

FILM INDEP ENDENT SPIRIT AWARDS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Alia Quart Khan, Film Independent
Tel: 310.432.1287 or aqkhan@filmIndependent.org

Gina Pence, Ginsberg/Libby
Tel: 323.645.6800 or gina.pence@ginsberglibby.com

JESSICA CHASTAIN NAMED 2016 SPIRIT AWARDS HONORARY CHAIR

JOHN BOYEGA AND ELIZABETH OLSEN TO ANNOUNCE THE NOMINEES AT PRESS CONFERENCE HELD AT W HOLLYWOOD ON NOVEMBER 24

LOS ANGELES (November 10, 2015)— Film Independent President Josh Welsh announced today that actress Jessica Chastain (*The Martian*, *A Most Violent Year*, *Interstellar*, *Tree of Life*) has been named Honorary Chair for this year's Spirit Awards. Chastain was nominated for a Spirit Award for her work in *Take Shelter* (2012) and *A Most Violent Year* (2015). Past Chairs include Kerry Washington, Tom Cruise, Benecio Del Toro, Angela Bassett, Jeremy Renner, Salma Hayek, Halle Berry, Robert Duvall, Jodie Foster, Danny Glover, Harvey Keitel, Nicole Kidman, Ang Lee, Julianne Moore, Martin Scorsese and John Travolta.

Also announced today, actors John Boyega (*Star Wars: Episode VII – The Force Awakens*, *Attack the Block*, *The Circle*, *Imperial Dreams*) and Elizabeth Olsen (*I Saw the Light*, *Old Boy*, *Silent House*, *Martha Marcy May Marlene*) will present the 2016 nominees in a press conference at 10:00 am PT on Tuesday, November 24 at The W Hollywood. The 2016 Film Independent Spirit Awards will be broadcast exclusively on [IFC](#) on February 27, 2016, LIVE at 2:00 pm PT / 5:00 pm ET.

“We’re so honored to have Jessica as our Honorary Chair at this year’s Spirit Awards,” said Welsh. “As a past Spirit Award nominee and someone whose work as an actor and producer embodies the qualities we celebrate at Film

Independent, I can't think of a more suitable Honorary Chair for this exciting celebration of artist-driven filmmaking. Our press conference hosts are also great friends of Film Independent. John Boyega's *Attack the Block* had a Gala presentation at the LA Film Festival in 2011 and Olsen is a past Spirit Award nominee for *Martha Marcy May Marlene* (2012)."

This year marks the 31st edition of the awards show that celebrates the best of independent film. Announced earlier this month, Joel Gallen of Tenth Planet Productions returns for his second year as executive producer of the show held in its usual tent on the beach in Santa Monica, in a new location this year just north of the Santa Monica Pier. Producer Shawn Davis returns for his 14th show and Rick Austin returns for his second year as producer.

Spirit Awards are given out in the following categories: Best Feature, Best First Feature, Best First Screenplay, Best Director, Best Screenplay, John Cassavetes Award (given to the best feature made for a budget under \$500,000), Best Male Lead, Best Female Lead, Best Supporting Male, Best Supporting Female, Best Cinematography, Best International Film, Best Documentary and Best Editing. The Filmmaker Awards include the Piaget Producers Award, the Truer Than Fiction Award and the Kiehl's Someone to Watch Award.

In addition to celebrating the broad spectrum of independent filmmaking, the Spirit Awards is also the primary fundraiser for Film Independent's year-round programs, which cultivate the careers of emerging filmmakers and promote diversity in the industry. To learn more about donations, table sales and attendance, please contact jmurby@filmIndependent.org or 310.432.1253.

To download the new Film Independent Spirit Awards logo, [click here](#).

ABOUT THE FILM INDEPENDENT SPIRIT AWARDS

Now in its 31st year, the Film Independent Spirit Awards is an annual celebration honoring artist-driven films made with an economy of means by filmmakers whose films embody independence and originality. The Spirit Awards recognizes the achievements of American independent filmmakers and promotes the finest independent films of the year to a wider audience.

The winners of the Spirit Awards are voted upon by Film Independent and IFP Members. Awards are given in the following categories: Best Feature, Best First Feature, Best First Screenplay, Best Director, Best Screenplay, John Cassavetes Award (given to the best feature made for a budget under \$500,000), Best Male Lead, Best Female Lead, Best Supporting Male, Best Supporting Female, Best Cinematography, Best Editing, Best International Film and Best Documentary. The Filmmaker Grants include the Piaget Producers Award, the Kiehl's Someone to Watch Award and the Truer Than Fiction Award. The Film Independent Spirit Awards are sponsored by Premier Sponsors Piaget, Bank of America, Heineken,

American Airlines, Jaguar and IFC. FIJI Water is the Official Water of the 2016 Spirit Awards. WireImage is the Official Photographer of Film Independent.

ABOUT FILM INDEPENDENT

Film Independent is a nonprofit arts organization that champions independent film 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 Los Angeles 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
filmIndependent.org/membership.

About IFC

IFC is the home of offbeat, unexpected comedies. Series like *Portlandia*, *Documentary Now!*, *Maron* and *Comedy Bang! Bang!* air alongside fan-favorite movies and comedic cult TV shows. IFC is owned and operated by AMC Networks Inc., and available across multiple platforms. IFC is *Always On Slightly Off*.

###