


# NewFilmmakers LA Reveal InFocus: Latinx & Hispanic Cinema Film Festival 2023 Lineup (Exclusive)

Hosted at The Academy's Linwood Dunn Theater in Hollywood from Sept. 22-23, this year will feature conversations with filmmaker Robert Rodriguez and Sundance Film Festival curators, along with a showcase of 24 short films across two days of programming.

BY ABBEY WHITE  SEPTEMBER 14, 2023 9:01AM



Spy Kids Armageddon and Fabula ROBERT RODRIGUEZ/NETFLIX; NEWFILMMAKERS LA

Conversations with *Spy Kids* helmer **Robert Rodriguez**, Sundance Film Festival curators Ana Souza and Diana Sánchez Maciel, and 24 short films are among the programming slated for this year's InFocus: Latinx & Hispanic Cinema Film Festival.

Taking place Sept. 22-23 at the Academy's Linwood Dunn Theater in Hollywood, the 2023 edition of NewFilmmakers Los Angeles' annual fest will feature four short programs, with audience Q&A sessions and four live panels, alongside a showcase of 24 short films from narrative live action to documentary and animated film.

"It's incredibly exciting to be back in 2023 with filmmakers representing 12 countries at the Festival," said NFMLA programming director Bojana Sandic and executive director and co-founder Larry Laboe in a joint statement. "It really is a testament to the talent that exists on a global scale and reflects our essential goal of creating a truly inclusive program. When everyone is represented, our industry can thrive."

Among this year's panel highlights are *Latinos as Heroes: In Conversation with Robert Rodriguez*, which will see the famed filmmaker explore the importance of showcasing the Latinx community as heroes like his *Spy Kids* franchise, and offer a deep dive into the kind of storytelling that can inspire a new generation of young heroes.

Other panels will feature craft and industry conversations with Sundance Film Festival curators Ana Souza and Diana Sánchez Maciel, documentary filmmaker and *Sansón and Me* director Rodrigo Reyes, and three award-winning Brazilian filmmakers discussing the process of getting a debut film made from conception to distribution for "Creating a Feature Film with The Brazilian Filmmakers Collective."

The 24 short films set to be featured at this year's festival represent countries like São Paulo, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Puerto Rico, Spain, Venezuela and the U.S. That includes the world premieres of five new short films from emerging artists out of São Paulo, the U.S. premiere of *Piedra Dura* by Emmy and Student Academy Award-winning filmmaker and NFMLA alum Rommel Villa, and writer-director Carlos Segundo's *Big Bang*, which premiered in Locarno.

Miguel Angel Caballero's *The Ballad of Tita and the Machines* and Gabriela Ortega's *Beautiful, FL* — both of whom were inaugural Academy Film Accelerator program fellows and previous Best of NFMLA Award nominees — are also in the 2023 lineup.

Festival day programming begins with *InFocus: São Paulo*, a collection of films curated in partnership with SPCINE, followed by *InFocus: Latinx & Hispanic Cinema Shorts I – Interdependence*, a collection of stories about how people rely on each other.

The third block of programming is *InFocus: Latinx & Hispanic Cinema Shorts II – The Unexplainable*, highlighting narratives that leave characters grasping for answers, with the final block of programming set as *InFocus: Latinx & Hispanic Cinema Shorts III – Through the Eyes of Youth*. This selection of stories are told from the perspective of children and adolescents coming of age.

Each year the NFMLA and the Academy also bring together industry professionals, executives and creatives in support of the programmed filmmakers and projects, with this year's class including Souza, Danielle Gasher at Gravitas Ventures; Diamond McNeil at Warner Bros.; Diego Nájera at Participant; DGA Award-winner Felipe Vargas; Graciela Garcia at Cinetic Media; Ivana Martinez at Verve Talent & Literary Agency; Joan Wai at the Academy; Lauren Lopez de Victoria at Borderless; Nick Romano at 18hz, Sarah Al-Qatou at Hoorae; and Tony Gil at Redefine Entertainment.

"The Academy is dedicated to encouraging and elevating emerging filmmakers from diverse communities around the world," said Kendra Carter, Academy svp, impact and global talent development. "We're thrilled to support **NewFilmmakers LA**, which has been instrumental in providing a start to so many careers in the industry."