



## Women in Film Celebrates Spotlight Awards 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Tuesday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00pm; Roundhouse Community Centre

### Winner's Announced for the 2019 Spotlight Awards

Women in Film and Television Vancouver (WIFTV) is thrilled to be celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Spotlight Awards Gala. To mark this milestone in honouring recipients for their outstanding work and contributions to advancing women in the industry, there will be 2 recipients of the **Artistic Achievement Award**, and the addition of a new category: **Special Jury Award for Outstanding Career**. The 2019 Spotlight Awards recipients include: Secwepemc/Ktunaxa First Nations filmmaker and educator **Doreen Manual**; gender-diversity advocate and filmmaker **Amy Fox**; and Vice-President of Creative BC **Robert Wong**. Other winners are: **Julia Ivanova, Ann Marie Fleming, Meeshelle Neal, Jax Smith, Natasha Tony, Shana Myara, Suzanne Thompson, Mayumi Yoshida, Barb Cranmer, Dawn McCormick, Amanda Coles, and Lily Hui**.

Since 1999, Women in Film and Television Vancouver (WIFTV) has paid tribute to those whose ongoing hard work and dedication have significantly shaped and advanced opportunities for women in screen-based media. WIFTV will this year's individuals at the Spotlight Awards™ Gala on July 2<sup>nd</sup>. The evening will be hosted by Morgan Brayton at the Roundhouse Community Centre.

Determining the recipients from a wealth of strong nominations proved to be challenging this year. WIFTV is grateful to members of the jury for their time and thoughtful consideration: Liz Shorten Senior Vice-President, Operations & Member Services for CMPA; Devi Singh, Producer,

Starfall Meida; The Spear Sisters, Filmmakers; Karin Lee, Filmmaker and adjunct Professor of Film at the University of British Columbia and Loretta Todd, Writer, Director, Producer. The jury was chaired by Christina Toms, Director of WIFTV's Board and Chair of its Awards Committee.

**Doreen Manuel will be awarded with Woman of the Year.** This award is presented to an industry leader who has achieved significant success and who has created opportunities for other women in the industry. Doreen Manuel is a Secwepemc/Ktunaxa First Nations filmmaker and currently the Director of the Bosa Centre for Film and Animation at Capilano University and is the first Indigenous woman to head a major academic filmmaking training institution in Canada. She helped shape the development of the Indigenous Storyteller edition of the TELUS STORYHIVE Filmmaking program, and she served as a Matriarch Advisor in the development of the innovative IM4 Indigenous Virtual & Augmented Reality program at Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

**Both Julia Ivanova and Ann Marie Fleming will be presented with an Artistic Achievement Award.** This award honours a screen-based media artist (i.e. writer, director, producer, editor, director of photography or performer) who has created an outstanding recent work or a significant body of work. Julia Ivanova is an award winning Vancouver director, writer and editor who has made ten feature-length film and television documentaries. Her films have played at Sundance, Hot Docs, IDFA, Hamptons, Chicago, LA, VIFF, Seattle, DOXA, Cleveland and many other international film festivals. Ivanova was recently honoured with a retrospective of her work at Hot Docs 2019.

Ann Marie Fleming is best known for her award winning animated feature, "Window Horses". She is a filmmaker, writer, and artist, who creates work that addresses themes of family, identity, history, and memory. Her latest film "Question Period", just premiered at Hot Docs as part of the NFB's Five Feminist Minutes Redux celebration of what would be the studio's 45th anniversary along with her film, "New Shoes: an interview in exactly 5 minutes", her original Five Feminist Minutes work from almost 30 years ago.

**Amy Fox is the recipient of the Innovation Award.** This award honours a key creator of a recent production or body of work that exemplifies vision, experimentation and innovation. Amy Fox's ground breaking work has unapologetically trailblazed an unusual path to success in an industry traditionally resistant toward female ideas and leadership. She spearheaded "The Switch – A Transgender Fantasy" (2016) a show that the Hollywood Reporter heralded as "TV's first transgender sitcom" and would earn its place as the world's first broadcast television sitcom with five transgender actors in lead roles portraying transgender characters.

**Robert Wong is the recipient of the Honoured Friend Award.** This award recognizes a person who has played a significant role in supporting women in the industry and promoting the goals of WIFTV. As Vice-President at Creative BC, Robert Wong is a champion of inclusion, gender parity and diversity. His contributions deserve recognition in strengthening female voices and creating a legacy of inclusive programming at Creative BC. He has moderated several panels

over the years at WIFTV, and this past year, participated in the Funder Panel at the Gender and Inclusion forum at the Vancouver International Women in Film Festival.

**Meeshelle Neal and Jax Smith will be presented with the Image Award.** This is awarded to a director, writer, editor or director of photography of an outstanding short work that shows production excellence or a unique, visionary approach. Duo Meeshelle Neal and Jax Smith are risk takers, whose films tell relevant stories in uniquely creative ways. This is demonstrated in their multi-award-winning film “Mental” (2017). Their work has brought together women, both veterans and newcomers of the industry, to create art that is brave.

**Natasha Tony is the recipient of the leadership in Education Award.** This award is presented to a screen industry teacher who has demonstrated a commitment to creating opportunities for and sharing expertise with women students within an academic or professional development context. After fifteen years in casting, Natasha Tony expanded her training to hone her skills in advocacy, training, negotiation, and conflict management. Within the IASTE union environment she has developed curriculum on workplace safety, diversity and inclusion. She is now setting out on her own with her own consulting business: Elevate Inclusion Strategies.

**Suzanne Thompson will be awarded the Wayne Black Award.** This award honours a major contributor to the screen-based media community while working ‘behind the scenes. Named in memory of Wayne Black, a lab manager, who gave tirelessly of his time and talent. Suzanne Thompson is a leading advocate for the film and television industry and the current VP of Sales at Encore Vancouver. She is also involved in a number of other organizations including as a Board Member for the Motion Picture Production Industry Association (MPPIA) and Chair of the Board for the Vancouver Post Production Alliance. As one of the founders of the Vancouver Post Alliance, Thompson has demonstrated visionary leadership in support of those working in the Post industry.

**Shana Myara is the recipient of the Iris Award.** This award is given to a person who has demonstrated a commitment to the promotion of women creators and their screen-based works either through curating or programming or through print and online media sources. Named after the Greek mythological figure Iris, associated with communication, messages, the rainbow and new endeavours. For years, Shana Myara has been working to create intersectional opportunities for women and people from many diverse communities. She became the Director of Festival Programming for the Vancouver Queer Film Festival, where in 2014 she announced that 50 percent of the festival’s feature programs were created by women, and is currently does movie acquisitions for OUTtv.

**Mayumi Yoshida is the recipient of the Newcomer Award.** This award recognizes a new artist or technician, including one who is shifting from one career to another (i.e. from an actor to a director) whose first few works have laid the foundation for an inspiring new career. Mayumi Yoshida is a successful working actor in Vancouver who has made impressive contributions to the arts. “Akashi” her debut feature, has won 7 awards and played at 16 festivals. After taking the TELUS STORYHIVE 2016 Digital Shorts Grand Prize, the film has gone on to win Yoshida the Outstanding Writer at NBC Universal Short Film Festival, Best Female Director at the Vancouver

Short Film Festival, Best Actor at the East Van Showcase and the Matrix Award for outstanding achievement in a short film at the Vancouver International Women in Film Festival.

**The Impact Award will be awarded in honour of Barb Cranmer**, who recently passed away.

This award is presented for a career, or singular body of work, that creates a significant impact through breaking boundaries, investigating historical experiences, and; or challenging perceptions. Barb Cranmer was a documentary filmmaker whose works document cultural renewal and traditional knowledge of First Nations of Canada's North Pacific Coast. Cranmer served several terms as an elected council member for 'Namgis First Nation. She belonged to the U'mista Cultural Society and the T'sasala Cultural Group, which presents songs, dances and cultural education in Alert Bay every summer. She was president of the Indigenous Arts Service Organization in British Columbia, which programs indigenous art festivals. Cranmer was a consultant for NMAI's exhibition "Listening to Our Ancestors: The Art of Native Life Along the North Pacific Coast" which opened in February 2006.

**Dawn McCormick will be presented with the Sharon Gibbon Award.** This award honours a WIFTV member who has made a major volunteer contribution in advancing the organization's goals. In memory of Sharon Gibbon, a deeply committed board member whose career was cut too short. Upon retiring in 2014, Dawn McCormick found volunteer work with WIFTV. Over the past 5 years, she has been instrumental in coordinating volunteers for various WIFTV events, including the Vancouver International Women in Film Festival (VIWFF), Martini Madness, and the Spotlight Awards.

**Lily Hui is the recipient of the Special Jury Award for Outstanding Career.** Wearing so many hats, it was difficult for the jury to find a fitting category for her. Lily Hui has had an incredible career that has spanned over 30 years in film and television. Hui was promoted to executive producer of the hit A&E/Lifetime series "UnReal", which has won many prestigious awards including a Peabody, a Critic's Choice TV Award for most exciting new series, an AFI Award, and many others. She also produced ABC's hit series "Mistresses". The unanimous decision to create a new special award for Hui this year was a fun and welcome occasion for the jury.

**Amanda Coles is the recipient of the Please Adjust Your Set Award** which recognizes a person or organization (local, national or international) who has made a major contribution to gender equity in the film, television and screen- based industries. Amanda Coles has researched and investigated our national film and television organizations and the structural impediments to gender equity and inclusion. Her work has provided essential analysis and data that has assisted in launching new policies and programs designed to address these issues.

WIFTV is grateful for the support received from the community and sponsors who make this awards gala possible: Teamsters Union Local No. 155, Troika, DGC-BC, Integral Artists, Matrix Production Services, Bron Studios, IATSE 891, UBCP/ACTRA, Encore Vancouver, and Finalé.

## **About WIFTV**

Women in Film and Television Vancouver (WIFTV) is a member driven, not-for-profit society, which addresses systemic barriers to women's equal participation in the production and dissemination of screen-based media.

We approach our goals by working with a range of partners to increase funding, employment, and promotional opportunities for those identifying as women. We offer professional skill-based training and create opportunities to further women-led projects as well as presenting and publicly celebrating the achievement of women in screen-based media.

**Visit our website:** [www.womeninfilm.ca](http://www.womeninfilm.ca)

### **Follow us on social media:**

- Facebook: [facebook.com/womeninfilm](https://facebook.com/womeninfilm)
- Twitter: @WIFTV
- Instagram: @WIFTV

### **Media Contact:**

Krystal Paraboo  
[communications@womeninfilm.ca](mailto:communications@womeninfilm.ca)  
604-685-1152