

NewFilmmakers Los Angeles Unveils Lineup For Latinx & Hispanic Cinema Festival

By Dino-Ray Ramos 
August 20, 2019 12:13pm



In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, NewFilmmakers Los Angeles (NFMLA) will put the spotlight on the Latinx and Hispanic community this year at their annual festival on September 14 at the [Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' Linwood Dunn Theater](#) in Hollywood.

NFMLA has partnered with for their annual NewFilmmakers Los Angeles Film Festival InFocus: [Latinx & Hispanic Cinema Festival](#). The fest will include a lineup of local and international films by world-class emerging filmmakers from Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Spain, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Australia, Canada and the United States across three short film programs.

The [day-long event](#) will include a pre-reception where attendees can meet the filmmakers and industry professionals. It will be followed by three film programs that will feature moderators Claudia Puig of the Los Angeles Film Critics Association and Rosy Cordero from Entertainment Weekly.

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The complete lineup and details about the filmmakers for the program can be read below.

InFocus: Latinx & Hispanic Cinema Shorts Program #1

***Argemira* – Directed by Bosco da Costa Brazil/Canada**

US Premiere

A visually rich documentary narrating the life of an 85-year-old nun who had to overcome numerous obstacles to achieve her childhood dream.

About the Director – Bosco da Costa is a Brazilian filmmaker born in Recife, Pernambuco. Da Costa studied Law at Faculdade de Direito do Recife but decided to switch careers in order to follow his true passion in life: filmmaking. Da Costa moved to Toronto, Canada in 2017 to study Film and Television at Centennial College.

***Taylor and Vanessa* – Directed by Christina Santa Cruz USA**

Taylor and Vanessa examine what it means to be in danger.

About the Director – Christina Santa Cruz is a filmmaker and installation artist. She has showcased her work in various festivals and exhibitions, such as Chicago Underground Film Festival, Portland Unknown Film Festival, Norcal Nostiefest, Other Places Art Fair and Sunspots Cinema. Her education includes a bachelor's degree in Film from the University of Central Florida and a master's degree in Art and Technology from the California Institute of the Arts.

***Insomniac* – Directed by Anna Victoria Salinas USA**

A journey through one sleepless night.

About the Director – Anna is a graduate of UCLA's MFA program in screenwriting and a 2018 Sundance New Voice Lab Fellow. She's produced numerous shorts and performs

in the all-latina sketch duo John Baxter, whose film Sync has screened the LA Scripted Comedy Festival and the Funny Women Fest.

***We Vanish* – Directed by Astrid Dominguez Mexico/Australia**

In a country where violence against women has been normalised, a young mother will put her own life in danger to get legal justice over her daughter's brutal murder.

About the Director – Astrid is a director and writer from the State of Mexico. Her career began in advertising, directing over seventy commercials. In 2018, she graduated with an MFA in directing at VCA in Melbourne, Australia, where she developed her graduate short film We Vanish/ Las Desaparecidas. Her recent work as a director is focused on female subjectivity, human rights, gender issues.

***Something to Believe In (Algo en lo Que Creer)* – Directed by Fany de la Chica USA/Spain**

World Premiere

Alba is about to make communion and asks Jesus Christ to kill her sick grandfather.

About the Director – Fany de la Chica is an award-winning filmmaker, singer and educator originally from Andalusia (south of Spain) and based in Harlem – New York. She studied the MFA in Directing/Screenwriting at Columbia University in New York. Her films have been selected in more than one hundred international film festivals, broadcast on television and awarded. Her work has been published in CINEWOMEN and The Hollywood Reporter. She won a College Emmy Award for her short film "Something to Believe in" and the New View Award from Glamour Magazine for her short film "The Looking Ceremony".

InFocus: Latinx & Hispanic Cinema Shorts Program #2

***Thank You for Calling* – Directed by Priscila Torres USA**

World Premiere

Trapped in a never-ending immigration process, a Salvadoran immigrant makes a snap decision that could put her marriage and future in jeopardy.

About the Director – Priscila Torres was born and raised in El Salvador. In 2013, she earned a BFA in Graphic Design from Universidad Don Bosco in San Salvador, El Salvador. That same year, she was chosen as Robert Redford/Milagro Initiative Unique Voice recipient to study film in Santa Fe, New Mexico. During that time, she also volunteered on multiple occasions for the Sundance Film Festival and The Sundance Labs. She graduated in 2016 with a BFA in Film Production from Santa Fe University of Art & Design, and since then has worked on a number of productions as a production assistant, and as an assistant for Carmen Ejogo on The Girlfriend Experience S2 and Rattlesnake. Her feature screenplay "Undercurrent" was selected for the Sundance Screenwriters Intensive Macon 2019.

***La Casita Rosa* – Directed by Elvin Herrera Mexico/USA**

An exploration of the humanitarian work done by Las Patronas, group of Mexican women determined to help feed the immigrants riding on top of cargo trains heading north to the U.S.

About the Director – Elvin Herrera is a documentarian and video editor. He received his

B.A. in Cinema and Television Arts from California State University Northridge (CSUN) in 2015 and a M.F.A. in Film and Television from Mount Saint Mary's University in 2017. Herrera has worked in post-production for the National Association of Latino Independent Producers, Spotify, and Compathos TV.

***This happened to you? (Esto Le Paso a Usted)* – Directed by Ana Maria Estrada Peru**

An elderly couple coming back to their country thirty years after emigrating discovers how much everything has changed and how vulnerable they are.

About the Director – Peruvian by birth, Ana Maria Estrada currently resides between the cities of New York, Lima and Miami, which allows her to work on various artistic projects. Her love for the performing arts started at an early age and she decided to polish her talents by studying acting in New York, Los Angeles, and London. She also studied film at the prestigious New York Film Academy.

***Finding Shelter* – Directed by Marissa Chibas USA**

This documentary captures the stories of several unaccompanied minors seeking refuge in the United States and how their real-life experiences were made in to the 2016 internationally acclaimed play.

About the Director – Marissa Chibas is a writer, performer, filmmaker. Her solo show Daughter of a Cuban Revolutionary, has toured the U.S., Europe, and Mexico. Her silent film/performance piece, Clara's Los Angeles, was presented at REDCAT's NOW festival and the San Diego Latino Film Festival. She conceived and wrote the play Shelter, which premiered in Lincoln Park and was presented at the Kennedy Center and has been made into a documentary, Finding Shelter.

***Processing Station* – Directed by Rodrigo Espinosa USA**

When an optimistic man gets run over and dies, he finds the afterlife is run like the DMV, and a religion-based written test will determine his fate.

About the Director – Rodrigo is a Mexican director focused on comedy. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

InFocus: Latinx & Hispanic Cinema Shorts Program #3

***Kiss Me Malibu* – Directed by Mikel Arraiz Spain**

A horror-comedy music video about the insecurities and overthinking that TV shows, religion, culture and belief systems create in us during male-female relationships and in courtship.

About the Director – Mikel Arraiz is a director and editor who studied Telecommunications at Public University of Navarre (UPNA). He has created several music videos for Spanish bands, broadcast on MTV, and has written four scripts, which earned him several awards.

***And The Brave Shall Rise* – Directed by Adam Schlachter USA**

Cindy Polo, stay-at-home mom and social activist, runs for office after the Parkland high school massacre to help inspire change in the Florida Legislature.

About the Director – Born in Puerto Rico and raised in Miami, Adam Schlachter graduated with an MFA in Directing from AFI, completed a Screenwriting Certificate at UCLA, and earned a BFA in Production from FSU. His thesis, "My Backyard Was A Mountain", qualified for the Oscars, won an Imagen Award, earned grants from Kodak and Panavision, and screened at over two hundred film festivals. Adam was selected for the CBS Directing Initiative, the NBC-Universal Writers Showcase, the WGA IWC, the HSF/McNamara Arts Grant, the Caucus Foundation Grant, and the MPPA Diversity Scholarship. He is in post-production on a feature, "Hair In A Bag".

***Caminante, Caminante: La Leyenda del Huay Chivo* – Directed by Luis Quijano Mexico/USA**

In a rural village in Yucatan, Mexico, two young missionaries in search of the town's religious conversion go against the people's beliefs and awaken a monster from a folk legend.

About the Director – Luis Quijano is a Mexican filmmaker born and raised in Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico. At the age of 18, he moved to Mexico City, to study "Media and Communication" where he made his first short film "Me Gusta Más Crudo" with two fellow students. In 2015, he moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career in filmmaking, where he studied at the New York Film Academy in Burbank, CA and graduated in 2018. His latest project, the horror short film "Caminante, Caminante: La Leyenda del Huay Chivo" is rounding up at film festivals around the world. Meanwhile, he is developing two feature films: "Caminante, Caminante", based on this short film, and "Esto es lo que Somos", a cannibal horror road film.

***Until Dawn Comes* – Directed by Aaron Acuna Costa Rica**

An unexpected message from the past makes Carmen get off a bus and rush to the city to sing a song to an old lover. With the reluctant help of her sister, she will embark looking for the pieces of her past she thought were behind her.

About the Director – Aaron earned a degree in Film and TV from Veritas Film School, a Bachelor's in Psychology from University of Costa Rica and a Web Development Associate's from CENFOTEC. Aaron has experience in filmmaking, producing, screenwriting and editing. He has directed and written 3 Award winning short films and produced several feature documentaries.

***A Low-Budget Film* – Directed by Paulo Leierer Brazil**

West Coast Premiere

A mixture of corporate film, archive footage, documentary and making of, the film is an attempt of the scientists from the "Brazilian Institute of Alternative and Secondary Importance Research" to fight the lack of funding, the closure of the institute and to keep their dreams alive.

About the Director – Paulo Leierer is a Brazilian director and scriptwriter who works developing and writing projects, especially comedies, with major Brazilian production companies. He directed a comedy series screened on Comedy Central and Netflix and has had short films screened at festivals such as the São Paulo International Film Festival, the Durban International Film Festival, Hanover International Film Festival, Bogotá Short Film Festival (Oscar Qualifying) and more.

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