

W Hotels Re-Ignites The What She Said Conversation
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Thought Leadership Platform to Join the Gender Equality Conversation in a Big Way with Expanded Lineup of Thought-Provoking Events Kicking off with Director Ava DuVernay at W Hollywood

NEW YORK, Feb. 23, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- It's time for women to speak up as never before. And, perhaps, most importantly, it's time for people to LISTEN to *What She Said*. W Hotels today announces an exciting next step for *What She Said*, the brand's popular initiative that celebrates femininity – in all its forms, nuances and glory. Here, femininity is defined by experience, not confined by gender. Since launching in 2016, *What She Said* has given a platform to icons of culture like Diane von Furstenberg, Jenna Lyons, Rachel Zoe, LeToya Luckett, Tig Notaro, Cheryl Hines, and NIIA, among others, with over 40 well-attended and stimulating *What She Said* events to date. Now, as conversations in our society evolve, so too will the *What She Said* platform, which will focus on providing safe spaces for conversation to drive progress in the gender equality movement by bringing in provocative speakers, cultivating community, and sparking conversation that inspires, educates, and enlightens. In addition to panels hosted with experts of industry around the world, W will host at least one intimate dinner each month, bringing captivating, behind-closed-doors conversations about modern issues of equality to the global stage through curated podcasts, videos and livestreamed content.

"W Hotels has always been a bold advocate and active participant in global conversations around equality," said Anthony Ingham, Global Brand Leader, W Hotels Worldwide. "The next iteration of *What She Said* will once again offer a global platform for essential conversations to be heard, navigating the challenges and triumphs of work, love, play and everything in between. This is a defining time for gender equality, not just in the U.S., and our global presence gives us the opportunity to foster meaningful discussions in a safe space, rooted in the idea that change comes from a place of understanding and positivity."

W kicks off the 2018 *What She Said* program on February 23 at W Hollywood as *What She Said* hands over the stage to powerhouse writer, producer, and director, Ava DuVernay. Spoken word poet, Olivia Gatwood, will start off the evening with a live performance followed by DuVernay who will welcome a private audience for an evening of honest discussion around work, life and femininity.

DuVernay has broken many boundaries throughout her award-winning career. She is the first African-American woman to win the U.S. Directing Award: Dramatic from the Sundance Film Festival for her film "Middle of Nowhere"; the first African-American woman nominated for a Golden Globe Award® for directing; and the first African-American woman director to have a film nominated for the Academy Award® for Best Picture (for her work on the Academy Award-winning film "Selma"). As the director of Disney's highly-anticipated "A Wrinkle in Time" DuVernay has reached another milestone as the first African-American woman to direct a live action film with a budget of more than \$100 million. She is a gifted storyteller and a hugely influential voice, inspiring millions around the world with her work and wisdom.

"We still have a lot of work to do. We have a long way to go before we reach a state of equality and platforms like *What She Said* are helping to do the work," said Ava DuVernay. "Like film, conversations like these can be a vehicle for empathy, a place to speak honestly about difficult aspects of society today and perhaps most importantly, a space to celebrate one another."

What She Said will continue the conversation each month at W hotels around the world covering a range of topics with industry experts in the fields of art, design, architecture, fashion, and fitness. Below are some highlights from the 2018 schedule:

- March 5, 2018: W Boston, Women in Fitness, conversation with Olympian Nastia Liukin and local celebrity chef and James Beard Award Winner, Jody Adams
- March 7, 2018: W Dubai – Al Habtoor City & W London – Leicester Square, International Women's Day celebration
- April 12, 2018: W Amsterdam, Design Panel with designers Antoinette van den Berg, Spijkers & Spijkers, Alexandra Frida, Bibi van der Velden and Loes Vrij
- May 12-20, 2018: W New York – Times Square, Women in Architecture, in partnership with [NYC Design Pavilion](#) and [NYC Design Week](#)

For more information, visit theangle.whotels.com/topic/what-she-said/.

About W Hotels Worldwide

Born from the bold attitude and 24/7 culture of New York City, W Hotels, part of Marriott International, Inc., has disrupted and redefined the hospitality scene for nearly two decades. Trailblazing its way around the globe, with over 50 hotels, W defies expectations and breaks the norms of traditional luxury wherever the iconic W sign lands. With a mission to fuel guests' lust for life, W ignites an obsessive desire to soak it in, live it up and hit repeat. The brand's provocative design, iconic Whatever/Whenever service and buzzing Living Rooms create an experience that is often copied but never matched. Innovative, inspiring and infectious, the brand's super-charged energy celebrates guests' endless appetite to discover what's new/next in each destination, to see more, feel more, go longer, stay later. W Hotels Worldwide is proud to participate in the industry's award-winning loyalty program, Starwood Preferred Guest®. Members can now link accounts with Marriott Rewards®, which includes The Ritz-Carlton Rewards® at members.marriott.com for instant elite status matching and unlimited points transfer. For more information on W Hotels, visit whotels.com/theangle or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

About Disney's "A Wrinkle in Time"

From visionary director Ava DuVernay comes Disney's "A Wrinkle in Time," an epic adventure based on Madeleine L'Engle's timeless classic which takes audiences across dimensions of time and space, examining the nature of darkness versus light and, ultimately, the triumph of love. Through one girl's transformative journey led by three celestial guides, we discover that strength comes from embracing one's individuality and that the best way to triumph over fear is to travel by one's own light.

Meg Murry is a typical middle school student struggling with issues of self-worth who just wants to fit in. The daughter of two world-renowned physicists, she is intelligent and uniquely gifted, as is Meg's younger brother, Charles Wallace, but she has yet to realize it for herself. Complicating matters is the mysterious disappearance of Mr. Murry, which has left Meg devastated and her mother broken-hearted. Charles Wallace introduces Meg and her fellow classmate Calvin to three celestial beings (Mrs. Which, Mrs. Whatsit and Mrs. Who) who have journeyed to Earth to help search for their father, and together they embark on their formidable quest. Travelling via a wrinkling of time and space known as tessering, they are transported to worlds beyond their imagination where they must confront a powerful evil force. To make it back home to Earth, Meg must face the darkness within herself in order to harness the strength necessary to defeat the darkness rapidly enveloping the Universe.

Directed by Oscar® nominee Ava DuVernay from a screenplay by Oscar winner Jennifer Lee and Jeff Stockwell based upon the beloved novel by Madeleine L'Engle, "A Wrinkle in Time" stars: two-time Academy Award® nominee Oprah Winfrey as Mrs. Which, Oscar winner Reese Witherspoon as Mrs. Whatsit, Emmy® nominee Mindy Kaling as Mrs. Who, Storm Reid as Meg Murry, Gugu Mbatha-Raw as Mrs. Murry, Michael Peña as Red with two-time Emmy winner Zach Galifianakis as the Happy Medium and Emmy nominee Chris Pine as Mr. Murry.

Produced by Jim Whitaker and Catherine Hand with Doug Merrifield and Adam Borba serving as executive producers, the film also boasts an impressive creative team featuring some of the most talented and skilled craft persons working today, including: Tobias Schliessler, ASC as director of photography, Naomi Shohan as production designer, Oscar®-nominee Spencer Averick as film editor, two-time Academy Award®-nominee Paco Delgado as costume designer with music by Ramin Djawadi.

"A Wrinkle in Time" opens nationwide on March 9, 2018.

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