



REFRAME RISE SELECTS THIRD COHORT FOR TWO-YEAR FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

*The Comprehensive and Customized Program Supports and Sustains
Mid-Career Directors & DPs with Support from Netflix*

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LOS ANGELES (June 24, 2025) — Today, **ReFrame**, an initiative founded by the **Sundance Institute** and **WIF** (formerly known as Women In Film), announced the new class of **ReFrame Rise™** fellows for their comprehensive, customized two-year program designed to accelerate high-level, sustainable advancement for mid-career talent. The third cohort of fellows includes the following directors: **Maureen Bharoocha, Ashley Eakin, Raven Jackson, Zoey Martinson, Nicole Mejia, Laura Moss, Kate Tsang** and **Anu Valia**, and cinematographers: **Ino Yang Popper, Aymae Sulick, and Maddy Talias**.

Following the successful launch of the inaugural ReFrame Rise™ class in 2019, and expansion to include cinematographers in the 2022 cohort, ReFrame continues to refine its strategies to support mid-career filmmakers with this class of fellows. With continued support from and in partnership with Netflix, ReFrame Rise has an enduring commitment to developing both above and below-the-line talent and continuing a pipeline of support toward resilient and lasting careers. Over the next two years, fellows will be connected with industry professionals who will serve as sponsors, offering fellows a deeper, more engaged level of support than traditional mentorship. Fellows will have elite access to a variety of ReFrame and WIF events and stakeholders, support on personal PR and publicity materials and ongoing craft refinement sessions as well as strategic support in making strides toward career goals. Fellows will also have opportunities to connect with the WIF Directing and Cinematography fellows to continue building the chain by forging relationships with next-generation talent in their fields.

"ReFrame Rise is designed to catalyze careers by assembling a cohort of extraordinarily talented storytellers and connecting them to influential leaders," said Kirsten Schaeffer, CEO of WIF. "By creating space for strategic sponsorship and visibility, we're not only changing individual careers, we're working to shift the industry landscape."

The selection committee for this year's fellows included esteemed industry professionals **Elena Blekhter**, Co-Executive Producer of Netflix's *Ginny & Georgia*; **Eryn Brown**, partner/ talent manager at Entertainment 360; **Stephen Love**, owner of MADE WITH LOVE MEDIA; **Leah Meyerhoff**, founder of Film Fatales; **Hajnal Molnar-Szakacs**, Director of Artist Accelerator and Women at Sundance Institute Programs at the Sundance Institute; **Mika Pryce**, Senior Vice President of Production at Paramount Pictures and **Couper Samuelson**, President of Feature Films at Blumhouse among others.

Former fellows of this esteemed program include Desiree Akhavan, Mounia Akl, Haifaa al-Mansour, Ava Benjamin Shorr, Patricia Cardoso, Hanelle Culpepper, Zetna Fuentes, Sydney Freeland, Laura Merians Gonsalves, Barbie Leung, Tina Mabry, Mariscela Mendez, Meera Menon, Nijla Mu'min, Ekwa Msangi, Yoko Okumura, Ally Pankiw, Terrie Samundra and Angel Kristi Williams.

ReFrame's work is made possible by IMDbPro and Endeavor. ReFrame Rise is supported by Netflix.

2025-2027 ReFrame Rise Class

DIRECTORS

Maureen Bharoocha

Maureen Bharoocha is a writer/director whose work spans feature films, late night, premium cable, and episodic television. She made her feature debut with the arm-wrestling comedy *Golden Arm* and has directed episodes of Hulu's *Deli Boys*, NBC's *Grand Crew*, *Pitch Perfect: Bumper in Berlin*, and *Saved By the Bell*. Raised in a half Irish Catholic, half Indian Pakistani Burmese Muslim household, Maureen tells stories about conflicted characters and excels at blending genres. Her latest film, *The Prank* stars legends Rita Moreno and Keith David. With a gift for both comedy and drama, Maureen lives by her motto: "Make Cool Shit!"

Ashley Eakin

Ashley Eakin is a writer/director born with a physical disability. She has directed projects for Disney+, Apple TV+ and Netflix. Her AFI Directing Workshop for Women short film *Single*, won the 2020 SXSW Special Jury Recognition Award and is being developed into a TV show with FX. Prior to working on her own content, Ashley was the assistant to Jon M. Chu, and worked on his film, *Crazy Rich Asians*. Having over 15 years of experience in the industry, Ashley is passionate about diversifying the narrative of how disabled people are portrayed in media. She is also a founding member of the DGA's historic Disability Committee.

Raven Jackson

Raven Jackson is an award-winning filmmaker, poet, and photographer from Tennessee. Her work often explores intimacy, connection, and the body's relationship to nature. Recently nominated for a Film Independent Spirit Award for Best First Feature and a Gotham Award for Breakthrough Director, Raven's debut narrative film, *All Dirt Roads Taste of Salt*, made in

partnership with Maria Altamirano, PASTEL, and A24, world-premiered in the US Dramatic Competition at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival, and was named one of the top ten movies of the year by *The New Yorker*, *Rolling Stone*, and RogerEbert.com.

Zoey Martinson

Zoey Martinson is an award-winning writer and director whose work spans theater, film, and television. Her feature *The Fisherman* premiered at the Venice Biennale, winning UNESCO's Fellini Medal. She has directed for Showtime's *Ziwe* (A24), Hulu's *Bite Size Halloween* (Incomplete, NAACP Image Award nominee), and MTV/Paramount+ (*The Wave*). Her short *Cupids* premiered at Tribeca and aired on BET & CBS. Other credits include *Uthandiwe* for DSTV MzansiMagic, *La Oposición* (Casa Mexicano programme SXSW), and *The Fisherman* short on HBO Max. She's written for HBO Max's *Betty* and was a finalist on Issa Rae's *Project Greenlight*. A Warner Bros. Discovery Directing Fellow (2023–24), Martinson has also written and directed Off-Broadway/ internationally.

Nicole Mejia

Nicole Mejia is a Los Angeles-based filmmaker. Her first feature, *A Place in the Field*, was distributed theatrically by Lionsgate and Grindstone in 2023. She's currently in pre-production on her second feature, an action/thriller about two juvenile delinquents trying to break out of the system. Nicole is the inaugural directing fellow for the Adelante Lab, a television fellowship created by the Latinx House, Netflix and Shondaland. Her short film, *Mancha*, was awarded the LALIFF/Netflix Fellowship. Her AFI thesis film *My Life Stopped at 15*, based on her personal story, won the ASC Heritage award. Originally from Honduras, she holds an MFA in Directing from the American Film Institute, where she was awarded the Audi Fellowship for Women and the 2021 Franklin J. Schaffner Award For Excellence in Directing. Nicole is represented by Matt Lubber and Larry Schapiro at Lubber Roklin.

Laura Moss

Laura Moss is a filmmaker from NYC. They were named one of Indiewire's 10 LGBTQ Creators On The Rise in 2023. Their work has screened at the Sundance Film Festival, Tribeca, Rotterdam, and SXSW. They have been a Film Independent Fellow, a Yaddo resident artist and an alum of both the Sundance Institute Screenwriters and Directors Labs. Their feature directing debut, *Birth/Rebirth*, premiered at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival and was distributed theatrically by IFC. It was nominated for three Independent Spirit Awards (Best Screenplay, Best Lead Performance, Judy Reyes and Someone To Watch). Their spec pilot, *Eureka!*, starring Karen Gillan, Jon Bass and Jillian Bell, premiered at Tribeca and won Best Director at Seriesfest. Their short film *Fry Day*, which premiered at SXSW, was featured on the Criterion Channel, paired with the classic satire, *Man Bites Dog*.

Kate Tsang

Kate Tsang is a multidisciplinary artist, filmmaker, and Emmy-nominated writer creating imaginative, offbeat stories with heart. Kate's debut feature film, *Marvelous and the Black Hole*, premiered at the 2021 Sundance Film Festival to rave reviews and is available on Showtime. The film stars Miya Cech (*Always Be My Maybe*) and Rhea Perlman (*Cheers, Barbie*). On the

TV side, Kate has written on hit animated shows such as *Adventure Time: Fionna and Cake* (HBO MAX) and *Steven Universe Future* (Cartoon Network). She is currently in development to write and direct her second feature film, *Sprout*.

Anu Valia

Anu Valia is a writer/director whose roots are in India and Indiana. Her short film, *Lucia, Before and After*, won the US Fiction Award at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival. Anu's TV directing credits include *Shrinking* (Apple TV+), *She-Hulk* (Marvel, Disney+), *A Man on the Inside* (Netflix), *The Afterparty* (Apple TV+), *And Just Like That* (HBO), *Shrill* (Hulu), *Never Have I Ever* (Netflix). She is the executive producer and pilot director for Apple TV's *Big Door Prize*. Her debut feature, *We Strangers*, premiered at SXSW and will be released later this year.

CINEMATOGRAPHERS

Ino Yang Popper

Ino Yang Popper is a Los Angeles-based cinematographer and lecturer at California State University, Northridge. Ino is a graduate from the American Film Institute (AFI) Conservatory. Her 35mm film, *Border*, shot during AFI was selected into the Telluride Film Festival. In 2021, she was selected into Film Independent's Project Involve program as a cinematography fellow, leading to her work on *The Mason Ring*, which won Best of the Best Award at the HBO Max competition of the Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival, and the acclaimed animated film *7LBS 8OZ*, honored with the Grand Jury Award at the Florida Film Festival and featured at Cannes' Emerging Filmmaker Showcase. As a recipient of the prestigious Panavision Grant and Fellowship, and an Associate of the Society of Camera Operators (SOC), Ino's artistry of visual storytelling continues to shine in other projects including *Deborah* (starring Sophia Bush and Deborah Ann Woll), *Chindia* (Best Comedy Feature at the Silicon Valley Asian Pacific Film Festival), and many others available on Amazon Prime Video, Apple TV+, and Tubi.

Aymae Sulick

Aymae Sulick is an award-winning cinematographer based in Los Angeles. With over 20 years of experience and cross-genre versatility, her work has screened on platforms such as Netflix, Hulu, and HBO, and at numerous festivals worldwide, including the Cannes Short Film Corner. She holds an MFA from the USC School of Cinematic Arts and is a proud member of ICG Local 600. In 2023, Aymae was selected for the prestigious ASC Vision Mentorship program, and she is a 2024 WIF Cinematography Fellow. She won a Women in Media Altitude Award for her cinematography from a panel of judges that included Alan Caso, ASC, and Lawrence Sher, ASC. Aymae is also an Emmy-nominated camera operator. Her operator credits include top-rated shows such as *Insecure*, *The L Word: Generation Q*, and *The Pitt*. Aymae often collaborates with underrepresented storytellers and wants to foster empathy and encourage connections through visual storytelling. She creates imagery to convey the emotional worlds of characters so the viewer will not only watch but also feel the story.

Maddy Talias

Maddy Talias is a cinematographer based in New York and Los Angeles, emerging as a dynamic force in visual storytelling. In 2023, Maddy's striking cinematography caught the attention of Beyoncé Knowles-Carter, leading to them shooting the *Renaissance World Tour* film. A 2022-2023 ASC Vision Mentee, AFI Cinematography Intensive for Women attendee, and Local 600 DP, Maddy's work has been showcased at the Tribeca Film Festival— winning Most Moving Narrative in 2024. Additional screenings include: MoMA, NewFest, RiverRun, New Museum, and the China Academy of Art. Maddy's style has gained recognition for being authentic and heartfelt while also packing a punch energetically.

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About ReFrame

Founded by Sundance Institute and WIF (formerly known as Women In Film, Los Angeles), ReFrame is an initiative that employs a unique strategy: a peer-to-peer approach, in which ReFrame Ambassadors engage with senior industry decision-makers at over 50 Partner Companies to implement ReFrame systemic change programs. The initiative's goals are to provide research, support, and a practical framework that can be used by Partner companies to mitigate bias during the creative decision-making and hiring process, celebrate successes, and measure progress toward a more gender-representative industry on all levels. ReFrame is made possible by support from Netflix's Creative Equity Fund, IMDbPro, WME and Pivotal Ventures. Learn more at ReFrameProject.org.

About WIF

Founded in 1973 as Women In Film, Los Angeles, WIF has been fighting for gender equity for more than 50 years. Its advocacy, career programs, and research efforts are a driving force for increasing gender representation in Hollywood. WIF works to dismantle gender bias in the screen industries by building the pipeline, sustaining careers, and advocating for change. Membership is open to all screen industry professionals and more information can be found on our website: WIF.org. WIF is led by Chief Executive Officer Kirsten Schaffer and Chair of the Board of Directors Syrinthia Studer. Follow WIF on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [TikTok](#), [X](#), and [YouTube](#).

Sundance Institute

As a champion and curator of independent stories, the nonprofit Sundance Institute provides and preserves the space for artists across storytelling media to create and thrive. Founded in 1981 by Robert Redford, the Institute's signature labs, granting, and mentorship programs, dedicated to developing new work, take place throughout the year in the U.S. and internationally. [Sundance Institute Collab](#), a digital community platform, brings a global cohort of working artists together to learn from Sundance Institute advisors and connect with each other in a creative space, developing and sharing works in progress. The Sundance Film Festival and other public programs connect audiences and artists to ignite new ideas, discover original voices, and build a community dedicated to independent storytelling. Through the Sundance Institute artist programs, we have supported such projects as *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *The*

Big Sick, Bottle Rocket, Boys Don't Cry, Boys State, Call Me by Your Name, Clemency, CODA, Didi (弟弟), Drunktown's Finest, The Farewell, Fire of Love, Flee, Fruitvale Station, Half Nelson, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Hereditary, The Infiltrators, The Last Black Man in San Francisco, Little Woods, Love & Basketball, Me and You and Everyone We Know, Mudbound, Nanny, One Child Nation, Pariah, Raising Victor Vargas, Requiem for a Dream, Reservoir Dogs, RBG, Sin Nombre, Sorry to Bother You, Strong Island, Summer of Soul (...Or, When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised), Swiss Army Man, A Thousand and One, Top of the Lake, Won't You Be My Neighbor?, and Zola. Through year-round artist programs, the Institute also nurtured the early careers of such artists as Paul Thomas Anderson, Wes Anderson, Gregg Araki, Darren Aronofsky, Lisa Cholodenko, Ryan Coogler, Nia DaCosta, The Daniels, David Gordon Green, Miranda July, James Mangold, John Cameron Mitchell, Kimberly Peirce, Boots Riley, Ira Sachs, Quentin Tarantino, Taika Waititi, Lulu Wang, and Chloé Zhao. Support Sundance Institute in our commitment to uplifting bold artists and powerful storytelling globally by making a donation at sundance.org/donate. Join [Sundance Institute](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), [X](#), [YouTube](#), and [Bluesky](#).

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