FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 10, 2020

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Sundance Institute Announces Inaugural Cohort of
Women at Sundance | Adobe Fellows

New Fellowship Offers Custom-Tailored Mentorship, Community, and Cash Grant from Sundance
Institute and Adobe

11 Women Artists, Creating Bold New Work Across Diverse Disciplines, Selected For
Year of Comprehensive Support

Los Angeles, CA – Sundance Institute announced today the 11 artists selected for its first-ever Women
at Sundance | Adobe Fellowship, designed to meaningfully support women artists creating bold new
work in film and media, with a priority on filmmakers from historically underrepresented communities. The
fellowship includes a $5,000 cash grant, skill-building workshops, and year-round mentorship from
Sundance Institute staff and Adobe executives. Fellows were selected by Adobe from Sundance
Institute’s community of supported artists across program disciplines.

The new fellowship for women connects to the Institute and Adobe’s shared long-standing commitment to
nurturing, developing, and championing underrepresented voices. Adobe is also the founding supporter of
Sundance Ignite, a year-long artist development program supporting filmmakers ages 18-25.

Beginning this summer, fellows will participate in an intimate online gathering to meet their cohort
community, providing a forum to speak candidly about challenges and goals, brainstorm ideas for
skill-building workshops, and learn how to maximize their fellowship experience. In the coming months,
fellows will be able to participate in two skill-building workshops, based on the groups’ needs and
interests.

Throughout their entire fellowship year, each artist will receive custom-tailored support from Sundance
Institute program staff and Adobe, including introductions to key industry contacts and creative advisors,
quarterly group calls to share progress and learnings, and referrals to specific opportunities. Each fellow
is participating in a Sundance Institute Lab or program aligning with their career path.

“We are so grateful to Adobe’s support in championing and meaningfully supporting these eleven
extraordinary artists through this new fellowship,” said Keri Putnam, Executive Director, Sundance
Institute. “In these turbulent times, visionary and targeted generosity is crucial for artists responding to this
moment in our culture and evolving their craft.”
“Creativity has the power to unite us, help us cope, inspire us and drive positive change in the world. But, creativity needs to be more accessible to, and celebrated by, every one of us—regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation. At Adobe, we believe it is our responsibility to give diverse voices a platform to share their stories, especially in this unprecedented moment, and we are proud to partner with Sundance Institute to create greater opportunity for female filmmakers,” said Ann Lewnes, EVP and CMO, Adobe.

Women at Sundance is made possible by leadership support from The David and Lura Lovell Foundation, CBS Corporation, The Harnisch Foundation, Refinery29, and Adobe. Additional support is provided by Hollywood Foreign Press Association, Kimberly Steward, Paul and Katy Drake Bettner, Barbara Bridges, Abigail Disney and Pierre Hauser—Like a River Fund, Rhianon Jones, Suzanne Lerner, Cristina Ljungberg, Susan Bay Nimoy, Nancy Stephens, Jenifer and Jeffrey Westphal, Ann Lovell, Chase Sapphire, IMDbPro, MAJORITY, Zions Bank, The Female Quotient, Visionary Women, Gruber Family Foundation, Pat Mitchell and Scott Seydel, The Jacquelyn & Gregory Zehner Foundation, and an anonymous donor.

The 2020 Women at Sundance | Adobe Fellows are:

Jameka Autry is a producer, director, and 2019 Sundance Creative Producing Fellow. In 2017 she was honored as an Impact Partners Creative Producers Fellow and in 2018 she was selected as part of the inaugural DOC NYC 40 Under 40 List. She was recently awarded the Sundance/A&E Brave Storyteller Award at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival and currently holds a Post Graduate Fellowship at the Investigative Reporting Program at the UC Berkeley School of Journalism. Most recently she completed work on Through The Night, which premiered at the 2020 Tribeca Film Festival. Other producing works include Ernie & Joe: Crisis Cops, which won the jury grand prize at SXSW and Boston International Film Festival, and premiered on HBO in Fall 2019. Jameka has also produced Marathon: The Patriots Day Bombing (HBO), In My Father’s House (Showtime), MATANGI/ MAYA/M.I.A. (Sundance 2018) and served as a Consulting Producer on We The Animals and Love Gilda.

Milisuthando Bongela is an award winning writer, blogger and editor whose work pivots around the subject of the post-apartheid condition from the perspective of black middle class South Africans and women. She has written extensively about the intersections of race, class and gender in South Africa for newspapers like the Mail and Guardian and City Press Dazed and Confused, Aperture Magazine, Elle and Colours as well as having worked across the arts in the fields of fashion, music, art, publishing and cultural activism. For three years she edited the Arts and Culture section of the weekly Mail & Guardian and is the co-creator of Umoya: On African Spirituality, a podcast that seeks to demystify African Spirituality. She is currently exploring the post-apartheid condition in South African society, focusing on the psychological effects of racism through her first film, a Sundance Institute and Chicken & Egg supported feature documentary currently titled Milisuthando. Sundance Institute Documentary Fund Grantee.

Ericka Blount Danois has worked as a music and culture writer, screenwriter, author, researcher, and producer. Her award-winning works include: Love, Peace and Soul, a history of the show Soul Train and documentaries; Time is Illmatic, Tupac (Untitled) and PBS’s Finding Your Roots. Ericka’s interview portfolio includes conversations with Fidel Castro, Earth Wind & Fire, Lenny Kravitz, and Andy Rooney. She is the recipient of a Ruby Award, Deadline Club for Journalism
Award at Columbia University and an award from the Society of Professional Journalists. **Sundance Institute 2020 Episodic Makers Lab Fellow.**

**Dionne Edwards** is a writer/director. Her short *We Love Moses* screened at over fifty festivals worldwide, including LFF and TIFF. It picked up numerous awards, including Short Film of the Year at the Critics’ Circle Film Awards 2018 and was licensed for television by Cine+, Canal+ and HBO. Dionne directed 2nd Unit on the third series of *Top Boy* (Netflix, 2019). Other TV credits include *That Girl for Channel 4*’s On the Edge series (2018). **In 2019 she took part in the Sundance Screenwriters Lab and Director’s Labs** and was named one of Screen International's 2019 Stars of Tomorrow. She is currently working on her debut feature film *Pretty Red Dress* with the BFI and BBC Films.

**Dina Hashem** is a writer and comedian whose style involves a subdued tone to deliver dark observations about life and her Arab-American upbringing. In 2017 she was named one of TBS's “Comics to Watch,” and she has since performed at Comedy Central’s Clusterfest, Melbourne Comedy Festival, and regularly performs at The Comedy Cellar. Her TV credits include CONAN, Comedy Central’s Roast Battle, Danny’s House on Viceland, and Comedy Central’s This Week at the Comedy Cellar. She opens for comics including Gary Gulman, Sam Morril, Todd Barry, and Anthony Jeselnik. **Sundance Institute 2020 Episodic Makers Lab Fellow.**

**Suzanne Kite**

Kite aka Suzanne Kite is an Oglála Lakȟóta performance artist, visual artist, and composer raised in Southern California, with a BFA from CalArts in music composition, an MFA from Bard College’s Milton Avery Graduate School, and is a PhD candidate at Concordia University. Kite’s scholarship and practice highlights contemporary Lakota epistemologies through research-creation, computational media, and performance. Recently, Kite has been developing a body interface for movement performances, carbon fibre sculptures, immersive video and sound installations, as well as co-running the experimental electronic imprint, Unheard Records. For the inaugural 2019 Toronto Art Biennial, Kite, with Althea Thauberger, produced an installation, Call to Arms, which features audio and video recordings of their rehearsals with Her Majesty’s Canadian Ship (HMCS) York, which also consisted of a live performance with the conch shell sextet, who played the four musical scores composed by Kite. Kite has also published extensively in several journals and magazines, including in The Journal of Design and Science (MIT Press), where the award winning article, "Making Kin with Machines,” co-authored with Jason Lewis, Noelandi Arista, and Archer Pechawis, was featured. Currently, she is a 2019 Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Scholar. **2020 Sundance Institute New Frontier Story Lab Fellow.**

**Lauren Lee McCarthy** is an artist examining social relationships in the midst of surveillance, automation, and algorithmic living. She is a 2019 Creative Capital Grantee, **Sundance Institute New Frontier Story Lab Fellow**, and has been a resident at Eyebeam, ZERO1 Arts Incubator, CMU STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, Autodesk, NYU ITP, and Ars Electronica. She is the recipient of grants from the Knight Foundation, the Online News Association, Mozilla Foundation, Google AMI, Sundance Institute New Frontiers Labs, Turner Broadcasting, and Rhizome. Her work *Someone* was awarded the Japan Media Arts Social Impact Award, and her work *Lauren* was awarded the IDFA DocLab Award for Immersive Non-Fiction.
Lauren's work has been exhibited internationally, at places such as The Barbican Centre, Ars Electronica, Fotomuseum Winterthur, Haus der elektronischen Künste, SIGGRAPH, Onassis Cultural Center, IDFA DocLab, Science Gallery Dublin, Seoul Museum of Art, and the Japan Media Arts Festival. She holds an MFA from UCLA and a BS Computer Science and BS Art and Design from MIT. She is also the creator of p5.js, an open source programming language for learning creative expression through code online. She is Co-Director of the Processing Foundation, a non-profit whose mission is to promote software literacy within the visual arts, and visual literacy within technology-related fields—and to make these fields accessible to diverse communities. Lauren is an Associate Professor at UCLA Design Media Arts.

Laura Moss is a filmmaker from New York City. They were named one of Filmmaker Magazine’s 25 New Faces of Independent Film, as well as an IFP Emerging Storyteller. They directed the pilot of the sci-fi/comedy series, *neurotica* (starring Karen Gillan and Jon Bass), which premiered April 2019 at the Tribeca Film Festival and won Best Director for a Comedy Pilot at Seriesfest. Their short, *Allen Anders – Live at the Comedy Castle (circa 1987)* premiered at SXSW 2018. Their previous short, *Fry Day*, screened at SXSW and Tribeca in 2017. *Fry Day* has since screened at over 50 international festivals and won 19 awards, including the top shorts prizes at Melbourne, Miami, New Hampshire and Hollyshorts. It is currently available on the Criterion Channel. This January, Laura and their writing partner, Brendan O’Brien were fellows at the 2020 Sundance Institute Screenwriters Lab, developing their horror feature *birth/rebirth*, an all-female redux of the Frankenstein myth. 2020 Sundance Institute Directors Lab Fellow.

Elissa Blount Moorhead is an artist exploring the poetics of quotidian Black life. Recent projects she has directed include: Jay Z’s *4:44* with TNEG (Arthur Jafa and Malik Sayeed), *Back and Song* with Bradford Young, an episode of PBS/Firelights new *Masters in the Making* series, *Life’s Time*, a mini doc about artist Valarie Maynard, and a 3D mapping and Augmented Reality installation called *As of A Now*. She was awarded the USA Artist Fellowship in (2018), Saul Zaentz Innovation Fellowship (2017), Ford Foundation /Just Films/Rockwood Fellowship (2017) and Ruby Award (2016), The Baker Award (2017) Creative Capital (2018) and Eyebeam (2020) She is the author of *P is for Pussy*, an illustrated “children’s” humor book and is a featured writer in the new anthology, *How We Fight White Supremacy: A Field Guide to Black Resistance*. She is a 2020 Sundance Institute Episodic Makers Lab fellow.

Jenny Shi

Jiayan "Jenny" Shi is a Chicago-based documentary filmmaker who is passionate about social justice issues regarding people of color. Her debut feature documentary *Finding Yingying* was set to premiere at 2020 SXSW Film Festival and won the Breakthrough Voice Special Jury Recognition. She has also worked on several projects as a researcher, digital content editor and translator including the ITVS co-produced digital series *Pulling The Thread* and the 2020 Academy Award-winning Netflix documentary *American Factory*. Jenny is a graduate of Kartemquin's Diverse Voices In Docs program, a TFI Network alum and the winner of the Paley DocPitch Competition 2018. Sundance Institute Documentary Fund Grantee.

Iliana Sosa is a documentary and narrative fiction filmmaker based in Austin, Texas. She was born and raised in El Paso, Texas by Mexican immigrant parents. A former Bill Gates Millennium Scholar, she holds a MFA in film production and directing from UCLA. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Steven Bochco Fellowship, the Hollywood Foreign Press Award, the Edie and Lew
Wasserman Fellowship and the National Hispanic Foundation of the Arts Scholarship, among others. Iliana has directed short documentaries, fiction shorts and a narrative fiction feature, *Detained In The Desert*, which had its World Premiere at the 2012 Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival. In 2017, Firelight Media awarded her an Impact Producer Fellowship. In 2018, she was selected as a Berlinale Talent and co-directed a short documentary, *An Uncertain Future*, with Chelsea Hernandez. The short screened at the 2018 SXSW Film Festival and won a Jury Award for Best Texas Short. It also screened at the 2018 Aspen ShortsFest where it won the Youth Jury Award. She was a 2018–2019 Sundance Institute Development Fellow with her first feature documentary, *What We Leave Behind*. The film has received additional support from the Ford Foundation and participated in the 2019 True/False Catapult Retreat and the 2020 IFP Documentary Lab. Iliana has also participated in the Logan Nonfiction Residency and the Jacob Burns Residency with the project.

**Sundance Institute**

As a champion and curator of independent stories for the stage and screen, Sundance Institute provides and preserves the space for artists in film, theatre, film composing, and digital media to create and thrive. Founded in 1981 by Robert Redford, 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. [Sundance Co//ab](https://www.sundance.org/coab), a digital community platform, brings artists together to learn from each other and Sundance Advisors and connect in a creative space, developing and sharing works in progress. The Sundance Film Festival and other public programs connect audiences and artists to ignite new ideas, discover original voices, and build a community dedicated to independent storytelling. Sundance Institute has supported such projects as *Clemency, Never Rarely Sometimes Always, Zola, On The Record, Boys State, The Farewell, Honeyland, One Child Nation, The Souvenir, The Infiltrators, Sorry to Bother You, Won't You Be My Neighbor?, Hereditary, Call Me By Your Name, Get Out, The Big Sick, Mudbound, Fruitvale Station, City So Real, Top of the Lake, Between the World & Me, Wild Goose Dreams* and *Fun Home*. Join [Sundance Institute](https://www.sundance.org) on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/sundance), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/sundance), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/sundance) and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/sundance).

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