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**41<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL MIAMI FILM FESTIVAL TO HONOR SHERYL LEE RALPH (PRECIOUS GEM AWARD) AND  
MICHAEL SHOWALTER (ART OF LIGHT AWARD)**

*Miami, FL (March 22, 2024)* – Today, the **Miami Film Festival**, produced by Miami Dade College, announced it will honor Emmy Award-winning actress **Sheryl Lee Ralph** and director, writer and producer **Michael Showalter** during the 2024 festival taking place from **April 5-14**. Ralph will receive the **Precious Gem Award** on Saturday, April 13, following a conversation about her career. Showalter will receive the **Art of Light Award** on Monday, April 8, following a screening of his latest film *The Idea of You*.

“We are so excited to add the incredible talents of Sheryl Lee Ralph and Michael Showalter to our slate of exceptional honorees for this year,” said **Miami Film Festival Programming Director Lauren Cohen**. “Both have made such outstanding contributions to their craft, and we know our audience will be enamored with their stories. We are so thrilled to be able to honor both Sheryl and Michael at the 2024 Miami Film Festival.”

In 2022, Ralph won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series for her portrayal of Barbara Howard on ABC’s hit comedy series *Abbott Elementary*. She was nominated again for the series’ second season. On stage, she is well known for her award-winning work and for creating the role of Deena Jones in the legendary Broadway musical *Dreamgirls*, which earned her Best Actress nods for Tony and Drama Desk Awards. Ralph made her feature film debut at 20 years old opposite Academy Award-winner Sidney Poitier in *A Piece of the Action*, which Poitier also directed. Other notable roles include *Mistress* with Robert De Niro, *To Sleep with Anger* with Danny Glover, *The Distinguished Gentleman* with Eddie Murphy, *Sister Act 2* with Whoopi Goldberg, *Moesha* and *Ray Donovan*. Miami Film Festival’s Precious Gem Award is the festival’s signature award, reserved for one-of-a-kind artists whose contributions to cinema are lasting and unforgettable. Past recipients of this award have included Penélope Cruz, Rita Moreno, Ryusuke Hamaguchi, Ramin Bahrani and Pedro Almodóvar.

Michael Showalter is a director, writer and producer whose most recent film, *The Idea of You*, starring Anne Hathaway and Nicholas Galitzine, is based on the best-selling novel of the same title. The film will be released globally by Amazon on May 2. His most recent release was *Spoiler Alert*, a Focus Features film adaptation of journalist Michael Ausiello’s 2017 best-selling memoir, starring Sally Field and Jim Parsons. Showalter also directed the two-time Oscar-winning film, *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*, starring Jessica Chastain who won Best Actress for her portrayal. Showalter’s 2017 film, *The Big Sick*, received an Oscar-nomination for its script written by Emily Gordon and Kumail Nanjiani. His additional feature credits include writing and directing *Hello, My Name Is Doris* starring Sally Field as well as directing and

producing the action-comedy *The Lovebirds* starring Kumail Nanjiani and Issa Rae. On the television side, Showalter recently directed and produced Hulu's *The Dropout*, starring Amanda Seyfried as Elizabeth Holmes for which she won Outstanding Lead Actress in a Limited Series. The show was nominated for six Emmy Awards including Showalter for Outstanding Directing. He also executive produced *I Love That For You*, a half-hour comedy series on Showtime, starring Molly Shannon and Vanessa Bayer and executive produced and directed *The Shrink Next Door*, for Apple TV+ starring Will Ferrell and Paul Rudd. He is the co-creator of *Wet Hot American Summer* and the hit HBO Max original series *Search Party* and serves as an executive producer on the CW series, *In the Dark*. The Festival's Art of Light Award is presented to cinematic artists whose exemplary work shines new wonders on the continuing evolution of motion pictures. The 2023 honoree was *Moonlight* Composer Nicholas Britell.

Ralph and Showalter will join previously announced honorees Molly Ringwald (Variety Creative Vanguard Award), Tom Hiddleston (Variety Virtuoso Award), Tony Goldwyn (Art of Light Award), Alison Brie (Art of Light Award) and Greg Kwedar (Impact Award). The 2024 Miami Film Festival will open with *Thelma*, directed by Josh Margolin and starring June Squibb, Fred Hechinger and Parker Posey with director Josh Margolin and producer Zoë Worth in attendance. The Festival will close with *Ezra*, directed by Tony Goldwyn, who will be in attendance on Saturday, April 13. The Festival will present three Marquee screenings for the films *Dear Jassi*, *Sing Sing* and *The Performance*, along with a Centerpiece screening of *The Idea of You*. This year's Festival will celebrate more than 180 feature narratives, documentaries, and short films of all genres, from over 31 countries worldwide, featuring ten World Premieres, ten North American Premieres, five U.S. Premieres, and 11 East Coast Premieres, and 42 Florida Premieres. The complete program is available at [www.miamifilmfestival.com](http://www.miamifilmfestival.com).

#### **About Miami Dade College's Miami Film Festival**

Celebrating cinema in two annual events, Miami Film Festival (41<sup>st</sup> annual edition April 5-14, 2024) and Miami Film Festival GEMS (November 2024), Miami Dade College's Miami Film Festival is considered the preeminent film festival for showcasing Ibero-American cinema in the U.S., and a major launch pad for all international and documentary cinema. The annual Festival welcomes more than 45,000 audience members and more than 400 filmmakers, producers, talent and industry professionals. It is the only major festival housed within a college or university. In the last five years, the Festival has screened films from more than 60 countries, including 300 World, International, North American, U.S. and East Coast Premieres. The Festival also offers unparalleled educational opportunities to film students and the community at large. For more information, visit [miamifilmfestival.com](http://miamifilmfestival.com) or call 305-237-FILM (3456).

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