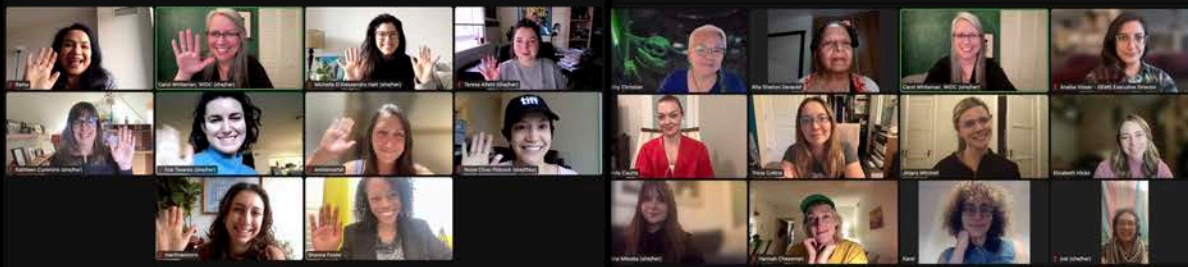
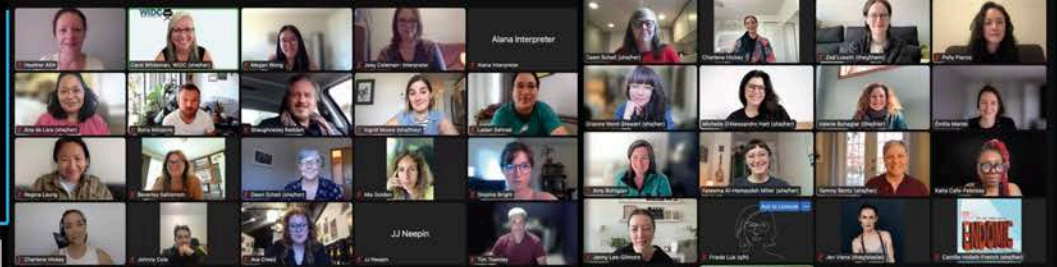




**CREATIVE
WOMEN
WORKSHOPS
ASSOCIATION**



2023-2024

ANNUAL REPORT

Creative Women Workshops Association (CWWA)
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INTRODUCTION

Overseen by Creative Women Workshops Association (CWWA), the non-profit society based in British Columbia, Canada, Women In the Director's Chair (WIDC) delivers an annual suite of professional leadership and story development, awards and production offerings for Canadian women and non-binary screen directors and writer/directors. This year, CWWA also engaged in a Canada Council for the Arts funded "Cultivate" project to develop a tool-kit and protocols to support media arts leaders, particularly those working in ultra-low budget productions.

WIDC recognizes the term Woman/Women is in an evolution of language and note that our intention in our use is to be fully inclusive of underrepresented persons who may or may not identify as women and share the goals and values of WIDC to promote these marginalized voices and stories. Further, we gratefully acknowledge that the WIDC program originates from the traditional and unceded lands of the Coast Salish people, including the xmkym (Musqueam), Swxwu7mesh (Squamish), and slilwta (Tseil-waututh) Nations. We also acknowledge the Indigenous Nations on whose traditional lands our guests, participants, and colleagues live, work, and create. We commit to working together in the spirit of collaboration and respect for the generations that came before, those living now, and the generations to come.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



The CWWA Board is comprised of President & CEO, Dr. Carol Whiteman, alumni representatives, **Siobhan Devine, Dr. Jules Koostachin, Juanita Peters, Rama Rau**, and ACTRA representative / Board Executive Officer, **Heather Allin**.

With the addition of this year's cohorts, there are now **355 WIDC director alumni** residing across Canada and internationally. The overall 2023-24 cohort of twenty-four directors self-identified as: 8% Indigenous, 13% Black, 42% Persons of Colour. In addition, 25% self-identified as being part of the 2SLGBTBQ+ community. Data on participation rates of individuals who identify as Persons with Disabilities was not recorded. The Board aims to maintain respectful self-identification policies that will help implement, track and report on equity, diversity, and inclusion.

One third (33%) of 2023-24 director participants were ACTRA members while 13% were DGC members. A review of the DGC directory (directors.ca) indicates that 28% of all WIDC alumni are also DGC members. While we have not collected comprehensive data on alumni directors hired to direct episodic, as directing producers or showrunners, we do know WIDC alumni are directing on series and MOWs in record numbers across Canada, in the US and internationally.

On behalf of the Creative Women Workshops Association Board of Directors who oversee WIDC programs and activities, we are extremely

grateful to our sponsors and community collaborators who have stuck with us during the continuing challenging times. We know the successes of WIDC alumni are due in no small part to the consistent and ongoing confidence shown through these important relationships. It has been inspiring to work with the media sector and alumni across Canada this past year.

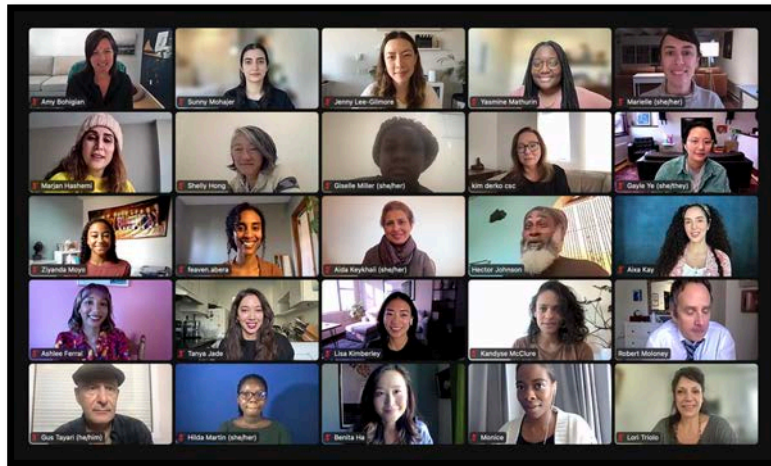
PROGRAMS

During 2023-2024 WIDC programs continued to be delivered via Zoom and for the first time since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, WIDC also delivered the Whistler Film Festival Industry Immersion 'in-person, powered by Warner Bros. Discovery Access Canada. Workshop days were kept short (maximum 4 hours) and the number of days per module were lengthened to accommodate Zoom fatigue. Application fees and tuition continued to be waived, a value of approximately \$20k. Thirty-four Canadian women and non-binary director participants, fifteen ACTRA actors and twenty-seven Instructors and Industry guests directly participated in WIDC programs this fiscal. **WIDC alumni directors' names are bolded.**

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Work

This 2-hour module specially designed for WIDC by alumna **Dr. Rita Shelton Deverell C.M.** and fellow scholar and filmmaker, Dr. Dorothy Cucw-la7 Christian, offers articles written by the instructors, engages in anti-racism exercises, and discussions, investigates micro-aggressions and the importance of self-location and land acknowledgments. Participants are guided in developing their own personalized EDI Pledge. The EDI Pledge and theme of EDI is woven throughout all WIDC programs and activities.

WIDC Story & Leadership Program



PART 1: Development of Leadership and Story was delivered November 2023 via Zoom, to eight director participants (**Amy Bohigian, Shelly Hong, Giselle Miller, Sunny Mohajer, Marjan Hashemi, Jenny Lee-Gilmore, Marielle Quesney, Yasmine Mathurin**) who developed their leadership and their fiction feature films and series projects. Dr. Carol Whiteman facilitated, with instructors **Dr. Rita Shelton Deverell C.M.**, Dr. Dorothy Cucw-la7 Christian led a 2-hour EDI masterclass, Dr. Carolyn Mamchur (Type Theory and psychological approach to story and leadership); Mentor Story Consultant, Karen Walton (*Orphan Black, Ginger Snaps*) Leadership specialists Lori Triolo (*Lost Solace*), Veena Sood (*Children Ruin Everything, With Love and a Major Organ*) rounded out the team. Panel discussions and one-to-one sessions about the Director/DOP relationship, preparing pitch materials and blocking were held with IATSE DOP's Kim Derko, csc (*Things We Do In the Shadows*) and Gayle Ye (*Zarqa*). This year's generous acting ensemble of 15 union members included Sage Arrindell, Ziyanda Moyo, Feaven Abera, Aida Keykhahi, Hector Johnson, Aixa Kay, Ashlee Ferral, Tanya Jade, Lisa Kimberley, Kandyce McClure, Robert Moloney, Gus Tayari, Hilda Martin, Benita Ho, Monica, and Lori Triolo.

They workshopped the directors' scripts (1 series and 7 feature films) through audition simulation exercises, table reads, rehearsals, and a modified blocking for camera exercises via Zoom. The program was supported by Program Manager, Zed Loseth, and Program Coordinator Intern, Lucia Felix.



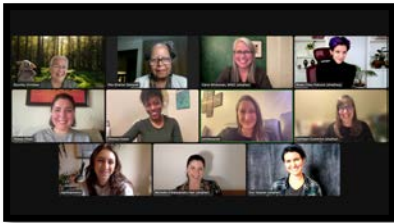
Pictured: (l to r) Amy Bohigian, Shelly Hong, Giselle Miller, Sunny Mohajer, Marjan Hashemi, Jenny Lee- Gilmore, Marielle Quesney, Yasmine Mathurin. Sunny was selected for the WFF "Power Pitch", and Giselle also attended the Producers Lab with another project.

PART 2: WIDC Whistler Film Festival Industry Immersion, *powered by WBD Access Canada* was delivered over 17 days, offering the director participants in-person festival passes to attend the summit, screenings, and the festival signature Women In Focus series. The directors met in roundtables with industry experts: Melissa Amer (Telefilm Canada), Gosia Kamela (CBC Films), Natalie Ingelfeld (Bell Media), Jon Taylor (IPF), and Digital Media Marketing Mentor, Annelise Larson (Veria.ca), Mentor Directors, **Dr. Jules Koostachin** (*Broken Angel*), **Nimisha Mukerji** (*My Life With the Walter Boys*). In addition, through the Whistler Film Festival, directors attended over a wide variety of one-to-one meetings with industry guests, plus an interactive fight choreography workshop led by veteran performer Garwin Sanford (*Arrow*, *Super Girl*).

PART 3: Story Consultation, including 1+1 meetings with Mentor Story Editor, Karen Walton and Dr. Carol Whiteman, January – February 2024, taking the directors' creative materials to the next stage.

PART 4: Career coaching, including 1+1 meetings via Zoom continues to be delivered through June 2024. This includes 3 hours each with Dr. Carol Whiteman, plus additional roundtables with Mentor Director and Guest Producer, **Kim Albright**, and Madeline Davis (*With Love and a Major Organ*).

WIDC Career Advancement Module (CAM)



Fall/Winter 2023/24 Edition: October 2023 through March 2024, in collaboration with St John's International Women's Film Festival, and the Reelworld Film Festival, 37.5% of director participants in the cohort are from under-represented racialized communities. The eight director participants included: **Rosie Choo Pidcock**, **Teresa Alfeld**, **Shonna Foster**, **Émilie Martel**, **Kathleen Cummins**, **Martina Monro**, **Michelle D'Alessandro Hatt**, **Eva Taveras** selected by a peer jury. Industry guests included Melissa Amer, (Telefilm Canada), Gosia Kamela (CBC Films), Natalie Igelfeld, (Bell Media), Carly McGowan (Independent Production Fund), Annelise Larson (Veria Search Media Marketing), Terry Markus, (Entertainment Lawyer and Executive Producer), and award-winning Directors, **Rama Rau** (*Coven*) and **Ruth Lawrence** (*Party Pirate*). Guests met with the directors in roundtable discussions and invited

directors to follow up when their projects were further along. Directors prepped for upcoming deadlines with support from WIDC 1+1 follow up coaching sessions. The cohort has also set up an online check-in group to help keep each other on track.



Spring /Summer 2024 Edition: Began March 3, and will continue with once per week sessions through to July 3, 2024. Presented in collaboration with the Female Eye Film Festival and Vancouver International Women In Film Festival, eight director participants were selected by peer jury. Pictured (l to r) with mentors Dr. Dorothy Cucw-la7 Christian, **Dr. Rita Shelton Deverell C.M.**, Dr. Carol Whiteman, **Anaïsa Visser** (GEMS Vancouver Executive Director), and directors: **Emily Coutts**, **Tricia Collins**, **Jinjara Mitchell**, **Elizabeth Hicks**, **Kristina Mileska**, **Hannah Cheesman**, **Karel Malkoun**, **Jordana Allen-Shim**. They will meet with the same industry guests, along with award-winning director, **Winnifred Jong** (*Tokens On Call*, *Pretty Hard Cases*).

AWARDS

WIDC Feature Film Award



2023 FF Award – Marjan Hashemi – *After Love* is a darkly comedic story about an Iranian-Canadian couple deeply at odds with the frustrating and mundane impacts of aging and living with each other, but everything changes when they show up at their estranged daughter's door-step and get to know their precocious grandson. Selected by a peer jury of WIDC alumni, *After Love* is being produced by Jordan Barker, Gear Shift Films in Ontario. (Pictured left: Marjan Hashemi).

Updates on past WIDC Feature Film Award winners

2022 FF Award – Susanne Serres – *Celestine* is now in postproduction. A coming-of-age story that explores themes of 2SLGBT+ acceptance and the love of God, the film will now also feature a fully animated component to capture the graphic novel elements of the story.



2021 FF Award – Lindsay McIntyre – *The Words We Can't Speak* is in polish and package stage. Lindsay completed a CCA-funded concept short based on the feature story. The short is titled *Nigniquik (The South Wind)*. See more news later in this report. Pictured: production still from the set of *Nigniquik (The South Wind)*.



2020 FF Award – Kim Albright – *With Love and a Major Organ* has continued its festival run garnering tremendous accolades including awards for Best Feature Film, Best Performance, Best Direction. The film will start its theatrical release April 12, 2024. Pictured: Poster, *With Love and a Major Organ*.



2019 FF Award – Pamela Gallant – *Monica's News* went to camera in June/July 2023 in and around rural Nova Scotia. And is now in final stages of postproduction. Pictured at right, Pamela Gallant directing Polly Gallant (CASSIE), *Monica's News*.

Pictured at left: Images from: *Nigniquik (The South Wind)*; *With Love and a Major Organ*; Pamela Gallant on set with Polly Gallant (CASSIE), *Monica's News*.

WIDC Advantage Award



2023 Advantage Award

Giselle Miller's debut feature film, *Hummingbird* (formerly, *Sweet Plantain*), was selected by a peer jury of WIDC alumni. The award included assistance with preparing Giselle's submission to Telefilm Talent to Watch fund and offered WIDC's nomination for Telefilm Talent to Watch funding, a one-year mentorship, along with a spot at the 2023-24 Story & Leadership program. Pictured: Giselle Miller.

Updates on past Advantage Award winners

Formally the Talent to Watch Mentorship Award, the Award was expanded and renamed the WIDC Advantage Award in 2023.



2019 TTW Mentorship Award – Ana de Lara – Best Friend Me, (digital short series) directed by Ana, written by and starring Andy Marie, about a lonely non-binary office worker who learns about self-care and self-acceptance with the help of their alter-egos, went to camera in August 2023. Currently in post-production, the project's cast and crew also participated in beta testing the WIDC Safer Creative Spaces Team Wellness Toolkit.

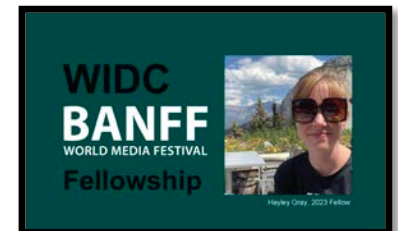


2018 TTW Mentorship Award – Reem Morsi – Banned (formerly *Hysteria*) completed post-production and is now submitting to festivals.

WIDC BANFF Fellowship Award

2023 Recipient – Hayley Gray received the WIDC Banff Fellowship which included a full pass to the online festival, along with a 2-month mentorship to help Hayley prepare for her meetings at BANFF and strategize follow up. Hayley attended the festival in person to pitch her feature film and television series projects. (Hayley is also a 2020 TTW Mentorship Award recipient.)

Pictured left: Photo 1) Slate from *Best Friend Me*; Photo 2) Reem Morsi directs on set of *Banned*; Pictured at right: Photo 3) Hayley Gray.



We asked Hayley....

What was the best thing about attending BANFF 2023?

HG - "Banff World Media Festival was a phenomenal experience thanks to Women In the Director's Chair. Connecting with friends and colleagues across Canada to talk about projects, dream up TV and Film, and listen to experts share their insights was extraordinary. Meeting and connecting with decisions makers across the province helped me to build my packages, projects and start real discussions on next steps."

Any developments for you or any of your projects as a result of attending the Festival?

HG - "My television pilot is now with Robot Monkey entertainment, and we are pitching to broadcasters. My first feature is going to camera in August and my second is partially financed. My next step is preparing to shoot my feature film this summer! We're continuing to develop my television pilot and packaging my next feature. In this industry it feels like you need to keep a dozen irons in the fire to keep things moving and I'm trying to balance them all."

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

WIDC Events

Annual Launch Event (June 8, 2023), WIDC launched its 27th annual slate of activities and presented two WIDC awards at a Zoom event with over 30 guests in attendance. The 2023 WIDC Advantage Award was presented to **Giselle Miller** (*Hummingbird*, formerly, *Sweet Plantain*) and the 2023 BANFF Fellowship Award was presented to **Hayley Gray**.

Fall Awards Event (November 27, 2023), WIDC hosted a Fall Awards Zoom Event attended by approximately 30 where recent program cohorts were introduced, the Spring slate of programs was launched and the 2023 Feature Film Award was presented to **Marjan Hashemi** (*After Love*). Later in the day, WIDC hosted an in-person, non-alcoholic gathering in Whistler attended by approximately 40 WIDC alumni, sponsors, and industry guests.

Pictured right: Photo 1) front row, Carol Whiteman, Tug Phipps (WFW), and past FF Award winners **Kim Albright**. (2020). Top row (l to r): past winners **Siobhan Devine** (2014), **Lindsay McIntyre**, (2021), and **Marjan Hashemi** (2023). Photo 2) Top (l-r) **Lori Lozinski** (EP), **Kim Albright**, Carol Whiteman (EP), Arghavan Jenati; front: Julia Lederer (writer), Donna Benedicto, Veena Sood (Mona), *With Love and A Major Organ* pre-screening at WFF.



WIDC Safer Creative Spaces: Building a Mental Health Tool-kit



Inspired by work with WIDC's Talent to Watch-supported ultra-low budget projects and with funding support from the Canada Council for the Arts, this special project aims to create a tool-kit, workshop and protocols that will help media arts leaders manage mental health and wellbeing for themselves, their cast and crews on ultra-low budget productions in Canada.

In January 2023, a leadership team comprised of four subject matter experts, one from each of 1) Dr. Carol Whiteman, WIDC, 2) Jane Taylor Lee, *Family Services of Greater Victoria*, 3) Charlene Hickey, *Songhees Nation Family Counselling*, and 4) **Ana de Lara**, *Stigma Free Productions*, a woman-led independent production company, began gathering preliminary research and conducting consultations with mental health professionals, adult educators, artists, and members from under-represented communities. Lead researcher, Dawn Schelm (Clinical Counsellor, University Victoria), was engaged to conduct a more thorough review of the literature and complete analysis of the survey and interview data collected.

A new Team Wellness workshop and practicum, plus protocols, for media arts leaders, cast and crew was designed and prototyped, and a national resource network of existing mental health services has been compiled. Encouraging and thoughtful feedback from close to one hundred workshop participants and consultants has helped shape a tool-kit that will be made available to the public.

The project will culminate May / June 2024 with a launch of the starter kit of tools, protocols, and a full report and recommendations, that will be available on the WIDC web site.

Other Collaborations

Through community collaborations, WIDC alumni have received submission discounts, pass and ticket discounts from GEMFest, FeFF, SJIWFF, Reelworld FF & Screen Institute, TIFF, VIFF, WFF and BANFF while WIDC offers promotional consideration, volunteer moderators and guest speakers. We enjoy cross promotions with Crazy 8's, ACCT and CBC Short Film Face-off.

DGC Masterclasses

WIDC alumni were again invited to attend DGC Masterclasses on Zoom throughout the year. WIDC alumni who are DGC members, are also invited to moderate or be guest speakers at these sessions. Alumnae who have attended have clearly appreciated the value of the insider knowledge being shared – free of charge. Alumni-led masterclasses available on the [dgc.ca Masterclasses website](https://dgc.ca/Masterclasses) include:

- **Marie Clements** – *Bones of Crow* & Production Design
- **Gloria Ui Young Kim & Karen Lam** – In conversation
- **Loretta Sarah Todd** – *Monkey Beach*
- **Sonia Bonspille Boileau** – In conversation

2023/24 Masterclasses included:

1. AI
2. Art Direction
3. Breaking Into the US Market
4. Business of Being a Filmmaker
5. Director Designer Relationship (on series)
6. Episodic Directors Workshop
7. How to Get Hired (incl Karen Lam)
8. Indie Feature Workshop
9. Someone Lives Here (case study)
10. The Mandalorian
11. TV Movie Workshop
12. Visionaries at TIFF
13. Visionaries at VIFF (incl. Dr. Jules Koostachin)
14. Working In Episodic



WIDC ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

The following highlights represent only a selected sampling of WIDC alumni achievement over the past 12 months.

Industry Funding

Telefilm Canada

- 10 alumni-led feature films funded by [Telefilm Canada](#):
 - DEVELOPMENT: **Elizabeth Lazebnik**
 - NATIONAL (aka Big Budget Stream): **Anne Marie Fleming; Anita Doron**
 - INDIGENOUS STREAM: **Eva Thomas**
 - [REGIONAL](#): **Hayley Gray & Kaayla Whachell; Gloria Ui Young Kim**
 - FEATURE DOC: **Alison Reid; Deanne Foley**
 - TALENT TO WATCH: **Jenna MacMillan**
- Rolla Tahir** went to camera on *Jude and the Jinn*



Independent Production Fund

- DEVELOPMENT & PRODUCTION funding: **Giselle Miller** (*Novelette Is Trying*)

CMF

- Short Digital Series Fund:
 - **Renee Hackett**, *What Odds* (CBC Gem)
 - **Zarqa Nawaz**, *Zarqa* (CBC Gem)
 - **Mary Walsh**, *The Missus Downstairs* (Bell Fibe)

Industry Recognition

2024 CSAs

- 41 CSA nominations for WIDC alumni and the related projects including:
 - 6 Best Direction nods for...
 - MOW:
 - **Rama Rau** (*Bad Behind Bars: Jodi Arias*)
 - **Samantha MacAdam** (*Fashionable In Love*)
 - **Simone Stock** (*The Girl Who Escaped: The Kara Robinson Story*), plus a Best MOW nod.
 - Comedy Series:
 - **Danishka Esterhazy** (*Surreal Estate*)
 - **Winnifred Jong** (*Pretty Hard Cases*)
 - Factual:
 - **Eva Thomas** (*Still Standing*)
 - Drama Series:
 - 19 nominations for *Little Bird* – **Lori Lozinski** (producer), created by Jennifer Podemski (WIDC Acting Ensemble, 1998 Banff)



- Comedy Series:
 - 8 nominations for *Pretty Hard Cases* – **Sherry White** (writer, showrunner)
- Digital Short Series:
 - 5 nominations for *The Drop* – **Dani Pagliarello** (writer, director, actor, producer), **Liz Whitmere** (producer)

And Performance nominations for WIDC alumni:

- Motion Picture:
 - **Hannah Cheesman** (*Hey, Viktor!*)
- Digital Short Series:
 - **Mary Walsh** (*The Missus Downstairs*)
 - **Dani Pagliarello** (*The Drop*)

2023 Leo Awards (BC)



Image from *Bones of Crows*



Image from *Polaris*

39 Leo Award nominations for WIDC alumni and their related projects in including:

5 Best Direction nods for...

- Feature Motion Picture:
 - **Marie Clements** (*Bones of Crows*) – Winner!
- Feature Documentary:
 - **Teresa Alfeld** (*Doug and the Slugs and Me*)
- Doc Short:
 - **Lori Lozinski** (*A Motorcycle Saved My Life*)
- Music, Comedy, Variety:
 - **Siobhan Devine** (*Reginald, the Vampire*) – Winner!
- Animation Program:
 - **Sophie Jarvis** (*Zeb's Spider*)
- Youth or Children's Series or Program:
 - **Nimisha Mukerji** (*Life By Ella*) – Winner!
 - **Tara Hungerford** (*Baby, Baby*)

Plus...

- Motion Picture (feature):
 - 13 nods and total 10 wins for *Bones of Crows* including wins for **Marie Clements** for Best Picture, Best Direction, Best Screenwriting.
 - 4 nods for *Polaris* (dir. **KC Carthew**) including Best Lead (female and male), Supporting Performance (female), and Best Youth Performance – Winner!
 - 1 nod for *Broken Angel* (dir. **Dr. Jules Koostachin**) including Best Performance (male)

And...

- 16 other nominations in Digital Short Series, Television Series, Animation, Children's & Youth and Doc categories.

WIDC Alumni Films screened at festivals across the globe during our 2023-24 fiscal. This is only a small sampling.

2023 Canadian Festivals

• TIFF

- *Red Lights* (short), **Eva Thomas** (developed with the support of WIDC)
- *Nigiqtuk (The South Wind, short)* by **Lindsay McIntyre**
 - Based on the WIDC FF Award film *The Words We Can't Speak*

• VIFF

- *WaaPaKe* (feature doc), **Dr. Jules Arita Koostachin**
 - Nominee, Best BC Film Vancouver Film Critics
 - Nominee, DGC Allen King Award of Excellence for Documentary
- *Physician, Heal Thyself* (feature doc), **Shannon Walsh** (producer)
- *Redlights* (short) by **Eva Thomas**

• ImagineNATIVE

- *WaaPaKe* (feature doc), **Dr. Jules Arita Koostachin**
- *Redlights* (short) by **Eva Thomas**
- *Nigiqtuk (The South Wind, short)* by **Lindsay McIntyre**
 - Winner, Best Short Film, qualifying for the 2025 Oscars™

Community Collaborator Festivals

WIDC alumni also made a significant showing at the festivals where WIDC has established program collaborations.

Whistler Film Festival

- *With Love and a Major Organ* (feature film) directed by **Kim Albright** (WIDC FF Award)
 - **Winner, Best BC Director**
- *Re:Uniting* (feature film) directed by **Laura Adkin**
 - **Honorable Mention for Best BC Director**
- *Finality of Dusk* (feature doc) by **Madison Thomas**
- *Angela's Shadow* (feature film sneak peek) by **Dr. Jules Arita Koostachin**
- *Introduction* (short) by **Bruna Arbex**
- *Nigigtuk (The South Wind, short)* by **Lindsay McIntyre**
 - Based on the WIDC FF Award film *The Words We Can't Speak*
 - **Winner, EDA Award for Best Short**
- Also, 6 alumni were featured including:
 - Guest Speakers: **Dr. Jules Koostachin, Giselle Miller, Laura Adkin, Kate Green**
 - WFF Screenwriter Lab: **Giselle Miller**
 - Power Pitch: **Sunny Mohajer**
- And Stars to Watch: Donna Benedicto, Arghavan Jenati (*With Love and a Major Organ*)



Image from *Re:Uniting*



Image from *Finality of Dusk*

Female Eye Film Festival

- *Rock the Cradle* (short) by **Asis Sethi**
- *Swallow, Dear Swallow* (short) by **Eva Colmers**
- *Smoke Break* (short) by **Lisa Robertson**
- Screenwriter Lab:
 - **Lil, Virginia Abramovich**
 - *Afghan Smoke and Aisha*, **Brishkay Ahmed** (Winner, Fresh Voice)
- Also, Dr. Carol Whiteman was featured on two panels and co-facilitated the Directors' Roundtable w/ Festival Founder and Artistic Director, **Leslie Ann Coles**



Image from *Angela's Shadow*

St John's International Women's Film Festival

- *Party Pirate* (feature) by **Ruth Lawrence** (Opening Night)
- *Coven* (feature doc) by **Rama Rau**
- *Redlights* (short) by **Eva Thomas**
- *I Do(n't)* (short) by **Katelyn McCulloch**
- *Poster Child* (short) by **Brianna Russell**
 - short developed with WIDC, MJ Award
 - produced by **Kerry Gamberg**
- Also, 7 alumni were featured on panels including:
 - **Ruth Lawrence, Rama Rau, Michelle Wong, Deanne Foley, Sherry White, Winnifred Jong, Dr. Latonia Hartery**



Kathleen Cummins, Ruth Lawrence, Michelle D'Alessandro Hatt at SJIWFF 2023

Community Collaborator Festivals (continued)

Reelworld Film Festival

- Trailblazer Award winner, **Winnifred Jong**
- *With Love and a Major Organ* (feature), directed by **Kim Albright**
 - Opening Night
 - Winner, Best Feature, Best Performance, Best Cinematography
- *Lay Down Your Heart* (feature doc) by **Marie Clements**
- *Introduction* (short) by **Bruna Arbex**
- *The Future Above Us* (short) by **Vanessa Magic**
 - Winner, Best Cinematography for Short
- *Hope Is the Thing With Feathers* (short) by **Sunny Mohajer**
- *The Body of My Name* 名自字体 (short) by **Rosie Choo Pidcock**

GEMFest (formerly Vancouver International WIFF)

- Directors Panel Moderated by **Dr. Jules Koostachin**
- Cinematography Panel speaker, **Polly Pierce**
- Producing in BC Panel speaker, **Lori Lozinski**
- Advocacy Panel Moderated by **Anaïsa Visser** (GEMS Executive Director)



With Love and a Major Organ, (l-r) Julia Lederer (writer), Kim Albright (director)
Opening Night at Reelworld FF 2023

PROMOTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

WIDC Media Releases

1. Announcing WIDC BANFF Fellowship and Advantage Award – 2023 winners
2. Announcing WIDC Feature Film Award, *With Love and a Major Organ* – Bow at Fantasia / BIFAN
3. Announcing WIDC Feature Film Award *Monica's News* – Start of Production
4. Announcing WIDC CAM Cohort – Fall/Winter 2023/24
5. Announcing WIDC Story & Leadership Cohort – 2023-24 and WBD Access Canada Sponsorship
6. Announcing WIDC Feature Film Award – 2023 winner
7. Announcing WIDC CAM Cohort – Spring/Summer 2024

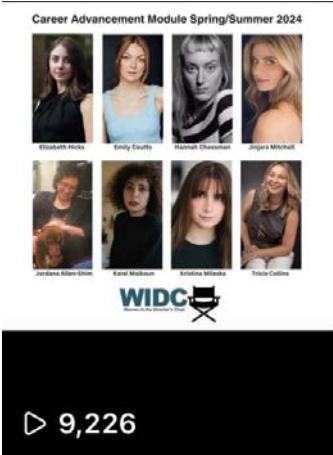
Visit www.WIDC.ca for more detailed stories about WIDC directors, programs, and awards. Below is only a small sample of news about the achievements of WIDC alumni directors. Many are making independent work, and being hired to direct television series, MOWs, shorts, digital short series, music videos and more.

WIDC Alumni in the News (sampling from Playback Online – April 2023 to March 2024)

1. [Announcing Directors for the Spring / Summer CAM 2023](#)
2. [Alumni Giselle Miller and Melanie Jones \(writer/director Switchback\) among WFF Talent Lab](#)
3. [WIFT Toronto Showcase 2023 winners include CAM alumn, Cailleah Scott-Grimes](#)
4. [S&L /CAM alumn Jenna MacMillan heads to Cannes Market](#)
5. [CAM alumn, Fateema Al-Hamaydeh-Miller selected for CFC Directors Lab](#)
6. [WIDC alumn Gail Maurice stars in new series Don't Even](#)
7. [WIDC CAM alumni Brishkay Ahmed, Émilie Martel selected for NSI CMF BIPOC Producer Program](#)
8. [Alumn Marie Clements' Bones of Crows sweeps the 2023 Leo Awards](#)
9. [WIDC FF Award-winner Pamela Gallant's Monica's News Starts Production Summer 2023](#)
10. [Alumni Giselle Miller, Jenny Lee-Gilmore among GEMS Vancouver Emerging Producers Program](#)
11. [CAM alumn, Eva Thomas selected for TIFF Filmmaker Lab](#)
12. [Alumn, Lori Lozinski among producers on Little Bird](#)
13. [Winners at 2023 ImagineNATIVE include Little Bird and Lindsay McIntyre's Nigigkut \(South Wind\)](#)
14. [Alumni Dr. Jules Koostachin, Murry Peeters, Lisa Robertson and Eva Thomas, DGC Award Nominees](#)
15. [S&L alumn Shannon Walsh \(producer\) Physician Heal Thyself at VIFF](#)
16. [CAM & S&L alumn, Jenna MacMillan received Telefilm Talent to Watch funding](#)
17. [WIDC FF Award-winner Kim Albright on DGC Discovery Awards longlist; Alumn Karen Lam a mentor at NSI](#)
18. [CAM alumn, Eva Thomas goes to camera on Telefilm-funded feature](#)
19. [Announcing Directors for the Fall/Winter 2023/24 CAM](#)
20. [S&L alumn, Madison Thomas doc wins international Emmy](#)
21. [WIDC S&L alumn, Léa Geronimo among selectees for WBD AC x ACCT Writers Program](#)
22. [Announcing Directors for 2023-24 Story & Leadership, plus Warner Bros Discovery Access Canada Sponsorship](#)
23. [Marjan Hashemi wins 2023 WIDC Feature Film Award](#)
24. [Announcing the Directors for the Spring/Summer 2024 CAM](#)
25. [WIDC FF Award-winner Kim Albright's With Love and a Major Organ wins at 2024 Canadian Film Fest](#)



The in kind support of Toronto-based publicist, Ingrid Hamilton has helped WIDC reach wider audiences through [GAT PR](#)



PR & Socials

WIDC Socials are made up of a collective 4-5k followers / subscribers comprised of alumni and friends who are active and responsive. Some individual alumni have tens of thousands of followers on their socials.

WIDC Alumni Newsletter 300+	WIDC Public Newsletter 400+				

WHAT WIDC DIRECTORS ARE SAYING...

Story & Leadership Program (8 Directors)

- *Definitely a huge thank! And, I hope they [Sponsors] know that they're not just sponsoring a program but they're sponsoring Canadian culture. WIDC programs give directors a FULL toolbox of tools to succeed including confidence, belief and support. These directors in turn go out and create Canadian films that become part of our culture and WIDC has the success rate to prove it works."*
- *"I would thank them [Sponsors] immensely for providing such a unique opportunity for female filmmakers to come together, develop their leadership skills, make new connections and improve as filmmakers."*
- *"Keep funding these programs. It is important that women receive the support to build our leadership skills."*
- *"This is an important moment in my career where I finally got past the fear of presenting myself. And I owe it to you and your support."*
- *"I would like to thank them [Sponsors] immensely for providing us with this opportunity and I want them to know what they're doing is bold and admirable beyond words. We gathered together and made a community that we can trust."*
- *"The WIDC program gives mid-career professionals a rare opportunity to learn - from industry experts, from our amazing cohort and from ourselves - how to advance our careers with intention and a robust network of support, and support in the future and that is invaluable."*
- *"Seeing everyone in person in Whistler was amazing."*
- *"Thank you very much for your support. Programs such as this are extremely helpful for us."*

Career Advancement Module (CAM) (16 Directors, sampling)

- *"I can't emphasize enough how invaluable the WIDC CAM was for me! Finally, I had a community of women around me who have faced similar barriers in the entertainment industry and a new language and toolkit to address these struggles and to know that I'm not alone. Carol truly does life changing work. I came out of this program a much stronger and more confident director than I entered and now there's no going back!"*
- *"Please keep supporting this essential program. We need it."*
- *"This program changes careers and lives. Genuinely. The WIDC CAM has caused me to reconsider what a director and a leader is and has allowed me to form relationships with unbelievably talented artists from across the country. Both Carol and the artists within the program have reignited my love for the craft and rejuvenated my spirit."*
- *"Thanks for all the support. Your input was very helpful. I rewrote the draft and submitted it - after our chat in May - and we got [the news] about a week ago that we secured development funding."*

SPONSOR RECOGNITION

In addition to our verbal thanks at WIDC workshops and events, in WIDC media releases and tags on social media, the poster (at right) appeared as the back cover of all WIDC hardcopy and e-workbooks this year, in recognition of those agencies, networks, companies, organizations and individuals who have pledged their support.

CWWA wishes to express much gratitude, as we acknowledge the support that helps make CWWA and WIDC activities possible.



WIDC
Women in the Director's Chair

MENTORSHIP – DEVELOPMENT – PRODUCTION
Advancing authentic voices on screen
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