



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**THROUGH HER LENS: THE TRIBECA CHANEL WOMEN'S FILMMAKER PROGRAM RETURNS FOR SIXTH YEAR WITH VIRTUAL PROGRAM**

***Mentorship program providing \$100,000 in grants to emerging women filmmakers to offer new Masterclass Conversations open to the public***

***Leadership committee includes Annette Bening, Angelica Ross, Angela Bassett, Channing Dungey, Emilia Clarke, Glenn Close, Gina Prince-Bythewood, Kirsten Dunst, Lucy Boynton, Jessica Elbaum, Marti Noxon, Niki Caro, Uzo Aduba among others***

**NEW YORK, NY – October 7, 2020** – Tribeca and CHANEL affirm their commitment to creating new opportunities for women filmmakers with a virtual gathering for the sixth annual THROUGH HER LENS: The Tribeca CHANEL Women's Filmmaker Program. Founded in 2015, presented by Tribeca and CHANEL in collaboration with Pulse Films, the mentorship program provides industry support, artistic development, and funding to emerging U.S. based self-identifying women and non-binary writers and directors. From October 13th through 15th, participants from around the globe will gather together online for a virtual program of workshops, masterclasses and peer-to-peer sessions.

**NEW! Masterclass Conversations:**

This year Tribeca and CHANEL will host a series of Masterclass Conversations. New to the program, Masterclass Conversations will offer virtual access to inspiring talks with leading women in film to aspiring filmmakers around the world.

Masterclass Conversations will include talks with actor/producer, **Yara Shahidi** in conversation with her business partner and mother, **Keri Shahidi**, discussing the business of film and setting your own career path. Cinematographers **Rachel Morrisson** and **Ellen Kuras** will exchange thoughts on visual storytelling and more.

Masterclass Conversations will air daily during the program October 13 - 15 at 1PM (ET) at [www.tribecafilm.com/throughherlens](http://www.tribecafilm.com/throughherlens)



*“THROUGH HER LENS brings together talented creators to support stories and the women who create them.”* said Tribeca Enterprises and Tribeca Film Festival Co-Founder and CEO Jane Rosenthal. *“Nurturing the next generation of women filmmakers is crucial work for our entire industry. This year, we’ve renewed our dedication to that work by pivoting to a virtual program that will immerse finalists in one-on-one mentorship sessions, as well as publicly-available Masterclass Conversations that will provide access and inspiration to film students and aspiring filmmakers.”*

Five teams of women filmmakers have been selected this year to receive project support for their short narrative films. Based on overwhelming support of leading women in the industry, Tribeca and CHANEL have assembled a diverse range of leading voices who will come together in a safe virtual environment to lend their time and share their experiences with the finalists.

The three-day immersive program will feature virtual one-on-one mentorship, intimate participant masterclasses, around script-to-screen development, casting, music composition, costume design, producing, and directing. Connected through technology, participants 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 supported projects 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. 2018's *ROSA* premiered at BlackStar Film Festival in August 2020 where it won Best Narrative Short. It is currently on the festival circuit. 2019 fully-funded recipient Hannah Peterson is in pre-production on her upcoming film *CHAMP*.

**The 2020 Leadership Committee:**

- **MASTERCLASS ADVISORS:** casting **Alexa Fogel** (*The Prom, Judas and The Black Messiah*), actor **Annette Bening** (*American Beauty, 20th Century*)



Women), directing **Gina Prince-Bythewood** (*The Old Guard*, *Beyond The Lights*), music **Laura Karpman** (“Lovecraft Country”, *Cotton Club Encore*), writer/director/ producer **Marti Noxon** (*Dietland*, *Sharp Objects*), and costume designer **Sharen Davis** (*Ray*, “Watchmen”)

- **JURORS:** actor/director/producer **Angela Bassett** (*Black Panther*, *What’s Love Got to Do With It*), actor/producer **Angelica Ross** (“American Horror Story: 1984”, “Pose”), **Channing Dungey**, Vice President, Original Series at Netflix, producer **Jessica Elbaum** (*Booksmart*, *Hustlers*), actor **Kirsten Dunst** (*Melancholia*, *Marie Antoinette*), actor **Lucy Boynton** (*Bohemian Rhapsody*, *Murder on the Orient Express*), actor Uzo Aduba (“Mrs. America”, “Americanah”)
- **MENTORS:** actor **Glenn Close** (*Hillbilly Elegy*, *The Wife*), actor **Emilia Clarke** (“Game of Thrones”, *Me Before You*), producer **Mollye Asher** (*Nomadland*, *Swallow*), writer/director **Nikki Caro** (*Whale Rider*, *Mulan*), writer/director/producer **Ry Russo-Young** (*The Sun is Also a Star*, *Before I Fall*).
- **WRITING MENTORS:** writer **Brit Bennett** (“The Mothers”, “The Vanishing Half”), writer/ producer **Janine Nabers** (“Atlanta”, “Watchmen”), writer/director **Jennifer Kaytin Robinson** (*Someone Great*, “Sweet/Vicious”), producer **Kelly Carmichael** (*My Week with Marilyn*, *The 355*), writer/producer **Marja-Lewis Ryan** (“The L Word: Generation Q”, *6 Balloons*).

### **The 2020 Selected Projects and Filmmakers:**

***BENEDICTION:*** *A broken woman’s search for solace lands her at a Baptist church in rural Mississippi, where an eerie encounter leads her to discover unsettling truths.*

- **Zandashé Brown, Writer/Director**  
Zandashé Brown is a New Orleans-based writer/director from southern Louisiana whose work raises a Black femme lens to the tradition of southern gothic horror. Brown’s directorial debut *Blood Runs Down* was one of five projects selected for the New Orleans Tricentennial Incubator Grant in 2018. Brown’s narrative and documentary work has been supported by Kickstarter, Create Louisiana, the New Orleans Video Access Center and the New Orleans Film Society, where she now serves as Artist Development Coordinator and Programming Manager.



- **Monica Sorelle, Producer**

Monica Sorelle is a Haitian American filmmaker from Miami who has produced and worked as a department head on projects for Film Independent, A24, HBO and PBS. Her latest project *T*, directed by Keisha Rae Witherspoon, has been selected by Sundance Film Festival, won the Golden Bear for Best Short Film at Berlinale and won additional awards at the Miami Film Festival, New Orleans Film Festival and BlackStar Film Festival. Currently, Sorelle is a Cinematic Arts resident at Oolite Arts, where she is writing and developing her feature film directorial debut *Mountains*.

**CUT LEAF:** *With the weight of a terminal diagnosis, Adeeba, a Pakistani mother, reckons with her own mortality by living vicariously through her daughter's college experience.*

- **Nadia P. Manzoor, Writer/Producer**

Nadia P. Manzoor is a Pakistani British writer, actor and producer whose work has led her to be interviewed by Christiane Amanpour, Terry Gross, Deepak Chopra and Marc Lamont Hill among others. Her comedy web series *Shugs and Fats* won a Gotham Film Award for breakthrough short form series in 2015 and premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival and Tacoma in 2016. She was also named as one of the 25 New Faces of Independent Film by Filmmaker Magazine in 2016. *Shugs and Fats* was in development with Amazon studios in 2019 and is currently partnered with Likely Story and Ilana Glazer as they search for a new home.

- **Khaula Malik, Producer**

Khaula Malik is an award-winning, Pakistan-born, Virginia-bred filmmaker who received her MFA in Film from the Feirstein Graduate School of Cinema. Her work centers on trauma, womanhood and intersectional identity. Her short film *How the Air Feels* won the National Board of Review Student Filmmaker Award, the 2017 BAFTA NY John Grist Award and premiered at AFI Docs in 2017. A three-time finalist for the Sundance Screenwriters Lab and a 2018 Hot Springs Filmmaker Lab fellow, Malik produced the feature film *I'll See You Around* and



has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Sight & Sound*, *Brown Girl Magazine* and CUNYTV.

**REST STOP:** *While on a bus ride from New York to Oklahoma, seven-year-old Meyi realizes her place in the world through the eyes of her mother.*

- **Crystal Kayiza, Writer/Director**

Crystal Kayiza is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker from Oklahoma, named one of Filmmaker Magazine's 25 New Faces of Independent Film. A recipient of the 2017 Jacob Burns Film Center Woman Filmmaker Fellowship and the 2018 Sundance Ignite Fellowship, Kayiza received the 2018 Gold Plaque at the Chicago International Film Festival for her film *Edgcombe*, which was an official selection of the 2019 Sundance Film Festival and was acquired for distribution by the PBS series *POV*. Her most recent film *See You Next Time*, which aired on Starz, was an official selection of the 2020 Sundance Film Festival and was released by *The New Yorker*.

- **Jalena Keane-Lee, Producer**

Jalena Keane-Lee is a director, cinematographer and producer who explores intergenerational trauma healing through an intersectional lens. Keane-Lee's films have screened at the UN, HIFF, CAAMFest and LAAPFF and she has also produced a short film for Independent Lens. Keane-Lee is the co-founder of Breaktide Productions, an all women of color video production company rooted in intersectional solidarity that has carried out national video campaigns for brands like Nike and Thinx. In addition to winning two Cannes Lion awards for their branded content, Breaktide was included in Yerba Buena Center for the Arts' list of 100 changemakers in 2019.

**ROSARIO:** *A struggling writer who moonlights as a bartender agrees to poison a drug dealer's adversary in order to get her student loans paid off and her nagging mother off her case.*

- **Mary Angélica Molina, Writer/Director**

Mary Angélica Molina is a writer and director from Queens, New York creating dark, funny, queer stories about seemingly unimportant Latinxs in extraordinary circumstances. She was recently selected as an AFI Directing Workshop for



Women fellow for half-hour comedy *Fernanda*. She was also included in the 2019 Sundance Reading Series as well as selected for the 2018 Sundance Episodic Lab for her half-hour comedy titled *Papi*. Molina is a 2017 Sundance New Voices Lab Fellow and her short film, *Valentina* (2018), about a woman with a talking vagina was licensed by HBO and aired globally. Currently, Molina is a staff writer on Showtime's *On Becoming a God in Central Florida* and on Disney Freeform's reboot of *Party of Five*.

**WINGS:** *After 10-year-old Bodi survives a car accident, their grandmother tells them that they have been given wings as a gift of resilience. In these wings, Bodi finds the power to accept their true gender identity.*

- **Susan O'Brien, Writer/Director/Producer**

Susan O'Brien is a filmmaker and art director based in New York whose mission is to make films, music videos and social content that provide a platform for womxn-identifying artists and marginalized groups. O'Brien began her career as an assistant to Academy Award®-nominated writer and director John Sayles and went on to work for New York Women in Film & Television, EightVFX NY and aWHITELABELproduct/Merman. Through her production company Red Beret Productions LLC, her film and music video work has been featured at the Smithsonian and film festivals globally as well as in *NYLON*, *Bust*, *Hype Magazine*, Boooooom TV, World of Wonder and MTV. O'Brien is currently represented by Content Muse.

- **Giselle Byrd, Writer/Producer**

Giselle Byrd is a New York based producer from Augusta, Georgia who aims to educate others on the journey of Black Trans people in America through her art and work behind the table in management. In 2014, after receiving a BFA in Performing Arts from SCAD, she started her career in casting and as an Arts Fundraising Representative. Byrd currently serves as a talent management assistant at The Katz Company, a full-service personal talent management company representing artists in all areas of the entertainment industry, where she aims to inspire members of her community to find their voice and showcase the greatness they possess.



For the past 16 years, CHANEL and Tribeca's ongoing partnership has supported and created new opportunities that give voice to the next generation of women filmmakers. Each year during the Tribeca Film Festival, Tribeca and CHANEL bring together world-class artists who donate a piece of their work to be presented as a prize to the award-winning filmmakers at the Tribeca Art Awards. The pair also host a Women's Filmmaker Lunch during the Festival.

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.

Tribeca Enterprises supports independent voices in storytelling and since the beginning has been active in propelling women voices in film forward. The Tribeca Film Festival has been uplifting 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.

**@tribeca**

**#throughherlens**

**#CHANELinCinema**

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

*Press Announcement Images / Social Videos On Link Below: [https://lpl-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/loc\\_trinh\\_chanel\\_com/Ehy2cE2JWG9Drt2-Yq--2voB3MICnykSmAbVF31S5KRcug?e=xVbTSu](https://lpl-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/loc_trinh_chanel_com/Ehy2cE2JWG9Drt2-Yq--2voB3MICnykSmAbVF31S5KRcug?e=xVbTSu)*

Jeff David Gray – Tribeca Enterprises: 212.470.1209 [jgray@tribecafilm.com](mailto:jgray@tribecafilm.com)

Alyssa Grinder – Tribeca Enterprises: 212.941.2015 [agrinder@tribecafilm.com](mailto:agrinder@tribecafilm.com)

Annie Buck – CHANEL: 404.771.8501 [annie.buck@chanelusa.com](mailto:annie.buck@chanelusa.com)





### **About Tribeca Enterprises:**

Tribeca Enterprises is a multi-platform storytelling company, established in 2003 by Robert De Niro and Jane Rosenthal. 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. In 2019, James Murdoch's Lupa Systems bought a majority stake in Tribeca Enterprises, bringing together Rosenthal, De Niro, and Murdoch to grow the enterprise. [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 on exceptional creation. As such, CHANEL promotes culture, art, creativity and "savoir-faire" throughout the world, and invests significantly in people, R&D and innovation. At the end of 2019, CHANEL employed close to 28,000 people worldwide.