentia delivers peak rehydration performance. It's about drinking up more of life and doing all the things that make you extraordinary. #EssentiaNation

Golden Road

Founded in 2011 by beer enthusiast Meg Gill, Golden Road Brewing has since become Los Angeles' largest craft brewer and is available throughout major markets in the US. Golden Road offers a wide variety of beers created by combining old world brewing standards with California lifestyle inspired innovation and ingredients.

Thank you to WireImage, the Official Photographer of the LA Film Festival. Please visit wireimage.com, the official source for photos.

Additional thanks to media partners Backstage, Deadline Hollywood, The Hollywood Reporter, KCRW 89.9FM, KPFK 90.7FM, LA Metro, LA Weekly, Los Angeles Confidential, Martin Outdoor Media, MovieMaker Magazine, OUTFRONT Media, Time Out Los Angeles, Univision/KLVE, Variety, Variety 411, WireImage and TheWrap.

To download images and clips from the winning films, please visit filmindependent.org/press, then click Press Materials.

Online & Social Media:

www.lafilmfest.com Find us on Facebook at facebook.com/LAFilmFest and Twitter @LAFilmFest. Official event hashtag: #LAFilmFest.

ABOUT THE LA FILM FESTIVAL

The LA Film Festival is a key part of the exhibition arm of the nonprofit arts organization Film Independent. Showcasing new American and international cinema that embraces diversity, innovation and unique perspectives, the Festival produces one-of-a-kind events featuring critically acclaimed filmmakers, industry professionals and award-winning talent from Los Angeles and around the world. The Festival's signature programs include the Filmmaker Retreat, Women Who Lead Luncheon, Spirit of Independence Award, Coffee Talks and more. The Festival's Future Filmmakers

Showcase supports high school filmmakers with screenings of their work and community based film education opportunities. Presenting Media Sponsor is the Los Angeles Times. Host Venue is the ArcLight Cinemas. Platinum Sponsors are Alfa Romeo, American Airlines, EFilm | Company 3, HBO and Maker's Mark® Bourbon. WireImage is the Official Photographer.

ABOUT FILM INDEPENDENT

Film Independent is a nonprofit arts organization that champions independent visual storytelling and supports a community of artists who embody diversity, innovation and uniqueness of vision. Film Independent helps filmmakers make their movies, builds an audience for their projects, and works to diversify the film industry. Film Independent's Board of Directors, filmmakers, staff and constituents is comprised of an inclusive community of individuals across ability, age, ethnicity, gender, race and sexual orientation. Anyone passionate about film can become a Member, whether you are a filmmaker, industry professional or a film lover.

In addition to producing the Spirit Awards, Film Independent produces the LA Film Festival and Film Independent at LACMA Film Series, a year-round, weekly program that offers unique cinematic experiences for the Los Angeles creative community and the general public.

With over 250 annual screenings and events, Film Independent provides access to a network of like-minded artists who are driving creativity in the film industry. Film Independent's Artist Development program offers free Labs for selected writers, directors, producers and documentary filmmakers and presents year-round networking opportunities. Project Involve is Film Independent's signature program dedicated to fostering the careers of talented filmmakers from communities traditionally underrepresented in the film industry. For more information or to become a Member, visit film-independent.org.

ABOUT ARCLIGHT CINEMAS

ArcLight Cinemas, created by Pacific Theatres, a privately owned, Los Angeles based company with 60 years of theatrical exhibition history throughout California, Hawaii and Washington is a premiere moviegoing experience with an unparalleled commitment to bringing a variety of rich cinematic content to moviegoers in all markets. ArcLight Cinemas operates seven theaters in California including Hollywood, Pasadena, Sherman Oaks, El Segundo, Santa Monica, Culver City and La Jolla, as well as theaters in Bethesda, MD, Chicago and Glenview, IL, with a new location in Boston for 2019. ArcLight also owns and operates the historic Cinerama Dome and programs the TCL Chinese Theatre and IMAX in Hollywood. Pacific Theatres currently operates theaters in Los Angeles that include The Grove and The Americana at Brand in Glendale, CA. Additional information about ArcLight Cinemas is available at www.arclightcinemas.com.

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