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Sundance Institute and Skywalker Sound Announce
Film Composers and Independent Filmmakers for
July Music and Sound Design Labs

Orchestra to Perform Original Scores to Scenes from
This Year’s Sundance Institute Feature and Documentary Lab Projects

Fellows Include Jacques Brautbar, Alexis Grapsas, Morgan Kibby, Amritha Vaz;
Creative Advisors Include Christophe Beck, Harry Gregson-Williams, Osvaldo Golijov

Los Angeles, CA — Sundance Institute and Skywalker Sound today announced the composers and directors selected for the Sundance Institute Music and Sound Design Labs at Skywalker Sound. This will be the fourth year the Music and Sound Design Labs take place at the Skywalker Ranch in northern California. Half of this year’s composing Fellows are women, extending the Institute’s commitment to female artists to a creative branch of filmmaking with an especially low percentage of women represented.

The Music and Sound Design Labs provide a space for composers, directors and sound designers to collaborate on the process of providing music and sound for film. Fellows participate in workshops and creative exercises under the guidance of leading film composers and film music professionals acting as Creative Advisors. Each composer/director team will have their original scores for new independent film scenes performed live by a chamber orchestra. The Music and Sound Design Lab for narrative feature films (July 7-20) is a joint initiative of the Institute’s Film Music Program and Feature Film Program, and the Music and Sound Design Lab for documentaries (July
22-30) is a joint initiative of the Film Music Program and Documentary Film Program. The Labs are part of 24 residential labs the Institute hosts annually to discover and foster the talent of emerging independent artists in film, theatre, music, new media and episodic content.

Peter Golub, Director of the Sundance Institute Film Music Program, said, “Like an unseen but essential character, music is vital to the craft of filmmaking. We are thrilled to be working with these multi-faceted, outstanding composers, directors and sound designers, allowing them to flex their creative muscles to match sound to image, bringing music to the forefront and setting the tone for how an audience will experience film.”

Josh Lowden, General Manager of Skywalker Sound said, “Collaborating with the Institute to host these Labs at Skywalker allows us to deepen our commitment to independent filmmaking. Twenty-five years ago Skywalker was founded by a filmmaker for filmmakers, and among our core philosophies is the importance of early collaboration between directors, sound designers and composers in bringing a story and vision to life.”

Creative Advisors this year include: composers Christophe Beck, George S. Clinton, Osvaldo Golijov, Harry Gregson-Williams, Laura Karpman, Blake Neely, Craig Richey, and Ed Shearmur; Skywalker Sound designers Pascal Garneau, Brandon Proctor, Steve Bissinger, Pete Horner, Kent Sparling, Andre J.H. Zweers, and Malcolm Fife; BMI Vice President Doreen Ringer-Ross; music supervisor Tracy McKnight; music editor Adam Smalley; music producer and music supervisor Evyen Klean; editor Vivien Hillgrove; directors Rob Epstein and Jesse Moss; and music agent Kevin Korn.

Artists and narrative projects selected for the 2016 Sundance Institute Music and Sound Design Lab: Feature Film (July 7-20) are:

Composers:

Amie Doherty
Galway, Ireland-born Amie Doherty works as a composer and orchestrator on a wide variety of film and television projects. Her credits as a feature film composer include Suburban Memoir and Feast of Varanasi. Over the past year, Amie has written additional music for such television series as Shadowhunters (Freeform) and Extant (CBS) alongside series composer Ben Decter. She is currently lead orchestrator on the upcoming FX/Marvel series Legion, working with composer Jeff Russo.

Alexis Grapsas
Alexis Grapsas is a Los Angeles based composer, originally from Greece, whose music can be heard in a wide variety of studio and independent features, as well as top rated television productions. He is currently based out of his studio on the Warner Bros Studio Lot pursuing a career as a freelance film and television composer. He has collaborated with many talented directors, studio producers, and top industry composers who trust his creative input and deep understanding of contemporary filmmaking.

Morgan Kibby
White Sea, the moniker of L.A.-based recording artist, composer and producer Morgan Kibby, was named Rolling Stone’s “Artist You Need to Know” in March 2014. Kibby, who previously collaborated and toured with French electronic group M83, has made a name for herself with her self-produced
debut album, In Cold Blood, earning high praise from outlets like LA Weekly, which coined her “LA’s renaissance woman of pop.” 2016 sees Kibby collaborating with chef Craig Thornton of Wolvesmouth on his most recent Lucy Walker directed documentary for The New Yorker on Amazon, and contributing score and sound design to his newest art installation which opened in March at MOCA in Los Angeles.

Gus Reyes
Gus Reyes is a Mexican composer best known for his work in The Dark Side of Light (2014), Mexican Gangster (2015), and The Charro de Toluquilla (2016). Reyes made his international debut with The Dark Side of Light, which earned him a nomination for the Jerry Goldsmith Award at the International Film Music Festival of Cordoba, Spain 2014, and later for the Silver Goddess Manuel Esperón Award 2015 for best music for a film at the Pecime Press Awards. Reyes is also known for his orchestral arrangements for several rock bands, such as Zoé (Mexico) and Dorian (Spain).

Jermaine Stegall
Originally from Joliet, Illinois, Jermaine Stegall has been working as a composer in Los Angeles for 12 years. After receiving his graduate certificate from USC’s Scoring for Motion Pictures and Television program, he interned with composer Marco Beltrami during the post-production of I, Robot. He has worked as an orchestrator and conductor of original and additional music for both film and television at studios such as Warner Bros, Lionsgate, and NBC Universal Television. Jermaine has scored over 20 films, most recently the upcoming Netflix release Mono.

Amritha Vaz
Born a Canadian of Indian descent and now residing in Los Angeles, multi-instrumentalist Amritha Vaz has had the privilege to work with Oscar and Emmy Award-winning composer Mychael Danna on films such as 500 Days Of Summer, Pomegranates and Myrrh, and Cooking With Stella. Most recently she scored two films for Film Independent's Project Involve lab, as well as for the documentaries Made In India (PBS) and Music for Mandela. In addition to scoring films, Amritha has arranged & performed strings on recordings for artists such as Melissa Etheridge, Andy Grammar, and K’Naan.

Directors:

Frances Bodomo / Afronauts (Zambia/U.S.A.): Just after Zambian Independence in 1964, an ingenious group of villagers build a homemade rocket in a wild bid to join the Space Race. 17-year-old astronaut Matha Mwambwa must decide if blasting off in the precarious rocket vindicates her past or just makes her a glorified human sacrifice. Inspired by true events.

César Cervantes / Hot Clip (U.S.A.): In the aftermath of their best friend’s fatal confrontation with a cop, three Southeast Los Angeles skaters spend 24 hours chasing dreams, making trouble and trying to survive in a community on the verge of exploding.

Adam Christian Clark / Newly Single (U.S.A.): After driving his girlfriend to leave him, Astor re-enters the LA dating scene, only to find himself becoming more and more abrasive as his
Rachel Israel / Keep the Change (U.S.A.): Keep the Change is a love story about David, an upper-class charmer struggling to hide his high-functioning autism. When David is forced to attend a support group for people with disabilities, he falls in love with Sarah, a young autistic woman, who challenges his desire to appear “normal.” Filmed with a cast from an existing community on the Upper West side of Manhattan, Keep the Change was written for and is starring adults on the autism spectrum.

Kirill Mikhanovsky / Coming to You (U.S.A.): After an assassin kills the wrong man, he gets too close to his real target and falls in love.

Eva Vives / Nina (U.S.A.): Just as Nina Geld’s brilliant and angry stand up kicks her career into high gear, her romantic life gets complicated, forcing her to reckon with what it means to be creative, authentic and a woman in today’s culture.

Artists and documentary projects selected for the 2016 Sundance Institute Music and Sound Design Lab: Documentary (July 22-30) are:

Composers:

Jacques Brautbar
Born and raised in Los Angeles, Jacques Brautbar began his professional music career at the age of fifteen as a founder, guitar player, arranger and songwriter for Sony recording artist Phantom Planet. Some of Jacques’ recent credits include the critically acclaimed documentary series, Lost LA, string arrangements for Chinese pop sensation Wanting Ku, and two Sloan Foundation films currently in production.

Chad Cannon
Chad Cannon is a composer and orchestrator whose unique style — fusing elements of Asian and American, popular and classical, cinematic and concert-oriented musics alike — is quickly launching him to prominence. 2016 has seen his first soundtrack releases with Paper Lanterns and Cairo Declaration, the latter co-composed with Chinese legend Ye Xiaogang. He has orchestrated for Studio Ghibli giant Joe Hisaishi and Academy Award winners Alexandre Desplat and Howard Shore, the latter under the mentorship of Conrad Pope.

Melisa McGregor
Melisa McGregor is a Canadian-born violinist, composer, and producer. She has written music for the Labyrinth Theater Co. in New York City. Now residing in Los Angeles, Melisa has been the
primary studio assistant for Danny Elfman for over 7 years, assisting him on many diverse film scores from *Alice in Wonderland* to the upcoming release *The Girl on the Train*. She is producer of the Library Concert Series with Christopher Lennertz and Tim Wynn which benefits Music Education charities.

**Katya Mihailova**

Katya Mihailova is a Kyrgyzstan-born composer/pianist based in NYC. She is currently working on a score for the British-produced documentary *Born To Be Free* about illegal capture and trade of beluga whales which premiered at the Sheffield Film Festival in June 2016. She composed an original score for *Russian Woodpecker*, a documentary film which received the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance 2015.

**Filmmakers:**

All filmmakers selected for this Lab have been supported by the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program.

**Damon Davis and Sabaah Folayan** (co-directors) / *Whose Streets?*: *Whose Streets?* is an intimate portrayal of the Ferguson story told by the people who lived it.

**Andrew James** (director) / *Street Fighting Man*: In a new America where the promise of education, safety and shelter are in jeopardy, three Detroit men fight to build something lasting for themselves and future generations.

**Jeff Unay** (director) / *Greywater*: A blue-collar family man breaks the promise he’d made years ago to never fight again. Now 40 years old, with a wife and four children who need him, Joe Carman risks everything — his marriage, his family, his financial security — to go back into the fighting cage and come to terms with his past.

**Landon Van Soest and Jeremy Levine** (co-directors) / *For Ahkeem*: *For Ahkeem* follows Daje Shelton, a 17-year-old Black girl from North St. Louis, as she strives to graduate from the nation’s only court-supervised public high school. Daje fights for her future as close friends are killed, her sixteen-year-old boyfriend Antonio is pulled into the prison system, and nearby Ferguson erupts after the police shooting of Michael Brown. Through Daje’s intimate first-person account, *For Ahkeem* explores the complex web between juvenile justice, education, and race in America today.
The Sundance Institute Film Music Program is supported by Time Warner Foundation, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, BMI, Christophe Beck and Jane Wang, The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, The Film Music Foundation, and ASCAP.

**Sundance Institute**
Founded in 1981 by Robert Redford, Sundance Institute is a nonprofit organization that provides and preserves the space for artists in film, theatre, and new media to create and thrive. The Institute’s signature Labs, granting, and mentorship programs, dedicated to developing new work, take place throughout the year in the U.S. and internationally. The Sundance Film Festival and other public programs connect audiences to artists in igniting new ideas, discovering original voices, and building a community dedicated to independent storytelling. Sundance Institute has supported such projects as *Beasts of the Southern Wild, Fruitvale Station, Sin Nombre, The Invisible War, The Square, Dirty Wars, Spring Awakening, A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder* and *Fun Home*. Join [Sundance Institute](https://www.sundance.org) on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.

**About Skywalker Sound**
Skywalker Sound, a division of Lucasfilm Ltd, is one of the largest, most versatile full-service audio post-production companies in the industry. Skywalker Sound offers comprehensive post-production services and utilizes the talents of Academy Award®-winning sound professionals working on sound design, editorial, Foley and re-recording mixes as a team. This provides filmmakers the most efficient model available for the audio post-production process. More information is available at [www.skysound.com](http://www.skysound.com).

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