**NEWS RELEASE**

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Effective: June 9, 2023

**Cine Gear Expo LA '23 Overwhelming Success**

**with Sunny Skies and Record Attendance**

*Hollywood, California*: The production community proved once again that there is "no place like home" and for Cine Gear Expo '23, that meant the now-familiar stages and streets of Paramount Studios Lot. With their biggest slate ever of informative and entertaining panels, technology, films, demonstrations, exhibits, activities, and parties, there was no shortage of entertainment for the thousands of guests. Even the sun decided to join in the festivities with the first blue skies in weeks.

Amid the world-class mingling Cine Gear business plunged forward with the Film Competition. Thursday's screenings were enthusiastically packed as the audience viewed the finalists. Both the Cine Gear and Audience Awards for Music Videos/Commercials went to *Mendirman!* written, produced, and directed by Sabirov Khurhid and Sabirov Nadir. In the Student Film Awards category AFI's writer/director Peiqi Peng, producer Ziqi Gao and cinematographer Tianyi Liu, also pulled in 2 awards for *A Roadside Banquet*. Cine Gear's award for Independent Short Film was won by *King Me*, Director/DP John Matysiak, writer David McKay, producers David and Marisa McKay. The Audience Award for Independent Short went to *Jerome,* written, produced anddirected by Gianfranco Fernández-Ruiz, produced by Santi Naidoo & Ben O’Keefe, shot by Joewi Verhoeven. Sponsored by Godox, the three Rising Star Awards went to: *Now and Never* filmmakers Kymberly Harris (director/screenplay), Natalie Nicole Dressel (story), producers Anita Banerji, Kavi Ramachandran Ladnier, Rohi Mirza Pandya, & Nick Rathod, and cinematographer Leah Anova; *Valerine (The Elephant Man)*, directed, written, produced and shot by VONJAKO; as well as *The Day, at the Beach* from Chapman University's Cindy Di Xin (writer/director), Maggie Mingqi Tao (producer) and DP Lance Haoyuan Li.

At Friday evening's VIP party community favorite Jay Holben masterfully took to the podium amid smiles and shout-outs to the individual filmmakers who took home honors at the previous day's screenings. Next, the Legacy Lifetime Achievement Award was given by Juliane Grosso to Mr. Otto Nemenz, the beloved founder and CEO of Otto Nemenz International, who has been instrumental in the film technology community for half a century. Other esteemed award recipients include the versatile and prolific Michael Goi, ASC for Visionary Achievement in Cinematography, Cinematographer Ksenia Sereda won the Emerging Star, and the Technological Achievement Award went to Black Magic Design for consistent innovation.

In honor of Cine Gear's late co-founder, Juliane Grosso announced the new Karl Kresser Heart of the Community Award. In keeping with Kresser's philosophy the award recognizes individuals who selflessly forge paths enabling others to satisfy their creative passions—all with an eye to perpetuate the spirit of community. The 2023 Heart of the Community was awarded to John W. Simmons, ASC, whose selfless teaching and perpetual helping hand and open heart personifies the spirit of the Award.

Due to the pandemic, 2023 is the first opportunity since 2019 that Cine Gear Expo has been able to return to its Hollywood roots. Although industry conditions created uncertainties for this year's Expo, the annual event went on as scheduled. "The success of the 2023 Cine Gear Expo is a testament to the strength of the film community", explains Cine Gear's CEO Juliane Grosso. "It serves as a reminder that even in challenging times, our industry can come together, celebrate innovation, and inspire one another. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to making this event an unparalleled success."

What's next? Cine Gear Atlanta is scheduled for October 6-7th at Trilith Studios. For more information visit [www.cinegearexpo.com](http://www.cinegearexpo.com).

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