

Autograph Collection Hotels Launches Unprecedented Cultural Program Focusing On Independent Film

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BETHESDA, Md., Oct. 19, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Autograph Collection, Marriott International's distinctive portfolio of one-of-a-kind hotels, is launching the *Independent Film Initiative*. Launching in January 2017, this dynamic, experiential cultural program will celebrate independent film – an art form that shares Autograph Collection Hotels' goals of championing individuality and diversity. The initiative will be curated by respected names working at the forefront of independent cinema including Franklin Leonard, Founder & CEO of The Black List, and digital entertainment distributor, FilmBuff.

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By collaborating with these cutting-edge industry leaders, Autograph Collection will create one-of-a-kind guest experiences in its global portfolio of more than 100 hotels, which are found in the world's most desirable destinations. Program highlights will include film premieres, live performances, director talks, screenwriter residencies, a signature cocktail as well as Autograph Collection Hotels' very own indie film channel for guests.

"Aligning with independent film is a natural fit since we both celebrate creative license," said Julius Robinson, Vice President & Global Lead, Autograph Collection Hotels. "Independent filmmakers tell stories without the influence of a big studio – and our hotels both tell and inspire travel stories of their own in a truly unscripted way."

The *Independent Film Initiative* will kick off during January 2017's Sundance Film Festival with the launch of the Autograph Collection Hotels & The Black List Sundance Social Space (January 19 – 23, 2017). This will take shape as a vibrant networking hub at Autograph Collection's Hotel Park City, where cutting-edge filmmakers will gather with Leonard and The Black List team. One of the week's focal points will be the bestowal of Autograph Collection Hotel Residencies to five screenwriters shortlisted on the 2016 Annual Black List.

The Annual Black List is a comprehensive list of screenplays which is published once a year on The Black List website. Leonard has posted it every year, since 2008, to draw attention to scripts that are "best liked" in Hollywood yet are unproduced and require financing. The posting of the Annual Black List has consistently connected screenwriters to moviemakers. For example, four of the last eight Best Picture Oscars and nine of the last 18 screenplay Oscars have gone to Annual Black List scripts. Now, Autograph Collection Hotel Residencies will lend extra support to independent screenwriters affording them the luxury of researching and writing at an Autograph Collection hotel of their choice over the course of 2017.

"We are thrilled to partner with The Black List and FilmBuff to shine a light on storytelling," said Amanda Altree, Senior Director, Brand Marketing, Autograph Collection Hotels. "Our 'exactly like nothing else' hotels are products of passion that inspire stories with their unique design and unmatched guest experiences – and we look forward to sharing those stories with the independent film community."

Through January 2017, Autograph Collection Hotels will serve as settings for other Black List events. The 2017 Black List Screenwriter Labs – weeklong, intensive workshops where promising yet non-professional screenwriters gather and enjoy one-on-one sessions with established professionals – will be staged at select Autograph Collection properties. The brand will also co-sponsor the Black List Live staged script readings, productions that bring to life Black List scripts as talented actors animate them on stage.

"When you find another organization that shares your values, it only makes sense to work together to further them," said Franklin Leonard, Founder & CEO, The Black List. "Both The Black List and Autograph Collection Hotels champion craftsmanship and specificity in order to leave lasting impressions, and working together, we'll be empowered to do more of both."

Autograph Collection Hotels will also host The Black List Happy Hour. These convivial, global gatherings happen monthly so The Black List's community of scriptwriters can meet and exchange ideas offline. To commemorate the first Happy Hour, The Black List, a signature cocktail, created by an Autograph Collection mixologist and Mr. Leonard, will debut and henceforth be featured on hotel bar menus.

Meanwhile, FilmBuff, an established leader in digital entertainment that is recognized for championing independent film, will curate the Autograph Collection's Independent Film Channel. This will be a dedicated, guest entertainment channel that will broadcast a range of titles from FilmBuff's critically acclaimed library of 1500 titles. The content will include feature films, award-winning documentaries, shorts, TV shows and webisodes. Tailored to guests' interests, the programming will focus on art, design, food and music.

Autograph Collection Hotels Premieres by FilmBuff – a series of three debuts of FilmBuff releases – will be showcased through 2017 in screening rooms and iconic spaces at Autograph Collection Hotels. Each premiere will be preceded by a pre-curtain cocktail reception and followed by a film-festival-style Q&A with the production's director. Special and intimate, these cinematic events will make for experiences that promise to be *exactly like nothing else*.

For further information on Autograph Collection Hotels and the brand's independent film initiatives, visit www.autographhotels.com

About Autograph Collection Hotels

Autograph Collection Hotels celebrates individuality by curating one-of-a-kind travel experiences at more than 100 luxury lifestyle hotels found in the world's most desirable destinations. Exactly like nothing else, each hotel has been hand selected for its distinction as an iconic landmark, for its remarkable design or for its best-in-class resort amenities. For more information, please visit www.autographhotels.com, and explore our social media channels to learn more about championing the independent spirit that is #ExactlyLikeNothingElse. [Instagram](#) [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#).

About Franklin Leonard & The Black List

Franklin Leonard, the Founder and CEO of The Black List, established the Annual Black List in 2005. He was then working for **Leonardo DiCaprio's** Appian Way Productions. Every year in December, since 2008, Leonard has posted online the Annual Black List of screenplays he gathers through a survey now involving over 300 members of the Hollywood and independent filmmaking community. Today, the Annual Black List, along with other components of The Black List brand - including a script database, Screenwriter Labs, live performances and Leonard's entertaining monthly podcast - has catalyzed writer/producer partnerships that

have resulted in over 325 diverse feature films. Films that have originated from Black List screenplays have earned over \$26 billion worldwide and have received 45 Oscars. Leonard is sought after to speak on diversity and inclusion in Hollywood. He chose The Black List as the umbrella title for his ventures because it references his own African American heritage as well as the Hollywood blacklist denying employment to a generation of American entertainment professionals during the McCarthy era.

About FilmBuff

FilmBuff is an award-winning distribution company that specializes in releasing independent films theatrically and through video on demand. FilmBuff partners with creative filmmakers, publishers and brands to reach, engage and inspire viewers around the world. The company's library comprises approximately 1,500 titles, ranging from feature films, factual television and some of the finest recent documentaries including Exit Through the Gift Shop and Senna. FilmBuff is headquartered in Manhattan's burgeoning NoMad district.

Marriott International, Inc. (NASDAQ: MAR) is the world's largest hotel company based in Bethesda, Maryland, USA, with more than 5,700 properties in over 110 countries. Marriott operates and franchises hotels and licenses vacation ownership resorts. The company's 30 leading brands include: Bulgari Hotels and Resorts®, The Ritz-Carlton® and The Ritz-Carlton Reserve®, St. Regis®, W®, EDITION®, JW Marriott®, The Luxury Collection®, Marriott Hotels®, Westin®, Le Méridien®, Renaissance® Hotels, Sheraton®, Delta Hotels by MarriottSM, Marriott Executive Apartments®, Marriott Vacation Club®, Autograph Collection® Hotels, Tribute Portfolio™, Design Hotels™, Gaylord Hotels®, Courtyard®, Four Points® by Sheraton, SpringHill Suites®, Fairfield Inn & Suites®, Residence Inn®, TownePlace Suites®, AC Hotels by Marriott®, Aloft®, Element®, Moxy Hotels®, and Protea Hotels by Marriott®. The company also operates award-winning loyalty programs: Marriott Rewards®, which includes The Ritz-Carlton Rewards®, and Starwood Preferred Guest®. For more information, please visit our website at www.marriott.com, and for the latest company news, visit www.marriottnewscenter.com and @MarriottIntl.



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