



**UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL OCTOBER 28 at 11am ET**

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## **THROUGH HER LENS: THE TRIBECA CHANEL WOMEN'S FILMMAKER PROGRAM RETURNS FOR THE FIFTH YEAR TO CHAMPION WOMEN FILMMAKERS**

***Three-day program provides mentorship, project support and master classes for emerging women filmmakers, and awards \$100,000 in grants***

***Leadership committee includes Sarah Jessica Parker, Alison Benson, Catherine Keener, Diane Kruger, Nicole Holofcener, Lesli Linka Glatter, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Julie Dash, Julie Taymor, Anne Carey, among others***

**NEW YORK, NY (October 28, 2019)** – For the fifth year, THROUGH HER LENS: The Tribeca CHANEL Women's Filmmaker Program will create new opportunities for women filmmakers. Tribeca and CHANEL, in collaboration with Pulse Films and Tribeca Film Institute (TFI), founded THROUGH HER LENS in 2015 to provide industry support, artistic development, and funding to emerging U.S.-based female writers and directors. Participants will gather in New York City for the program's 5th edition, which will run November 4-6, 2019.

For the program this year, five pairs of women filmmakers have been selected to receive project support for their short narrative films. They will participate in the three-day immersive program with one-on-one mentorship, master classes around script-to-screen development, casting, music composition, costume design, producing, and directing. Additionally, they will work with mentors to shape and refine their projects and pitches. At the conclusion of the program, each pair will pitch their projects to a jury of industry experts. One team will receive full financing to produce their short film with support from Tribeca Studios. The four other projects will be awarded grant funds to support their films' development.

To date, past fully-funded project participants have achieved noteworthy successes including: A.V. Rockwell's *Feathers* (2016), which was acquired by Fox Searchlight after it premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival, and Nikyatu Jusu's *Suicide by Sunlight* (2017), which premiered at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival. Last year's main recipient, filmmaker Suha Araj for her film *ROSA*, is currently in post-production.

"THROUGH HER LENS has provided a platform for women filmmakers to tell the stories they long to tell," said Paula Weinstein, Chief Content Officer of Tribeca Enterprises. "We've seen real opportunities created because of the program and we're proud to continue our partnership with CHANEL."

"We're thrilled to enter the fifth year of this important partnership with Tribeca and CHANEL," said Amy Hobby, Executive Director of Tribeca Film Institute. "This program's impact is undeniable – many projects supported by THROUGH HER LENS premiere at prominent film festivals around the world, and the creators go on to write, direct and produce award-winning films and series."

### **The 2019 Leadership Committee:**

- **MASTER CLASS ADVISORS:** actor/producer **Sarah Jessica Parker** ("*Sex and the City*", "*Divorce*") and producer **Alison Benson** ("*Divorce*", *Here and Now*), costume designer **Ane Crabtree** ("*The Handmaid's Tale*", *The Last Thing He Wanted*), editor **Sabine Hoffman** (*Julieta Naked*, *The Glorias*, *Maggie's Plan*), composer **Laura Karpman** (*Why We Hate*, *Cotton Club Encore*), casting director **Laura Rosenthal** (*Carol*, *Unbelievable*), and writer/director/producer **Julie Taymor** (*Frida*, *Titus*, *Across the Universe*).

- **JURORS:** producer **Dede Gardner** (*Moonlight, The Big Short*), actor **Diane Kruger** (*355, In the Fade*), actor **Gugu Mbatha-Raw** (“Black Mirror”, *Motherless Brooklyn*), director **Sam Taylor-Johnson** (*A Million Little Pieces, Nowhere Boy*), and producer **Paula Weinstein** (“Grace and Frankie,” *The Perfect Storm, Recount*).
- **MENTORS:** producer **Anne Carey** (*Can You Ever Forgive Me, 20th Century Women*), director/producer **Julie Dash** (*Daughters of The Dust, Rosa Parks*), director/producer **Lesli Linka Glatter** (“Homeland,” “Mad Men”, *Now and Then*), director/writer/producer **Nicole Holofcener** (*Enough Said, Friends with Money*), and actor **Catherine Keener** (*Get Out, Kidding*).
- **WRITING MENTORS:** writer/director **Semi Chellas** (“Mad Men”, *American Woman*), writer/director **Tina Gordon** (*Little, Drumline*), writer/producer **Liz Hannah** (*Long Shot, The Post*), writer/producer/director **Aline Brosh McKenna** (“Crazy Ex-Girlfriend”, *The Devil Wears Prada*), and writer/director **Olivia Milch** (*Ocean’s 8, Dude*).

### **The 2019 Selected Projects and Filmmakers:**

**CHAMP:** *While traveling on a train through Texas for an away game, point guard Genevieve has an unwanted encounter with her high school basketball coach. Wielding her strategy and grit off the court, Genevieve finds a way to retaliate.*

- **Hannah Peterson, Writer/Director**

Hannah Peterson is a graduate of the MFA program in Film Directing at CalArts and has worked closely with filmmakers Sean Baker and Chloé Zhao. Filmmaker Magazine named Hannah as one of 25 new faces of independent film in 2018. Her film, *East of the River*, premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival and Slamdance Film Festival 2019 where Hannah was awarded the Russo Brothers Fellowship. Most recently, Hannah directed the Disney Channel series, “Shook.”

- **Taylor Shung, Producer**

Taylor Shung is a producer born and raised in New York City. She recently co-produced *Nomadland*, directed by Chloe Zhao, and *Mickey and the Bear* (SXSW), directed by Annabelle Attanasio. Her short films have played at prestigious festivals around the world, and most recently she produced *Agua Viva*, directed by Alexa Lim Haas, which won the 2018 SXSW Animated Shorts Grand Jury Prize. Taylor is a 2019 Sundance Creative Producing Fellow and a producer for Borscht Corp., a film and arts non-profit in Miami.

**COCHE BOMBA:** *Twelve-year-old Rosa loves aliens and hates everything else, including her annoying little sister Lu. When a car bomb detonates while she’s babysitting, Rosa must bring her sister to safety by convincing her that aliens have arrived to greet them.*

- **Kantú Lentz, Writer/Director**

Kantú Lentz is a Peruvian filmmaker who creates films that take place in alternate realities with magical realism elements. She recently directed the short film *Jack & Jo Don’t Want to Die*, commissioned by the Shatterbox Anthology series, starring Justin Kirk and Olivia Edward. Kantú is an AFI Directing Workshop for Women alumni. She is part of this year’s Sony Diverse Directors Program as well as the Viacom Viewfinder Emerging Directors Program.

- **Roja Gashtili, Producer**

Roja Gashtili worked on the Oscar-nominated *No End in Sight* and was an associate producer at MTV. She produced the Refinery29 Shatterbox film *Jack & Jo Don’t Want to Die*. With her filmmaking partner, Julia Lerman, Roja wrote and directed *Rita Mahtoubian Is Not A Terrorist* at AFI’s Directing Workshop for Women, which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival. Their short, *Pinky*, was a Refinery29 Shatterbox film. They have sold pilots to FX, YouTube and AMC.

**KEEP IT TOGETHER:** *Beirut, Lebanon, 1976. May defies the terror of the civil war on a daily basis. Today, she risks her safety on a sniper-controlled street to save a cherished item left behind: her deceased grandmother’s sandals.*

- **Bane Fakh, Writer/Director**

Bane Fakh is a Lebanese filmmaker based in New York City. She wrote and directed award winning *Assil and Jad*, as well as *Vibes*, which is currently touring in international and local festivals. After completing her film MFA at Columbia University and receiving the Ezra Litwak award for Distinction in Screenwriting, Bane is now developing her first feature *Keep It Together*, which was selected for the 2019 Tribeca All Access and Cine Qua Non Lab.

- **Birgit Gernböck, Producer**

Birgit Gernboeck worked on numerous films for German networks prior to pursuing her MFA from Columbia University. She produced Francisca Alegria’s short and won the International Jury Award at Sundance ‘17 and Darya Zhuk’s feature film *Crystal Swan*, which premiered at Karlovy Vary ‘18 and at

Slamdance '19 in the US. The film received the audience award at Shanghai '19 slowly winding down the international festival run.

**MELISSA:** *Over the course of her summer fellowship, queer theater director Cleo becomes the unwilling object of desire for her boss – a married woman.*

- **Charlotte T. Martin, Writer**

Charlotte T. Martin is a writer who acts. Although she does not discriminate between writing projects based on medium, her first and truest love is screenwriting. After many experiments with homegrown webseries and a charmingly DIY feature (*The First of Our Friends to Get Married*, writer and co-director), Charlotte wrote and starred in the short *Chemistry*, her first partnership with Cynthia Silver. *Melissa* is their second collaboration.

- **Cynthia Silver, Director**

Cynthia Silver's filmmaking is a culmination of twenty-five years spent as an actor and director in New York City and a master acting teacher at Atlantic Acting School. Her award-winning shorts *Sleep Training*, *Sibs*, *Chemistry*, and the short form series *Adult* are all collaborations with former students and longtime theatre colleagues. Cynthia's most recent short *The Shallow End*, based on Wendy MacLeod's one-act play of the same title, embarks on its festival run this fall.

**OVER AND OVER:** *Evelyn is seeing troubling visions: technology infecting our food supply, wires growing out of her body, and the resurrection of creatures which humanity long rendered extinct. Everyone assures Evelyn she's fine, but she knows she is either mentally ill or humanity's savior. She just can't be certain which.*

- **Laura Moss, Writer/Director**

Laura Moss is a filmmaker from New York City. Her recent pilot "neurotica." premiered at Tribeca in 2019. Her previous short, *Fry Day*, screened at Tribeca and SXSW in 2017, as well as over 50 international festivals. *Fry Day* was recently acquired by the Criterion Collection. Laura's design work has screened at MoMA, Sundance, Telluride, Berlin and in competition at Cannes. She is an alumna of NYU's graduate film program and IFP's Emerging Storyteller's program.

- **Mali Elfman, Producer**

Mali Elfman is a BAFTA nominated producer, who began her career with her micro-budget feature film *Do Not Disturb* (released by Warner Brothers, 2010). Since then she's produced many films including Karen Gillan's directorial debut *The Party's Just Beginning* and Mike Flanagan's *Before I Wake*. She's produced over 45 short films for FUN SIZE HORROR, a company she helped co-found. She recently produced the pilot "neurotica." with award winning director Laura Moss and writer Nick Kocher ("Saturday Night Live", "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia"). She has also produced numerous live events including Mark Danielewski's "The Fifty Year Sword" at the Disney Concert Hall.

For the past 15 years, CHANEL and Tribeca's ongoing partnership has supported and created new opportunities to give voice to the next generation of women filmmakers. In addition to THROUGH HER LENS, Tribeca and CHANEL partner on The Nora Ephron Award, which has awarded \$25K annually since 2013 to exceptional women filmmakers who embody the spirit of the late filmmaker. Past recipients include: Meera Menon (*Farah Goes Bang*), Talya Lavie (*Zero Motivation*), Laura Bisपुरi (*Sworn Virgin*), Rachel Tunnard (*Adult Life Skills*), Petra Volpe (*The Divine Order*), Nia DaCosta (*Little Woods*), and Rania Attieh (*Initials S.G.*) from this past year.

The world of film, from its boldest directors and most talented actors, has been intrinsically linked to the history of CHANEL since its inception. House founder and visionary Gabrielle Chanel worked with the leading filmmakers of her time, drawing inspiration from and supporting her fellow creative peers. Her legacy of fostering creativity lives on through CHANEL's dedication to the art of film, which is expressed through programs such as THROUGH HER LENS and the brand's other long-standing film partnerships.

The Tribeca Film Festival has been a champion of women filmmakers and has reached gender parity in programming over the last few years. THROUGH HER LENS: The Tribeca CHANEL Women's Filmmaker Program — an ongoing iteration of Tribeca's commitment to providing a platform for new artistic voices — continues to provide resources to help empower emerging women storytellers in the industry. The Tribeca Film Institute, Tribeca's nonprofit affiliate, supports female filmmakers through, among other initiatives, its cornerstone grant and mentorship program, Tribeca All Access®. Currently in its 17<sup>th</sup> year, the program supports scripted, documentary and interactive storytellers from diverse communities, including those that are statistically underrepresented in the industry. Tribeca actively cultivates independent voices in storytelling and has been at the forefront of supporting women filmmakers.

@tribeca

#throughherlens

[www.tribecafilm.com/throughherlens](http://www.tribecafilm.com/throughherlens)

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**About Tribeca Enterprises:**

Tribeca Enterprises is a multi-platform storytelling company. 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 entertainment businesses including the Tribeca Film Festival; the Tribeca TV Festival; and its branded entertainment production arm, Tribeca Studios. [www.tribecafilm.com](http://www.tribecafilm.com)

**About CHANEL:**

CHANEL is a private company and a world leader in creating, developing, manufacturing and distributing luxury products. Founded by Gabrielle Chanel at the beginning of the last century, CHANEL offers a broad range of high-end creations, including Ready-to-Wear, Leather Goods, Fashion Accessories, Eyewear, Fragrances, Makeup, Skincare, Jewelry and Watches. CHANEL is also renowned for its Haute Couture collections, presented twice yearly in Paris, and for having acquired a large number of specialized suppliers, collectively known as the Métiers d'art. CHANEL is dedicated to ultimate luxury and to the highest level of craftsmanship. It is a brand whose core values remain historically grounded in exceptional creation. As such, CHANEL promotes culture, art, creativity and "savoir-faire" throughout the world, and invests significantly in people, R&D and innovation. CHANEL currently employs more than 20,000 people across the world.

**About Tribeca Film Institute:**

Tribeca Film Institute (TFI) works across the U.S. and globally to ensure that filmmakers and creators have the tools and resources they need to tell their stories, connect with audiences, and build thriving careers. We do all of this in service of the storyteller in order to break barriers to access, exposure, and sustainability that result from imbalances in representation and power. Working in documentary, scripted, and immersive media, TFI supports more than 225 storytellers each year through grants, mentorships, labs, and workshops valued at more than \$2.25 million. For more information about TFI, please visit [www.tfiny.org](http://www.tfiny.org).