



CONVERSATIONS AMONG “X” SERIES SCHEDULE

Wednesday, June 30, 4pm ET

Topic: **FILM FESTIVALS AND LATINX FILMMAKERS: HOW TO SUBMIT THE WINNING ENTRY**

Film Festivals...Are They Worth the Time and Money to Enter?

Should I enter my work in a film festival? Which festival should I choose? Join Moderator Lorena Russi, a performer and filmmaker, as she moderates a panel of filmmakers and podcast veterans who have traveled the film festival road before. Please send us your questions via email (tccyf@hitn.org) or listen live and send them via chat.



Moderator: LORENA RUSSI

Lorena Russi is a Queer-Latinx Pro Soccer Player turned Comedian and Filmmaker. Her decade in entertainment ranges from Writer-Director-Host for PBS to Writing-Producing for The Late Show w/ Stephen Colbert digital team. Follow her @ColonialManFace or follow her home, dealer's choice!

Panelists:



CARLA CAVINA

ADRIAN NUÑO

CARLA CAVINA is a queer multidisciplinary artist born in the archipelago of Puerto Rico where she lives and studied visual arts. Throughout her career, she has used photography, performance, and film to deconstruct gender and ancestral mythology. In 2016, she released her first feature film: *Extra Terrestrials* which she wrote, directed and edited. The film has been exhibited in more than 40 queer film festivals around the world and has collected awards in Puerto Rico, Miami, Milan and Paris. More on Carla's work can be found [here](#).



ANDREW NUÑO

ALEXIS GARCIA

ADRIAN NUÑO is a filmmaker, actor and content creator from Chicago, Illinois. With over ten years of filmmaking experience, his work shines a light on underrepresented topics and communities. He co-directed, produced and edited a short film on mental health entitled *Little Things* which received recognition from film festivals in Portugal, Ireland and here in the United States. His most recent project is a Latinx web series entitled *Border'd* which will premiere its first season this year on the Emmy-nominated platform Open Television. More on Adrian's work can be found [here](#).

ANDREW NUÑO is a writer, director, producer, and actor from Chicago, Illinois. Andrew creates content that focuses on untapped communities. Over the years, his work has been recognized at film festivals in both the US and abroad in countries like Portugal and Ireland. In addition, his work has screened through partnerships with organizations like the National Alliance on Mental Illness and at venues like The Chicago Cultural Center. Andrew's current project, the web-series *Border'd*, is currently streaming on the Emmy and Streamy-nominated web platform Open Television where the full season of *Border'd* is expected to premiere this summer. More on Andrew's work can be found [here](#).

ALEXIS GARCÍA is a writer, director and proud Afro Boricua whose work has spanned both TV and digital. She is currently Supervising Producer for BuzzFeed's Latinx channel *Pero Like*, and is passionate about driving critical conversations that inform and uplift the Latinx community. More on Alexis can be found [here](#).

Wednesday, July 21, 4pm ET

Topic: EVOKING EMOTION: EXPLORING THE USE OF IMAGES AND SOUND

"Sound design is the main contributing factor to the mood and atmosphere of any film," Charlie Battin

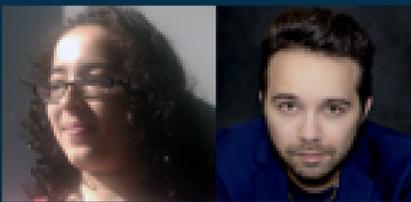
Sounds, like images, engage audiences by evoking emotions. Together, these two critical elements can bring your film to life. Join today's panel, moderated by Jessie Fuentes, as they discuss the individual and complementary roles of images and sound, using their favorite movies and their own work. Please send us your questions via email (tccyf@hitn.org) or listen live and send them via chat.



Moderator: JESSIE FUENTES

Jessie Fuentes, is an activist and educator in the Humboldt Park Community in Chicago, IL, popularly known as "Paseo Boricua". Fuentes has participated in work empowering young people in the community, the campaign to release Oscar López Rivera, anti-gentrification work, education reform, and for the independence of Puerto Rico. Fuentes is currently the Dean of Student Affairs at Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School. She strives to see a more just world through advocacy and policy.

Panelists:



NATASHA CÁNEPA BEN GUZMAN



DENES PAGAN ARMANDO VERGARA

NATASHA CÁNEPA Born in Puerto Rico, Natasha Canepe is an avid lover of art and animation with her passion to draw dating back to elementary school. She has created the 2D short films Ready to Fight and Magic Play, the latter of which won several awards including Best Local Animation at LUSCA Fantastic Film Fest in Puerto Rico. Presently, she runs a multi-service studio where she incorporates Animation, Motion Media, Storyboarding, Illustration and Post-Production into numerous projects from educational presentations to studio short films like Metro6. Natasha's work can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

BEN GUZMAN is an award-winning director, producer, editor, and storyteller from Brooklyn, NY. Most recently, he served as Senior Creative Producer at Better Noise Music, managing a small team and creating content that led to three Grammy Nominations and multiple RIAA Gold and Platinum Records. Drawing inspiration from the music videos and films he grew up studying, he has spent the past decade creating a name for himself through his aggressive editing and highly stylized imagery. Garnering over 1 billion video views, Ben has created visuals for an eclectic group of artists such as The Notorious BIG, Nelly Furtado, Mötley Crüe, Kehlani, and Lupe Fiasco. His approach to each client and project is the same: tell the story the way it should be told. More on Ben can be found [here](#).

DENES PAGÁN is a 2 time Emmy Award winning audio post engineer and TV/Film music composer for his work for Atencion Atencion for their TV series, trained as a classical and popular music guitarist at the University of Puerto Rico. Denes has worked extensively in the advertising industry for clients such as: Claro, Wendy's, JCPenney, Proctor and Gamble, United Ways, Toyota and Home Depot among others. Denes has also won recognition at the Cannes Festival as well as Cuspide Awards in Puerto Rico. Have won Saatchi & Saatchi several Fiap metals in the Radio category. Presently, he works as a sound engineer for Reaktor Post. More on Denes can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

ARMANDO VERGARA is a Cuban and Puerto Rican Trombonist, Composer, Bandleader, and Educator from South Florida, currently based in NYC. He graduated from The Manhattan School of Music in 2019 with a Bachelor of Music in Jazz Arts, and has performed and recorded with world renowned musicians such as Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Bobby Sanabria, Jon Faddis, Paquito D'Rivera, María Schneider, Randy Brecker, Benny Benack III, Steven Feifke, María Bacardi, Sean Jones, and many more. Armando is the founder/creator of 'Mestizos'. Armando teaches private classes in his studio, and has given masterclasses at a number of schools in NYC and South Florida. More on Armando can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Wednesday, August 11, 4pm ET

Topic: WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR: OBSTACLES & TRIUMPHS

“Don’t take no as a full stop, treat it like a comma.” – Amma Asante

There were more women in the director's chair in 1998 than there are now. So, what's the problem? Join Moderator Lorena Russi and four women directors as they discuss their experiences, obstacles, and triumphs making films. Please send us your questions via email (tccyf@hitn.org) or listen live and send them via chat.



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Panelists:



AMNERIS MORALES: A respected actress of the Puerto Rican theater, television and cinema scenes, with a vast experience not only as an actress but also as producer and writer. She is also a Magna Cum Laude graduate of film production and direction from Universidad Ana G. Mendez, Puerto Rico with studies in psychology and acting at the UPR. Her extensive career includes many performances in plays, TV shows, soap operas and films in Puerto Rico and Argentina, among other Latin American countries. Her career in theatre includes many performances in plays, such as “La Carreta,” “The Effect Of Gamma Rays On Man In The Moon of The Marigolds,” “Back To My Land,” “La Ultima Plena Que Bailó Luberza,” “The Living Room,” and “Julia De Burgos; A Child Of Water,” among others. She has performed in many Puerto Rican soap operas, such as “Yo Se Que Mentía,” “Vivir Para Ti,” and “Yara Prohibida.” She has appeared in the American T.V. production “Miami Vice.” Her Puerto Rican film credits include, “Orfanato,” “La Granja” and “Romeo y Romeo.”

MILDRED AMADOR has been involved in different facets of film and media. Some of her early work experiences included the Chicago Latino Film Festival, Noticias 26 and Ogilvy and Mather Advertising Agency. Mildred has also worked on independent film projects including Flags of Steel, a documentary that recounts the most recent history of the Puerto Rican influence in Chicago's Humboldt Park community. Currently, Mildred is a CTE, Career Technology Education, instructor for Chicago Public Schools at Roberto Clemente Community Academy, her Alma Mater. More on Mildred can be found [here](#).

LORENA GUILLEN CASTILLO is a multi-hyphenate artist- actress, playwright, producer, director, and entrepreneur. She is currently a student at the Stella Adler Studio of Acting and New York University's Tisch School of the Arts where she is majoring in Drama and Producing. In her free time, she enjoys writing, as well as making Fashion, Beauty, and True Crime videos for her YouTube channel. More on Lorena can be found [here](#).

JAYLEEN S. PÉREZ is a Latina Filmmaker from Bayonne, NJ, also former Miss Puerto Rico 2011. Her first film Karmen which is a romantic thriller with a strong LGBTQ presence has been well received both domestically and internationally. Within a year she already has 5 IMDb credits, including an acting credit in a commercial. Jayleen is all about pushing the limits and showing others not to count out a Hispanic women in a male dominant industry. More on Jayleen can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Wednesday, September 1, 4pm ET
Topic: "SOCIAL ACTIVISM IN FILM:
TALES FROM THE YEAR THAT WAS"

"We must use what we have to invent what we desire." Adrienne Rich

The events and social causes that we see, hear about, and experience help shape our views of the world and frame our visions of the world that can be. Join Moderator Jessie Fuentes and a panel of filmmakers as they reflect on the causes and experiences that inspired them to share the world they desire through the films they made. Please send us your questions via email (tccyf@hitn.org) or listen live and send them via chat.



Moderator: JESSIE FUENTES

Jessie Fuentes is an activist and educator in the Humboldt Park Community in Chicago, IL, popularly known as "Paseo Boricua". Fuentes has participated in work empowering young people in the community, the campaign to release Oscar López Rivera, anti-gentrification work, education reform, and for the independence of Puerto Rico. Fuentes is currently the Dean of Student Affairs at Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School. She strives to see a more just world through advocacy and policy.



Panelists:

SOFÍA GALLISÁ MURIENTE is a visual artist working through multiple approaches to documentation, deepening the subjectivity of historical narratives and examining formal and informal archives, popular imaginaries and visual culture. She studied Film & TV Production and Latin American Studies at New York University and has participated in experimental pedagogical platforms led by artists, like Anhoek School and Beta-Local's La Práctica, substituting graduate studies with a process of learning and unlearning with others. Her work has been featured in The New York Times, Art in America, Terremoto, and Hyperallergic, and earned her grants from TEOR/ÉTica and NALAC. She has exhibited in the Whitney Biennial, the Queens Museum, ifa Galerie in Berlin, Museum of Contemporary Art in Puerto Rico, MALBA in Argentina and CCA Glasgow, among others, and Puerto Rican galleries like Km 0.2, El Lobi, Diagonal and Embajada.

MATT MCCANNA Video specialist whose work explores health, culture, resistance, identity, and social movement. For 10+ years Matt has worked and trained in varying degrees of film/documentary production in Chicago & New York, including producing two videos for the Campaign to Free Oscar López Rivera. Current work focuses on video as a mechanism for community building. More on Matt can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

RAYMOND ARTURO PÉREZ is an LA-based television writer and creative, hailing from San Antonio, Texas, who most recently served as staff writer for season 2 of Selena: The Series on Netflix. As a writer, Raymond aims to broaden the film and television canon with stories of Latinx people, queer people, and other underrepresented communities. In 2014, Raymond graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a BBA in Marketing and a BS in Radio-Television-Film. He received his Master's degree in Screenwriting in 2019 from the American Film Institute, which is currently ranked the number one film school by The Hollywood Reporter. More on Raymond can be found [here](#).

STEVEN RIVERA also known as Kruz Rivera founded Indie Films Puerto Rico in January 2015. Born on April 7, 1989 in Arecibo, Puerto Rico. Kruz is a self taught director of photography that has worked on music videos, fashion films, short films, tv productions and as a creative director for brands, record labels and artists such as Zion & Lennox, Warner Music Latina, Pina Records, UMG, Rimas and many more. More on Steven can be found [here](#).

Wednesday, September 22, 4pm ET

**Topic: "COMPELLING DOCUMENTARIES:
REAL STORIES FOR REAL CHANGE"**

"We must use what we have to invent what we desire." Adrienne Rich

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Moderator: LORENA RUSSI

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Panelists:

STEVEN VÁZQUEZ is an award winning director and producer based in Los Angeles. A graduate of Howard University, Steve began his filmmaking career producing music videos for artists like Tiesto, The Chainsmokers, P. Diddy, Galantis, and Marshmello. Steve has produced two feature films and in 2019, he directed his first narrative feature film titled Domino: Battle of the Bones starring Snoop Dogg and David Arquette. Steve has produced and directed projects that have won laurels from Nashville International Film Festival, LA Shorts Film Festival, HollyShorts Film Festival, Legends of Hollywood Film Festival, DigiDay Award, Webby Award, and three CLIO awards for branded content campaigns.

JORGE XOLALPA is an award-winning filmmaker and CEO of Mighty Aphrodite Pictures. His studio concentrates in the production of female driven stories. In 2019 Jorge launched NYTA (Not Your Typical Assholes) Films, a Mighty Aphrodite Pictures sister company with the intent to produce LGBTQIA+ and or LatinX content, created for and by LatinX filmmakers. His 2020 film, YOUR IRON LADY, was in consideration for a Golden Globe nomination and received great reviews from members of the Hollywood Foreign Press. His thematic is constantly very dark and dramatic. Jorge has publicly admitted that he is heavily inspired by the works of Darren Aronofsky, Yorgos Lanthimos, and Woody Allen. More on Jorge can be found [here](#).

JOÃO DALL'STELLA is a Brazilian writer and director based in Los Angeles. His AFI thesis film "Día De Las Carpas" won the DGA Student Grand Prize for Latino Directors and has been featured in prestigious showcases and festivals such as CAA Moebius, SAG-AFTRA Foundation and Oscar-qualifying film festivals. His short film "Stalls" has also played in more than 50 LGBTQ+ Festivals worldwide. More on João can be found [here](#).

JORGE L. RIVERA is a Puerto Rican filmmaker with a BFA from Miami International University of Art & Design. Jorge is a thirteen-year veteran in the Film and TV industry. He has worked with major networks such as Netflix, NBC, and Universal Studios as an Assistant Director, Stage Manager, Segment Producer, and Covid Compliance Officer. Recently, the American Film Institute recruited him to work as an industry mentor on student films. One of the most life-changing projects he has worked on was the

2019 documentary, "Lost in America," about the hidden lives of homeless youth across the United States. More on Jorge can be found [here](#).

Wednesday, October 13, 4pm ET

**Topic: "TEARS, FEARS AND LAUGHTER:
OVERCOMING OBSTACLES & LESSONS LEARNED"**

"We must use what we have to invent what we desire." Adrienne Rich

The events and social causes that we see, hear about, and experience help shape our views of the world and frame our visions of the world that can be. Join Moderator Maestro Antonio Martorell and a panel of filmmakers as they reflect on the causes and experiences that inspired them to share the world they desire through the films they made. Please send us your questions via email (tccyf@hitn.org) or listen live and send them via chat.



Moderator: ANTONIO MARTORELL

Antonio Martorell has his art workshop in La Playa de Ponce where he lives and works. He has been artist-in-residence for more than 25 years at the University of Puerto Rico in Cayey. He keeps busy at painting, drawing, installation and performance art, graphics, set and costume design, theatre, films, TV, radio, writing for the press and has published three books. He is the host of the WIPR-TV series, "En la punta de la lengua" (On the Tip of the Tongue), which won 5 Emmy Awards. His work has been exhibited and awarded in and out of the country and in private and public collections. More on Antonio can be found [here](#) and [here](#).



Panelists:

NEYDA MARTÍNEZ is a producer with over 20 years experience. She has worked on the publicity and marketing campaigns of over 70 acclaimed and award-winning PBS POV documentaries and was the project manager for the organization's rebranding campaign. Her film credits include producer of the documentary films Lucky (2013) about a homeless LGBTQ single mom who dreams of stardom, and Decade of Fire (2019) uncovers the story of why the South Bronx burned in the '70s, and will reach a national audience on the PBS' series, Independent Lens. Martínez is the recipient of a Rockefeller Cultural

Innovation Fund Award for The New Audience Project™, a curriculum and program she created to engage marginalized women as cultural ambassadors.

ALEX RAMÍREZ is an award-winning Mexican-American filmmaker based in San Antonio, Texas. He is a graduate of the University of Texas-Pan American with a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre. He has worked professionally throughout Texas since 2014 as the head of his own production company, Mala Bruja Pictures. His films have screened both domestically and across the globe. In 2021, his film, "The Quiet Shore," was distributed by ShortsTV. He currently teaches media and film at SAY Sí in San Antonio and serves as a Board Member of the San Antonio Film Society. More on Alex can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

DANI ADELIZ is a bi-racial Afro-Latina actress, comedian, writer, and director. She works predominantly in web video and on stage as an actress, comedian, and writer but has recently transitioned into directing and producing. Dani just wrapped on a short film which she wrote, produced, co-directed, and acted in called Piña Coladas. It is picture locked and currently in the last stretch of post-production. More on Dani can be found [here](#).

BRYAN CID BORRERO is a jack of all trades; actor, musician/singer/composer, writer, spokesperson, and aspiring entrepreneur. In his most recent work Bryan makes a guest star appearance as Jesus in the movie "Hope" playing in the Caribbean Cinemas theaters in Puerto Rico, and his new music group "Perfekto" debuted with the music video "Estoy Orando" in the credits of the film. Some of his best appearances on TV include CBS CSI: Miami, Nickelodeon's Big Time Rush, and Netflix Nicky Jam: El Ganador, national commercials for McDonald's/Coke and Sprint, and is currently the face of Freeway Insurance. More on Bryan can be found [here](#) and [here](#).