



WIFTV Whistler Film Festival Film Market Preparation Mentee Announced

VANCOUVER, BC (October, 2022) – WIFT Vancouver, in association with Whistler Film Festival (WFF) is pleased to announce that Helene Taylor is the recipient of the 2022 WIFTV Whistler Film Festival Market Preparation Mentorship Program for her dark comedy-drama mini-series *Weyburn*, a satirical take on the real-life history of Canada's most prominent mental hospital. *Weyburn* tells the story of how a 1950s team of visionaries under the influence of psychedelic drugs built one of the most infamous mental hospitals in Weyburn, Saskatchewan. Her mentor will be award-winning filmmaker Kate Kroll.



"What a great opportunity to participate in the 2022 WIFTV WFF Mentorship program. I believe the next step of my career is to work with a Producer who relates to my desire to bring a middle-aged woman's POV to light. I look forward to honing my messaging and tone for prospective buyers to focus on the value of older female characters and trust us women creatives can rule in dark comedy," says Helene.

Helene Taylor is a screenwriter and recipient of the Canadian Cable Television Programming Excellence Award. A cynical childfree Gen Xr, Helene's taste for adventure had her move twenty-five times, landing her in New York in the early 2000s to study film and television writing while working in front and behind the camera of the Hulu series *Anyone But Me* and hospital dramas *Mercy* and *Nurse Jackie*. Five years ago, she returned to her hometown Vancouver to be part of Vancouver's Playwright Theatre's Mentorship Program and was recently one of the six selected Canadian television writers for the Pacific Screenwriters/Whistler Film Festival Storyroom. In her quest to bring female protagonists to the forefront of a story, Helene searches out Canadian IP with unique and intriguing factual accounts and tweaks them by injecting a female protagonist. She writes drama with a quirky, lighter bent and comedy with an acerbic darker perspective with storylines torn out of her life, headlines, or inspired by IP.



Kate Kroll is a multi-skilled, award-winning filmmaker with a passion for storytelling and following the thread. A truth and justice seeker, she is always excited to dive into a subject that no one wants to talk about. With over ten years of experience producing both documentary and narrative, Kate aims to bring stories to life that move and inspire, along with cultivating change in individuals and society as a whole. She is the recipient of the 2021 CMPA Indie Screen Kevin Tearney Emerging Producer Award for her work on the Indigenous dramedy, *Portraits From a Fire* (dir. Trevor Mack).

Most recently, Kate finished production on the CBC Gem series, *Future Futures* (Screen Siren Pictures) and is currently in Production on the feature documentary, *Lunatic* (Telefilm, Creative BC, Raven Banner Ent.) and is developing the Telefilm-funded drama, *What Comes Next*.

The mentorship jury included Alisa Luke and Andy Alvarez, and Board Member Laura Arboleda.

Laura Arboleda is a queer Colombian-Mestizo filmmaker and programmer. She holds a B.F.A. in Film Production from Simon Fraser University and is an alum of Vancouver International Film Festival's Mentorship Program. Her previous short films have screened in festivals and venues across North America, Asia, and Europe. She continues to expand her film practice, making short documentaries and process based experimental films. Her work explores themes of shared memories and spaces. Laura is the Senior Programmer with Vancouver Short Film Festival and serves on the Board of Directors of WIFT Vancouver.

Alisa Luke is a Vancouver-based writer and producer who loves the opportunity to be involved in socially and culturally relevant narratives that effect change. Through her work in post-production, she's delivered more than 80 titles including features, MOWs, shorts and animated programs to networks, distributors and festivals.

Andy Alvarez is an award-winning Colombian-Canadian filmmaker and co-founder of Studio 104 Entertainment Inc. Her short film "La Mariposa" (2017), based on her personal story of growing up as an immigrant in Canada, won a Leo Award in 2018. Since then, she has written and directed "Our Home" (2019), garnering accolades from Hot Docs 2019 and winning the Best Canadian Short Film Award at the Wilson Oakville



Film Festival in 2020. She also co-wrote and directed; "Sol" (2020), which was in the top 6 of the Crazy 8s short film competition in 2020. As of 2022, Andy has had three projects licensed by CBC, "La Mariposa," "Sol," and "Growing Up With Mi Familia" (2021). With the support of TELEFILM Canada, she is currently developing her feature film, "La Estrella al Lado de la Luna."

The Whistler Film Festival Society is a charitable, cultural organisation dedicated to furthering the art and business of film by providing programs that focus on discovering, developing, and promoting new talent culminating in the highly respected Whistler Film Festival and Content Summit each December. In all its programs, WFF strives for gender parity, inclusivity and diversity. The Whistler Film Festival Society is situated on the shared unceded territory of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Liłwat7úl (Lil'wat) Nations. Tickets, packs and industry passes are now available for the 2022 Whistler Film Festival at whistlerfilmfestival.com

WIFT Vancouver (WIFTV) is a member-based organisation committed to creating an equitable screen-based industry for women and gender diverse people. By addressing systemic barriers we believe we are also working towards more inclusive, representative media.

WIFTV incorporated in 1989 as a not-for-profit society registered in British Columbia. Our offices are located on the unceded traditional and ancestral homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.