

MIAMI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 21 FILMS DIRECTED BY WOMEN AS PART OF 2016 LINEUP

BY JUAN BARQUIN

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The director of the film *Cameraperson*, Kirsten Johnson, during shooting of her film.

Courtesy of the Miami International Film Festival

The conversation about female filmmakers rarely being highlighted at festivals isn't ending anytime soon. Slowly but surely, organizers are trying to widen the lens and include more women.

The Miami International Film Festival is joining the conversation and announced today its partnership with Google for a seminar series that addresses gender and racial gaps in the film industry. That is something to get excited about.

"Google has changed the world of technology and information in swift and radical ways," the festival's executive director and director of programming, Lois Larentis, said in the official

estival's executive director and director of programming, Jale Lapiante, said in the official release. "Who better to lead a new charge at changing long-standing gender and racial inequalities in opportunities in the world of film and technology? We are incredibly honored that Google has chosen Miami International Film Festival as a forum to discuss solutions and inspire new filmmakers wanting to scale the heights of their chosen profession."

The Google Seminar Series on Gender & Racial Gaps in Film & Tech, which will focus particularly on women in technical cinematographic roles, will take place in the Idea Center at Miami Dade College and other spots during the festival. One of the biggest highlights of the series is cinematographer Kirsten Johnson's presence at the festival, alongside her feature memoir *Cameraperson*. The film covers her extensive career working with great documentarians such as Laura Poitras, Kirby Dick, and Michael Moore.

"Our research shows that when it comes to encouraging women and underrepresented minorities to pursue careers in computer science and other technical fields, positive role models matter, which makes the work of the film industry so powerful," said Julie Ann Crommett, Google CS education in media program manager. "We're thrilled to support the Seminar Series on Gender & Racial Gaps in Film & Tech at the Idea Center at Miami Dade College to shed light on this important issue and inspire more creators to showcase positive portrayals of women and underrepresented minorities in tech."



Still from *My Big Night*

Courtesy of the Miami International Film Festival

Just as riveting as this news is the unveiling of 21 other films in the 2016 program, all of which are directed by women. Three films will be in the Knight Competition: Francesca Archibugi's *An Italian Name (Il nome del figlio)*, Liz Garbus' *Nothing Left Unsaid: Gloria Vanderbilt and Anderson Cooper*, and Dawn Porter's *Trapped*.

The latter two films of the bunch are also eligible for the Knight Documentary Achievement Award, which includes five other feature documentaries: Shaina Koren's *The Rebound*; Keidi Ewing and Rachel Grady's *Norman Lear: Just Another Version of You*; Jennifer Redfearn's *Tocando La Luz (Touch the Light)*; Elyse Steinberg and Josh Kreigman's *Weiner*; and Marcia Tambutti Allende's *Beyond My Grandfather Allende (Allende, mi abuelo Allende)*.

The Lexus Ibero-American Feature Film Competition will consider five other features: Vera Egito's *Restless Love (Amores Urbanos)*; Jessica Rodriguez's *Dark Glasses (Espejuelos oscuros)*; Daniela Goggi's *Abzurdah*; Ana Katz's *Mi amiga del parque*; and Angela Maria Osorio and Santiago Lozano Alvarez's *Siembra*. The last of these is also competing for the Jordan Alexander Ressler Screenwriting Award alongside Yaelle Kayam's debut, *Mountain*.

In the Cinema 360 category, four films will be featured, including Theresa von Eltz's *4 Kings (4 Könige)*; Catherine Corsini's *Summertime (La belle saison)*; Maiwann's *My King (Mon roi)*; and Leena Yadav's *Parched*. The sole female filmmaker in the Visions category is Miami's Monica Peña, with her sophomore feature *Hearts of Palm*, which will also compete in the Knight Competition.

Last, but not least, are Naomi Kawase's *Sweet Bean (An)* and Megan Riakos' *Crushed*, which will both be featured in Lee Brian Schrager's Culinary Cinema program. These titles all join previously announced women directors from Spain in the selection: Paula Ortiz's *The Bride (La novia)*; Gracia Querejeta's *Happy 140 (Felices 140)*; Juana Macías' *We Are Pregnant (Embarazados)*; and Veronica Escuer & Cristina Jolonch's *Snacks: Bites of a Revolution (Snacks: Bocados de una revolución)*.

The 33rd-Annual Miami International Film Festival
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