

WOMEN  
IN  
FILM & VIDEO  
WASHINGTON, DC

# WIFV NEWS

May 2025

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## Roundtable Roundup

**Narrative Directors:** *Meet Jeff Mann*  
*PAPER MARRIAGE*  
**Mon, May 5, 6:30 pm [RSVP here](#)**

**Documentary:** *WOMEN BEHIND THE WHEEL*  
**Mon, May 12, 6:30 pm [RSVP here](#)**

**Film Club:** Gene Hackman Selections

## President's Message



Dear WIFV Members & Friends,

As I shared at our wonderful Women of Vision Awards event in April, our organization is needed now more than ever. From the

top levels of government, we have heard not just a narrative, but witnessed legislation, that attempts to diminish the contributions of women in our industry and others.

And yet, **Neilsberg** research shows that there are 3.3 million more women than men in the United States – 167,842,453 females, compared to 164,545,087 males. (50.50% vs. 49.50%)

At the very least, that should mean equal footing. However, according to an **Annenberg Inclusion Initiative study**, representation of women in the entertainment industry is not half.

The study, presented by Annenberg's Dr. Stacy L. Smith and Katherine Pieper, drew data from 3,240 narrative films made in Australia, France, Germany, Italy, the U.S. and the U.K. that grossed at least \$1 million globally. It also surveyed the lineups at five top film festivals: Cannes, Berlin, Venice, Sundance and Toronto.

Here are some of the results:

- In the U.S., the number of women behind the camera grew from 8% in 2015 to 16.2% in 2024.
- Only 25.3% of the characters in the movies surveyed are women above the age of 40, and only 32% of speaking characters were women.

Mon, May 19, 7:30 pm [RSVP here](#)

Roundtables are free for WIFV Members / \$15 for public

You will receive your login link with your confirmation email

## Send Your News & Photos

The 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](mailto:director@wifv.org). [You can see past issues here](#). The 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](mailto:director@wifv.org). Please provide a project name and a photo credit.



- The representation of female directors in the five major film festivals, is still below 30%, according to the study.

WIFV has made significant progress, but our work is not done. Rollbacks on DEI throughout the country affect women in a major way, as well as people of color, the disabled, and every other marginalized group.

Dr. Smith predicts “that Gen Z’s demand for inclusivity will ultimately push companies to recognize the need to represent the world accurately in order to engage these younger audiences.” ([Variety](#))

I’m with her.

So what does that mean for WIFV? It means we need to continue to do our important work of networking, engaging, and providing professional development opportunities to women, especially young women, who are pursuing careers in the industry.

Your support – through membership, **donations**, and attendance – helps us achieve our goals.

**Take a look at the WIFV calendar** and sign up to attend some of our fantastic events.

Let’s use our voices, our presence, and our dollars to keep the momentum going.

**Connie**

Connie St. John

## New/Renewing Members (April 1 - 29, 2025)

Tristan Au  
Jolan Baucum Bastien  
Jennifer Beman  
Virginia Bertholet  
Lorraine Blackwell  
Luis Blandon  
Alene Boghosian  
Ericka Boston  
Traci Bryant  
Kayla Dailey  
Lauren Fletcher  
Terry Menefee Gau  
Alison Hadley  
Kristin Reiber Harris  
Ben Howard  
Matthew Hua

Carletta Hurt  
Tanya Hutchins  
Robert Jackson  
Eden Jenkins  
Claire Kaplan  
Damien Krzesinski  
Linda Lawson  
Penny Lee  
Isadora Leidenfrost  
Nadine Licostie  
Dave Lilling  
Emily Lin  
Monica Logothetis  
Paula Mosby  
Lisa Musgrove  
Emma Palmer

Monica Sanjur  
May Santiago  
Amita Sarin  
Lisa Scott  
Miles Sedgwick  
Stephanie Smith  
Cordelia Stanton  
Susan Stolov  
Jan Sutcliffe  
Miyas Taha  
Brittany Toth  
Skye Trimble  
Rangeley Wallace  
Marie Wilda  
Diane Williams  
Irene Ziegler

## News You Can Use



Filmfest DC returns for its 39th year now until May 4, showcasing 63 films from 36 countries across 11 days. As the city's premier international film festival, Filmfest DC brings powerful stories to the big screen—celebrating diverse voices, sparking dialogue, and building community through the art of cinema.

Don't miss this incredible lineup of films and experiences across DC from Downtown's Regal Theater, The Wharf, the Embassy of France, National Gallery of Art, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library. [Learn more and view the full schedule here.](#)

### MetroShorts1 - Popular Demand Screening - May 3

SMALL STEPS directed by Christopher McGuinness

ANACOSTIA PORTRAITS directed by Yev K'banchik, Elena Volkova

BLACK PRINTMAKERS OF WASHINGTON DC directed by Susan J. Goldman

Regal Gallery Place Cinema - May 3, 11:15 am

[Get free tickets and more info here](#)



### ROOM TO BREATHE on WETAMetro and PBS App

After screening their film exclusively in-person for one year, **Mary Awosika** and **Dave Haft** are excited to share a major milestone for ROOM TO BREATHE: they have officially selected PBS as their broadcast and streaming home for the next two years!

To kick things off, ROOM TO BREATHE will air on the WETA Metro channel. This powerful, personal film—shot right here in DC—explores the emotional complexity of modern caregiving, and the quiet strength it takes to balance the needs of others with our own. We're equally thrilled to announce that ROOM TO BREATHE will soon be available for streaming on the PBS app, reaching audiences nationwide who are navigating similar questions about care, resilience, and community. [More info here.](#)

"Thank you for walking alongside us on this journey. We hope you'll tune in, share the news, and help us bring this conversation into more homes across the country."



## Bloch's Pedro Pie-scal in TV Guide!

On stands now, *TV Guide Magazine's* special issue all about HBO's *THE LAST OF US*, features some fan art from WIFV's own EVP, Candice Bloch! Her "Pedro Pie-scal" was made two years ago for Pi Day, showcasing an image of Pedro Pascal as Joel Miller from the hit television series based on the video game of the same name.

Yes, it's a real strawberry pie - created with some cinnamon stenciling and other sculpted details to bring it life. The pie received a lot of online love thanks to being selected for one of HBO's "Fan Art Friday" showcases on their official Instagram account and is being reprised here again in honor of the show's April 13th season 2 premiere. You can find the original post on Candice's social media accounts: @littledicecreations or @janeofmany lanes

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## GAME OF TRUTH Screening - May 6

Truth is a struggle that the people of Northern Ireland have come to understand. For thirty years, Northern Ireland was plagued by a conflict between Catholics and Protestants known as The Troubles. In 1998, the Good Friday Agreement brought an end to three decades of violence and assassinations shrouded in state secrecy. To this day, more than half of the 3,500 deaths resulting from the conflict remain unexplained, leaving families without closure. Unfazed by the passage of time, some families continue to fight for the truth regarding the deaths of their loved ones. They accuse the British government, the army, the police, and MI5 of obstructing justice. They decry the collusion—manifested as secret and sometimes deadly deals—between British institutions and terrorist groups. The documentary *GAME OF TRUTH* tells their story. It will be shown May 6th, at 6:30pm, at the NYU campus in Washington DC, 1307 L street NW, 20005. It will be followed by a Q&A with the director, **Fabienne Lips-Dumas**. [Get your free ticket here.](#)

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DC/DOX returns to Washington, DC, for its highly anticipated third edition, June 12–15, 2025. Get ready for four days of powerful cinema from across the globe, thought-provoking discussions with filmmakers, and an expanded “Reality Check” industry forum! A festival pass is your key to unlocking the full DC/DOX experience, including priority access to all programs and exclusive networking events and parties. [Get your pass here.](#)

WIFV Members can save an additional 10% off Early Bird Passes. That special discount code will be shared on the Members' listserv later today.

**Coming Up On MediaMaker Spotlight...**

**#097 Apr 27**  
**"Words of War: Refusing to Silence Press Freedom"**  
 Part 1 with guest **Mark Maxey**

**#098 May 11**  
**"Words of War: Refusing to Silence Press Freedom"**  
 Part 2 with guest **Maxine Peake**

**#099 May 25**  
**"Producing Decades of Hollywood Blockbusters"**  
 with guest **William Fay**

Ep. 097 & Ep. 098 - Words of War: Refusing to Silence Press Freedom (Parts 1 & 2)

In this special two-part series, host **Sandra Abrams** first chats with **Mark Maxey**, WIFV board member and producer of a new geo-political thriller, **WORDS OF WAR**. The film tells the story of Russian-American journalist, Anna Politkovskaya, who was assassinated on October 7, 2006 for uncovering the truth about the Chechen War. The film opens in theaters on May 2, the day before United Nations’ World Press Freedom Day. The all-star cast includes Maxine Peake as Anna, Ciaran Hinds as her editor, Dmitry, and Jason Isaacs as her husband, Sasha. Oscar-winner Sean Penn and Congressman Eric Swalwell (D-CA) serve as executive producers.

In Part 1 (released on April 27th), Mark shares why this film is so timely to what is happening today when the world seeks to hold the powerful accountable for crimes against humanity. He also gives insight into how Sean Penn joined the film as executive producer. Part 2, also hosted by Sandra Abrams, features WORDS OF WAR’s lead actress, Maxine Peake and will be released on May 11th. In their conversation, Maxine discusses filming on location in Latvia and shares which scene she and Jason Isaacs did some improvising.

To learn more about WORDS OF WAR, visit: <https://www.rollingpictures.com/>

Then on May 25th, Ep. #099: “Producing Decades of Hollywood Blockbusters”

Host **Candice Bloch** chats with longtime Hollywood producer William Fay about many of the blockbuster films he produced over his career. Known for founding Legendary Pictures, and producing and executive producing many notable projects through the years, such as Independence Day, The Patriot, 300, The Hangover, The Town and more, Bill shares stories and advice from his decades in the industry.

And have you listened to our Earth Day special episode from last month yet?

Episode #096, "**Greenlighting Sustainable Eco-Friendly Productions**" -

Host Candice Bloch interviews Kat Friis, an Emmy award-winning producer and founding member of *Green the Bid*, a grassroots, non-profit industry organization that aims to shift the media production industry to zero-waste, minimal carbon, sustainable and regenerative practices. The two discuss the importance of sustainability in the production industry, educating and advocating for sustainable practices, and practical steps that producers can take to reduce their carbon footprint. The conversation also touches on common misconceptions about sustainability, the cost-effectiveness of sustainable practices, and the resources available through Green the Bid for those looking to implement eco-friendly practices in their productions. To learn more about Green the Bid, visit: <https://www.greenthebid.earth/>

You can find MediaMaker Spotlight wherever you find your podcasts, including our video companion on [YouTube](#). Subscribe to the show so you don't miss any episodes!

## Upcoming WIFV Events

### NSDF: Directors & Scripts - May 1

This workshop with **Joan Darling** and **Claudia Myers** will present how a director will interact with a script when they take on a project and what they look for when approached to join a project. The info shared is also valuable for writers who expect to direct their own projects to ensure they are wearing the "right hat" for this stage of production. **Presenter bios here.**

**Thursday, May 1, 6:30-8:00 pm** [RSVP here](#)

\$20 for WIFV Members (must be logged in) / \$35 for public

You will receive login information with your registration confirmation.

The WIFV Narrative Script Development Fellowship is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. To find out more about how National Endowment for the Arts grants impact individuals and communities, visit [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov). Additional support was received from **OCTFME/202 Creates** and the Gem Star Foundation.

### Meet Jeff Mann - May 5

Meet writer and director Jeff Mann. In 2024, Jeff released his first feature-length film, PAPER MARRIAGE. Produced by the Duplass brothers and filmed locally, the movie focuses on a marriage of convenience when an unemployed man marries a Chinese immigrant, hoping to get American citizenship.

Jeff also stars as the leading man. PAPER MARRIAGE screened at DCIFF earlier this year and won the Audience Favorite Award!

**Monday, April 7, 6:30-8:00 pm** [RSVP here](#)

FREE for WIFV Members (must be logged in) / \$15 for public

You will receive login information with your registration confirmation.

### Narrative Directors Roundtable

Brought to you by  




### Producing AMERICAN MUSLIMS: A History Revealed - May 7

This six-part documentary series reveals and explores surprising stories of Muslims in America, uncovering a history



far richer and more complex than many realize. Hosted by acclaimed journalists Malika Bilal, Aymann Ismail, and Asma Khalid, the series spans 200 years—from the experiences of enslaved African Muslims in the 18th century to the rise of diverse Muslim communities in the early 20th century. Along the way, it uncovers remarkable narratives, such as the unexpected story of an early mosque in North Dakota and the inspiring journey of Mohammad Kahn, an Afghan immigrant who fought for the Union Army and later battled for his rightful pension. Seamlessly weaving pivotal moments in US history

with deeply personal accounts, this gripping series offers a fresh perspective on America's diverse past. [Watch the trailer here](#).

**Wednesday, May 7, 6:30 pm [RSVP here](#)**

Free for WIFV Executive Members

\$20 WIFV Members (must be logged in) and Students / \$35 for public

You will receive the login information with your registration confirmation.

Sponsored by [Interface Media Group](#), [202Creates](#), [OCTFME](#) and [Maryland Film Office](#)



### **Coffee in Annapolis**

**Tuesday, May 6, 9:00 am [RSVP here](#)**

49 West Coffeehouse, 49 West Street, Annapolis

Organized by **Felicia Barlow Clar** and **Alison Bauer**

### **Coffee in Frederick**

**Wednesday, May 7, 9:00 am [RSVP here](#)**

Coffee in a private home in Adamstown

Address provided with your registration confirmation

Organized by **Jean Rosolino**

### **Executive Member Coffee**

**Tuesday, May 13, 9:00 am [RSVP here](#)**

You will receive the login info for the zoom with your registration confirmation

### **Happy Hour in Richmond**

**Thursday, May 15, 5:00 pm [RSVP here](#)**

Best Café at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

200 N Arthur Ashe Blvd, 1st Floor, Richmond, VA 23220

Organized by **Virginia Bertholet** and **Robin Farmer**

### **Reel Moms Coffee**

**Friday, May 16, 10:00 am [RSVP here](#)**

The two-minute film challenge theme is PLAIN

You will receive the login info for the zoom with your registration confirmation

Organized by **Alyscia Cunningham**

### **Coffee in Baltimore**

**Tuesday, May 20, 9:00 am [RSVP here](#)**

The Bun Shop, 239 West Read Street, Baltimore

Organized by **Jacque Greff** and **May Santiago**

### **Coffee in Clarendon**

**Thursday, May 22, 9:00 am [RSVP here](#)**

Kaldi's Social House, 3100 10th Street North, Clarendon

Organized by **Connie St. John**, **Candice Bloch**, and **Sandra Brennan**

### **Coffee in DC**

**Friday, May 23, 9:00 am [RSVP here](#)**

Emissary Coffee, 2032 P Street NW (Dupont Circle North metro)

Organized by **Anna Greisshammer**, **Melissa Houghton**, and **Paul Mowry**

## Women Behind the Wheel - 5/12

Two women, a rented car and camera equipment set out to explore Central Asia and tell the stories of women in remote communities living their lives and sharing their stories of quiet revolution and feminism. **WOMEN BEHIND THE WHEEL** is the award-winning documentary of their extraordinary road trip.

## Documentary Roundtable

Brought to you by



Join us as filmmakers Catherine Haigh and Hannah Congdon share their stories and innovative screening campaign. This is one road trip you won't want to miss! The film is currently streaming on tubi.

**Monday, May 12, 6:30-8:00 pm** [RSVP here](#)

FREE for WIFV Members / \$15 public

You will receive the Zoom login information with your registration confirmation.

## How My Documentary Changed Minds and Policies

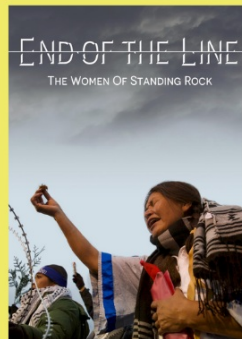
A WIFV 45th Anniversary Panel

This panel features filmmakers whose groundbreaking films focused on the injustices faced by Indigenous peoples of America, sparking vital conversations on policy reform and fairness.



**Aviva Kempner**

Co-Director of  
*Imagining the Indian*



**Shannon Kring**

Director & Producer of  
*End of the Line*



**Geoffrey O'Gara**

Director of *Home for School*  
& Executive Producer of  
*Who She Is*



**Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library**

901 G St NW, Washington, DC

May 14, Wednesday

6:30-8:00 pm



## Starring Gene Hackman - 5/19

In honor of Gene Hackman's recent passing, Film Club Co-Organizer **Connie St. John** selected two of his related films. People can watch both or either for the discussion.

**THE CONVERSATION** (1974) - directed by Francis Ford Coppola - A paranoid, secretive surveillance expert has a crisis of conscience when he suspects that the couple he is spying on will be murdered. Starring Gene Hackman, and featuring Teri Garr, Harrison Ford, John Cazale, Cindy Williams, and Robert Duvall (uncredited).

**ENEMY OF THE STATE** (1998) - directed by Tony Scott, and considered to be a sequel to *The*



*Conversation* - A lawyer becomes targeted by a corrupt politician and his NSA goons when he accidentally receives key evidence to a politically motivated crime. Features an all-star cast, including Will Smith, Gene Hackman, Jon Voight, Lisa Bonet, Regina King, Gabriel Byrne, Jack Black, and Anna Gunn.

**Watch the film in advance of the Film Club Meeting** . Both films are available on Amazon Prime Video.

**Monday, May 19, 7:30-8:30 pm [RSVP here](#)**

You will receive login information with your registration confirmation.

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## Meet Landi Maduro - June 2

**Landi Maduro**, founder of Women of Color Filmmakers, will be joining us to discuss her career, films, courses, and more!

**Monday, June 2, 6:30-8:00 pm [RSVP here](#)**

FREE for WIFV Members (must be logged in) / \$15 for public

You will receive login information with your registration confirmation.



## The Skinny on Rom Coms - June 4

Rom coms aren't what is making it to theaters these days but it doesn't mean we don't want to see them and aren't eager to learn how to bring our story ideas to audiences. Join the June Weds One and meet **Alys Murray** who began as a novelist and has five rom coms under her belt. She's done the research on trends, trendsetters, and is willing to share her experience about breaking into the genre!

**Wednesday, June 4, 6:30-8:00 pm [RSVP here](#)**

\$20 WIFV Members (must be logged in) / \$35 for public

You will receive login information with your registration confirmation.

## 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 telehealth.

Email [CCSCFoggyBottom@gwu.edu](mailto: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](mailto: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.



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