

# **IFP's 20<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GOTHAM INDEPENDENT FILM AWARDS™**

## **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS** **Friday, SEPTEMBER 17, 2010 AT 5PM EST**

### **ABOUT IFP**

After debuting with a program in the 1979 New York Film Festival, the nonprofit IFP has evolved into the nation's oldest and largest organization of independent filmmakers, and also the premier advocate for them. Since its start, IFP has supported the production of **7,000** films and provided resources to more than **20,000** filmmakers--voices that otherwise might not have been heard. IFP believes that independent films enrich the universal language of cinema, seeding the global culture with new ideas, kindling awareness, and fostering activism. The organization has fostered early work by leading filmmakers including Charles Burnett, Edward Burns, Jim Jarmusch, Barbara Kopple, Michael Moore, Mira Nair and Kevin Smith.

Currently, IFP represents a network of **10,000** filmmakers in New York City and around the world. Through its workshops, seminars, conferences, mentorships, and *Filmmaker Magazine*, IFP schools its members in the art, technology, and business of independent filmmaking (there are special programs to promote racial, ethnic, religious, ideological, gender, and sexual diversity). IFP builds audiences by hosting screenings—often in collaboration with other cultural institutions—and also bestows the Gotham Independent Film Awards™, the first honors of the film awards season. When all is said and done, IFP fosters the development of **300** feature and documentary films each year.

### **ABOUT THE GOTHAM INDEPENDENT FILM AWARDS™**

The Gotham Independent Film Awards are selected by distinguished juries and presented in New York City, the home of independent film. This public showcase honors the independent filmmaking community, expands the audience for independent films, and supports the work that IFP does behind the scenes throughout the year to bring such films to fruition. The Awards began in 1991.

### **BASIC CRITERIA FOR ALL COMPETITIVE AWARDS**

There will be seven (7) competitive awards in 2010 – Best Feature, Best Documentary, Best Ensemble Performance, Breakthrough Actor, Breakthrough Director, Best Film Not Playing at a Theater Near You®, and the Festival Genius™ Audience Award. All eligible submissions must meet the following basic criteria for competitive awards:

■ **Filmmaking with a point of view.**

IFP believes that filmmaking is a subjective art form. Each Gotham Independent Film Award™ will be given to individual films or performers in films where the vision of an individual director, producer, writer or writer/director is abundantly evident, and where the film cannot be classically defined as a “work for hire.”

■ **Feature-length (defined as over 60 minutes).**

■ **Films made with an economy of means.**

■ **Films must be American.**

The film must be directed and/or produced by a US born or based filmmaker.

■ **Screening availability by the Nominating Committee.**

The film must be submitted on DVD by the deadline or made available for screening by nominating committee. (Not applicable to the Festival Genius Audience Award)

■ **Independent Distribution.**

Films must be scheduled for a theatrical or digital platform or Pay TV release during calendar year 2010 (Midnight January 1 – 11:59 pm December 31). See special criteria for cable and digital platforms below.

Theatrical release: The release can be through a specialty division of a studio, an independent distributor, or via self-distribution. The film must be screened for paid admission in a commercial motion picture theatre in New York City and/or Los Angeles County. It must run for at least seven consecutive days. The film must be advertised and marketed during the New York and/or Los Angeles County run in a manner considered normal and customary to the industry. The film must be publicly exhibited by means of 16mm, 35mm or 70mm film, or in a digital format, delivered to the screen by an image and sound file format suitable for exhibition in existing commercial cinema sites.

Digital Platform/Pay TV: Films released exclusively via a digital platform or PayTV/Cable (with no theatrical dates) may qualify in the **Best Feature** category only, with the stipulation that the films first screened at one of the following qualifying festivals: **Berlin, Cannes, Los Angeles Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival, SXSW, Toronto International Film Festival, or Tribeca Film Festival.** The digital platform release can be via VOD, streaming, DTO, or DTR.

*(Note: The Independent Distribution criteria are not applicable to the Best Film Not Playing at a Theatre Near You and Festival Genius™ Audience Award categories. See specific guidelines below for alternative criteria in these categories.)*

## ADDITIONAL CRITERIA BY CATEGORY

**BEST FEATURE** – an exceptionally realized fiction film that raises the possibilities of filmmaking and that will withstand the test of time. The Gotham Independent Film Award™ will be presented to the film’s credited director(s) and producer(s).

**BEST DOCUMENTARY** - an exceptionally realized non-fiction film that deals creatively with cultural, artistic, historical, social, scientific, economic or other subject matter. The objective is to recognize the significant artistic and/or social impact of the director’s vision. It may be photographed in actual occurrence, or may employ partial re-enactment, stock footage, stills, animation, stop-motion or other techniques, as long as the emphasis is on fact and not fiction. The Gotham Independent Film Award™ will be presented to the film’s credited director(s) and producer(s).

**BEST ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCE** – an outstanding performance by a group of actors who create a unique cinematic chemistry in a specific film. In order to be eligible, the film must have a minimum of three (3) roles of equal significance in the film, without one of the actors being a discernable lead. The objective is to recognize the collaboration of the actors, not just the appearance of a great cast of performers. The Gotham Independent Film Award™ will be presented to the ensemble actors as determined by the submitting entity on their application.

**BREAKTHROUGH ACTOR** - an outstanding debut or “breakthrough” performance. The actor’s performance is not necessarily the actor’s first role, but is considered the first to display the expanse of his/her talent. The actor’s role must be a lead or a strong supporting character in a specific film. Actors who have won or been nominated for significant film awards (Academy Award®, Golden Globe, Spirit Awards, etc.) for work released prior to 2010 or who have been

previously nominated in this category are ineligible. The Gotham Independent Film Award™ will be presented to the actor.

**BREAKTHROUGH DIRECTOR** - a filmmaker whose first fiction film pushes the boundaries of creativity and demonstrates a unique vision. The Gotham Independent Film Award™ will be presented to the film's credited director(s).

**BEST FILM NOT PLAYING AT A THEATRE NEAR YOU®** – IFP believes it is critical to recognize amongst its modest number of competitive awards a film that has achieved critical acclaim from the festival circuit, but has not yet been released theatrically or on any digital platform. **Both feature-length fiction and non-fiction films are eligible in this category.** The Gotham Independent Film Award™ will be presented to the film's credited director(s) and producer(s).

**Note: Consideration in this category is solely via recommendation by a committee comprised of US festival programmers and film critics. The final 5 nominees and winner are selected by the editors of *Filmmaker* magazine and a curator from The Museum of Modern Art. All nominees are screened for the public in November 18 – 21 as part of a showcase series at MoMA.**

#### **FESTIVAL GENIUS™ AUDIENCE AWARD –**

This new award serves to celebrate audience favorites at US and Canadian film festivals from November 2009 through October 2010. The nominees and winner for the favorite audience award winning film will be selected by the Festival Genius Festival Genius community - 200,000 film fans worldwide. IFP's Festival Genius provides critical infrastructure to support film festivals and independent filmmakers. The Gotham Independent Film Award will be presented to the film's credited director(s) and producer(s).

### **OUR SELECTION PROCESS**

#### ■ **Nominating Committees**

Committees comprised of film critics, festival programmers and others not directly engaged in the production and distribution of films will review all submitted films and determine the final nominees in each of the competitive categories. **Nominees in all categories will be announced on Monday October 18.**

#### ■ **Final Selection Juries**

A final jury of distinguished filmmakers will determine the winners in each category. Final juries are frequently comprised of directors, writers, producers, casting directors, editors, actors, directors of photography and others directly associated with making films. Executives of companies which release or sell films do not participate in the selection process at any stage. **All winners will be announced live at the 2010 Gotham Independent Film Awards on Monday, November 29.**

### **SUBMISSION APPLICATION**

Applicants must complete and submit their application forms by 5pm EST on Friday, September 17, 2010. Applications are available at <http://gotham.ifp.org>. For additional queries, please email: [mtabbot@ifp.org](mailto:mtabbot@ifp.org)