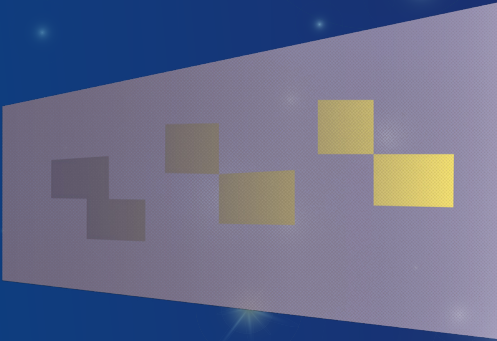


Emerson
COLLEGE

Department of Visual and Media Arts

Spring 2023 Program



BRIGHT LIGHTS CINEMA SERIES

Web: emerson.edu/brightlights

 /BrightLightsEmerson

 @BrightLightFilm

 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) |  D Dealing with disability issues |
|  W Directed by women |  I International cinema |
|  POC Directed by or featuring people of color |  LGBTQ Dealing with LGBTQ issues |
|  EC Emerson College community |  SJ Social justice cinema |



A Note on Accessibility:
All Bright Lights films will include open or closed captioning 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/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/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. Tickets are no longer required. 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. Proof of vaccination is no longer required. Masks are mandatory. Any and all patrons must wear a mask covering their nose and mouth at all times. KN95s and well-fitting 3-ply surgical masks are recommended. If a patron arrives without a mask, one will be provided by Guest Experience or Box Office staff. Eating and drinking is not permitted in the cinema at this time.



Thursday, January 26

Triangle of Sadness



Co-presented with the Independent Film Festival Boston, the Boston Underground Film Festival, and Emerson Center for Comedic Arts

Directed by Ruben Östlund, drama/comedy, English and Swedish, German, French, Greek, and Tagalog with English subtitles, Denmark, 147 minutes, 2022

Social hierarchy is turned upside down, revealing the tawdry relationship between power and beauty. Celebrity model couple Carl and Yaya are invited on a luxury cruise for the uber-rich, helmed by an unhinged boat captain. What first appeared Instagrammable ends catastrophically, leaving the survivors stranded on a desert island and fighting for survival. Discussion led by assistant professor Ken Feil to follow.



Thursday, February 2

Strawberry Mansion



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

Directed by Kentucker Audley and Albert Birney, sci-fi, English, USA, 91 minutes, 2022

In 2035, our dreams are no longer our own—they're infused with product placement and auditors assess unpaid taxes on our most private reveries. Beleaguered taxman James Preble (Kentucker Audley) arrives at a run-down house in the countryside for a routine audit and encounters Bella Isadora (Penny Fuller), a lifelong dreamer who remains resolutely analog, circumventing the surveillance state with VHS tapes and homemade headgear. As Preble works his way through Bella's archive of the unconscious, he begins to fall in love with visions of her younger self (Grace Glowicki). But all is not well in dreamland as dangerous family secrets and a rogue's gallery of blue demons and fried chicken pitchmen threaten to set the lovers' paradise ablaze. Can Preble and Bella escape from the modern, monetized dreamscape and find refuge in Strawberry Mansion? Discussion with director Albert Birney to follow.



Thursday, February 9

Please Baby Please



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

Directed by Amanda Kramer, drama/musical, English, USA, 95 minutes, 2022

Big issues, packaged in flamboyantly witty dialogue, are addressed amid hyper-stylized decors with a theatrical 1950s feel (think a rather dark, campy twist on *West Side Story* [1961] as directed by John Waters). How should one be a “real” man or woman? And, what does the institution of marriage have to do with it? Suze and Arthur are the ideal Lower East Side bohemian couple. He earns a modest living as a clarinetist; she is a stylish housewife, dutifully doing the washing up. One evening, they witness a murder, committed by a rough gang of greasers in leather jackets, on the sidewalk in front of their house. This introduction to the intimidating Young Gents arouses previously unsuspected emotions and feelings of sexuality in both Arthur and Suze. Discussion with director Amanda Kramer '02 to follow. [CC](#)



Thursday, February 16

Riotsville, USA



Co-presented with the Boston Women's Film Festival, GlobeDocs, and the Independent Film Festival Boston

Directed by Sierra Pettengill, documentary, English, United States, 91 minutes, 2022

Welcome to *Riotsville, USA*, a turning point in American history where the protest movements of the late 1960s came into conflict with increasingly militarized police departments. Focusing on unearthed military training footage of Army-built model towns called “Riotsvilles,” where military and police were trained to respond to civil disorder in the aftermath of the Kerner Commission created by President Lyndon B. Johnson, director Sierra Pettengill's kaleidoscopic all-archival documentary

reconstructs the formation of a national consciousness obsessed with maintaining law and order by any means necessary. Drawing insight from a time similar to our own, *Riotsville, USA* pulls focus on American institutional control and offers a compelling case that if the history of race in America rhymes, it is by design. Discussion with producer Sara Archambault to follow. [CC](#)



Thursday, February 23

You Resemble Me



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

Directed by Dina Amer, drama, English and Arabic with English subtitles, United States, France, and Egypt, 91 minutes, 2022

The true story of Hasna Ait Boulahcen, a woman who was falsely accused of being Europe's first female suicide bomber. Cultural and intergenerational trauma erupt in this story about two sisters on the outskirts of Paris. After the siblings are torn apart, the eldest, Hasna, struggles to find her identity, leading to a choice that shocks the world. Director Dina Amer takes on one of the darkest issues of our time and deconstructs it in an intimate story about family, love, sisterhood, and belonging. Discussion with director Dina Amer and producer Sean Glass '09 to follow. [CC](#)



My Name Is Andrea


Thursday, March 2

My Name Is Andrea



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

Directed by Pratibha Parmar, documentary, English, USA, 94 minutes, 2022

My Name Is Andrea is a hybrid feature documentary about one of the most controversial figures of the 20th century. Andrea Dworkin offered a revolutionary analysis of male supremacy with a singular urgency and iconoclastic flair. Decades before #MeToo, Dworkin called out the pervasiveness of sexism and rape culture, and the ways it impacts every woman's daily life. Shaped by the values of justice and equality learned in the civil rights movement, the film focuses on key moments from the life of this fearless fighter who demanded that women be seen as fully human. The film features performances by Ashley Judd, Soko, Amandla Stenberg, Andrea Riseborough, and Christine Lahti, woven in with rare, electrifying archival footage of Dworkin. Discussion with director Pratibha Parmar and producer Shaheen Haq to follow. 




Subtle Images of Every Day Revolt

Thursday, March 9

Subtle Images of Every Day Revolt: Short Works from Contemporary Iran



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

In this collection of short films by female and non-binary Iranian filmmakers in Iran and in diaspora, artists explore a wide range of subjects, from stories of war and immigration to the everyday lives of working people of Iran. At this moment of revolt in their country, we are turning to Iranian filmmakers to share their vision with us. In many ways, these films explore the poetics of everyday lives while pointing at the brutality of life under a dictatorship. These films are visual explorations of war, grief, hope, and joy. This program was curated by Homa Sarabi and Ghazal Bakhtazad. Sarabi is an artist and educator from Iran. She works primarily with moving images and examines the potential of documentary in personal storytelling. She is an affiliated faculty at Emerson College, where she teaches 16mm experimental filmmaking. Bakhtazad is a filmmaker and an activist. She is a professional lighting technician and committed to empowering women who enter the patriarchal world of cinema in Iran. Discussion with some of the filmmakers to follow. 

The Bright is closed March 16 for Spring Break.



TikTok, Boom.

Thursday, March 23

TikTok, Boom.

POC W SJ

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

Directed by Shalini Kantayya, documentary, English, USA, 97 minutes, 2022

Dissecting one of the most influential platforms of the contemporary social media landscape, *TikTok, Boom.* examines the algorithmic, sociopolitical, economic, and cultural influences and impact of the history-making app. This rigorous exploration balances a genuine interest in the TikTok community and its innovative mechanics with a healthy skepticism around the security issues, global political challenges, and racial biases behind the platform. A cast of Gen Z subjects, helmed by influencer Feroza Aziz, remains at its center, making this one of the most needed and empathetic films exploring what it means to be a digital native. Discussion with director Shalini Kantayya to follow. [CC](#)



Framing Agnes

Thursday, March 30

Framing Agnes

POC SJ LGBTQ

Co-presented with Wicked Queer: The Boston LGBT Film Festival and GlobeDocs

Directed by Chase Joynt, documentary, English, USA, 75 minutes, 2022

In the late 1950s, a woman named Agnes approached the UCLA Medical Center seeking sex reassignment surgery. Her story was long considered to be exceptional and singular until never-before-seen case files of other patients were found in 2017. *Framing Agnes* features preminent trans culture-makers, breathing new life into those who redefined gender in the mid-century. Discussion with director Chase Joynt to follow. [CC](#)



All the Beauty and the Bloodshed


Thursday, April 6

All the Beauty and the Bloodshed

W SJ LGBTQ D

Co-presented as part of Wicked Queer: LGBT Film Festival with GlobeDocs, the Boston Women's Film Festival, and Boston Jewish Film

Directed by Laura Poitras, documentary, English, USA, 117 minutes, 2022

All the Beauty and the Bloodshed is an epic, emotional, and interconnected story about internationally renowned artist and activist Nan Goldin told through her slideshows, intimate interviews, groundbreaking photography, and rare footage of her personal fight to hold the Sackler family accountable for the overdose crisis. Discussion led by activists to follow. 




Thursday, April 13

Mad God

Co-presented with the Boston Underground Film Festival and the Boston SciFi Film Festival

Directed by Phil Tippett, animation, no dialogue, USA, 83 minutes, 2021

Equipped with a gas mask and a crumbling map, the Assassin, an iron-clad humanoid, descends into a rusty, peril-laden underworld of grime, blood, and unsettling monstrosities. As the stealthy invader meanders through the labyrinthine post-apocalyptic wasteland on a mysterious mission, going deeper and deeper in the nightmarish realm, the Assassin gradually reaches his final destination: the heart of this grotesque tower of torture. But what cruel, vindictive deity allows fear and suffering to take its most complete creation further and further into despair? Only a Mad God would revel in humankind's ordeal. Discussion with director Phil Tippett and producer Colin Geddes to follow. 




Thursday, April 20

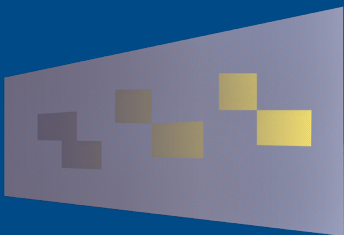
Women Talking



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

Directed by Sarah Polley, drama, English, USA 104 minutes, 2022

Reeling from multiple counts of sexual abuse newly uncovered within their Mennonite colony, a group of women gather in a hayloft to discuss how to respond. While the men are away, the women narrow their options down to three: do nothing, stay and fight, or leave. Some fear that any act of defiance will jeopardize their entry into heaven, while others believe they cannot survive without husbands and sons. Some are willing to take any measures to escape the terror of their domestic lives and insist that "the truth is stronger than the rules." Discussion led by affiliated faculty Colleen Kelly Poplin to follow. 



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

Emerson College resides on the ancestral and unceded lands of the Massachusetts, whose name was appropriated by this Commonwealth. We pay respect to the Massachusetts elders past and present. We acknowledge the truth of violence perpetrated in the name of this country and make a commitment to uncovering that truth.

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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