

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**WIFTV Banff World Media Festival Mentorship Recipient Announced**

Vancouver, BC (May 17, 2017) – Women in Film & Television Vancouver (WIFTV), is pleased to announce the recipient of the WIFTV BANFF WORLD MEDIA FESTIVAL MENTORSHIP. The jury this year selected Heather Hatch, who is set to be mentored by Cynde Harmon, Producer and CEO for “Really Real Films Inc.” (*Stranger In The House, If I Had Wings*).

This mentorship offers Heather the invaluable opportunity to attend the Banff World Media Festival, June 11-14, 2017 at the Fairmont Banff Springs. Prior to the festival, she will have a chance to consult with her mentor, as well as meet with a member of the WIFTV team before and during the festival.

The WIFTV Mentorship jury was comprised of screenwriter and owner of StoryMaker Entertainment and WIFTV Board member, Pamela Jones; writer and producer at Rave Film Inc. and Project Consultant for the From Our Dark Side Screenplay Competition, Peggy Thompson; and Director at Rezolution Pictures and WIFTV Board member, Shannon Kaplun.

When asked about their decision to choose Heather for the Banff Mentorship the jury said, “We were impressed with the 17 creative projects, but in the end, we all felt that Heather Hatch stood out with her stop-motion and live action series, *‘The Girl Who Talks to the Moon’*. Her pitch kit was well laid-out with compelling graphic images, and the vision and tone of the series was very clear. Heather has a strong team behind her and support from others in the industry to get this series made. She was honest in her need for a pitching mentorship, as she has not pitched in a situation like Banff before, and we feel that she would greatly benefit from the experience. Heather’s short film *‘JAAT SDIIHLYL’LXA The Woman Who Returns’* was well-received at our Women in Film Festival this year and we look forward to seeing many more projects from this innovative storyteller. Thank you to all who entered, and all the best with your projects. Congratulations Heather!”

Heather Hatch was chosen for her project *‘The Girl Who Talks to the Moon’* — the story of a young Haida girl named Harmony who learns about Canada while sharing her language. Heather has a passion for sharing female and Indigenous stories that create positive representations in the media. The first short documentary that she directed was for CBC Short Digital Docs called, *‘JAAT SDIIHLYL’LXA Woman Who Returns’*, a story she shared to connect to community, identity and the search of returning that is close to many.

“I became interested in the film industry because I primarily enjoyed writing; however, I realized that I write very visually and seeing what I envisioned on screen was all it took to bring my passion for filming to life. I have actively sought out mentors and engaged in many projects to turn my ideas into film realities,” said Heather. “The WIFTV [opportunity] is wonderful, they brought women and resources together. I am very honoured and excited to go to the Banff World Media Festival through their mentorship.”

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**About the Banff World Media Festival**

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Banff World Media Festival is the world's largest and most important gathering of entertainment industry and digital media executives dedicated to media content development, production, broadcast and distribution within TV and digital media. BANFF provides a platform for the evolving media industry to develop its creative and business objectives – it serves as the leading destination for co-production and co-venture partners and is an unparalleled marketplace for over 2,000 international decision-makers to connect with new partners, learn from industry leaders and execute new business deals. The 38th annual BANFF World Media Festival will take place June 11-14, 2017 at the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel in Banff, Canada.

**About WIFTV**

Women in Film & Television Vancouver (WIFTV) is an internationally affiliated non-profit society committed to advancing and celebrating women in screen-based media. We are the Vancouver chapter of Women In Film + Television International (WIFTI), which counts more than 10,000 members worldwide.

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