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Announcing REEL CHANGE: The Fund for Diversity in Film Scoring

powered by SESAC and Christophe Beck
and managed by New Music USA

New York, NY (October 27, 2020) –

New Music USA announces the launch of **Reel Change: The Fund for Diversity in Film Scoring**, powered by **SESAC** and composer **Christophe Beck**, and administered by **New Music USA**.

Responding to the fact that the vast majority of films are scored by white men, Reel Change is a five-year grants and mentorship program for composers of diverse backgrounds who have been marginalized in film composition.

This fund – which is now accepting applications from US-based composers – supports film projects currently in production, where additional funding and mentoring would help composers at a pivotal moment in their careers. Four to six grants averaging \$20,000 will be allocated each year of the program. Supportable expenses include composer compensation, musician fees, recording and sound mastering fees, studio expenses, orchestration, production equipment, and more.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling timeline by an advisory board made up of leading composers of film music, including **Christophe Beck**, **Jongnic “JB” Bontemps**, **Kris Bowers**, **Miriam Cutler**, **Chanda Dancy**, **Tony Morales**, and **Pinar Toprak**. Members of this advisory board will offer additional support and mentorship for interested applicants.

Information and applications are available [here](#).

Composer Christophe Beck says:

“For too long, the community of composers who create scores for Hollywood films has been dominated by white men. Throughout my career, I’d been aware of this and told myself that someday, I’d like do something about it. That ‘someday’ is finally here.

The Reel Change fund was born not only of a desire to promote opportunity for underrepresented composers, but also to enrich the art of film scoring itself by embracing a wider breadth of musical perspectives. With deep gratitude to my partners at SESAC and New Music USA, I’m proud to witness this idea finally come to fruition.”

Vanessa Reed, President and CEO of New Music USA, says:*

“In 2019, 94% of the top 250 films at the box office were scored by men; no data has been published about the representation of BIPOC composers in film scoring. Reel Change is the first fund to tackle these inequities. We’re proud that New Music USA will make this program happen, and we look forward to hearing from music creators whose voices will define the soundtracks of today and tomorrow.”

Erin Collins, SESAC’s VP of Film, Television and Developing Media, says:

“Christophe Beck and I knew that something needed to be done to solve the problem of underrepresented voices in the world of film scoring. When we suggested this project, SESAC’s chairman and CEO John Josephson immediately agreed and approved one million dollars towards the effort. We’re excited to hear fresh, innovative scores that more accurately represent the world we live in, and can’t wait to see these composers smash through the glass ceiling. This has been a long time coming, and SESAC is honored to be part of the journey.”

Composer Kris Bowers says:

“The type of content that’s been made with people who look like me has affected the way that I see myself as a person of color. Pushing the boundaries and figuring out how we can be represented in beautiful, complex and positive ways is something I want to be part of.”

*Statistics and research: https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2019_Celluloid_Ceiling_Report.pdf



ABOUT THE ADVISORY BOARD

KRIS BOWERS is a Grammy-nominated, Emmy Award-winning, and Juilliard-educated pianist and composer who creates genre-defying music that pays homage to his jazz roots with inflections of alternative and R&B influences. Bowers’ work as a film and television composer is a testament to his versatility as an artist. Bowers has established himself at the forefront of Hollywood’s emerging generation of composers, and throughout his career, he has consistently championed an art practice guided by multi-disciplinary collaboration. krisbowers.com

JONGNIC “JB” BONTEMPS is a uniquely modern film composer, harmonizing a classical education with his rich tech background as a maestro of Silicon Valley to write everything from the hip-hop infused score for the Tribeca-favorite documentary *United Skates*, to rousing additional music for *Creed II*. He’s been the go-to composer for the latter film’s director, Steven Caple Jr., including the score for the coming-of-age drama, *The Land*, where he also produced the song “This Bitter Land” for Nas and Erykah Badu. bontempsmusic.net

MIRIAM CUTLER is a three-time Emmy-nominated composer, is passionate about documentaries: HBO, CNN, PBS, Sundance, Emmy, and Oscar nominated films: *RBG*, *Love Gilda*, *Dark Money*, *The Hunting Ground*, *Ethel*, *Lost in La Mancha*, *Poster Girl*, *KingsPoint*, *Ghosts of Abu Ghraib*... Advisor/ Sundance Documentary Composers Lab, juror Sundance, AMPAS Documentary Branch Exec Committee, Film Expert/USC Cinema/US State Department’s American Film Showcase. TV Academy Music Branch Exec committee, former SCL Board and Co-Founder Alliance for Women Film Composers. miriamcutler.com

CHANDA DANCY is both an accomplished film and television composer with over 16 years of experience and an emerging classical concert composer. Arts Boston named her one of “[10 Contemporary Black Composers You Should Know](#).” She is known for her work with Aleem Hossain’s sci-fi feature “[After We Leave](#)” which has garnered critical acclaim around the globe. She is also known for her work with Wong Fu Productions’ debut feature “[Everything Before Us](#)”, starring Randall Park (*Fresh Off The Boat*). chandadancy.com

TONY MORALES is an Emmy-nominated composer known for his orchestral scores and textural sound for feature films and television, including *Bloodline* and *Scorpion*. His latest project, action-thriller *The Fugitive* is hailed as the new Quibi flagship series. Morales earned a Primetime Emmy nomination for the mini-series *Hatfields & McCoys* (co-composed with John Debney), and scored all three seasons of Disney's *Elena Of Avalor* for which he received multiple Daytime Emmy nominations as well as an Annie Award nomination. Morales has composed music for documentaries including *Benedict Men*, *The Definition of Insanity*, and *The Dominican Dream*. tonymoralesmusic.com

PINAR TOPRAK is one of the most refreshing voices in music composition today, with a diverse body of work spanning across film, television, and video games. She has composed for major superhero sagas like Marvel Studios' *Captain Marvel*, DC's *Stargirl*, and SY-FY's Superman prequel series *Krypton*. She also scored HBO's six-part docuseries *McMillions*, which premiered at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, as well as Epic Game's massively popular online video game *Fortnite*. pinartoprak.com



CHRISTOPHE BECK



ABOUT THE PARTNERS

CHRISTOPHE BECK, an LA-based, Canadian composer, started piano lessons at five, and by eleven he was learning Bee Gees songs by ear and performing with his first-ever band, the unfortunately-named Chris and The Cupcakes. During high school he studied piano, saxophone, and drums, and wrote many tender 80's love ballads. Beck studied music at Yale, and attended USC's prestigious film-scoring program, where he studied with Jerry Goldsmith. Beck scored the second season of WB's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, and received Emmy Award for Outstanding Music Composition for his score to the *Buffy* episode, "Becoming, Part 1." In 2000, the cheerleading comedy *Bring It On* launched Beck's film career, which includes such diverse credits as *Under the Tuscan Sun*, *Edge of Tomorrow*, *Crazy Stupid Love*, *Pitch Perfect*, and the *Hangover* trilogy. More recently, Chris scored the Oscar® and Grammy®-winning animated film *Frozen*, and Marvel's *Ant-Man* films. Christophe works out of his studio in Santa Monica, California. christophebeck.com

SESAC PERFORMING RIGHTS ORGANIZATION currently licenses the public performances of more than 1 million songs on behalf of its 30,000 affiliated songwriters, composers, and music publishers, which include such familiar names as Adele, Bob Dylan, Neil Diamond, R.E.M., RUSH, Disclosure, Zac Brown, Rosanne Cash, Mumford & Sons, Burna Boy, Shirley Caesar, Keshia, and Lalah Hathaway. SESAC has long represented the music on some of TV's biggest shows including *Grey's Anatomy*, *How I Met Your Mother*, *Parenthood*, *Dateline NBC*, *Dr. Phil*, *Seinfeld*, and *The Doctors* among many others, and is the PRO of choice among many of Hollywood's most sought-after film and television composers, including Christophe Beck, Danny Lux, Jon Ehrlich, Dennis C. Brown, Bruce Miller, Randy Newman, Paul Shaffer, among many others. sesac.com

NEW MUSIC USA supports the sounds of tomorrow by nurturing the creation, performance, and appreciation of new music for adventurous listeners around the world. We empower and connect US-based music makers, organizations, and audiences by providing funding through our Project Grants; fostering new connections through our programs; deepening knowledge through our online magazine, NewMusicBox; and working as an advocate for the field. New Music USA works in collaboration with its community in response to pressing needs and to amplify the diverse voices of music creators. New Music USA envisions a thriving and equitable ecosystem for new music throughout the United States. newmusicusa.org

Media: Digital assets are available [here](#).

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