

The image features a collage of film-related scenes. At the top, a circular logo contains the text 'ATHENA FILM FESTIVAL'. Below this, a large orange banner displays the main title. The background includes a woman in a crown, a woman in a pink shirt speaking, and a group of people sitting on a stage.

ATHENA  
FILM  
FESTIVAL

**ATHENA FILM FESTIVAL**

**2022 IMPACT REPORT**

# ABOUT US

## THE ATHENA FILM FESTIVAL

Athena is the premier film festival showcasing women leaders at the center of the action. For 13 years, we have built a reputation for elevating and celebrating leadership from underexplored perspectives; women leading in all places and spaces; women resisting and refuting preconceived notions of all they can be and do.

The Festival is a joint project of Barnard College's Athena Center for Leadership and Women and Hollywood. The Festival's founding sponsor is the Artemis Rising Foundation and its CEO, Regina K. Scully.

**500+ FILMS**

**600+ FILMMAKERS**



**WOMEN OR NON-BINARY DIRECTORS**



# CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



- THE ATHENA LIST
- THE WRITERS LAB
- WORKS-IN-PROGRESS

Our program provides women and non-binary storytellers with opportunities to hone their craft, make meaningful connections, and advance their projects.

Together, we are supporting a pipeline of writers working on women-centric scripts and helping get these movies made.

## 200+ PARTICIPANTS



*"Participating in the Athena Writers Lab... has been one of the most thrilling and fulfilling experiences in my career thus far. I met so many artists that inspired me to pursue my passions, ambitions, and continue to work and grow without compromise. For that, I will be forever grateful."*  
- Nic Yulo, 2021 Chinonye Chukwu Emerging Writer Awardee

*"The Athena Works In Progress Program was like rocket fuel for my project."* - Patricia Gillespie, Director

*"The interaction with the mentors, industry professionals and of course my fellow writers was priceless!"* - Anu Sukdial

*Without a doubt, the Athena WIP program came at a critical time. I entered the program without any experience in "Pitch Forums" and left feeling more confident to pitch my film to any audience in any setting."*

- Débora Souza Silva, Director *Black Mothers*





"My movie was on the verge of falling apart when I received the Athena List Sloan Development Grant. The grant enabled my producer and I to save the picture by re-upping the book option for the underlying material. It also gave me the gift of time, time to dive back into the script and do one final, necessary rewrite before taking it out to find financial partners. I'm so endlessly grateful!"

Cherien Dabis, writer *What the Eyes Don't See*  
Recipient of the 2020 Athena List Sloan Development Grant



"Navigating sales and distribution of my first feature film has been an educational, at times daunting, experience. I am so grateful to have the support of Athena Film Festival, both the grant and the check-ins, the encouragement. I made *Kili Big* because I believe that this is a story worth spreading far and wide and you are helping me do that."

Ida Joglar, Director of *Kili Big* Recipient of the 2022 Athena Breakthrough Award

### ALFRED P. SLOAN ATHENA LIST DEVELOPMENT GRANT \$20,000

Given to an Athena List winner or finalist with a screenplay that focuses on a woman or women in STEM project.

### THE ATHENA FILM FESTIVAL BREAKTHROUGH AWARD \$25,000

Given to a feature-length film — narrative or documentary — directed by a first or second-time woman filmmaker. The winning film screens at the Athena Film Festival.

### THE CHINONYE CHUKWU EMERGING WRITER AWARD \$10,000

Given to a feature-length writer who has previously participated in the Writers Lab to aid in the development of their script. The writer also receives a year-long intensive writing mentorship.

### DISNEY ATHENA LIST DEVELOPMENT GRANT \$10,000

Awarded to a writer/director of a project that is a winner or finalist of the Athena List and a member of a historically underrepresented community in film.

# GRANTS

Over **\$175,000**  
in grants awarded since **2019**

In addition to cash grants, the Athena Film Festival offers our grantees **continuous support, one-on-one mentorship, and a one year FREE membership to the Girls Club**, a global community for women creatives, culture-changes, and storytellers to connect, create, network, advocate, support, and redefine entertainment.





# THE ATHENA LIST

An annual script competition that selects exceptional scripts with women leaders at the heart of the story. The Athena List raises the profile of the scripts, helping get these films made and elevating the writers' careers to the next level.

## OVER 1200 SUBMISSIONS

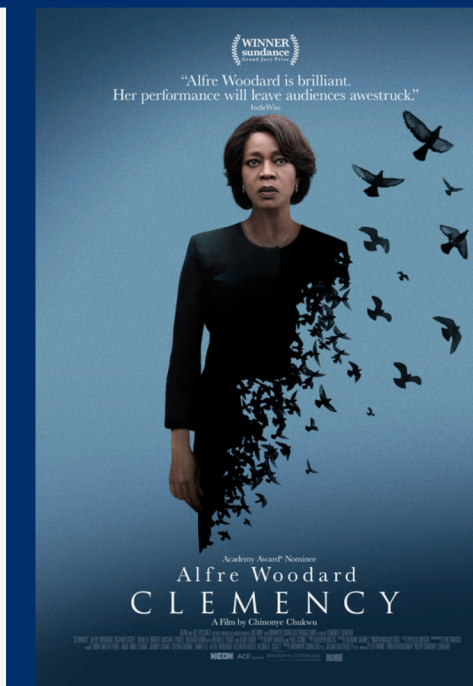
60

## ATHENA LIST WINNERS & FINALISTS SCRIPTS



*"In all my years of seeking a foothold in the industry, I've never felt more supported and empowered than by the Athena Film Festival. The immense honor of being on the Athena List has been the single most determining factor in the viability of my script. The vital exposure and validation has been essential to finding collaborators to shepherd the film, and for that I am truly grateful."*

Kate Sheffield, Writer, *Ray of Life* 2022 Athena List Winner



## 3 FILMS SCREENED AT ATHENA



2020 Athena List Winners Tricia Lee, Cherien Dabis, and Nina Kentsis



# THE WRITERS LAB

The Athena Film Festival Writers Lab is a creative development workshop for emerging women writers. We provide storytellers with training, skills, and a valuable, supportive network. Participants engage in one-on-one mentoring sessions with experienced screenwriters and industry experts, as well as in peer-to-peer reflections.

## 1000+ SUBMISSIONS

100

SCRIPTS

105

WRITERS



*"The Writers Lab made me feel like I deserved a seat at the table and meeting all of these inspiring women that the network introduces you to is worth more than anything I've ever attended." - Lian Kaye, Writer*





# WORKS-IN-PROGRESS

The Works-in-Progress Program is an intensive pitch training and storytelling strengthening opportunity that in addition to the training includes a live pitch in front of a panel of esteemed industry representatives, introductions to a network of potential supporters and partners, peer mentorship, and a cohort to grow with, all wrapped into a festival event.

*Athena Film Festival's Works-in-Progress changed our film, "In Plain Sight" for the better. They helped us better shape our film's narrative messaging and it was hugely beneficial to hear feedback from industry veterans. We are so grateful to the Athena team for allowing us the space to grow and shape our film!*

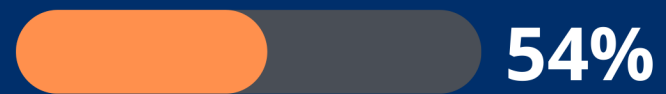
Sarah McClure, Director, *In Plain Sight*, 2022 WIP Participant



**32 FILMS**



**Released films have screened at AFF**



**BIWOC Filmmakers**





# SUCCESS STORIES

## THE ATHENA LIST

In addition to the films screened at Athena, a number of them are currently **in development**, including Daniel Stiepelman's script *Out of My Mind* which tells the story of 11 Melody Brooks a smart, non-verbal girl with Cerebral Palsy being "mainstreamed" in the fifth-grade classroom will be on Disney+. Amber Sealy will direct the film for Disney+ and Melody has been cast after a worldwide search.

Scripts that will be **filming soon** include Jenny Halper's *The Burning Season*, and Rachel Feldman and Adam Price's *Lilly* about Lilly Ledbetter starring Patricia Clarkson which Rachel is directing. Additional Athena List scripts have been **optioned**.

## WORKS-IN-PROGRESS

Numerous WIP filmmakers have gone on to receive **additional funding and grants**; notably Débora Souza Silva, Director of *Black Mothers* and Heather Courtney, Chelsea Hernandez and Princess A. Hairston, Directors of *The Untitled 19th\* News Film*. After Athena, and leveraging their WIP pitches, both of these films received the DOCPITCH DOCLANDS Grand Prize using the pitches. *Black Mothers* received the grant in 2020 and *The Untitled 19th\* News Film* in 2022.

Noteworthy WIP alums that have screened at the festival include: Dawn Porter's *Trapped* which won the Sundance Film Festival Special Jury Award for Social Impact Filmmaking Film and Luchina Fisher's *Mama Gloria*.

## THE WRITERS LAB

Many Lab writers have gone on to find both **jobs and representation** thanks to the Athena network. For example, following the lab, participant Jane Barr signed with UTA and is currently working on a project for Lionsgate. She was also featured in Essence Magazine as a 2021 Women in Film Pathmaker. Additional lab writers have gone on to write and work on such hit series as The CW's *Riverdale* and Netflix's *Ginny & Georiga*.



# OUR TEAM

For more information, please contact Melissa Silverstein at [melissa@womenandhollywood.com](mailto:melissa@womenandhollywood.com)



Athena Center  
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Gabriela Jatene, Post-Baccalaurate  
Athena Film Festival



Judith Helfand, WIP Program Facilitator



Bryce Norbitz, Writers Lab Program Director



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