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EMERGING FILMMAKER AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED
FOR 2024 FILM INDEPENDENT SPIRIT AWARDS

Lily Gladstone and Colman Domingo Hand Out $75,000 in Honors

39th Annual Awards Show to be held on February 25th
at the beach in Santa Monica, CA

LOS ANGELES (January 6, 2024) – Film Independent, the nonprofit arts organization dedicated to fostering independence and inclusivity in visual storytelling, announced the winners of its three Emerging Filmmaker Awards today at its annual Spirit Awards Nominee Brunch held at Hotel Casa del Mar. Spirit Awards Honorary Chair Lily Gladstone (Killers of the Flower Moon, The Unknown Country) and Colman Domingo (Rustin, The Color Purple) served as hosts for the event and handed out the honors. Winners for the remaining categories will be revealed at the 2024 Film Independent Spirit Awards on Sunday, February 25.
“Understanding the enormous challenges independent artists are facing, it’s essential that they are provided the resources to move forward with their artistic visions,” said Josh Welsh, president of Film Independent. “The Emerging Filmmaker Awards provide vital support to these talented artists, enabling them to continue to develop new work and thrive as singular artists.”

The Someone to Watch Award presented by Stella Artois was given to Monica Sorelle, director of *Mountains*. The award recognizes a talented first-time narrative filmmaker of singular vision who has not yet received appropriate recognition. The award, which is in its 30th year, includes a $25,000 unrestricted grant. The finalists for the award included Joanna Arnow for *The Feeling That the Time for Doing Something Has Passed* and Laura Moss for *Birth/Rebirth*.

The Truer Than Fiction Award was presented to Set Hernandez, director of *unseen*. The award is presented to a first-time director of non-fiction features who has not received significant recognition. The award is in its 29th year and includes a $25,000 unrestricted grant. Jesse Short Bull and Laura Tomaselli for *Lakota Nation vs The United States* and Sierra Urich for *Joonam* were finalists for the award.

Finally, the Producers Award presented by Bulleit Frontier Whiskey, went to Monique Walton. The award honors emerging producers who, despite highly limited resources, demonstrate the creativity, tenacity, and vision required to produce quality, independent films. The annual award, in its 27th year, includes a $25,000 unrestricted grant funded by Bulleit Frontier Whiskey. Finalists were Rachael Fung and Graham Swon.

Presenting the honors at the annual Spirit Awards Nominee Brunch were acclaimed artists Colman Domingo and Lily Gladstone. Domingo is an Emmy Award-winning actor, playwright and producer who has additionally received nominations for a Tony, Independent Spirit, Gotham, Lawrence Olivier, Drama Desk, Drama League, NAACP Image and Black Reel Award. He currently stars in *Rustin*, *The Color Purple* and the upcoming *Sing Sing*. Gladstone, who, as previously announced, will serve as the Honorary Chair of the 2024 Spirit Awards, recently starred in *Killers of the Flower Moon*, for which she was named best actress of 2023 by the New York Film Critics Circle. She is also nominated at the Spirit Awards for the John Cassavetes Award as a writer of *The Unknown Country*.

The Film Independent Spirit Awards, hosted by *Saturday Night Live* alum Aidy Bryant, will take place on Sunday, February 25, 2024. The in-person show, held at the beach in Santa Monica, will be streamed live on the IMDb and Film Independent YouTube
channels, as well as across other social platforms. The Spirit Awards are the primary fundraiser for Film Independent’s year-round slate of programs, which cultivate the careers of emerging filmmakers and celebrate creative independence, diversity, innovation and uniqueness of vision in independent film and television. The previously announced nominees can be viewed here.

Film Independent Spirit Awards are supported by Principal Sponsor IMDbPro and Official Sponsors Bulleit Frontier Whiskey, FIJI Water, Miraval and Stella Artois. Easterseals Disability Services is the accessibility partner. Hotel Casa del Mar is an Official Hotel. Pentagram is the Visual Branding Partner. Getty Images is the Official Photographer. Vision Media is the exclusive screening partner.

To learn more about attending the Spirit Awards and supporting Film Independent’s mission and programs, please contact Jennifer Murby at jmurby@filmindependent.org.

To learn about sponsorship opportunities, please contact Kate Walker D'Angelo at kwalker@filmindependent.org.

To learn more about the Spirit Awards eligibility rules and regulations, please visit filmindependent.org/spirit-awards/faq.

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

Press and publicist credential applications for the 2024 Film Independent Spirit Awards are now open at filmindependent.org/press. For any questions regarding credentials, please contact Jason Berger at publicity@filmindependent.org.

ABOUT FILM INDEPENDENT

For over 40 years, Film Independent has helped filmmakers get their projects made and seen. The nonprofit organization’s core mission is to champion creative independence in visual storytelling in all its forms, and to foster a culture of inclusion. We support a global community of artists and audiences who embody diversity, innovation, curiosity and uniqueness of vision.
In addition to producing the Film Independent Spirit Awards, the organization supports creative professionals with Artist Development programs, grants and labs. Signature mentorship program Project Involve fosters the careers of talented filmmakers from underrepresented communities. Education events and workshops equip filmmakers of all ages and experience levels with tools and resources. Global Media Makers, a cultural exchange program produced in partnership with the U.S. Department of State, provides career-building opportunities for international film professionals. And year-round screening series Film Independent Presents offers a robust program of unique cinematic experiences, including screenings, conversations, Live Reads and Bring the Noise musical events.

For more information or to become a Member, visit filmindependent.org.

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