



## SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST ANNOUNCES KEYNOTE DARREN ARONOFSKY AND ADDITIONAL FEATURED SPEAKERS

**Austin, Texas – October 10, 2017** – South by Southwest® (SXSW®) Conference and Festivals (March 9-18, 2018) has announced the addition of Keynote **Darren Aronofsky** and the latest round of Featured Speakers to the programming lineup including **Keith Urban**, **Luvvie Ajayi**, **W. Kamau Bell**, **Steve Ballmer**, **Yiying Lu**, **Stefan Blom**, and others. Aronofsky and the Featured Speakers announced represent an innovative and diverse group of storytellers, creative visionaries, and changemakers who offer practical inspiration and a dynamic vision for the future.

"A provocative, and virtuoso filmmaker, we're thrilled to host Darren Aronofsky as one of SXSW Film's 2018 Keynotes," said Janet Pierson, Director of Film. "He's been an original since his first independent work, and we know it will be a blast for our passionate SXSW audiences to hear his story."

Darren Aronofsky is a film director, screenwriter and film producer whose latest film *mother!* stars Jennifer Lawrence, Javier Bardem, Ed Harris, and Michelle Pfeiffer. His film *Black Swan* became an indie box office phenomenon and earned star Natalie Portman an Academy Award® for her performance. His other films have included *The Wrestler*, *The Fountain*, *Requiem for a Dream* and *Pi*. Aronofsky joins previously announced SXSW Keynotes **Ta-Nehisi Coates** (Convergence), **Barry Jenkins** (Film Keynote), **Esther Perel** (Interactive Keynote), and **whurley** (Convergence Keynote).

"Some of the world's most imaginative thinkers are part of today's announcement," said Hugh Forrest, Chief Programming Officer. "These innovative speakers cover the depth and breadth of SXSW content, enhancing our standing as the foremost destination for creative people to gain the practical tools and outside-of-the-box inspiration to achieve their goals."

Other Featured Speakers announced today include writer and host of *With Friends Like These* podcast **Ana Marie Cox**, *This American Life* creator and host **Ira Glass**, design ethicist **Tristan Harris**, biophysicist and engineer **Hugh Herr**, Facebook Vice President of Messaging Products **David Marcus**, activist **Bree Newsome**, athlete and model **Aimee Mullins**, bestselling author **Daniel H. Pink**, Altimeter Principal Analyst and Futurist **Brian Solis**, GSD&M co-founder and chairman **Roy Spence**, Pulitzer prize-winning author **Lawrence Wright**, and many more.

SXSW Conference programming is organized into 24 Tracks divided between Interactive, Film, Music, and Convergence, presented in a variety of session formats. Once again, SXSW is offering expanded access to events for all registrants. Attendees will receive primary access to programming associated with their badge type but now also enjoy secondary entry to most other SXSW events.

## **Keynotes**

**Darren Aronofsky** (Film Keynote) - Brooklyn born and raised, Academy Award®-nominated director Darren Aronofsky is the founder of Protozoa Pictures. He is the writer and director of *mother!*. Last year, Aronofsky produced *Jackie*. He directed, co-wrote, and produced *Noah* (2014). Before that he directed the indie box office phenomenon, *Black Swan* (2010). It starred Natalie Portman who won an Academy Award® for her performance. Aronofsky directed and produced *The Wrestler* (2008). His earlier credits include directing and writing the acclaimed films: *The Fountain* (2006); *Requiem for a Dream* (2000); and *Pi* (1998).

## **Featured Speakers**

**Luvvie Ajayi** (Social Impact) - Luvvie Ajayi, the New York Times best-selling author of *I'M JUDGING YOU: The Do-Better Manual*, is a speaker and digital strategist who thrives at the intersection of comedy, technology, and activism. A fourteen-year blogging veteran, she is the voice behind *Awesomely Luvvie*, a widely-respected humor blog that covers everything pop culture – from TV, movies, and technology to travel, race, and life's random adventures.

**Steve Ballmer** (Startup & Tech Sectors) - Steve Ballmer is co-founder of Ballmer Group and owner of the Los Angeles Clippers. Ballmer retired as Chief Executive Officer of Microsoft in 2014 after leading the company for nearly 14 years. He remains a significant investor. Through philanthropy and civic activism, Ballmer Group strengthens promising and proven approaches that increase economic mobility for children and families in the United States. Ballmer also leads USAFacts, a project seeking to improve transparency in government.

**W. Kamau Bell** (Social Impact) - W. Kamau Bell is a sociopolitical comedian based in The People's Republic of Berkeley, Calif. Bell is the host of the Emmy Award-winning CNN Original Series *United Shades of America with W. Kamau Bell*. The series also received an Emmy and a Television Critics Association Award nomination in its first season. The third season of *United Shades* will premiere in 2018 on CNN.

**Stefan Blom** with **Josh Constine** (Sync, Stream & License) - Stefan Blom is Chief Content Officer at Spotify. In his role as CCO he has responsibility for the company's content and distribution operations, including all licensing, programming, studios & original content, industry & creators relationships and products globally. Prior to his role at Spotify, Mr. Blom held senior positions at EMI Music, most recently as CEO and Chairman of the group's Nordic operations, and prior to that as EVP Commercial Development in a global capacity. Josh Constine is the Editor-At-Large for TechCrunch where he specializes in deep analysis of social products.

**Sandy Carter** (Startup & Tech Sectors) - Sandy Carter is an Amazon Web Services VP focused on Enterprise Workloads and helping companies with innovation. A leading pioneer in the digital business revolution, Sandy was a driving force of Innovation at IBM for the last decade. Carter

is an extreme innovator and best-selling author with her fifth book *Extreme Innovation*, built on her research with Carnegie Mellon.

**Ana Marie Cox, and Bree Newsome** (Social Impact) - Ana Marie Cox is a political columnist and culture critic. She conducts the "Talk" interviews featured in *The New York Times Magazine*. She also hosts *With Friends Like These*, a podcast from Crooked Media. Bree Newsome is a community organizer and activist who removed the Confederate battle flag from the South Carolina State House. Newsome rallies the spirit with her impassioned message about racial equality and illustrates how, with courage, zeal and the support of others, ordinary people can make an extraordinary difference.

**Ira Glass** (News & Journalism) - Ira Glass is the host and creator of the radio program and podcast *This American Life*. The show is heard each week by over 2.2 million listeners on more than 500 public radio stations in the United States, Australia and Canada, with another 2.5 million listening to the podcast. Under Glass's editorial direction, *This American Life* has won the highest honors for broadcasting and journalistic excellence, including five Peabody awards.

**Tristan Harris** (Design) - Tristan Harris was previously a Design Ethicist at Google and left to lead Time Well Spent, a non-profit movement to align technology with our humanity. Time Well Spent aims to transform the race for attention by revealing how technology steers two billion people's thoughts and choices, and by demonstrating how new incentives and design practices can transform our technology environment to align with our best interests. Harris has spent a decade researching what influences our minds, drawing on insights from sleight.

**Hugh Herr, Aimee Mullins, and Professor Hans Georg Näder** (Intelligent Future) - *Time Magazine* coined Dr. Hugh Herr the "Leader of the Bionic Age" because of his revolutionary work in the emerging field of Biomechatronics – technology that marries human physiology with electromechanics. Athlete and model Aimee Mullins became the first amputee in history to compete in the NCAA and was the first person ever to be outfitted with woven carbon fiber sprinting prostheses. She then went on to set World Records in the 100 meter, the 200 meter, and the long jump and has since built a career in film and television. Hans-Georg Naeder heads the world's largest prosthetic and orthotic manufacturers dedicated to help people regain their mobility. A third-generation family-owned business, Ottobock and has worked with the Paralympics since 1988, producing hockey sledges and custom prosthetics for skiers, snowboarders, and sprinters.

**Yiying Lu** (Design) - Yiying Lu was born in Shanghai China, Educated in Sydney Australia & London UK, now based in San Francisco Silicon Valley as a Creative Director. She is an award-winning artist and designer with more than 10 years of experience in the creative realm. Lu was named a "Top 10 Emerging Leader in Innovation" in the Microsoft Next 100 series.

**David Marcus** (Intelligent Future) - David Marcus is the Vice President of Messaging Products at Facebook responsible for Messenger, which is used by hundreds of millions of people around

the world daily. David joined Facebook in 2014 from PayPal where he spent the previous two years as the company's President and previously as Vice President of Mobile, leading its mobile products and business.

**Bruce Mau** (Design) - Bruce Mau, Chief Design Officer at Freeman, is a brilliantly creative optimist whose love of thorny problems led him to create a methodology for whole system transformation. Twenty-five years in the business of design gave Mau the practical, holistic insights for going into the design of business with his Massive Change Network five years ago. In doing so, Mau laid the foundation for the new discipline of enterprise design, successfully applying his design thinking methodology to economic, cultural, governmental, environmental, and social change.

**Daniel H. Pink** (Workplace) - Daniel H. Pink is the author of several books about management, work and behavioral science, including *The New York Times* bestsellers *Drive*, *To Sell is Human*, and *A Whole New Mind*. His books have won multiple awards and have been translated into 35 languages.

**Brian Solis** (Brands & Marketing) - Brian Solis is Principal Analyst and Futurist at Altimeter, the digital analyst group at Prophet and has been called one of the greatest digital analysts of our time by CMOs and CEOs of top brands. Additionally, Solis is an award-winning author of seven best-selling books including *X: The Experience When Business Meets Design*, *What's the Future of Business (WTF)*, and *The End of Business as Usual*.

**Roy Spence** (Workplace) - Roy Spence is the chairman and co-founder of the advertising agency GSD&M and author of the books *The Amazing Faith of Texas* and *It's Not What You Sell, It's What You Stand For: Why Every Extraordinary Business Is Driven By Purpose*. Spence is also Co-Founder and CEO of The Purpose Institute which helps organizations and leaders discover and fulfill their purpose.

**Keith Urban** (Music Culture & Stories) - Keith Urban is a premier songwriter, vocalist, musician and virtuoso guitarist. Over the course of his career, Urban has earned four Grammy Awards, ten Country Music Association Awards, eleven Academy of Country Music Awards, a People's Choice and an American Music Award. His eighth studio album, *RIPCORD*, produced four #1 songs, bringing Urban's total of #1s to twenty-two. Having achieved platinum status in 2016, one of only two country artists to hit that mark, Urban extends his historic streak (9) of platinum or multi-platinum albums.

**Lawrence Wright** (Government) - Lawrence Wright is a staff writer for *The New Yorker* and the author of nine previous books of nonfiction, including *In the New World*, *Remembering Satan*, *The Looming Tower*, *Going Clear*, *Thirteen Days in September*, and *The Terror Years*, and one novel, *God's Favorite*. His books have received many prizes and honors, including a Pulitzer Prize for *The Looming Tower*. His latest book, *God Save Texas: A Journey into the Soul of the Lone Star State*, will be released in Spring 2018.

## **SXSW Deadlines**

To register for the event, please visit [sxsw.com/attend](http://sxsw.com/attend). SXSW's next registration deadline is October 20, 2017.

SXSW Film Festival is now accepting Feature Film, Short Film, Episodics, Music Video, and Virtual Cinema submissions through October 20, 2017. Texas High School Short and Title Sequence will accept submissions through December 15, 2017. [Submit now](#) for the early bird rate.

Artists can now apply to showcase at the 2018 Music Festival directly through SXSW. The application period closes on October 20, 2017. [Apply early](#) for a discounted rate.

SXSW dedicates itself to helping creative people achieve their goals. Founded in 1987 in Austin, Texas, SXSW is best known for its conference and festivals that celebrate the convergence of the interactive, film, and music industries. The event, an essential destination for global professionals, features sessions, showcases, screenings, exhibitions, and a variety of networking opportunities. SXSW proves that the most unexpected discoveries happen when diverse topics and people come together. SXSW 2018 will take place March 9-18, 2018.

SXSW 2018 is sponsored by Capital One and The Austin Chronicle.

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