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THE 55TH CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES INDUSTRY DAYS, OCT. 17-20

Headliners include Bob Berney, former Head of Distribution at Amazon Studios, Oscar® Winning Production Designers Hannah Beachler and Adam Stockhausen, and Sundance Winner Chinonye Chukwu

CHICAGO - The 55th Chicago International Film Festival announced today the program for Industry Days (October 17-20, 2019) with an impressive list of guest speakers to inspire and illuminate the film and entertainment community.

Highlights include this year's Keynote Conversation with Bob Berney, former Head of Marketing & Distribution at Amazon Studios, Picturehouse, and Newmarket Films, who oversaw theatrical distribution for some of the biggest independent films of all time; a Case Study with Sundance Grand Jury Prizewinner Chinonye Chukwu (*Clemency*); Master Classes in Production Design with Oscar®-winners Hannah Beachler (*Black Panther*) and Adam Stockhausen (*The Grand Budapest Hotel*); a Screenwriting Master Class with Steven Conrad (*The Weatherman, Patriot*); and panel discussions, featuring leading industry figures such as producer Bob Teitel (*The Hate U Give*) and representatives from top entertainment companies such as CAA and Neon.

"As Chicago becomes a hotbed of film, TV, commercial and web-series production, Industry Days has become an important meeting place for our multiple entertainment communities to come together with each other and major decision-makers from around the U.S.," said Chicago

International Film Festival Senior Programmer Anthony Kaufman. “The synergies can produce meaningful results.”

The Chicago International Film Festival’s hub for filmmakers and industry professionals to connect, share ideas and inspire each other, the Industry Days program includes panels, workshops, and screenings as well as one-on-one meetings, networking events, and a competitive pitch session, which all take place during the first weekend of the Festival, October 17-20, 2019. All events are held at the Festival’s main venue, the AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois St.), with the exception of select special events and roundtable meetings located within the Streeterville neighborhood in downtown Chicago.

Since its inception in 2015, Industry Days has hosted an impressive lineup of film executives, creatives, and entertainment professionals, including Oscar®-winning director Steve McQueen (*12 Years a Slave*), Michael Barker (Sony Pictures Classics) and Charles D. King (Macro), Hollywood producers Gigi Pritzker, James D. Stern, and Albert Berger, and award-winning and celebrated independent filmmakers, including Stephen Cone, Sam Pollard, and Joe Swanberg.

All events are open to registered Industry Days badge-holders.

For full schedule information, registration, and other updates visit:

www.chicagofilmfestival.com/industrydays

The full schedule is below. Speakers are subject to change.

Thursday, Oct. 17

4:30-5:45pm: Chicago Industries: Breaking Through to the Mainstream

Panelists: Betsy Steinberg (moderator), Kwame Amoaku (Chicago Film Office), Carrie Holt de Lama (Unit Production Manager), Lisa Masseur (Tessa Films), Jennifer Reeder (*Knives and Skins*)

The Windy City’s entertainment sector is blowing up, from TV shows to commercials, independent feature films to web series. Experts from diverse sections of the business discuss the widening options for media careers in Chicago and how to sustain the rise. (AMC River East 21)

6pm-9pm: **Industry Days Happy Hour** (at Lucky Strike Lounge)

Hosted by: SAGindie

Friday, Oct. 18

10-11am: Capturing the Real: Documentary Development Workshop

Panelists: Michael Caplan (moderator), Jolene Pinder (Kartemquin Films), Diane Quon (*Minding the Gap*), Debra Tolchinsky (*Fast Talk*)

A panel of nonfiction experts offer the skills needed to develop documentary projects and offer feedback and encouragement to participants. Come prepared, with your idea or inquiry submitted beforehand.

10-11am: From Script to Nuts: Fiction Development Workshop (co-produced by Stage 18)

Panelists: Angie Gaffney (moderator), Eugene Park (Full Spectrum Features), Bob Teitel (*The Hate U Give*), Brittani Ward (Casting Director)

Join industry pros for a discussion on the development process, and why your film needs it more than you think it does--especially when it comes to the script. With a diverse professional panel, we'll discuss all the different elements you need to pull together before you start making that shot list, some key DOs and DONTs, and why development is actually the most important stage of production.

Co-produced by: Stage18

11:30am-12:30pm: Money Talks: The Many Ways to Finance Your Project

Panelists: Nicole Bernardi-Reis (moderator), Julie Goldman (Motto Pictures), Brian Hieggelke, Cesar Lopez (Chicago Film Office), Yvonne Welbon (Sisters in Cinema)

Making media requires capital, but there are many ways to fund a project, from grants and donations, to tax incentives and private equity. These experts will show you the various avenues to take.

1:30pm-2:30pm: They Are the Champions: Accessing Lawyers, Agents and Managers

Panelists: Laverne McKinnon (moderator), Jeffrey Becker (entertainment attorney), Nick Ogiony (CAA), Ross Putman (Verve)

"It's all about who you know"--which is why having representatives who can help advocate on your behalf is so important. How do you find reps and how do you get them to most effectively work for you?

Sponsored by: Swanson, Martin & Bell, LLP

3-4pm: Career Building Through Distribution

Panelists: Aymar Jean Christensen (moderator), Chris Charles (Throughline Films), Ryan Oestreich (Music Box Theatre)

Don't just throw your project on a platform or at a film festival: Be strategic. Find out how to work with exhibitors and distributors that help you sustain your career over the long term.

4:30-5:30pm: Keynote Conversation: Theatrical Campaigns and Streaming Wars with Bob Berney

Moderator: Anthony Kaufman

A preeminent force in the film world for more than two decades, Berney was most recently Head of Marketing & Distribution at Amazon Studios, where he oversaw theatrical distribution for a vast array of critically acclaimed titles, including *Manchester by the Sea* and *The Big Sick*. Prior to joining Amazon Studios, he released some of the biggest indie films of all time, including *Insidious*, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, and *Memento*. Berney will discuss surviving the streaming wars and the seismic shifts in the entertainment landscape.

Sponsored by: DePaul University

7-10pm: **Industry Days Party** at Chez (247 E. Ontario St.)

Sponsored by: Aberlour, Chloe Wine Collection, Goose Island, Hamilton Watch, Panavision

Saturday, Oct. 19

11am-12pm: **Case Study: *Clemency***

Panelists: Darrien Michele Gipson (moderator), Chinonye Chukwu (director), Bronwyn Cornelius (producer)

Clemency seemingly came out of nowhere to win the Grand Jury Prize at this year's Sundance Film Festival. What was the secret to their success--and how did the filmmakers develop, finance, and produce this low-budget, female-driven Oscar® contender?

Sponsored by: SAGindie

12:30pm-1:30pm: **Hit Me With Your Best Shot: Cinematographers' Tricks of the Trade**

Panelists: Megan Donnelly (moderator), Christopher Rejano (*Knives and Skin*), Scott Thiele (*Girl on the Third Floor*), Tommy Maddox-Upshaw (*On My Block*)

Cinematographers talk the tools of their craft, break down their most impressive sequences, cameras, lenses, and gear, and discuss best practices for collaborating with directors and crew.

Sponsored by: Panavision and AbelCine

2:30-3:30pm: **Master Class in Screenwriting with Steven Conrad**

Moderator: David Wolinsky

Steven Conrad is the writer of *The Pursuit of Happyness*, *The Weather Man*, *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, and wrote and directed the Amazon series *Patriot* and the Epix series *Perpetual Grace, LTD*.

4-5pm: **Master Class in Production Design with Oscar®-winner Hannah Beachler**

Moderator: Jacqueline Najuma Stewart (University of Chicago)

Hannah Beachler made history this year as the first African American to win the production design Oscar® for her visionary work on Marvel's blockbuster *Black Panther*. Previous credits include Oscar®-winner *Moonlight*, *Creed*, *Fruitvale Station*, and *Beyoncé's Lemonade*. (Chicago Cultural Center, Free Public Event)

Hosted by: Chicago Film Office and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events

6-7pm: **Industry Days Happy Hour** (at Lucky Strike Lounge)

Hosted by: DePaul University

Sunday, Oct: 20

12pm-1pm **Master Class in Production Design with Oscar®-winner Adam Stockhausen**

Oscar®-winning production designer Adam Stockhausen's long-standing collaboration with filmmaker Wes Anderson has yielded some of the most mesmerizing design in recent memory, including *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, for which he won the Academy Award. Other credits include Steven Spielberg's *Bridge of Spies* and *Ready Player One*, and Steve McQueen's *12 Years a Slave* and *Widows*. (AMC River East 21, Public Event)

1:30pm-5:00pm **The Pitch**

Pitch Judges: Bryce Norbitz (Tribeca Institute), Josh Foster (Cinetic)

A curated selection of filmmakers with new narrative projects in active development will take part in a competitive pitch session. The winning pitch, selected by a jury of film experts, will receive an award of in-kind services from Chicago Production Facilities and Consultation Services, including Keslow Camera, Stage18, Chicago Media Angels, Swanson, Martin & Bell, LLP, and the Tribeca Film Institute, worth over \$20,000.

Sunday, Oct. 27

5:30pm: **Stacy Smith: Making Hollywood More Inclusive**

Dr. Stacy L. Smith, Founder and Director of the Media, Diversity, and Social Change Initiative at U.S.C.'s Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism, is one of the premiere experts and researchers on the underrepresentation of women, racial and ethnic groups, the LGBTQ community and people with disabilities in Hollywood films, the music industry, and film criticism. In this inspiring discussion, Smith examines how we can work together to create sustainable industry change. (AMC River East 21, Public Ticketed Event)

Industry Days are made possible by the help of our sponsors and partners: AbelCine, Aberlour, Camera Ambassador, Chicago Film Office, Chloe Wine Collection, Cinespace Chicago Film Studios, DePaul University, Goose Island, Hamilton Watch, Illinois Film Office, Panavision, PRG, SAGindie, Swanson, Martin & Bell, LLP

Festival Information

The 55th Chicago International Film Festival runs Oct. 16-27, 2019 at the AMC River East, 322 E. Illinois St., and features more than 150 films, with a vast diversity of offerings, including numerous competitive categories and several highlight programs such as Black Perspectives, Cinemas of the Americas, International Comedy, Women in Cinema, Out-Look, After Dark and the City & State program (showcasing films made in Chicago and throughout Illinois.)

Festival Sponsors and Partners

The 55th Chicago International Film Festival's sponsors include Major Festival Sponsors: Bloomberg Philanthropies, Chloe Wine Collection, Citi, Columbia College Chicago, Xfinity; Festival Sponsors: Aberlour, British International School of Chicago, South Loop, Cinespace Chicago Film Studios, DePaul University, Goose Island, Hamilton Watch, Panavision, SAGindie, Swanson, Martin & Bell, LLP, William Blair; Official Agency: Ogilvy; Host Hotel: Ambassador Chicago; Participating: Hotels EMC2, The Whitehall Hotel; Airline Partner: LOT Polish Airlines; Festival Supporters: National Endowment for the Arts, Illinois Arts Council Agency, Illinois Film Office, Chicago Film Office, Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Sarofsky, PRG, Camera Ambassador; Media Partners: NCM, WTTW, WBBM, CHIRP; Partners: Beyond Events Catering, Chez, Chicago Architecture Biennial, Chicago Gourmet, Choose Chicago, Chop Shop, Goat Group Catering,

Robert's Pizza and Dough Company, Marchesa, Midwest Immersive, Museum of Contemporary Art, Steak 48.

About Cinema/Chicago

Cinema/Chicago, the presenting organization of the Chicago International Film Festival, is a year-round nonprofit arts and education organization dedicated to fostering better communication between people of diverse cultures through the art of film and the moving image. Cinema/Chicago's programs include the Chicago International Film Festival, Summer Screenings Program, CineYouth Festival, and year-round Education Program. Celebrating its 55th edition October 16-27, 2019, the Chicago International Film Festival is North America's longest-running competitive film festival. For more information, please visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter.

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