



**WOMEN IN FILM, LOS ANGELES CELEBRATES
2017 CRYSTAL + LUCY AWARDS® HONOREES:**

**ELIZABETH BANKS, TRACEE ELLIS ROSS, ZOEY DEUTCH,
MIRA NAIR, DAN RATHER,
MICHAEL BARKER & TOM BERNARD**

JESSICA WILLIAMS TO HOST THIS YEAR’S GALA, THEMED *EVOLVE*

*The Annual Benefit Gala presented by Max Mara and BMW
will take place on Tuesday, June 13 at The Beverly Hilton*

Los Angeles, CA, (May 10, 2017) - Since 1977, Women In Film, Los Angeles (WIF LA) has annually honored outstanding women in the entertainment industry – women who lead by example, are creative, groundbreaking, and excel at their chosen fields. This year’s Crystal + Lucy Awards® fundraising dinner, in support of WIF LA’s educational and philanthropic programs and its advocacy for gender parity for women throughout the industry, will be held on **Tuesday, June 13** at The Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, CA.

The 2017 Crystal + Lucy Award® honorees are:

- *The Crystal Award for Excellence in Film – ELIZABETH BANKS*
- *The Lucy Award for Excellence in Television – TRACEE ELLIS ROSS*
- *The Women In Film Max Mara Face of the Future Award® – ZOEY DEUTCH*
- *The BMW Dorothy Arzner Directors Award® – MIRA NAIR*
- *The Norma Zarky Humanitarian Award® – DAN RATHER*
- *The Women In Film Beacon Award – MICHAEL BARKER & TOM BERNARD*

The evening, themed “Evolve,” will be hosted by actress and comedian **Jessica Williams**. The 2017 Crystal + Lucy Awards is presented by sponsors **Max Mara** and **BMW** and is designed and produced by Tony Schubert of Event Eleven.

Cathy Schulman, President of Women In Film, Los Angeles, said, “Throughout the last five years, Women In Film has focused its efforts on research, raising awareness, and sustainable solutions for gender parity in media. The theme of this year’s Crystal + Lucy Awards gala is “Evolve,” reflecting the advocacy work we’ve done, the pressing demand for systemic change, and the promise of an inclusive future.”

Iris Grossman, President Emerita of Women In Film, Los Angeles, returning this year as Chair of the Awards, said, “We are proud to celebrate this year’s honorees, who are also focused on gender parity solutions and changing the system, through their artistry, their leadership, and by their example.”

About The Honorees

Elizabeth Banks / The Crystal Award for Excellence in Film

Elizabeth Banks is an actress, producer, and director who is known for her work both in front of and behind the camera. She recently wrapped production on “Pitch Perfect 3” which she appears in and produces through her company Brownstone Productions. The company, which she founded with her husband Max Handelman, produced the global hit “Pitch Perfect” and “Pitch Perfect 2.”

Banks is known for her roles in hit global franchises like “The Hunger Games,” “The Power Rangers Movie,” “Spiderman” and “The Lego Movie” as well as critically-acclaimed independent dramas like “Love and Mercy,” “W,” and the Academy Award winning film “Seabiscuit.”

She is also a three-time Emmy® nominee for her recurring roles in “30 Rock” and “Modern Family.” In 2015, she hosted “Saturday Night Live.” Other television credits include “Scrubs,” “Wet Hot American Summer: First Day of Camp,” and she has recently wrapped production on “Wet Hot American Summer: 10 Years Later.”

On the production side, Banks is attached to direct the “Charlie’s Angels” reboot at Sony as well as the young adult adaptation “Red Queen.” With an overall film deal at Universal and television deal at Warner Brothers, the Brownstone Productions’ slate includes multiple film, television and digital collaborations with HBO, CW, Netflix, HULU, Paramount Digital, and the recently announced ABC pilot, “The Trustee.” Other upcoming projects include two projects in development at Lionsgate, “White Girl Problems” and “Heist Society;” and “Dirty Rush” at Tristar. On the digital side Banks’ co-founded WhoHaHa.com, a female-driven comedy website which is a multi-media platform for funny women and stories.

She is active politically and socially, working closely with organizations like Planned Parenthood, Turnaround Arts, LA’s Best and Step Up. She recently spoke at the 2016 Democratic National Convention.

Originally from Massachusetts, Banks received her Bachelor’s Degree from the University of Pennsylvania and her Graduate Degree at the American Conservatory Theater. Banks currently resides with her family in Los Angeles.

Tracee Ellis Ross / The Lucy Award for Excellence in Television

Tracee Ellis Ross is the star of the hit ABC comedy series “Black-ish”. For her role, Ross won the 2017 Golden Globes “Best Actress in a Television Comedy Series.” She also received the 2015 and 2016 NAACP Image Award for “Best Actress in a Comedy Series”. In addition, Ross was recently honored and acknowledged at the 2016 ESSENCE Black Women in Hollywood luncheon receiving the “Fierce and Fearless” award. Ross also hosted the Women In Film Crystal + Lucy Awards in 2014.

Ross is best known for her starring role on the hit sitcom “Girlfriends” which ran for eight seasons on The UPN/CW network. Her role earned her eight NAACP Image Award nominations including two wins. She also starred in and produced the BET series "Reed Between the Lines," which earned Ross her third NAACP Image Award win.

Additional credits include short film series “FIVE” for Lifetime, regular host of BET's Black Girls Rock, turns in “Love, Loss, and What I Wore” on stage in New York and LA, guest starring roles on ABC's “Private Practice,” CBS' hit crime drama “CSI,” and HBO's “LIFE Support” with Queen Latifah; and feature films "Hanging Up" with Jennifer Connelly and Marcia Gay Harden, and Tyler Perry's "Daddy's Little Girls."

Ross is a passionate activist. With her large social media platform, and as a motivational speaker, Ross utilizes her joyful point of view to disrupt the traditional culture of beauty, fight for equality and inspire self-love.

Ross was awarded an honorary degree as Doctor of Fine Arts by her Alma mater, Brown University in 2015.

Zoey Deutch / The Women In Film Max Mara Face of the Future Award

Zoey Deutch is the female lead in Richard Linklater’s *Everybody Wants Some!!*, and stars opposite James Franco and Bryan Cranston in the 20th Century Fox comedy, *Why Him?*. She also stars alongside Robert De Niro and Zac Efron in Lionsgate’s *Dirty Grandpa*.

Deutch is the star of Open Road's *Before I Fall*, which opened Sundance and is currently ranked as the 3rd highest grossing independent film of 2017. She is also the lead of *Flower*, directed by Max Winkler, co-starring Kathryn Hahn, Tim Heidecker, and Adam Scott. It was the first film purchased at this year’s TriBeCa Film Festival.

Deutch also produced, and co-starred, in the independent feature *The Year of Spectacular Men* written by, and starring, Madelyn Deutch and directed by Lea Thompson; the film was recently accepted into this year’s LA Film Fest.

Her next films include the upcoming 2017 release, *Rebel in The Rye*, opposite Kevin Spacey and Nicholas Hoult and Netflix's next original feature, *Set It Up*, which is set to begin shooting this summer and will reunite Deutch with her *Everybody Wants Some!!* co-star, Glen Powell.

Mira Nair / The BMW Dorothy Arzner Directors Award

Mira Nair is an award-winning director, writer, and producer who moves between Hollywood and Independent Cinema. Nair made her debut feature film *Salaam Bombay!* in 1988 which has received more than 25 international awards including an Academy Award nomination for Best Foreign Language Film and the Caméra d'Or Award at the Cannes Film Festival. Her second film, *Mississippi Masala*, starring Denzel Washington and Sarita Chodhury, was nominated for Best Feature at the Independent Spirit Awards. In 2001, Nair's classic *Monsoon Wedding* won the Golden Lion at the 2001 Venice Film Festival and then went on to become one of the highest grossing foreign films of all time.

Her interest in the impact of cultures on individuals led her to make a diverse range of films such as *The Perez Family* about a group of Cuban refugees, *Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love* inspired by the classic Hindu text, *My Own Country* set in rural Tennessee, and the documentary short *The Laughing Club of India* about an alternative medicine practice in Mumbai. After making William Makepeace Thackeray's epic *Vanity Fair*, she returned to her native India to direct a film based on Jhumpa Lahiri's best-selling novel *The Namesake*. She subsequently directed the Amelia Earhart biopic, *Amelia*, followed by 2012's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, a thriller based on the best-selling novel by Mohsin Hamid.

A long-time activist, Nair set up an annual filmmakers' laboratory, Maisha, in Kampala, Uganda. Since 2005, young directors in East Africa have been trained at this non-profit facility with the belief that "If we don't tell our stories, no one else will."

Most recently, Nair directed *Queen of Katwe*, the story of a Ugandan girl who sees her world rapidly change after being introduced to the game of chess and stars Lupita Nyong'o and David Oyelowo. She is currently working on a stage musical adaptation of her film *Monsoon Wedding*. The musical will be presented at the Berkeley Repertory Theater in Berkeley, California starting in May 2017.

Dan Rather / The Norma Zarky Humanitarian Award

With a famed and storied career that has spanned more than six decades, **Dan Rather** has been one of the world's best-known journalists for much of the last half century. He has interviewed every president since Eisenhower and personally covered almost every important dateline of the last 60 years. Rather joined CBS News in 1962. He quickly rose through the ranks, and in 1981 he assumed the position of anchor and managing editor of the *CBS Evening News*—a post he held for 24 years. His reporting across the network helped to turn *60 Minutes* into an institution, launched *48 Hours* as an innovative news magazine program, and shaped countless specials and documentaries. Upon leaving CBS, Rather returned to the in-depth reporting he always loved, creating the Emmy Award winning, *Dan Rather Reports* on HDNet. Now, building upon that foundation, he is president and CEO of News and Guts, an independent production company he founded that specializes in high-quality nonfiction content across a range of traditional and digital distribution channels.

Michael Barker & Tom Bernard / The Women In Film Beacon Award

As Co-Presidents and Co-Founders of Sony Pictures Classics, **Michael Barker** and **Tom Bernard**, have distributed (and quite often produced), some of the finest independent movies for over 30 years. Previously, Barker and Bernard were executives at United Artists (1980-1983) and went on to co-found Orion Classics (1983-1991) and Sony Pictures Classics (1992-Present).

Over the span of their careers, their films have received 163 Academy Award[®] nominations that have resulted in 37 wins, including Best Actress winners Julianne Moore (*Still Alice*), Cate Blanchett (*Blue Jasmine*), and Emma Thompson (*Howards End*), Best Supporting Actress Marcia Gay Harden (*Pollock*), and Best Foreign Language Film for Susanne Bier's *In A Better World*.

Barker and Bernard have collaborated with some of the world's finest female filmmakers including Bier, Nicole Holofcener, Agnes Varda, Sally Potter, Eleanor Coppola, Lisa Cholodenko, Amy Berg, Vera Farmiga, Marielle Heller, Maren Ade, Margaret Betts, Aisling Walsh, Meera Menon, Rebecca Miller, Louise Osmond, Lorene Scafaria, Maya Forbes, Marjane Satrapi, Agnieszka Holland, Lone Scherfig, Anne Fontaine, Anna Boden, Haifaa Al-Mansour, Tanya Wexler, Robin Swicord, Jamie Babbit, and Claire Denis.

Honors bestowed on Barker and Bernard include the Honors Award from the Directors Guild of America, the FINDIE Spirit Award in Los Angeles, the GLAAD Media Award, the Gotham Industry Lifetime Achievement Award from the Independent Feature Project in New York, the Spirit of Independence Award from Film Independent at the Los Angeles Film Festival, and the esteemed French Legion of Honor from the French government in acknowledgment for their contributions to French culture over the past 30 years.

Barker currently serves as Co-Chairman of the Museum of the Moving Image Board of Directors, the Entertainment Media and Technology Dean's Advisory Board at the NYU Stern School of Business, and has served as Adjunct Professor at the Columbia University School of the Arts Graduate Film Program and on the Visiting Committee to the Division of the Humanities at the University of Chicago.

Bernard is the New Jersey State Film Commissioner and is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the British Academy of Film and Television Arts, the Sundance Advisory Board, the Los Angeles Film Festival Advisory Board, the Count Basie Theatre Foundation Board of Directors, the Atlantic Highland Arts Council Advisory Board and the Monmouth County Arts Council, as well as Theatre-Chair for the Asbury Park Music in Film Festival.

Upcoming Sony Pictures Classics releases include *Paris Can Wait* (Eleanor Coppola); *Maudie* (Aisling Walsh); *Brigsby Bear* (Dave McCary); *Call Me By Your Name* (Luca Guadagnino) and *The Leisure Seeker* (Paolo Virzi).

About The Host

Jessica Williams is a talented comedian, writer and performer who has garnered the attention of television audiences with her influential voice, perspective, and wit around pop culture conversations in media.

Williams can next be seen in *The Incredible Jessica James*, opposite Chris O'Dowd. Written and directed by Jim Strouse, the film centers on an aspiring playwright (Williams) in New York who strikes up a friendship with a guy (O'Dowd) while on the rebound from a break-up. It premiered at the closing night of the Sundance Film Festival—Williams received rave reviews, with *Variety* calling her a “force of nature” and *The Wrap* proclaiming “a movie star is born.”

In April 2016, Williams launched the podcast, *2 Dope Queens*, with her best friend and fellow comedian Phoebe Robinson. Based on their live comedy show in Brooklyn, the podcast tackles the struggles of two twenty-something women shaking things up as they discuss everything from sex to romance to hair issues and of course living in NYC.

In 2015, Williams starred opposite Jermaine Clement and Regina Hall in the Sundance Film Festival selection, *People Places Things*. The comedy centers on the story of Will Henry, a graphic novelist who struggles to raise his two young daughters in the wake of a recent breakup.

Williams joined the cast of Comedy Central's *The Daily Show* in 2012 as the first African American woman and youngest correspondent to date. Williams led numerous comedic yet thought-provoking segments on hot button topics such as police brutality, transgender rights, sexism in politics and race. Williams announced her departure from the show in June 2016 after four years with the late-night series. Williams' other television credits include HBO's hit series *Girls* and Nickelodeon's *Just for Kicks*.

Prior to her success on *The Daily Show*, Williams gained experience as a writer and performer with the Los Angeles Upright Citizens Brigade. Williams was featured on *Variety's* annual “Top 10 Comics to Watch” list in 2012.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Williams attended California State University, Long Beach and graduated in 2012. She currently resides in Brooklyn, NY.

About Women In Film and the Awards

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.

The Crystal Awards was established in 1977 to honor outstanding women who, through their endurance and the excellence of their work, have helped to expand the role of women within the entertainment industry. Past recipients include Nicole Kidman, Cate Blanchett, Laura Linney, Viola Davis, Annette Bening, Donna Langley, Jennifer Aniston, Diane English and the cast of *The Women*, Renée Zellweger, Jennifer Lopez, Sandra Bullock, Gwyneth Paltrow, Diane Lane, Halle Berry, Laura Ziskin, Jessica Lange, Meryl Streep, Jodie Foster, Angela Bassett, Meg Ryan, Susan Sarandon, Michelle Pfeiffer, Alfre Woodard, Polly Platt, Lauren Shuler Donner, Diane Warren, Amy Heckerling, Paula Weinstein, Martha Coolidge, Buffy Shutt and Kathy Jones, Gale Anne Hurd, Nancy Malone, Maya Angelou, Lily Tomlin, Ruby Dee, Penny Marshall, Jessica Tandy, Barbara Boyle, Nikki Rocco, Jean Firstenberg, Lee Remick, Lina Wertmuller, Bette Davis, Bette Midler, Goldie Hawn, Diane Keaton, Sherry Lansing, Nora Ephron, Dawn Steel, Fay Kanin, Lillian Gish, Whoopi Goldberg, Glenn Close, Amy Pascal, Denise Di Novi, Lucy Fisher, Lianne Halfon, Lynda Obst, Jane Rosenthal, and Paula Wagner.

The Lucy Awards was founded in 1994 by Joanna Kerns, Bonny Dore and Loreen Arbus and are presented in association with the Lucille Ball Estate. They were named for Lucille Ball, who was not only a legendary actress and comedienne, but also a producer, studio owner, creator and director. They are given to recognize women and men and their creative works that exemplify the extraordinary accomplishments she embodied; whose excellence and innovation have enhanced the perception of women through the medium of television. Past recipients include: Taraji P. Henson, Jill Soloway, Kerry Washington, The Women Of *Mad Men* (Christina Hendricks, January Jones, Elisabeth Moss, Jessica Paré, Kiernan Shipka), Bonnie Hammer, Nina Tassler, Courteney Cox, Holly Hunter, Salma Hayek, Shonda Rhimes and the women of *Grey's Anatomy*, Geena Davis, Debra Messing and Megan Mullally, Blythe Danner, Lily Tomlin, Rosie O'Donnell, Amy Brenneman, Tyne Daley, Phyllis Diller, Marcy Carsey, Carol Burnett, Barbara Walters, Shari Lewis, Garry Marshall, Angela Lansbury, Marlo Thomas, Gary David Goldberg, Diahann Carroll, Tracey Ullman, Fred Silverman, Imogene Coca, Camryn Manheim, Norman Lear, Bud Yorkin and the casts of *Sex and the City*, *If These Walls Could Talk* and *If These Walls Could Talk 2*.

The **Women In Film Max Mara Face of the Future Award**[®], inaugurated at Women In Film's 2006 Crystal + Lucy Awards[®], is given to an actress who is experiencing a turning point in her career through her work in the film and television industries, through her contributions to the community at large, in recognition of her outstanding achievements, and her embodiment of style and grace. Past recipients include Natalie Dormer, Kate Mara, Rose Byrne, Hailee Steinfeld, Chloë Grace Moretz, Katie Holmes, Zoë Saldana, Elizabeth Banks, Ginnifer Goodwin, Emily Blunt and Maria Bello.

Dorothy Arzner was the first female member of the Directors Guild of America. In her honor, the **BMW Dorothy Arzner Directors Award**[®] was established to recognize the important role women directors play in the film and television industries. Past recipients include: Lesli Linka Glatter, Ava DuVernay, Jennifer Lee, Sofia Coppola, Pamela Fryman, Lisa Cholodenko, Catherine Hardwicke, Nancy Meyers, Barbra Streisand, Mimi Leder, Barbara Kopple, Gillian Armstrong, Lian Lunson, Joey Lauren Adams and Nicole Holofcener.

Norma Zarky was a founding member of Women In Film. A renowned entertainment attorney and the first woman President of the Beverly Hills Bar Association, she was a tireless advocate of human rights and women's issues. The **Norma Zarky Humanitarian Award**[®] was established in 1979 and is presented to individuals who, like Ms. Zarky herself, have demonstrated enlightened support for the advancement of equal opportunity and devotion to the improvement of the human condition. Past recipients have included: Eva Longoria, George Lucas, Christina Applegate, Jeffrey Katzenberg, Ted Turner, Whoopi Goldberg, Billy Crystal, Robin Williams, Quincy Jones and Elizabeth Taylor (posthumously).

The Women In Film Beacon Award is presented to an entertainment industry professional for outstanding leadership in the advancement of gender equity, signaling and celebrating unbiased decision making in media. Tom Bernard and Michael Barker of Sony Pictures Classics will be given the inaugural award for their unmatched support of female filmmakers consistently and throughout the entire history of their careers.

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