

FILM INDEPENDENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Chris Libby, Ginsberg/Libby

Tel: 323 645 6800 or chris.libby@ginsberglibby.com

FILM INDEPENDENT TO REPLACE LA FILM FESTIVAL WITH YEAR-ROUND SERIES OF EVENTS

LOS ANGELES (October 31, 2018) — After 18 years of showcasing independent fiction, documentary, and short films at the LA Film Festival, Film Independent announced today that its Board of Directors has voted to shift the energy and resources of the organization from the Festival structure to a variety of year-round events aimed at building community and broadening its support of visual storytellers.

These programs will include a number of new initiatives to be announced in coming months as well as several that have traditionally taken place during the LA Film Festival—among them, The Portal, a showcase of VR and immersive storytelling, produced in partnership with Loyola Marymount University School of Film and Television; a two day event around inclusion in the film industry, launched in 2013 by Stephanie Allain and continued by Hasan Foster; Fast Track, a film financing market supporting both fiction and non-fiction projects; and Future Filmmakers, which features work by L.A. high-school filmmakers.

“We took a hard look at the healthy growth of Film Independent’s year-round programs and events over the past six years: the Spirit Awards, our film series curated by Elvis Mitchell, membership, labs, workshops, filmmaker grants and international programs,” said Mary Sweeney, Chair of the Film Independent Board of Directors. “In the end, we concluded that the organization should explore a more nimble, sustainable form of exhibiting and celebrating independent film artists year round.”

“While we are very proud of what we’ve accomplished with the LA Film Festival over the past eighteen years, the truth is that it has struggled to thrive, and the time has come for us to try something new,” said Josh Welsh, President of Film Independent. “We are all deeply grateful to Jennifer Cochis for her vision, passion, and creativity and we’re enormously proud of the Festival that she oversaw these past two years. We remain committed to serving filmmakers and film audiences across Los Angeles.”

As a result of discontinuing the Festival in its present form, the nonprofit arts organization will eliminate three full-time staff positions. Film Independent will continue with its current suite of programs and events, including: The Film Independent Spirit Awards; Film Independent Presents, curated by Elvis Mitchell; Global Media Makers, an innovative mentoring initiative for international visual storytellers; Project Involve, the 25-year-old mentorship program for filmmakers from underrepresented backgrounds; as well as its annual suite of Filmmaker Labs and the Film Independent Forum and Directors Close-Up.

About Film Independent

Film Independent is the nonprofit arts organization that champions creative independence in 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 Film Independent Presents, a year-round screening series for its members that offers unique cinematic experiences for the Los Angeles creative community and the general public.

Through 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 filmIndependent.org.

###