

Making modern movies in 2018

 By Leigh Andrews

19 Feb 2018

While movies have been mainstream for more than a hundred years, diversity behind the lens has been more than a little lacking - hello 2018's top trending TV and cinema industry hashtags, #TimesUp and #OscarsSoWhite. That's why production teams around the globe rejoiced at the news that LA mayor Eric Garcetti, *It* and *The Lego Movie* producer Dan Lin and female film firebrand Ava DuVernay are working to get more females, people of colour and those from low-income households producing movies that more accurately reflect 2018.



Ava DuVernay on the 89th Oscars' red carpet in 2017. Original image © Tyler Golden of ABC on [ABC Television Group Flickr stream](#). Cropped with #FairnessFirst logo overlay as per Creative Commons terms.

It's no secret – the TV, film and cinematography industry is vastly in need of transformation.



Swift: 78% of women in the film/TV industry victims of discrimination

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Here in SA, last year's Sisters Working in Film and Television or Swift report found that as much as 78% of these women feel that they are discriminated against because of their gender.

Sadly, broadening the focus doesn't improve the image. Almost from the start, with the commercial, public screening of ten of the Lumière brothers' short films in Paris in 1895, filmmaking and the production of 'moving pictures' has been seen as the domain of the older, white men of money. But it's time for a shakeup of note.

DuVernay is leading the pack in making that change by imagining a different Hollywood and indeed global film industry. Long lauded as the motivational movie maven we need, she's a true Jill of all trades, as writer, producer, director and distributor of independent film.



Bridge to Freedom

Daniel Derksen 6 Feb 2015



DuVernay's Twitter bio sums up exactly who she is:

“ A girl from Compton who got to make a Disney movie about finding light in a dark world. ”

But her work on *A Wrinkle in Time* brings her to true superstar status as it makes her the first African-American woman to direct a movie with a budget over \$100m. Now she's looking to give others in the industry a much-needed leg up.

“ Although it's not out yet, 'A Wrinkle in Time' is already disrupting Hollywood. Through our [#CareerReadiness](#) volunteer work at the [#CaliforniaFilmCommission](#) we heard a story about [#AvaDuVernay](#) and student interns on the set of [#WrinkleInTime](#) <https://t.co/Y44rKQHq0t> <pic.twitter.com/dlYY9gGbUK>— Bayha Group (@BayhaGroup) [February 14, 2018](#) ”

Reimagining Hollywood with the Evolve Entertainment Fund

According to [Variety](#), the Evolve Entertainment Fund and all-encompassing diversity initiative led by DuVernay, Garcetti and Lin is set to promote inclusion and offer exciting opportunities to those otherwise not given a chance to break into the industry.

“ Real change happens when we take tangible action, and that means giving young women and people of color opportunities in the industry early on so they have the chance to shape its future. - [@ava](#) ”

We are proud to partner in the Evolve Entertainment Fund. <https://t.co/G2EmHu6lFq>— Film Independent (@filmIndependent) [February 12, 2018](#) ”

The *New York Times* reports that the partnership that would specifically fund Hollywood internships for women, people of colour and those from low-income households.

“ Ava DuVernay and the mayor of Los Angeles are teaming up to start a partnership that would fund Hollywood internships for women, people of color and those from low-income households <https://t.co/gifvdrPtrF>— The New York Times (@nytimes) [February 13, 2018](#) ”

As an alliance between the City of Los Angeles, industry leaders in entertainment and digital media, non-profit organisations, and educational institutions, the fund has already secured 150 paid summer internships for students participating in the Hire LA's Youth program and is partnering with leading entertainment and digital media organisations that include DreamWorks Animation, Ryan Murphy Television, Film Independent, WME, CAA, Kobe Bryant's Gravity Studios, and Anonymous Content.

That number will snowball, with DuVernay confirming a goal of 500 placements by 2020.

“ Great [#filmmakers](#) on [#filmmaking](#).[#WomenInFilm](#) [#AvaDuVernay](#) [#FilmHero](#) [pic.twitter.com/b7yARAr0lp](#)—
FilmHero (@FilmHeroClub) [February 12, 2018](#) ”

Better representation on screen in 2018

Switching focus to the front of the lens, Marvel's latest superhero story *Black Panther* is also making 'movie diversity' headlines, with [The Independent](#)'s video interview with *Black Panther*'s director Ryan Coogler explaining how it's bringing Afrofuturism into the mainstream:



Why *Black Panther* is such a game-changer

Lerato Serumula 19 Feb 2018



The Guardian calls it [the most radical superhero film yet](#) as it goes beyond typical comic book movie stock to torpedo stereotypes left, right and centre with not only a strong African-American cast but also placing feminism on the front foot with Wakanda's elite, all-female sub-Saharan African royal guardians in the same vein as the legendary Amazonian women warriors of Themyscira in *Wonder Woman* last year.

“ the 'black panther' runway show celebrated africa and body diversity <https://t.co/cUf8h8yOjO>
[pic.twitter.com/IR6QX9FqLP](#)— i-D (@i_D) [February 14, 2018](#) ”

Interestingly, [CinemaBlend](#) confirms that DuVernay passed on directing *Black Panther* but said she'd "be first in line to see it."



#FairnessFirst: Amplifying the female voice

Leigh Andrews 15 Jan 2018



Interesting times behind the camera, let's hope for more inclusion, equality and diversity in every aspect going forward!

“ *Figure out what you need to do to be the heroine of your own story*” [#AvaDuvernay #MondayMotivation](#)
pic.twitter.com/a9Zv2v3c0D— Jennifer Sluder (@jensluder) [January 29, 2018](#) ”

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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