



FEMALE AND NON-BINARY FOCUSED 'BREAKING THROUGH THE LENS' ANNOUNCES TOP TEN FILM FINALISTS AT CANNES

The grassroots initiative pairs female and non-binary directors with investors to make their projects a reality

CANNES, FRANCE, July 8, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Breaking Through The Lens' (BTTL) announced its top ten line-up at an event this week at the Marche du Film in Cannes. The grassroots movement focuses on measurable actions to overcome the greatest barrier to women and non-binary directors – access to finance.

This pioneering year-round program seeks to be a resource for underserved filmmakers, one that is multicultural, intersectional and results-driven, says Kathryn Moseley, a film producer, jury moderator, and primary sponsor for Breaking Through The Lens.

"We bring these two groups together in a way that is mutually beneficial, enjoyable and forges lasting professional relationships. There's no competition, no gimmick, it's as simple as that," said Moseley. "Much work is left to be done, and words alone are not enough."

This year's lineup includes a diverse slate of films hailing from seven different production countries including Jamaican-American Director Sontenish Myers' "Stampede," about a young slave girl with telekinetic powers; Canadian Director Anita Doron's "The Truth About Monsters," centering on a young indigenous boy who discovers aliens in the Boreal Forest, and Egyptian Director Farida Zahran's "The Leftover Ladies," following a 60-year-old woman who tries to leave her polygamous husband.

Daphne Schmon, co-founder of Breaking Through The Lens, said the move to a virtual event in light of pandemic restrictions posed some unique hurdles that the entrants and event sponsors proved eager to overcome.

"We feared that moving to a virtual space would pose a challenge. However, this pandemic year has been our most successful cycle yet, and we anticipate 2021 to be even stronger. Our team was truly blown away by the quality and originality of the submissions this year. There is a clear hunger for bold female and non-binary voices in our industry. We are committed to helping bring their extraordinary stories to the world."

Below are the finalists for Breaking Through The Lens 2021:

1. CAIN AND ABEL | Drama | Egypt, France, USA | Director: Dina Amer

The fates of two French-born Muslim Arabs born in the same neighborhood collide as they find themselves on opposite sides of the 2015 Charlie Hedbo attack, as police officer and terrorist. Who are these men beneath their uniforms? How many degrees of separation really exist between them?

2. FERAL | Horror, Magical Realism, Dark Comedy | USA | Director: Nihaarika Negi

The arrival of a lover/shaman scholar on a colonial estate in 1950's India, causes two tribal maidservants to a sadomasochistic English Madame to transgress - as they slowly take over the house and reclaim their lost wild mystical selves.

3. IDOL | Music Bio-Pic | USA | Director: Tricia Lee

A music biopic about William Hung, the 21-year-old Asian kid whose infamous failed audition on American Idol of Ricky Martin's "She Bangs" catapulted him into the American zeitgeist.

4. LAYLA IN DREAMLAND | Drama | United Kingdom | Director: Celine Cotran

Layla is a 60-year-old Syrian refugee relocated to the seaside town of Margate with her undocumented granddaughter, Ritaj. Sharing a room in a halfway house for refugees, she struggles to build connections until she meets Femi, a young boy who teaches her to skateboard.

5. THE LEFTOVER LADIES | Comedy | Egypt | Director: Farida Zahran

A 60-something woman tries to leave her polygamous husband after he expresses a renewed commitment to their stale relationship.

6. RHYTHM IN BLUES | Drama | USA | Director: Tamika R. Guishard

Aging out of a broken system, three foster siblings' paths from East New York – school, service, streets—are detoured when mothers reappear, forcing them to lean on African rhythms and heal their own wounds without benefits.

7. STAMPEDE | Thriller, Sci-Fi | USA | Director: Sontenish Myers

On a plantation in 1802 Georgia, a young slave girl named Lena has telekinetic powers she cannot yet control. When she is separated from her mother and moved into the Big House, Lena must grapple with the danger of her gift as well as its potential.

8. THE TIDES | Drama | United Kingdom | Director: Isla Ure

While a British carer must prove she's adult enough to care for her Nan, an Iraqi boy must prove he's a child to gain asylum.

9. THE TRUTH ABOUT MONSTERS | Animated Sci-Fi | Canada, India | Director: Anita Doron

A family of aliens has been stranded on Earth since crash-landing their spaceship. Pete, a nerdy indigenous boy discovers the monsters he has always read about are actually aliens and only he can help them return home.

10. UNTITLED UNDERGROUND RAILROAD RIDE | Documentary | USA | Director: Fisayo Olajide

Five black and brown cyclists set off to traverse a route that helped enslaved people escape to freedom. Over the course of 17 days, the continuous threat of the road transforms the story from an ambitious athletic feat into a thought-provoking, complex tale of heart versus mind.

Meanwhile, "CLARA SOLA" from BTTL's 2019 line-up will be premiering at the Cannes Film Festival under the director's fortnight program. Directed by Nathalie Álvarez Mesén, the film tells the mesmerizing story of Clara, a Costa Rican woman who must break free of social and religious conventions to become the master of her sexuality and newfound powers. Emily Carlton, co-founder of BTTL, said the film and its steady progress towards completion serve as an example of the work the initiative takes pride in.

"This is about finding films with strong artist merit, that are in a position to receive finance and go into production within the next year. As filmmakers ourselves, we understand the frustration that independent projects are facing, and therefore focus on getting results," said Carlton.

Tiffany Boyle, president of [Ramo PC](#) and a sponsor for the event, congratulated the top ten films chosen and promised more to come.

"As a female-run law firm, we have always supported the under-represented communities in film and television. We are thrilled to partner with Breaking Through The Lens to help those voices be heard and share their art and perspectives with the world," Boyle said.

Visit BTTL's website.

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