

FILM INDEPENDENT

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FILM INDEPENDENT UNVEILS DRAMATIC EXPANSION WITH TELEVISION CATEGORIES FOR THE 2021 FILM INDEPENDENT SPIRIT AWARDS

2021 SHOW TO BE BROADCAST ON IFC, APRIL 24, 2021

SUBMISSIONS ARE NOW OPEN

LOS ANGELES (September 29, 2020) — Film Independent, the nonprofit arts organization that produces the Film Independent Spirit Awards, announced today the addition of television prizes for the 2021 program. The 2021 television categories include Best New Scripted Series, Best New Non-Scripted or Documentary Series, Best Male Performance, Best Female Performance, and Best Ensemble Cast. The organization also announced that the 2021 show will be returning to longstanding broadcast partner IFC, and that submissions for the 2021 program are now officially open. The show will take place on April 24, 2021.

“The independent, diverse creators we’ve supported for decades now straddle the feature and episodic worlds,” said Board Chair Mary Sweeney. “Our mission supports and celebrates visual storytellers wherever they practice their craft. The addition of TV Spirit Awards recognizes this expansion by celebrating diverse independent, creative voices across platforms.”

For several years, Film Independent has incorporated television and episodic work in its year-round programs, including Education, Artist Development and its screening program, Film Independent Presents. As opportunities have continued to grow for filmmakers to create bold, original work in this space, the organization decided it was time to celebrate that work at the Spirit Awards, beginning in 2021.

Additionally, it was announced that the 2021 Spirit Awards once again will be broadcast on IFC. IFC has broadcast the show since 1994.

“2020 has been a year of endless change and chaos, so it’s wonderful to be back with our friends at IFC,” said Film Independent President Josh Welsh. “As tough as this year has been, there’s so much great filmmaking and yes, television, that has sustained us throughout the pandemic. We look forward to celebrating that work at the Spirit Awards in April.”

Said Blake Callaway, Executive Director, IFC and SundanceTV, “2020 provides an opportunity for a re-imagined Spirit Awards and just about everything else. Expanding the most entertaining stop on the awards circuit to include television is just the start, and IFC is looking forward to a continued partnership with our friends at Film Independent.”

The Early Deadline for Spirit Award submissions is October 13, 2020, the Regular Deadline is October 27, 2020, the Final Deadline is November 17, 2020 and the extended Film Independent Member Deadline is November 20, 2020. The nominations will be announced on Tuesday, January 26, 2021. Celebrating 36 years, the 2020 Awards will be held on Saturday, April 24, 2021.

“The Film Independent nominations process is a unique and inspiring one,” said Setu Raval, Associate Director of Nominations. “It is an inclusive gathering of filmmakers, programmers, critics and performers with the common goal to curate and celebrate bold, diverse, authentic and innovative visual storytelling. We are excited to open the 2021 Spirit Awards Submissions.”

The 2021 Spirit Awards will honor artist-driven storytellers across 20 categories as follows:

New TV Awards:

- Best New Scripted Series
- Best New Non-Scripted or Documentary Series
- Best Male Performance in a Scripted Series
- Best Female Performance in a Scripted Series
- Best Ensemble Cast in a Scripted Series

Feature Film Awards:

- Best Feature
- Best First Feature
- Best Director
- Best Screenplay
- Best First Screenplay
- John Cassavettes Award
- Best Male Lead
- Best Female Lead
- Best Supporting Male
- Best Supporting Female
- Best Cinematography
- Best Editing
- Robert Altman Award
- Best International Film
- Best Documentary

Film Independent will continue to honor emerging filmmakers with the Truer Than Fiction Award, Producers Award and the Someone to Watch Award.

To learn more about the Spirit Awards eligibility rules and regulations please visit <https://www.filmindependent.org/spirit-awards/faq/>

The Spirit Awards serve as Film Independent's largest annual fundraiser, supporting the work we do year-round. To learn more about supporting Film Independent's mission and programs, contact Jennifer Murby at jmurby@filmindependent.org.

To learn about sponsorship opportunities please contact Stephanie Terifay at sterifay@filmindependent.org.

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 are 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.

The winners of the Film Independent Spirit Awards are voted upon by Film Independent Members. Membership is open to the public. For more information or to become a Member, visit filmIndependent.org.

ABOUT IFC

IFC is the home of offbeat, unexpected comedies. Acclaimed series *Documentary Now!*, *Sherman's Showcase*, *Baroness von Sketch Show* and *Year of the Rabbit* 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.