

ReFrame Rise 2019

Expand the story. Change the world.

It's been a privilege to work with Women In Film and the team of Ambassadors to select this remarkable cohort of female directors who are ready for the next stage in their careers. These eight directors have the talent, voice, ambition and commitment needed to change the industry and expand the diversity and breadth of stories being told. This is a community wide effort, where everyone in the industry has a role to play in changing the narrative and ensuring the success of our pilot year. We hope you will join our growing family of sponsors, mentors and decision makers and commit to becoming true advocates for this exciting group of directors who deserve our unflagging support.

Michelle Satter

Founding Director, Sundance Institute Feature Film Program

We are proud to launch ReFrame Rise, a sponsorship program to advance experienced female directors who are poised to helm high level features, TV pilots, and their own shows. Over time, our goal is to include women working across the media landscape who face similar challenges of bias, closed networks, and limited opportunity – writers, producers, cinematographers, composers and more. Together, with our Ambassadors and Sponsors, we will shine a light on these eight gifted directors whose work reflects the complexity and beauty of stories that can entertain, inform, and illuminate our common humanity. We can't wait to see what they will do next.

Alison Emilio

Director, ReFrame

ReFrame would like to thank co-presenting sponsor Hulu, and The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for their support of ReFrame Rise.

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ReFrame

Founded and led by Women In Film and Sundance Institute, ReFrame™ is a nonprofit organization fueled by an influential and dedicated group of active entertainment industry leaders—more than 70 Ambassadors—that include studio heads, agency partners, senior network executives, directors, writers, actors, and guild leaders committed to increasing the number of women of all backgrounds working in film, TV, and media. Together, we have developed a research-based action plan to further gender parity in the media industry.

Our unique, industry-wide collaboration invites company leadership to adopt measurable actions that will shift a complex system in which women have been consistently underrepresented. ReFrame™ Partners—film, TV, and media companies—engage in programs that advance more diverse storytelling for expanded audiences around the globe.

ReFrame™ is made possible by support from The Harnisch Foundation; Hulu; IMDbPro; Melanie Backer—Backer Charitable Trust; Mercer; the Women at Sundance Leadership Council: Ruth Ann Harnisch, Katy Drake Bettner, Barbara Bridges, Abigail Disney, Cristina Ljungberg, Ann Lovell, Susan Bay Nimoy, Patty Quillin, Brenda Robinson, Kimberly Steward, Lynda Weinman, and Jenifer Westphal; Delta Air Lines; Zola Mashariki; and an anonymous donor. Special support provided by The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

ReFrame Rise

ReFrame Rise™ is a comprehensive and customized two-year sponsorship program that provides high-level endorsement and career acceleration for experienced female directors who are poised to lead commercial features and high-profile television shows.

Research shows that sponsorship, as opposed to mentorship, can enhance and accelerate a person's career trajectory. A sponsor is an advocate who can propel a candidate to the top of a hiring list and provide access to the industry's most powerful networks. ReFrame™ sponsorship differs from traditional mentorship in that it depends on a cross company collaboration of industry leaders to select, guide, and ultimately endorse the director—moving beyond career advice to actively landing jobs. ReFrame Rise directors will be paired with a team of three sponsors who will provide support based on the individual goals of the filmmakers.

Current studies demonstrate that there is a seven to 10-year gap in the careers of women who create content. There are gender barriers at each stage of the production process that cause “drop-out” patterns that hinder women filmmakers' traction and success in Hollywood—a pattern that has not changed in the last 15 years. Findings illustrate that gender representation needs to address the barriers affecting women of all backgrounds, as only seven of the 1,200 top-grossing films from 2007–2018 were directed by women of color. Through ReFrame Rise, we hope to advance our philosophy that inclusive representation in media and diverse storytelling can transform the world by allowing us to better understand and connect with one another.

Desiree Akhavan




“I direct because I have so much to say and no other way of saying it. I’d like to make mainstream films that touch people’s lives, so that I can sneak in my agenda like when you slather your dog’s heart worm pills in peanut butter.”

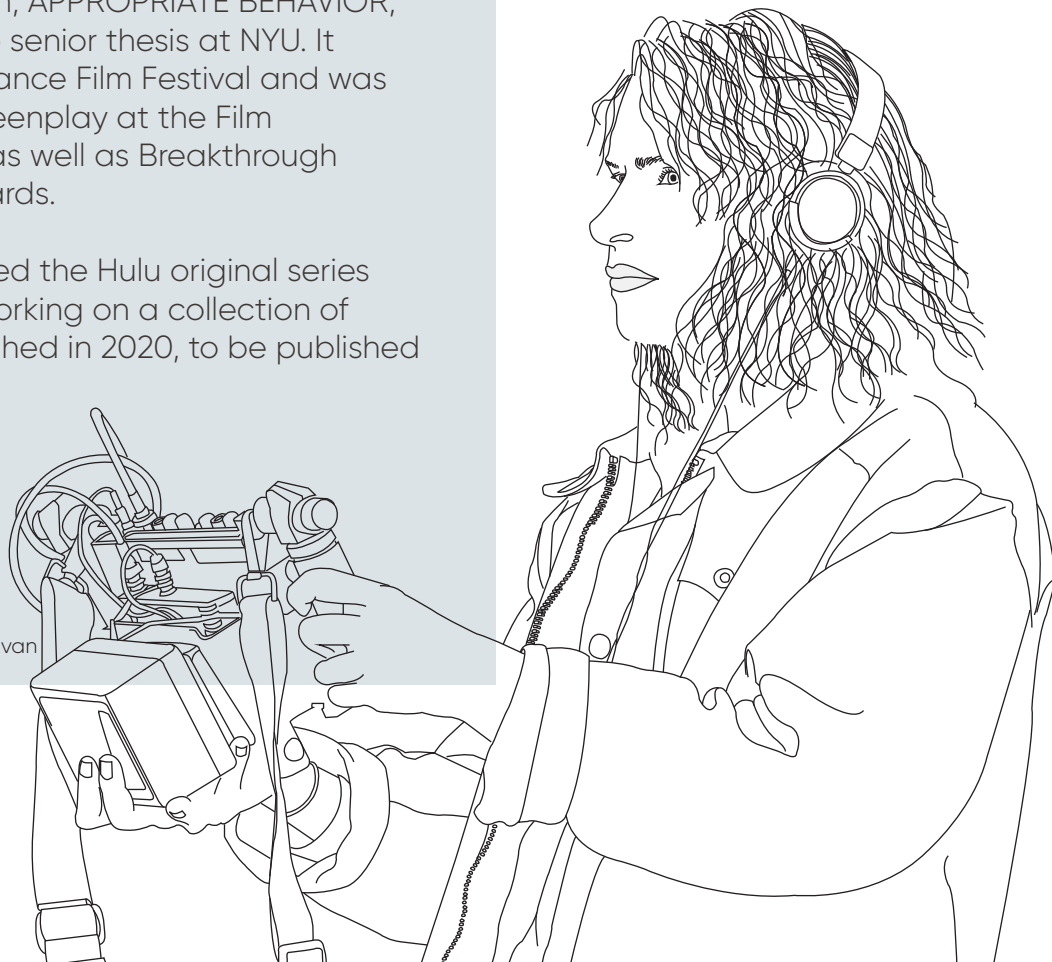


Desiree Akhavan is the director and co-writer of THE MISEDUCATION OF CAMERON POST, starring Chloe Grace Moretz and Sasha Lane, which won the 2018 Sundance Grand Jury Prize. Her first film, APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR, was written as her graduate senior thesis at NYU. It premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival and was nominated for Best First Screenplay at the Film Independent Spirit Awards as well as Breakthrough Director at the Gotham Awards.

Most recently, Desiree created the Hulu original series “The Bisexual.” She is also working on a collection of personal essays to be published in 2020, to be published by Random House.

Desiree has a BA from Smith College and an MFA from New York University’s Graduate Film Program.

 @desireeekhavan



Haifaa al-Mansour

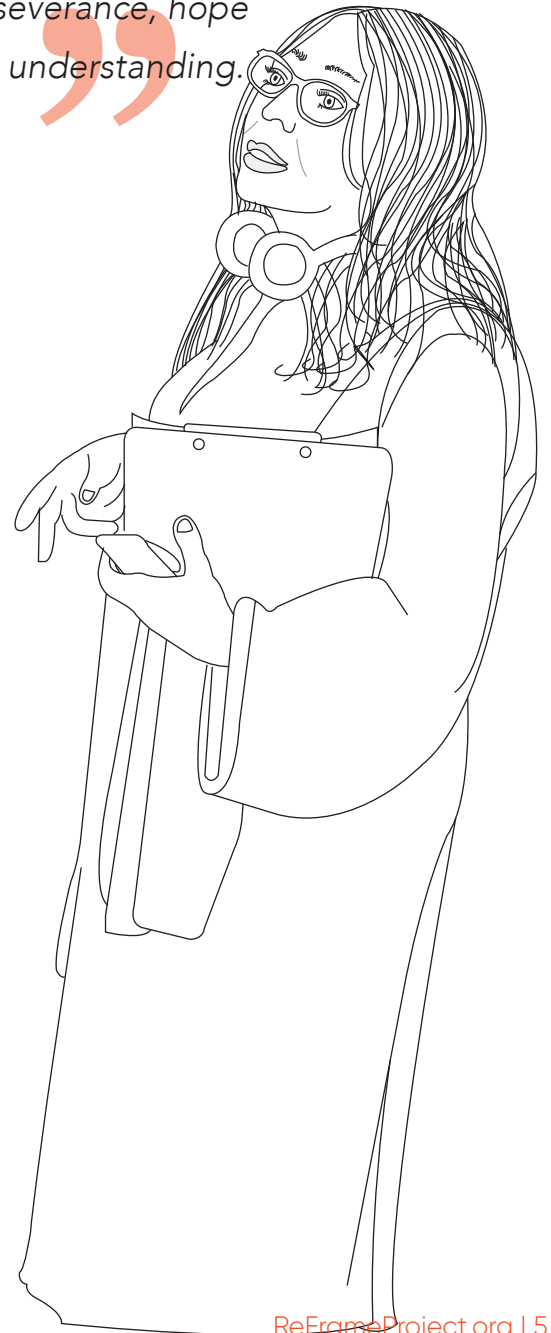


Haifaa al-Mansour is the first female filmmaker in Saudi Arabia. The success of her three short films, as well as the international acclaim of her award-winning 2005 documentary *WOMEN WITHOUT SHADOWS*, influenced a new wave of Saudi filmmakers. Haifaa's acclaimed 2012 film *WADJDA* received numerous awards and accolades at festivals around the world. In 2017, Haifaa released *MARY SHELLEY*, starring Elle Fanning and Douglas Booth. In 2018, she released the Netflix film *NAPPILY EVER AFTER* starring Sanaa Lathan. She recently directed episodes of "The Society" for Netflix and "Motherland: Fort Salem" for Freeform.

Haifaa is currently in pre-production on her fourth feature film, entitled *THE PERFECT CANDIDATE*, and is developing an animated feature with Shadowmachine entitled *MISS CAMEL*.

 @HaifaaMansour

“
I want to make films that travel to as diverse and as far-reaching an audience as possible. I want to continue to make films about strong women from across the globe, and to celebrate stories of tolerance, perseverance, hope and understanding.
”



Patricia Cardoso

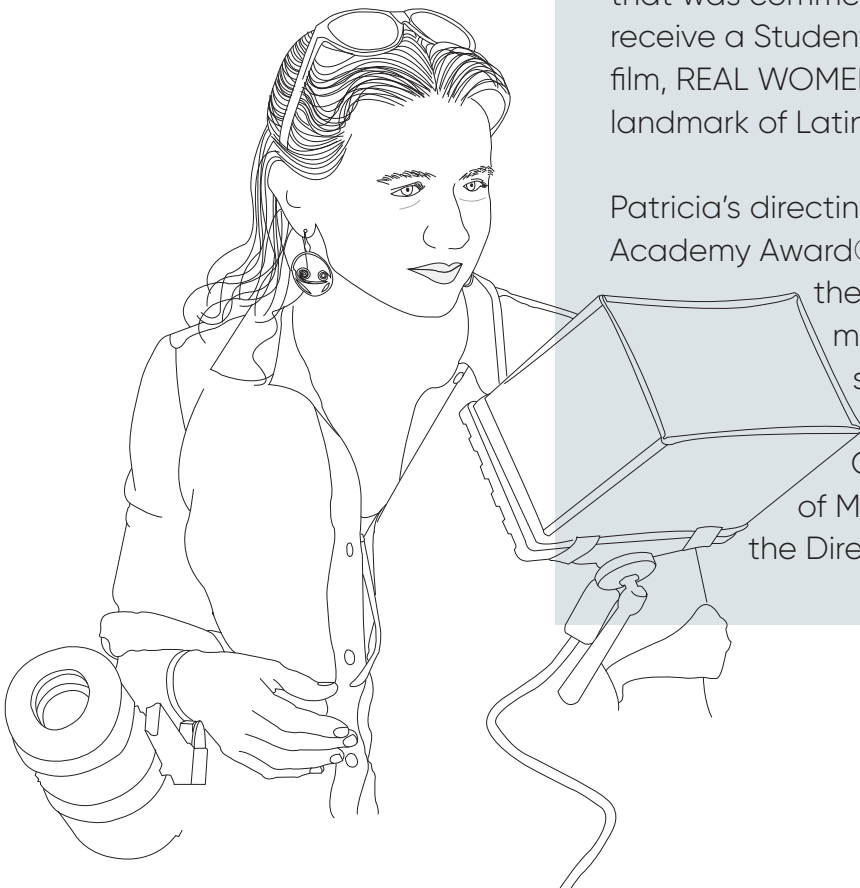
“I want to make films about the Latinx & Latin American communities. My goal is to tell truthful stories that portray characters with dimensionality and dignity while entertaining a broad audience.”



Patricia Cardoso is the first Latinx woman director to win a Sundance Audience Award, to direct a feature that was commercially successful in the U.S., and to receive a Student Academy Award®. Her first feature film, REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES, has become a landmark of Latinx cinema.

Patricia's directing credits include the Student Academy Award®-winning short THE WATER CARRIER, the feature TERESA'S JOURNEY, the TV movie LIES IN PLAIN SIGHT, the web series "Ro," and episodes of "Queen Sugar" and "Tales of the City." She is a member of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences and the Directors Guild of America.

 @PatCardosoFilm



Hanelle Culpepper



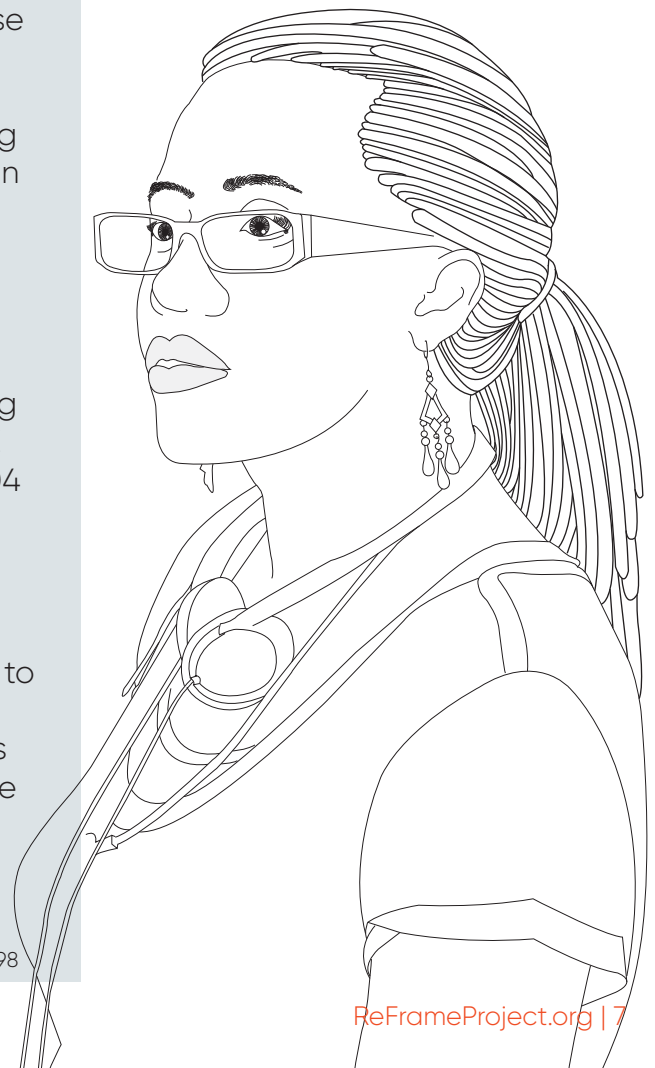
“The storyteller itch came early...movie outings motivated me to write coming-of-age adventure stories in homemade books, mount suspense thriller plays in front of sheets tacked to the doorway, or record horror radio soaps on cassette tapes. If my love of genre isn't obvious, then know my Dad called me the female Hitchcock.”

Hanelle Culpepper is an award-winning director whose credits range from superhero action adventures to thrillers to character-driven dramas. In 2019, she was chosen to direct the pilot for “Star Trek: Picard,” making her the first woman to launch a new “Star Trek” series in its 53-year history. Hanelle earned her B.A. from Lake Forest College and her M.A. from USC's Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism.

After working for Oscar-winning screenwriter/director Callie Khouri, Hanelle participated in the AFI's Directing Workshop for Women. Her DWW short A SINGLE ROSE screened at film festivals worldwide, including the 2004 Cannes Film Festival. Hanelle has helmed multiple independent thrillers, including MURDER ON THE 13TH FLOOR starring Tessa Thompson.

Participating in NBC Universal's Directing Initiative led to an episodic directing role for “Parenthood”, and to subsequent television work on “Counterpart,” “Mayans M.C.,” “Criminal Minds,” “Grimm,” “American Crime,” “The Flash,” “Gotham,” and recently, the upcoming AMC series “NOS4A2.” In 2015, Hanelle was nominated for an Image Award for Outstanding Directing for a Drama Series.

 @Hillview798




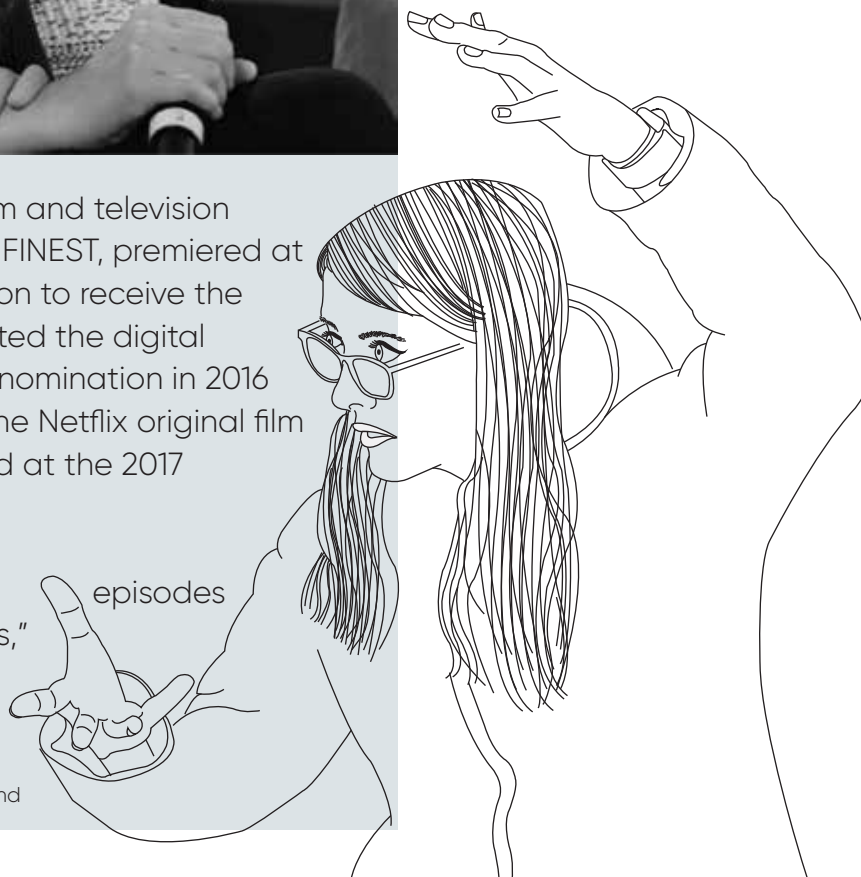
Sydney Freeland



Sydney Freeland is an Emmy-nominated film and television director. Her debut feature, DRUNKTOWN'S FINEST, premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival, and went on to receive the Jury Prize at Outfest Los Angeles. She directed the digital series "Her Story," which received an Emmy nomination in 2016 for Short Form Series. Her second feature, the Netflix original film DEIDRA AND LANEY ROB A TRAIN, premiered at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival.

Additionally, Sydney has directed television for "Grey's Anatomy," "Heathers," "Chambers," and "Station 19." Upcoming episodic work includes "Tales of the City," "Impulse," and "Fear the Walking Dead."

 @sydneyfreeland



"I was raised to believe that art was not just for entertainment purposes. Navajo chant-way are songs used to communicate with holy people when spiritual guidance is needed. In other tribes, individuals were trained from birth to be storytellers. I was taught art is what connects us to each other, and to something bigger than ourselves."

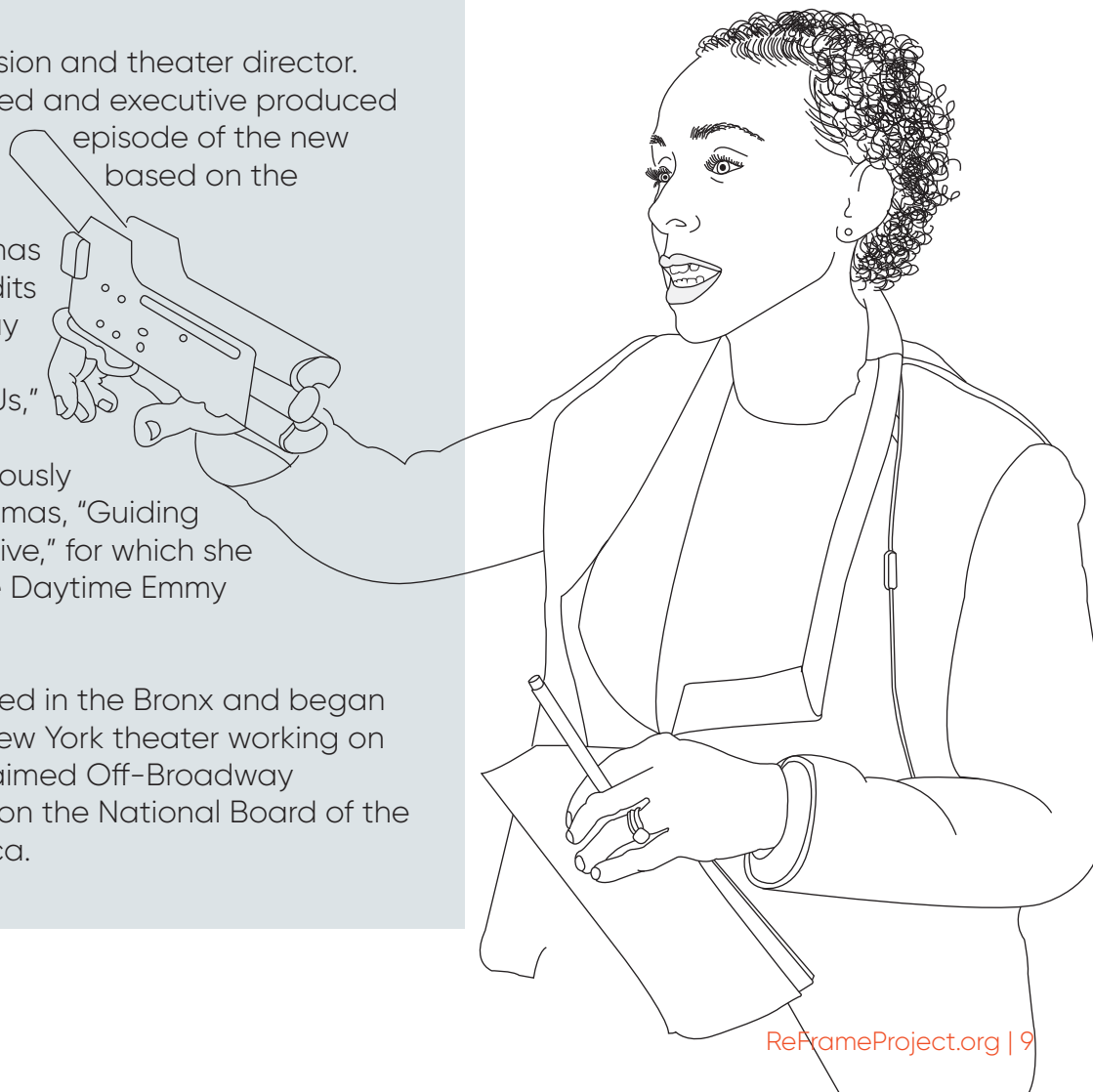
Zetna Fuentes



“ I have faced many challenges and roadblocks in my career beginning with growing up poor and brown in the Bronx...When I decided to pursue directing it was many years later when I dared to access the love I always had for movies and television and dared to dream of working in any job that would get me close to those worlds... I hope that I can contribute to changing the narrative in how people of color and women are represented on screen.”

Zetna Fuentes is a television and theater director. She most recently directed and executive produced the pilot and second episode of the new Netflix series, “Cursed” based on the illustrated novel by Frank Miller and Thomas Wheeler. Her recent credits include “The Deuce,” “Ray Donovan,” “The Chi,” “Jessica Jones,” “This is Us,” “Bosch,” “Snowfall,” and “Shameless.” Zetna previously directed on daytime dramas, “Guiding Light” and “One Life To Live,” for which she was nominated for three Daytime Emmy Awards.

Zetna was born and raised in the Bronx and began her directing career in New York theater working on numerous critically acclaimed Off-Broadway productions. She serves on the National Board of the Directors Guild of America.




Tina Mabry

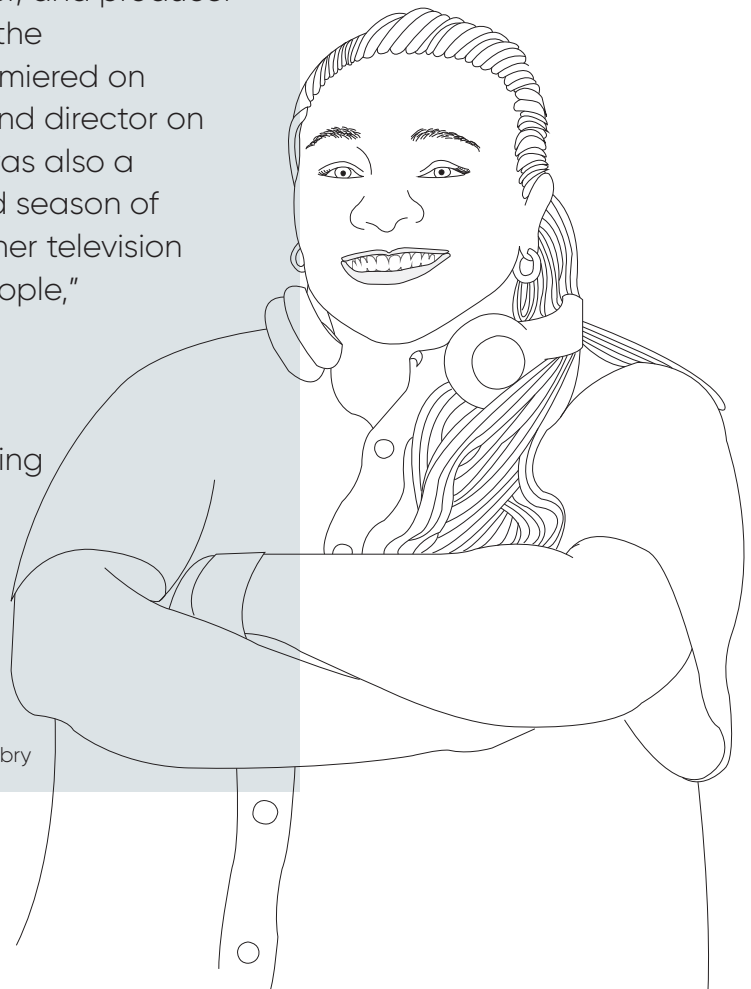
“As a director and writer, I have the ability to give an authentic voice to disenfranchised people by telling our stories, sharing our struggles, and representing ourselves within American media as fully developed and complicated characters.”



A true hyphenate, Tina Mabry is a writer, director, and producer for television and film. Tina wrote and directed the award-winning MISSISSIPPI DAMNED, which premiered on Showtime in 2011. Tina was a producer, writer, and director on the first season of OWN's "Queen Sugar." She was also a co-producer, writer, and director for the second season of USA's hit drama "Queen of the South." Tina's other television directing credits include "Pose," "Dear White People," "Insecure," "The Mayor," and "Power."

In 2017, Tina won a DGA Award for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Children's Programming for her work on Amazon Studios's MELODY 1963: LOVE HAS TO WIN. In 2019, she will be directing her first studio feature, THE SUPREMES AT EARL'S ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT, written by Gina Prince Bythewood.

 @TinaMabry




Meera Menon

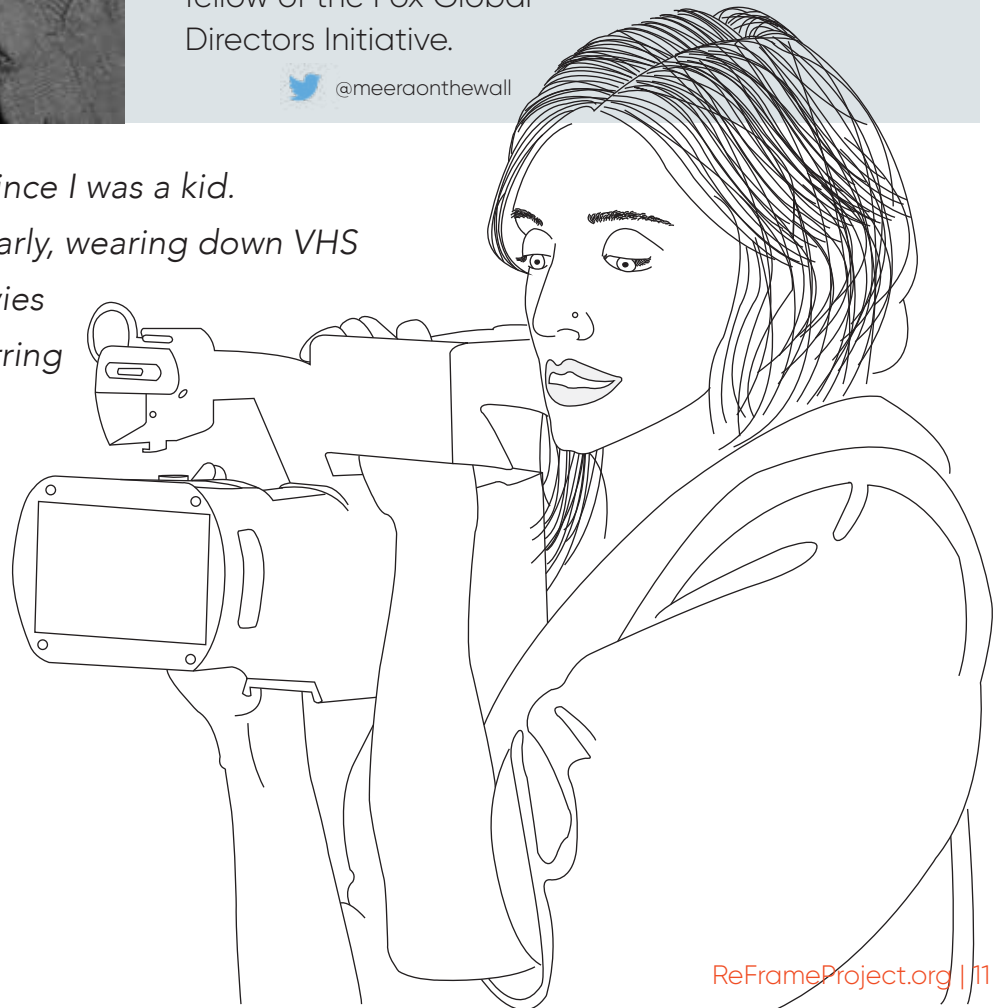


Meera Menon is a Jersey-born, LA-based filmmaker whose directing credits include the feature films EQUITY, which competed at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival, and FARAH GOES BANG, which screened at the 2013 Tribeca Film Festival and was awarded the Nora Ephron Prize. Meera has directed television shows on episodes of "Glow," "Halt and Catch Fire," "The Magicians," "Outlander," "The Terror," "Man in the High Castle," "The Walking Dead," "Fear the Walking Dead," "The Exorcist," "Titans," "Queen of the South," "Snowfall," and the new Apple show "For All Mankind." In 2016, she wrote and directed the short film PRESS CONFERENCE for Refinery29's ShatterBox Anthology, a series of shorts written and directed by women.

Meera is a graduate of Columbia University and USC's School of Cinematic Arts, and was a 2014 fellow of the Fox Global Directors Initiative.

 @meeraonthewall

"I've wanted to make movies since I was a kid. I was turned on to its magic early, wearing down VHS tapes of Cameron Crowe movies and pretty much anything starring Jim Carrey. I want to make commercially accessible films and shows that provide platforms for marginalized talent, and hope to straddle the worlds of artistic and commercial filmmaking."





**Founded by Women In Film and
Sundance Institute**

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