



NEW ORLEANS
FILM
SOCIETY

EMERGING VOICES

2018-19

ABOUT

EMERGING VOICES

New Orleans Film Society founded the Emerging Voices program on the principle that to create a more diverse storytelling landscape, filmmakers of color in Louisiana and the American South need greater access to gatekeepers.

Since 2014, the Emerging Voices mentorship program has supported 25 filmmakers of color, connecting them to prominent industry insiders to broaden their networks nationally and gain invaluable feedback on their own projects in development.



Emerging Voices engages a cohort of 6-8 filmmakers annually to participate in an intimate and focused mentorship and workshop experience during New Orleans Film Festival and throughout the year. Mentees receive guidance on their projects from mentors with relevant experience in their project's genre and attend a number of facilitated networking opportunities.

Above: Emerging Voices 2017 Cohort

Below: Emerging Voices mentees from all years came together for the premiere of EV 2016 mentee Benjamin Simmons's documentary, "Animals".



IMPACT

SURVEY RESPONSES FROM FALL 2017

When New Orleans Film Society launched a longitudinal survey of past Emerging Voices mentees in 2017, the most commonly recurring words used to describe the value of the program were “confidence” and “access” and “community.”



“My relationship with my mentor allowed me to take myself, my projects, and my profession more seriously.”

“Emerging Voices put me in touch with a supportive community of seasoned mentors who have since aided me in the development of my projects, provided me with constructive feedback and advice regarding professional choices, and helped put me on to opportunities for grants, paid gigs, and meeting other people in my field.”

“Emerging Voices helped me see that there are people out there interested in my project and there are many resources available for me which are within reach.”

THE PROGRAM

8 FILMMAKERS, 7 PROJECTS IN 2017-18

Emerging Voices benefited eight Louisiana-based filmmakers and seven projects in 2017-18, pairing each project with an industry mentor.

For biographies of mentors, mentees and project descriptions, please visit:
www.neworleansfilmsociety.org/emerging-voices

Emerging Voices launched in October in order to take full advantage of the networking opportunities with industry professionals offered during the New Orleans Film Festival, a top-growing Southern film festival with a reputation for discovery and diverse storytelling.

Detailed schedules and facilitated meetings for mentees over their (9) days at NOFF ensured critical relationships were seeded, a rare opportunity for Louisiana filmmakers for whom geography and access to resources to facilitate travel can prevent key connections from being made.

FACILITATED MEETINGS

In addition to meeting with their mentors, mentees attended 4-6 one-on-one meetings each with industry professionals during the NOFF Industry Exchange. Participating professionals included:

Bryce Norbitz, Tribeca Film Institute
Chi-hui Yang, Ford Foundation
Dan Schoenbrun, The Eyeslicer
Dylan McGinty, Kanopy
Elise McCave, Kickstarter
Evan Morehouse, The Orchard
Farihah Zaman, Field of Vision
Ina Pira, Vimeo
Jacob Coburn, Magnetbox Films
Jake Hanly, Gunpowder + Sky
Jandiz Estrada Cardoso, NBC Entertainment
Jenny Slattery, SFFilm
Jordana Meade, Thousand Fold Consulting
Julie Keck, Seed + Spark

Kate Lambert, FX
Kay Shaw, Black Public Media
Kevin Niu, Urus Entertainment
Kristen Fitzpatrick, Women Make Movies
Lana Garland, Southern Documentary Fund
Liliana Espinoza, NALIP
Maurice, James NBCU Digital Content Lab
Merrill Sterritt, Cinereach
Moirra Griffin, Fox Inclusion
Monika Navarro, ITVS
Sapana Sakya, Center for Asian American Media
Sean Flanagan, Magnetbox Films

WORKSHOPS

Mentees also benefited from hands-on workshops in specific areas, including grant writing, crowdfunding, distribution and representation. Seed+Spark, NBC Universal, Magnetbox Films, and Thousandfold Consulting gave presentations exclusively to the cohort.

Mentees attended roundtable discussions with NOFF alumni and industry professionals such as Kelly Edwards, Head of Talent Development for HBO, and Toni Edwards, Filmmaker Services Manager at the International Documentary Association.

A continuing collaboration with partner Firelight Media allowed documentary track mentees to benefit from a three-day workshop featuring a world-class roster of speakers (funders, partners, and filmmakers).

POST NOFF OPPORTUNITIES

Additional touch-points in Spring 2018 continue the cohort learning experience and reconvene mentees to ascertain the status of their developing projects.

After the program ended, Emerging Voices mentees were also supported and funded to:

Take part in select sessions as part of New Orleans Film Society's Southern Producer's Lab (April 23-25, 2018)

Explore festival strategies, network and attend workshops at Atlanta Film Festival's Creative Conference (April 17-20); travel, lodging and passes are covered by the program

Attend works in progress screenings with feedback sessions.

The 2017-18 Emerging Voices program has already yielded tangible impact-- most notably, mentor Lisa Cortés has agreed to Executive Produce her mentee Philip Williamson Jr.'s short film Perfectly Audible-- and the cohort's progress will be monitored over time as their projects and new connections materialize.



THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

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