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**FILM INDEPENDENT TO HONOR ANDREW AHN, AARON T. EDMONDS AND JOMO FRAY
WITH CHANGEMAKER AWARDS**

**Awards to Be Presented at the 22nd Annual Artist Development Showcase
Featuring Eight Film Independent Fellow-Produced Shorts**

LOS ANGELES (July 10, 2025) – Film Independent, the nonprofit arts organization that produces the Spirit Awards, announced today the recipients of the third annual Changemaker Awards, presented to three outstanding Film Independent Fellows: Andrew Ahn (Project Involve 2012, Screenwriting Lab 2013, Directing Lab 2014); Aaron T. Edmonds (Project Involve 2017, Grant Recipient 2017); and Jomo Fray (Project Involve 2017, Grant Recipient 2017, Grant Recipient 2019). The Changemaker Awards will be awarded at the 2025 Artist Development Showcase, an evening of curated short films made by alumni of Film Independent’s Artist Development programs, on July 23, 2025 at the Director’s Guild of America Theater.

The Changemaker Awards, first awarded in 2023 to celebrate Film Independent Artist Development’s 30th anniversary, exemplify Film Independent Artist Development’s mission to champion independent voices and create impactful, positive change by highlighting the extraordinary work of Film Independent program alumni, whose body of work and commitment to giving back have made wide-reaching impact on the industry and in their communities. Previous Changemaker awardees include Academy Award nominees Smriti Mundhra and Pamela Ribon, Film Independent Spirit Award nominee Tze Chun, Peabody Award winner Grace Lee, SXSW Audience Award winner Linda Yvette Chávez and Sundance Director of Programming Kim Yutani.

“We are excited to acknowledge past Artist Development Fellows whose expressive visual storytelling impacts our global society and their commitment to mentorship embodies the kind of filmmakers we love to champion,” said Francisco Velasquez, Associate Director of Project Involve. “Andrew Ahn, Aaron T.

Edmonds and Jomo Fray personify the spirit of the Changemaker Award and we are thrilled to spotlight their accomplishments."

Andrew Ahn is a queer Korean American filmmaker based in Los Angeles. His film *The Wedding Banquet* premiered at the 2025 Sundance Film Festival and was released theatrically by Bleecker Street and Universal International. His films *Fire Island*, *Driveways* and *Spa Night* have premiered at festivals like Sundance and Berlinale and have won numerous awards including the Gotham Ensemble Tribute and the John Cassavetes Film Independent Spirit Award. Ahn has directed fiction and documentary television including *Bridgerton* and *Generation*. He has served as a mentor for Pacific Arts Movement's Reel Voices, Outfest's OutSet and the Sundance Institute's Native Filmmaker Lab.

Aaron Edmonds is Vice President of Film at Hartbeat. Prior to Hartbeat, Edmonds was a senior film executive at Lionsgate and held positions at Columbia Pictures and HBO. In 2017, Edmonds was selected as a Film Independent Project Involve Executive Track Fellow. He is currently an advisor for Film Independent's Project Involve Program. Edmonds holds a bachelor's degree from Columbia University in Political Science and Comparative Ethnic Studies and a master's degree from UCLA's Producers Program. He is currently a lecturer in the Producers Program at UCLA's School of Theater, Film and Television.

Jomo Fray is a cinematographer whose work is focused on crafting images from a place of radical empathy—films that strive to have the viewer not only see the story but feel it as well. Some recent honors include a 2025 Independent Spirit Award as well as a 2024 Spirit Award nomination. He was also featured as one of the 2018 25 New Faces of Independent Film by Filmmaker Magazine and won the 2025 American Cinematographer Spotlight Award. Feature film work includes *Selah and the Spades* (Sundance 2019), *Port Authority* (Cannes 2019), *No Future* (Tribeca 2020), *Runner* (TIFF 2022), *All Dirt Roads Taste of Salt* (Sundance 2023) and *The Young Wife* (SXSW 2023). His most recent film, *Nickel Boys*, directed by RaMell Ross, was nominated for multiple Oscars including Best Picture and garnered multiple critics awards for its cinematography.

The Artist Development Showcase is held every summer to spotlight a selection of talented work our Film Independent Artist Development Fellows continue to create. The films screening at this year's showcase, as well as the Film Independent Fellows attached, include:

Angels

Producer, Fabiola Andrade (Project Involve 2024)

A farmer caring for her dying mother has her prayers answered from above.

Beezing

Director, Tiffany Lin (Project Involve 2024, Grant Recipient 2023)

A hot summer night, the 10 freeway, and a tube of lip balm. Based on a true story.

Before You

Producer, Helena Sardinha (Fast Track 2024)

Looking back on her first pregnancy, a woman navigates the echoes of a life-changing loss.

Food for the Chosen People

Co-Director, Varun Chopra (Screenwriting Lab 2021, Grant Recipient 2021)

Three LA friends battle for a table at legendary Chinese restaurant Yang Chow to continue the Jewish

Christmas Day tradition. Food for the Chosen People captures all of the chaos and joy that come with a uniquely American ritual.

Interdimensional Pizza Portal

Writer/Director/Producer, Aron Kantor (Screenwriting Lab 2025)

When Grover summons a slice of pizza through an interdimensional portal, his best friend Aliee's concerns about the unintended consequences of his actions lead them both down a dark path.

Play Hard

Writer/Director, Winter Dunn (Project Involve 2021, Episodic Directing Intensive 2022); Producer, Xin Li (Project Involve 2021); Producer, Takara Joseph (Project Involve 2020); Cinematographer, Mike Maliwanag (Project Involve 2021)

Nate, a workaholic drummer, spends all his time practicing, always striving for perfection. After he meets Yazmine, a like-minded, dedicated modern dancer, he realizes that the key to success isn't just to work hard – sometimes it requires you to play hard.

Quaker

Cinematographer, Vittoria Campaner (Project Involve 2020)

During their last Quaker meeting of the year, Brooklyn high school seniors share their unfiltered feelings with each other.

Single Residence Occupancy

Director, Omer Ben Shachar (Project Involve 2023, Grant Recipient 2023 and Screenwriting Lab 2024); Writer, Belinda Tang (Project Involve 2023); Producer, Yuky Shen (Project Involve 2023); Cinematographer, Wenting Fisher (Project Involve 2023); Creative Executive, Jasmine Rivas (Project Involve 2023); Editor, Luodawei Xiao (Project Involve 2023)

A Chinese immigrant living in a Single Residence Occupancy apartment receives news that her family's application for better housing is denied, and grapples with how to share the news with her children.

ABOUT FILM INDEPENDENT

For over 40 years, Film Independent has helped filmmakers get their projects made and seen. The nonprofit organization's core mission is to champion creative independence in visual storytelling in all its forms and foster a culture of inclusion, in support of a global community of artists and audiences who embody diversity, innovation, curiosity and uniqueness of vision.

In addition to producing the [Film Independent Spirit Awards](#), the organization supports creative professionals with [Artist Development](#) programs, grants and labs. Signature mentorship program [Project Involve](#) fosters the careers of talented filmmakers from underrepresented communities. Weekly Education events and workshops equip filmmakers of all ages and experience levels with tools and resources. International programs provide cultural exchanges and career-building opportunities for film professionals around the world. And year-round screening series [Film Independent Presents](#) offers a robust program of unique cinematic experiences, including screenings, conversations, Live Reads and Bring the Noise musical events.

For more information or to become a Member, visit filmindependent.org.

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