



**Press/Media Contacts:**

**Shelley Spicer, Mill Valley Film Festival**  
415.526.5845; [sspicer@cafilm.org](mailto:sspicer@cafilm.org)

**Karen Larsen, Larsen Associates**  
415.957.1205; [karen@larsenassoc.com](mailto:karen@larsenassoc.com)

**Clara Franco, Hamilton Ink PR**  
415.381.8198; [clara@hamiltoninkPR.com](mailto:clara@hamiltoninkPR.com)  
(Above number and email are not for publication)

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**CELEBRATING 42 YEARS**

Showcasing the Best in Independent and World Cinema  
Thursday, October 3 – 13, 2019

**MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL WILL HONOR  
ANNA SERNER, CEO, SWEDISH FILM INSTITUTE,  
AT THE FESTIVAL'S MIND THE GAP SUMMIT IN OCTOBER**

SAN RAFAEL, CA (MAY 9, 2019) – The Mill Valley Film Festival (MVFF) will honor Anna Serner, CEO, Swedish Film Institute, with its Mind the Gap Award at its Festival in October. The award recognizes those persons whose work and leadership inspires the movement towards greater equity in film—Serner is recognized internationally as a gender equality in film production leader. In conjunction with honoring Serner, MVFF42 will produce a Swedish Focus of recent films from the country

Serner will also serve as the keynote speaker at the Festival's annual Mind the Gap Summit which takes place on Saturday, October 5, and will have "money" as its theme. The Swedish Film Institute, under Serner's leadership, published a report in 2018 entitled "[The Money Issue](#)" which explores how finances and investments in the film industry are distributed, and how that translates when it comes to the working conditions for male and female filmmakers.

"We hear frequently from women filmmakers that 'money' is a major issue for them. That includes film financing, pay equity and power dynamics," said Zoë Elton, MVFF director of programming and founder of MVFF's Mind the Gap gender equity initiative. "With this in mind, our annual Mind the Gap Summit will focus on these topics, offering women filmmakers a practical guide on how to improve in this area," Elton added.

For the past five years, MVFF has been leading the charge in festivals towards closing the gender equity gap in Hollywood and the rest of the global film industry by providing an inclusive platform for emerging and established women filmmakers and content.

In 2018, MVFF signed the Gender Parity Pledge, joining the likes of Cannes, Venice, and Toronto International Film Festivals, to work towards better gender representation and inclusion in its lineup, and increase transparency of its selection process by 2020. **Last year, out of 204 films, MVFF41 showcased 45% women directors throughout the 11-day Festival.**

**Anna Serner**

Anna Serner is the CEO of the Swedish Film Institute (SFI). She studied film theory and filmmaking and has a Master of Laws from Stockholm University. Before taking office at the Swedish Film Institute in 2011, Serner was CEO of the Advertising Association of Sweden, and Managing Director of the Swedish Media Publishers' Association, where she was active in public debate on freedom of speech and the media's role in society. Under her tenure the gender equality perspective permeates everything that is done at the Swedish Film Institute—from production funding to the recruitment of new personnel. One of the goals is to lay the foundation for gender equality in film production, a labour that moves forward with the aid of concrete action plans. In 2016, Serner presented the initiative "50/50 by 2020" at the Cannes Film Festival, aiming to raise international awareness regarding the issue of gender equality in film production, based on Sweden's prominent position.

**About the Mill Valley Film Festival**

Presented by the California Film Institute, the 41<sup>st</sup> Festival runs October 4 – 14, 2018. Locations this year include: CinéArts@Sequoia (Mill Valley), Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center (San Rafael), Cinemark's Century Theater Larkspur, Lark Theatre (Larkspur), and other theatres throughout the Bay Area. With a reputation for launching new films and creating awards season buzz, MVFF has earned a reputation as a "filmmakers' festival" by celebrating the best in American independent and world cinema alongside high profile and prestigious award contenders.

**About the California Film Institute**

The non-profit California Film Institute (CFI) celebrates and promotes film by presenting the annual Mill Valley Film Festival and DocLands Documentary Film Festival, exhibiting film year-round at the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, and building the next generation of filmmakers and audiences through CFI Education. CFI relies on the generosity of its community to sustain these core programs. The invaluable support of our sponsors, foundations, and individual donors ensures our continued success as we celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> year. For more information please visit [www.cafilm.org](http://www.cafilm.org).

**Mind the Gap**

Mind the Gap is the California Film Institute/Mill Valley Film Festival's gender equity initiative. Its goal is to screen 50% women-directed films at the festival by 2020. Our mission is to ensure women and their work in film is seen, heard and championed. Mind the Gap's sponsors include Delta Air Lines, Andalou Naturals, and Equator Coffee, and our film collaborators include the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, ReFrame, Film Fatales, and Women and Hollywood. Learn more at [www.mindthegapinfilm.com](http://www.mindthegapinfilm.com).

**Social Media**

#MVFF42, #MindtheGap

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