



45 Main Street, Suite 506
Brooklyn, NY 11201
424-234-8537 t | 815-361-7531 f
info@gamechanger-films.com

Gamechanger Award Honoring Outstanding Woman Director to be Given at SXSW

Formerly known as Chicken & Egg Pictures Emergent Narrative Woman Director Award, whose previous recipients include Lena Dunham (“Tiny Furniture”), Hannah Fidell (“A Teacher”), and Amy Seimetz (“Sun Don’t Shine”)

February 20, 2014, New York, NY – Gamechanger Films, which launched last September as the first for-profit company dedicated to financing women-directed narrative features, announces the Gamechanger Award, to be given at SXSW to an outstanding woman director. Women directors or co-directors of narrative features screening at SXSW are eligible to opt in for consideration for the award, which comes with a cash prize of \$2,500.

Gamechanger has inherited the award from Chicken & Egg Pictures, whose co-founders Julie Parker Benello and Wendy Ettinger also co-founded Gamechanger along with Dan Cogan and GERALYN Dreyfous. Formerly known as the “Chicken & Egg Pictures Emergent Narrative Woman Director Award,” it has been given to six honorees at SXSW since 2009: Hannah Fidell for *A Teacher*, Megan Griffiths for *Eden*, Amy Seimetz for *Sun Don’t Shine*, Sophia Takal for *Green*, Lena Dunham for *Tiny Furniture*, and Judi Krant for *Made in China*. Additionally, Chicken & Egg has given two “We Believe in You” special jury awards during this time: Katie Graham for *Zero Charisma* and Martha Stephens for *Passenger Pigeons*.

Stephens, whose first two features, *Passenger Pigeons* and *Pilgrim Song*, premiered at SXSW, recently premiered her third feature, *Land Ho!*, at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival. The Iceland-set buddy comedy, which she co-directed with Aaron Katz, was acquired by Sony Pictures Classics and will be released this summer. *Land Ho!* is the first film to be financed by Gamechanger.

Parker Benello, Ettinger, and Chicken & Egg Pictures’ third founder, Judith Helfand, all agree, “We couldn’t be happier to pass the baton to Gamechanger. The award was originally created to focus attention on women narrative directors at SXSW, which has established itself as an important platform for identifying and launching emerging auteurs. We launched the award the same year that Janet Pierson took the helm at SXSW, and together, we’ve strived to use it to honor women’s voices; we’re very proud of the results of our collaboration. Because Chicken & Egg Pictures’ primary mission is to support and mentor women documentary filmmakers, and Gamechanger is a new company focused on women-directed narrative features, we thought it was a great time to migrate the award to Gamechanger. We could not think of a better home for it.”

Gamechanger president Mynette Louie said, “Chicken & Egg Pictures and SXSW have done such a wonderful job of identifying talent early through this award. Many of the recipients have continued to impress, including Lena Dunham, creator of HBO’s *Girls*, and Martha Stephens, director of *Land Ho!*, which happens to be the first film financed by Gamechanger. The Gamechanger Award aims to continue this great tradition of shining a light on brilliant women directors, in the hopes that the film industry at large will stop undervaluing them and start investing in them.”

The directors eligible for the Gamechanger Award this year are: Sarah-Violet Bliss for *Fort Tilden*, Kat Candler for *Hellion*, Leigh Janiak for *Honeymoon*, Leah Meyerhoff for *I Believe in Unicorns*, Jen McGowan for *Kelly & Cal*, Gillian Robespierre for *Obvious Child*, Anja Marquardt for *She's Lost Control*, Liz Tuccillo for *Take Care*, and Jocelyn Towne for *We Will Never Have Paris*. The Gamechanger Award will be presented at the SXSW Film Festival Awards on Tuesday March 11.

###

GAMECHANGER FILMS is the first for-profit film fund dedicated exclusively to financing narrative features directed by women. The company aims to shift the gender disparity in the film marketplace by tapping into the enormous but undervalued talent pool of women filmmakers and providing the necessary financing to bring their work to audiences worldwide.

CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES is dedicated to supporting women nonfiction filmmakers whose diverse voices and dynamic storytelling have the power to catalyze change, at home and around the globe. We match strategic financial support with creative mentorship offered at critical junctures of a filmmaker's life and work, with \$3.2 million in grants and 4,500 hours in mentorship given since 2005.

SXSW FILM Conference & Festival champions the vitality, innovation and opportunity that drives the entertainment and media landscape, and boldly tackles the evolution of all aspects of "film" today, down to its very definition. Every March, creatives of all stripes gather in Austin to witness, share and inspire the visions that will galvanize the filmmakers and ideas of tomorrow. A nexus of discovery and collaborative energy, SXSW Film celebrates the art and business of the possible.