

HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES SELECTED SCREENWRITERS, SCREENPLAYS & MENTORS FOR 19th ANNUAL SCREENWRITERS LAB

Tamara Jenkins & Jim Taylor to Host a Master Class

Lab to Take Place April 5 – 7, 2019 in East Hampton, NY

East Hampton, NY (March 14, 2019) – The Hamptons International Film Festival (HIFF) announced today the selected screenwriters, screenplays and mentors for the 19th annual Screenwriters Lab, which will take place April 5 – 7, 2019, in East Hampton, New York. The Lab pairs rising screenwriters with established and knowledgeable screenwriters, directors, and producers for a weekend of one-on-one mentoring sessions.

The three selected screenplays for 2019 are **Barbara Cigarroa's "El Otro Lado (The Other Side)," Sontenish Myers' "Stampede,"** and **Kirsten Tan's "Higher."** Full bios of all Lab participants are included below. For the second year in a row, all of the selected lab participants are women.

"Over the years our annual Screenwriters Lab has become a wonderful opportunity for writers to explore the possibilities of their work and receive guidance from some of the industry's most prolific storytellers," said David Nugent, Artistic Director of the Hamptons International Film Festival.

This year's mentors include **Michael H. Weber**, screenwriter of *THE DISASTER ARTIST*, for which he received an Academy Award® nomination, *THE FAULT IN OUR STARS*, *(500) DAYS OF SUMMER*, and *THE SPECTACULAR NOW*; and **Caroline Kaplan**, who has produced over 70 films, including *EN EL SÉPTIMO DÍA*, *SORRY TO BOTHER YOU* and *BOY'S DON'T CRY*.

Oscar®-winning screenwriter **Jim Taylor** and Oscar®-nominated screenwriter **Tamara Jenkins** will lead this year's screenwriting Master Class, which is open to the public. Taylor, who won an Oscar® for Best Adapted Screenplay for *SIDEWAYS* and was nominated for *ELECTION*, is also known for *ABOUT SCHMIDT* and *DOWNSIZING*. Jenkins was nominated for an Academy Award® for Best Original Screenplay for her film *THE SAVAGES*, and is also known for *PRIVATE LIFE* and *SLUMS OF BEVERLY HILLS*. The pair worked together recently on *JULIET, NAKED*. They will use clips and personal experiences to detail all that goes into writing a script for every type of audience. This is a special opportunity to hear from two of the most talented and versatile writers in the industry.

The Master Class will take place at 6:00PM on Saturday, April 6, at the Ross School in East Hampton. Tickets are available for purchase at hamptonsfilmfest.org.

During the Lab weekend HIFF will also present a special screening of **TERMS OF ENDEARMENT** on Friday, April 5, at Bay Street Theater, with a post-screening conversation between David Nugent and Alec Baldwin. Tickets are available for purchase at hamptonsfilmfest.org.

This year's Lab is funded with support from the Melissa Mathison Fund. Previous recipients of support from the fund include Cathy Yan and Annabelle Attanasio, whose films *DEAD PIGS* (Yan) and *MICKEY AND THE BEAR* (Attanasio) premiered at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival and the 2019 SXSW Film Festival, respectively. The fund was established in 2016 and named for the late, beloved Oscar®-nominated screenwriter, and strives to foster the continued development of female writers in the industry.

Highlights since the Lab's inception include Michael Tyburski and Ben Nabors' *THE SOUND OF SILENCE*, starring Peter Sarsgaard and Rashida Jones, which premiered at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival; Ísold Uggadóttir's *AND BREATHE NORMALLY* and Christina Choe's *NANCY*, which both premiered at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival and received awards for directing and screenwriting, respectively; Destin Daniel Cretton's *SHORT TERM 12*, starring Academy Award®-winning actors Brie Larson and Rami Malek, which won the Grand Jury and Audience Award at SXSW in 2013; Justin Schwartz's *THE DISCOVERERS*, starring Griffin Dunne, which made its world premiere at HIFF 2012; Sara Colangelo's *LITTLE ACCIDENTS*, which premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival, starring Elizabeth Banks and Chloe Sevigny, and Claudia Myers's *FORT BLISS*, starring Michelle Monaghan and Ron Livingston, which was released in 2014.

For more information on this program, please visit the [HIFF website](#). The 27th annual Hamptons International Film Festival will take place over Columbus Day Weekend: October 10 – 14, 2019.

SCREENPLAYS

"El Otro Lado (The Other Side)" by Barbara Cigarroa

Logline: Set in Brownsville, Texas, during the child migration crisis, Lucy, a low-income Mexican American teen, is confronted with her own need for escape when her father decides to sponsor two undocumented minors for money.

Bio: Barbara Cigarroa holds an MFA in Screenwriting from Columbia University and a BA in English from Yale. A storyteller with a passion for social-justice activism and Hispanic narratives, Barbara's work has been recognized world-wide on the festival circuit, and through individual grants and awards from organizations including the Kellogg Foundation, Lincoln Center, and Sundance Institute. Barbara was selected for the 2019 Sundance Screenwriters Lab, where she was awarded the Latinx Fellowship with her project "El Otro Lado" (The Other Side), which was also featured at IFP's 2018 No Borders Co-Production Market. Her short film "Dios Nunca Muere" (God Never Dies) had its world premiere at the 2018 New York Film Festival, and concurrently she was invited to be a member of the 2018 NYFF Artist Academy. Previous work, "Marta Rosa," was an official selection at dozens of international film festivals, including Austin, New Orleans, and Palm Springs, where it won Panavision's "Best North American" short. Prior to moving to New York, Barbara volunteered as a documentary filmmaker in South Texas and Central America for non-profit companies focused on fighting for underprivileged community's rights. Before this, Barbara mentored under renowned documentary filmmaker Albert Maysles.

"Stampede" by Sontenish Myers

Logline: Set on a southern plantation in the 1800s, a young slave girl named Lena has telekinetic powers she cannot yet control. Circumstances escalate when she's separated from her mother to be a house girl, in close quarters with the mercurial Master's wife: Elizabeth.

Bio: Sontenish Myers is a writer-director based in Harlem, NY. She is a graduate and adjunct professor of NYU's Graduate Film program. Sontenish has written and directed 4 short films to date. In her work, racial identity, womanhood, power dynamics, and the heroic journey are often explored. She is particularly interested in doing so across genres, from dramas, science fiction/fantasy, to dark comedies. Her most recent short film, *Cross My Heart*, follows an American teen who upon visiting her family in Jamaica, discovers a secret that changes the way she sees the people she loves. The film made its North American Premiere at Seattle International Film Festival. Sontenish was also awarded the Alexis Award for Best Emerging Student Filmmaker at Palm Springs International Shortfest for *Cross My Heart*, which was also included in Refinery29's list of The Most Exciting Woman-Directed Films At 2018's Palm Springs Shortfest. *Cross My Heart* won the Vimeo Staff Pick Award at Hampton International Film Festival for its "outstanding performances from its two young leads and a nuanced directorial approach." Sontenish is an IFP Marcie Bloom Fellow in Film, and is developing her first feature film *Stampede*.

“Higher” by Kirsten Tan

Logline: As a mysterious flood rises floor by floor through a metropolitan apartment building, its residents fight for survival and resources, setting off an absurdist satire of interlocking short stories grappling with morality, truth and justice.

Bio: Kirsten Tan is a New York-based Singaporean filmmaker whose debut feature *Pop Aye* premiered as the Opening Night film of the World Cinema Dramatic competition at Sundance 2017. The film went on to receive a Special Jury Prize at Sundance, the VPRO Big Screen Award at Rotterdam and the Best International Film Award at Zurich Film Festival. To date, it has screened at over 50 film festivals including BFI London, Melbourne, Munich, Busan and was released by Kino Lorber. *Pop Aye* was invited to represent Singapore in the Foreign Film Category at the Oscars. Prior to completing *Pop Aye*, she made a series of short films. Her shorts *10 Minutes Later*, *Fonzi*, *Sink*, *Cold Noodles* and *Dahdi* have collectively received over ten international awards. A Cinereach Film Fellow, she earned her MFA at NYU Graduate Film School where she received the Tisch School of the Arts Fellowship.

MENTORS

Michael H. Weber

Michael H. Weber is an Oscar-nominated screenwriter and award-winning independent film producer.

With Scott Neustadter, he adapted *THE DISASTER ARTIST*, which was nominated for Best Adapted Screenplay at the 90th Academy Awards.

Their other writing credits include *THE FAULT IN OUR STARS*, *(500) DAYS OF SUMMER*, *THE SPECTACULAR NOW*, *PAPER TOWNS* and *OUR SOULS AT NIGHT*.

Weber graduated the Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University in 2000. Born in New York City, he currently lives in Manhattan.

Caroline Kaplan

Caroline Kaplan is the Director of Film and Creative Programs at Cinereach, a Film Foundation and Production Company based in New York. She manages direct support of filmmakers, including artistic and project development, and oversees the organization's various programs including the Fellowship Program and Creative Initiatives. She also serves as producer on select Cinereach productions and co-productions including Boots Riley's *Sorry To Bother You* and the upcoming *Marcel The Shell* movie. Caroline is also an independent film producer. Recent films include Oren Moverman's *Time Out of Mind*, Joseph Cedar's *Norman*, Jim McKay's *En El Septimo Dia* and Kent Jones' upcoming *Diane*. Prior to that she was the head of Production and Acquisitions at IFC Entertainment. She was also a founding partner of InDigEnt, the pioneering digital production company. Her film credits at IFC include: *Our Song*, *Mr. Death*, *Waking Life*, *Monsoon Wedding*, *Tadpole*, *Pieces of April*, *Personal Velocity*, *Me and You and Everyone We Know* and *Boyhood*. Prior to IFC Entertainment, she was the Senior Vice President of Original Programming for the Independent Film Channel and the Bravo Channel as well as a founder of the Independent Film Channel. Her television credits include: Errol Morris' *First Person*, *A Decade Under the Influence*, *Dinner for Five*, *The Typewriter*, *The Rifle and the Movie Camera* and Werner Herzog's *My Best Fiend*. She began her career in the Documentary department of HBO.

Tamara Jenkins

Tamara Jenkins is the writer-director of *PRIVATE LIFE*, *THE SAVAGES*, and *SLUMS OF BEVERLY HILLS*. Among the honors she has received are a Best Screenplay Award from the Los Angeles Film Critics Association, an Independent Spirit Award, and an Academy Award nomination for Best Original Screenplay. Ms. Jenkins currently teaches directing in the Graduate Film program at NYU's Tisch School

of the Arts, where she also received her MFA. Jenkins lives in New York City with her husband the screenwriter, Jim Taylor, and their daughter, Mia.

Jim Taylor

Born and raised in Seattle, Jim received a BA from Pomona College and an MFA from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. Jim is the long-time collaborator of writer/director Alexander Payne. Among the screenplays they have co-authored are ELECTION, ABOUT SCHMIDT, SIDEWAYS and DOWNSIZING. For their work on these scripts they have been honored with two Golden Globes, two Writers Guild Awards and one Academy Award. Jim is married to and sometimes writes with the filmmaker Tamara Jenkins. Their most recent collaboration is an adaptation of the Nick Hornby novel, JULIET, NAKED.

ABOUT THE HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

The Hamptons International Film Festival (HIFF), celebrating 27 years, is a year-round non-profit organization with monthly screenings, filmmaking workshops, a Screenwriters Lab, master classes, a summer documentary screening series, and an annual film festival each October. The Festival is the premiere film event on New York State's east end, and is an intimate showcase of some of the year's best offerings in contemporary cinema from around the world. Selections from all of our programs continue to play an important role during awards season. 2019 marked the 9th time in a row that a film in the Festival has become the eventual Best Picture winner at the Oscars, making HIFF the only Festival on the East Coast with such a distinction. For more information please visit: www.hamptonsfilmfest.org.

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