



50 50 2020

ELLE

Report workshop  
« Women's place in Film Festivals »  
17th December 2018  
Les Arcs Film Festival

## Participants

**Brittany Allan**, Manager, Industry Sales at TIFF

**Delphine Besse**, Responsible for the signature of the Charter 5050 for film festivals, for the Collective 5050

**Frédéric Boyer**, Tribeca, Artistic Director of Les Arcs Film Festival

**Stéphanie Douet**, Sensito Films

**Claude Duty**, President of Les Arcs Film Festival

**Sophie Erbs**, Producer at Cinema Defacto

**Trevor Groth**, Ex Sundance Film Festival's Director of Programming, now working at 30WEST

**Marcin Pienkowski**, Distributor at New Horizons International Film Festival

**Sandrine Pillon**, Founder of Femmes et Cinéma

**Nikki Saltz**, Film director

**Charles Tesson**, General Manager at Semaine De La Critique

## Host

**Fabienne Silvestre-Bertoncini**, General coordinator of the Lab

## Observers

**Guillaume Calop**, Co-founder of the Lab and General Manager of Les Arcs Film Festival

**Véronique Vatinos**, Head of the celebrities department at ELLE magazine

**Emma Pagès**, Assistant, Lab - Femmes de cinéma

**Valentine Bottaro**, Femmes et cinéma



## Through the testimonies...

### **Selection committee**

Transparency in festivals' selection committee was necessary, only recently did committees begin to be transparent. This transparency needs to concern who decides and how the sections are defined.

Since 2016, some festivals have been doing 50-50% and the desire for this to continue is real. In certain committees: there are more women than men!

### **The problem of the underrepresentation of women in film selections**

We noticed that the underrepresentation of women is less important in short films.

However, this underrepresentation is real for first and second films, and even more important with more experienced filmmakers!

### **Different criteria of selection for men and women**

Sometimes these criteria are not the same for men and women, which urges us to wonder how the selection is made. In fact, the majority of festivals are directed and founded by men.

There are two questions here... How do they carry women's sensitivity? How is it possible to change the image of women in the films selected for festivals?

### **A feminization of the jobs**

Many jobs begin to get feminized in the cinema industry, even if men stay very present in films.

**But not complete !!!**

There are more and more women programmers but very few women has led a festival yet.

### **The programming**

The programming can be balanced in order to have a good representation of gender. But this representation depends on the section. For example, for documentaries, short films or short budgets, it is easier to get a more equal representation of women and men in the selections.

### **Actions to help women**

Actions to help them find their position in the cinema industry with particular sections for women: the example of a 2016 special section created by women : 100% films made by women.



## Nugget quotes

« In the main festivals, there are 80 films but only 2 made by women. »

« In Poland: they signed a kind of agreement to be sure that there are 50-50% but it is still not the reality - personally I cannot believe it »

« Most of the time, when we arrive in a festival, inside the welcome bag for a female director, there is a hairdryer. »

« There are a lot of strong women in the cinema industry but most of us don't even know them »

« For a long time, there were no women at all in big festivals/big ceremonies »

« I found myself a few times in a selection committee where I was the only woman among ten men »

« We've been quoting Jane Campion for 20 years now. »

« This is a female film... directed by a woman.... We would never say this for a man! »

« Some festivals always begin with this sentence : Journalists, you are going to be happy.... We selected films directed by women! »

« In our redactions, there are no women. The editors-in-chief are all men. »

« I have to say that I never have to face difficulty with festivals because I faced them before. »

« When the film is finished, we have been struggling so hard to get there, that the work is easier. »

« My experience as a boom operator has sensitized me very soon to gender issues; particularly because I had to face sexist remarks. »



## What are for you the main issues regarding the position of women in film festival?

- Reflection about the position of glamour in film festivals which tend to erase the other facets of the festival; in fact the glamour is a real problem for the image of women in general.
- Each festival has a beauty sponsor, and it is difficult not to put women on a pedestal just because of their beauty; it is important to go in depth on what they are really representing and work more and more on the image of women in cinema.
- The understanding of how women could feel and how we could do something to change how they feel.
- There are some trouble when the selection is made : committees are trying to have an equal representation of gender, but sometimes it is not possible.
- The difficulty is in the set of mind, in the politics and in the message that is sent
- The fact that a film is made by a woman is systematically highlighted, but we really need to treat the cinema in a neutral way.
- All the chain in the creation of a film is hard, it would be great if a film could be neutral from its very beginning.  
Finally, what really is the responsibility of festivals? It is to overcome an inequality which is here from the beginning?
- There are a lot of women in the programming departments, but from the moment you speak of management, there is a problem.
- Every time we have to justify the fact that a film is made by a woman, but the truth is that we shouldn't have to do this.



## What can be changed to improve this situation?

- **Evaluating the main directors every five years** without judging him or her and in real freedom of speech; but the question is : who evaluates them?
- **Creating a board of experts** (programmers, journalists...) who will judge the selections of the main festivals after knowing what they left on the side. The board can be anonymous but could give a note to the programmers, arguing on what they missed, which female director they could have reasonably programmed. It would be food for public debate.
- **Concerning the jury** : having a female president of the jury at least every 2 years.
- **Making a 100/100 section** : To be provocative : A section directed by a woman with 100% freedom to 100% female directors for 100% female audience.
- **Creating two different awards** : one for best female director and one for best male director.
- **Seeing more women at the head of festivals** Women that are very important in management no longer need to be in the shadow, on the contrary!
- **Reflection about quotas** : How to deal with quotas when there are not much production, especially for countries without any films directed by women.
- **Highlighting more the talent than the physique of all women in the cinema industry**
- **Breaking the glamour's side of the red carpets during the festival**
- **Idea of anonymity**  
When a film is sent to a selection, the committee doesn't have to know if it is a woman or a man who made it (and same thing concerning the age and the ethnicity).  
Anonymity can bring more diversity to the selection!
- **Putting films made by men and women on the same level**  
It needs to be done based on some numbers to see the differences and to be able to communicate on them : such as holding public statistics.
- **Contributing to see a change in mentalities** with education, communication, with marketing about this issue, activism, research and follow up.
- **Men should learn how to trust women more**
- **Creating some support for career management**



Which word comes to you at the end of this workshop?

Cinema, Hope, Consciousness, Work in progress, Sharing, Discovering, Inspiring...