



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 29, 2019

THE BLACK LIST AND WOMEN IN FILM, LOS ANGELES
ANNOUNCE PARTICIPANTS AND MENTORS
FOR 2019 FEATURE PROGRAMS

July 29, 2019, Los Angeles — Women In Film, Los Angeles (WIF LA) and the Black List have selected the participants in their **2019 Feature Residency**, expanded from their 2018 Feature Lab.

A joint effort between both organizations that provides mentorship and career opportunities to six rising women screenwriters over the course of a year, the Residency kicked off with a three-day intensive this past weekend in a Los Angeles home sponsored by Airbnb and included mentors Haifaa Al-Mansour (WADJDA), Jessica Bendinger (BRING IT ON), Andrea Berloff (THE KITCHEN), Aline Brosh McKenna (“Crazy Ex-Girlfriend”), Scott Myers (*Go Into the Story*, the official blog of the Black List), Liz Hannah (LONG SHOT), and Kiwi Smith (LEGALLY BLONDE). The participants will continue in mentorship, script work, and career development for the next twelve months. The Residency is supported by Airbnb and the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

The Black List has also selected the participants for their **Annual Feature Lab**. Selected from over 1,000 submissions via the Black List website, six writers will participate in an all-expenses-paid residential workshop in Los Angeles from August 4–10, 2019. Each writer will workshop one screenplay through peer groups and one-on-one sessions with working professional screenwriting mentors, including Victoria Strouse (FINDING DORY), Kiwi Smith (LEGALLY BLONDE), Jessica Bendinger (BRING IT ON), and Scott Myers (*Go Into the Story*, the official blog of the Black List). Previous Black List Lab alumni include Minhal Baig (writer/director of HALA, 2016 Black List), Tom Dean (TIME TRAVELERS LA RONDE, 2016 Black List) and Noga Pnueli (MEET CUTE, 2018 Black List).

The Residency participants and their projects are:

Sylvia Batey Alcalá

SICK – When a violent contagion begins to spread, a director and actor take solace in their production of OTHELLO and fall deeply in love, even as the outbreak threatens to destroy what they've created.

Sylvia Batey Alcalá is an award-winning writer-director-actor-hyphen enthusiast, whose most recent film, THE SPECTACULAR SUMMER OF WEREDOG AND AMY, took home the Hollyshorts Audience Award. She has worked as a Writers' Assistant on The CW's “Legacies,” and lives in Eagle Rock with her husband and two dogs, Tesla and Indiana Bones.

Devi Gowni

THE LIMPING LADY – The true story of Virginia Hall, the legendary female spy from World War II, and her escape across the Alps with a wooden leg, several injured POWs in tow, and the Nazi army closing in behind them.

Devi Gowni is a writer, director, and political organizer who has worked with organizations such as March and Rally LA and Human Rights Watch to craft and execute campaigns centering around advocacy. Having worked at the intersection of storytelling and activism for most of her adult life, her aim is to tell powerful, inclusive, and commercial stories with lasting human impact.

Alyssa Lerner

JESSE IS A FRIEND – Jesse, a 17-year-old Filipina and awkward tomboy, is in deep unrequited love with her best friend, Roxanne. After Roxanne shows interest in a new girl, Jesse will have to move their semi-romantic friendship to the next level before Roxanne moves on without her.

Alyssa Lerner is a queer, Asian-American writer and director hailing from Poway, CA. Since receiving her M.F.A. in Writing for Film and TV from the University of Southern California, her work has garnered a number of accolades, including the Best TV Pilot screenplay award at the L.A. Comedy Fest, finalist placement at the NBCUniversal Short Film Fest, winner of the Inside Out Film Festival Pitch Competition, and the audience award for Best Short at the Frameline43 International Film Festival with her directorial debut BUBBLE.

Anya Meksin

TAMINEX – When a deadly pandemic plunges the city into an anti-immigrant panic, a young Iranian woman must go outside official channels and venture into the underbelly of a corrupt society to procure the only drug that can save her boyfriend's life and her own—Taminex.

Anya Meksin is an award-winning writer-director whose work has been supported by Film Independent, IFP, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the Open Society Institute, SFFILM, ScreenCraft, NYTVF, the Big Vision Creators Program, the Museum of the Moving Image, and the National Academy of Sciences. Born in Russia, Meksin immigrated to the U.S. as an asylum-seeking refugee before receiving a B.A. from Yale University and an M.F.A. from Columbia University, where she also taught non-fiction filmmaking.

Erin Rodman

MADAME – Based on the true life story of the legendary Madame Claude (Fernande Grudet), from her childhood in Nazi-occupied France to the origins of her brothel and its mid-century heyday. Serving illustrious clients such as Marlon Brando, Gianni Agnelli, and the Shah of Iran, in Paris and L.A., Madame Claude managed to elude authorities until third-generation police detective Martine Monteil, eager to boost her career, decides to take her down.

Erin Rodman spent many years rolling calls, making lists on buck slips, and reading on the weekends as a development assistant at DreamWorks and 20th Century Fox, and writing coverage as a story analyst at Parkes MacDonald, Netflix, and Paramount. She currently has a feature and two series in development at Stampede Ventures, co-wrote two episodes of the upcoming Miso Film/Viaplay series "Seizure," and is a 2019 WritersForWriters Female Screenwriting Fellowship winner. Erin has an M.F.A. in screenwriting from Loyola Marymount University and a Master's Degree in film and television theory from the University of Glasgow in Scotland.

Bo Shim

TAKE CARE – Struggling to follow up her debut bestseller, a Korean-American novelist reluctantly returns home to care for her cancer-stricken brother. As she gets entangled in the chaos of the family she left behind, they all confront the ugly truth that facing mortality doesn't necessarily bring out the best in people.

A graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, Bo Shim is a Korean-American writer based in Los Angeles. She has received the Alfred P. Sloan Writing Grant and the Writers Guild Initiative's Michael Collyer Memorial Fellowship in Screenwriting, and most recently participated in the inaugural Women In Film Production Program.

The Feature Lab participants are:**Claire Ayoub**

EMPIRE WAIST – When a shy, overweight teen's talent for fashion design is discovered by her fat and fabulous classmate, she must choose to put her designs on display for the world to see, or return to a life of sewing in the shadows.

Claire Ayoub is a writer, director, and producer who creates empowering, educational, and entertaining content for women and girls through her production company, Try Anyway Productions. Claire launched her career in NYC's comedy scene as a member of the Upright Citizens Brigade Theater before writing for Amy Poehler's Smart Girls and creating two web series: "A Series of Comebacks" (2015) and "Your Hair Looks Great Today" (2018).

Dominique Genest

THE INNOCENT AND THE VICIOUS – When a young woman's family is brutally murdered by Nazi officers, she and two friends embark on a dangerous mission to exact personal revenge.

Dominique Genest is an L.A.-based writer and producer who has worked in independent film, television, and branded content. Originally from Canada, Dom is a graduate of the University of Virginia's McIntire School.

John C. Hoffler Jr.

THREE SUMMERS – A coming-of-age story about an entitled English boy who discovers young love and familial values after stumbling through a magical garden—and his corresponding journey to save his surrogate family during World War II.

John C. Hoffler Jr. is an Atlanta-based camera assistant with credits on such projects as Netflix's "Ozark," DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES, and the upcoming HBO series "Watchmen," and is a participant of the 2017 Black List / Cassian Elwes Sundance Fellowship.

Jimmy Keyrouz

BROKEN KEYS – Trying to flee his war-ravaged Middle Eastern neighborhood for Europe, a musician struggles to rebuild his piano after it is destroyed by terrorists.

Jimmy Keyrouz is a Lebanese/Mexican writer-director. His short film NOCTURNE IN BLACK won the Gold Medal at the 43rd Student Academy Awards, the BAFTA and the DGA Film Awards, and was shortlisted for the 2017 Oscars in the Live Action Shorts category. Jimmy recently directed and edited

THE HOLY GOATS, a feature documentary film about the social impacts of climate change and is currently developing BROKEN KEYS, the feature-length version of NOCTURNE IN BLACK.

Tony Martin

MAIDENS OF BABYLON – Woven through personal accounts of four ‘fallen women,’ Britain's first investigative reporter publishes an article about buying a 13-year-old girl that forces the government into raising the age of consent. Inspired by the trial of W. T. Stead.

Tony Martin is a LGBTQ Buddhist screenwriter who teaches mindfulness and consults for social impact nonprofits. He studied screenwriting at UCLA and writes compelling stories for a diverse audience focusing on important social narratives.

Dustin Sohn

TALBUKJA (DEFECTOR) – When a complacent mother is given a bootleg copy of the film TITANIC, she becomes increasingly curious about life outside her home in North Korea.

After spending years drawing and painting in the Pacific Northwest and earning a degree in illustration from the Rhode Island School of Design, Dustin only now discovered that illustration isn't really his thing. Final Draft is his new paintbrush.

About Women In Film, Los Angeles

Women In Film, Los Angeles (WIF LA) advocates for and advances the careers of women working in the screen industries—to achieve parity and transform culture. Founded in 1973, Women In Film supports all women working in film, television, and digital media from emerging to advanced career. Our distinguished programs include: mentoring, speaker and screening series, production training program, writing labs, film finishing funds, legal aid, and an annual financing intensive. Women In Film advocates for gender parity through research, education, and media campaigns. Women In Film honors the achievements of women in Hollywood through the Legacy Series, annual Emmy and Oscar parties, and our signature event, the Women In Film Annual Gala. Membership is open to all media professionals and more information can be found on our website: wif.org. Follow Women In Film on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).

About the Black List

The Black List, an annual survey of Hollywood executives' favorite unproduced screenplays, was founded in 2005. Since then, more than 319 Black List scripts have been produced, grossing over \$26 billion in box office worldwide. Black List movies have won 51 Academy Awards from 264 nominations, including four of the last nine Best Picture Oscars and ten of the last twenty Best Screenplay Oscars. In October of 2012, the Black List launched a unique online community where screenwriters make their work available to readers, buyers and employers.

Since its inception, it has hosted more than 65,000 screenplays and teleplays and provided more than 100,000 script evaluations. As a direct result of introductions made on the Black List, dozens of writers have found representation at major talent agencies and management companies, as well as sold or optioned their screenplays. In only three years, a half dozen films have been produced from scripts introduced on the website including Golden Globe nominated NIGHTINGALE, starring David Oyelowo. Currently, the Black List hosts over 3,500 scripts for consideration by over 3,500 film industry

professionals ranging from agency assistants, to studio and network presidents, to A-list actors and directors. More information on the Black List is available at www.blcklst.com.

The Black List Contact

For more information on the Residency and the Feature Lab, please contact:

Megan Halpern

The Black List, Director of Events

T. (323) 266-9768

megan@blcklst.com

Women In Film Contact

For more information on the Residency, please contact:

Maikiko James

Women In Film, Director of Programs

T. (323) 935-2211

mjames@wif.org

Katherine Spada

Women In Film, Communications Manager

T. (323) 935-2211

kspada@wif.org