

51st CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

# INDUSTRY DAYS

OCTOBER 22-25



# "GO AHEAD. MAKE OUR DAY."

For all of us at TIAA-CREF, it makes our day to sponsor this year's Chicago International Film Festival. Over the last 10 decades—and long before movies had sound—we've been proud to be a part of Chicago's great history. It's a heritage we look forward to continuing as we look to another 100 years of helping people throughout Illinois and across the country prepare for their financial future.



But today, we're going to join you in watching all the great films the Festival has to offer.

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The Chicago International Film Festival has always wanted to present a dedicated Industry program. We are thrilled that it's finally happening this year, with a terrific roster of illuminating and thought-provoking discussions and distinguished professional guests from New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and beyond. The Festival has always had a strong international focus, and, with Industry Days, we look forward to bringing our foreign filmmakers together with the U.S. and Chicago filmmaking community and seeing what synergies develop. Who knows what will come of it? Hopefully, some fruitful collaborations, and maybe even a deal or two.



**Anthony Kaufman**  
*Industry Days Programmer*



Photos: Timothy M. Schmidt.

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**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22**

**7:00 PM INDUSTRY TRIBUTE: GIGI PRITZKER**

Location: **AMC River East 21** (322 E. Illinois Ave.)

*Open to the public, \$5 each. Free tickets available at box office for all badge-holders..*

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23**

**Tribune Tower** (435 N. Michigan Ave., Campbell Hall, Room 750)

*Requires Industry Days badge or Guest badge.*

**10:00 AM**

Overseas Connections: How to Gain Access to International Partners and Financiers (co-produced with IFP/Chicago)

**11:30 AM**

Crowdfunding and Crowdfunding: How to Raise Money and Prime Your Prospective Audience

**1:00 PM**

Making an Impact: How to Build Coalitions, Engage Communities, and Change the World Through Film

**AMC River East 21** (322 E. Illinois Ave.)

*Open to the public, \$5 each. Free tickets available at box office for all badge-holders.*

**1:00 PM**

State of the Art-house: A Conversation with Sony Pictures Classics' **Michael Barker**

**2:15 PM**

Is the Future of Indie Film in TV and on the Web?

**4:00 PM**

How to Build a Booming Chicago Film Industry (co-produced with Stage 18)

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24**

**Tribune Tower** (435 N. Michigan Ave., Campbell Hall, Room 750)

*Requires Industry Days badge or Guest badge.*

**10:00 AM**

How to Make a Great Movie for \$50,000 or Less

**1:00 PM**

How to Sell Your Film

**2:30 PM**

The Distribution Puzzle: Film Releasing Strategies from Theaters to VOD

**AMC River East 21** (322 E. Illinois Ave.)

*Open to the public, \$5 each. Free tickets available at box office for all badge-holders.*

**11:15 AM**

A Conversation with Writer-Producer-Directors **Steve Pink** and **Jeff Garlin**

**2:00 PM**

The Foreign-Language Film Crisis: Are Subtitled Movies Fading on U.S. Screens? (co-produced with IFP/Chicago)

**4:00 PM**

Power Players: How Women Producers & Financiers are Changing the Entertainment Business

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25**

**10:00 AM THE PITCH**

A curated selection of filmmakers with new narrative projects in active development will take part in a competitive pitch session. The winning pitch will receive an award of in-kind services from Avid, HP, Magnanimous Media, and Stage 18. (co-produced with IFP/Chicago)

Location: **JW Marriott Chicago** (151 W. Adams) *Requires Industry Days badge or Guest badge.*

## INDUSTRY DAYS

The Festival's new hub for filmmakers and industry professionals to connect, share ideas, and inspire each other, the Industry Days program examines current and future trends in the art and industry of the entertainment business. Topics covered include low-budget filmmaking, shifting financing and distribution paradigms, and strategies for selling, releasing, and promoting films in the marketplace. The four-day gathering also includes parties and a competitive Pitch session, co-produced by IFP Chicago.

Featured panelists this year include writer-director Steve Pink (*Grosse Pointe Blank*, *Hot Tub Time Machine*, *New Girl*); actor-producer-director Jeff Garlin (*Curb Your Enthusiasm*, *I Want Someone to Eat Cheese With*); Sony Pictures Classics co-president Michael Barker, distributor of hundreds of

Oscar-nominated films; Kickstarter co-founder Charles Adler; Chicago directors Stephen Cone and Kris Swanberg; Richard Lorber, distributor of films by such acclaimed directors as Steven Soderbergh, Jean-Luc Godard, Francois Truffaut, and John Woo; and Amy Hobby, producer of such films as *Secretary* and *What Happened, Miss Simone?* and co-founder of the female-driven production company Tangerine Entertainment.

Speakers from the following companies are also participating: IFC Films, Magnolia Pictures, The Orchard, Sundance Institute, MPI Media Group, Zeitgeist Films, Music Box Films, Kino/Lorber, The Film Collaborative, Film Buff, The Film Sales Company, Preferred Content, ITVS, Kartemquin Films, and the Chicago Media Project.

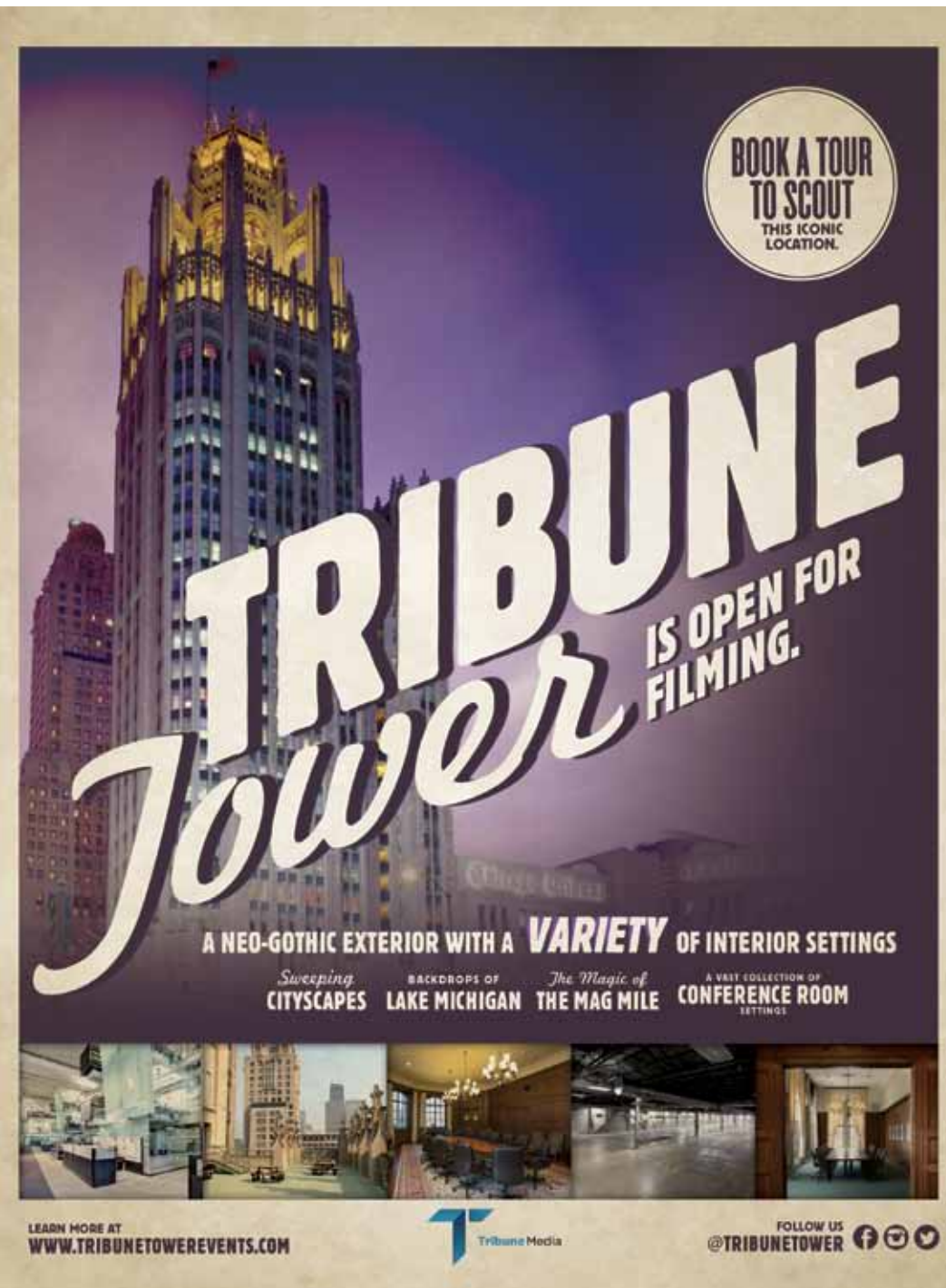


Michael Barker  
Jeff Garlin  
Steve Pink

## GIGI PRITZKER TRIBUTE



Producer of such noted films as the Academy Award®-nominated *Rabbit Hole*, Jon Stewart's *Rosewater*, and the Ryan Gosling thriller *Drive*, prolific film executive Gigi Pritzker is celebrated with an onstage conversation along with film clips highlighting her producing achievements.



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# INDUSTRY DAYS

All public events take place at the **AMC River East 21** (322 E Illinois St) and cost \$5 for non-registered Industry Days attendees. All other events take place at the **Tribune Tower** (435 N Michigan Ave), unless otherwise noted. For more information, to register, and other updates, please go to: [CHICAGOFILMFESTIVAL.COM/INDUSTRY-DAYS](http://CHICAGOFILMFESTIVAL.COM/INDUSTRY-DAYS)

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22

### Industry Tribute: Gigi Pritzker

Moderated by *Andrea Wishom*

7:00 PM-8:00 PM – AMC River East 21

Prolific film executive Gigi Pritzker, producer of such noted films as Jon Stewart's *Rosewater* and the Ryan Gosling thriller *Drive*, will be celebrated with an onstage conversation along with film clips from her producing achievements. *Followed by private VIP reception at The Crown at Tribune Tower. By invitation only.*

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23

### Overseas Connections: How to Gain Access to International Partners and Financiers

*Co-produced with IFP/Chicago*

10:00 AM-11:00 AM – Tribune Tower, Campbell Hall, Room 750

**Panelists:** Betsy Steinberg (moderator), Nicola Goelzhaeuser (MPI Media), Jennifer Reeder (filmmaker, *Blood Below the Skin*), Claudia Landsberger (BaseWorx For Film)

How can U.S.-based filmmakers connect with international producers to obtain foreign tax subsidies and overseas public funding? What are the practical hurdles and challenges of working with international partners, and how will changes in transatlantic free trade agreements affect this process?

### Crowdfunding and Crowdfunding: How to Raise Money and Prime Your Prospective Audience

11:30 AM-12:30 PM – Tribune Tower, Campbell Hall, Room 750

**Panelists:** Jack C. Newell (moderator, filmmaker, *Open Tables*), Charles Adler (Kickstarter), Rebecca Parrish (filmmaker, *Radical Grace*), Tim Horsburgh (Kartemquin Films), Eric S. Smith (filmmaker, *We Are Sarah Jones*)

Crowdfunding is an increasingly viable way to finance projects as well as a valuable tool in gathering potential audiences. But it also requires diligent, around-the-clock work and full-blown strategizing. Experts weigh in on what works and what doesn't.

### Making an Impact: How to Build Coalitions, Engage Communities, and Change the World Through Film

1:00 PM-2:00 PM – Tribune Tower, Campbell Hall, Room 750

**Panelists:** Ines Sommer (moderator, *Beneath the Blindfold*), Paula Froehle (Chicago Media Project), Beckie Stocchetti (Kartemquin Films), Naomi Walker (ITVS)

Can films change the world? These panelists believe they can. How can filmmakers create successful campaigns around their films to make an impact on society and ensure that audiences aren't just passive viewers but engaged citizens?



*Radical Grace*

### State of the Art-house: A Conversation with Sony Pictures Classics' Michael Barker

1:00 PM-2:00 PM – AMC River East 21

As Co-President and Co-Founder of Sony Pictures Classics, Michael Barker (with Tom Bernard) has distributed (and often produced) some of the finest independent movies over the past 30 years. Over the span of his career, Barker's films have received 158 Academy Award® nominations including several for Best Picture. Join us for this illuminating one-on-one conversation about the current state of non-Hollywood movies with a venerable expert.



*Son of Saul*, Sony Pictures Classics

### Is the Future of Indie Film in TV and on the Web?

2:15 PM-3:15 PM – AMC River East 21

**Panelists:** Mike McNamara (moderator, Midwest Independent Film Festival), Matt Abramson (Cap Gun Collective), Sam Bailey (*You're So Talented*), Wendy Jo Carlton (*Easy Abby*)

As more filmmakers turn to producing content for television and online, this panel addresses the career and creative opportunities provided by new media outlets, and the implications and consequences of this trend on the traditional filmmaking landscape.

### How to Build a Booming Chicago Film Industry

*Co-produced with Stage 18*

4:00 PM-5:00 PM – AMC River East 21

**Panelists:** Angie Gaffney (moderator, Stage 18), Alex Pissios (Cinespace Chicago Film Studios), Christine Dudley (Director, Illinois Film Office), Bruce Sheridan (Chair, Cinema Art & Science, Columbia College), Christina Varotsis (producer)

Film and TV production in Chicago has tripled over the last five years. To continue this growth, what can the city, the state, and its local industry do to keep the business flourishing? This panel gathers together leading forces in the City's entertainment sector to discuss how to sustain a thriving production ecosystem in Chicago.

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24

### How to Make a Great Movie for \$50,000 or Less

10:00 AM-11:00 AM – Tribune Tower, Campbell Hall, Room 750

**Panelists:** Ray Pride (moderator), Stephen Cone (filmmaker, *Henry Gamble's Birthday Party*), Michael J. Larnell (filmmaker, *Cronies*), Kris Swanberg (filmmaker, *Unexpected*)

Producing a film doesn't have to be an expensive, multi-million-dollar project. Three independent filmmakers talk about their experiences creating successful films without breaking the bank.



*Henry Gamble's Birthday Party*

### A Conversation with Producer-Writer-Directors Steve Pink and Jeff Garlin

Moderated by *Seth Abramovitch*

11:15 AM-12:15 PM – AMC River East 21

Producer-director-writer Steve Pink (*Hot Tub Time Machine*, *High Fidelity*, *New Girl*) and actor-producer-writer Jeff Garlin (*Wall-E*, *Curb Your Enthusiasm*) have served in a variety of impressive roles both on-screen and behind-the-scenes. In this conversation, they discuss navigating the differences between Hollywood and independent film, film and TV, and how to be successful wearing multiple hats—often at the same time.

## How to Sell Your Film

1:00 PM-2:00 PM – Tribune Tower, Campbell Hall, Room 750

**Panelists:** Laurel Ward (moderator), Marc Bortz (Preferred Content), Lucas Verga (The Film Sales Company), Ryan Werner (Cinetic Media)

You've made your film—now what? To get your project into the hands of buyers, it helps to have advocates and legal representatives to navigate the wilds of the business and strategize both its launch and publicity. How do such “reps” work and what can they do for you—and at what expense?

## The Foreign Language Film Crisis: Are Subtitled Movies Fading on U.S. Screens?

2:00 PM-3:00 PM – AMC River East 21

**Panelists:** Scott Tobias (film critic), Richard Lorber (Kino/Lorber), Ed Arentz (Music Box Films), Nancy Gerstman (Zeitgeist Films), Milos Stehlik (Facets)

The U.S. box office for foreign-language films has declined precipitously in the last several years. And with cable and VOD outlets not particularly hospitable to subtitled movies either, where is the next Bergman, Godard, or Almodóvar to go? This panel examines the current state of foreign films on U.S. screens.

## The Distribution Puzzle: Film Releasing Strategies from Theaters to VOD

Co-produced with IFP/Chicago

2:30 PM-3:30 PM – Tribune Tower, Campbell Hall, Room 750

**Panelists:** Nicole Bernardi-Reis (moderator, IFP/Chicago), Jake Hanly (Film Buff), Bryan Glick (The Film Collaborative), Dan Truong (The Orchard), John Von Thaden (Magnolia Pictures)

You've made your film—now what? Releasing movies into the world has become an increasingly complex endeavor, with more distribution platforms and alternatives than ever. How do filmmakers navigate this thorny arena, and what options are best for what kinds of projects?

## Power Players: How Women Producers & Executives are Changing the Entertainment Business

4:00 PM-5:00 PM – AMC River East 21

**Panelists:** Ilyse McKimmie (moderator, Sundance Institute), Amy Hobby (Tangerine Entertainment), Alicia Sams (producer, *Amreeka*), Rebecca Green (producer, *It Follows*)

Though women are under-represented in the entertainment industry, a number of prominent female producers and executives are successfully leveling the scales. This panel will focus on the ways that women are influencing all areas of the business, from indie films to TV to Hollywood.

## Industry Days “Meet the Distributors” Cocktail Party

6:00 PM-7:00 PM – Loews Hotel (455 N. Park Dr.)



*Mountains May Depart*, Kino/Lorber



*Entertainment*, Magnolia Pictures



*It Follows*

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24

### THE PITCH

A curated selection of filmmakers with new narrative projects in active development will take part in a competitive pitch session. The winning pitch will receive an award of in-kind services worth over \$20,000 from such companies as Magnanimous Media, AVID, Hewlett-Packard and Stage 18. (co-produced with IFP/Chicago)

10:00 AM-2:00 PM

JW Marriott Chicago (151 W. Adams)

**Pitch Judges:** Amy Hobby (producer), Aijah Keith (IFC Films), Steve Pink (producer),  
**Pitch Moderator:** Claudia Landsberger

### PITCH PROJECTS

#### AS WITH KNIVES AND SKIN

Director: Jennifer Reeder  
Producer: Steven Hudosh

Sophomore year of high school turns less typical when a series of unexpected traumas accelerates the coming-of-age process. This Southern gothic drama presents girlhood as a revolution.

Contact: **Jennifer Reeder**  
thejenniferreeder@gmail.com

#### GHOSTAPHOBIA

Director: Collin Schiffl  
Producer: Ben Atkinson

Suffering from severe anxiety, a man decides to never leave his home again even though the ghosts haunting his house want him out.

Contact: **Collin Schiffl**  
collin.schiffl@gmail.com

#### SIGNATURE MOVE

Director: Fawzia Mirza  
Producer: Eugene Park

A 30-something lesbian flounders in life, love and wrestling, trying to reconcile who she is with the values of her religious, TV-obsessed mother.

Contact: **Brian Hieggelke**  
brian@newcity.com

#### CARNEY KILL

Director: John McNaughton  
Producer: Steven A. Jones

With its surreal carnival setting and deliriously crooked cast of spieles, luck-boys, and dancing girls with indecent hips and sub-zero hearts, *Carney Kill* is classic film noir at its most devious and pungent. Based on the classic pulp noir novel by Robert Edmond Alter.

Contact: **Steven A. Jones**  
stevenajones@sbcglobal.net

#### ORIOLE PARK

Director: Kevin Slack  
Producer: Amelia Dellos, Eric Anderson

1978. Chicago. After the death of her mother, a teen struggles to find her place in a neighborhood living in the shadow of John Wayne Gacy.

Contact: **Amelia Dellos**  
cornbredfilms@gmail.com

#### TILL

Producer: Brett Hays

The compelling story of the brutal lynching of 14-year old Emmett Till and the courageous actions of his mother that galvanized the historic civil rights movement in America.

Contact: **Brett Hays**  
brett@shatterglassfilms.com

## INDUSTRY DAYS SPEAKER BIOS

### SETH ABRAMOVITCH

Seth Abramovitch is an award-winning senior writer at *The Hollywood Reporter*, where his reporting runs the gamut from celebrity profiles to true crime and everything in between. He has previously written for *New York*, *The Atlantic*, *Movieline* and other publications.

### MATT ABRAMSON

Matt Abramson helped start Cap Gun Collective in 2009. Cap Gun is a commercial production company that also has a focus on developing and producing original content for TV as well as the Internet, including *Teachers* web series which has since been ordered to series by TV Land and will start airing in January.

### CHARLES ADLER

Charles Adler is a Kickstarter co-founder, designer, and lifelong nomad. Born in the U.K., raised in the U.S., living life exploring the world.

### SAM BAILEY

Sam Bailey is a writer, actor, director, and the creator of the web series *You're So Talented*.

### MICHAEL BARKER

As Co-President and Co-Founder of Sony Pictures Classics, Michael Barker (with Tom Bernard), has distributed (and quite often produced) some of the finest independent movies over the past 30 years. Over the span of his career, Barker's films have received 158 Academy Award® nominations including several for Best Picture: *Whiplash*; *Amour*; *An Education*; *Capote*; *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, recognized as the highest grossing foreign film of all time in North America; and *Howards End*. Upcoming releases include *Labyrinth Of Lies*, *Truth*, *I Saw The Light*, *Dark Horse*, and *Son of Saul*.

## NICOLE BERNARDI-REIS

Nicole Bernardi-Reis is a documentary producer whose work has aired on a wide range of broadcast outlets. Her most recent project is Rebecca Parrish's *Radical Grace*, a feature length documentary about feisty feminist nuns who take on the Vatican, that RogerEbert.com wrote "easily ranks among the year's best films." A long-time board member of IFC Chicago, Nicole is committed to providing resources for independent filmmakers that strengthen artistic vision, hone business skills and develop relationships with industry decision-makers.

## MARC BORTZ

Marc Bortz is the Director of Fiction Content at Preferred Content, where he packages and produces narrative features to be sold at leading domestic film festivals such as Sundance, SXSW, Tribeca, and Toronto.

## WENDY JO CARLTON

Wendy Jo Carlton is the writer/director of the LGBT comedy web series *Easy Abby*, which has 30 million views for Season 1. She has directed two features, *Jamie & Jessie are Not Together* and *Hannah Free*, and is working on Season 2 of *Easy Abby* while prepping her third feature, the teen drama *Last of the Lovers*.

## STEPHEN CONE

Stephen Cone's features include *The Wise Kids* (New York Times Critics' Pick), *Black Box*, and *Henry Gamble's Birthday Party*. He is also a Lecturer in the Department of Radio, Television + Film at Northwestern University and a very occasional actor.

## PAULA FROEHL

In addition to being a filmmaker and educator, Paula Froehle is Co-Founder of Chicago Media Project, a member-based philanthropic organization focused on supporting social impact documentary media.

## ANGIE GAFFNEY

Angie is a passionate content producer and business manager, working with creatives to foster locally-produced, high-quality content. In addition to being the Executive Director of Stage 18, Angie produces original narrative content with her company Black Apple Media.

## JEFF GARLIN

A writer, producer, director, actor, and standup comedian, Jeff Garlin is perhaps best known for his role as Larry David's manager in HBO's critically acclaimed comedy *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, which he also executive produces. With an extensive acting resume that includes Disney-Pixar's *WALL•E* and *Toy Story 3*, Garlin can currently be seen as the cantankerous, and often pants-less, family patriarch Murray Goldberg in season 3 of ABC's hit '80s comedy, *The Goldbergs*.

## BRYAN GLICK

Bryan Glick is the Director of Acquisitions and Theatrical Distribution for The Film Collaborative. Recent titles include the Sundance Award-winning *(7) error*, the Tribeca Award-winning *Manos Sucias*, and the SXSW doc *Tab Hunter Confidential*.

## NICOLA GOELZHAUSER

Nicola Goelzhauser oversees international and digital sales and business development for MPI Media Group and its genre label Dark Sky Films.

## JAKE HANLY

Jake Hanly is a content acquisitions manager at FilmBuff, the award-winning distribution and worldwide sales company behind *Senna*, *Exit Through the Gift Shop*, and *The Internet's Own Boy*.

## TIM HORSBURGH

Tim Horsburgh is Kartemquin's Director of Communications and Distribution, overseeing all marketing, public relations and social media, and working with filmmakers on festivals and theatrical, broadcast and digital releases. He is also responsible for assessing potential new Kartemquin projects. He has led multiple crowdfunding campaigns, including the acclaimed Indiegogo for *Life Itself*.

## AIJAH KEITH

Keith is the Acquisitions Coordinator at IFC Films, aiding in securing over 120 titles for the company's three film labels: IFC Films, Sundance Selects, and IFC Midnight.

## CLAUDIA LANDSBERGER

Claudia Landsberger, senior partner at BaseWorx For Film, has been working many years in the film and media industry in the fields of international marketing and promotion, script and project development and festival programming. She was managing director of Holland Film/EYE International and co-founder and president of European Film Promotion. Landsberger served for 12 years as a member of the selection committee for the Competition Program of the Berlin International Film Festival. She is a member of the European Film Academy and a delegate to the selection committee of Venice Days.

## MICHAEL J. LARNELL

Michael J. Larnell is a recent graduate from New York University's graduate film program where he created his first feature film, *Cronies*, as his thesis film.

## RICHARD LORBER

Richard Lorber is the President and CEO of Kino Lorber Inc., the 30-year-old leader in the release of acclaimed world cinema, award-winning American independent films, and classics. Upcoming films include *Mountains May Depart*, *Arabian Nights*, and Locarno award-winner *Tikkun*, among other films Kino Lorber posits as "classics of tomorrow." The Company has a distinguished record with five Oscar-nominated films in the last 7 years, including *5 Broken Cameras*. Mr. Lorber was also the co-founder and head of Fox Lorber, the Co-Chairman of WinStar—the first company to release on DVD in the U.S. the near complete works of Francois Truffaut, Eric Rohmer, and Jean Luc Godard—and the President of Koch Lorber Films and Lorber Films.

## MIKE MCNAMARA

Mike is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Midwest Independent Film Festival, a Chicago actor, and a Senior Contributor for *SCREEN Magazine*.

## ILYSE MCKIMMIE

For the past 16 years, Ilyse McKimmie has served as a key staff member of the Sundance Institute's Feature Film Program. As Labs Director, she oversees the Screenwriters and Directors Labs, works closely with the Creative Producing Initiative and Episodic Story Lab, and provides year-round creative and tactical support to program alumni.

## JACK C. NEWELL

Jack C. Newell is a filmmaker, artist, and educator. He has used crowdfunding platforms to produce his documentary *How to Build a School in Haiti* and a public art project *The Wabash Lights*. He is the Program Head of the TV, Film & Digital program at The Second City Training Center.

## REBECCA PARRISH

Rebecca Parrish is a Chicago-based documentary director, DP, and editor. Her directorial debut, *Radical Grace*, is lighting up the festival circuit having received

audience awards at Hot Docs and AFI Docs and a "year's best films" review from RogerEbert.com.

## STEVE PINK

Steve Pink is a writer-director-producer who co-wrote and produced the feature films *High Fidelity* and *Grosse Pointe Blank*, among many others. He's directed several films, including the *Hot Tub Time Machine* movies and a remake of *About Last Night*. He's also directed numerous episodes of television and served as Co-Executive Producer on the television series *Entourage*. Most recently, he directed the pilot of *The Detour*, starring Jason Jones for TBS, and *Hot and Bothered*, starring Eva Longoria for NBC. Both were picked up to series for broadcast this year.

## ALEX PISSIOS

Alexander Pissios is the Founder/CEO of Cinespace Chicago Film Studios. The 1.45 million sq. ft. facility opened for business in May 2011. Alex was born and raised in Chicago.

## RAY PRIDE

Ray Pride is film critic of *Newcity*, news editor of *MovieCityNews.com* and a contributing editor of *Filmmaker* magazine. His photos and other work are at <http://www.raypri.de>.

## GIGI PRITZKER

Gigi Pritzker is a film and stage producer. As CEO of film production and financing company OddLot Entertainment (OLE), Pritzker produced Academy Award-nominated *Rabbit Hole*, starring Nicole Kidman, as well as *The Way, Way Back* and Jon Stewart's directorial debut, *Rosewater*. Pritzker has expanded OLE's footprint in the global motion picture business to create the foreign sales company Sierra/Affinity and is part of a consortium that recently launched the next generation film studio STX.

## JENNIFER REEDER

Jennifer Reeder constructs personal films about relationships, trauma, and coping. Her award-winning narratives are innovative and borrow from a range of forms including after school specials, amateur music videos, and magical realism. These films have shown consistently around the world, including the Sundance Film Festival, the Berlin International Film Festival, the Venice Biennale and the Whitney Biennial.

## ALICIA SAMS

Alicia Sams is a producer and production manager, known for *Amreeka* (2009), *Chocolat* (2000) and *By the People: The Election of Barack Obama* (2009).

## ERIC S. SMITH

Eric S. Smith is the Director and Producer of *We Are Sarah Jones*. Over the course of his career, Smith has worked on narrative, documentary, and reality from high budget projects to low for dozens of studios, networks, and production companies. Director and Director of Photography for TNT's *Boston's Finest*. Smith is a member of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, the Producers Guild of America, and the Society of Camera Operators.

## INES SOMMER

Ines Sommer is a filmmaker, film programmer, and educator, whose work ranges from documentaries to experimental and genre-crossing projects. Ines is the Associate Director of the new MFA in Documentary Media program at Northwestern University and the co-founding Executive Director of Percolator Films, a non-profit organization that has produced film events, series, and festivals with an emphasis on community engagement.

## BETSY STEINBERG

As managing director of the Illinois Film Office from 2007-2015, Betsy Steinberg oversaw unprecedented growth in Illinois' film industry. Steinberg also served as vice president, development for Towers Productions where she created documentary television treatments and marketed co-production partnerships. She has produced, directed and written numerous documentaries and issue advocacy commercials.

## BECKIE STOCCHETTI

Beckie Stocchetti is the Director of Engagement + Programs at Kartemquin Films, where she is responsible for overseeing and building successful strategies for providing producers with critical advice and support around audience engagement, social impact, and fundraising throughout the production and distribution process. She also manages Kartemquin's community partnerships, outreach initiatives, and educational programs.

## KRIS SWANBERG

Kris Swanberg began her film career studying documentary film production at Southern Illinois University, but went on to focus on narrative film with naturalistic techniques and often working with non-actors. *Unexpected*, starring Cobie Smulders and Anders Holm, premiered in competition at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival and is Swanberg's third feature, after *It Was Great, But I Was Ready to Come Home* (2009) and *Empire Builder* (2012).

## CHRISTINA VAROTSIS

Based in Chicago, Christina Varotsis has produced a wide variety of independent projects, music videos, and commercials, in the U.S. as well as abroad. Credits include *Lost River*, *A Very Harold & Kumar Christmas*, *Sirens*, *Shameless*, *Imperfections*, and *Division 19*.

## JOHN VON THADEN

John Von Thaden joined Magnolia Pictures/Magnet Releasing in 2011 and currently serves as the VP of Acquisitions.

## SCOTT TOBIAS

Scott Tobias is a Chicago-based film critic and editor. For 14 years, he was on staff at The A.V. Club, serving as the assigning editor for the film and DVD sections. From there, he was part of the founding staff of the film site The Dissolve, where he was editor and chief critic. He's currently a freelance writer for *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Variety*, *Village Voice*, *Rolling Stone*, *GQ*, *NPR*, and several other publications.

## NAOMI WALKER

Naomi Walker has been with ITVS since 2006 as National Engagement Consultant. She coordinates the Community Cinema program in Chicago, partnering with organizations to host monthly screenings of documentaries followed by discussions, resource sharing, workshops and performances. Naomi was recently Outreach Director for Good Pitch Chicago and taught Engagement Strategies for Documentary at Columbia College.

## LAUREL WARD

Laurel Ward is an accomplished film producer and creative talent who has compiled an impressive list of credits in her nearly 20 years of filmmaking. She served as Associate Producer on *The Ice Harvest* and *Analyze That* and co-producer on *Year One*, among others.

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