

NOU AKOMA NOU SINÈJI HAITIAN DOMINICAN TRANSNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

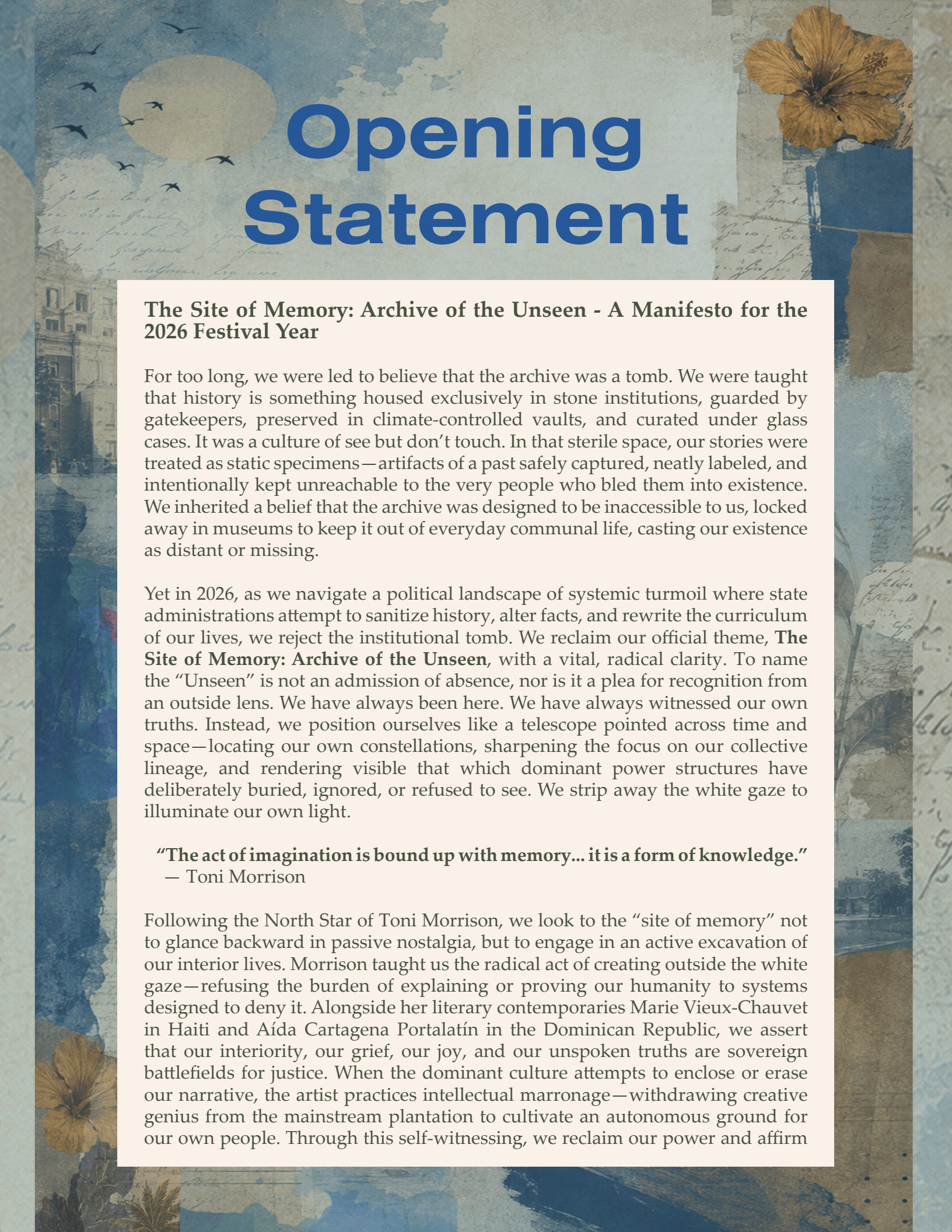


THE SITE OF MEMORY:
ARCHIVE OF THE UNSEEN

2026
FESTIVAL PROGRAM



dominicanslovehaitians.com



Opening Statement

The Site of Memory: Archive of the Unseen - A Manifesto for the 2026 Festival Year

For too long, we were led to believe that the archive was a tomb. We were taught that history is something housed exclusively in stone institutions, guarded by gatekeepers, preserved in climate-controlled vaults, and curated under glass cases. It was a culture of see but don't touch. In that sterile space, our stories were treated as static specimens—artifacts of a past safely captured, neatly labeled, and intentionally kept unreachable to the very people who bled them into existence. We inherited a belief that the archive was designed to be inaccessible to us, locked away in museums to keep it out of everyday communal life, casting our existence as distant or missing.

Yet in 2026, as we navigate a political landscape of systemic turmoil where state administrations attempt to sanitize history, alter facts, and rewrite the curriculum of our lives, we reject the institutional tomb. We reclaim our official theme, **The Site of Memory: Archive of the Unseen**, with a vital, radical clarity. To name the "Unseen" is not an admission of absence, nor is it a plea for recognition from an outside lens. We have always been here. We have always witnessed our own truths. Instead, we position ourselves like a telescope pointed across time and space—locating our own constellations, sharpening the focus on our collective lineage, and rendering visible that which dominant power structures have deliberately buried, ignored, or refused to see. We strip away the white gaze to illuminate our own light.

"The act of imagination is bound up with memory... it is a form of knowledge."
— Toni Morrison

Following the North Star of Toni Morrison, we look to the "site of memory" not to glance backward in passive nostalgia, but to engage in an active excavation of our interior lives. Morrison taught us the radical act of creating outside the white gaze—refusing the burden of explaining or proving our humanity to systems designed to deny it. Alongside her literary contemporaries Marie Vieux-Chauvet in Haiti and Aída Cartagena Portalatín in the Dominican Republic, we assert that our interiority, our grief, our joy, and our unspoken truths are sovereign battlefields for justice. When the dominant culture attempts to enclose or erase our narrative, the artist practices intellectual marronage—withdrawing creative genius from the mainstream plantation to cultivate an autonomous ground for our own people. Through this self-witnessing, we reclaim our power and affirm



what always has been: our enduring existence.

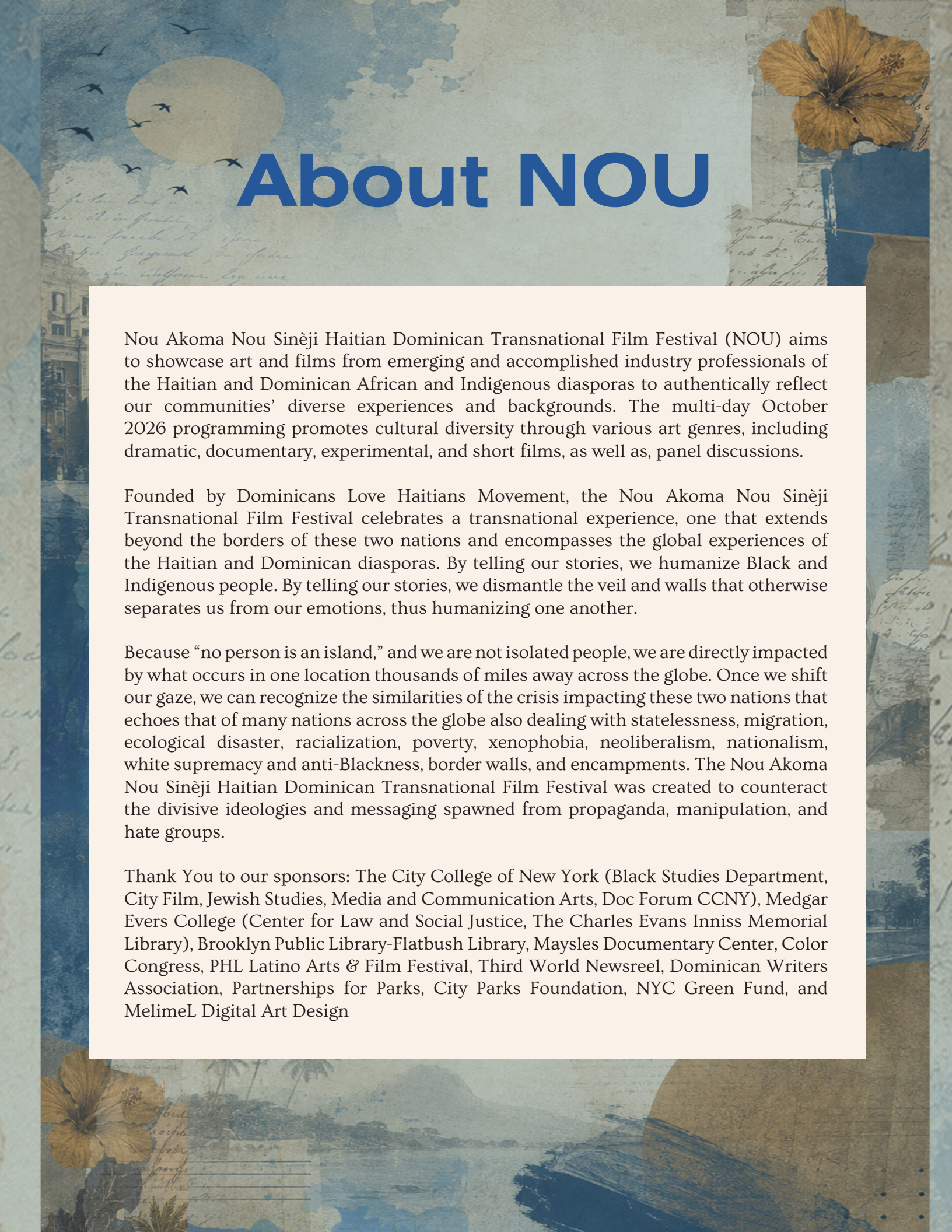
This year, our archive has teeth. It is grounded in the historical, direct actions of fugitivity and marronage—the ancestral blueprint of escaping capture to live entirely free. That freedom was inextricably bound to ecology. The Maroon and Indigenous ancestors knew that the state could not capture what it could not map. The thick canopy, the hidden rivers, and the impenetrable sierras of the maniel were not passive backdrops; they were active co-conspirators in liberation. We see this lineage alive today when practitioners braid ancestral seeds into their programming, treating the soil as an open-source archive of survival, and when urban farms treat indigenous agriculture not simply as sustainability, but as a sacred, decentralized ceremony of self-determination. They remind us that community gardens, urban plots, and public canopies are modern maniel—sanctuaries of sovereignty where memory stays protected beyond the reach of state power.

Many of the films in this year's festival confront immediate, painful realities of displacement and homelessness—whether through being unhoused, physically uprooted from ancestral soil, or caught in the violent machinery of national border enforcement and racialization. Yet in documenting these struggles, we are not merely cataloging injury. The camera acts as a mirror of reclamation, and the documentary becomes a deliberate reenactment of claiming the self. When home is torn away through government intervention, dictatorships, or white supremacy, seeing yourself and grasping your history restores sovereign agency. Each film becomes a temporary liberated territory—a space where displaced people are fully witnessed, fully present, and fully home within their own legacy.

The Site of Memory: Archive of the Unseen is our collective invocation. It functions as our communal lens, bringing into crisp, undeniable focus what the world sought to veil. It insists that when textbooks alter facts, the living testimony of the elder becomes the law. When states draw borders to dictate who belongs, we affirm that we belong to the earth, carrying our archives in our bones, our seeds, and our untranslated tongues. We do not wait to be discovered. We train our gaze upon ourselves, recognize our unbroken presence, and awaken the living present.

Asé. Ayibobo. Amen. Aha.

Clarivel Ruiz
Founder and Cultural Alchemist
Dominicans Love Haitians Movement



About NOU

Nou Akoma Nou Sinèji Haitian Dominican Transnational Film Festival (NOU) aims to showcase art and films from emerging and accomplished industry professionals of the Haitian and Dominican African and Indigenous diasporas to authentically reflect our communities' diverse experiences and backgrounds. The multi-day October 2026 programming promotes cultural diversity through various art genres, including dramatic, documentary, experimental, and short films, as well as, panel discussions.

Founded by Dominicans Love Haitians Movement, the Nou Akoma Nou Sinèji Transnational Film Festival celebrates a transnational experience, one that extends beyond the borders of these two nations and encompasses the global experiences of the Haitian and Dominican diasporas. By telling our stories, we humanize Black and Indigenous people. By telling our stories, we dismantle the veil and walls that otherwise separates us from our emotions, thus humanizing one another.

Because "no person is an island," and we are not isolated people, we are directly impacted by what occurs in one location thousands of miles away across the globe. Once we shift our gaze, we can recognize the similarities of the crisis impacting these two nations that echoes that of many nations across the globe also dealing with statelessness, migration, ecological disaster, racialization, poverty, xenophobia, neoliberalism, nationalism, white supremacy and anti-Blackness, border walls, and encampments. The Nou Akoma Nou Sinèji Haitian Dominican Transnational Film Festival was created to counteract the divisive ideologies and messaging spawned from propaganda, manipulation, and hate groups.

Thank You to our sponsors: The City College of New York (Black Studies Department, City Film, Jewish Studies, Media and Communication Arts, Doc Forum CCNY), Medgar Evers College (Center for Law and Social Justice, The Charles Evans Inness Memorial Library), Brooklyn Public Library-Flatbush Library, Maysles Documentary Center, Color Congress, PHL Latino Arts & Film Festival, Third World Newsreel, Dominican Writers Association, Partnerships for Parks, City Parks Foundation, NYC Green Fund, and MelimeL Digital Art Design

Wed, October 7 Schedule

 **NOU Film Festival at The City College of New York**
October 7–9, 2026
CITY COLLEGE | 160 Convent Avenue, New York, NY 10031
(Shepard Hall, Room 290 & 291)

The 4th Annual Nou Akoma Nou Sineji Haitian Dominican Transnational Film Festival comes to The City College of New York for three days of films, conversations, scholarship, and community exploring migration, labor, Black resistance, storytelling, race, historical memory, and the responsibility of artists to speak to the times in which we live.

 **Wednesday, October 7, 2026 | 6:00–10:00**
PM EDT - Opening Night | Reception, Films & Conversation

-  **6:00 PM - Doors open at 6:00pm**
-  **6:00-7:30 PM – Reception (Room 290)**
-  **7:30-8:30 PM – Screening (Room 291)**
-  **8:30-9:30 PM – Artist Q&A and Conversation**

We open the 2026 NOU Film Festival by turning our attention to New York City and the people who have fought to shape their workplaces and neighborhoods.

Domsey on Strike (Domsey an Grèv) — 28 mins

A rarely told history of predominantly Haitian immigrant workers who organized against exploitation, racism, and abusive working conditions at Brooklyn's Domsey International textile factory.

The Ones Who Bought Bushwick — 23 mins

Created by youth filmmakers at Educational Video Center (EVC), this documentary investigates gentrification and displacement in Bushwick, asking who gets to determine the future of a neighborhood—and who gets to remain.

October 8 & 9 Schedule

 CITY COLLEGE | 160 Convent Avenue, New York, NY 10031
(Shepard Hall, Room 291)

Through archival footage and first-person testimony, TRUE NORTH revisits the 1968 Congress of Black Writers and the Sir George Williams Affair, restoring Montreal's place within the history of global Black liberation.

Moving across the Caribbean, Canada, and the United States, the film connects histories of migration, colonialism, institutional racism, and resistance while centering the elders who lived and organized through this transformative period.

The screening will be followed by a conversation with director Michèle Stephenson, moderated by filmmaker Alain Martin, exploring the film and the long process of researching, nurturing, financing, and bringing documentary stories into the world.

 **Thursday, October 8, 2026 | 6:30–10:00 PM EDT -
Black Resistance Across Borders**

 6:30 PM - Doors open at 6:30pm (Room 291)

 7:00 PM - Screening

 Discussion following the film

True North (98 mins)

Set against the backdrop of 1960s Montreal and taking a hemispheric view of Black resistance, TRUE NORTH connects threads from the Caribbean, Canada, and the US, tracing the shared legacies of colonialism and state oppression. At the heart of the film are the voices of elders, who lived through this period and whose contributions have largely gone unrecognized. Their stories ground the film's narrative, offering a rare and poignant perspective on the era. Through their lens, TRUE NORTH becomes both an act of remembrance and a call to action for new generations.

Visually striking and emotionally resonant, TRUE NORTH is a love letter to 1960s Montreal and a radical reimagining of its place in history. With its bold artistic approach and commitment to truth-telling, TRUE NORTH invites audiences into an immersive experience that is as relevant now as it was revolutionary then.

 **CITY COLLEGE | 160 Convent Avenue, New York, NY 10031**
(Shepard Hall - See specific room locations below)

Friday expands the festival beyond the screen for a day of exchange among filmmakers, scholars, students, cultural workers, and community.

The day program includes conversations and presentations such as participant care in documentary filmmaking, work by City College MFA student filmmakers, and more.

 The daytime gathering concludes with a networking reception.

Friday, October 9, 2026 | 12 noon–6:00 PM EDT - Film, Storytelling & Community

 12:00 PM–1:30 PM - Values-Based Filmmaking with DAWG (Room 390)

 2:00 PM–4:30 PM - City College MFA Student Film Screening (Room 491)

 4:30 PM–6:00 PM - Funding Opportunities with Firelight Media (Room 310)

 6:30 PM–10:00 PM - Screenings (Room 291)

 Discussion following the films

Friday Evening | 6:30 PM–10:00 PM EDT - Memory, Migration & Belonging

Toda La Verdad (20 mins)

When a young Dominican-American woman discovers African ancestry through a DNA test, her search into a relative's hidden past forces a reckoning with long-held family beliefs about race, class, and identity. *Toda La Verdad* explores heritage, belonging, and the stories families tell—and the truths they choose to hide.

Diaspora Power (53 mins)

Directed by Joseph Hillel, *Diaspora Power* traces the arrival of Haitian immigrants to Quebec during the 1960s and 1970s. Through stories of exile, racism, solidarity, and community building, the film reveals how Haitian immigrants created networks of belonging while contributing to the social and cultural life of Quebec. It is a story of migration, resilience, and the power of diaspora to create roots in new soil.

Together, the films ask how migration, memory, ancestry, and the stories we inherit shape who we understand ourselves to be—and how we create belonging across generations and borders.



CITY COLLEGE | MFA Student Films Showcase | OCTOBER 9

The NOU Film Festival's student and emerging filmmaker showcase brings together four films exploring Dominican and Caribbean life through questions of labor, family, cultural memory, childhood, and belonging.

In *Welcome to Batey 6*, Haitian-born filmmaker **Mano Alexandre Jr.** enters a Dominican sugarcane community, following two men whose lives reveal different realities of living and working within the island's sugar economy.

Find Me At The Dinner Table, by **Samantha Alvarez**, turns toward food, family, and memory. Feeling disconnected from her Caribbean roots, Alvarez reconnects with her Puerto Rican Tía Abuela, Alaida Toro, in the kitchen, where recipes and art become pathways toward preserving family history and cultural identity.

In *Yokaira*, **Kilpatry Montes de Oca** offers a vérité portrait of a nine-year-old girl living in a largely unseen community in the Dominican Republic. Following Yokaira through the rhythms of everyday life, the film encounters her world from a child's perspective—one shaped by scarce resources but also by innocence and her vision of a better future.

Wigner Baldwin Duarte's *Buscando al Zorro* (*Looking for Zorro*) follows a single father and his son as they journey far from home and find their relationship beginning to unravel. The film brings another dimension to the program's exploration of family, distance, and connection.

Together, the films move between the batey, the kitchen table, childhood, and the complicated bonds between parent and child. They invite us to consider how Caribbean identities and relationships are shaped through place, labor, migration, family, memory, and the stories we preserve and pass forward.

Sat, October 10 Schedule

 FLATBUSH LIBRARY | 22 Linden Blvd, Brooklyn, NY 11226

Join us at Flatbush Library for an afternoon of films exploring migration, displacement, memory, identity, resistance, and belonging—from New York City to the Gambia, Finland, Jamaica, and across the African diaspora.

 **Saturday, October 10, 2026 | 12 noon–4:30 PM EDT**
- Screenings

 12:00 PM–2:00 PM - Migration, Work & Belonging

 2:30 PM–4:30 PM - Displacement, Memory & What We Carry

 Discussion following the films

 12:00–2:00 PM | Migration, Work & Belonging

Unsanctioned in a Sanctuary City (22 mins) - Created by high school filmmakers from Educational Video Center (EVC), this youth-led documentary follows immigrant street vendors in New York City amid increased ICE activity, asking what it means to live and work in a “sanctuary city.”

The Strong Man of Bureng (75 mins) - After building a new life in Finland, Gambian migrant and former UN soldier Essa returns home to Bureng, where the COVID-19 pandemic suddenly threatens his ability to return to Europe. An intimate story about migration, family, responsibility, and the search for security across borders.

 2:30–4:30 PM | Displacement, Memory & What We Carry

Lines of Displacement (23 mins) - EVC youth filmmakers examine gentrification in NYC’s Chinatown, centering community voices, cultural identity, displacement, resistance, and the right to remain.

Buckskin (17 mins) - An experimental portrait of groundbreaking Black scientist Carroll B. Williams Jr. exploring family memory, environmental history, race, settler colonialism, and our relationship to the natural world.

Today & Tmrw (12 mins) - An ordinary after-school day takes an unexpected turn when two best friends, Mariah and Kimberly, confront feelings that have remained unspoken.

Mercy (16 mins) - Poetry, dance, movement, and voice come together in a meditation on Black womanhood, race, language, and memory.

Tambu (23 mins) - Through Jamaica’s TambuFest, drumming, dance, prayer, and community become living archives of African diasporic histories, carrying memories of slavery, survival, resistance, and cultural continuity across generations.

THE FEEDING TREE GARDEN | 340 Tompkins Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11216

Gather with us under the open sky for an evening of films exploring land, migration, memory, Black identity, grief, cultural inheritance, and the ways communities carry history forward.

Saturday Evening | 6:00 PM–9:30 PM EDT - Screenings

 6:00 PM - Garden opens at 6pm

 6:30 PM-9:30 PM - Screenings

 Discussion following the films

Buckskin (17 mins) - An experimental portrait of pioneering Black scientist Carroll B. Williams Jr., Buckskin weaves family memory, environmental history, race, and the natural world together. Through personal archive and 16mm imagery, the film considers what we inherit and how our relationships to land and history shape what we leave behind.

Mercy (16 mins) - Poetry, dance, movement, and voice come together in a meditation on Black womanhood, race, language, and memory. Anchored by the poetry of Cornelius Eady and informed by the legacy of Phillis Wheatley, Mercy explores Black expression through the body, word, and gesture.

Remedy for Broken Faith (5 mins) - A journal entry brought to life, Remedy for Broken Faith follows a woman confronting grief and emotions she has long buried. In finding the courage to acknowledge what she feels, she begins a journey of rediscovery and recovers the strength to hope.

Tambu (23 mins) - Rooted in Jamaica's TambuFest, Tambu explores drumming, dance, prayer, and gathering as living archives of African diasporic memory. The film celebrates cultural practices carried across generations as expressions of survival, resistance, community, and continuity.

Sun, October 11 Schedule

 MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE | 1650 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11225 - Charles Evans Inniss Memorial Library

 Sunday, October 11, 2026 | 2:00 PM–4:00 PM EDT - Workshop

 2:00 PM–4:00 PM - Workshop

Charles Evans Inniss Memorial Library

 2:00–4:00 PM | Workshop

Listening as a Practice of Care

In a time of turmoil and uncertainty, gathering to listen can itself become a practice of care. Inspired by the listening practices of artist and composer Pauline Oliveros, this participatory gathering invites us to slow down, listen to our bodies and our surroundings, and reconnect with one another through sound, silence, reflection, and shared presence. Together, we create space to restore our attention, nurture connection, and consider how listening can help sustain us and our communities.

Mon, October 12 Schedule

 MAYSLES DOCUMENTARY CENTER | 343 Malcolm X Blvd, New York, NY 10027

 Monday, October 12, 2026 | 6:30 PM–10:00 PM
EDT - Screenings

 6:30 PM-10:00 PM - Screenings

 Discussion following the films

Testigo (Witness) (17 mins)

A woman spends the night in the mountains, trying to reach the border to cross into Haiti and reunite with her child, who was kidnapped and deported by immigration agents. There she encounters the living, the half-alive, and the dead, who tell their stories, hoping someone will listen.

Based on testimonies contained in the report “Deportaciones masivas y estado de excepción en República Dominicana” de HaitianosRd, 2025

Melodrama (90 mins)

Selected as the Dominican Republic’s entry for the Academy Awards, Melodrama follows Sonia, a recently widowed Dominican woman forced to sell her longtime home and begin again in a small apartment overlooking the Caribbean Sea. There she meets Aimé, a Haitian construction worker, and an unexpected relationship develops between them. Their connection challenges racial, class, and social prejudices while unfolding against the fraught relationship between the Dominican Republic and its Haitian population.

Tues, October 13 Schedule

 MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE | 1650 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11225 - Student Services Building, Mary Pinkett Lecture Hall (Room S122)

 Tuesday, October 13, 2026 | 6:00 PM–9:30 PM EDT
- Housing, Dignity, and the Right to Belong

 6:00 PM–9:30 PM - Screenings
 Discussion following the films

Student Services Building - Mary Pinkett Lecture Hall (Room S122)

No Place Like Home (21 mins)

Housing is a human right—but in New York City, affordable housing has increasingly become a commodity for the profit of a few. Created by youth filmmakers at Educational Video Center (EVC), No Place Like Home examines the struggles New Yorkers face in finding and maintaining an affordable place to live. The documentary asks what must change for housing to truly be treated as a right available to everyone.

Where Do Black Men Live? (55 mins)

Based on 25 ethnographic interviews conducted by Haitian sociologist Stephanie Guirand, Where Do Black Men Live? centers the experiences of low-income and housing-insecure Black men in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Using verbatim theatre, actors bring the men's own words and experiences to the screen. The film offers an intimate exploration of housing insecurity, systemic racism, resilience, and the fundamental question of who gets to feel secure and at home.

Wed, October 14 Schedule

 MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE | 1650 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11225 - Student Services Building, Mary Pinkett Lecture Hall (Room S122)

 Wednesday, October 14, 2026 | 6:00 PM–9:30 PM EDT - Memory, Identity, and Reclaiming the Self

 6:00 PM-9:30 PM - Screenings

 Discussion following the films

Student Services Building - Mary Pinkett Lecture Hall (Room S122)

Remedy for Broken Faith (5 mins)

A journal entry brought to life, Remedy for Broken Faith follows a woman confronting grief and emotions she has long buried. In finding the courage to acknowledge what she feels, she begins a journey of rediscovery and recovers the strength to hope.

A Thousand Colors (90 mins)

Separated from her Haitian biological family at eight months old and adopted by a white family in Quebec, a young biracial filmmaker grows up disconnected from her Blackness, culture, and family history. At 21, she begins searching for her roots and for the mother whose absence has shaped much of her life. Through home videos, family archives, collective stories, and silences, A Thousand Colors becomes a poetic exploration of adoption, mixed-race identity, memory, uprooting, and the human need to belong. How can one belong to a story one does not remember?

Festival Ends

◆ Thank you for being with us!



2026 FILM SELECTION

A Thousand Colors

2025

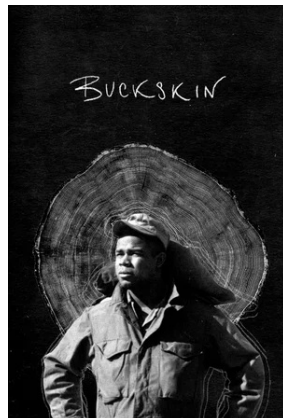


Separated from her Haitian biological family at eight months old and adopted by a white family in Quebec, a young biracial filmmaker grows up disconnected from the Blackness, culture, and family history she inherited from her mother.

Director: Nadia Louis-Desmarchais **Producer:** Paola Arriagada-Nunez

Buckskin

2026

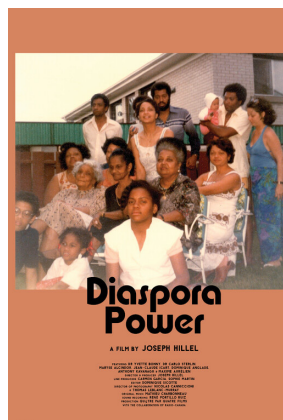


An experimental portrait of groundbreaking Black scientist Carroll B. Williams Jr. exploring family memory, environmental history, race, settler colonialism, and our relationship to the natural world.

Director: Mars Verrone

Diaspora Power

2026



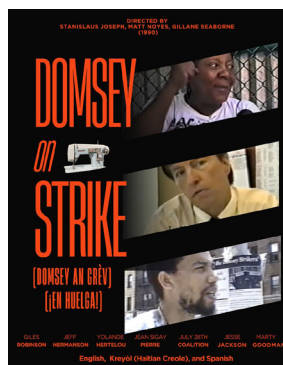
Inspired by the stories of Haitian women and men who arrived in Quebec during the 1960s and 1970s, Diaspora Power, traces a generation navigating exile, migration, and the challenges of building a new home.

Through intimate personal stories, the documentary explores the realities of integration and systemic racism alongside the solidarity, community networks, and cultural connections that sustained Haitian immigrants as they established new lives in Quebec.

Director: Joseph Hillel

Domsey on Strike (Domsey an Grèv)

1991



Domsey on Strike chronicles the historic labor struggle waged by predominantly Haitian immigrant workers at Domsey International, a massive textile sorting factory in Brooklyn. Filmed on-site by Matthew Noyes, Gillane Seaborne, and Stan Joseph during the height of the labor dispute, the documentary captures workers organizing against wage theft, racism, psychological abuse, sexual harassment, restrictions on bathroom breaks, and other exploitative working conditions.

Directors: Matthew Noyes, Gillane Seaborne, and Stan Joseph

Lines of Displacement

2025



Educational Video Center (EVC) youth filmmakers examine gentrification in NYC's Chinatown, centering community voices, cultural identity, displacement, resistance, and the right to remain.

Director: Educational Video Center (EVC)

Melodrama

2026

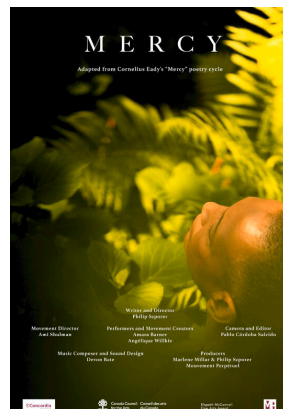


After her husband's death, Sonia is forced to shrink her life, trading her family home for a cramped, unfamiliar apartment. In this state of displacement, her world is a quiet hum of grief and rigid routines, until she meets Aimé, a Haitian worker whose presence awakens a dormant yet intense desire. Their connection is swift and tender, yet their romance exists in a crossfire. The film serves as the Dominican Republic's official entry for the 99th Academy Awards.

Director: Andrés Farías Cintrón **Producer:** Rafael Elías Muño

Mercy

2025

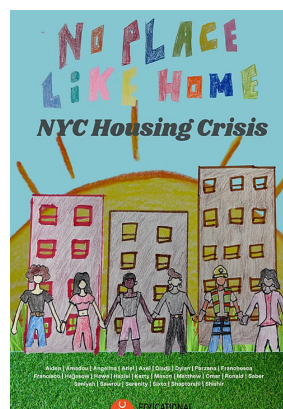


Poetry, dance, movement, and voice come together in a meditation on Black womanhood, race, language, and memory. Anchored by the poetry of Cornelius Eady and informed by the legacy of Phillis Wheatley, Mercy explores Black expression through the body, word, and gesture.

Director: Philip Szporer **Producer:** Marlene Millar

No Place Like Home

2025



Housing is a human right. Why should people go through so much trouble for a right that everyone deserves? Everyone should have access to affordable housing. As it stands in New York City, housing has become a commodity for the profit of few. No Place Like Home is a documentary that explores this issue and hopes to get people thinking about possible solutions to this problem.

Director: Educational Video Center (EVC)

Remedy for a Broken Faith

2026

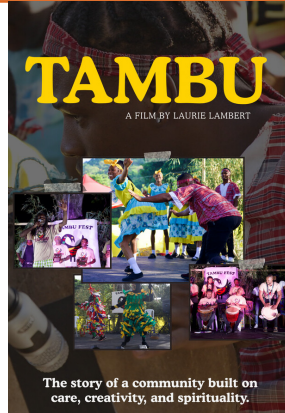


A journal entry brought to life, a woman explores grief and what remains of herself in the aftermath of loss. After years of numbing herself against emotions like anger and sadness, a moment of jealousy triggers new reflections and a journey of self-discovery. Or rather, re-discovery. In finding the courage to admit her feelings to herself, she recovers her strength to hope.

Director: Jina Yu

Tambu

2026

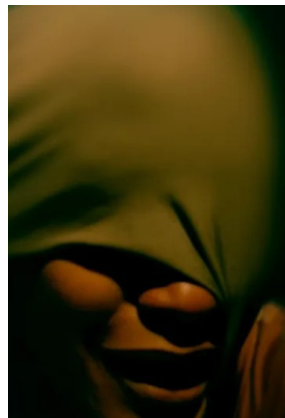


Tambu highlights how Jamaican folk practitioners create community spaces through prayer, the sharing of food, drumming, song, and dance. Combining footage from the TambuFest festival with documentary film from plantation ruins in Eastern Jamaica, slave dungeons in Ghana, and archival photographs, the film considers how these drumming and dance rituals remember African Diasporic histories of slavery, indenture, and survival.

Director: Laurie Lambert

Testigo (Witness)

2026



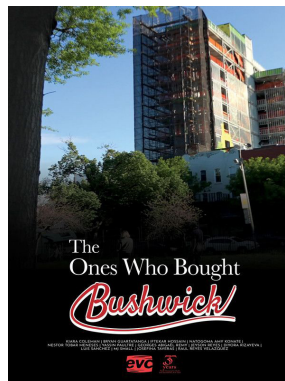
A woman spends the night in the mountains, trying to reach the border to cross into Haiti and reunite with her child, who was kidnapped and deported by immigration agents. There she encounters the living, the half-alive, and the dead, who tell their stories, hoping someone will listen.

Based on testimonies contained in the report “Deportaciones masivas y estado de excepción en República Dominicana” de HaitianosRd, 2025

Director: Ingrid Luciano Sánchez

The Ones Who Bought Bushwick

2019



Through interviews with residents—including an EVC Youth Producer and her family, who were forced to leave Bushwick as housing costs rose—the film examines what rapid neighborhood change means for the people who already call a community home. The young filmmakers speak with residents, an urban planner, a sociologist, and a real estate developer, and attend Community Board meetings to understand who shapes the future of an urban neighborhood and whose interests are prioritized.

Director: Educational Video Center (EVC)

The Strong Man of Bureng

2023



Former UN soldier Essa has fled the Gambia for Finland, where he has successfully set up a business that provides for his family. Back in his hometown Bureng, he is celebrated as a hero. During a visit home, world events catch up with him: The coronavirus outbreak jeopardises Essa's return to Europe and his application to renew his residence permit, plunging him into one of the most serious crises of his life.

Director: Mauro Bucci

Toda La Verdad

2026



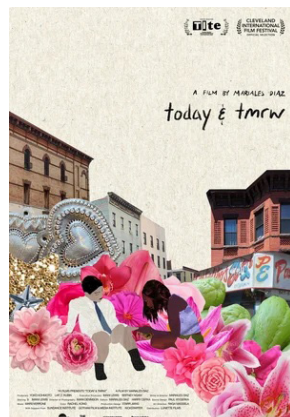
When a young Dominican-American woman uncovers African ancestry through a DNA test, her search for answers about a relative's hidden past forces a reckoning with long-held family beliefs about race, class, and identity.

Toda La Verdad explores the complexities of heritage, belonging, and the stories families tell—and the truths they choose to hide.

Director: Alex Vasquez Escaño **Producer:** Myrta Vida

Today & Tmrw

2026

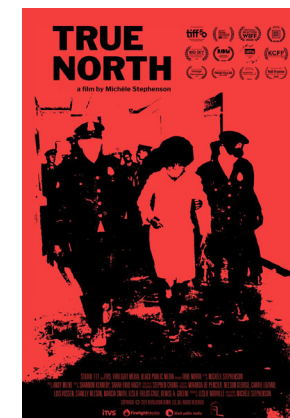


Two best friends, Mariah and Kimberly, navigate their after-school routine in New York City. What starts as an ordinary day takes an unexpected turn as unspoken feelings between them come to light.

Director: Mariales Diaz **Producers:** Yoko Kohmoto, Liat Z. Rubin

True North

2025

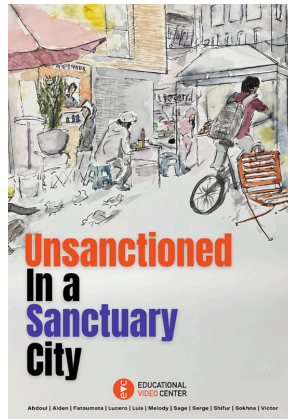


Taking a hemispheric view of Black resistance, TRUE NORTH connects threads from the Caribbean, Canada, and the US, tracing the shared legacies of colonialism and state oppression. At the heart of the film are the voices of elders, who lived through this period and whose contributions have largely gone unrecognized. Their stories ground the film's narrative, offering a rare and poignant perspective on the era. Through their lens, TRUE NORTH becomes both an act of remembrance and a call to action for new generations.

Director: Michèle Stephenson **Producer:** Leslie Norville

Unsanctioned in a Sanctuary City

2025

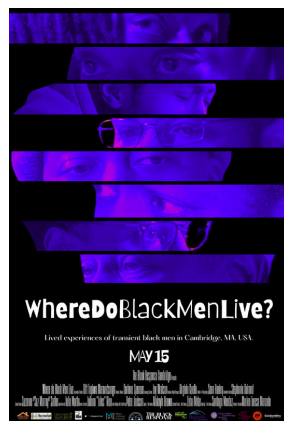


Focusing on the experiences of street vendors, young EVC filmmakers explore the relationship between migration, work, community, and belonging while examining how federal immigration policies affect the people whose labor and cultures help make New York City what it is.

Director: Educational Video Center (EVC)

Where Do Black Men Live?

2025



Eight men, portrayed by actors, are brought together in an imagined circle where they share deeply personal experiences of searching for, securing, and maintaining a place to call home. Produced by The Black Response and based on 25 ethnographic interviews conducted by Haitian sociologist Stephanie Guirand for her doctoral research, the film uses a verbatim theatre approach, with its dialogue drawn directly from the words of the men interviewed.

Directors: Corinne Spencer **Producer:** The Black Response





MEET THE DIRECTORS

ALEX VASQUEZ ESCAÑO Toda La Verdad		Alex Vásquez Escaño is a Dominican-born playwright, screenwriter, producer, and film director in New York City. He partners with diverse creatives to bring timely stories to life. As a person of color and an immigrant, he aims to lift marginalized voices and spark cross-cultural conversations.
ANDRÉS FARÍAS CINTRÓN Melodrama		Andrés Farías Cintrón is a Dominican director, assistant director, and film educator. A graduate of the San Antonio de los Baños Film School in Cuba, he also holds a master's degree in Film, Television, and Interactive Media. He has worked as an assistant director on more than 20 feature films, including *The Killer, Woodpeckers, Cocote, Pepe,* and *Chroma Kid*. His debut feature, *Candela*, supported by the Sundance Institute and French Institute, screened at more than 15 international festivals and received several awards. Most recently, he completed his second feature film, *Melodrama*, with Lantica Studios.
CORINNE SPENCER Where Do Black Men Live?		Corinne Spencer is a Trinidadian, Brooklyn-based artist working at the intersection of video, photography, and installation. She received her BFA from Massachusetts College of Art and Design in 2010 and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2014. Her work has been exhibited throughout the U.S., including *HUNGER*, a city-commissioned installation in Boston; exhibitions at NADA NY, Brandeis University, and La MaMa La Galleria; and her solo exhibition *Splendor* at the University of Rochester. Spencer has received numerous grants, awards, and fellowships, including the Franklin Furnace Fund Award, two Foundation for Contemporary Arts grants, the MacDowell Fellowship, and the Constance Saltonstall Fellowship. She was a 2023–24 artist-in-residence with the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Workspace residency.
EDUCATIONAL VIDEO CENTER Lines of Displacement, No Place Like Home, The Ones Who Bought Bushwick, Unsanctioned in a Sanctuary City		Educational Video Center challenges structural inequities and harmful narratives that disadvantage young people of color in education, careers, and life. We do this by teaching documentary filmmaking to help young people thrive as learners, artists and social justice leaders; building the capacity of teachers and public schools to create youth-centered, culturally responsive classrooms; mobilizing youth-produced media to inspire action; and disrupting systems that harm BIPOC youth, their communities, and the world.
INGRID LUCIANO SÁNCHEZ Testigo (Witness)		Ingrid Luciano-Sánchez teaches Aesthetics, Philosophy, and Playwriting at Instituto Filosófico Pedro Francisco Bonó and Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo. Her most recent writing, "Art in the Primary Classroom: work proposals for dramatic expression" was published by the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI) this year. Her current project "Voices and Echoes of the 21st Century Dominican Women Playwrights" is a study that explores how Dominican Women have used theatre to resist patriarchal domination. Prof. Luciano-Sánchez will examine themes, interests, and aesthetical preferences and references of Dominican women playwrights who reside in the Dominican Republic and abroad, drawing out similarities and differences among them. Her analysis will touch on a range of themes, including how these women combine their roles as writers with their roles as interpreters, directors, and producers; their awareness of other women playwrights from the past or present; and how they resist racism and patriarchal domination through theatre, among other topics.

JINA YU Remedy for a Broken Faith		Jina Yu is an emerging filmmaker and multi-disciplinary artist with a background in painting, singing, poetry, and dance. She begins her MFA in Film & Television at NYU Tisch this fall 2026, drawn to stories and images that make space for what usually goes unsaid.
JOSEPH HILLEL Diaspora Power		Joseph Hillel was born in Port-au-Prince and lives in Montreal. He writes, directs, and produces documentary films, including <i>Diaspora Power</i> (2026), which explores Haitian immigration to Quebec in the 1960s and 1970s; <i>At All Kostos</i> (2024), in which artists from Port-au-Prince choose the performing arts as a form of resistance; <i>City Dreamers</i> (2018), which presents four inspiring pioneering women architects; <i>Ayiti Toma</i> (2013), a journey through Haiti's vibrant history and rich culture; <i>Karsh Is History</i> (2009), a portrait of the renowned photographer Yousuf Karsh; and <i>Regular or Super</i> (2004), about the work of architect Mies van der Rohe. Founder of the production house Qu4tre par Quatre Films in 1998, Joseph Hillel previously produced short and feature-length fiction films as well as documentaries before moving into directing.
LAURIE LAMBERT Tambu		Laurie Lambert is a filmmaker and academic based in New York City. She is the author of <i>*Comrade Sister: Caribbean Feminist Revisions of the Grenada Revolution*</i> (2020) and director of <i>*Tambu*</i> (2026), a documentary on Jamaican folk music and dance. She teaches at Fordham University, where her research focuses on Caribbean folk practices, Black Feminism, and Caribbean and African Diasporic history, literature, and film. Lambert holds a B.F.A. in Film Studies from Toronto Metropolitan University, an M.A. from the University of Toronto, and a Ph.D. in English and American Literature from New York University. The daughter of Grenadians, she grew up between Toronto and Grenada.
MARIALES DIAZ Today & Tmrw		Mariales Diaz is an award winning gender-expansive Dominican writer, director, producer and programmer living in New York. Their storytelling explores experiences that exist within the intersection of survival and love. Diaz's produced work has played at film festivals such as BlackStar, SFFILM, Hot Docs, New Orleans and Palm Springs Short Fest. They have worked on the production and post-archival teams at companies such as Pilgrim Media Group, Religion of Sports, HBO Max, ESPN and Proximity Media. They are a graduate of the SUNY Purchase Film Conservatory and a 2024 Sundance Institute Trans Possibilities Fellow. They also have participated in fellowships and artist programs such as Film at Lincoln Center's Artist Academy, Sundance Ignite, Creative Culture at The Jacob Burns Film Center, and NeXt Doc. Diaz is currently in post-production for their short film <i>Today and Tomorrow</i>, which follows two NYC teens as their efforts to return to their after-school routine unravels unspoken feelings.
MARS VERRONE Buckskin		Mars Verrone is an Emmy-nominated filmmaker, musician (harpist/vocalist), and educator from Los Angeles, based in Brooklyn, NY. They direct, produce, edit, and compose, with credits including the short documentaries <i>Buckskin</i> (about their grandfather, pioneering forester Carroll B. Williams) and <i>Golden Voice</i>, and the feature <i>Who Moves America</i>. As a first-time producer, Verrone developed and produced the Oscar-shortlisted <i>UNION</i> (dir. Stephen Maing, Brett Story), which premiered at Sundance 2024, won a Special Jury Prize, and earned Verrone a Cinema Eye Honors Award and a 2026 Emmy nomination. Verrone is a Sundance Documentary Producers Fellow, NBC Original Voices Fellow, PGA Create Fellow, and was named to DOC NYC's 2024 "40 Under 40."

MATTHEW NOYES, GILLANE SEABORNE, STAN JOSEPH Domsey on Strike (Domsey an Grèv)		Domsey on Strike chronicles the historic labor struggle waged by predominantly Haitian immigrant workers at Domsey International, a massive textile sorting factory in Brooklyn. Filmed on-site by Matthew Noyes, Gillane Seaborne, and Stan Joseph during the height of the labor dispute, the documentary captures workers organizing against wage theft, racism, psychological abuse, sexual harassment, restrictions on bathroom breaks, and other exploitative working conditions.
MAURO BUCCI The Strong Man of Bureng		Mauro Bucci is an Italian award-winning filmmaker and independent researcher working in the field of Visual Anthropology. He is particularly concerned with film's potential for studying and understanding human experiences and cultural practices. He has authored scientific essays on ethnographic cinema for both Italian and international journals and books, and he has held seminars, summer schools and master classes focused on the theories and techniques of representing social phenomena through film.
MICHÈLE STEPHENSON True North		Emmy Award-winning filmmaker, artist, and author Michèle Stephenson draws on her Haitian and Panamanian heritage to transform nonfiction storytelling. Through a Black Atlantic lens, she reimagines narratives of resistance and healing, weaving fiction, immersive, experimental, and hybrid forms that center the Black Radical tradition and the lived experiences of the Black diaspora. Her newest work, TRUE NORTH, is a creative nonfiction feature exploring the history of the Black liberation movement in Canada. She is a Guggenheim Fellow, Creative Capital Artist, and member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.
NADIA LOUIS-DESMARCHAIS A Thousand Colors		Nadia Louis-Desmarchais is an award-winning Afro-feminist filmmaker whose intimate and political work gives voice to marginalized narratives. She has directed several acclaimed fiction and documentary short films. Director of the web series The Meteorites, which won a Géméaux Award for the production that most distinguished itself internationally, she has just completed her first feature-length documentary, A thousand colors, selected for DOC NYC and awarded both the Audience Award and the Student Jury Award at RIDM.
PHILIP SZPORER Mercy		Philip Szporer is a Montréal-based writer, filmmaker, educator, and cultural journalist whose work has explored the intersections of dance, memory, place, and the moving image for more than four decades. He teaches at Concordia University's Loyola College for Diversity and Sustainability and previously spent more than two decades teaching in the Department of Contemporary Dance. Philip has long been recognized as one of Canada's leading voices in dance, dance film, and screendance culture.



MODERATOR AND PANEL BIOS

Arelis M. Figueroa, M.Div. Originally from the Dominican Republic, Arelis Figueroa is a Christian Minister, Counselor, Advocate and community organizer. She has worked with disadvantaged communities in New York City for more than thirty years. She holds a Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary and has completed Certification on Community Organizing, Substance Abuse Counselor and Workers Cooperative Developer. She is the lead Pastor and Co-founder of La Iglesia del Pueblo, a community founded in 2020. La Iglesia del Pueblo accompanies and supports new immigrants as they manage daily challenges in their quest for a better future for themselves and their families. As a Black Dominican woman, Arelis experienced Dominican racism and anti-Blackness directly, which is present in all areas of Dominican Republic society. This experience compelled her to join the movement in solidarity with Haitians and Dominicans, becoming a fearless advocate and activist. She also partnered with organizations such as Border Mission-Funtosalud International to personally bring much-needed medical care to Dominican Haitian communities on the island. Recently, she joined the Staff of The organization Mothers on Move-Madres En Movimiento in the Bronx. New York.

Ayanna Legros (she/her) is a Haitian American historian, artist, educator, preservationist, and radio archivist. She collected over one thousand materials from the radio broadcast, *Lè Ayisyen/L'Heure Haïtienne/The Haitian Hour*, which was on the air from 1969 to 2000 at Columbia University's WKCR 89.9FM radio. From 2016 to 2026 she worked with researchers, audio-engineers, archivists, librarians, and radio station managers to keep the recordings alive. In 2026 the collection became available for streaming with the support of the Library of Congress, GBH Foundation, and American Archive of Public Broadcasting. She is currently working to preserve files from SELA, a grassroots Brooklyn based community center tied to the radio program which ran from 1982 to 2002, which offered support and resources to newly arrived Haitian migrants. She previously served on the boards of the Library of Congress Radio Preservation Task Force, Latin American Studies Association, and Haitian Studies Association. She has presented her work and commentary about Haitian culture, politics, and art at the Caribbean Studies Association, Organization of American Historians, American Historical Association, Library of Congress Radio Preservation Task Force Conference, Haitian Studies Association, Northwestern University's Buffet Center and Study Abroad Office, and Loyola School. Legros has published her work in the *Journal of the Global South*, *Journal of Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture*, *American Anthropological Association's Journal of Consciousness*. She is passionate about telling underrepresented stories best illustrated in her 2024 Guardian newspaper piece, "We need 'em worse than they need us: How Haitian farmworkers feed the US" which details the challenges of agricultural workers on H2A work visas during the COVID-19 pandemic. She is also an oil painter, collage artist, and bottle painter. She completed a B.A. at Northwestern University (African American Studies & International Studies), M.A. at New York University (Africana Studies), and a M.A. at Duke University (History).

In 1990, when *Domsey an Grèv* was made, **Matt Noyes** and co-directors Stanislaus Joseph and Gillane Seaborne were graduate students at the New School for Social Research. Noyes was a graduate student in political economy and a budding labor activist. He later became a worker educator, in unions, workers centers, and university-based labor programs, as well as the Brooklyn-based Association for Union Democracy. After 15 years in Tokyo, Japan, teaching and working on international labor solidarity and cooperative education, he returned to Colorado where he is now a member of a seasonal farm worker cooperative and a social movement educator and organizer focused on solidarity economy and worker cooperatives.

Director collective bio: *The Ones Who Bought Bushwick* was collectively directed, filmed, and edited by students in the Educational Video Center's Youth Documentary Workshop in the spring of 2019. These students were Kiara, Bryan, Iftekar, Natogoma (Nana), Nestor, Krystian, Georges, Jeyson, Diyora (Dior), Luis, MJ, Josefina, and Raul. At the time of the making of the film, they attended high schools across New York City, including City-as-School, International High School at Union Square, Diploma Plus High School, Flushing International High School, Lower East Side Preparatory High School, and Cascades High School.

Alain Martin, Director & Producer

I believe where one is from is where one feels most at home—not necessarily where one was born or grew up. So, I'm from Jacmel. I'm from the five boroughs of New York City. And I'm from Bergenfield, New Jersey—although I was born in a hospital somewhere in the hills of Port-au-Prince. Jacmel is where I spent my formative years, discovering literature and mindless shoot-'em-up action films that my siblings and I would recreate in our backyard with paper guns. New York is where I came of age, where I stumbled upon Malcolm X and Du Bois and was introduced to the cinema of Spike Lee, John Singleton, and Quentin Tarantino. It was there that I realized filmmaking wasn't just about things blowing up and people being shot—it could be something much more. New Jersey is where I spent my early twenties, exploring both cinema and literature. I attended William Paterson University, where I majored in film and took an elective on Haitian history. In that class, I learned about the brutal and often-forgotten U.S. occupation of Haiti. When my professor learned that I was studying film, they suggested that I seriously consider giving the occupation a documentary treatment. So, here we are—all these years later.

Natalie Bullock Brown is the proud director of the Documentary Accountability Working Group (DAWG), a collective she helped found in 2020. DAWG encourages care, consent, and collaboration towards ethical filmmaking, and has released a framework and syllabus to help promote those values. Natalie is also a documentary film producer and emerging director; a 2023 Harvard Kennedy School Shorenstein Center Documentary Film Fellow; a 2023 DOC NYC New Leader; a 2022 Sundance Producing Mentor; and a 2021 Rockwood Institute JustFilms Fellow. Natalie started her career as an associate producer on documentary filmmaker Ken Burns' 10-part PBS series, *Jazz*. She holds a Master of Fine Arts in Film Production from Howard University, and a Bachelor of Arts in English from Northwestern University.

Anjanette Levert's first job after college took her to the Dominican Republic, where she worked as a reporter for the English-language newspaper *The Santo Domingo News*. While living there, she learned to read and write Spanish and traveled to Haiti. Seeing the stark differences—and deep connections—between the two countries sparked a lasting curiosity about the intertwined histories of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The experience also led her to reflect on her own culture and history as a Black American and the ways race, culture, and history shape how communities understand one another. Levert is an award-winning documentary producer, filmmaker, programmer/curator, and educator committed to using nonfiction storytelling to illuminate underrepresented histories and communities. She is a Senior Lecturer in Documentary Filmmaking at Spelman College and Producer of Matthew Hashiguchi's *The Only Doctor*, winner of a 2025 Peabody Award.

Myrta Vida (pronounced “meer-tah vee-dah”) is an award-winning, Puerto Rican writer who produces. She's based in NYC. She writes across narrative film, documentary, & literature, crafting stories rooted in identity, belonging, and connection. She provides Story Consulting and Creative Producing through her company, 4 Syllables Productions, to help fellow Filmmakers bring bold, culturally specific narratives to life. She believes great storytelling preserves culture, expands empathy, & builds bridges across communities. As a decorated U.S. Army Veteran, she brings a deep commitment to transparency, trust, & steadfast collaboration – qualities she considers essential to bringing meaningful projects across the finish line. She's an active member of Film Independent (Spirit Awards Voter) • Gotham Film & Media Institute • NALIP • NYWIFT • MiFILM

Liza Tripp has been a translator of French, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese into English since 2003. Recent translations include Rim Battal's *I'll Look Myself in the Eyes* (Galiot Press), and Hélène Héroult's *One Way* (Silent Clamor Press). Liza has also translated numerous non-fiction books for publishers including Rizzoli, Assouline, and Schiffer Books. Her poetry translations have appeared in the *Cordite Poetry Review* and the *International Poetry Review*. She recently received a 2026 Villa Albertine translation grant for Rim Battal's *L'eau de bain*.

Director collective bio: Unsanctioned in a Sanctuary City was collectively directed, filmed, and edited by students in the Educational Video Center's Youth Documentary Workshop in the fall of 2025. These students were Abdoul, Aiden, Fatoumata, Lucero, Luis, Melody, Sage, Shifur, Sokhna, and Victor. At the time of the making of the film, they attended high schools across New York City, including City-As High School, ELLIS Prep Academy, Harlem Renaissance High School, Independence High School, Judith S. Kaye High School, Liberty High School, Manhattan Comprehensive Night and Day High School, and Queens Satellite High School.

Director collective bio: Lines of Displacement was collectively directed, filmed, and edited by students in the Educational Video Center's Youth Documentary Workshop in the summer of 2025. These students were Aaron, Ashanti, Cadence, Christopher, Darcie, Eva, Geoffrey, James-Tyer, Jomairy, Jose, Kangxin, Latoya, Max, Mesomachukwu, Murat, Natalya, Neftali, Promise, Ryan, SJ, William, and Zachary. At the time of the making of the film, they attended high schools across New York City, including Bronx Collegiate Academy, Brooklyn Technical High School, CCNY, City As School, CUNY Hunter College, Manhattan Early College For Advertising, Manhattan International High School, Mott Hall Bronx Highschool, New Heights Academy Charter School, New Utrecht High School, New York Academy of Art, Parsons School of Design, and the University at Albany.

Lunise Cerin is a queer writer, Director, Editor, and Story Producer from Port-au-Prince and Philadelphia. Cerin began her film career in Los Angeles at the SVOD Black and Sexy TV, and pivoted to documentary in 2018. Lunise's body of work, whether narrative, documentary, or installation, and her work as an educator, is always focused on the plights and joys of the many communities that name her. Cerin received an MFA in screenwriting from Columbia University in 2024 and is currently in post-production for her directorial debut, the documentary film "Miwa". Lunise teaches film at Saint Joseph's University.

Rasu Jilani | A native New Yorker of Caribbean heritage, Rasu brings more than 15 years of experience advocating for the Brooklyn cultural and creative community to the organization. Most recently, Rasu applied his dynamic cross-cultural curatorial skills as the Cultural Network Curator at Lambent Foundation, where he translated Lambent's core values and organizational practice to foster collaboration and exchange among grant partners in New York City, New Orleans, and Nairobi, Kenya. Prior to Lambent, he served as Director of Recruitment and Community Engagement for the New Museum's art and tech incubator, NEW INC, where he built a professional network of artists, designers, technologists, and entrepreneurs into a cohesive workspace that reflects New York's diverse and multi-faceted artists. Rasu is also a reputable facilitator in the cultural sector, the founder of Coup d'état BROOKLYN and Coup d'état Arts, and was a producer for Afropunk.

Wizmic Etienne is a Cambridge barbershop owner and a trusted presence for Black men facing housing insecurity. His barbershop has long been a place where men without stable housing can find community and support. Many of the interviews for the documentary *Where Do Black Men Live?* were conducted in his shop, and he has personally supported many of the men whose stories appear in the film. Wizmic offers free haircuts at community events sponsored by The Black Response and supports mutual aid and other direct services for Black and Brown communities in Cambridge. He brings a grounded, firsthand perspective on the daily realities of housing insecurity for men in our city.

Virginia Cuello is a producer and project manager of the documentary *Where Do Black Men Live?*, which centers the stories of Black men experiencing housing insecurity in Cambridge. She works with The Black Response, a Cambridge organization supporting Black communities, and serves as a Director on the Board of KLo Community Spirit. Through her work on the film, Virginia leads community screenings and conversations that bring the voices

of transiently housed Black men to the public. The film has received an award at the Berlin Kiez Film Festival and an Honorable Mention from Films That Move.

Director collective bio: No Place Like Home: NYC's Housing Crisis was collectively directed, filmed, and edited by students in the Educational Video Center's Youth Documentary Workshop in the spring of 2025. These students were Aiden, Amadou, Angelina, Ariel, Axel, Diadji (DD), Dylan, Farzana, Franchesca, Francisco, Hajjasow, Hawa, Hazi, Katty, Mason, Matthew, Omar, Ronald, Saber, Saniyah, Sawrou, Serenity, Shaptorshi, Sixto, and Sumcul. At the time of the making of the film, they attended high schools across New York City, including Cascades High School, City-As High School, Crotona International HS, Ellis Prep Academy, Emma Lazarus High School, Flushing international High School, Harlem Renaissance High School, Independence High School, International High School Union Square, Lower East Side Preparatory High School, and Queens Satellite High School.

Vanessa A. Cruz is a writer-director and documentarian. Most recently, her first film, "The Making of a Matriarch," premiered at Paramount Global in Manhattan (August 2024) & was awarded Best Documentary Film at Reel Works Film Festival at SVA Theatre (Nov. 2024). As a Dominican-American filmmaker, she aspires to tell dramedy, coming-of-age stories that center around Dominican culture & minority experiences.

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CLARIVEL RUIZ

Founder, Cultural Worker, Artists,

Educator, Activists

Dominicans Love Haitians Movement

Clarivel Ruiz (we, us, you), child of the African and Indigenous Diaspora, parents from Ayiti Kiskeya (aka Hispaniola, aka the Dominican Republic and Haiti), raised in NYC on the ancestral bones and covered shrines of the Lenape people. In 2018, we initiated Dominicans Love Haitians Movement, Inc., an art-based nonprofit organization. We are alumni of Hemispheric Institute's EmergeNYC, Culture Push's Utopian Fellow, a Civic Practice Seminar participant at the Metropolitan Museum, The Innovative Cultural Advocacy Fellowship at CCCADI, a Brooklyn Arts Council award and Unicorn Fund recipient through New Media Democracy. Clarivel is an MFA graduate of CUNY, City College.

ANA-MARIA GARCIA

Retired Community Developer

Ana-María García has over 40 years experience in community development, leadership training, and social and racial justice. She has managed budgets in excess of \$100 million and is known for her fiscal management. In 1995, a day (Nov 30) was named after her for the previous five years' body of work, which included creation of a specialized project named Project Start; development of training programs for general assistance clients; development of two comprehensive youth centers, and creation of a coordinated system of human services. She went on to work for the Census Bureau to familiarize herself with data gathering. She has a Juris Doctorate from Temple University.

ANJANETTE LEVERT

Documentary Filmmaker & Professor

Anjanette Levert is a documentary filmmaker, producer, curator, coach, and professor. She is the former Director of Spelman College's Documentary Filmmaking Program. She is the 2022 Recipient of the Presidential Teaching Award at Spelman College, an invited panelist at the Sundance Producer Summit and a member of the Sundance Producers Intensive. She is the producer of *The Only Doctor* by Matthew Hashiguchi, which made its world premiere at Toronto's Hot Docs International Film Festival in 2023. She is a board member for Jezebel Productions and Atlanta's MINT Gallery.

MELISSA "MELIMEL" LAURADIN

Creative Artist/Graphic Designer

MelimeL Digital Art Design

MelimeL is a creative artist and mompreneur, forging her own path as a Lead Graphic Designer of MelimeL Digital Art Design. Her zine, "POWER Zine: Volume I: art inspires," and the upcoming "POWER Zine: Volume II: power plays" are an ode to her transformative POWER artwork from 2008, that solidifies her status as a visionary and empowerment agent. Aside from designing and writing, MelimeL enjoys travel, photography, performing, and is an aspiring DJ. She is an NYU alum and community leader who hosted an Annual Women Empowerment Event for ten years (2013-2022) and is currently developing a documentary film about it. MelimeL runs The sisSTAR Loop, a platform for women-owned business and professionals, and The Empowerment Network, a digital magazine with its 16th issue currently in production. Earlier this year, she launched her latest project, *Love Notes & Flowers*, an empowering digital hub for those on a healing journey. Through her creative works, MelimeL is committed to empowering others to excel in their personal and professional lives.



NOU FESTIVAL HOST COMMITTEE

BIANCA MOÑA

Artist, Curator, Educator, Advocate,
Cultural Worker

Bianca Moña is a lover of the arts. As an artist, curator, educator, and advocate, she has initiated a number of projects at institutions such as Studio Museum in Harlem (New York, NY) and The John F Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington, DC), and Market Photo Workshop (Johannesburg, SA). All of her artistic endeavors center on a greater understanding of contemporary Africa and her diaspora. As an oral historian and sound artist she had received commissions from The Laundromat Project, Initiatives of Change USA, and Restorative Justice Initiative.



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