



**SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST ANNOUNCES KEYNOTE JESSICA BRILLHART AND ADDITIONAL FEATURED SPEAKERS**

*Elisabeth Moss, Trevor Noah, Kevin Hart, Brené Brown, Lance Bass, Busy Philipps, and more added to the Conference Lineup*

**Austin, Texas — November 27, 2018** — South by Southwest® (SXSW®) Conference and Festivals (March 8–17, 2019) has announced the addition of Film Keynote **Jessica Brillhart** and a new round of Featured Speakers to the 2019 programming lineup.

Among the Featured Speakers revealed today are Clovyr co-founder **Amber Baldet**; singer and actor **Lance Bass**; Black Girls CODE founder **Kimberly Bryant**; musician and activist **Laura Jane Grace**; puppeteer, director and producer **Frank Oz**; Backstage Capital founder **Arlan Hamilton**; actor and comedian **Kevin Hart**; philosopher and writer **Jaron Lanier**; actress and producer **Elisabeth Moss**; *The Daily Show* host **Trevor Noah**; actress and writer **Busy Philipps**; GSD&M chairman and co-founder **Roy Spence**; and more. Additionally, best-selling author and researcher **Brené Brown** has been added as the SXSW 2019 Opening Speaker.

Jessica Brillhart, founder of independent studio Vrai Pictures, is an immersive director, writer, and theorist. She was the Principal Filmmaker for VR at Google where she worked with engineers to develop Google Jump, a virtual reality live-action capture ecosystem. Brillhart joins previously-announced Keynotes **Joseph Lubin** (Interactive), **Shirley Manson** and **Lauren Mayberry** (Music), **Marti Noxon** (Film), and **Kevin Systrom** with **Josh Constine** (Interactive).

"A shining star in the immersive arts community, Jessica Brillhart is an early explorer trying to define storytelling in the immersive world and she's spearheaded early innovation in creating stories using VR, AR, and AI," said Janet Pierson, Director of Film. "We are excited to share her perspectives on this exciting field, as well as from our many esteemed Featured Speakers in entertainment, business and technology."

SXSW Conference programming is organized into 25 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.

## Keynote

**Jessica Brillhart** (Film) — Jessica Brillhart is an immersive director, writer, and theorist. She's the founder of the independent studio, Vrai Pictures. Previously, Jessica was the Principal Filmmaker for VR at Google where she worked with engineers to develop Google Jump, a virtual reality live-action capture ecosystem. Since then, Jessica has made a range of highly acclaimed VR experiences, working with such entities as NASA, the Philharmonia Orchestra in London, Google's Artists and Machine Intelligence program, the Montreal Canadiens, and the Weather Channel. In 2017, Jessica was heralded by MIT Technology Review as an innovator and pioneer in the field of virtual reality filmmaking and immersive entertainment.

## Featured Speakers

**Amber Baldet** (Blockchain & Cryptocurrency) — Amber Baldet is co-founder and CEO of Clovyr, a company reshaping how businesses connect to each other and the world's data. Having previously led JPMorgan's blockchain efforts and appearing on 2017's *Fortune's* 40 Under 40 list of the most influential young people in business, she “handily bridges the divide between the Wall Street and crypto sets.” Baldet also serves on the Board of the Zcash Foundation, a non-profit dedicated to building Internet payment and privacy infrastructure for the public good.

**Lance Bass** (Music Industry & Culture) — Lance Bass is the quintessential illustration of a highly successful and driven jack-of-all-trades: singer, host, actor, producer, writer, entrepreneur, philanthropist, and cosmonaut. Beyond his fame as a member of the phenomenally successful group \*NSYNC, where the group sold an impressive 80 million plus records worldwide, Bass has made himself a household name. Producing is his true passion with several films (documentaries and features) and television shows under his belt including: *Boy Band Con*, *Lance Loves Michael-E! special*, *Celebrity Home Raiders*, *Kidnapped for Christ*, *Mississippi: I Am*, *The Grand*, *Lovewrecked* and *On the Line*.

**Brené Brown** (Social & Global Impact) — Brené Brown is a research professor at the University of Houston where she holds the Huffington Foundation – Brené Brown Endowed Chair at The Graduate College of Social Work. She has spent the past two decades studying courage, vulnerability, shame, and empathy and is the author of the #1 *New York Times* bestsellers: *The Gifts of Imperfection*, *Daring Greatly*, *Rising Strong*, *Braving the Wilderness*, and *Dare to Lead*. Brené Brown will be the SXSW 2019 Opening Speaker.

**Kimberly Bryant** (Entrepreneurship & Startups) — Kimberly Bryant is the Founder and CEO of Black Girls CODE, a non-profit organization dedicated to “changing the face of technology” by introducing girls of color (ages 7-17) to the field of technology and computer science with a concentration on entrepreneurial concepts. Prior to starting Black Girls CODE, Kimberly enjoyed a successful 20+ year professional career in the pharmaceutical and biotech industries as an Engineering Manager in a series of technical leadership roles for various Fortune 50 companies

such as Genentech, Merck, and Pfizer. Since 2011 Kimberly has helped Black Girls CODE grow from a local grassroots initiative serving only the Bay Area, to an international organization with fourteen chapters across the U.S. and in Johannesburg, South Africa. Black Girls CODE has currently reached over 15,000 students and continues to grow and thrive.

***A Better Future Through Digital Health*** Featured Session (Health & MedTech) — The U.S. health care system is big, complex, at times difficult to navigate, and expensive. The good news is that a fix is within our grasp: It's digital, and consumers are willing to embrace it as long as it meets their needs and provides the level of quality they expect. Delivering this requires a full-on consumer-centric approach. Join **Kevin Hart** (actor and comedian), **David Ko** (President and COO, Rally Health, Inc.), **Sarah Martin** (VP, Product and Consumer Innovation at BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina) and **Vickie Strickland** (Director, Health Strategy & Resources Delta Air Lines) to learn their strategies for advancing the promise of digital health.

***Cannabis and Wellness: The Body and Beyond*** Featured Session (Cannabusiness) — This session will explore the potential of cannabis to contribute to not only physical, but also emotional, mental and spiritual well being. From **Ricky Williams'** (Former Heisman trophy winner and NFL running back) experience, the most profound effect that cannabis has had on his life has been spiritual — helping him find his purpose. Williams joins **Jess Dugan** (The Oil Plant, Inc.), **Dr. Michele Ross** (CEO of Infused Health) and **John Salley** (Former NBA player) for a conversation about how the medicinal benefits of marijuana have now catapulted cannabis in the mainstream, but all holistic forms of medicine recognize that in order to maintain physical health, we must also attend to the health of our psyches.

**Troy Dayton** (Cannabusiness) — Dayton co-founded cannabis investment and research firm The Arcview Group in 2010, and serves as CEO. Arcview created the Arcview Investor Network where more than 1200 high net-worth investors have pumped more than \$200 million into 190+ cannabis-related ventures and raised more than \$3 million for the legalization effort. Arcview also publishes The State of Legal Marijuana Markets, the most-cited market data and analysis report on the industry. Arcview co-founded Cannasure Insurance Services in 2011 and launched Canopy, a business accelerator in 2015. Dayton is an elected board member of the Marijuana Policy Project and is a founding board member of the National Cannabis Industry Association. *Fortune Magazine* named him as one of the top 7 most powerful people in the cannabis industry.

**Laura Jane Grace** (Music Industry & Culture) — To say musician, author and activist Laura Jane Grace has had a defiant career would be the understatement of the year. Whether being accused of leaving the DIY punk scene to pursue a major label career over a decade ago, or courageously challenging people's conceptions of gender identity with a bombshell Rolling Stone article, Grace has remained a daring and influential cultural figure in her over 20+ years of creating dynamic art across various mediums. Sure, she's bound to worry some fans with her decision to press pause on Against Me! to release a more intimate singer-songwriter leaning

solo album under the name Laura Jane Grace & the Devouring Mothers, but her artistic motivation cast her determination in steel.

**Arlan Hamilton** (Entrepreneurship & Startups) — Arlan Hamilton is a remarkable entrepreneur who built a venture capital fund from the ground up while homeless. She is the Founder and Managing Partner of Backstage Capital, a venture capital firm dedicated to minimizing funding disparities in tech by investing in high-potential founders who are people of color, women, and/or LGBT. Started in 2015, Backstage has now invested nearly \$5M into 100 startups led by underestimated founders and has been featured in *Forbes*, *Fast Company*, *Fortune*, *Wall Street Journal*, *CNN Money*, *Inc.*, *Entrepreneur*, and *Quartz*.

**Chris Lee** (Music Industry & Culture) — Since joining SM Entertainment's A&R department in 2005, Chris Lee has played a visionary role in the evolution of Asia's leading entertainment agency. He made a name for himself by developing SM's peerless production system, which involves a global network of more than 900 hit songwriters (from legends like Teddy Riley to pop sensations like Bruno Mars). Lee's efforts introduced the songcamp model to K-pop, setting a new precedent for the Asian music industry as a whole. Lee takes a similarly hands-on approach to nearly every facet of SM's prodigious output, and fostering top global acts like EXO, Super Junior, Red Velvet, and NCT. As a member of SM Entertainment Group's board of directors, Lee is actively involved in formulating fresh corporate development strategies and directions.

**Jaron Lanier** (Intelligent Future) — Jaron Lanier is known as godfather of Virtual Reality, since he named it, had the first startup, and built many of the first app examples including surgical simulation. He's received a lifetime career award from the IEEE as well as the German Peace Prize for Books and many other awards. He was named one of tech's 25 icons of the last 25 years by *Wired* and is on lots of other fancy lists. He writes books and thinks social media is harming the world.

**Amy Margolis** (Cannabusiness) — Amy Margolis has been a lawyer for more than 16 years and is the founder of the Oregon Cannabis Association. She frequently advises both businesses and investors on deploying capital in the cannabis space, multi-jurisdictional growth, public offerings and every other stage of business and corporate development. Margolis is also the founder of The Initiative, a business accelerator for female entrepreneurs, to train and fund women in the cannabis space.

**Elisabeth Moss** (Entertainment Influencers) — Elisabeth Moss can soon be seen in Alex Ross Perry's *HER SMELL* and Jordan Peele's *Us*, both of which will be opening theatrically in March of 2019. Moss is currently starring in the Emmy Award-winning Hulu drama series *The Handmaid's Tale*, based on the acclaimed Margaret Atwood novel of the same name, on which she also serves as a producer. Among the many honors and accolades she has received are Emmy and Golden Globe Awards for Best Actress in a Drama Series and Best Drama Series.

Other upcoming credits include *The Kitchen* opposite Melissa McCarthy and Tiffany Haddish and *Shirley* with Michael Stuhlbarg, which she also produced.

**Trevor Noah and The Daily Show “News Team” Panel Hard with Jake Tapper** Featured Session (Media & Journalism) — CNN Anchor & Chief Washington Correspondent **Jake Tapper** sits down with *Daily Show* host **Trevor Noah** and correspondents **Ronny Chieng, Michael Kosta, Desi Lydic, Dulcé Sloan, Roy Wood Jr.** and **Jaboukie Young-White** to panel harder than anyone has ever paneled before. They’ll discuss how today’s fast-paced media cycle has changed (and keeps changing!) the late-night comedy landscape. *The Daily Show* team will offer an inside look at how they tackle politics, race and social issues on the show. And they’ll also dive into how both their digital team and Emmy Award-winning series “Between the Scenes” lend a fresh perspective to the larger conversation that happens with their audience.

**Frank Oz** (Entertainment Influencers) — Frank is a four-time Emmy winner and recipient of The Art Director’s Guild Award, The Comedy Awards’ Creative Achievement Award, Saturn Lifetime Achievement Award, George Foster Peabody award, and others. He’s performed with *The Muppets* and on the *Star Wars* Films. The dozen feature films he’s directed include *Little Shop of Horrors, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, In & Out, The Score, and Death at a Funeral.*

**Busy Philipps and Hillary Kerr** (Entertainment Influencers) — Busy Philipps is an actress best known for roles in cult TV classics like *Dawson’s Creek, Freaks and Geeks, Cougar Town, ER,* and most recently HBO’s *Vice Principals*. She has appeared in fan-favorite films such as *Made of Honor, I Don’t Know How She Does It, He’s Just Not That Into You, White Chicks,* and *The Gift*. She also was one of the writers of the hit film *Blades of Glory*. In fall 2018, her late-night talk show *Busy Tonight* premiered on E!. Hillary Kerr is the co-founder and Chief Content Officer of Clique Brands, a content, commerce, and consumer brands company that includes WhoWhatWear.com, Byrdie.com, MyDomaine.com, CollegeFashionista.com and the Who What Wear Collection.

**Sharks Everywhere! How We Multiplatform Shark Week** Featured Session (Making Film & Episodics) — Every year, Discovery Channel brings Shark Week to audiences on every possible platform and device, from cable TV to Snapchat to social to connected devices to plush toys and Walmart displays. Two of the principal creators / architects of the Shark Week Experience, **Fred Graver** (Senior Vice President, Digital Content and Social for Discovery Digital) and **Scott Lewers** (Executive Vice President of Multi-Platform Programming and Digital Media for Discovery and Science Channels) bring you behind the scenes in the creation, distribution and community-building around Shark Week. Includes linear programming, digital production, sponsorships and partnerships and a lot of shark tales!

**Roy Spence** (Future 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.

**Bruce Sterling** (Intelligent Future) — Bruce Sterling is an author, journalist, editor, and critic. Best known for his ten science fiction novels, he also writes short stories, book reviews, design criticism, opinion columns, and introductions for books ranging from Ernst Juenger to Jules Verne. His nonfiction works include *The Hacker Crackdown: Law and Disorder on The Electronic Frontier*, *Tomorrow Now: Envisioning The Next Fifty Years*, *Shaping Things*, and *The Epic Struggle of the Internet Of Things*. His most recent book is a collection of Italian fantascienza stories, *Utopia Pirata: I Racconti Di Bruno Argento*.

**Kerry Trainor** (Music Industry & Culture) -- Kerry Trainor is the Chief Executive Officer of SoundCloud, leading the strategic direction of the platform's creator-first initiatives. Founded in 2007, SoundCloud is the world's largest open audio platform, empowering the world's audio creators with the best tools, services and resources to build and grow their careers. Since Trainor joined, SoundCloud has rolled out a number of new services and features, including most recently the expansion of SoundCloud Premier, its direct monetization program, integrations with major DJ applications, a partnership with Dubset, and more, benefiting its community of more than 20 million creators globally.

**Damon Wayans Jr. and Kristopher B. Jones** (Entrepreneurship & Startups) — In this session, actor/comedian Damon Wayans, Jr and serial entrepreneur and investor Kristopher B. Jones will explore the convergence of Silicon Valley and Hollywood. In 2016 Wayans and Jones founded Special Guest App to drive efficiency into the process of booking non-managed and emerging talent. Backed by Silicon Valley investors, including Jeremy Liew of Lightspeed Venture Partners (first investor in Snapchat), Special Guest is determined to democratize the way that anyone, anywhere discovers and books live entertainment.

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. An essential destination for global professionals, the event 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 2019 will take place March 8-17, 2019. For more information, please visit [sxsw.com](http://sxsw.com). To register for the event, please visit [sxsw.com/attend](http://sxsw.com/attend).

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Press Contacts:

Brett Cannon

Jody Arlington

Elizabeth Derczo  
Heather Kaplan  
[press@sxsw.com](mailto:press@sxsw.com)  
512-467-7979