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Images from cocktail reception:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/c1c7g6ynv3v5qu3/AAB8G9FqxAiAiprz5Woxd_8Na?dl=0

Headshots: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/tfjpkonc00e7ffl7/AACidA8Z_LmY_azQvAHW5zEla?dl=0

**TRIBECA AND CHANEL ANNOUNCE RECIPIENT OF PRODUCTION FUNDS FROM
THROUGH HER LENS: THE TRIBECA CHANEL WOMEN'S FILMMAKER PROGRAM**

**RACHEL WEISZ, MIRA NAIR, AND PAULA WEINSTEIN AWARD SUICIDE BY SUNLIGHT FROM
NIKYATU JUSU AND R. SHANEA WILLIAMS FULL PRODUCTION FUNDS ALONG WITH SUPPORT
FROM TRIBECA STUDIOS**

New York, NY [October 19, 2017] – Tribeca Enterprises and CHANEL concluded the third annual *THROUGH HER LENS: The Tribeca Chanel Women's Filmmaker Program*, announcing the recipient who will receive full production funding for her original short film at a cocktail reception this evening in Tribeca. Nikyatu Jusu and R. Shanea Williams were selected by the jury to receive the production grant, along with production support from Tribeca Studios. In addition, the other four writer/directors in the program each received a development grant to support continued work on their respective films to bring them closer to production. A total of \$100,000 in filmmaker grants was awarded amongst the five projects.

Following an intensive, three-day workshop, the filmmakers from the five projects selected pitched their projects to a jury comprised of: director/producer **Mira Nair** (*Salaam Bombay!*, *Monsoon Wedding*, *Queen of Katwe*), producer **Paula Weinstein** (*Grace and Frankie*, *The Perfect Storm*, *Recount*), and actor/producer **Rachel Weisz** (*Disobedience*, *The Lobster*, *The Constant Gardener*, *My Cousin Rachel*).

“At Tribeca we are always looking for ways to empower and support women in our industry. It’s not enough to talk about what needs to be done. We need to actually do it,” said Paula Weinstein, EVP of Tribeca Enterprises. “We have had an inspiring three days with these remarkable women working to hone their projects and pitches. We congratulate director/writer Nikyatu Jusu and her co-writer R. Shanea Williams and thank all the filmmakers and women in the industry who came together to support THROUGH HER LENS: The Tribeca Chanel Women’s Filmmaker Program.”

“The caliber of all five scripts was hugely impressive as was each presentation. We feel certain that each will be made as the confidence and vision of the filmmakers was apparent and inspiring. We look forward to this full female creative assault to come on the industry,” said Mira Nair and Rachel Weisz. “We selected a project that turned a familiar genre on its head in a unique way, filling it with emotion, drama and mystery.”

Suicide by Sunlight, written by Nikyatu Jusu and R. Shanea Williams, is about Valentina, a day-walking Black vampire protected from the sun by her melanin, who finds it difficult to suppress her bloodlust when a new woman is brought around her estranged twin daughters.

“We are so thankful that Tribeca and CHANEL are supporting urgent and much needed voices,” said Nikyatu Jusu and R. Shanea Williams. “We are excited to explore the intersectionality of social issues and genre through the lens of black vampires daywalking in NYC.”

The announcement wraps up a powerful program, presented by Tribeca and CHANEL, in collaboration with Pulse Films, and facilitated by Tribeca Film Institute® (TFI), which offered the participants project support, one-on-one mentorship, peer-to-peer sessions, and master classes on directing, costume design, composing, producing, and the actor/director relationship. The five women writers/directors selected for the program were:

- **Marianne Amelinckx** with *Vuela* and producer **Claudia Lepage**
- **Nicole Emanuele** with *Wingmen*
- **Myna Joseph** with *No Fault* with producer **Amy Lo**
- **Nikyatu Jusu** with *Suicide by Sunlight* with co-writer **R. Shanea Williams**
- **Anna Zlokovic** with *Girl Wants Magic* with producer **Heather Grehan**

The leadership committee for the program, in addition to the jury, included the following:

MASTER CLASS ADVISORS: writer/director **Amma Asante MBE** (*Belle, A United Kingdom, Where Hands Touch*), actor **Dakota Fanning** (“The Alienist,” *Brimstone, The Runaways*), producer **Donna Gigliotti** (*Hidden Figures, Silver Linings Playbook, Shakespeare in Love*), composer **Laura Karpman** (*Paris Can Wait, Underground*), producer **Riva Marker** (*Stronger, Beasts of No Nation*), and costume designer **Sandy Powell** (*Wonderstruck, Carol, The Aviator*).

MENTORS: producer **Caroline Baron** (“Mozart in the Jungle,” *Capote, Monsoon Wedding*), writer/executive producer **Ilene Chaiken** (“The L Word,” “Empire,” “The Handmaid’s Tale”), writer **Leslie Dixon** (*Mrs. Doubtfire, Limitless, Hairspray*), casting director **Ellen Lewis** (*Goodfellas, The Wolf of Wall Street, The Irishman*), actor **Elizabeth Olsen** (*Wind River, Ingrid Goes West, Avengers: Infinity War*), and producer **Celine Rattray** (*The Kids Are All Right, American Honey*).

WRITING MENTORS: producer **Effie T. Brown** (FOX’s “Star,” *Dear White People, “Project Greenlight”*), producer **Lucy Fisher** (*The Great Gatsby, Memoirs of a Geisha, the Divergent Series*), president of TriStar **Hannah Minghella** (*Trainspotting 2, Baby Driver*), and director/writer/producer **Robin Swicord** (*The Jane Austen Book Club, Memoirs of a Geisha, Little Women*).

Since its inception, Tribeca has actively cultivated independent voices in storytelling and has been at the forefront of supporting women filmmakers, especially through awards such as the Nora Ephron Prize. This past year, CHANEL became the presenting partner of the award, expanding its initiatives to support female filmmakers. Awarded during the annual Tribeca Film Festival, the prize was created in 2013 to honor exceptional female filmmakers who embody the spirit and vision of the legendary filmmaker. Women who have received the award include: Meera Menon (*Farah Goes Bang, Equity*), Talya Lavie (*Zero Motivation*), Laura Bispuri (*Sworn Virgin*) Rachel Tunnard (*Adult Life Skills*), and Petra Volpe (*The Divine Order*) from this past year.

Tribeca actively cultivates independent voices in storytelling and has been at the forefront of supporting women filmmakers. *THROUGH HER LENS: The Tribeca Chanel Women’s Filmmaker Program*—the most recent iteration of Tribeca’s commitment to female artistic voices—continues to provide resources to help empower emerging women storytellers in the entertainment industry. The nonprofit affiliate of Tribeca, Tribeca Film

Institute, supports female filmmakers through, among other initiatives, its cornerstone grant and mentorship program, Tribeca All Access®. Currently in its 15th year, the program supports scripted, documentary and interactive storytellers from diverse communities, including those that are statistically underrepresented in the industry.

About the recipients:

Nikyatu Jusu is an award-winning Sierra Leonean-American filmmaker. Her screenplay *Free the Town* participated in the Sundance Institute's inaugural Diverse Writers Workshop and was selected for both the 2013 Durban Film Mart and Film Independent's Fast Track. Her short film, *Flowers*, won the HBO short film award and is her third film acquired by HBO.

Filmmaker R. Shanea Williams attended NYU's Tisch School of the Arts Dramatic Writing Program and earned her MFA in 2008. Upon graduation, she was honored with the Venable Herndon Graduate Screenwriting Award for Excellence. Partnering with producer Anthony Davis, she wrote and directed two award-winning short films *Contamination* (2013) and *Paralysis* (2015). Williams currently resides in Queens, New York.

Hashtag: #ThroughHerLens

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About TRIBECA ENTERPRISES

Tribeca Enterprises is a multi-platform storytelling company based in New York City. Established in 2003 by Robert De Niro, Jane Rosenthal and Craig Hatkoff, Tribeca provides artists with unique platforms to expand the audience for their work and broadens consumer access to experience storytelling, independent film and media. The company operates a network of branded entertainment businesses including the Tribeca Film Festival, Tribeca Film Festival International, and Tribeca Studios. In 2014, The Madison Square Garden Company acquired a 50% stake in Tribeca Enterprises, bringing together two of New York's most important cultural and entertainment icons to enhance the reach and impact of both brands. www.tribecafilm.com.

About CHANEL

CHANEL, the international luxury goods company, was founded in France by Gabrielle Chanel at the beginning of the last century. The company, which is privately held, offers a broad range of luxury products, including Ready-to-Wear, fragrance, cosmetics, leathersgoods, accessories, fine jewelry and watches, through a U.S. network of 24 boutiques and approximately 91 locations at select retailers. CHANEL is also renowned for its Haute Couture collections presented in Paris. CHANEL maintains 189 fashion boutiques worldwide, including the legendary House of CHANEL on rue Cambon in Paris. Under

the creative guidance of designer Karl Lagerfeld, the House of CHANEL remains dedicated to luxury, fashion, style and image.

CHANEL opened its very first watch boutique avenue Montaigne in 1987 for the launch of the Première watch. The boutique was then transferred to place Vendôme in 1990, displaying also from 1993 the new CHANEL Fine Jewelry creations. Since 1997, the flagship Watch and Fine Jewelry boutique sits at 18, place Vendôme. There are 12 boutiques featuring fine jewelry collections in the U.S. and 52 Watch and Fine Jewelry boutiques worldwide.

About TRIBECA FILM INSTITUTE

Tribeca Film Institute champions storytellers to be catalysts for change in their communities and around the world. Through grants and professional development programs, TFI supports a diverse, exceptional group of filmmakers and media artists, providing them resources needed to fully realize their stories and connect with audiences. The Institute's educational programming leverages an extensive film community network to help underserved New York City students learn filmmaking and gain the media skills necessary to be productive citizens and creative individuals in the 21st century. Featuring hands-on training and exposure to socially relevant films, the Institute administers programs to more than 25,000 students annually. TFI was founded by Robert De Niro, Jane Rosenthal, and Craig Hatkoff in the wake of September 11, 2001 and is a 501(c)(3) year-round nonprofit arts organization. For more information and a list of all TFI programs, visit <http://www.tribecafilminstitute.org/>

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