



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Women In Film Los Angeles and Sundance Institute Convene 'Systemic Change Project: Moving the Needle for Women In Hollywood'**

### **Senior Entertainment Industry Leaders Explore Systemic Causes of Industry's Gender Bias, Craft Solutions**

**Los Angeles, CA — Sundance Institute and Women In Film Los Angeles** convened an unprecedented two-day meeting, organized and conducted in private, of entertainment industry decision-makers and top talent in mid-October to determine tangible steps for solving the gender parity issue that plagues Hollywood. Agents and industry executives who are normally accustomed to competing with each other, came together in a rare collaboration, the goal being to effect deep and lasting change.

Participating were 44 senior industry leaders — both men and women — from studios, networks, distributors, guilds and agencies, along with high-profile writers, directors and producers, to drill into the systemic causes of gender bias in the industry and craft solutions.

The gathered leaders began by focusing on the specific obstacles for women in Hollywood identified in the ground-breaking Sundance Institute / Women In Film Los Angeles USC Annenberg research, which over the last four years has succinctly identified the barriers and most consistent "fall out" points for female filmmakers from the earliest development of projects at Sundance Institute Labs, through the festival experience and into the marketplace.

**Keri Putnam**, Executive Director of Sundance Institute, said, "With perspective from opening Sundance's records for four years of landmark research that examines the barriers facing women in film, the time is right to gather industry leadership and start to address these obstacles. The commitment from participants makes me believe that the industry is ready to explore real, tangible solutions that create more opportunities for women."

**Cathy Schulman**, President of Women In Film Los Angeles, said, "We are at an economic, social and cultural tipping point and sustainable change is within reach. The time to act is now. Hollywood is surprisingly late in

coming to this party and this is the time for conversion.”

**Erik Feig**, Co-President of Lionsgate and a participant in the meeting, said, “As someone who has professionally and creatively greatly benefited from women as protagonists, directors, producers, writers, fellow executives and audiences, gender parity has always seemed like the most win-win goal for anyone in the entertainment industry so getting behind this objective was a very easy decision for me.”

The two-day think tank was led by Carolyn Buck Luce and Rob Evans, the expert facilitation team at Imaginal Labs. Together they have worked with senior executives from 40 of the Fortune 100 companies and designed breakthrough strategies for women’s advancement with such companies as Google, Goldman Sachs, Time Warner, NBC Universal, Bloomberg and Intel, bringing with them the best practices of these companies to our event. In addition they brought in leaders from other fields who offered examples of concrete, actionable change from other industries’ efforts to open up opportunities for women and other under-represented groups.

For almost two decades statistics have shown flat-lined numbers for women behind and in front of the camera. Studies from USC, UCLA, USD and the DGA have led this awareness campaign, together with the Women In Film/Sundance Institute/Annenberg study.

The participants in the meeting determined four key conversion strategies that this group is moving forward to implement.

- **Advocate ‘Unconscious Bias’ training across the industry.** Leaders in other businesses have determined that unconscious bias creates blind spots and leads to missed market opportunities, and also hinders access to valuable consumer segments limiting profits. Creating more content for women and people of color is not only about equality; it also makes good business sense. An expert Unconscious Bias educator will be selected to work with executives and creatives across the industry.
- **Develop and launch a Gender Parity Stamp** to recognize films and television shows — as well as production companies, networks and studios — that show measurable progress to achieving gender equity. Mirrored on the successful work by LGBT advocates and the PGA’s producer mark, this recognition for positive progress will be a visible identifier for companies that have prioritized equal gender hiring practice and have financed or supported business opportunities for women in front of and behind the camera.
- **Sponsor/Protégé Program.** This high-level pilot program will identify talented early-to-mid career female film and TV directors for a year-long training and fellowship program, and pair them with advocates across the industry who will actively help them move to the next level. While many individual companies have training programs, this unique program will enable the protégé to work across different networks, studios and agencies. With the support and participation of executives across the industry, this program will highlight women selected by a panel of leaders and assure they have the tools, relationships, and exposure to launch and sustain their careers.
- **Ambassadors** from the industry leaders at the meeting will spread the word about the solutions to studios, networks and agencies. Crucially, the participants have committed to staying involved in the project and will enlist an ever-growing group of advocates to work inside their organizations on articulating the business case for making changes in culture and practices to hire more women and people of color.

The Systemic Change Project: Moving the Needle for Women In Hollywood was made possible by BMW of North America and the supporters of the Female Filmmakers Initiative, co-founded by Sundance Institute and Women In Film Los Angeles: Refinery29, The Harnisch Foundation, Morgan Stanley, Kenneth Rainin Foundation, Susan Bay Nimoy and Leonard Nimoy, Palix Foundation, Archer Gray, Gruber Family Foundation, The Jacquelyn & Gregory Zehner Foundation, and LUNA.

### **Sundance Institute**

Founded in 1981 by Robert Redford, Sundance Institute is a nonprofit organization that provides and preserves the space for artists in film, theatre, and new media to create and thrive. The Institute's signature Labs, granting, and mentorship programs, dedicated to developing new work, take place throughout the year in the U.S. and internationally. The Sundance Film Festival and other public programs connect audiences to artists in igniting new ideas, discovering original voices, and building a community dedicated to independent storytelling. Sundance Institute has supported such projects as *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Fruitvale Station*, *Sin Nombre*, *The Invisible War*, *The Square*, *Dirty Wars*, *Spring Awakening*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* and *Fun Home*. Join [Sundance Institute](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

### **Women In Film (WIF)**

Women In Film is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting equal opportunities for women, encouraging creative projects by women, and expanding and enhancing portrayals of women in all forms of global media. Given that women comprise fifty percent of the population, WIF's ultimate goal is to see the same gender parity reflected on and off screen. Founded in 1973, WIF focuses on advocacy and education, provides scholarships, grants and film finishing funds and works to preserve the legacies of all women working in the entertainment community. For more information visit [www.wif.org](http://www.wif.org).

## **PARTICIPANTS**

### **Adriana Alberghetti**

Agent and partner, WME

### **Stephanie Allain**

Producer of HUSTLE & FLOW, BEYOND THE LIGHTS and former Senior Vice President of Production, Columbia Pictures

### **Victoria Alonso**

Executive Vice President of Physical Production, Marvel Studios

### **Len Amato**

President, HBO Films

### **Darla Anderson**

Producer of TOY STORY 3, CARS, MONSTERS INC., A BUG'S LIFE and Board of Directors, PGA

### **Chris Andrews**

Agent, CAA

### **Rowena Arguelles**

Agent, CAA

**Bonnie Arnold**

Co-President, Dreamworks Animation

**Glen Basner**

CEO of FilmNation

**Maria Bello**

Actor, activist, author and producer

**Andrea Berloff**

Screenwriter of WORLD TRADE CENTER, STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON and Board of Directors, WGA

**Cindy Chupack**

Writer/Executive Producer of SEX AND THE CITY, Writer/Co-Executive Producer of MODERN FAMILY and EVERYBODY LOVES RAYMOND

**Maha Dahkil**

Agent, CAA

**Mike De Luca**

Producer of SOCIAL NETWORK, FIFTY SHADES OF GREY, and former executive at Sony, New Line and Dreamworks

**Zanne Devine**

Executive Vice President of Film and Television, Miramax

**Cassian Elwes**

Producer / Executive Producer of THE BUTLER, DALLAS BUYERS CLUB, BLUE VALENTINE and former agent and Head of William Morris Independent

**Erik Feig**

Co-President, Lionsgate

**Sid Ganis**

Former executive at Sony Pictures, Lucasfilm, Warner Bros. and Paramount and former President of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences

**Liz Gateley**

Executive Vice President, Head of Programming, Lifetime Television

**Micah Green**

Agent and Co-Head of Film Finance, CAA

**Catherine Hardwicke**

Director of TWILIGHT, THIRTEEN, LORDS OF DOGTOWN, MISS YOU ALREADY

**Nina Jacobson**

Producer of THE HUNGER GAMES and DIARY OF A WIMPY KID series, former President, Walt Disney Motion Picture Group

**Charles King**

Founder of MACRO, and former agent and partner, WME

**Jenji Kohan**

Creator of WEEDS, ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK

**Sue Kroll**

President of Worldwide Marketing and Distribution, Warner Bros. Pictures

**Franklin Leonard**

Founder of The Black List, former executive at Universal and at the production companies of Will Smith, Sydney Pollack and Anthony Minghella, Leonardo DiCaprio, and John Goldwyn

**Linda Lichter**

Founding law partner of Lichter, Grossman, Nichols, Adler & Feldman, Inc.

**Alix Madigan**

Head of Creative Affairs, Broad Green Pictures

**Zola Mashariki**

Executive Vice President, Head of Original Programming at BET Networks, former Senior Vice President, Fox Searchlight

**Glen Mazzara**

Creator and showrunner of DAMIEN, Executive Producer of THE WALKING DEAD and THE SHIELD and co-chair of the WGA's Diversity Advisory Group

**Hannah Minghella**

President, Tristar Pictures and former President, Columbia Pictures

**Bruna Papandrea**

Co-founder of Pacific Standard, producer of GONE GIRL, WILD, HOT PURSUIT

**Kimberly Peirce**

Director and writer of BOYS DON'T CRY, CARRIE, STOP-LOSS, Western Council and National Board Member, DGA

**Lydia Dean Pilcher**

Producer of THE DARJEELING LIMITED, VANITY FAIR, CUTIE AND THE BOXER and Vice President, PGA

**Gigi Pritzker**

CEO of OddLot Entertainment and Board Trustee, Sundance Institute

**Keri Putnam**

Executive Director, Sundance Institute

**Howard Rodman**

President, WGA

**Rena Ronson**

Agent, partner and Head of the Independent Film Group, UTA

**Michelle Satter**

Founding Director, Sundance Institute Feature Film Program

**Cathy Schulman**

Head of Production, STX Entertainment, President, Women In Film Los Angeles and Board Member, Film Independent

**Stacy Smith**

Director of Media, Diversity & Social Change Initiative, USC and author of Women In Film/Sundance Institute research

**Mimi Steinbauer**

President and CEO, Radiant Films International

**Robin Swicord**

Screenwriter of LITTLE WOMEN, THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON, JANE AUSTEN BOOK CLUB, MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA, Governor for the Writers Branch of the Academy and Chair of the Nicholl Fellowship

**Paula Wagner**

Co-founder, Cruise/Wagner Productions, Producer of the MISSION IMPOSSIBLE trilogy, WAR OF THE WORLDS, THE LAST SAMURAI, former CEO, United Artists and Board Member, PGA

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