



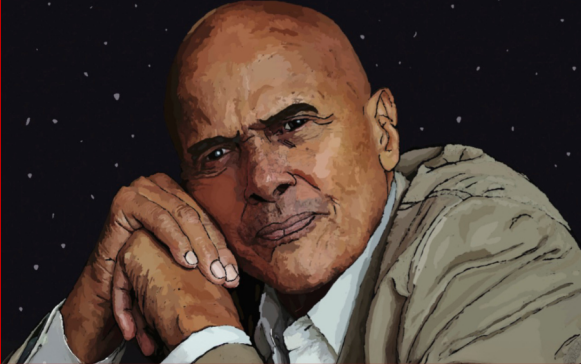
**REEL SISTERS & BAM
CELEBRATE
WOMEN'S HISTORY
MONTH**

2026



AV
AFRICAN VOICES

FALL/WINTER 2025
\$7.00 (\$10.00 OUTSIDE OF USA)



Winter 2025 Issue

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About Us

Founded in 1997 by African Voices magazine, Reel Sisters, the first Oscar qualifying film festival in the nation devoted to women of color, has showcased 10,000+ films by women of African, Asian, Native American, Indian, Latina and Arabic descent. Reel Sisters will be held in Brooklyn on Oct. 24-25, 2026. For information visit www.reelsisters.org.

Women's History Month Program

March 25, 2026 | 7 pm

Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave.

Greetings

Jesse Trussell

Director, Film & Program Strategy, Brooklyn Academy of Music

Carolyn A. Butts

Executive Director, African Voices

Film Screenings

Film Panel

Moderator: Jennica Carmona, *co-founder of Si Se Puede Productions*

Panelists: Lilian T. Mehrel (*Musica Quarantena*), Caitlin Machak (*Gloria*), Maria de la Cruz Rudloff (*Shallow End*), Alterik Miller (*Laundry*), Okema T. Moore (*Laundry*) and Tamika Lamison (*Superman Doesn't Steal*).

Audience Q & A

Closing Remarks

Carolyn A. Butts

Moderator



Jennica Carmona is a New York City based Puerto Rican film maker, actor, and activist. Born in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico and raised in Rochester, NY she is a graduate of the Tisch School of the Arts at NYU. She is a proud co-founder of Si Se Puede Productions, a theatre and film production company that creates material with a social justice theme. From 2008-2009, Jennica worked with director Lee Daniels on the Academy Award winning film,

‘Precious’, where she gained hands on experience with filmmaking and production. She later went on to write, direct, and produce her first feature film, “Millie and the Lords”. The film was the recipient of several film festival awards and it was sold to HBO/Cinemax shortly after its release.

Jennica is currently in post-production of her new short film, “The Corito Project”, which she developed and worked on as part of the 2024 Third World Newsreel Program. She also has a feature film in development titled “The Fellowship”, which is a narrative film that explores issues of class, privilege, and race in an elite private college. As an educator, Jennica has worked as an Adjunct Professor at the University of the Arts Undergraduate Film Program, with the Philadelphia Latino Film Festival, and with the Montclair Film Festival’s Education Department. Currently, she works as the Documentary Programmer for the Atlanta Film Festival.

Film Showcase 2026

Musica Quarantena

Producers: Lilian T. Mehrel, Danielle Rhoda

Director: Lilian T. Mehrel Animator: Danielle Rhoda

Animated, 3:46 min.

A little girl's love for her bedridden Papa inspires a town in lockdown to make music out of their windows. The animated short stars Elisa del Genio (HBO's My Brilliant Friend).



Writer | Director: Lilian T. Mehrel

Lilian T. Mehrel is an award-winning writer & director with a visionary sense of feeling and humor. She is the winner of the Tribeca AT&T Untold Stories Award for her debut feature, Honeyjooon, which premiered at the 2025 Tribeca Festival. Lilian's films have also screened at AFI FEST, Sao Paulo (Mostra), Palm Springs, Mill Valley, Clermont-Ferrand, and the AmPav Emerging Filmmaker Showcase at Cannes. Info: www.lilianmehrel.com

Animation Director: Danielle Rhoda

Danielle Rhoda is an accomplished illustrator and animator. She graduated with a BA [Honors] in Illustration with Animation from the Manchester School of Art, and her Masters in Animation Direction at the National Film & Television School in the UK. Her work has been featured in the New York Times, BBC, CNN, Ancestry, City of London, BlueQ, at the UK's People's History Museum, at the Bologna's Children's Book Festival, and at the AOI World Illustration Awards. Danielle teaches an animation course for The Guardian. Her animated films have premiered at AFI FEST, Clermont Ferrand, the American Pavilion Emerging Filmmaker Showcase at Cannes, and dozens more festivals around the world. Info: www.daniellerhoda.co.uk

Gloria

Producers: Xin Liu, Caitlyn Durkin, Kim Blanck, Caitlin Machak

Director/Writer: Kim Blanck

Narrative, 9:39 min.

Gloria, a Chinese woman in her 70s living alone and struggling with her memory, finds new purpose in teaching herself Spanish.



Producer: Caitlin Machak

Caitlin Machak is an award-winning cinematographer and member of the International Cinematographers Guild (IATSE Local 600).

She worked her way up through the camera department on projects such as Netflix's *HOUSE OF CARDS* and HBO's *GIRLS*, learning from world-renowned cinematographers along the way. In 2019, she was selected to participate in the ASC's inaugural year of the Vision Mentorship Program.

Recently, Caitlin worked as a camera operator on Savannah Leaf's A24 film *EARTH MAMA* as well as Beth de Araújo's *JOSEPHINE*, which won the Grand Jury Prize: US Dramatic and the Audience Award at Sundance 2026 and was also in Competition at Berlinale.

As a cinematographer, her work on Kim Blanck's short film *GLORIA* world premiered at Tribeca Festival 2025. She is currently in post-production on a feature film by video artist Thomas D. Rotenberg.

Director: Kim Blanck

Kim Blanck's pilot script *Half Full* was a RIOT Refinery29 Comedy Lab selection, and she was co-creator and producer of the web series *Basic Witch*. As an actor, her film and television appearances include *Call Jane*, *Women Who Kill*, *WeCrashed*, and *New Amsterdam*. A full-time caregiver for her mother Yie-Teh since 2021, Gloria marks her debut as a writer-director.

Reel Sisters Best Narrative Short 2025 (Academy Qualifying Film)

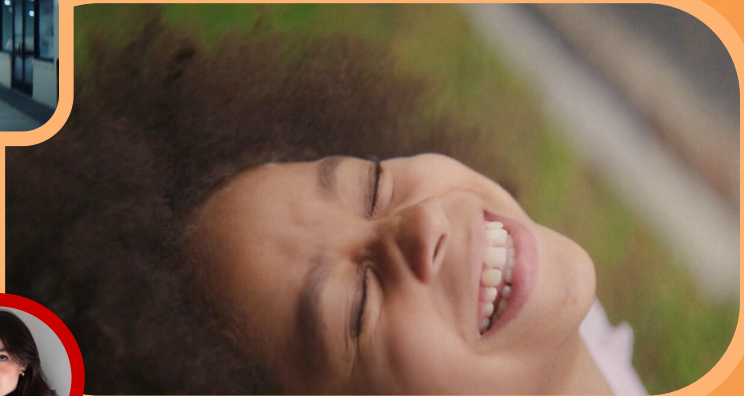
Shallow End

Director/Writer: Maria de la Cruz Rudloff

Producers: Maria de la Cruz Rudloff, Janet Valentina Manina,
Anne Leigh Cooper

Narrative, 11 min.

Twenty-something year old Agatha comes home after a lengthy stay in rehab, a shattered person. In her small town, everything seems to remind her of the life she once had and the people she held dear before it all went wrong.



Director: Maria de la Cruz Rudloff

Maria is a Chilean-Mexican producer, writer and director based in New York City. She has worked for companies such as Netflix, Amazon, Miramax, and Disney as well as small independent projects. In her work, she likes to explore themes exclusive to the female experience, immigration, trauma, and familial relationships.

Laundry

Producers: Alterik Miller, Danielle Moné Truitt, Samuel Calvin Morrison, Jr., Tobias Truvillion, Wink Woodall, Okema T. Moore
Director: Okema T. Moore **Writer:** Alterik Miller
Narrative, 18:50 min.

Laundry follows Darius and Bree Williams, a couple whose lives are shattered when their six-year-old son Hunter suffers a severe oxygen-depriving accident. The short stars Tobias Truvillion (Empire, First Wives Club) and Danielle Moné Truitt (Law and Order Organized Crime).



Producer | Director: Okema T. Moore

Okema T. Moore is an Emmy and NAACP Image Award nominated, ABFF-winning director, producer, and writer committed to bold, emotionally resonant storytelling across platforms. A Brooklyn native, and proud Caribbean multi-hyphenate, she began her career as a performer before moving behind the camera, emerging as a dynamic creative leader in branded, scripted, and unscripted work. Her films have screened at Tribeca, Outfest, and Reel Sisters.

In 2024 and 2025, Okema wrote and produced the EBONY Power 100 Awards and served as lead producer on the Oscar-qualified, NAACP Image Award-nominated short Chocolate with Sprinkles. She recently directed Ally Bank's Money Roots campaign and earned her first directing award at the American Black Film Festival for her short Laundry, along with four additional Best Director honors. She closed out 2025 directing three additional short films.

Her unscripted credits include Netflix, OWN, BET, Marvel/Disney, and STARZ, where she developed the GLAAD and Humanitas-nominated Down in the Valley. A member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., Okema serves on the board of NYWIFT and is a member of AWD, and the New York Television Academy, advocating for equity and access across the industry.

Writer | Director | Producer | Composer: Alterik Miller

Alterik Miller is an award-winning filmmaker and composer from Newark, New Jersey, recognized for authentic storytelling that blends commercial appeal with social impact. His short film Laundry won the 2025 ABFF Black Father's Competition and has been selected for over 20 festivals including Bronze Lens (Oscar Qualifying) and Detroit Black Film Festival, contributing to 20+ career festival wins. As a self-taught writer, director, cinematographer, and composer, Alterik maintains complete creative control across all production phases while maximizing efficiency. He has collaborated with established talent including LaRoyce Hawkins (Chicago P.D./Southside), Keith Arthur Bolden (The Ms. Pat Show/Black Lightning), and Kris D. Lofton (Power Force). His work consistently addresses vital social issues—family protection, LGBTQ+ representation, community safety—while maintaining audience engagement. Based in Newark, NJ, Alterik continues to develop projects that challenge perspectives and leave lasting cultural impact.

Reel Sisters Best Short Comedy 2025

The Knife

Producer: Grace Odumosu Director/Writer: Joy Nesbitt
Narrative, 15 min.

In *The Knife*, Ife, a young Black Irish woman, is anxiously awaiting her 20-week pregnancy scan, hoping for good news about her baby's health. But when the scan reveals unexpected complications, she and her husband, Darragh, are forced to confront a ridiculous reality that will test their trust in the healthcare system.



Director: Joy Nesbitt

Joy Nesbitt is a director, writer, and musician who is inspired by stories of Black Femininity and postcolonial imagination. She has been named on *The Irish Times* and *Sunday Times*' lists of "Ones to Watch in 2024." In 2022, Joy attended the Theatre Directing MFA at The Lir National Academy of Dramatic Arts. She is a 2021 recipient of the Louis Sudler Prize in the Arts for the sum of her artistic activities at Harvard University. Joy is a Director SEED for Rough Magic Theatre Company, a Writer under the mentorship of Enda Walsh for Theatre For One with Landmark Productions, and a member of the 2023 cohort of the Rachel Baptiste Programme at Smock Alley Theatre.

Reel Sisters Best Director 2024

Superman Doesn't Steal

Producers: Tamika Lamison, Chris Beal, Dominique DeLeon, Carol Shine, Ben Ephraim

Consulting Producer: Cleve Lamison

Producer/Director/Writer: Tamika Lamison

Narrative, 19 min.

Based on true events, *Superman Doesn't Steal* is a coming-of-age story, set during the 1970's Atlanta child murders — as seen through the eyes of nine-year-old Harriet and her brother, who are fascinated with superheroes.



Director: Tamika Lamison

Tamika Lamison is an award-winning writer, director, producer, and nonprofit founder whose work sits at the intersection of storytelling and service. She is the creator and Executive Director of the Commercial Directors Diversity Program (CDDP), developed in partnership with the Directors Guild of America and AICP, and the founder of Make A Film Foundation, which pairs children with serious illnesses with Hollywood mentors to create film legacies. As a writer and filmmaker, her work has been supported by fellowships and labs including the RISE Fellowship, Disney/ABC Writing Fellowship, AFI's Directing Workshop for Women, The Writers Lab International, and Athena Labs, where her feature is a finalist for the Chinonye Chukwu Emerging Writers Award. Her films and scripts have screened at major festivals, earned an NAACP Image Award, and include the Tribeca Audience Award-winning documentary *Ferguson Rises* and the Oscar-qualified short *Superman Doesn't Steal*. She was a Finalist for the Disney Directing & Shondaland Directing Fellowships. Tamika is currently developing film and television projects and is represented by Buchwald and Rain LA.

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Reel Sisters is supported, in part, by the New York State Council on the Arts, Brooklyn Arts Council, Council members Crystal Hudson, Farah Louis and Yusef Salaam.



Presenting Organizations

BAM

Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) is the home for curious people and adventurous ideas. We support artistic experimentation and champion inclusion and accessibility throughout the arts as presenter, activator, and connector.

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Founded in 1992, African Voices supports art, literature and film by artists of color. AV serves 5,000 NYC residents through the following key programs: African Voices, a literary magazine that has published more than 4,300+ artists; Reel Sisters of the Diaspora Film Festival & Lecture Series, the nation's first Oscar qualifying film festival devoted to women of color; and AV Readings, Workshops & Performance Series that offers literary readings, artistic workshops, professional forums and art exhibitions at our Brooklyn gallery space. Spelman College is archiving the organization's arts collection for future generations to enjoy.

Reel Sisters has awarded \$75,000 in fellowships and scholarships to women of color filmmakers. Reel Sisters 29th Anniversary festival will be held from Oct. 24-25, 2026.

For information join our mailing list at www.reelsisters.org.

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