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## **Sundance Film Festival: Juries, Awards Night Host Announced**

**24 Jurors to Award NUMBER Prizes, Including New NEXT Innovator's Award**

**Jason Mantzoukas (*The Long Dumb Road*) to Host Livestreamed Awards Show;  
Nick Offerman, Kiersey Clemons (*Hearts Beat Loud*) to Perform**

**Los Angeles, CA** — Sundance Institute will convene 24 experts in film, art, culture and science to award feature-length work shown at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival with 28 prizes, announced at a ceremony January 27 that will be livestreamed at [sundance.org](http://sundance.org), and on YouTube. Short Film Awards will be announced at a separate ceremony on January 23 and will also be livestreamed. The Festival takes place January 18-28 in Park City, Salt Lake City and Sundance, Utah.

Hosting the Awards ceremony: **Jason Mantzoukas**, actor, comedian and star of **Hannah Fidell's** *The Long Dumb Road* (Premieres section). Also known for playing Derek Hofsteler in the NBC comedy *The Good Place*, as well as Dr. Steve in *Transparent*, Rafi in *The League*, Dennis Feinstein on *Parks and Recreation* and Adrian Pimento on *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, Mantzoukas co-starred as Nadal in the film *The Dictator* and co-hosts the popular film discussion podcast *How Did This Get Made?*

Also onstage at Awards: from **Brett Haley's** *Hearts Beat Loud* (Premieres section, Closing Night Film), musicians **Keegan DeWitt** and **Jeremy Bullock** with lead actors **Nick Offerman** on bass and **Kiersey Clemons** on vocals -- opening the show with their film's title track.

The awards, which recognize standout artistic and story elements, are voted on by each of seven section juries, including, in the case of the new-this-year NEXT Innovator's Award, a jury of one. As in years past, Festival audiences have a role in deciding the 2018 Audience Awards, which will recognize five films in the U.S. Competition, World Competition and NEXT categories; new this year, audiences will vote on a Festival Favorite film across categories, which will be announced the week following the Festival. *Search*, which premiered in the NEXT section, won the Alfred P. Sloan Prize, announced previously.

The **2018 Sundance Film Festival Jury members** are:

### **U.S. Documentary Jury**

#### **Barbara Chai**

Barbara Chai is head of arts and culture coverage at Dow Jones Media Group, a suite of publications including Barron's, Penta, MarketWatch and the U.K.'s Financial News. She is also the editor of MarketWatch Entertainment. She was previously a longtime arts and news editor at The Wall Street Journal and was the

managing editor of Speakeasy, the WSJ's pop culture and entertainment site. In 2012, Chai traveled to Dharamsala, India, to blog about Buddhism and conduct the first of two video interviews with the Dalai Lama. She has lived and worked overseas for a decade, in Brussels and Hong Kong as an international news editor, and in Taiwan as a volunteer English teacher. Chai received her M.F.A. in fiction and poetry from Hollins University, where she also taught undergraduate creative writing as a fellow.

### **Simon Chinn**

Simon Chinn conceived and produced *Man on Wire*, which won the World Cinema Documentary Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival and went on to win an Academy Award and 40 other international awards. He followed that up with a string of award-winning feature documentaries including *The Imposter*, *Project Nim*, and *Searching for Sugar Man*, which also won an Academy Award and two prizes at the Sundance Film Festival. In 2014 Simon launched Lightbox with his LA-based cousin, Jonathan Chinn. Focused on producing high-end nonfiction for multiple platforms, Lightbox has produced major projects for big and small screen alike, including LA 92 for National Geographic and the only authorized documentary about Whitney Houston, directed by Kevin Macdonald, which will be released theatrically around the world in 2018.

### **Chaz Ebert**

Chaz Ebert is the CEO of the movie review site RogerEbert.com, heads the TV and movie production company Ebert Productions LLC, and is the co-founder of Ebertfest (Roger Ebert's Film Festival), now entering its 20th year. As president of the Roger and Chaz Ebert Foundation, her civic interests include endowing programs to help break the glass ceiling for women and people of color, providing education and arts for women, children, and families, and encouraging empathy, kindness, compassion, and forgiveness. Through these programs she also supports emerging writers, filmmakers, and technologists at various film festivals and universities. Ebert's affiliation with Sundance Institute includes supporting a program for Ebert Fellowship recipients at the Sundance Film Festival and participating as a creative investor in both the Catalyst Forum and Catalyst Women. She has also provided grants to many documentary films, among them *Radical Grace*, *Strong Island*, and *They Call Us Monsters*.

### **Ezra Edelman**

Ezra Edelman is an award-winning filmmaker. He directed *O.J.: Made in America*, which won the 2016 Academy Award for best documentary feature and is the third film Edelman has made for ESPN's acclaimed *30 for 30* documentary series. Edelman has also produced and directed three films for HBO, including the Peabody Award-winning *Magic & Bird: A Courtship of Rivals* and the Emmy-winning *Brooklyn Dodgers: The Ghosts of Flatbush*. In 2013, Edelman co-produced the Academy Award-nominated documentary *Cutie and the Boxer*. A native of Washington, DC, Edelman graduated from Yale University and currently lives in Brooklyn.

### **Matt Holzman**

Matt Holzman is host and producer of *The Document*, a new mash-up of radio and documentaries from NPR's Southern California flagship station, KCRW. A veteran public radio producer and reporter for film, culture, and the arts, Holzman previously created *The Business*, KCRW's weekly radio show about the entertainment industry, and has appeared regularly on PRI's *Studio 360* and *The World*. On his new program, Holzman works with documentary filmmakers to tell riveting stories—with no pictures. Holzman is also the creator and host of KCRW's documentary screening series.

### **U.S. Dramatic Jury**

**Rachel Morrison, A.S.C.**

Cinematographer Rachel Morrison has emerged as a refreshing talent in contemporary cinema. She has shot several features that have played at the Sundance Film Festival in recent years, including *Fruitvale Station* (which won both the U.S. Dramatic Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award); indie breakout *Dope*; *What Happened, Miss Simone?* (an Academy Award nominee for best documentary feature); and most recently, the period drama *Mudbound*. Morrison has a background in photojournalism and completed a master's degree in cinematography at the American Film Institute. She has also been nominated for two Emmys and received the Kodak Vision Award. Morrison's next film, *Black Panther*, reunited her with *Fruitvale Station* director Ryan Coogler and made her the first woman to be director of photography on a blockbuster superhero film.

**Jada Pinkett Smith**

Jada Pinkett Smith was born in Baltimore and has starred in many successful films. Her most recent film, *Girls Trip*, became the first film that starred and was produced, directed, and written by African Americans to break \$100 million at the U.S. box office. Smith has also produced several films, including *The Secret Life of Bees*, *The Karate Kid*, and *Free Angela and All Political Prisoners*. Other films she has starred in include *The Matrix Reloaded*, *The Matrix Revolutions*, and *The Nutty Professor*, as well as voicing Gloria in the *Madagascar* films. The Will and Jada Smith Foundation launched Careers in Entertainment—an initiative to help underrepresented voices enter the entertainment industry—in 2016, and then in 2017 the Foundation partnered with Sundance Institute to support diverse independent filmmakers through the Screenwriters Intensive.

**Octavia Spencer**

As a veteran character actress and one of Hollywood's most sought-after talents, Octavia Spencer has become a familiar fixture on both television and the silver screen. Her critically acclaimed performance as Minny in the DreamWorks film *The Help* won her an Academy Award, a BAFTA Award, a Golden Globe, a Screen Actors Guild Award, and a Critics' Choice Award, among numerous other accolades. Earlier this year, Spencer portrayed real-life mathematician Dorothy Vaughan in the Academy Award-nominated drama *Hidden Figures*, for which she also received her second individual Academy Award nomination. She can currently be seen in Guillermo del Toro's fantasy drama, *The Shape of Water*, which won the coveted Golden Lion Award at this year's Venice Film Festival and has since been awarded a wide range of accolades including individual Golden Globe and BAFTA nominations for Spencer.

**Michael Stuhlbarg**

Michael Stuhlbarg can currently be seen in Luca Guadagnino's *Call Me By Your Name*, Guillermo del Toro's *The Shape of Water*, and Steven Spielberg's *The Post*. His other film credits include *Doctor Strange*, *Arrival*, *Miles Ahead*, *Trumbo*, *Lincoln*, *Hugo*, and *A Serious Man*, the latter of which earned him a Golden Globe nomination. Stuhlbarg received his BFA from The Juilliard School; he also studied at UCLA, the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, the British American Drama Academy, Balliol College and Keble College (both of the University of Oxford), and with Marcel Marceau. Stuhlbarg is also known for his acting on the stage, having worked numerous times with Shakespeare in the Park and earning a Tony nomination for his performance in Martin McDonagh's *The Pillowman*.

**Joe Swanberg**

Joe Swanberg has directed several films, including *Drinking Buddies*, *Happy Christmas*, and *Win It All*. He contributed to the anthology horror film *V/H/S* and has acted in Adam Wingard's *You're Next*, Ti West's *The Sacrament*, and Annie Clark's segment of *XX*. He is the creator of the Netflix original series *Easy*, which he produces, writes, and directs, and his directing work in television includes episodes of HBO's *Looking* and Netflix's *Love*. In addition to his own work, Swanberg finances and produces films through his Forager Films

production company, including Alex Ross Perry's *Queen of Earth* and *Golden Exits*, Zach Clark's *Little Sister*, and Dustin Guy Defa's *Person to Person*. Swanberg works in Chicago, where he lives with his wife—filmmaker Kris Swanberg—and their two children.

### **World Cinema Dramatic Jury**

#### **Hanaa Issa**

Hanaa Issa has held several senior responsibilities through the founding and establishment of the Doha Film Institute in Qatar. Currently, as director of strategy and development, she oversees initiatives for film funding, training, and development, as well as the institute's programming, and she ensures that DFI's core programs deliver on their mission of nurturing and strengthening local and regional film industries. Some of the films supported by the institute include the Academy Award nominees *Timbuktu* (by Abderrahmane Sissako) and *Mustang* (by Deniz Gamze Ergüven), *Loving Vincent* (by Dorota Kobiela and Hugh Welchman), and the Academy Award-winning *The Salesman* (by Asghar Farhadi). Issa is also the deputy director of Qumra, DFI's annual industry event that provides mentorship, hands-on development, and international market access to emerging filmmakers from around the world.

#### **Ruben Östlund**

As an avid skier, Ruben Östlund directed ski films for five years, solidifying his taste for long sequence shots. In his mid 20s he went on to study film at the University of Gothenburg, where he developed his skill in constructing well-thought-out sequence shots, and this knowledge has continued to evolve through all his films. His works are best described as both humorous and accurate observations of human social behavior—film blended with sociology. His last four feature films have premiered at the Cannes Film Festival; *Force Majeure* won the Un Certain Regard Jury Prize in 2014, and his latest film, *The Square*, won the Palme d'Or, was distributed in over 75 territories, and became a box-office success. Östlund is also a professor of film at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden.

#### **Michael J. Werner**

Michael J. Werner is an American-born, Hong Kong-based producer, strategic consultant, and producer's representative. He has been credited as a producer or executive producer on nearly 30 high-profile independent films, including Wong Kar-wai's *The Grandmaster*, Tran Anh Hung's *Norwegian Wood*, Kiyoshi Kurosawa's *Tokyo Sonata*, John Cameron Mitchell's *Shortbus* and *How to Talk to Girls at Parties*, and Gregg Araki's *Mysterious Skin*. Werner was a partner in the pioneering foreign-sales company Fortissimo Films. He has served as a consultant or advisor to numerous industry and festival events in Asia, including the Hong Kong's HAF, the Asian Film Awards, Screen Singapore, the Busan International Film Festival, and the International Film Festival and Awards of Macao. He most recently was a consultant to Fox International Productions and was an executive producer on *212 Warriors*, their new Indonesian-language co-production. Currently he is producing a new film (*Suk Suk*) from Hong Kong director Ray Yeung.

### **World Cinema Documentary Jury**

#### **Joslyn Barnes**

Among the films Joslyn Barnes has been involved with producing since co-founding Louverture Films are *Bamako* (directed by Abderrahmane Sissako), *Trouble the Water* (Carl Deal and Tia Lessin), *The Black Power Mixtape 1967–1975* and *Concerning Violence* (both directed by Göran Hugo Olsson), *The House I Live In* (Eugene

Jarecki), *The Time that Remains* (Elia Suleiman), *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives* and *Cemetery of Splendour* (both directed by Apichatpong Weerasethakul), *House in the Fields* (Tala Hadid), *White Sun* (Deepak Rauniyar), *Zama* (Lucrecia Martel), and *Strong Island* (Yance Ford). Forthcoming films include *Hale County This Morning, This Evening* (RaMell Ross); *Angels Are Made of Light* (James Longley); and *Aquarela* (Victor Kossakovsky). In 2017, Barnes received both the Cinereach Producer Award and the Amazon Studios Producers Award.

### **Billy Luther**

Billy Luther (Navajo, Hopi, and Laguna Pueblo) is the director and producer of the award-winning documentary *Miss Navajo*, which premiered at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival and aired on PBS's Independent Lens. He studied film at Hampshire College and worked on various projects for the National Museum of the American Indian's film and video center. His second documentary feature, *Grab*, premiered at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival and aired nationally on public television. His latest short documentary film, *Red Lake*, premiered at the 2016 LA Film Festival and was nominated for best short at the 2016 International Documentary Association Awards. He is currently in production on *alter-NATIVE*, a docuseries exploring the world of Native American fashion designers.

### **Paulina Suárez**

Paulina Suárez is director of *Ambulante*, a non-profit organization that supports and promotes documentary cinema culture across Mexico. She holds a BA from UNAM (Mexico's national university), an MA from the University of Chicago, and is completing her PhD at NYU. Her research and writing have focused on Mexican cinematic modernity, fictional and nonfictional melodramas, and expanded documentary cultures. Since 2016, Suárez has directed *Ambulante's* film training program and its annual traveling festival, which screens nonfiction works at over 140 venues across Mexico. Suárez is committed to cinema's vocation as a public art and to exploring its potential as a catalyst for social change.

### **Short Film Jury**

#### **Cherien Dabis**

Cherien Dabis is an award-winning filmmaker and television writer/director who made her feature debut with *Amreeka*, which premiered at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival and won the coveted FIPRESCI Prize at the Cannes Film Festival. It went on to win several more international awards (including the Humanitas Prize), was nominated for the IFP Gotham Award for best feature, and was named one of the top 10 independent films of the year by the National Board of Review. Dabis made her onscreen debut in her second feature, *May in the Summer*, which premiered at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival. Dabis has also written and directed for several television series, such as Showtime's groundbreaking *The L Word*, Fox's hit *Empire*, and USA Network's critically acclaimed crime thriller *The Sinner*.

#### **Shirley Manson**

Shirley Manson is best known as the lead vocalist of the critically acclaimed alternative rock band Garbage and has been an active recording artist for more than 30 years. Garbage has sold over 12 million records during the course of an award-winning career that includes the recording of the James Bond movie theme "The World Is Not Enough" and the formation of their own independent record label, STUNVOLUME. Last year they released an autobiographical coffee-table book titled *This Is the Noise That Keeps Me Awake* and embarked upon a co-headline tour across North America with the legendary post-punk band Blondie. They are currently in the

studio working on their seventh record, and they expect to be hitting the road later in 2018 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of their Grammy-nominated record, *Version 2.0*.

### **Chris Ware**

Chris Ware is the author of *Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid on Earth* and *Building Stories*, which was named a top 10 book of the year by the New York Times and a top 10 fiction book of the year by Time. A regular contributor of comic strips and over two dozen covers to the New Yorker, his work has been exhibited at MOCA Los Angeles, the MCA Chicago, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, and he was a focus of the “Chicago” episode of the PBS program *Art in the 21st Century* in late 2016. His book *Monograph* by Chris Ware was released by Rizzoli in October 2017.

### **NEXT**

### **RuPaul Charles**

RuPaul Charles is an actor, singer, songwriter, and the two-time Emmy-winning host and executive producer of *RuPaul's Drag Race*. RuPaul studied theatre before moving to New York City in the mid-eighties, where he was crowned the Queen of Manhattan in 1989. RuPaul shot to international fame with the 1992 hit song “Supermodel (You Better Work),” followed by a seven-year contract as the first face of MAC Cosmetics. In addition to *Drag Race*, RuPaul has appeared in more than 50 films and television sitcoms, released 13 solo albums, published 2 books, and was named one of Time magazine’s 100 Most Influential People in 2017. RuPaul currently hosts the weekly podcast *What’s the Tee?* with Michelle Visage as well as the bi-annual drag convention RuPaul’s DragCon.

### **Alfred P. Sloan Feature Film Jury**

### **Robert Benezra**

Dr. Robert Benezra is a member of the Cancer Biology and Genetics Program at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and a professor of biological sciences at Weill Cornell Medicine of Cornell University. He received his doctoral degree in biological sciences at Columbia University and completed his postdoctoral training at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle.

### **Heather Berlin**

Dr. Heather Berlin is a cognitive neuroscientist and assistant professor of psychiatry at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. Passionate about science communication, Berlin is a committee member of the National Academy of Science’s Science & Entertainment Exchange and the New York Times series TimesTalks. She hosts *StarTalk All-Stars* with Neil deGrasse Tyson, and she hosted the CUNY TV series *Science Goes to the Movies* and the Discovery Channel series *Superhuman Showdown*.

### **Kerry Bishé**

Kerry Bishé is an actor and writer for theatre, film, and television. Her work can be seen in movies including *Argo*, *Red State*, and *Blue Highway*. She played computer engineer Donna Clark on AMC’s *Halt and Catch Fire*. Kerry is an ardent science enthusiast who works to expand access to computer science education and help scientists articulate their message for a broad audience.

### **Nancy Buirski**



Nancy Buirski is the director/producer/writer of *The Rape of Recy Taylor*, which premiered at the Venice International Film Festival, where it was awarded the Human Rights Nights Award. It is also a nominee for the NAACP Image Award for outstanding documentary. Buirski is also the director/producer of *By Sidney Lumet* (2015), *Afternoon of a Faun: Tanaquil Le Clercq* (2013), and the Peabody Award-winning and Emmy-winning *The Loving Story* (2012). Buirski is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences

### **The Sundance Film Festival®**

The Sundance Film Festival has introduced global audiences to some of the most groundbreaking films of the past three decades, including *Boyhood*, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Fruitvale Station*, *Whiplash*, *Brooklyn*, *Twenty Feet from Stardom*, *Life Itself*, *The Cove*, *The End of the Tour*, *Blackfish*, *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl*, *Dope*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *sex, lies, and videotape*, *Reservoir Dogs*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Precious* and *Napoleon Dynamite*. The Festival is a program of the non-profit Sundance Institute®. 2017 Festival sponsors include: Presenting Sponsors – Acura, SundanceTV, and Chase Sapphire®; Leadership Sponsors – Adobe, Amazon Studios, AT&T, DIRECTV, Dropbox, Omnicom, Stella Artois® and YouTube; Sustaining Sponsors – Canada Goose, Canon U.S.A., Inc., Dell, Francis Ford Coppola Winery, GEICO, Grey Goose Vodka, High West Distillery, IMDbPro, Lyft, Unity Technologies and the University of Utah Health; Media Sponsors - *Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times* and *Variety*. Sundance Institute recognizes critical support from the Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development, and the State of Utah as Festival Host State. The support of these organizations helps offset the Festival's costs and sustain the Institute's year-round programs for independent artists. Look for the Official Sponsor seal at their venues at the Festival.

[sundance.org/festival](http://sundance.org/festival)

### **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 *Boyhood*, *Swiss Army Man*, *Manchester By the Sea*, *Brooklyn*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *Life*, *Animated*, *Sonita*, *20 Feet From Stardom*, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Fruitvale Station*, *Sin Nombre*, *Spring Awakening*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* and *Fun Home*. Join [Sundance Institute](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

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