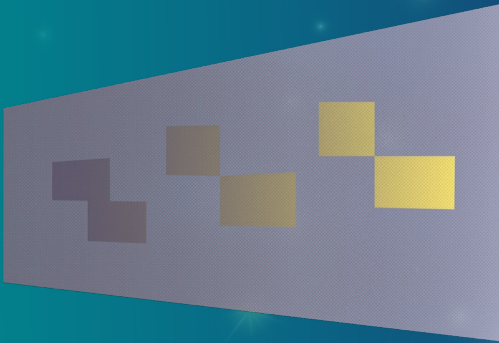


Department of Visual and Media Arts

Fall 2023 Program



BRIGHT LIGHTS CINEMA SERIES

Web: emerson.edu/brightlights

 /BrightLightsEmerson

 @BrightLightFilms

 BrightLightsEmerson

Every Thursday at 7:00 pm
during the semester

All screenings are free
and open to the public.

Key

- F** Feminist (Bath Film Festival rating)
- GD** Gender Diversity (directed by filmmakers of marginalized genders)
- BIPOC** Directed by BIPOC filmmakers and /or amplifying BIPOC stories
- EC** Emerson College community
- EN** Cinema dealing with the environment
- D** Directed by disabled filmmakers and /or amplifying stories about disability
- I** International cinema
- Q** Directed by queer filmmakers and/or amplifying queer stories
- SJ** Social justice cinema



A Note on Accessibility:

All Bright Lights films will include open or closed captioning as indicated. Several films presented have descriptive audio available as indicated. All trailers and conversations will have open captions, which will appear for all viewers. For more information on accessibility in the Bright, visit websites.emerson.edu/brightlights/how-to-attend/accessibility.

The Bright Lights Film Series implemented an advisory in Fall 2019 to notify our community about potentially disturbing content. This information will be made available for those who seek it out at websites.emerson.edu/brightlights/about/content-advisory/.

How to Access Screenings

All screenings are free and open to the public and seating is available on a first-come basis. Doors open at 6:30 pm. We reserve 15 seats for Emerson College faculty and staff until 15 minutes before show time. Any Emerson classes or community organizations attending as a group or anyone needing guaranteed seating for accessibility reasons may reach out to brightlightsemerson@gmail.com to reserve seats.

COVID Protocols

A Shared Code of Conduct between ArtsEmerson (hosts of the Bright Lights Cinema Series) and patrons can be found at artsemerson.org. Mask-wearing is strongly encouraged at all times while indoors at the theatre but is no longer required for most* performances and events.

For folks who require a socially distanced seating location or who have other questions or concerns, please contact the Box Office by phone at 617.824.8400 or by emailing tickets@artsemerson.org to arrange seating that accommodates your needs. Masks and face shields will also be available at the theatre upon request.

If you or a member of your party is feeling sick, experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, or has been in contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 10 days, please stay home. No one should come to the venue if they are not feeling well.

It is within our values to create a safe space for everyone, full stop. All staff at the Theatres of Emerson College are working to ensure the health and safety of all who are sharing these spaces. Maintaining our community's health and safety requires the effort of all involved. By committing to this Shared Code of Conduct, you are not only protecting yourself, but fellow guests, artists, and staff. Please do all you can to help keep all of us safe. We cannot wait to see you at the theater!



Directed by Cecilia Aldarondo and Sarah Enid Hagey, documentary, English and Spanish with English subtitles, United States, 97 minutes, 2023.

In this high school reunion movie turned inside out, filmmaker Cecilia Aldarondo embarks on a fantastical quest to reconcile her tortured teen years. She 'goes back' in more ways than one, tracking down old foes and friends while also reenacting visceral memories of youthful humiliation and desire. Oscillating between present and past, hallucination and reality, *You Were My First Boyfriend* is a hybrid documentary that explores the power of adolescent fantasy, the subtle violence of cultural assimilation, and the fun house mirror of time's passage. Discussion with co-director Sarah Enid Hagey and producer Ines Hoffman Kanna '96 to follow.

Thursday, September 21st

How to Blow up a Pipeline

Co-presented with the Boston Underground Film Festival, the Emerson College Office of Sustainability and the Engagement Lab

Directed by Daniel Goldhaber, drama/ thriller, English, United States, 104 minutes, 2023.

A crew of young environmental activists execute a daring mission to sabotage an oil pipeline, a taut and timely thriller that is part high-stakes heist, part radical exploration of the climate crisis. Based on the controversial book by Andreas Malm. Panel discussion on the future of environmental activism will follow the screening.



Thursday, October 5th

Radical Imagination: Responding to an Environmental Crisis in Motion

Co-presented with the Emerson College Office of Sustainability, the Engagement Lab and the Roxbury International Film Festival


The world around us is changing, the climate of our planet, our immediate environment, and our future as the inhabitants of Earth. In this curated collection, each film serves as a powerful catalyst for change. From stunning cinematography that captures the wonders of nature to heartfelt narratives that expose environmental injustices, these documentaries invite you to explore the delicate balance between humanity and the planet, examining the varied but urgent environmental challenges we are facing.



Thursday, September 28th

You Were My First Boyfriend

Presented as part of Cinefest Latino with the Boston Women's Film Festival, the Boston Underground Film Festival, Globedocs and Independent Film Festival Boston

This program is curated by Homa Sarabi, a filmmaker, artist and educator. She works primarily with moving images and examines the potential of documentary in personal storytelling. She is the director of production, safety, and sustainability and an affiliated faculty at Emerson College, where she teaches 16mm experimental filmmaking. Discussion with filmmakers and Emerson Professor and ecologist Jon Honea, moderated by Homa Sarabi to follow. 





Thursday, October 12th

Every Body

Co-presented with *Wicked Queer: the Boston LGBT Film Festival*, the *Boston Women's Film Festival*, *Globedocs* and *Boston Jewish Film*

Directed by Julie Cohen, documentary, English and Spanish with English subtitles, United States, 92 minutes, 2023.

This documentary focuses on three individuals who overcame shame, secrecy, and unauthorized surgery throughout their childhoods to enjoy successful adulthoods. Choosing to ignore medical advice to conceal their bodies and coming out as who they truly were. Panel discussion with Frances Grimstad, a pediatric and adolescent Gynecologist at Boston Children's Hospital and intersex activists Esther Leidolf and Jackey Baiza to follow.  





Thursday, October 19th

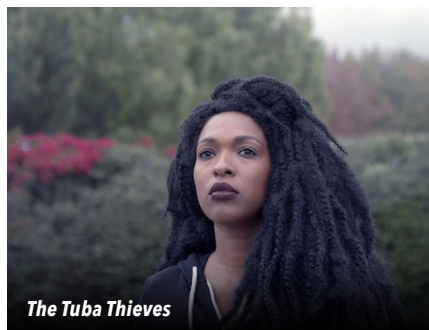
Past Lives

Co-presented as part of the *Boston Asian American Film Festival* with the *Independent Film Festival Boston* and *Belmont World Film*

Directed by Celine Song, drama, English and Korean with English subtitles, United States and Korea, 105 minutes.

Nora and Hae Sung, two deeply connected childhood friends, are wrest apart after Nora's family emigrates from South Korea. Two decades later, they are reunited in New York for one fateful week as they confront notions of destiny, love, and the choices that make a life, in this heartrending modern romance. Discussion led by Emerson College professor and assistant dean Yu-jin Chang to follow.  



Thursday, October 26th

The Tuba Thieves

Co-presented with Emerson Access: the Student Disability Union

Directed by Alison O'Daniel, documentary/ drama, American Sign Language, English and Spanish with English subtitles, United States, 92 minutes, 2023.

Drawing upon her experiences with hearing loss, specifically navigating between hearing and silence, Alison O'Daniel expands definitions of sonic experience beyond ear-reliance as our sole auditory skill. In the seven shorts in *The Tuba Thieves*, the artist's fascination with a series of tuba robberies from Los Angeles high schools became a comparison point between loss of this tonally-rich instrument to her daily experiences of missing information and filling in conversation gaps. O'Daniel inverts script-driven filmmaking processes by writing scenes based on the musical scores, which were commissioned in advance of developing the visual narratives. Discussion with director Alison O'Daniel to follow. This conversation will have an ASL interpreter available in addition to live captions.



Thursday, November 2nd

Kim's Video

Co-presented with the Boston Underground Film Festival, the Boston Asian American Film Festival and the Independent Film Festival Boston

Directed by David Redmon and Ashley Sabin, documentary, English, Korean and Italian with English subtitles, United States, 85 minutes, 2023.

For two decades, New York City cinephiles had access to a treasure trove of rare and esoteric films through *Kim's Video*. Originally run by the enigmatic Yongman Kim out of his dry-cleaning business, his franchise eventually amassed 55,000 rental titles. In 2008, facing a changing industry, Mr. Kim offered to give away his collection provided that it stay intact and be available to Kim's Video members. In a bid to revitalize tourism, the small Italian village of Salemi, Sicily became home to the archive. But after the initial publicity faded, so too did any sign of the collection. Enter filmmaker David Redmon, who credits Kim's Video for his film education. With the ghosts of cinema past leading his way, Redmon embarks on a seemingly quixotic quest to track down what happened. Discussion with directors David Redmon and Ashley Sabin to follow.



Thursday, November 9th

Israelism

Co-presented with the Boston Palestine Film Festival, the Boston Workers Circle, IF Not Now and Jewish Voice for Peace Boston

Directed by Eric Axelman and Sam Eilertsen, documentary, English, United States, 84 minutes, 2023.

When two young American Jews raised to unconditionally love Israel witness the brutal way Israel treats Palestinians, their lives take sharp left turns. They join a movement of young American Jews battling the old guard to redefine Judaism's relationship with Israel, revealing a deepening generational divide over modern Jewish identity. Discussion with directors Eric Axelman and Sam Eilertsen to follow.



Chasing Chasing Amy

Thursday, November 16th

Chasing Chasing Amy



Co-presented with *Wicked Queer: the Boston LGBT Film Festival* and the *Boston Underground Film Festival*

Directed by Sav Rodgers, documentary, English, United States, 95 minutes, 2023.

In *Chasing Chasing Amy*, filmmaker Sav Rodgers goes on a journey of self-discovery while making a documentary on the development and creation of Kevin Smith's controversial LGBTQ+ film, *Chasing Amy*. The film explores the transformational impact of a '90s rom-com on a 12 year old kid from Kansas, coming of age and contending with queer identity. Discussion with director Sav Rodgers and producer Lela Meadow-Conner to follow.

Thursday November 23rd the cinema will be dark in honor of the National Day of Mourning



Lakota Nation vs the United States

Thursday, November 30th

Lakota Nation vs the United States



Co-presented with the *Roxbury International Film Festival*, *Independent Film Festival Boston* and *Globedocs*

Directed by Jesse Short Bull and Laura Tomaselli, documentary, English, United States, 118 minutes, 2023.

Lakota Nation vs. the United States chronicles the Lakota Indians' century-long quest to reclaim the Black Hills, sacred land that was stolen in violation of treaty agreements. A searing, timely portrait of resistance, the film explores the ways America has ignored its debt to indigenous communities, and ponders what might be done today to repair the wrongs of the past. Discussion with Emerson College professor Adam Spry (White Earth Anishinaabe) to follow.



Playland

Thursday, December 7th

Playland



Co-presented with *Wicked Queer: the Boston LGBT Film Festival*, *Globedocs* and the *Boston Underground Film Festival*

Directed by Georden West, drama/fantasy/ documentary, English, United States, 72 minutes, 2023.

"With an eclectic ensemble of queer performers, including drag icon Lady Bunny and Pose's Danielle Cooper, *Playland* is transdisciplinary in every

sense of the word: music, dance, archival footage, tableaux, opera, and performance art are layered into an ethereal piece subverting all boundaries. An expressionist and very queer bricolage, focusing on an atemporal night in (Boston's) renowned Playland Café. Following its employees and others who have haunted the space, weaving together a tapestry of personal and community anecdotes across the bar's existence." –Sophie Tupholme, IFFR. Discussion with writer director Georden West MFA '18 to follow.

CC



Shortcomings

Thursday, December 14th

Shortcomings

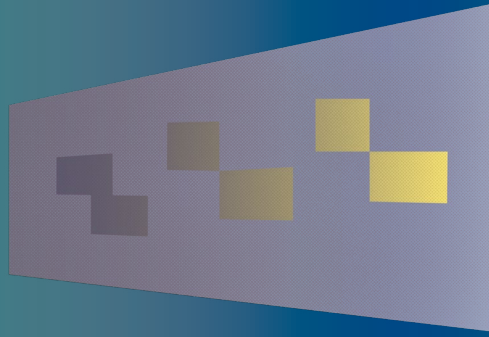
Q BIPOC F

Co-presented with the Boston Asian American Film Festival, the Independent Film Festival Boston and Wicked Queer: the Boston LGBT Film Festival

Directed by Randall Park, comedy/drama/romance, English, United States, 92 minutes, 2023.

Ben, a struggling filmmaker, lives in Berkeley, California, with his girlfriend, Miko, who works for a local Asian American film festival. When he's not managing an arthouse movie theater as his day job, Ben spends his time obsessing over unavailable blonde women, watching Criterion Collection DVDs, and eating in diners with his best friend Alice, a queer grad student with a serial dating habit. When Miko moves to New York for an internship, Ben is left to his own devices, and begins to explore what he thinks he might want. Discussion led by Emerson College professor and comedic writer Ed Lee with comedian Nate Shu '21 to follow. **CC AD**





BRIGHT LIGHTS

CINEMA SERIES

The Bright Lights Cinema 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 filmmakers of marginalized genders and crafting a diverse program including BIPOC filmmakers with a commitment to highlighting indigenous stories, queer cinema, and films dealing with disability.

Emerson College, Boston, resides on the ancestral and unceded lands of the Massachusetts people, whose name was appropriated by this Commonwealth. The Bright Lights Cinema Series makes a commitment to amplifying the voices of indigenous filmmakers and highlighting the stories of the original stewards of this land and encourages all of us to work toward the continued self-determination of Indigenous peoples the world over.

Screenings take place every 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, and seating is on a first-come basis. This series is curated and managed by Head of Film Exhibition and Festival Programs Anna Feder.

Contact: Anna Feder
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