



**Melanie McFarland, TV Critic for *Salon*,  
Joins IFC Center's Split Screens Festival as Co-Creative Director**

**Festival Also Announces "Writing for TV Boot Camp,"  
First in an Ongoing Series of Professional Seminars,  
February 28 at IFC Center**

**McFarland to Share Programming Duties with Founding Co-Creative Director  
Matt Zoller Seitz for 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Festival Celebrating the Art and Craft of Television,  
May 29-June 2 in New York City**

New York, February 11, 2019 — IFC Center's Split Screens Festival announced today that noted TV critic **Melanie McFarland**, has joined the annual TV festival as Co-Creative Director. The Salon TV critic, who also serves on the executive board of the Television Critics Association (TCA), will curate the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the event, running May 29-June 2, alongside founding Co-Creative Director Matt Zoller Seitz.

Additionally, the festival organizers announced the first in an ongoing series of professional development seminars, "**Writing for TV Boot Camp**," featuring panelists working across a wide variety of television genres, to be held Thursday, February 28 at IFC Center.

"We're thrilled to welcome Melanie to join Matt as Co-Creative Director of Split Screens," said Split Screens Executive Director Raphaela Neihausen. "We can't wait to share this creative duo's vision with audiences in May. We are also pleased to extend the Split Screens brand to include the launch of our professional development seminar series. It's a natural extension of our commitment to showcasing the best in TV content and allows us to contribute to the artistic community in a meaningful way."

"I'm honored to join the Split Screens team," McFarland noted, "especially at a time when writers, directors and producers are shattering long-held norms of the television art form, demonstrating levels of adventurousness and creativity no one could have predicted even a few years ago. Never has the medium felt so fertile with possibility, and this festival gives those of us who love television an incredible way to celebrate and connect to that excitement."

"At a time when television has moved to the center of popular culture," added Split Screens founding Co-Creative Director Matt Zoller Seitz, "and the medium is constantly evolving and innovating, it's a great blessing to be joined by Melanie, a critic whose insight and originality are matched only by her compassion and conscience."

Melanie McFarland is the TV Critic for *Salon*. Prior to joining Salon, McFarland was the TV Editor for IMDb, where she curated the site's television content as well as writing and hosting episodes of its first original web series "What to Watch." McFarland served on the 2004 and 2005 juries that selected the American Film Institute's 10 Most Outstanding TV Programs of the Year. She also was a member of the George Foster Peabody Awards board between 2006 and 2012. McFarland has lent her expert commentary to a variety of media outlets, including CNN, NPR, American Public Media, and the BBC. She has been a member of the Television Critics Association since 2003, and currently serves on its executive board. McFarland's work has appeared in *Variety*, as well as the *Seattle Times* and *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, *The Oregonian*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Geekwire*, *Rotten Tomatoes* and *Parade Magazine*. Her work is included in the upcoming anthology "The Women of David Lynch," due out June 11. She is based in Seattle, WA.

Split Screens' "Writing for TV Boot Camp," the first in an ongoing series of professional seminars, will take place Thursday, February 28 at IFC Center, 10am-5pm. Hosted and taught by industry professionals, the event will explore the ins-and-outs of writing for television in a series of panels geared to both newcomers and established writers. Produced by the festival's Educational Programs Producer Allyson Morgan, an award-winner writer-producer and veteran of the Nantucket and Hamptons International Film Festivals, among others, the day-long seminar's lineup includes:

- **10am – 11am: Writing For Comedy**  
Sitcom writers Hannah Bos and Paul Thureen (*High Maintenance*, *Mozart in the Jungle*), Jon Kern (*The Simpsons*), and Leah Nanako Winkler (*Ramy*) share tips for creating half-hour scripts that balance jokes with emotional stakes, and how to be a part of a comedy writers room. Moderated by Dani Faith Leonard (Big Vision Empty Wallet).
- **11am – 12pm: Writing For Late Night Variety TV**  
From *Saturday Night Live* to Jimmy Kimmel, the art of late night and variety is alive and thriving. Meet some of the writers working in the field, including Katie Hartman (*Paid Off with Michael Torpey*), Brian McCann (*Conan*) and Alex Song (*The Tonight Show*), and hear how they broke in. Moderated by Kevin Laibson (former Artistic Director of The PIT).
- **12pm – 1pm: What Agents Want**  
You wrote a script, now what? Hear from agents Beth Bickers (APA) and Vern Co (Gersh) on what they're looking for in a writer, and how to get your script in front of them. Moderated by Ben Izzo (Abrams Artists).
- **2pm – 3pm: How To Adapt**  
IP is hot – or so you've heard. How do you take that material you love and adapt it for TV? Writer Lone Lloyd (*The Sinner*) will talk about her experience adapting for television. Moderated by Rebecca Scolnick (*W Magazine*).
- **3pm – 4pm: Writing For Drama**  
Television drama is hotter than ever. Hear from drama writers Matthew Lee Erlbach (*Masters of Sex*), Ashlin Halfnight (*Bloodline*), and Erica Saleh (*Wisdom of the Crowd*) about this exploding genre and how the format is expanding and changing. Moderated by Dana Weissman and co-presented by WGA East.
- **4pm – 5pm: Networking Happy Hour**  
Join fellow writers and our industry guests for a drink on the house at a nearby bar and talk about everything you've learned.

**Tickets for the "Writing for TV Boot Camp"** are \$99 for the full day (\$80 for IFC Center members), and are available at [splitscreensfestival.com](http://splitscreensfestival.com) or at the IFC Center box office.

**About Split Screens:**

Split Screens Festival is produced and presented by IFC Center, one of New York's leading independent cinemas, and is organized by the core team of its successful DOC NYC documentary film festival, including Executive Director Raphaela Neihausen, Director of Development Deborah Rudolph and Operations Director Dana Krieger. Collaborating with broadcasters, cable networks and streaming services, the festival will highlight great content from a range of platforms to bring together the creative talent behind TV's most acclaimed shows and sophisticated New York audiences.

**Press contact**

For information about Split Screens' "Writing for TV Boot Camp" or the forthcoming Festival, contact Harris Dew at IFC Center: [Harris.Dew@ifccenter.com](mailto:Harris.Dew@ifccenter.com)