



February 6, 2020
MEDIA RELEASE

TIFF WRITERS' STUDIO PARTICIPANTS ANNOUNCED FOR 2020

TORONTO – Today, TIFF announced its eight participants in the 2020 Writers' Studio. This year's Studio, comprising 50% women, is a five-day intensive workshop led by international script consultants, providing a highly focused professional- and craft-development experience for the selected storytellers.

After reviewing over 90 submissions from across the country, the following Canadian writers have been selected: **Cory Bowles, Romeo Candido, Julian De Zotti, Sol Friedman, Lisa Jackson, Fawzia Mirza, Jasmin Mozaffari, and Sanja Živković.** The participants will be celebrated at a cocktail event this evening at TIFF Bell Lightbox.

"We are thrilled to present the 2020 class of TIFF Writers' Studio participants," said TIFF Executive Director and Co-Head Joana Vicente. "TIFF has seen incredible talent come through TIFF Writers' Studio, and the high calibre of this year's screenwriters is again a testament to the strength of Canada's filmmaking industry."

TIFF Writers' Studio, now in its ninth year, will take place in March 2020 at TIFF Bell Lightbox. This year's lab will support the development of feature-film scripts, with dedicated one-on-one discussions from international script consultants Alesia Weston, Karen Walton, Christina Lazaridi, and Brad Fraser, in addition to expert guests. Participants will also receive complimentary access to the 2020 Toronto International Film Festival and TIFF's Industry Conference, Business Centre, and Delegate Resources.

Notable TIFF Studio alumni include filmmakers Pat Mills (*Don't Talk to Irene*), Molly McGlynn (*Mary Goes Round*), Ashley McKenzie (*Werewolf*), Yung Chang (*This Is Not a Movie*), and Renuka Jeyapalan (*Life Support*). Following their involvement in TIFF Studio, these filmmakers went on to present their films at the Festival as part of the Official Selection.

TIFF Writers' Studio is produced by TIFF and supported in part by Share Her Journey.

TIFF Writers' Studio 2020 biographies:

Cory Bowles

Cory Bowles is a multidisciplinary artist from Nova Scotia, Canada. His credits include *Trailer Park Boys* (01–18), the children's show *The Moblees* (14–), *Studio Black!* (15–), the dance production *Juliet and Romeo* (17), *Little Dog* (18–), and *Diggstown* (19–). His first feature, *Black Cop* (17), premiered at TIFF and went on

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to earn Best Canadian Film at the Vancouver International Film Festival. The film won Best Narrative Feature at the St. Louis International Film Festival and the John Dunning Discovery Award at the Canadian Screen Awards, and was nominated for Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia Masterworks Arts Award.

Romeo Candido

Romeo Candido is a writer, director, musician, and producer. He is the senior producer for CBC Arts and *CBC Arts: Exhibitionists*, now in its fifth season. He was the series director for the first two seasons of the Canadian Screen Award-nominated comedy show *Second Jen* (16-). He was a writer on the first two seasons of the sci-fi drama *Another Life* (19-). His award-winning musical *Prison Dancer* (12) received support from the National Arts Centre's National Creation Fund, and he is the composer for the upcoming stage production *Wendy & Peter Pan* at Stratford.

Julian De Zotti

Julian De Zotti is a performer and creator from Mississauga, Canada. He splits his time between acting, writing, producing, and showrunning, working in television, film, short-form, and theatre. His credits include co-writer and star of the feature film *New Year* (10); co-creator, writer, and executive producer on the series *Whatever, Linda* (15-); *Ming's Dynasty* (19-); and writer on the upcoming TV adaptation of *Snowpiercer* (13). He won the inaugural MIPTV/Canneseries In Development competition, and he has been a panellist for VIFF and SXSW. He is the writer, creator, and star of the upcoming TV series *For the Record*.

Sol Friedman

Sol Friedman is an award-winning filmmaker based in Toronto, Canada. His short films blend a variety of live-action and animation techniques, and have played at festivals worldwide, including the Toronto International Film Festival, Sundance, SXSW, and Annecy. He has won a Sundance Jury Award and a Canadian Screen Award, and his work has been featured in *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times*. His series of animated shorts, *An Imagined Conversation*, will be featured on FXX.

Lisa Jackson

Lisa Jackson is one of Canada's most celebrated artists working in film and media. She is known for her cross-genre approach. Her films have screened widely on television and at festivals, including the Berlinale, Hot Docs, and SXSW. Her work has earned her a Genie Award. Her virtual-reality installation *Biidaaban: First Light* (18) premiered at Tribeca and won a Canadian Screen Award. Her 2017 documentary *Indictment: The Crimes of Shelly Chartier* won Best Documentary at the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival. She is Anishinaabe and lives in Toronto. Jackson is also a participant in the TIFF Talent Accelerator programme.

Fawzia Mirza

Fawzia Mirza was named one of *Independent Magazine's* "10 Filmmakers to Watch" in 2017. She is a White House Champion of Change, a 3Arts Award recipient, an Islamic Scholarship Fund Film Grant recipient, a

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Djerassi resident, and an SFFILM Rainin Grant recipient. Her first feature, *Signature Move* (17), which she co-wrote, produced, and starred in, had its world premiere at SXSW and won the Grand Jury Prize for US Narrative Feature at Outfest. She was a writer on CBS's *The Red Line* (19). She also directed, wrote, and produced the two short films *I Know Her* (19) and *Saya* (19).

Jasmin Mozaffari

Jasmin Mozaffari is a Toronto-based filmmaker. She studied film at Ryerson's School of Image Arts. Her debut feature film, *Firecrackers* (18), premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival, and won Best Film at the Stockholm International Film Festival. In 2019, *Firecrackers* won two Canadian Screen Awards, including the award for Achievement in Direction, and was named a *New York Times* Critic's Pick. Mozaffari is also a participant in the TIFF Talent Accelerator programme.

Sanja Živković

Sanja Živković is a Serbian-Canadian film screenwriter and director whose work is split between Belgrade and Toronto. Her short films include *Our Little Secret* (11), *Maria's Episode* (14), and *Cleo* (16), which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival. She wrote and directed her first feature film, *Easy Land*, which premiered at TIFF 2019.

For participant headshots contact proffice@tiff.net

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About TIFF

TIFF is a charitable cultural organization whose mission is to transform the way people see the world through film. An international leader in film culture, TIFF projects include the annual Toronto International Film Festival in September; TIFF Bell Lightbox, which features five cinemas, major exhibitions, and learning and entertainment facilities; and innovative national distribution program Film Circuit. The organization generates an annual economic impact of \$189 million CAD. TIFF Bell Lightbox is generously supported by contributors including Founding Sponsor Bell, the Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, the City of Toronto, the Reitman family (Ivan Reitman, Agi Mandel and Susan Michaels), The Daniels Corporation and RBC. For more information, visit tiff.net.

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Share Her Journey is TIFF's five-year commitment to increase participation, skills, and opportunities for women behind and in front of the camera.

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For information, contact Emma Kelly, TIFF Senior Manager, Communications & Brand at ekelly@tiff.net.

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