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ARTSEMERSON CONTINUES ITS COMMITMENT TO FILM PROGRAMMING THROUGH THE 2021/2022 SEASON

SHARED STORIES AND PROJECTING CONNECTIONS INITIATIVES,
BRIGHT LIGHTS FILM SERIES, BOSTON LATINO INTERNATIONAL FILM
FESTIVAL AND BOSTON ASIAN AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL ARE AMONG
CONTINUING PROGRAMMING PARTNERSHIPS

[Boston, MA – Thursday, September 23, 2021] – ArtsEmerson, Boston’s leading presenter of contemporary world theater and film and the professional presenting and producing organization housed at Emerson College, is excited to announce it will continue to foster film partnerships and will continue its virtual streaming support on the ArtsEmerson virtual platform. Programming includes film screenings in partnership with Emerson College’s Bright Lights Film Series, the Boston Latino International Film Festival (September 24 – October 03), and the Boston Asian American Film Festival (October 20 – 24) with extended streaming of short films through Oct. 31.

Returning in 2022 will be **Shared Stories**, a BIPOC film series and joint effort between ArtsEmerson and the Boston Asian American Film Festival (BAAFF), **Boston Latino International Film Festival** (BLIFF), and the **Roxbury International Film Festival** (RoxFilm), which aims to build conversation and unite diverse communities through the power of cinema. **Projecting Connections**, a series using film as a lens to reflect on the vast lived experiences of the Chinese in the Greater Boston Area, is designed to build and foster meaningful community conversation, will also be back in the new year, along with partnerships with **Baltic Film Festival** in February 2022, **Wicked Queer | Boston’s LGBTQ+ Film Festival** in April 2022, and **RoxFilm** in June 2022.

To see a list of upcoming events, please visit [ArtsEmerson’s website](#).

For production stills and other media kit assets for the 2021/22 season, click [here](#).

BLIFF 2021 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All BLIFF films, with the exception of the Student Shorts Program and Fruits of Labor, are \$10, tickets can be purchased [here](#).

Rita Moreno: Just a Girl Who Decided to Go for It

Directed by Mariem Pérez Riera

\$10 | 90 Minutes | PG-13

FRI, SEP 24 @ 6:00 PM –

SUN, OCT 03 @ 10:00 PM

RITA MORENO: JUST A GIRL WHO DECIDED TO GO FOR IT illuminates the humor and the grace of Moreno, as well as lesser-known struggles faced on her path to stardom, including pernicious Hollywood sexism and abuse, a toxic relationship with Marlon Brando, and serious depression a year before she emerged an Oscar winner. Moreno's talent and resilience triumphed over adversity, as she broke barriers, fought for representation and forged the path for new generations of artists.

Q&A with the producer to follow.

Dreams of Chonta

Directed by Monica Cohen

\$10 | 87 Minutes | All Ages

In Spanish with English subtitles

FRI, SEP 24 @ 6:00 PM –

SUN, OCT 03 @ 10:00 PM

DREAMS OF CHONTA follows the story of Diego Obregon, an Afro-Colombian musician who came to the United States 16 years ago in search of his dreams. He made the ultimate sacrifice by leaving his family behind and living a solitary life.

This is not just another immigrant story focused on terror, inequity and policy; this is a story about the hopes and dreams of an artist, the only ambassador of his music and his culture in NYC. People have never been this close to the life of an undocumented immigrant whose struggles go beyond himself and his family to create a bridge between 2 worlds. This story honors the wealth and the ripples of change that immigration creates.

Q&A with the director to follow.

Perfume de Gardenias

Directed by Macha Colón

\$10 | 97 Minutes

In Spanish with English subtitles

FRI, SEP 24 @ 6:00 PM –

SUN, OCT 03 @ 10:00 PM

Perfume de Gardenias is the debut film from the renowned queer Afro-Puerto Rican singer, multi disciplinary artist and filmmaker Macha Colón. The dark comedy that captures the idiosyncrasies and spirit of a nation adept at creating novel strategies for laughter in the face of adversity, tells the story of Isabel – played by veteran theater and television actress Luz María Rondón in her first movie-starring role — an elderly woman living in a middle-class neighborhood in Puerto Rico, who has just become a widow after having cared for her husband until his last breaths. However, her recent loss becomes a blessing when she crafts a beautiful custom-made funeral for him that catches the attention of Toña (Sharon Riley), a pious but domineering woman who involves herself in local funerals.

Q&A with the director to follow.

Los Hermanos/The Brothers

Directed by Marcia Jarmel and Ken Schneider

\$10 | 84 Minutes | All Ages

In English and Spanish with English subtitles

FRI, SEP 24 @ 6:00 PM –

SUN, OCT 03 @ 10:00 PM

Virtuoso Afro-Cuban-born brothers—violinist Ilmar and pianist Aldo—live on opposite sides of a geopolitical chasm a half-century wide. Tracking their parallel lives in New York and Havana, their poignant reunion, and their momentous first performances together, *Los Hermanos/The Brothers* offers a nuanced, often startling view of estranged nations through the lens of music and family. Featuring an electrifying, genre-bending score, composed by Cuban Aldo López Gavilán, performed with his American brother, Ilmar, and with guest appearances by maestro Joshua Bell and the Harlem Quartet. Q&A with the filmmakers to follow.

Women is Losers

Directed by Lissette Feliciano

\$10 | 84 Minutes | PG-13

FRI, SEP 24 @ 6:00 PM –

SUN, OCT 03 @ 10:00 PM

In 1960's San Francisco, bright and talented Catholic school girl Celina Guerrero (Lorenza Izzo) survives a difficult home life by following the rules. That is until an indiscretion creates a series of devastating consequences. As Celina faces the compounded obstacles of being young and alone, she sets out to rise above the oppression of poverty and invest in a future that sets new precedents for the time. Inspired by real women and the Janis Joplin song of the same title, *WOMEN IS LOSERS* world premiered at the 2021 SXSW Film Festival, where it finished as one of the most-watched of the festival.

Q&A with the director to follow.

Student Shorts Program

Directors: Ethan Almonte, Pedro Aponte, Chris Carchipulla, Lena Faeskorn, Anaisha Foster, Michael Rodriguez

FREE | 60 Minutes | All Ages

FRI, SEP 24 @ 6:00 PM –

SUN, OCT 03 @ 10:00 PM

BLIFF 2021 features an hour of selected student shorts, including non-fiction and experimental films, for example, produced by high school and college students. The program will include "Pandemic Duck-Rabbit," a poignant documentary filmed by a high school student over the course of an entire year—as well as "Safe and Unsocial" and "Facade," two thought-provoking experimental films from R2R Filmschool kids.

Viewing of this video is available only to those in New England.

Fruits of Labor

Directed by Emily Cohen Ibañez

FREE | 78 Minutes

Tickets will become available WED SEP 29 at 12PM ET.

WED, SEP 29 @ 7:00 PM –

THU, SEP 30 @ 7:00 PM

Co-presented with Bright Lights Film Series – *Free Screening Event*

Ashley Solis is a high school senior who must divide her time between school and supporting her family as a second-generation Mexican American. Located in a California working class town, the harshness of agricultural labor in the strawberry fields shares a stark contrast with the beautiful nature and relationship to her spiritual ancestral upbringing. Director Emily Cohen Ibañez documents Ashley's life guided by the spirit world through her hardships and joys in modern America.

Live Q&A with the director on September 30.

Missing in Brooks County

Directed by Lisa Molomot and Jeff Bemiss

\$10 | 81 Minutes | PG-13

In English & Spanish with English subtitles

THU, SEP 30 @ 6:00 PM –

SUN, OCT 03 @ 10:00 PM

70 miles north of the Mexican-US border lies Brooks County, Texas – a haunted, inhospitable place where thousands of immigrants have gone missing or died over the past decade. Missing in Brooks County follows the journey of two families who arrive in Brooks County to look for their loved ones, only to find a mystery that deepens at every turn. Stuck between the jurisdiction of border agents, local law enforcement, and cartels, the county is a barren landscape designed as a deterrent to illegal crossings. Despite this tactical designation, the municipality has never been provided the resources to process the remains of the hundreds of undocumented immigrants who succumb to dehydration and exposure each year. Missing in Brooks County is a potent reminder that these deaths are more than a statistic—each represents a living human being, loved by their family, now lost.

Q&A with the filmmakers to follow.

My Darling Supermarket

Directed by Tali Yankelevich

\$10 | 78 Minutes | All Ages

In Portuguese with English subtitles

THU, SEP 30 @ 6:00 PM –

SUN, OCT 03 @ 10:00 PM

“Grocery store employees, today’s essential workers, get star treatment in My Darling Supermarket (made prior to the pandemic). Set within a bright, colorful supermercado in São Paulo, Brazil, this charming, funny documentary glides through a seemingly endless array of vibrantly designed shelves and displays, but it’s the store’s employees who take center stage. Rodrigo (in bread) discusses quantum physics and parallel universes; Santo (a forklift operator) builds video game cities; a security officer tracks possible shoplifters on closed circuit TVs (“Two suspects near the condensed milk!”); Ivan (a baker) is into Manga cosplay; and then there’s the artist who lovingly paints the prices. A panoply of individuals with fears, hopes, and questions about their place in the universe are celebrated in a quirky portrait that juxtaposes their idiosyncrasies with the assumed mundanity of bringing food to our table...” —Film Forum

Q&A with the director to follow.

On the Divide

Directed by Maya Cueva and Leah Galant

\$10 | 80 Minutes | PG-13

In English & Spanish with English subtitles

THU, SEP 30 @ 6:00 PM –

SUN, OCT 03 @ 10:00 PM

ON THE DIVIDE follows the story of three Latinx people living in McAllen, Texas who, despite their views, are connected by the most unexpected of places: the last abortion clinic on the U.S./Mexico border. As threats to the clinic and their personal safety mount, our three characters are forced to make decisions they never could have imagined.

Q&A with the filmmakers to follow.

Viewing of this video is available only to those in New England.

BRIGHT LIGHTS 2021 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Bright Lights seeks to create an environment where visual media is not only viewed and appreciated but where a dialogue is fostered and a community of media makers, academics and aficionados are engaged and supported.

All events are FREE and reservations become available the afternoon on the day which the event starts streaming. More info can be found at [ArtsEmerson’s website](#).

On These Grounds

Directed by Garrett Zevgetis

Free | 108 minutes | SJ, POC, EC (racial and carceral justice)

SEP 22 – 23, 2021

An explosive video goes viral, showing a white school resource officer in South Carolina pull a Black teenager from her school desk and throw her across the floor. An outraged nation divides over who is at fault and what role race played in the incident. Healer-Activist Vivian Anderson uproots her life in NYC and moves to South Carolina to help the girl and dismantle the system behind the "Assault at Spring Valley". To contextualize this incident, geographer Janae Davis treks the surrounding swamps to unearth the overgrown and neglected homes of formerly enslaved people of African descent, drawing a throughline connecting trauma from the past to present. Against the backdrop of a racial reckoning and its deep historical roots, one incident illuminates a persistent American power structure.

Co-presented with Roxbury International Film Festival, the Independent Film Festival Boston, and the Emerson College Alumni Association

SEP 23 @ 7PM ET

Join for a live 45-minute moderated discussion with director Garrett Zevgetis (MA '05), executive producer Kevin Bright, cinematographer Christopher Lewis Dawkins, and activist Vivian Anderson.

Free Event

Reserve tickets [here](#)

Fruits of Labor

Directed by Emily Cohen Ibañez

Free | 78 minutes | SJ, W, POC (immigration, gender and sexuality, racial, environmental and economic justice)

SEP 29 – 20, 2021

A Mexican-American teenager dreams of graduating high school, when increased ICE raids in her community threaten to separate her family and force her to become the breadwinner for her family. She works long days in the strawberry fields and the night shift at a food processing factory. Set in an agricultural town on the central coast of California, *Fruits of Labor* is a coming of age story about an American teenager traversing the seen and unseen forces that keep her family trapped in poverty. A lyrical meditation on adolescence, nature and ancestral forces, the film asks, what does it mean to come into one's power as a working young woman of color in the wealthiest nation in the world?

Co-presented as part of the Boston Latino International Film Festival with the Roxbury International Film Festival, the Boston Women's Film Festival and SEIU local 888

SEP 30 @ 7pm ET

Join for a live 45-minute moderated discussion with producer and director Emily Cohen Ibañez and protagonist Ashley Solis Pavon.

Free Event

Tickets will become available WED SEP 29 at 12PM ET

A Glitch in the Matrix

Directed by Rodney Ascher

Free | 108 minutes | D (mental health and disability justice)

OCT 06 – 02, 2021

What if we are living in a simulation, and the world as we know it is not real? To tackle this mind-bending idea, acclaimed filmmaker Rodney Ascher uses a noted speech from Philip K. Dick to dive down the rabbit hole of science, philosophy, and conspiracy theory. Leaving no stone unturned in exploring the unprovable, the film uses contemporary cultural touchstones like *The Matrix*, interviews with real people shrouded in digital avatars, and a wide array of voices, expert and amateur alike. If simulation theory is not science fiction but fact, and life is a video game being played by some unknowable entity, then who are we, really? *A Glitch in the Matrix* attempts to find out.

Co-presented with the Boston Underground Film Festival, Boston Sci Fi film fest, and the Independent Film Festival Boston

OCT 07 @ 7PM ET

Join for a live 45-minute moderated discussion with writer and director Rodney Ascher and protagonist Paul Gude.

Free Event

Tickets will become available WED OCT 06 at 12PM ET

United States Vs Reality Winner

Directed by Sonia Kennebeck

Free | 94 minutes | Free | 108 minutes | D (mental health and disability justice)

OCT 13 – 14, 2021

A state of secrets and a ruthless hunt for whistleblowers – this is the story of 25-year-old NSA contractor Reality Winner who disclosed a document about Russian election interference to the media and became the number one leak target of the Trump administration.

Co-presented as part of the Boston Women's Film Festival and the Emerson College Alumni Association

OCT 14 @ 7PM ET

Join for a live 45-minute moderated discussion with director Sonia Kennebeck and producer Ines Hoffman Kanna (MA '96) to follow.

Free Event

Tickets will become available WED OCT 13 at 12PM ET

End of the Line: The Women of Standing Rock

Directed by Shannon Kring

Free | 87 minutes | SJ, POC, W (gender and sexuality, racial, environmental and economic justice)

OCT 20 - 21, 2021

A group of indigenous women risk their lives to stop the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline, which jeopardizes their land, water and entire way of life. Despite the desecration of their ancient burial and prayer sites, violent confrontations, and limited resources, these women refuse to back down. Calls for change reverberate nationally as the women of Standing Rock lead a tireless effort to defend their right to clean water and rich heritage.

Co-presented with the Boston Women's Film Festival, the Roxbury International Film Festival and the Living on Earth Podcast

OCT 21 @ 7PM ET

Join for a live 45-minute moderated discussion with director Shannon Kring.

Free Event

Tickets will become available WED OCT 20 at 12PM ET

Malni-Towards the Ocean, Towards the Shore

Directed by Sky Hopinka

Free | 82 minutes | SJ, POC (racial and environmental justice)

OCT 27 -28, 2021

This film follows Sweetwater Sahme and Jordan Mercier's wanderings through each of their worlds as they wander through and contemplate the afterlife, rebirth, and the place in-between. Spoken mostly in chinuk wawa, their stories are departures from the Chinookan origin of death myth, with its distant beginning and circular shape.

Co-presented with the Roxbury International Film Festival, the Living on Earth podcast, DocYard and Emerson Contemporary Gallery

OCT 28 @ 7PM ET

Join for a live 45-minute moderated discussion with writer and director Sky Hopinka to follow.

Free Event

Tickets will become available WED OCT 27 at 12PM ET

Soy Subana

Directed by Ivaylo Getov and Jeremy Ungar

Free | 96 minutes | POC, I, EC (racial, gender and sexuality and immigration justice)

NOV 03 – 04, 2021

In 2017, the all-female Cuban quartet, Vocal Vidas, were invited to perform their first show in America, just as US-Cuba relations were closing. What began as a concert became a journey across physical and ideological borders: an affirmation of the connective power of music, even in the most uncertain times.

Co-presented with the Boston Latino International Film Festival, Roxbury International Film Festival, and the Emerson College Alumni Association

NOV 04 @ 7PM ET

Join for a live 45-minute moderated discussion with directors Jeremy Ungar and Ivaylo Getov and producer Robin Miller Ungar ('74).

Free Event

Tickets will become available WED NOV 04 at 12PM ET

Not Going Quietly

Directed by Nicholas Bruckman

Free | 96 minutes | D (mental health and disability and economic justice)

NOV 10 – 11, 2021

A rising star in progressive politics and a new father, 32-year-old Ady Barkan's life is upended when he is diagnosed with ALS. But after a confrontation with powerful Senator Jeff Flake on an airplane goes viral, catapulting him to national fame, Ady and a motley crew of activists ignite a once-in-a-generation political movement called "Be a Hero." Together, they barnstorm across the country and empower people to confront their elected officials with emotional, personal stories to demand healthcare justice, and Ady holds groundbreaking interviews with Joe Biden, Kamala Harris, Bernie Sanders, and Elizabeth Warren. Through his journey, Ady discovers that collective action and speaking truth to power offers hope for his family and millions of others.

Co-presented with the ReelAbilities Boston Film Festival, SEIU local 888 and Boston Jewish Film

NOV 11 @ 7PM ET

Join for a live 45-minute moderated discussion with director Nicholas Bruckman and activist Liz Jaff.

Free Event

Tickets will become available WED NOV 11 at 12PM ET

No Ordinary Man

Directed by Aisling Chin-Yee and Chase Joynt

Free | 83 minutes | SJ, W, LGBTQ, POC (gender and sexuality justice)

NOV 17 – 18, 2021

American jazz musician Billy Tipton developed a reputable touring and recording career in the mid-twentieth century, along with his band The Billy Tipton Trio. After his death in the late 80s, it was revealed that Tipton was assigned female at birth, and his life was swiftly reframed as the story of an ambitious woman passing as a man in pursuit of a music career. The genre-defying documentary *No Ordinary Man* seeks to correct that misrepresentation by collaborating with trans artists. As they collectively celebrate Tipton's story as a musician living his life according to his own terms, they paint a portrait of a trans culture icon.

Part of Trans Awareness Week

Co-presented with Wicked Queer: The Boston LGBT Film Festival and the Boston Women's Film Festival

NOV 18 @ 7PM ET

Join for a live 45-minute moderated discussion with writer and directors Aisling Chin-Yee and Chase Joynt to follow.

Free Event

Tickets will become available WED NOV 17 at 12PM ET

No Straight Lines: The Rise of Queer Comics

Directed by Vivian Kleiman

Free | 79 minutes | SJ, W, LGBTQ, D, POC (gender and sexuality and racial justice)

DEC 01 – 02, 2022

No Straight Lines tells the story of five scrappy and pioneering cartoonists who depicted everything from the AIDS crisis, coming out, and same-sex marriage, to themes of race, gender and disability. They tackled the humor in queer lives in a changing world, and the everyday pursuits of love, sex and community. Their work is funny, smart, and profound, and provides a unique, uncensored window into LGBTQ lives from the 1970s onward, beginning at a time in which there was no other genuine queer storytelling in popular culture. Equally engaging are their personal journeys, as they, against all odds, helped build a queer comics underground that has been able to grow and evolve in remarkable ways.

Co-presented with Wicked Queer: The Boston LGBT Film Festival and the Boston Women's Film Festival

Join for a live 45-minute moderated discussion with producer director Vivian Kleiman and comic artists Rupert Kinnard and Jennifer Camper.

Free Event

Tickets will become available WED DEC 01 at 12PM ET

The Gig is Up

Directed by Shannon Walsh

Free | 88 minutes | W, I, POC (economic and environmental justice)

DEC 15 – 16, 2021

From delivering food and driving ride shares to tagging images for AI, millions of people around the world are finding work task by task online. The gig economy is worth over 5 trillion USD globally, and growing. And yet the stories of the workers behind this tech revolution have gone largely neglected.

Who are the people in this shadow workforce? *The Gig is Up* brings their stories into the light. Lured by the promise of flexible work hours, independence, and control over time and money, workers from around the world have found a very different reality. Work conditions are often dangerous, pay often changes without notice, and workers can effectively be fired through deactivation or a bad rating. Through an engaging global cast of characters, *The Gig is Up* reveals how the magic of technology we are being sold might not be magic at all.

Co-presented with the Independent Film Festival Boston, the Boston Sc-fi Film Festival, the Boston Women's Film Festival, the Living on Earth podcast and SEIU Local 888

DEC 16 @ 7PM ET

Join for a live 45-minute moderated discussion with writer and director Shannon Walsh.

Free Event

Tickets will become available WED DEC 15 at 12PM ET

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Boston Latino International Film Festival (BLIFF)

Since its inception in 2001, the Boston Latino International Film Festival (BLIFF) has been committed to using the power of film to break stereotypes, bring cultures and communities together and reveal the complex issues that affect the Latinx community in the United States, Latin America and Spain.

BLIFF is sponsored in part by ArtsEmerson, BASE, Bright Lights Film Series, Boston Cultural Council, El Planeta, and the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Bright Lights Film Series

The Bright Lights Film Series is sponsored by the Department of Visual and Media Arts at Emerson College. The mission of the series is to create community through cinema and welcomes both Emerson faculty, students and staff as well as the general public. Bright Lights seeks to create an environment where cinema is not only viewed and appreciated but where a dialogue is fostered and a community of media makers, academics and aficionados are engaged and supported. The series is committed to screening at least 50% films directed by women and crafting a diverse program including filmmakers of color, queer cinema and films dealing with disability. Screenings take place weekly with a viewing window open from 7pm EST Wednesday until 8pm on Thursday and a live moderated conversation on Zoom at the end of the viewing window. Sessions are always free and open to the public. This series is curated and managed by the director of programming, Anna Feder. She can be reached at 617-824-3805 or anna_feder@emerson.edu.

Boston Asian American Film Festival (BAAFF)

The Boston Asian American Film Festival (BAAFF) empowers Asian Americans through film by showcasing Asian American experiences and serving as a resource to filmmakers and the Greater Boston Community. BAAFF is a production of the Asian American Resource Workshop. www.BAAFF.org

ArtsEmerson

ArtsEmerson is the professional presenting and producing organization at Emerson College, and its mission is to bring people together to experience powerful performances that delight, provoke, and inspire, celebrating both our differences and common humanity. Founded in 2010 by Robert J. Orchard — the year the U.S. Census confirmed there was no single cultural majority in Boston — ArtsEmerson is committed to building a

cultural institution that reflects the diversity of our city. Our imaginative and globe-spanning live and virtual performances, films, and conversations invites each of us to be part of a Boston that is more creative, equitable, and connected. ArtsEmerson is led by Executive Director, David Howse. For more information visit ArtsEmerson.org.

Emerson College

ArtsEmerson and HowlRound Theatre Commons both operate from within the Emerson College Office of the Arts. Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,700 undergraduates and 1,400 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic as well as its new Global Portals. The College has an active network of 51,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit Emerson.edu. For media inquiries specific to Emerson College, please contact Michelle Gaseau (E: Michelle_Gaseau@emerson.edu, O: 617-824-3547, C: 617-429-2624).

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