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# Horizon Awards Announced in Park City during Sundance Film Festival

## Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

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## *THE HORIZON AWARD SUPPORTS EMERGING FEMALE FILMMAKERS WORLD-WIDE*

*The Horizon Award co-founders, Elwes, Howell, and Vachon, have partnered with new and returning sponsors: The Adrienne Shelly Foundation, Sundance Institute, Women In Film (WIF) Los Angeles, The Black List, CreativeFuture, The Creative Mind Group, ScreenEngine, MPRM, Twitter, MPAA, WME, and ShivHans Pictures  for the 3rd Annual Awards in Park City.*

PARK CITY, UTAH (January 23, 2017) â?? The Horizon Award co-founders (Cassian Elwes, Lynette Howell Taylor, and Christine Vachon) proudly announced the winners of the 3rd Annual Horizon Awards on last night, January 22, 2017, at the WME Lounge in Park City, Utah during the 2017 Sundance Film Festival.  The six directors who judged the final 53 films to select the 2 winners were: Catherine Hardwicke (Thirteen, Twilight), Kimberly Pierce (Boys Donâ??t Cry, Carrie), Jamie Babbit (But Iâ??m a Cheerleader, Addicted to Fresno), Karyn Kusama (Jenniferâ??s Body, Ã?on Flux), Tina Mabry (Mississippi Damned, Queen Sugar), and Vicky Jensen (Shrek, Shark Tale).  Brittany â??B MonÃ©tâ?• Fennell and Andy Villanueva were the two (2) female directors, who submitted their self-directed short film (two minutes or less) through the website (www.horizonaward.org), and were awarded their cash prize during this event.  As part of their award, The Horizon Award made it possible for both Ms. Fennell & Ms. Villanueva to experience an all-expense paid mentorship to the 2017 Sundance Film Festival, in addition to a cash prize.

Pictured above: top left to right, Christine Vachon (Co-Founder), Lynette Howell Taylor (Co-Founder) Andy Villanueva (Award Winner), Carey Mulligan (Actress), and Jack Black (Actor). (Photo credit: Da

Among the presenters were Jack Black (The Polka King, Kung Fu Panda), Carey Mulligan (Mudbound, Suffragette), Sharon Lawrence (NYPD Blue, Shameless), and Dee Rees (Director of Mudbound, Pariah).

We were also delighted to announce that CEO, Shivani Rawat and ShivHans Pictures generously donated $25,000 to the Horizon Award winners for continuing education and sponsorship on film projects. ShivHans Pictures was one of the producers of The Polka King that premiered at Sundance with directors: Maya Forbes and Wallace Wolodarsky with cast: Jack Black, Jason Schwarzman, Jenny Slate, and others.

â??Being a woman in a largely male-dominated field presents challenges, one of which is balancing the serious gender and diversity gap within the filmmaking community. As a young, Indian-American female producer myself this is a personal challenge, which is why ShivHans Pictures is proud to support this yearâ??s women filmmakers as a patron of the Horizon Award.â?• â??Shivani Rawat

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The Horizon Award Co-Founders have been in Park City to represent each of their films at the Sundance Film Festival. Christine Vachon, David Hinojosa, and Killer Films are with their four films: Beatriz at Dinner, Lemon, Mercy, and Where is Kyra. Cassian Elwes and Elevated is with Mudbound, directed by Dee Rees and starring Carey Mulligan, Jason Mitchell, Jason Clarke, and Garrett Hedlund. Following an amazing 2016 Sundance Film Festival with her film, Captain Fantastic, Lynette Howell

Taylor is currently working on the HBO mini-series, American Lion, with Sean Penn as well as with Brie Larson on her directorial debut, Unicorn Store. Lynette has snuck away from post-production to support The Horizon Award at Sundance 2017.

ABOUT THE HORIZON AWARD RECIPIENTS:

Brittany â??B MonÃ©tâ?• Fennell is a graduate of Spelman College. She studied writing and directing at New York University and was granted the Graduate Film Department Fellowship. She associate produced a short film â??Strings Attachedâ?• that premiered at Cannes Court Metrage. Recently, shot a feature length documentary called Little Sallie Walker with Stephanie Person, the first African-American professional skateboarder. She also worked at BeyoncÃ©â??s production company Parkwood Entertainment. Last year she completed a short documentary #RiseUpOctober with Dr. Cornel West, about the #BlackLivesMatter movement. Currently, she is developing her short film â??Q.U.E.E.N.â?• into a feature and working on a short film for the Bureau of Creative Works that will be featured on VHX in 2017. This year she was named a directing fellow for Film Independentâ??s fellowship Project Involve.

Andy Villanueva is a Mexican immigrant, multi-disciplinary artist and co-founder of Project Slut. She has been fighting for young womenâ??s rights since she was 15. She is currently double majoring at York University and studying Human Rights & Equity Studies & Cinema.

ABOUT THE HORIZON AWARD FOUNDERS, SPONSORS, & GRANTS:

Founded by acclaimed independent film producers Cassian Elwes (Dallas Buyers Club), Lynette Howell Taylor (Captain Fantastic), and Christine Vachon (Carol), The Horizon Award make it possible for two young women to experience an all-expense paid mentorship to the 2017 Sundance Film Festival, in addition to a cash prize. Elwes, Howell, and Vachon have partnered with new and returning sponsors: The Adrienne Shelly Foundation, Sundance Institute, Women In Film (WIF) Los Angeles, The Black List, CreativeFuture, The Creative Mind Group, ScreenEngine, MPRM, Twitter, MPAA, WME, and ShivHans Pictures in this effort.

The Horizon Award is an annual competitive accolade, with a cash prize, established to support emerging female directors and address the significant disparity between the numbers of female-to-male directors, a hot topic that is the subject of an ACLU inquiry into management and labor hiring practices in Hollywood. The American film and television industry is in need of significant change to better represent the diversity of this country. At a time when women make up 50.8% of the U.S. population, just 7.5% of the 100 top-grossing films from 2015 were made by female directors. One of the most glaring statistics: approximately 50% of people in film school are women, 25% of films in competition at Sundance Film Festival are directed by women, yet only 2% of the top-grossing films in 2014 were directed by women. The Horizon Award wants to be part of the change.

The Horizon Award team is incredibly grateful for the continued support of The Adrienne Shelly Foundation. This year, the Adrienne Shelly Foundation is returning with a $5,000 Film Grant to be awarded in partnership with The Horizon Award at The Sundance Film Festival in January 2017. Named in honor of actress/filmmaker, Adrienne Shelly, the grant supports women filmmakers to move forward in their careers. Commenting on the grant, Founder and Executive Director, Andy Ostry said: â??Our grants support women filmmakers. Yet just 6% of the 250 top grossing films last year were directed by women. Thatâ??s a shameful statistic, which is why our mission is so critical.â?•

*Featured photo: left to right, Cassian Elwes (Horizon Award Co-Founder, Carey Mulligan (Actress), and Andy Villanueva (Award Winner).(Photo credit: Dan Campbell/Horizon Award)

(Source: Melanie MÃ¡rquez, Senior Publicist at M4PR )

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2. Sundance Film Festival

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