

EMERSON COLLEGE

Department of Visual
and Media Arts



bright lights series

Spring 2017 Calendar

Web: emerson.edu/brightlights

 /BrightLightsEmerson

 @BrightLightFilm

 BrightLightsEmerson

All screenings are free
and open to the public
and start at 7:00 pm.

Paramount Center
559 Washington Street
Boston, MA



Arrival

Thursday, January 26

Arrival

Directed by Denis Villeneuve, drama, 116 minutes, USA, 2016

When mysterious spacecrafts touch down across the globe, an elite team—led by expert linguist Louise Banks (Amy Adams)—is brought together to investigate. As mankind teeters on the verge of global war, Banks and the team race against time for answers—and to find them, she will take a chance that could threaten her life, and quite possibly humanity. Discussion with producer Aaron Ryder '94 to follow via Skype.

* Due to anticipated demand, this screening will require a ticket, which will be available on a first-come basis at the Paramount box office starting at 5:00 pm on the day of show.

F EC



Newtown

Tuesday, January 31

Newtown

Directed by Kim A. Snyder, documentary, 85 minutes, USA, 2016

Filmed over the course of nearly three years, the filmmakers use unique access and never-before-heard testimonies to tell a story of the aftermath of the deadliest mass shooting of schoolchildren in American history on December 14, 2012. *Newtown* documents a traumatized community fractured by grief and driven toward a sense of purpose. Joining the ranks of a growing club to which no one wants to belong, a cast of characters interconnect to weave an intimate story of community resilience. Panel discussion on gun violence to follow.

W SJ



13TH

Thursday, February 2

13TH

Directed by Ava DuVernay, documentary, 100 minutes, USA, 2016

The title of Ava DuVernay's extraordinary and galvanizing documentary *13TH* refers to the 13th Amendment

to the Constitution, which reads "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States." The progression from that second qualifying clause to the horrors of mass criminalization and the sprawling American prison industry is laid out by DuVernay with bracing lucidity. With a potent mixture of archival footage and testimony from a dazzling array of activists, politicians, historians, and formerly incarcerated women and men, DuVernay creates a work of grand historical synthesis. Panel discussion on mass incarceration to follow. Co-presented by the UMass Boston Film Series and EBONI.

W SJ POC



Tower

Tuesday, February 7

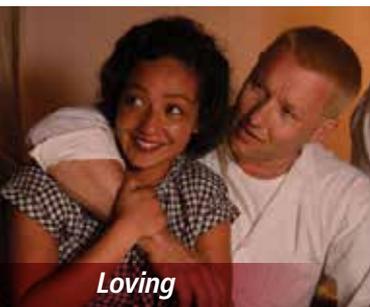
Tower

Directed by Keith Maitland, documentary, 96 minutes, USA, 2016

On August 1, 1966, a sniper rode the elevator to the top floor of the University of Texas Tower and opened fire, holding the campus

hostage for 96 minutes. When the gunshots were finally silenced, the toll included 16 dead, 3 dozen wounded, and a shaken nation left trying to understand. Combining archival footage with rotoscopic animation in a dynamic, never-before-seen way, *Tower* reveals the action-packed untold stories of the witnesses, heroes and survivors of America's first mass school shooting, when the worst in one man brought out the best in so many others. Discussion with co-producer and animation director Craig Staggs to follow.

SJ



Loving

Thursday, February 9

Loving

Directed by Jeff Nichols, drama, 123 minutes, USA, 2016

Interracial couple Richard and Mildred Loving fell in love and were married in 1958. They grew up in Central Point, a small town in Virginia that was more integrated than surrounding areas in

the American South. Yet it was the state of Virginia, where they were making their home and starting a family, that first jailed and then banished them. Richard and Mildred relocated with their children to the inner city of Washington, DC, but the family ultimately tries to find a way back to Virginia. Discussion with producer Sarah Green '81 to follow over Skype.

F POC SJ EC



Some Freaks

Tuesday, February 14

Some Freaks

Directed by Ian MacAllister McDonald, drama/comedy, 96 minutes, USA, 2016

A charming romance develops between a boy with one eye (Thomas Mann) and an overweight girl (Lily Mae Harrington), though when she loses weight after going to college, their relationship is tested in devastating ways they never dreamed would happen. Discussion with writer/director Ian MacAllister McDonald, producer Sarah Edrie, and composer Walter Sickert to follow.

F D

Key

- F** Feminist (Bath Film Festival rating)
- W** Directed by women
- POC** Directed by or featuring people of color
- EC** Emerson College community
- D** Dealing with disability issues
- I** International cinema
- LGBTQ** Dealing with LGBTQ issues
- SJ** Social Justice cinema
- COM** Comedy

About the "F-Rating"

The F-rating was founded by Holly Tarquini at Bath Film Festival 2014, where she wanted to highlight films that feature prominent women both behind the camera and in front of it.

Every film that ticks "yes" to the one of the following questions receives the F-rating of approval: (1) Does it have a female director? (2) Is it written by a woman? (3) Is/are there complex female characters on screen who exist in their own right (not simply there to support to the male lead)? The F stands for *feminist*. Feminism is:

"The belief that men and women should have equal rights and opportunities." We believe that feminism benefits everyone. bathfilmfestival.org.uk/f-rated



Under the Shadow

**Thursday,
February 16**

Under the Shadow

Directed by Babak Anvari, horror, 84 minutes, Jordan, 2016

Co-presented with the Boston Palestine Film Festival

After Shideh's building is hit by a missile during the Iran-Iraq War, a superstitious neighbor suggests that the missile was cursed and might be carrying malevolent Middle Eastern spirits.

She becomes convinced a supernatural force within the building is attempting to possess her daughter Dorsa, and she has no choice but to confront these forces if she is to save her daughter and herself. Discussion with faculty to follow.

F **POC** **I**



Other's People Footage

**Tuesday,
February 21**

Other People's Footage

Directed by Diane E. Carson and Robert Johnson Jr., documentary, 75 minutes, USA, 2016

Other People's Footage: Copyright and Fair Use explores the three questions crucial to determining fair use exemptions and presents illustrative examples from nonfiction, fiction, and experimental films that use pre-existing footage, music and sound from other individuals' creations—without permission or paying fees. Through on-camera interviews with noted documentarians, film, and legal experts, the film also reviews relevant court cases and clarifies legal issues regarding trademark, parody, and shooting on location or in a controlled setting. Discussion with directors Diane Carson and Robert Johnson to follow.

POC **W**



Daylight Exhibitions

**Thursday,
February 23**

Special Event: Robert Todd's *Daylight Exhibitions*

Wanderings and discoveries amid the lightfall of 2016 in the form of a concert of 16mm films by VMA professor and AGX Film Collective member Robert Todd. Discussion to follow with director and VMA Associate Professor Robert Todd.

EC



The Neon Demon

**Tuesday,
February 28**

The Neon Demon

Directed by Nicolas Winding Refn, drama, 118 minutes, USA, 2016

When aspiring model Jesse (Elle Fanning) moves to Los Angeles, her youth and vitality are devoured by a group of beauty-obsessed women who will use any means necessary to get what she has in *The Neon Demon*, the new horror thriller from Nicolas Winding Refn. Discussion with faculty to follow.

F **LGBTQ**



Untouchable

Thursday, March 2

Untouchable

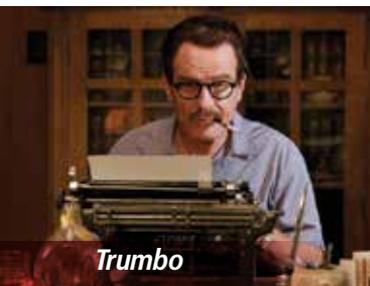
Directed by David Feige, documentary, 105 minutes, USA, 2016

When the most powerful lobbyist in Florida discovers that the nanny has sexually abused his daughter, he harnesses his extraordinary political power to pass the toughest sex offender laws in the nation.

SJ

Untouchable chronicles his crusade and its impact on the lives of several of the 800,000 people forced to live under the kinds of laws he has championed. The film interweaves intimate portraits of men and women who have been branded sex offenders with the heartbreaking stories of those who have suffered sexual abuse. It is a film that pushes viewers toward an uncomfortable place, requiring them to walk in the shoes of those who have survived sexual abuse, but to still bear witness to the experiences of those we revile. Panel discussion led by producer Rebecca Richman Cohen.

SJ



Trumbo

Tuesday, March 14

Trumbo

Directed by Jay Roach, drama, 124 minutes, USA, 2015

In 1947, Dalton Trumbo (Bryan Cranston) was Hollywood's top screenwriter until he and other artists were jailed and blacklisted for their political beliefs. *Trumbo* recounts how Dalton used words and wit to win

two Academy Awards and expose the absurdity and injustice under the blacklist, which entangled everyone from gossip columnist Hedda Hopper (Helen Mirren) to John Wayne, Kirk Douglas, and Otto Preminger.

Preceded by *1954*, directed by Tom Kingdon, drama, 15 minutes, 2016. A child and his family experience the effects of the anti-Communist witch-hunt of the 1950s. Discussion with VMA faculty Tom Kingdon to follow.

SJ



Equity

Thursday, March 16

Equity

Directed by Meera Menon, drama, 100 minutes, USA, 2016

Part of the MIT Women Take the Reel Series

Naomi Bishop is an investment banker determined to overcome a previous stain to her professional reputation, which is a challenge in the male-dominated financial sector she works in. As Naomi, in that spirit, makes her move managing a burgeoning new tech IPO, she has to endure not only the condescension of her colleagues, but also her

imperious client even as troubling new developments cloud the venture's future. Against that, the probing of a college friend turned federal investment law prosecutor and the conniving of her double-dealing boyfriend seem to be manageable complications, until a betrayal by a trusted colleague threatens to ruin everything. Discussion with producer and actor David Alan Basche '90.

F W EC LGBTQ



Remedy

Tuesday, March 21

Remedy

Directed by Cheyenne Picardo, drama, 120 minutes, USA, 2013

Part of the MIT Women Take the Reel Series

Remedy follows a young woman from the underground kink clubs of New York City into the world of commodified BDSM where workers are paid to embody the sexual and psychological fantasies of complete strangers. Despite her habitually submissive tastes, the woman finds a job as a dominatrix at a commercial dungeon, working under

the pseudonym “Mistress Remedy.” Before long, her personal proclivities peek through the veneer. She begins to show her compliant side to a few regulars. Soon an unscrupulous night manager asks Remedy to session with dominant clients, where she will be the client’s slave for the hour. Remedy quickly realizes that her submissiveness at home does not prepare her for the pressures and risks of this lesser-known side of the sexual service industry. Discussion with director Cheyenne Picardo moderated by author Melissa Gira Grant to follow.

F W LGBTQ



Deprogrammed

Thursday, March 23

Deprogrammed

Directed by Mia Donovan, documentary, 85 minutes, USA, 2015

Part of the MIT Women Take the Reel Series

Deprogrammed chronicles Ted “Black Lightning” Patrick’s anti-cult crusade. His practice of “deprogramming,” also known as “reverse brainwashing,” started in the early 1970s and quickly snowballed into a

vast underground movement composed of concerned parents, ex-cultist-turned-deprogrammers, and some sympathetic law enforcers whose mission was to physically and mentally remove individuals from “cults.” Discussion with director Mia Donovan to follow.

W POC I



Tuesday, March 28

Blue Jay

Directed by Alex Lehmann, drama, 80 minutes, USA, 2016

Former high school sweethearts Jim and Amanda have been out of touch for more than 20 years—but they run into each other at a grocery store back in their alpine hometown of Crestline, California. Jim’s mother has died and he’s there to put her house on the market. Amanda is visiting her pregnant sister. They get to talking, first over coffee, and then over beer and jellybeans. Before they know it they’re at Jim’s mother’s house, where everything sends them spiraling back into the past. Discussion with director Alex Lehmann ‘04 to follow.

EC



Asperger's Are Us

Thursday, March 30

Asperger's Are Us

Directed by Alex Lehmann, documentary, 82 minutes, USA, 2016

Co-presented with the ReelAbilities Film Festival, School of the Arts, and the offices of Diversity and Inclusion and Disability Services.

From critically acclaimed producers The Duplass Brothers comes *Asperger's Are Us*. In this coming-of-age documentary directed by Alex Lehmann, four friends on the autism spectrum who have bonded through humor and performed as the comedy troupe *Asperger's Are Us* will prepare for one final, ambitious show before going their separate ways. Discussion with director Alex Lehmann ‘04 to follow.

D EC COM



Presenting Princess Shaw

Tuesday, April 4

Presenting Princess Shaw

Directed by Ido Haar, documentary, 83 minutes, Israel, 2016

Co-presented with Wicked Queer: the Boston LGBT film festival

Princess Shaw placed her dreams on YouTube. Then they became a reality. This is the extraordinary true story of an aspiring musician down on her luck, who inspired internationally famous YouTube artist Kutiman to create a magical collaboration that would bring her music to a whole new audience. Discussion with star Princess Shaw to follow via Skype.

LGBTQ POC I



Thursday, April 6

It's All True

This is the sixth year of It's All True, Emerson's annual student documentary festival, showcasing exceptional documentary work from Emerson College undergraduate and graduate students. The evening of screenings culminates a two-day event, this year featuring notable personal documentary filmmaker Ross McElwee, who will be on hand to interface with student filmmakers, attend classes, and screen his own work the prior night. We encourage the Emerson community to come support these outstanding films.

EC



Christine

Tuesday, April 11

Christine

Directed by Antonio Campos, drama, 119 minutes, USA, 2016

Rebecca Hall stars in director Antonio Campos's third feature film, *Christine*, the story of a woman who finds herself caught in the crosshairs of a spiraling personal life and career crisis. Christine, always the smartest person in the room at her local Sarasota, Florida, news station, feels like she is destined for bigger things and is relentless in her pursuit of an on-air position in a larger market. As an aspiring newswoman with an eye for nuance and an interest in social justice, she finds herself constantly butting heads with her boss (Tracy Letts), who pushes for juicier stories that will drive up ratings. Plagued by self-doubt and a tumultuous home life, Christine's diminishing hope begins to rise when an on-air co-worker (Michael C. Hall) initiates a friendship that ultimately becomes yet another unrequited love.

Disillusioned as her world continues to close in on her, Christine takes a dark and surprising turn. Discussion with Journalism Assistant Professor Tim Riley to follow.

D F



Kate Plays Christine

Thursday, April 13

Kate Plays Christine

Directed by Robert Greene, documentary, 112 minutes, USA, 2016

Filmmaker Robert Greene cleverly forgoes your standard talking-head-and-sound-bite approach to nonfiction storytelling, instead choosing to employ Kate Lyn Sheil as a conduit to understanding an impossibly complex issue. Committed to doing justice to Christine's life, Kate not only candidly pulls back the curtain on her acting process, but she also reveals the biases and presumptions even supposed experts can provide in their diagnosis. *Kate Plays Christine* boldly challenges its subjects and audience alike to accept that answers from the past are never easy. Discussion with Performing Arts Assistant Professor Lindsay Beamish to follow.

D



The Handmaiden

Tuesday, April 18

The Handmaiden

Directed by Park Chan-wook, drama, 144 minutes, South Korea, 2016

Co-presented with Wicked Queer: the Boston LGBT film festival

From Park Chan-wook, the celebrated director of *Oldboy*, *Lady Vengeance*, and *Stoker*, comes a ravishing new crime drama. Chan-wook presents a gripping and sensual tale of two women: a young Japanese lady living on a secluded estate, and a Korean woman who is hired to serve as her new handmaiden but is secretly plotting with a conman to defraud her of a large inheritance. Inspired by the novel *Fingersmith* by British author Sarah Waters, *The Handmaiden* borrows the most dynamic elements of its source material and combines it with Chan-wook's singular vision to create an unforgettable viewing experience. Discussion with faculty to follow.

F POC I LGBTQ



Moonlight

Thursday, April 20

Moonlight

Directed by Barry Jenkins, drama, 111 minutes, USA, 2016

Co-presented with Wicked Queer: the Boston LGBT film festival

A timeless story of human connection and self-discovery, *Moonlight* chronicles the life of a young black man from childhood to adulthood as he struggles to find his place in the world while growing up in a rough neighborhood of Miami. At once a vital portrait of contemporary African American life and an intensely personal

and poetic meditation on identity, family, friendship, and love, *Moonlight* is a groundbreaking piece of cinema that reverberates with deep compassion and universal truths. Anchored by extraordinary performances from a tremendous ensemble cast, Jenkins's staggering, singular vision is profoundly moving in its portrayal of the moments, people, and unknowable forces that shape our lives and make us who we are. Discussion with faculty to follow.

POC LGBTQ



The Bright Lights screening and talk series is sponsored by the Department of Visual and Media Arts at Emerson College. The mission of the series is to provide engaging visual media-related events to the Emerson College community as well as the wider Boston community. These events range from screening of student, faculty, and alumni work to the work of local, national, and international artists as well as demonstrations, lectures, discussions, and presentations by industry professionals.

Bright Lights seeks to create an environment where visual media is not only viewed and appreciated but also where a dialogue is fostered and a community of media makers, academics, and aficionados are engaged and supported. Screenings take place every Tuesday and Thursday when the College is in session and are free and open to the public.

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