



TWENTY-FIVE
YEARS OF
CINEMA

**HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES
SCREENWRITERS & MENTORS FOR 17TH ANNUAL SCREENWRITERS LAB**

**FESTIVAL CONTINUES SUPPORT FOR EMERGING FILMMAKERS
WITH A FOCUS ON FEMALE ARTISTS**

LAB TO TAKE PLACE APRIL 7 – 9

East Hampton, NY (March 22, 2017) - The Hamptons International Film Festival (HIFF) today announced the screenwriters and mentors for the 17th annual Screenwriters Lab, which will take place April 7 - 9 in Sag Harbor & East Hampton, NY. The Lab pairs up-and-coming screenwriters with established screenwriters, directors and producers for a weekend of one-on-one mentoring sessions.

“Our focus on fostering up-and-coming talent in the HIFF community is at the forefront of our festival's mission, and our Screenwriters Lab is one of our most valued events,” said David Nugent, Artistic Director of the Hamptons International Film Festival. “In the last four years, 4 projects from our Lab have gone on to be produced, all by female filmmakers, which is particularly exciting to us.”

The three selected screenplays for 2017 are Annabelle Attanasio's "Mickey and the Bear," Jess dela Merced's "Chickenshit," and Andrew Semans's "Resurrection." Full bios of all Lab participants included below.

This year's mentors include Robin Swicord, screenwriter of "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," for which she received an Academy Award®-nomination for Best Adapted Screenplay, "Memoirs of a Geisha," and "Little Women," and director of "Wakefield," which screened at the 2016 HIFF; David Siegel, co-writer, producer and director of "Uncertainty," which screened at the 2008 HIFF, and "The Deep End," and director of "Bee Season," which screened as Opening Night of the 2005 HIFF, and "What Maisie Knew"; and Ted Griffin, co-writer of "Ocean's Eleven," "Matchstick Men," and "Tower Heist," screenwriter of "Ravenous," producer of Academy Award®-nominated "The Wolf of Wall Street" and "Up In The Air," and director of TV series "Terriers," "Mad Dogs," and "Patriot."

HIFF will also feature a screenwriting Master Class, open to the public, with last year's mentor Michael H. Weber, an award-winning screenwriter and independent film producer. Weber co-wrote "(500) Days of Summer," which was nominated for Best Feature - Comedy at the Golden Globe® Awards and earned him an Independent Spirit Award and a Golden Satellite Award for Best Screenplay of the Year; "The Spectacular Now," which was nominated for two Independent Spirit Awards including "Best Screenplay," "The Fault in Our Stars," "The Disaster Artist" and the upcoming "Our Souls at Night" and "Where'd You Go, Bernadette." Weber also served as an executive producer on "The Spectacular Now,"

“Paper Towns” and “The Disaster Artist.” Weber will take participants through the entire process of scriptwriting, from building a script in the original writing phase to the ways a script changes and morphs through to the final edited picture. Weber will use clips and personal experience to help detail all that goes into writing a script for every type of audience, specifically focusing on taking a script from book to screen. This is a special opportunity to hear from Weber, one of the most talented writers working in film today. The Master Class will take place at 6:00PM on Saturday, April 8 at the Ross School in East Hampton. For more information on this program, check the [HIFF website](#).

This year’s Lab will enjoy the support of the Melissa Mathison Fund, which is primarily focused on fostering female writers in the industry and their continued development. In 2017, Annabelle Attanasio’s “Mickey and the Bear” will receive support from the fund. Following the Lab, Attanasio will further develop her connection to key industry contacts through a selected screenplay reading (by established actors) at an exclusive event in the fall.

“We look forward to having our Lab participants come to the East End for the opportunity to develop their craft under the guidance of our talented mentors, and to build relationships within the industry,” said Anne Chaisson, Executive Director of the Hamptons International Film Festival. “We could not have done this without the support of the Melissa Mathison Fund, and are so thankful for everyone involved in this year’s Screenwriters Lab.”

A number of recent projects in the Lab have gone on to be produced, distributed and to screen at festivals around the world, such as Sundance, South by Southwest, Karlovy Vary, Locarno and the Los Angeles Film Festival. Some highlights include Destin Daniel Cretton’s “Short Term 12,” starring Brie Larson (HIFF/ *Variety*’s “10 to Watch” 2013) and John Gallagher, Jr., which won the Grand Jury and Audience Award at SXSW; Justin Schwartz’s “The Discoverers,” starring Griffin Dunne, which had its world premiere at the 2012 HIFF; 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.

The 25th annual Hamptons International Film Festival will take place over Columbus Day Weekend: October 5th – 9th, 2017.

SCREENPLAYS

“Mickey and the Bear” by Annabelle Attanasio

Logline: In rural Montana, a scrappy, conscientious teenage girl seeks independence from her controlling father, whom she’s taken care of since her mother’s death. Upon finding refuge in a worldly stranger, she must decide whether to remain loyal to her father, or to leave him behind to pursue her own life.

Bio: Annabelle Attanasio is an actress and filmmaker based in Brooklyn. Her short “Frankie Keeps Talking” recently had its world premiere at SBIFF, and will screen at MIFF and NFFTY in the coming months. “Frankie” is a feminist farce about the severity of frustration a woman feels when she goes on a

date with a man who never stops talking. Attanasio's notable acting credits include "The Knick" (Cinemax), "Barry" (Netflix) and a (current) series regular role on "Bull" (CBS). Attanasio is represented by Rhonda Price at The Gersh Agency and Jen Konawal at Washington Square Films.

"Chickenshit" by Jess dela Merced

Logline: With the help of a ragtag group of boys, 11-year-old Phoenix sets out on a dangerous mission to save her Detroit neighborhood from arsonists and to prove herself to her father.

Bio: Jess dela Merced is a Filipino-American writer/director from San Francisco. She is currently a director in the Disney ABC directing program. Last year, she was named as one of *Filmmaker Magazine's* 25 New Faces of Independent Film and a NYFF Artist Academy fellow. She holds an MFA from the NYU Grad Film Program, where she received the 2012 Spike Lee Fellowship as well as the Lorraine Hansberry Arts, Performance, and Media Award. Her award-winning thesis film "Hypebeasts," written under the mentorship of Spike Lee, aired on PBS. From 2014-2015 Jess was a San Francisco Film Society FilmHouse screenwriting resident and one of IFP's Emerging Storytellers. Her feature script "Chickenshit" is a winner of NYU's 2016 Purple List and a San Francisco Film Society grant recipient.

"Resurrection" by Andrew Semans

Logline: Sometimes all it takes to be a truly great mother is to stalk and kill an older gentleman in Manhattan.

Bio: Andrew Semans is a filmmaker based in Brooklyn, NY. "Nancy, Please," his debut feature as writer/director, premiered at the 2012 Tribeca Film Festival and was distributed theatrically by Factory 25. "Nancy" received a strong critical response and currently boasts a 100% "fresh" rating on Rotten Tomatoes. Previously, Andrew wrote and directed a handful of acclaimed short films.

MENTORS

Robin Swicord

Robin Swicord is primarily known for her work as a screenwriter for "Memoirs of a Geisha" (Satellite Award for best screenplay); "Little Women," (co-producer, Writers Guild award nomination); "Matilda" (co-written and co-produced with Nicholas Kazan); the cult comedy "Shag" (shared); "The Perez Family"; and "Practical Magic" (shared). She has written two plays that were produced off-Broadway ("Last Days at the Dixie Girl Café" and "Criminal Minds," both published by Samuel French).

In 2009 Swicord received an Oscar® nomination for her contribution to "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," a project Swicord originated and worked on for more than a decade.

Swicord made her feature-directing debut with Sony Classics' "The Jane Austen Book Club," for which Swicord also wrote the screenplay adaptation. She also wrote and directed "Wakefield" (HIFF 2016),

starring Bryan Cranston and Jennifer Garner; it premiered at the Telluride Film Festival in August 2016, and will be released theatrically by IFC in May 2017.

Swicord is currently a Governor for the Writers Branch of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, and chairs the Academy's prestigious Nicholl Screenwriting Fellowship.

David Siegel

David Siegel was born in Brooklyn, New York, but spent most of his youth in Southern California. He received a BA in Architecture at UC Berkeley before pursuing an MFA in Photography and Painting at the Rhode Island School of Design.

Siegel began working with Scott McGhee in San Francisco, completing their first feature, "Suture," in 1994. Since then, they have made "The Deep End" (2001), "Bee Season" (2005), "Uncertainty" (2008), and "What Maisie Knew" (2013).

Ted Griffin

As a screenwriter, Ted Griffin's credits include the 2001 remake of "Ocean's Eleven," "Matchstick Men" (with brother Nick Griffin), "Ravenous" and "Tower Heist" (with Jeff Nathanson). His producing credits include "Matchstick Men," the Oscar®-nominated "Up in the Air," Martin Scorsese's Fran Lebowitz documentary "Public Speaking," Walt Disney's "Prom" and the Oscar®-nominated "The Wolf of Wall Street." He conceived and appeared in the CLIO-winning commercial "The Key to Reserva" and wrote the Dolce-Gabbana ad "Street of Dreams," both directed by Mr. Scorsese. In television, he created, executive produced (with Shawn Ryan) and directed episodes of "Terriers" for FX, and has directed episodes of "Mad Dogs" and "Patriot" for Amazon. He lives in New York City with his wife and daughter.

MASTER CLASS

Michael H. Weber

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

With Scott Neustadter, he adapted "The Fault in Our Stars," based on the bestselling novel by John Green. In June 2014 it opened as the #1 movie in America and went on to gross more than \$300 million worldwide.

Weber co-wrote "(500) Days of Summer," which was nominated for "Best Feature—Comedy" at the Golden Globe® Awards and earned him an Independent Spirit Award and a Golden Satellite Award for Best Screenplay of the Year.

He also co-wrote and executive produced the critically acclaimed independent film "The Spectacular

Now,” an official selection of the 2013 Sundance Film Festival. The film was nominated for two Indie Spirit Awards, including "Best Screenplay," and the National Board of Review named it a Top Ten Independent Film of 2013.

Weber & Neustadter's adaptation of Tom Bissell's nonfiction work “The Disaster Artist” premiered at SXSW 2017. Starring and directed by James Franco, the cast also includes Seth Rogen, Dave Franco, Sharon Stone and Bryan Cranston. Warner Bros is releasing the movie later this year.

They recently finished production on an adaptation of Kent Haruf's “Our Souls at Night,” starring Robert Redford and Jane Fonda. Directed by Ritesh Batra, Netflix plans to release it in Fall 2017.

Weber & Neustadter's other projects include adaptations of “Where’d You Go Bernadette” for Annapurna, “Looking for Alaska” for Paramount and “The Rosie Project” for Sony.

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

ABOUT THE HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

The Hamptons International Film Festival (HIFF) is a year-round 501(c)3 non-profit organization with events, screenings, film workshops, comprehensive summer programs 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. With cash and in-kind prizes handed out totaling more than \$200,000, HIFF continues to attract some of the best films of the year. Selections from all of our programs continue to play an important role during awards season. 2016 marked the 8th time in the last 9 years that a film at 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.

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