

**Department of
Visual and Media Arts**

Emerson
COLLEGE



bright lights

film series

Spring 2019 Calendar

Web: emerson.edu/brightlights

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 BrightLightsEmerson



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

Paramount Center
559 Washington Street
Boston, MA

**Thursday, February 7****Lobster War****SJ**Co-presented with the **GlobeDocs Film Festival** and the **Emerson College School of Communication**

Directed by David Abel, documentary, 74 minutes, USA, 2018

Lobster War documents a climate-fueled conflict between the United States and Canada over waters that both countries have claimed since the end of the Revolutionary War. The disputed 277 square miles of sea, known as the Gray Zone, were traditionally fished by US lobstermen. But as the Gulf of Maine has warmed faster than nearly any other body of water on the planet, the area's previously modest lobster population has surged. As a result, Canadians have begun to assert their sovereignty, warring with Americans to claim the bounty. Discussion with director David Abel and moderated by Raul Reis, Dean of the School of Communication at Emerson, to follow.

Directed by Tim Wardle, documentary, 97 minutes, USA, 2018

Three strangers are reunited by astonishing coincidence after being born identical triplets, separated at birth, and adopted by three different families. Their jaw-dropping, feel-good story instantly becomes a global sensation complete with fame and celebrity; however, the fairy-tale reunion sets in motion a series of events that unearth an unimaginable secret—a secret with radical repercussions for us all. Discussion led by molecular biologist and Associate Professor Amy Vashlishan Murray to follow.

**Thursday, February 14****Love, Gilda****W**Co-presented with the **Boston Jewish Film Festival**

Directed by Lisa D'Apolito, documentary, 86 minutes, USA, 2018



In her own words, comedienne Gilda Radner reflects on her life and career. Weaving together her recently discovered audiotapes; interviews with friends (Chevy Chase, Lorne Michaels, Laraine Newman, Paul Shaffer, and Martin Short); rare home movies and diaries read by modern-day comedians inspired by Gilda (Bill Hader,

**Tuesday, February 12****Three Identical Strangers**Co-presented with the **Independent Film Festival of Boston** and the **Boston Jewish Film Festival**

Amy Poehler, Maya Rudolph, and Cecily Strong); *Love, Gilda* opens up a unique window into the honest and whimsical world of a beloved performer whose greatest role was sharing her story. Discussion led by Assistant Professor Maria Corrigan to follow.



Tuesday, February 19

Skate Kitchen

F POC W

Co-presented with the Independent Film Festival of Boston and the Boston Latino International Film Festival

Directed by Crystal Moselle, drama, 107 minutes, USA, 2018

Camille, an introverted teenage skateboarder (newcomer Rachelle Vinberg) from Long Island, meets and befriends an all-girl, New York City-based skateboarding crew called Skate Kitchen. She falls in with the in-crowd, has a falling-out with her mother, and falls for a mysterious skateboarder guy (Jaden Smith), but a relationship with him proves to be trickier to navigate than a kickflip. *Skate Kitchen* precisely captures the experience of women in male-dominated spaces and tells a story of a girl who learns the importance of camaraderie and self-discovery. Discussion with director Crystal Moselle to follow.

Thursday, February 21

Blindspotting

POC SJ

Co-presented with ArtsEmerson, the Boston Latino International Film Festival, the Independent Film Festival of Boston, and the Roxbury International Film Festival

Directed by Carlos López Estrada, drama, 96 minutes, USA, 2018

Collin must make it through his final three days of probation for a chance at a new beginning in his Oakland, CA, neighborhood. His bond with his volatile best friend soon gets tested when Collin sees a police officer shoot a suspect in the back during a chase through the streets. Things soon come to a head when the buddies attend a party at the upscale home of a young and wealthy tech entrepreneur. Discussion with writer, producer, and lead actor Rafael Casal to follow.



Tuesday, February 26

Let the Corpses Tan

W F I

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

About the “F-Rating”



The F-Rating is applied to all films which are directed by women and/or written by women. If the film ALSO has significant women on screen, it receives a TRIPLE F-Rating, our gold standard. The rating allows audiences to "vote with your seat" and proactively choose to go and see F-Rated films. The F-Rating is applied to films by cinemas and film festivals giving moviegoers an easily identifiable label so they can choose films that fairly represent women on screen and behind the camera. Highlighting these films sends a clear message to distributors, producers, and funders that women can and should have more than just a supporting role within the industry. For more info, go to: f-rated.org.

Co-presented with the Boston Underground Film Festival

Directed by Hélène Cattet, Bruno Forzani, thriller, 92 minutes, France/ Belgium, French with English subtitles, 2017

During a beautiful Mediterranean summer, Rhino and his gang steal a cache of gold. They believe they've found the perfect hideout: a remote and abandoned hamlet that has been taken over by a woman who is searching for inspiration. Unfortunately, surprise guests and two cops compromise their plan, and the heavenly place where wild happenings and orgies used to take place turns into a gruesome battlefield. Discussion led by Assistant Professor Ougie Pak to follow.



Thursday, February 28

You Were Never Really Here

W D

Co-presented with the ReelAbilities Film Festival and the Boston Women's Film Festival

Directed by Lynne Ramsey, thriller, 89 minutes, USA, 2018

A traumatized veteran, unafraid of violence, tracks down missing girls for a living. When a job spins out of control, Joe's nightmares overtake him as a conspiracy is uncovered leading

to what may be his death trip or his awakening. Discussion led by Assistant Professor Julia Halperin to follow.

The Bright will be closed the week of March 4-8 for spring break.



Tuesday, March 12

Danseur

LGBTQ POC SJ

Co presented with the GlobeDocs Film Festival and the Wicked Queer Film Festival

Directed by Scott Gormley, documentary, 71 minutes, USA, 2018

Enter any dance studio in the United States and the classes will be brimming with little bunheads dreaming of crossing the stage at Lincoln Center. But you will be hard pressed to find a single boy among them. In *Danseur*, we will explore why in a country that strives for gender equality, where young women are encouraged to cross the gender barrier and participate in male-dominated fields, especially by their parents, this disparity exists. Why is it more socially acceptable for parents (fathers in particular) to encourage their sons to participate in all other physical pursuits (i.e., sports, fitness) but not the ballet? A recent survey revealed that nearly 95 percent

of male ballet dancers stated that they faced physical or verbal attacks because of dance.

Preceded by Movement in Structure, directed by Shaun Clarke, documentary, 4 minutes, USA, 2018

A short dance film featuring John Lam (Boston Ballet) performing a solo dance piece in a unique and historic Boston landmark. Discussion with directors Scott Gormley and Shaun Clarke and dancer John Lam to follow.



Thursday, March 14

Madeline's Madeline

POC W F D

Co-presented with the Boston Underground Film Festival, the Independent Film Festival of Boston, the Roxbury International Film Festival, and the ReelAbilities Film Festival

Directed by Josephine Decker, drama, 94 minutes, USA, 2018

Madeline has become an integral part of a prestigious physical theater troupe. When the workshop's ambitious director pushes the teenager to weave her rich interior world and troubled history with her mother into their collective art, the lines between performance and reality begin to blur. The resulting battle between imagination and appropriation rips out of the rehearsal space and goes through all three

women's lives. Discussion led by faculty to follow.



Tuesday, March 19

All About Nina

W F EC

Co-presented with the Boston Women's Film Festival, the Boston Latino International Film Festival, and the Boston Jewish Film Festival

Directed by Eva Vives, drama, 100 minutes, USA, 2018

Nina Geld's passion and talent have made her a rising star in the comedy scene, but she's an emotional mess offstage. When a new professional opportunity coincides with a romantic one, she is forced to confront her own deeply troubled past. Discussion with comedic consultant Jamie Loftus '13 and director Eva Vives to follow.



Thursday, March 21

I Am Not a Witch

W F POC I

Co-presented with Boston Women's Film Festival and the Roxbury International Film

Festival

Directed by Rungano Nyoni, drama, 93 minutes, Zambia, English, and Nyanja with English subtitles, 2018

Following a banal incident in her local village, 8-year-old girl Shula is accused of witchcraft. After a short trial, she is found guilty, taken into state custody, and exiled to a witch camp. At the camp, she takes part in an initiation ceremony where she is shown the rules surrounding her new life as a witch. Like the other residents, Shula is tied to a ribbon that is attached to a coil that perches on a large truck. She is told that should she ever cut the ribbon, she'll be cursed and transformed into a goat. Discussion led by Assistant Professor Rae Shaw to follow.



Tuesday, March 26

Eating Animals

SJ

Co-presented with the Independent Film Festival of Boston

Directed by Christopher Dillon Quinn, documentary, 95 minutes, USA, 2018

How much do you know about the food that's on your plate? Based on the bestselling book by Jonathan Safran Foer and narrated by co-producer Natalie

Portman, *Eating Animals* is an urgent, eye-opening look at the environmental, economic, and public health consequences of factory farming. Spotlighting farmers who have pushed back against industrial agriculture with more humane practices, *Eating Animals* offers attainable, commonsense solutions to a growing crisis while making the case that ethical farming is not only an animal rights issue but also one that affects every aspect of our lives. Discussion with director Christopher Dillon Quinn to follow.



Thursday, March 28

The Rider

W F POC D

Co-presented as part of the ReelAbilities Film Festival with the Boston Asian American Film Festival

Directed by Chloé Zhao, drama, 104 minutes, USA, 2017

Based on a true story, *The Rider* stars breakout Brady Jandreau as a once-rising star of the rodeo circuit warned that his competition days are over after a tragic riding accident. Back home, Brady finds himself wondering what he has to live for when he can no longer do what gives him a sense of purpose: to ride and compete. In an attempt to regain control of his fate,

Brady undertakes a search for a new identity and tries to redefine his idea of what it means to be a man in the heartland of America. Discussion led by Nancy Allen, MPH Executive in Residence Institute for Liberal Arts and Interdisciplinary Studies to follow.



Tuesday, April 2

Lizzie



Co-presented as part of the Wicked Queer Film Festival

Directed by Craig William Macneill, drama, 105 minutes, USA, 2018

In 1892, Lizzie Borden lives a quiet life in Massachusetts under the strict rules established by her father. Lizzie finds a kindred spirit in the live-in maid, Bridget, and friendship soon blossoms into a secret romance. But tension mounts in the Borden household, leading to a violent breaking point. Discussion led by Assistant Professor Sarah Zaidan to follow.



Thursday, April 4

We the Animals



Co-presented as part of the Wicked Queer Film Festival with the Independent Film Festival of Boston and the Boston Latino International Film Festival

Directed by Jeremiah Zagar, drama, 94 minutes, USA, 2018

Manny, Joel, and Jonah tear their way through childhood. Their mother and father have a volatile relationship that makes and unmakes the family many times over, often leaving the boys fending for themselves. As their parents rip at one another, Manny and Joel harden and grow into versions of their father. With the triumvirate fractured, Jonah, who is the youngest, becomes increasingly aware of his desperate need to escape. Driven to the edge, Jonah embraces an imagined world all his own. Discussion with director Jeremiah Zagar '03 to follow.



Tuesday, April 9

Crime + Punishment



Co-presented as part of the It's All True documentary showcase with the Roxbury International Film Festival and the Boston Asian American Film Festival

Directed by Stephen Maing, documentary, 115 minutes, USA, 2018

Amid a landmark class action lawsuit over illegal policing quotas, *Crime + Punishment* chronicles the remarkable efforts and struggles of a group of black and Latino whistleblower cops and the young minorities they are pressured to arrest and summons in New York City. A highly intimate and cinematic experience with unprecedented access, *Crime + Punishment* examines the United States's most powerful police department through the brave endeavors of a group of active duty officers and one unforgettable private investigator who risk their careers and safety to bring light to harmful policing practices that have plagued the precincts and streets of New York City for decades. Discussion with director Stephen Maing to follow.



Thursday, April 11

The Truth About Killer Robots



Co-presented with Points North Institute

Directed by Maxim Pozdorovkin, documentary, 83 minutes, USA, English and other languages with subtitles, 2018

An eerie, eye-opening work of science nonfiction, *The Truth About Killer Robots* considers several automation cases,

from a factory in Germany to a bomb-carrying police droid in Dallas, raising questions of accountability and morality. Exploring the provocative viewpoints of engineers, journalists, and philosophers, the film goes beyond sensational deaths to examine more subtle but pervasive ways that robots affect humanity. Discussion with director Maxim Pozdorovkin to follow.



Tuesday, April 16

On Her Shoulders

W POC SJ I

Co-presented with the United Nations Association of Greater Boston, the Boston Women's Film Festival, the Independent Film Festival of Boston, and the Center for Women's Health and Human Rights at Suffolk University

Directed by Alexandria Bombach, documentary, 95 minutes, USA, Arabic and English with English subtitles, 2018

Twenty-three-year-old Nadia Murad's life is a dizzying array of exhausting undertakings—from giving testimony before the U.N. to visiting refugee camps to soul-bearing media interviews and one-on-one meetings with top government officials. With deep compassion and a formal precision and elegance that matches Nadia's calm and

steely demeanor, filmmaker Alexandria Bombach follows this strong-willed young woman who survived the 2014 genocide of the Yazidis in Northern Iraq and escaped the hands of ISIS to become a relentless beacon of hope for her people, even when at times she longs to lay aside this monumental burden and simply have an ordinary life. Discussion led by Amy Agigian, founder and director of the Center for Women's Health and Human Rights at Suffolk University, to follow.



Thursday, April 18

The Feeling of Being Watched

POC SJ W

Co-presented with the Boston Palestine Film Festival, the GlobeDocs Film Festival, and the Muslim Justice League

Directed by Assia Boundaoui, documentary, 87 minutes, USA, English and Arabic with English subtitles, 2018

In the Arab American neighborhood outside of Chicago where director Assia Boundaoui grew up, most of her neighbors think they have been under surveillance for over a decade. While investigating their experiences, Assia uncovers tens of thousands

of pages of FBI documents that prove her hometown was the subject of one of the largest counterterrorism investigations ever conducted in the US before 9/11, code-named "Operation Vulgar Betrayal." With unprecedented access, *The Feeling of Being Watched* weaves the personal and the political as it follows the filmmaker's examination of why her community fell under blanket government surveillance. Assia struggles to disrupt the government secrecy shrouding what happened and takes the FBI to federal court to compel it to make the records it collected about her community public. Discussion led by Fatema Ahmad, deputy director of the Muslim Justice League, to follow.



Tuesday, April 23

Seder-Masochism

F W

Co-presented with the Boston Jewish Film Festival

Directed by Nina Paley, comedy/drama/musical, 78 minutes, USA, 2018

Loosely following a traditional Passover Seder, events from the Book of Exodus are retold by Moses, Aharon, the Angel of Death, Jesus, and the director's own father. But there's

another side to this story: that of the Goddess, humankind's original deity. *Seder-Masochism* resurrects the Great Mother in a tragic struggle against the forces of Patriarchy. Discussion with director Nina Paley to follow.



Thursday, April 25

If Beale Street Could Talk

POC SJ F

Co-presented with the Roxbury International Film Festival

Directed by Barry Jenkins, drama, 119 minutes, USA, 2018

Set in early-1970s Harlem, *If Beale Street Could Talk* is a timeless and moving love story of both a couple's unbreakable bond and the African American family's empowering embrace, as told through the eyes of 19-year-old Tish Rivers. A daughter and wife-to-be, Tish vividly recalls the passion, respect, and trust that have connected her and her artist fiancé Alonzo Hunt, who goes by the nickname Fonny. Friends since childhood, the devoted couple dream of a future together but their plans are derailed when Fonny is arrested for a crime he did not commit. Discussion led by Associate Professor Kim McLarin to follow.

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 percent of films directed by women and crafting a diverse program including filmmakers of color, queer cinema, and films dealing with disability.

Screenings take place every Tuesday and Thursday evening during the semester with the exception of occasions when the College is closed (such as holidays, spring break, inclement weather). Sessions are always free and open to the public. This series is curated and managed by the director of programming, Anna Feder.

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GLOBEDOCS
FILM FESTIVAL

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UNDER-
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film festival

BOSTON
WOMEN'S
FILM FESTIVAL

IFFBOSTON
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WICKED
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PALESTINE
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