

## **FIN Partners' keynotes, Finola Dwyer of Wildgaze Films, and Mark Slone of Pacific Northwest Pictures inspire audience of 154 international delegates**

*Oscar-nominated producer of Brooklyn, and Canadian veteran distribution exec spoke September 13<sup>th</sup>- 14<sup>th</sup> in Halifax, Canada.*

**September 17, 2019 (Halifax, Canada)** - FIN Partners, Canada's leading international co-production/co-financing market, highlighted themes of strategic partnerships and disruption, this September 12-14 in Halifax. The coastal city had 154 delegates descend in hopes of securing financing for projects in development and to forge new co-production partnerships. They also came to hear from keynote speakers **Finola Dwyer** of Wildgaze Films, the Oscar-nominated producer (*Brooklyn, An Education*) and **Mark Slone**, President of Pacific Northwest Pictures.

"I think in choosing partners you want to choose like-minded spirits," said Finola Dwyer of co-producing. "They are quite long and tense relationships, so finding the right partner is critical."

Dwyer opened the market with a keynote conversation hosted by Damon D'Oliveira of Conquering Lion Pictures Inc. With an eye for breakout talent, she discussed the process of casting Carey Mulligan in *An Education*, and Saoirse Ronan in *Brooklyn*, and the value of nurturing quality partnerships. As one half of the first female producing duo (along with Amanda Posey) to be twice nominated for Best Picture at the Oscars, Dwyer spoke of being drawn to stories with female protagonists, and the importance of reflecting the diversity of the audience in her work.

"The number one question we get is what are you buying," said Mark Slone, president of Pacific Northwest Pictures, a leading Canadian feature film distributor and producer based in Toronto. "It's harder to answer than ever before. It's not what will they consume, but under what circumstances."

Slone kicked off the second day of FIN Partners with a keynote address on the state of distribution and theatrical exhibition. He offered thoughts on how social media has allowed a multitude of communities to form where there used to be barriers and how this has changed the cinema landscape.

An afternoon panel discussion focused on 'Opportunities in Finance for UK Co-production.' Host Karen Paré of Film Finances Canada directed the conversation to share strategies for working with UK financiers, and structuring complex multi-country co-productions. Christelle Conan of Ingenious Media, Natalie Coleman of Head Gear Films, George Hamilton of Protagonist Pictures, and Paul Ashton of Creative England shared insights based on their experiences.

"Most co-productions we have done are done for economic reasons," said Coleman. "You can shoot a movie anywhere and make it look like anything. Sometimes it's important to the story. Sometimes it's purely you want to claim as many tax credits and incentives as possible."

The Independent Production Fund also brought delegates a panel discussion on “Possibilities and Priorities: The New OTT Landscape.” It was hosted by Stephen Finney, development executive Connect3 Media. Gave Lindo, executive director, OTT Programming at CBC, Tory Jennings, director of programming, Bell Media Pay & SVOD, and Anthony Jiwa, head of marketing of OUTtv explained the directions their services are heading. A push for short form content was a key part of the conversation. “We’re in the market for great Canadian series as we’re building a destination for great Canadian stories. Short form content is something we really believe in,” said Lindo, who also mentioned they have commissioned over 50 short form series and over 100 short form documentaries so far for CBC Gem.

Apart from this, nearly 1000 pre-scheduled 1-2-1 meetings took place. This was the second of a two-year term highlighting producers and delegates from Spotlight Regions of the United Kingdom, Ireland and the USA.

Helena Mackenzie, head of inward investment and business development at Film London announced two Atlantic Canadian TV drama producers to receive a familiarization trip to London this December in celebration of her region’s inclusion in the market. Two East Productions and Picture Plant Limited were the producers selected. FIN Partners focuses on dramatic feature film and fiction series projects being developed for all platforms.

FIN Partners was presented by Telefilm Canada; with support from Signature Partner: Bell Media & CTV; Platinum Partner: Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage; and Gold Partners: Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Canadian Media Production Association, and Super Channel.

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