

HAMPTONS FILM

HAMPTONSFILM ANNOUNCES SELECTED SCREENWRITERS, SCREENPLAYS & MENTORS FOR 21st EDITION OF THE SCREENWRITERS LAB

Mentors Include Award-Winning Screenwriters James Ponsoldt, Jesse Andrews & Sara Colangelo

Lab to Take Place Virtually April 9-11, 2021

East Hampton, NY (March 29, 2021) – HamptonsFilm, home of Hamptons International Film Festival, announced today the selected fellows, screenplays and mentors for the 21st edition of their annual Screenwriters Lab, which will take place April 9-11, 2021. The Lab pairs rising screenwriters with established screenwriters, directors, and creative-producers for a weekend of one-on-one mentoring sessions. Given the current COVID-19 pandemic, this year's lab will take place virtually.

“We are committed to celebrating 21 years of the HamptonsFilm Screenwriters Lab by continuing this early spring tradition virtually. We so very much appreciate that our mentors James, Jesse, and Sara have agreed to dedicate their time to this program and to working with these screenwriters. It’s a fitting announcement in Women’s History Month that all three selected screenwriters are female for the second time in three years.” said Anne Chaisson, Executive Director.

The three selected screenplays for 2021 are “**Back Seat**” by **Lana Wilson**, “**Bear Lake**” by **Zoë Maltby**, and “**Samir, the Accidental Spy**” by **Charlotte Rabate**. Full bios of participants are included below.

“Since the Lab’s inception just over two decades ago, over fifty screenplays have been developed at our lab, with many being produced, premiering, and winning awards at Festivals such as Sundance, Cannes, SXSW and more, in addition to screening theatrically around the world,” said David Nugent, Artistic Director of HamptonsFilm. “This year’s selected artists bring diverse, unique, and personal stories about people from all different walks of life. We are so excited to go on their journey with them.”

This year’s mentors include Independent Spirit Award winner **James Ponsoldt**, screenwriter of *THE END OF THE TOUR*, *THE SPECTACULAR NOW*, and *SMASHED*; **Jesse Andrews**, an award-winning screenwriter and *New York Times* best-selling novelist whose work includes *ME*, *EARL AND THE DYING GIRL* as well as Pixar’s upcoming *LUCA*; and **Sara Colangelo**, whose three feature films have world-premiered at Sundance and been released worldwide, including *LITTLE ACCIDENTS* and *WORTH*, as well as *THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHER*, which served as the Opening Night Film of the 2018 Hamptons International Film Festival. Both Colangelo (2013) and Ponsoldt (2008) are alumni of the HamptonsFilm Screenwriters Lab.

HamptonsFilm also announced that Wilson and her project “Back Seat” is the recipient of the 2021 Melissa Mathison Fund. Previous recipients include **Kelly O’Sullivan’s “Mouse,” Kirsten Tan’s “Higher,” Aemilia Scott’s “The Birthday Suit,” Annabelle Attanasio’s “Mickey And The Bear,”** and **Cathy Yan’s “Dead Pigs.”**

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 of the Screenwriters Lab over the past two decades have included 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.

Photos of this year's mentors and participants are available [here](#). For more information on this program, please visit the [HamptonsFilm website](#). The 29th annual Hamptons International Film Festival will take place from October 7 – 13, 2021.

SCREENPLAYS

“Back Seat” by Lana Wilson

Logline: When a single split-second decision leads to a woman's life turning upside down, she fights to prove that she's a worthy mother—to the courts, her children, and herself.

Bio: Lana Wilson is an Emmy-winning director and writer. Her latest film, the Taylor Swift documentary *MISS AMERICANA*, premiered on the opening night of the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, was a New York Times and IndieWire Critic's Pick, and is a Netflix Original. It was named one of the Five Best Documentaries of the Year by the National Board of Review. Previous work includes *THE DEPARTURE* (2017 Tribeca Film Festival, Independent Spirit Award nominee for Best Documentary), *A CURE FOR FEAR* (IDA Award Nominee for Best Short-Form Series), and *AFTER TILLER*, which premiered at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival, was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award, and won an Emmy Award for Best Documentary.

“Bear Lake” by Zoë Maltby

Logline: “Bear Lake” follows the intertwined journeys of a queer Utah teenager and a Mormon pioneer woman, separated by a century but cosmically united through a mythical, brooding lake monster.

Bio: Zoë Maltby is a writer, director, and actor hailing from Sleepy Hollow, NY. She recently completed post-production on her first short film, *THE 45TH ANNUAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS ALL-STAR ALL-SCHOOL CONFERENCE*. Playwriting credits include *my parents are here tonight* (Access Theatre), *Reunion* (Off With Her Head Productions), and *Oh Dracula, My Dracula* (Hatchlings NYC). She holds a B.A. in Theatre from Northwestern University.

“Samir, the Accidental Spy” by Charlotte Rabate

Logline: Samir, 12, and his family escape to Lebanon after the 1966 Syrian coup d'état. Convinced that his father is a spy, he leads an investigation with his new girlfriend Christine. However, his father's double life has nothing to do with diplomacy.

Bio: Charlotte Rabate is best known for her viral commercial for Durex, which won the AICP award and the Porsche Award, and was nominated for a Cannes Lions. Charlotte is a French-Syrian filmmaker based in New York. She holds a MFA in directing from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. *STRAY DOLLS*, a feature she produced and co-wrote, premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival and received the Tribeca All Access Grant, Jerome Foundation Grant and IWC Schaffhausen award. A Berlinale talent fellow, Charlotte workshopped “Samir, the Accidental Spy” at the Rawi Screenwriters Lab and the Torino Film Lab Extended, her first

feature as a writer-director.

MENTORS

Jesse Andrews

Jesse Andrews is an award-winning screenwriter, New York Times-bestselling novelist, and former German youth hostel receptionist. His produced credits include ME AND EARL AND THE DYING GIRL, which he adapted from his own debut novel and which won the Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival. He is also a co-writer of Pixar's LUCA, currently scheduled to release in summer 2021.

Sara Colangelo

Sara Colangelo is a New York-based writer and director, whose three feature films have world-premiered at Sundance and been released worldwide. Colangelo's debut, LITTLE ACCIDENTS, starring Boyd Holbrook and Elizabeth Banks, premiered in 2014 and went on to be nominated for a 2015 Independent Spirit Award in the category of Best First Screenplay. Her second film, THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHER, starring Maggie Gyllenhaal and Gael Garcia Bernal, premiered in 2018 and won the U.S. Dramatic Directing Prize. WORTH is her latest feature film and stars Michael Keaton, Stanley Tucci and Amy Ryan. It follows D.C. lawyer Ken Feinberg's quest to calculate incalculable human loss during the administration of the 9/11 Compensation Fund. The film will be released through Netflix and Barack and Michelle Obama's production company Higher Ground in September 2021.

James Ponsoldt

James Ponsoldt is from Athens, Georgia. His films include THE END OF THE TOUR, THE SPECTACULAR NOW, SMASHED, THE CIRCLE, and OFF THE BLACK (and have won awards at the Independent Spirit Awards and Sundance, and have been honored by the National Board of Review). He's directed pilots for Fox and Amazon, and he directed the pilot and was an Executive Producer on Netflix's hit series MASTER OF NONE. Most recently, Ponsoldt executive produced and directed the pilot and multiple episodes of SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS (starring Elizabeth Olsen). He is developing film and TV projects with Amazon, Anonymous Content, Paramount, and Sony. He'll direct his next feature this summer.

ABOUT HAMPTONSFILM

HamptonsFilm, home of the Hamptons International Film Festival (HIFF), based in the Hamptons on the Eastern End of Long Island was founded in 1992 to celebrate the art of film and to introduce a unique and varied spectrum of international films and filmmakers to our audiences with an annual film festival each October. A non-profit organization with year-round screenings of global narrative and documentary films, a Screenwriters Lab, and extensive educational initiatives, HamptonsFilm offers programs that enlighten, educate, and provide invaluable exposure for filmmakers, while also providing the East End of Long Island with an educational and cultural experience that enriches the lives of its citizens and contributes to the local economy. HIFF celebrating 28 years, the tent-pole event of HamptonsFilm, is an annual premiere film event in New York State, and is an intimate showcase of some of the year's best offerings in contemporary cinema from around the world. Awarding prizes to filmmakers in cash and goods and services of over \$180,000 each year, with over \$4.5 million awarded in competition funds and services over the past 27 years, our program continues to play an important role during awards season. 2019 marked the 10th 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 in the world with such a distinction. For more information please visit hamptonsfilmfest.org.

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