



LUCIA ANIELLO TO BE KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT AFI DWW+ SHOWCASE

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson



AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES

EMMY® AWARD-WINNING FILMMAKER LUCIA ANIELLO AS

KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT AFI DWW+ SHOWCASE

DWW+ Class of 2025 to Debut New Films

Alums of the DWW+ Directing Program Include Lesli Linka Glatter, Siân Heder, Dime Davis, Cicely Tyson, Lee Grant, Gandja Monteiro, Marianne Jean-Baptiste, Maya Angelou and More

OR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, Los Angeles, CA, March 4, 2025 â?? Today, the [American Film Institute](https://www.afi.com/) (AFI) announced that Emmy® Award-winning writer/director/producer Lucia Aniello (HACKS, BROAD CITY, ROUGH NIGHT) will deliver the keynote address at the AFI DWW+ Showcase for the Class of 2025 which will take place on Wednesday, March 5 at 7:00 p.m. at the Directors Guild of America in Los Angeles.

The DWW+ Showcase is an integral part of the AFI DWW+ program and provides an opportunity for the graduating cohort to premiere their short films to an audience of agency and studio representatives, as

well as working artists from throughout the creative community.

The presenting directors from the Class of 2025 include Julia Bales, Jahmil Eady, MG Evangelista, Marissa High, Jasmine J. Johnson, Natasha Mynhier, Karina Lomelin Ripper and Ezra Rose. The directors were mentored by AFI DWW+ Guest Artistic Director Hanelle M. Culpepper (STAR WARS: THE ACOLYTE, STAR TREK: PICARD, WESTWORLD) who also oversaw the artistic curriculum for the 2024-2025 program.

“Lucia Aniello is an imperative and dynamic voice in today’s storytelling landscape, and we are honored to welcome her as this year’s keynote speaker at the AFI DWW+ Showcase,” said Susan Ruskin, Dean of the AFI Conservatory and Executive Vice President of the American Film Institute. “We look forward to bringing the entertainment community together to celebrate the DWW+ Class of 2025 directors and their bold new films.”

Emmy® and Golden Globe winner Lucia Aniello is a writer, director, producer, performer and one half of the comedy team Paulilu with her partner, Paul W. Downs.

Aniello and Downs have achieved critical acclaim and commercial success writing, directing, producing and acting in comedies such as HACKS, BROAD CITY, TIME TRAVELING BONG, NORA FROM QUEENS, THE BABY-SITTERS CLUB and more.

Aniello is currently writing, directing and executive producing the fourth season of Max’s Original comedy series, HACKS, starring Jean Smart, which she also co-created alongside Downs and Jen Statsky. HACKS has received 48 Emmy® nominations and nine wins across its three seasons, including wins for Outstanding Comedy Series, Outstanding Writing For A Comedy Series and Outstanding Directing For A Comedy Series as well as wins for four Golden Globe Awards, four Writers Guild of America Awards and a Peabody Award; and Aniello has won two Directors Guild of America Awards in the category of Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Comedy Series. The series was honored as one of the Outstanding Television Programs of the Year at the AFI AWARDS for seasons one, two and three. HACKS has also received various award nominations and wins at the Screen Actors Guild Awards, Critics Choice Awards, Producers Guild of America Awards and the Gotham Awards, among others. Season three of the show premiered on May 2, 2024, on Max with season four premiering in the Spring of 2025.

After the success of HACKS in 2021, Downs and Aniello signed a multiyear overall deal with Warner Bros. Television Group. Most recently, in November of 2024, HBO landed KANSAS CITY STAR, a half-hour comedy starring and executively produced by Kaley Cuoco, created by the Hacks trio of Aniello, Downs and Statsky.

Aniello also served as executive producer and director on Comedy Central’s series AWKAFINA IS NORA FROM QUEENS and Netflix’s THE BABY-SITTERS CLUB. Aniello previously served as a writer, executive producer and director on Comedy Central’s beloved series BROAD CITY, which ran for five seasons. On the big screen, Aniello directed Sony’s ROUGH NIGHT starring Scarlett Johansson which she also co-wrote and produced with Downs. Other past projects include the Comedy Central miniseries TIME TRAVELING BONG, which was created and written by Aniello, along with Downs and Ilana Glazer.

[Download photo of Lucia Aniello](#) (photo credit: Ryan Pfluger)

RSVPs are required for the AFI DWW+ Showcase on March 5.

As one of the longest-running and preeminent film and television workshops nationwide, AFI DWW+ has trained hundreds of artists whose directorial work has entertained global audiences and defined our collective cultural landscape. Distinguished Alums of the AFI DWW+ program include Maya Angelou, Anne Bancroft, Neema Barnette, Pippa Bianco, Tessa Blake, Tricia Brock, Ellen Burstyn, Rebecca Cammisa, Dyan Cannon, Dime Davis, Jan Eliasberg, Naomi Foner, Jennifer Getzinger, Lesli Linka Glatter, Lyn Goldfarb, Randa Haines, Siân Heder, Victoria Hochberg, Marianne Jean-Baptiste, Matia Karrell, Maggie Kiley, Lynne Littman, Nancy Malone, Gandja Monteiro, Amber Sealey, Sarah Gertrude Shapiro, Becky Smith, Cicely Tyson, Jude Weng and Joanne Woodward. [View full list of 350+ AFI DWW+ Alums here.](#)

AFI DWW+ is part of the AFI Conservatory's Department of Innovative Programs, which also includes the AFI Cinematography Intensive Workshop. Through a range of learning opportunities, Innovative Programs serves a diverse community of aspiring visual storytellers to cultivate cutting-edge technological and media-making skills, bridge access to professional networks and place participants on an upward career trajectory.

Learn more at Conservatory.AFI.com/Innovative-Programs/.

About the American Film Institute (AFI)

The American Film Institute (AFI) is a nonprofit organization with a mandate to champion the moving image as an art form. Established in 1967, AFI launched the first comprehensive history of American film and sparked the movement for film preservation in the United States. In 1969, AFI opened the doors of the **AFI Conservatory**, a graduate-level program to train narrative filmmakers. The Conservatory, which counts Deniese Davis, Affonso Gonçalves, Susannah Grant, Matthew Libatique, David Lynch, Melina Matsoukas and Rachel Morrison as Alumni, is ranked one of the top film schools in America. AFI's enduring traditions include the **AFI Life Achievement Award**, which honors the masters for work that has stood the test of time; **AFI AWARDS**, which celebrates the creative ensembles of the most outstanding screen stories of the year; and scholarly efforts such as the **AFI Catalog of Feature Films** and the **AFI Archive** that preserve film history for future generations. AFI exhibition programs include **AFI FEST Presented by Canva** and year-round exhibition at the **AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center** in Maryland. **AFI Movie Club** is a destination for movie lovers from around the world to celebrate and engage with the art form every day. Other pioneering programs include workshops aimed at elevating emerging storytellers and technology, including **AFI DWW+** and the **AFI Cinematography Intensive Workshop**. Read about all of these programs and more at AFI.com and follow us on social media at Facebook.com/AmericanFilmInstitute, YouTube.com/AFI, X.com/AmericanFilm, TikTok.com/@americanfilminstitute and Instagram.com/AmericanFilmInstitute.

About the AFI Conservatory

The [AFI Conservatory](https://AFI.com) opened its doors in 1969 to an inaugural class that included Terrence Malick, Caleb Deschanel and Paul Schrader. Today, the Conservatory offers a two-year MFA degree in six filmmaking disciplines: Cinematography, Directing, Editing, Producing, Production Design and Screenwriting. In a collaborative production environment, AFI Fellows learn to master the art of storytelling, collectively creating up to 175 films a year. Fellows actively participate in the entire life cycle of a film, from development through production and exhibition.

Alumni of this elite program, ranging from modern masters to bold new voices defining the state of the art form, include Andrea Arnold, Darren Aronofsky, Ari Aster, Deniese Davis, Sam Esmail, Brad Falchuk, Affonso Gonçalves, Susannah Grant, Liz Hannah, Patty Jenkins, Janusz Kamiński, Matthew Libatique, David Lynch, Melina Matsoukas, Polly Morgan, Rachel Morrison and Wally Pfister, among others.

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