

NewFilmmakers Los Angeles Highlights Shorts at Annual InFocus: Latinx and Hispanic Cinema

By **RICARDO LOPEZ** 



CREDIT: COURTESY OF DANIELA ARGUELLO

Daniela Arguello, a Guatemalan-born director, is yet to screen her upcoming short film, “Sra. Genovese,” but already HBO has acquired the adventure comedy for its streaming service.

Through exposure at the annual InFocus: Latinx and Hispanic Cinema event, Arguello’s work is being noticed. (Latinx is the gender-neutral form of Latino increasingly used by academics, activists and bloggers.) Her previous short, “2500km,” made on a \$500 budget, was acquired by HBO after screening at the event in 2017.

Arguello and a few other Latinx filmmakers return this year to the annual screening event co-hosted by NewFilmmakers Los Angeles and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. The Sept. 8 event is intended to showcase the work of up-and-coming filmmakers, offering opportunities to gain a foothold in the American film industry. Many of the directors come from countries like Mexico, Brazil, Peru, and Spain, among others.

The event, Arguello said, “was life changing because it opened a lot of doors in my career.”

Director Rubin Stein, who returns for his third short film screening, said the event is a rare opportunity to see how a live audience reacts to his work. He is screening “Bailaora,” the final short film in a suspense trilogy. He was named one of the 10 Spanish Filmmakers on the Rise by *Variety*. The September event, he said, “is essential to give our cinema more visibility in Hollywood and to show that our movies can be very local and universal at the same time.”

The lineup features three world premieres: “The Morphable Man” by Jonathan Ostos Yaber; “Synopsis” by Felipe Saleme and Lara Koer; and “Sra. Genovese” by Arguello. Stein’s “Bailaora” will have its L.A. premiere at the event. The program also includes multiple award-winning directors, writers, and producers whose films have been programmed and awarded across Europe, South America, and in the United States, including at the SXSW Film Festival and Sundance Film Festival. (A full lineup and ticket purchasing information can be found [here](#).)

HBO, a sponsor, said the event and partnerships with NewFilmmakers Los Angeles and the National Association of Latino Independent Producers are key ways it finds emerging talent. “It falls in line with our mission and goal to foster and incubate and nurture emerging creators,” said Axel Caballero, director of HBO’s Corporate Social Responsibility office.

SAG-AFTRA president Gabrielle Carteris said in a statement that the partnership with NewFilmmakers LA and the Academy is an opportunity “to educate up-and-coming film professionals about our contracts, how to work with our members, as well as provide other critical information that’s necessary for advancement as a filmmaker.”



LEAVE A REPLY

NEW FILMMAKERS LOS ANGELES

Want to read more articles like this one? [Subscribe to Variety Today.](#)