

December 2023

In this Issue

1. President's Message
2. Roundtable Roundup
3. Submit YOUR News
4. New and Renewing Members
5. Topps Harjo: Master of Chaos
6. Plante Papers at Loyola U
7. FIRST WE BOMBED NEW MEXICO at Festivals
8. RealScreen Summit, Jan 29-Feb 1
WIFV Member Discount!
9. Narrative Script Development Fellowship Applications Due Feb 9
10. Short to Feature, Dec 4
11. Weds One: Accessible Video Production, Dec 6
12. Coffees in December - Annapolis, Executives, New Members, In-person Reel Moms
13. Moving Margins Happy Hour, Dec 9
14. Industry Happy Hour, Dec 13
15. ScriptDC: How to Stand Out as a Filmmaker, Dec 11
16. ScriptDC: Screenplay Formatting, Jan 9
17. Weds One: Successful Freelancing, Jan 10
18. Resources / Care for Creatives
19. Thank you to our sponsors

Roundtable Roundup

Film Club: PAST LIVES
Monday, Dec 18, 7:30 pm [RSVP here](#)

Screenwriters: Holiday Movies - First Five Page Readings
Tuesday, Dec 19, 6:30 pm [RSVP here](#)

Roundtables are free for WIFV Members. There is a \$10 fee for non-members **You must pre-register to receive login links for these online programs.**

Send Your News & Photos

President's Message



Greetings, Friends.
The year is coming to an end and we have so many things to celebrate – personally and professionally.

Before we begin making our list of New Year's Resolutions, let's look back at all the things we accomplished in 2023. It's so important to do this regularly. Our "to do" lists are always overflowing and overwhelming. Our "got it done" lists are what reminds us what we're capable of, and they are the motivation that keeps us moving forward.

Here are some highlights of what WIFV accomplished in 2023:

- ☐ Our first in-person Women of Vision Awards since before the pandemic. We honored three phenomenal women - Abby Greensfelder, Lynda Obst and Vonnya Pettigrew - and celebrated their achievements in media making.
- ☐ 20 in-person Happy Hours & Coffees around the Greater Mid-Atlantic Region.
- ☐ 85 educational, training, and informational programs, discussions, and workshops which total more than 255 hours of valuable information to our WIFV members and attendees from the general public

- ☐ Our first in-person Open House since before the pandemic with more than 70 attendees.
- ☐ 35 virtual Happy Hours & Coffees.
- ☐ Our first in-person ScriptDC weekend since before the pandemic. Nearly 80 media makers joined us on the AU campus for five tracks of intensive training. This in addition to 18 ScriptDC webinars across the year.
- ☐ Our first in-person PA training workshop with more than 20 participants.
- ☐ Screening of 6 short films for 130 guests

Deadline for Members in the News is the 10th of the month. Send an article (100 words or so) and a photograph or link to director@wifv.org. You can see past issues [here](#). Deadline for the monthly newsletter is the 20th of the month.

We welcome receiving photos of you at work - writing, filming, acting, and supporting colleagues. Send your photos to director@wifv.org. Please provide a project name and a photo credit.



SAG-AFTRA Support in NYC
Photo Credit: Laurisha Yniguez

at the Avalon Theatre featuring the films from the Let's Make Short Films initiative and the WIFV 48 Hour team.

□ The first annual WIFV Short Screenplay Competition with cash and Final Draft prizes recognized the work of Lexi Christie, Joe Dzikiewicz, Mary Beth Warner, and Bridget Bell McMahon.

And operationally:

□ WIFV added Sofia Sandoval-Ferris and Cate Latessa to its staff to support our wonderful executive director, Melissa Houghton.

□ WIFV supported 46 film and media makers with grants, fellowships, and fiscal sponsorships.

□ WIFV raised \$151,821 through grants and sponsorships, allowing us to continue our important work in supporting media makers throughout the region.

What personal or professional accomplishments are you particularly proud of this year? Stop and celebrate what you've already done. It's been a great year!

Happy Holidays!

Connie St. John

New and Renewing Members (Oct 26 - Nov 28, 2023)

Shilette Addison-Reed
Karen Allyn
Vanessa Anthony
Sara Barger
Felice Berkowitz
Donna Brant
Nic Cohen
Taren Coleman
Meg Cormier
Celia de la Vega
Irene Fanous
Daphne Glover Ferrier
Estrellita Fitzhugh
Lynn-Jane Foreman
Tehryah Foreman
Merilyn Francis
Jerry Friedman
Suzie Galler
Hadeel Ghaida

Laetitia Giansily-Doyle
Pennington Greene
Erik Gudris
Richard Hall
Pamela Hoevel
Carletta Hurt
Rouane Itani
Michelle Jones
Sarah Katz
Christina Ksoll
Gussie Lehman
Shari Lewis
Monique Lyons
Paul Mahood
Brian Matusz
Michael McCray
Joseph McKay
Britt Morton
Shyla Palm

Matthew Radcliff
Jack Reilly
Karyn-Siobhán Robinson
Christina Ruppert
Michael Schochet
Flora Scott
Phil Shapiro
Joel Snyder
Kathleen Strouse
Leon Swerdel-Rich
Susan Taylor
Lisa M. Thomas
Ilana Trachtman
Job van Zuijlen
Aura Wharton-Beck
Wendy Wilkins
Kevin Wilson
Melanie Young
Laura Zam

News You Can Use

Topps Harjo: Master of Chaos

From the moment she learned to read, Audrea Topps



Harjo has been a creator, first turning words into worlds in her mind, and then sharing those stories she loved so much with her family as a performer. Her passion led her to filmmaking in various forms, from telling her own stories in her own voice as a director, to helping other creators bring their visions to life.

A skilled problem solver with a knack for breaking down complicated problems and navigating complex work environments, Audrea has made a name for herself as someone you can turn to when you need help, be it setting up something new or stepping in to bring teams into alignment.

From Washington, DC, to LA, New Zealand and back, Audrea has not only worked everywhere but she's also worked with everyone and in our conversation, she shares insights into her career, from the early days of working at Sony Pictures Imageworks to adventures at Electronic Arts and Lightstorm Entertainment. Along the way, she discusses culture shock, "otherness," and how taking risks has been a cornerstone of her career.

[Listen to the podcast here.](#)

Plante Papers now at Loyola

60 MINUTES correspondent Lesley Stahl and the newsmagazine's executive producer Bill Owens honored their late, longtime CBS News colleague Bill Plante at Loyola University of Chicago. CBS News senior White House and political correspondent Ed O'Keefe, Plante's wife **Robin Smith** and investigative reporter for CBS2 – WBBM TV Dorothy Tucker joined the Bill Plante Conversation to celebrate the donation of his papers and discuss the journalistic skills and values Plante brought to his work.



According to the [Loyola press release](#), "Meticulous notes from Bill Plante (BS '59) spanning half a century of the renowned journalist's career covering breaking news from the civil rights movement to four presidencies will find a home at Loyola University Chicago. Plante's widow, Robin Smith, is honoring the first anniversary of her husband's passing by donating his notebooks, calendars, correspondence, and CBS News story scripts to the University."

Photo courtesy of Adweek

FIRST WE BOMBED NEW MEXICO at Festivals



FIRST WE BOMBED NEW MEXICO – the story Oppenheimer leaves out - won the Audience Award for Best Documentary and Best New Mexico Documentary Prizes at the Santa Fe International Film Festival where it premiered and then won the Best Feature Documentary Prize at the Austin Film Festival! Next they head to St. Louis and Palm

Springs festivals. At the St. Louis Film Festival they will join with the courageous mothers of Coldwater Creek, who also suffered tragic losses, including of their children due to the Manhattan Project dumping nuclear waste in 1945 in their backyard.

A David and Goliath story, Tina Cordova, an inspiring Hispanic cancer survivor bangs on the corridors of power to fight for compensation and an apology for Native and Hispanic communities in New Mexico whose land and water was radiated by the Trinity Bomb. The film, directed by **Lois Lipman**, is accompanied by a grassroots impact campaign, urging Congress to finally acknowledge and compensate the still ignored families across America's mountain states who paid with their lives for America's nuclear testing legacy. Recently the Senate overwhelmingly voted to extend RECA (Radiation Exposure Compensation Act) for this purpose. Now the impact campaign is focused on Republicans in the House whose votes are needed to make this happen before the legislation sunsets in June 2024. To help with outreach, an anonymous donor is matching gifts up to a total of \$25,000. [You can make your donation here.](#)

Thanks to the extraordinary **Melissa Houghton** who has helped me over many years since I got my MFA at American University. Thanks to brilliant cinematographer **Sheila Smith** who filmed our DC footage and to Docs in Progress who gave my film early recognition 8 years ago when I was starting out. Thanks also to former classmates from AU who helped the project in those early days – Kelly Donnellan, Associate Professor in Cinema Arts at Point Park University and Ellen Tripler, also **Adele Schmidt**. And huge thanks to my brilliant editor and partner Joel Marcus with whom I crafted this film over years & to many others – it takes a village.

Realscreen Summit, Jan 29-Feb1 WIFV Member Discount

Realscreen Summit, the definitive gathering of the unscripted industry, returns January 29 - February 1, 2024, bringing together executives and delegates from around the globe. Make sure to take advantage of the opportunity to network, meet with programmers, and join the conversations on the issues and trends that will shape your plans in the coming year.

[The WIFV Member discount code saves you \\$375USD off the full rate.](#)



Narrative Script Development Fellowship Application Deadline - February 9

Through the nine-month WIFV Narrative Script Development Fellowship, open only to WIFV members, accomplished film professionals will work with 4-6 Fellows to take feature-length scripts from page to production. Three meetings per month with mentors – will workshop the scripts through all aspects of pre-production and development. The Fellows will also meet monthly, forming a cohort to support each other as they move out of the Fellowship. By program's end, the Fellows will have a shooting script, budget, a plan to make their films and access funds, OR a project they can successfully pitch to producers outside of their teams.

[Application process starts here.](#) There is a \$50 application fee. Applicants must be WIFV Members in good standing. Application deadline for the 2024 program is February 9, 2024. [More info here.](#)

Upcoming Events

Short to Feature - December 4

Did you make a short as a proof of concept for a feature? Are you wondering how to actually get the feature made? Join WIFV

for this Filmmaker Conversation with **Megan Holley** as she shares her journey with THE PROJECTIONIST. You will receive a link to the short under discussion with your registration confirmation. [Ms. Holley's bio here.](#)



Monday, December 4, 6:30-8:00 pm [RSVP Here](#)
\$15 for WIFV Members (must be logged in) / \$30 for public
You will receive the login information with your registration confirmation.



Accessible Video Production - December 6

In this training we will explore the technologies and techniques to ensure users with auditory or visual disabilities have equal access to your content. By understanding the requirements of digital content accessibility, producers can create exceptional video that provides an equal experience for all users. We will explore how video producers can save effort, time, and money by preparing for accessibility during the planning phases of production, and we will gain a better understanding of the complex regulatory landscape of digital media accessibility compliance. Presented by **Ben Gordon** and [Word Wizards, Inc.](#)

Wednesday, December 6, 6:30 pm [RSVP here](#)
FREE for WIFV Executive Members (must be logged in and use discount code)
\$15 for WIFV Members (must be logged in) and Students / \$30 for public
You will receive login information with your registration confirmation.

Event sponsored by [Interface Media Group](#), [202Creates](#), and [OCTFME](#).

Coffees in December

Coffee in Annapolis

Tuesday, December 5, 8:00 am [RSVP here](#)
49 West Coffeehouse, 49 West Street, Annapolis, MD

Executive Member Coffee

Tuesday, December 12, 9:00 am [RSVP here](#)
You will receive login info for the zoom with your registration

New Members Coffee

Wednesday, December 14, 9:00 am [RSVP here](#)

This coffee provides an overview of WIFV services and gives you a chance to meet other new members. We are all about building networks! You will receive login info for the zoom with your registration.

Reel Moms Coffee - In Person in Silver Spring

Friday, December 15, 10:00 am [RSVP here](#)

The two-minute film challenge theme is OLD.

Info on how to share your short will be with your registration.

You will receive the address for the coffee in your registration confirmation



Moving Margins Happy Hour - December 9

Moving Margins is an intentional convergence for multidisciplinary artists, centering queer, disabled, immigrant, and BIPOC creatives who live and work in the DMV region. Through this unstructured convening, we hope to foster connection, collaboration and innovation across disciplines!

Saturday, December 9, 6:00-8:00 pm, [RSVP here](#)

Busboys & Poets, Brookland, 625 Monroe Street NE
Food and drink will be available for purchase.

Industry Happy Hour - December 13

Yes, this is an in-person event. Connect with members of DC's entertainment industry - from talent to production crew to other creatives and investors (or those aspiring/intrigued!) - all are welcome! Co-hosting organizations: The Actors' Center, Harvard Club, Harvardwood, and Women in Film & Video.

Wednesday, December 13, 6:00 to 9:00 pm [RSVP here](#)
The Admiral, 1 Dupont Circle NW, Washington, DC 20036
Food and drink will be available for purchase.

How to Stand Out as a Filmmaker - December 11



Picture this: you walk into a filmmaker mixer, surrounded by a diverse crowd of fellow filmmakers, financiers, and professionals from major agencies and studios. The room is buzzing with creative energy, but among all the talented people, how do you ensure you stand out? And this is just the beginning. Once you have a project in hand, the challenge shifts to standing out to potential collaborators and garnering the support needed. Furthermore, after your film is complete, how do you navigate the film festival circuit, ensuring your work shines among the thousands of other submissions? **Ramfis Myrthil** is a New York-based filmmaker who champions films by people of color, women, and the LGBTQ community, while promoting themes of passion and integrity in all of his work. [Read his full bio here](#)

Monday, December 11, 6:30 pm [RSVP here](#)
\$15 WIFV Members and Students / \$30 Public
You will receive the Zoom link with your registration confirmation.

ScriptDC - Make It! is supported in part by [Office of Cable Television, Film, Music & Entertainment](#), [The Maryland Film Office](#), [Virginia Film Office](#), [Blackmagic Design](#), and [Final Draft](#).



PAST LIVES - December 18

The December film selection is PAST LIVES (2023) written and directed by Celine Song. Nora and Hae Sung, two deeply connected childhood friends, are wrested apart after Nora's family emigrates from South Korea. Twenty years later, they are reunited for one fateful week as they confront notions of love and destiny. The film stars Greta Lee, Teo Yoo, and John Magaro. [Watch the trailer here](#). Rent on Prime to watch the full movie. **Make sure you watch (or re-watch) the film in advance of the discussion.**

Monday, December 18, 7:30-8:30 pm [RSVP here](#)
You will receive the Zoom link with your registration confirmation.

First Five Pages: Holiday Movies December 19

This meeting will be a first five pages meeting and this month we are looking to concentrate on holiday movies! You pick the holiday and how you plan to draw us in with those first five pages.

Screenwriters Roundtable

Brought to you by:
The logo for Women in Film & Video, featuring the text "Women in Film & Video" in a stylized font next to a circular icon.



We put out a call for submissions of the first five pages of your script the week before the meeting, and the first 4-5 submissions get chosen for a table read by actors from The Actors' Center and to receive constructive criticism from the other attendees. If you wish to be added to the Screenwriters Roundtable listserv, please contact the WIFV office at director@wifv.org.

Scripts are not distributed during the table read to the audience.

Tuesday, December 19, 6:30 pm [RSVP here](#)

Free for WIFV Members / \$10 Public

You will receive the Zoom link with your registration confirmation.

Co-hosted by [The Actors' Center](#).



Screenplay Formatting - January 9

Let Dr. Format (Dave Trottier) share the latest trends in formatting and simplify spec screenplay formatting techniques in the process. Dave will cover all the fundamentals (including common blunders) in this brief presentation and make it easy for you to apply this "screenwriting language" and the latest trends to your current script. Dave will answer your questions afterward, so get the answers you've been seeking! [Read Mr. Trottier's bio here](#).

Wednesday, November 8, 6:30-8:00 pm [RSVP here](#)

\$15 for WIFV Members (must be logged in) and Students / \$30 for public

You will receive login information with your registration confirmation

ScriptDC - Make It! is supported in part by [Office of Cable Television, Film, Music & Entertainment](#), [The Maryland Film Office](#), [Virginia Film Office](#), [Blackmagic Design](#), and [Final Draft](#).

Successful Freelancing - January 10

Are you considering leaving a full-time job to go freelance? Or you're new to freelancing and feel like "you don't know what you don't know"? Being a freelancer means you are a small business owner, and there's more to it than just waiting for the phone to ring, grabbing some gaff tape, and heading out the door. No matter what area you intend to freelance in, there are financial considerations, process considerations, and time management considerations. **Sharon Sobel** took her freelance leap in 2003, and hasn't looked back. She'll share what every freelancer should know (and do!) before taking the freelance leap - it's not for everyone. [Read Ms. Sobel's bio here](#).



Wednesday, January 10, 6:30 pm [RSVP here](#)

FREE for WIFV Executive Members (must be logged in and use discount code)

\$15 for WIFV Members (must be logged in) and Students / \$30 for public

You will receive login information with your registration confirmation.

Event sponsored by [Interface Media Group](#), [202Creates](#), and [OCTFME](#).

Resources

WIFV has been collecting (and suggesting) relief resources for freelancers, artists, and small businesses across the region. [Access them here](#).

[Care for Creatives](#) provides pay-what-you-can mental health support to the DC creative and entrepreneurial community. Individuals who reach out to the CCSC are matched with a clinical intern to support them through a solution-oriented therapy approach. All services are confidential and will be provided via tele-health.

Email CCSCFoggyBottom@gwu.edu and the Care for Creatives team will follow up with more information.

Thanks to Our Sponsors



Send Stories to:
director@wifv.org



About WIFV

Women in Film & Video provides educational and networking opportunities for screen-based media makers, celebrates women's creative and technical achievements in media, and advocates for parity both in front of and behind the camera to ensure that all voices can be heard.



Women in Film & Video | 1200 18th Street NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036

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