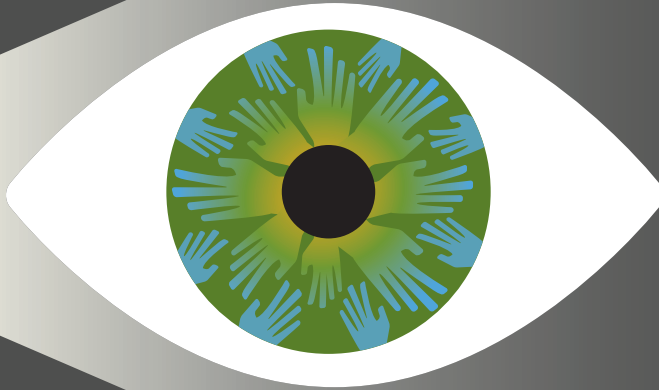


SECOND ANNUAL
APRIL 14-21, 2017
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO



act.
HUMAN RIGHTS
FILM FESTIVAL



COMMUNICATION STUDIES
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

AWAKEN
to your world

CONNECT
across cultures

TRANSFORM
lives near and far

Greetings,

We are thrilled to have you join us for our second annual ACT Human Rights Film Festival. We know it will create moments of communication, community, and engagement.

ACT encapsulates liberal arts education in its oldest and most important meanings. Liberal comes from the Latin root *liberales* meaning to be free and not constrained, while art comes from *artes* meaning learning and practice. ACT teaches us about freedom and offers opportunities to practice what we learn as we gather through empathy with people like and unlike us.

ACT also demonstrates the centrality of communication to the arts of freedom. The films we will see are powerful, multi-sensory modes of communication that help us move beyond ourselves and our own experiences. Our interactions before and after the films, our dialogues with the festival guests, and our discussions with each other can remake ourselves and our world.

The films and conversations we will share weave together hope and hurt, freedom and fear, possibility and paucity. ACT, we believe, is part of these very real, very human entanglements.

May this experience awaken, connect, and transform us all.

Yours,

Greg Dickinson
Chair, Department of Communication Studies



FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

Opening Night Reception

Friday, April 14, following the screening of *The Queen of Ireland*
Lory Student Center West Ballroom

Join filmmaker Conor Horgan and film subject Rory O'Neill for a reception in the Lory Student Center West Ballroom.

Who I Am - A 3D/360 Virtual Reality Documentary Film

Opening and closing screenings and throughout the week

Virtual reality and human rights cinema merge in this journey of unity through the stories of refugee, immigrant, and first generation students. *Who I Am* captures an up-close look at the work of Colorado State University Ethnic Studies Professor Dr. Eric Ishiwata, who specializes in working with communities to effectively assimilate an influx of immigrants and refugees.

Student Short Film Competition

See page 24 for details.

After Hours at Ace Gillett's

239 S. College Ave, Fort Collins

Join festival film guests, patrons, and other community members at Ace Gillett's Lounge to further conversations inspired by the festival. Bar specials will be offered to all ACT festival guests, but you must present a ticket stub or festival program to receive discounts and more. See you there!

Closing Night: Special Guest Harry Belafonte

Friday, April 21, 7:30 p.m., Lory Student Center Theatre

I Am Not Your Negro screening features Q&A guest Harry Belafonte. Community reception to follow in the Lory Student Center West Ballroom. You must show your film ticket for entry.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

ACT Human Rights Film Festival organizers are deeply grateful to our sponsors, university, community, and business partners, ACT Founder's Circle Members, and donors for their generous support.

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FESTIVAL THEMES

American Triumphs and Tragedies: Fighting for Rights in the United States

Films about U.S.-based social justice issues, ranging from the treatment of inmates in supermax prisons to women's reproductive rights to the fight for racial equality during the 1950s and 1960s; films focusing on high-profile leaders of the Civil Rights era as well as the less-famous everyday heroes who protect the freedoms we enjoy today.

Beyond Barriers: Free Movement, Free Press

Films about the literal and figurative boundaries that inform national identity and the sense of belonging while constraining migratory movements around the globe; films emphasizing the need to strive for or retain open borders as well as open minds with regard to the rights of refugees and the role of photojournalists in documenting social transformations.

Girl Power: Dreaming of a Better Tomorrow

Films about young women and adolescent girls living in patriarchal societies whose personal and professional ambitions necessitate significant institutional changes if they are to achieve their goals; films foregrounding educational facilities and detention centers (from a small village near Kabul to the outskirts of Tehran) that either inspire young people to aim for greater things or inhibit such aspirations.

Haunted Memory: Remembrance, Forgiveness, and the Ghosts of War

Films about the residual traumas of wartime experiences; films that concern the need to memorialize the past and to heed the words of eyewitnesses and victims of genocide or other forms of mass atrocity/violence.

LGBTQ Rights: Drag Performances and Transgender Communities

Films about the fluidity rather than fixity of gender both in everyday life and on the international stage; films that celebrate honest and open expressions of sexual identity as well as the individuals and organizations that have fought for LGBTQ rights in such far-flung places as Cuba and Ireland.

Raising the Roof: Profiles in Musical Exile and Courage

Films about musicians whose lives and livelihoods are threatened by fundamentalist groups, governmental oppression, and the spread of violence in West Africa and the Middle East; films trumpeting the heroic endeavors of individuals who use music and art more generally as a form of political resistance to the status quo.

Film synopses listed in this program were written by ACT Human Rights Film Festival Programming Director Dr. David Scott Diffrient.

The Queen of Ireland

Director: Conor Horgan

Ireland / 2015 / 86 minutes



Panti Bliss, the titular “queen” in director Conor Horgan’s crowd-pleasing, uplifting documentary, was on the frontlines of Ireland’s recent push for same-sex marriage rights, which culminated with a 2015 referendum that amended the country’s constitution. Also known as Rory O’Neill, this well-known drag queen and social activist has devoted his life to combating homophobia and raising awareness and funds for HIV/AIDS research. But he has also had to cope with personal setbacks ever since Rory’s childhood years in the small town of Ballinrobe, where growing up gay was a crucible of sorts for the person who would eventually become Ireland’s answer to RuPaul. Like the American drag queen, Panti — an indestructible force of nature — has inspired people around the world to embrace their sexual identities and resist gender conformity, something that *The Queen of Ireland* reveals with equal dashes of humor and poignancy.

Director Conor Horgan and film subject Rory O’Neill will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Aaric Guerriero.

Friday, April 14

Lory Student Center Theatre

7:30 p.m.

What Tomorrow Brings

Director: Beth Murphy
USA/Afghanistan / 2015 / 90 minutes



Razia Jan, the film's subject and founder of the K-12 Zabuli Education Center and Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation, will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Dr. David Scott Diffrient.

Saturday, April 15
Lory Student Center Theatre
Sponsored by RamEvents
1:00 p.m.

In addition to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), several multilateral UN treaties, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), include articles that call for the protection of children's basic right to education, which is essential to the development of young people's literacy levels as well as their self-confidence and self-expression. Director Beth Murphy's *What Tomorrow Brings* illustrates the important role that education plays in strengthening respect for the fundamental freedoms outlined in the above documents. Specifically, this heartwarming documentary, set in a remote Afghan village, follows a group of eager young students who attend the first all-girls school in that region, where — just a few years ago, during the Taliban's control of the country and under strict enforcement of Sharia Law — women were largely confined to their homes and prevented from pursuing careers requiring a degree. The quality of life for pre-teen and teenage girls appears to be improving, however, thanks to the heroic efforts of the school's founder, Razia Jan, as well as the progressive female instructors whose inspirational impact on their students goes well beyond the classroom.

Raving Iran

Director: Susanne Regina Meures

Switzerland/Germany/Iran / 2016 / 84 minutes



Colorado DJs, Cory Clarke and Cody Marsden of Kind Dub, and Skeena will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Jesse Elliott.

Colorado Premiere

Saturday, April 15

Lory Student Center Theatre

4:00 p.m.

Most U.S. audiences have had no exposure to contemporary urban youth cultures in Iran, a country that is often the subject of depressing news coverage and mainstream media representations conveying little about the actual lives of its people. Although recent UN reports indicate that human rights violations have worsened under Hassan Rouhani's Presidency, Iran's cultural landscape has become increasingly diverse and dynamic, reflecting a growing interest in rap music, hip hop, techno, and other artistic expressions that are threatened by censorship. Director Sue Regina Meures' *Raving Iran* focuses on two of Tehran's most notorious underground DJs, Anoosh and Arash, whose mission is to bring electronic dance music and rave culture to the masses, but whose livelihoods are threatened by a governmental crackdown on such "punishable" political acts. With undercover footage (some of it shot on a hidden iPhone) detailing the complications that the duo — known to their fans as "Blade & Beard" — faces in seeking government approval, selling music recordings, and organizing parties with reliable security, this documentary provides compelling insights into the perseverance of artists who are ultimately forced to leave loved ones behind in pursuit of a higher calling. A propulsive, deeply hypnotic film, *Raving Iran* is as bouncy as the base-thumping house music performed by its two youthful subjects.

Driving with Selvi

Director: Elisa Paloschi

India / 2016 / 74 minutes



Director Elisa Paloschi and film subject Selvi will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Dr. Ramaa Vasudevan.

Saturday, April 15

Lory Student Center Theatre

8:00 p.m.

As the founder of Eyesfull, an independent documentary production company based in Toronto, Canadian filmmaker Elisa Paloschi has long demonstrated a commitment to social justice issues and to bringing largely underrepresented or silent voices to the screen. Her recent film, *Driving with Selvi*, is further evidence of this — an intimate encounter with South India's first female taxi driver, who escaped an abusive child marriage and defied strict limitations on what women can do in a patriarchal society where human trafficking has run rampant for decades. Paloschi first met Selvi at a women's shelter in 2004, while traveling to Mysore (in the southwestern state of Karnataka). So taken was the filmmaker with the eighteen-year-old that she spent the next decade recording hours of footage, which shows Selvi learning to drive, obtaining her license, starting her own taxi service, and reaching out to other women with similar ambitions or entrepreneurial goals in mind. The beauty of this initially self-funded film (which was eventually supported by grants and crowdfunding) results from the amount of time that Paloschi devoted to Selvi during and after production, in addition to the evident joy that the latter derives from sharing her uplifting story with others, both in India and throughout the world.

Starless Dreams

Director: Mehrdad Oskouei

Iran / 2016 / 76 minutes



Director Mehrdad Oskouei will join the post-screening Q&A (via Skype) moderated by Dr. David Scott Diffrient.

Colorado Premiere

Sunday, April 16

Lory Student Center Theatre

2:00 p.m.

Winner of the Amnesty International Film Prize at the 2016 Berlin International Film Festival (in addition to numerous other awards), Iranian director Mehrdad Oskouei's *Starless Dreams* is one of the most poignant and aesthetically rigorous explorations of stolen childhood ever made. Set primarily inside a girl's "rehabilitation center" near Tehran, this documentary showcases the sisterly bonding and solidarity that builds among a diverse cross-section of adolescents who are locked up on various charges (from drug possession to car theft to premeditated murder). These girls and their criminal acts, the film reveals, are products of the impoverished and exploitative environment in which they were forced to grow up, enduring verbal, physical, and sexual abuse that continues to haunt them inside the juvenile detention facility. The young subjects' personal testimonies, while shattering, suggest their capacity to move forward and create a brighter future without forgetting the past or letting go of memories that are as dark as a starless night. There is even a playfulness to the girls' relationship to Oskouei's gently inquisitive camera, which observes them with an empathetic tenderness lacking in most documentaries. As a reminder of just how vital the hope for a better life is to individuals who have been deprived of comforts that many audiences take for granted, *Starless Dreams* is a stunning, unforgettable cinematic experience.

This is Exile: Diaries of Child Refugees

Director: Mani Benchelah

Lebanon / 2015 / 56 minutes



Director Mani Benchelah will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Coloradoan reporter Jason Pohl.

Colorado Premiere
Sunday, April 16
Lory Student Center Theatre
5:00 p.m.

"Exile has killed us." These words, spoken by one of the many children featured in Mani Benchelah's devastating documentary about the Syrian refugee crisis, indicate how dire the situation has become for the most vulnerable members of a displaced and dispersed community now numbering in the millions. Indeed, another preadolescent boy's comment that "this is grown-up talk, not young-kids talk," reminds one of the disparities between a childhood spent in relative comfort and a childhood that has been interrupted by war, sickness, and familial separation. Although numerous documentary shorts and feature-length films on the subject have been produced since 2011, when fighting first broke out between Syrian government forces (under the authoritarian Presidency of Bashar al-Assad), Sunni Arab rebel groups, and the Islamic State, Benchelah's work stands out from the pack due to its exclusive focus on young refugees living in neighboring Lebanon. Several boys and girls take time out from playing eerily realistic war games to speak directly to the camera, sharing their individual hardships and their longing for home. This prism of personal testimonies reflects in microcosm the hopes and fears shared by many other Syrians — young and old alike — whose future remains unclear and who are finding fewer countries around the world willing to play host or provide humanitarian assistance. Thankfully, this illuminating film can open people's hearts and minds to the physical suffering and psychological traumas that these children will likely carry with them into adulthood.

The Fog of Srebrenica

Director: Samir Mehanovic

Bosnia / 2015 / 60 minutes



Director Samir Mehanovic will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Dr. Julia Khrebtan-Hörhager.

Monday, April 17
Lincoln Center Magnolia Theatre
4:30 p.m.

"The war is finished. But for us, the victims, it continues." The war being alluded to by a still-grieving woman in director Samir Mehanovic's *The Fog of Srebrenica* is the one that took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina between 1992 and 1995. Specifically, though, she and the other interviewees from Srebrenica are referring to the genocide that took place in their town beginning on July 11, 1995, when over 8,000 Muslim Bosniaks were slaughtered by members of the Serb Army. Since that time, dozens of documentary films have grappled with the humanitarian crisis that resulted from that massacre, although few of those productions are as clear-eyed in their assertion of the need to retain painful memories of the past as *The Fog of Srebrenica*. One after another, survivors provide defiant testimonies and eyewitness accounts while calling out the failures of Western governments to hold the perpetrators of that genocide accountable. Through subtle use of onscreen text, archival footage, and chapter headings that lend contextual information and structural integrity to its traumatized subjects' collective assertion of unending pain, Mehanovic's bracing, artfully composed film cuts through the titular fog and gives viewers a rare glimpse into the lives of people who were conveniently overlooked or largely ignored over two decades ago.

The Apology

Director: Tiffany Hsiung

Canada/South Korea/Philippines / 2016 / 104 minutes



Director Tiffany Hsiung and author Maija Devine will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Dr. Hye Seung Chung.

Monday, April 17
Lincoln Center Magnolia Theatre
7:00 p.m.

Nearly 75 years after being forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army, the few surviving individuals whose life-shattering experiences as “comfort women” continue to haunt them wait for an apology. The film’s titular expression of regret on the part of Japan’s current government has been slow to come, though, and was only recently delivered (after this documentary was completed) as a half-hearted token of remorse. In other words, it was an “apology” that, following several public petitions and weekly demonstrations outside the Japanese embassy, was designed to bring that sad chapter from the Second World War to a close. Produced by the Academy Award-winning Anita Lee (of the National Film Board of Canada) and directed by the enormously talented Tiffany Hsiung, *The Apology* ensures that the lives of some 200,000 victims of institutionalized rape are not forgotten. Significantly, the film departs from earlier cinematic portraits of comfort women by focusing on a trio of good-humored octogenarians — lovingly referred to as “grandmas” — living in three different Asian locations: South Korea, China, and the Philippines. The director’s regionally expansive approach to the subject highlights the ways in which lingering traumas can be confronted, if not completely dispelled, through a shared understanding of other victims’ pain. Audiences the world over will be moved by the actions and words of Grandma Gil, Grandma Cao, and Grandma Adela — women who, even in their twilight years, embody a level of political commitment and emotional resilience that is truly inspiring.

FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

Friday 4/14

The Queen of Ireland

*Guests: Conor Horgan, director,
and Rory O'Neill, film subject*

7:30 p.m. LSC Theater

Reception

Follows screening in
LSC West Ballroom

Saturday 4/15

What Tomorrow Brings

Guest: Razia Jan, film subject

1:00 p.m. LSC Theater

Raving Iran

*Guests: Cory Clarke and Cody
Marsden, Colorado DJs*

4:00 p.m. LSC Theater

Driving With Selvi

*Guests: Elisa Paloschi, director,
and Selvi, film subject*

8:00 p.m. LSC Theater

Sunday 4/16

Starless Dreams

*Virtual guest: Mehrdad Oskouei,
director*

2:00 p.m. LSC Theater

This Is Exile: Diaries of Child Refugees

Guest: Mani Benchalah, director

5:00 p.m. LSC Theater

Monday 4/17

The Fog of Srebrenica

*Guest: Samir Mehanovic,
director*

4:30 p.m. Magnolia

The Apology

*Guests: Tiffany Hsiung, director,
and Majia Devine, author*

4:30 p.m. Magnolia

Tuesday 4/18

Jackson

*Guests: Maisie Crow, director,
and April Jackson, film subject*
4:30 p.m. Magnolia

They Will Have to Kill Us First

Guest: Johanna Schwartz, director
7:00 p.m. Magnolia

Wednesday 4/19

Frame By Frame

Guest: RJ Sangosti, photojournalist
4:30 p.m. Magnolia

Solitary

*Guest: Rebecca Wallace,
Colorado ACLU representative*
7:00 p.m. Magnolia

Thurs 4/20

Walls

*Guests: Alvaro Enciso, film subject,
and Hanan Isweiri, CSU student*
4:30 p.m. LSC Theater

Transit Havana

Guest: Malú Cano, film subject
7:00 p.m. LSC Theater

Fri 4/21

Sing Your Song

4:30 p.m. LSC Theater

I Am Not Your Negro

Guest: Harry Belafonte
7:30 p.m. LSC Theater

Closing Night Reception

Follows screening in
LSC West Ballroom

 Lory Student Center Theatre
 Lincoln Center Magnolia Theatre

Jackson

Director: Maisie Crow

USA / 2016 / 92 minutes



Director Maisie Crow and film subject April Jackson will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Dr. Cori Wong.

Tuesday, April 18
Lincoln Center Magnolia Theatre
4:30 p.m.

Ever since the U.S. Supreme Court established women's basic reproductive rights in the landmark *Roe v. Wade* decision of 1973, anti-abortion crusaders operating under the guise of evangelical authority have made significant inroads in the legal and political battle over women's bodies. In recent years, nearly 300 Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers (TRAP) laws have been passed by state legislatures, forcing healthcare clinics to abide by arbitrary standards and stringent, sometimes ridiculous regulations that make it increasingly difficult for independent providers to perform safe abortions. Director Maisie Crow's balanced but deeply committed documentary *Jackson* tackles this subject with frankness and sensitivity, focusing on the financially strapped individuals who are most impacted by the limitations being placed on abortion access. Set in Mississippi, a state where the number of abortion clinics has shrunk from fourteen to one, the film shows how cultural stigmatization and familial pressure — not to mention "pro-life" protestors' constant calls to close that last clinic — affect young mothers (like twenty-four-year-old April Jackson) who are faced with unplanned pregnancies. One of the most intelligent and stirring exposés on the subject of reproductive justice ever made, *Jackson* is sure to spark difficult but necessary public conversations about women's rights and healthcare accessibility for years to come.

They Will Have to Kill Us First

Director: Johanna Schwartz

Mali / 2015 / 105 minutes



Director Johanna Schwartz will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Jack Rogers.

Tuesday, April 18
Lincoln Center Magnolia Theatre
7:00 p.m.

Fans of director Abderrahmane Sissako's award-winning *Timbuktu*, a 2014 film about the violent clampdown on cultural activities (including musical performances) in Mali after the rise to power of Islamic extremists, will find much to appreciate in Johanna Schwartz's provocatively titled debut *They Will Have to Kill Us First*. Likewise concerned with the jihadist takeover of that war-ravaged West African country in 2012, this frenetically paced documentary focuses on singers and instrumentalists like Khaira Arby, Fadimata Walett Oumar, Moussa Sidi, and Songhoy Blues, who live in exile after a ban on music forces them from their homes in the north. Having left Gao and Timbuktu behind for refugee camps in the southern part of the country (and in neighboring Burkina Faso), these "rebels with a cause" become even more committed to the idea that art is a necessary response to oppressive rule. Beginning with an introductory rap that provides contextualizing information about this recent, now-overturned ban on Malian music-making, the film launches into a series of snapshots of these artists, who lend a hand and help other refugees while performing small concerts for appreciative crowds. Few documentaries make such a compelling case that music — or artistic practice more generally — really is a life and death matter for some of the world's most rights-deprived people.

Frame by Frame

Directors: Alexandria Bombach and Mo Scarpelli
Afghanistan / 2015 / 85 minutes



Denver Post photojournalist RJ Sangosti will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Dr. Nick Marx.

Wednesday, April 19
Lincoln Center Magnolia Theatre
4:30 p.m.

The legendary American photojournalist W. Eugene Smith once said of his profession that it was “documentary photography with a purpose.” Like Smith, whose work has been celebrated worldwide for its humanism, the four photojournalists featured in Alexandria Bombach and Mo Scarpelli’s gripping first feature *Frame By Frame* are resolute in their commitment to ending — or at least easing — the pain of their fellow Afghans through image-based reportage. One by one we meet the charismatic main subjects of this documentary — Massoud Hossaini, Wakil Kohsar, Najibullah Musesafer, and Farzana Wahidy — who are but a few of the many visual artists and members of the press given a new lease on life after the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan drove the Taliban from power in 2001. Now, with new threats being posed by a resurgent fundamentalist insurgency, these and other recorders of human rights abuses assume an increasingly central place in local attempts to fight tyranny with truth. Displaying both courage and caution in the face of adversity, they are aware of the inherent shortcomings of their chosen medium and profession, in terms of their limited ability to affect actual social or political change in a country still desperate for reform. But they, like this film’s talented directorial team (who were granted unprecedented access to people and places largely unseen by most Westerners), display the empathy necessary in overcoming apathy or hopelessness. Raw and wrenching but also cathartic, the artfully lensed *Frame By Frame* is as hauntingly beautiful as the photographs taken by the Pulitzer Prize-winning Hossaini, a testament to Bombach and Scarpelli’s instinctive understanding of their own chosen medium.

Solitary

Director: Kristi Jacobson
USA / 2016 / 82 minutes



Rebecca Wallace, Colorado ACLU representative, will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A, moderated by Dr. Greg Dickinson.

Wednesday, April 19
Lincoln Center Magnolia Theatre
7:00 p.m.

The true test of human rights cinema comes when audiences are asked to consider the positive attributes of individuals who, on the surface, are undeserving of our sympathy or compassion. This includes prisoners who have been convicted of murder, rape, and other crimes that infringe on the rights of others. Director Kristi Jacobson's *Solitary* brilliantly illustrates the need to overcome such prejudices and recognize the inherent dignity of all people, regardless of their backgrounds, actions, or violent pasts. Set inside the Red Onion State Prison in Virginia (a "supermax" facility housing the so-called "worst-of-the-worst" offenders who pose "high-security risks"), this documentary reveals just how inhumane and psychologically damaging long-term solitary confinement is on the men who edge closer to madness with each day that passes. Inmates like Michael and Randall serve life sentences inside cramped 8-by-10-foot cells, and the screams of other isolated souls ricochet cacophonously off the walls of this stark, dehumanizing environment. Judiciously, Jacobson includes footage of correctional officers and councilors reflecting on their sometimes ambivalent attitudes toward segregated incarceration. She and her crew, through intimate interviews in which the men open up about their depression and loneliness, follow in the footsteps of the greatest documentarians (such as Frederick Wiseman and Barbara Kopple) and make a significant intervention in contemporary debates about the "Prison-Industrial Complex."

Walls

Directors: Pablo Iraburu and Migueltxo Molina
Spain / 2016 / 80 minutes



Film subject Alvaro Enciso and CSU student Hanan Isweiri will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A, moderated by Dr. Sophie Esch.

Colorado Premiere
Thursday, April 20
Lory Student Center Theatre
4:30 p.m.

Walls, especially those placed along national borders and boundaries, are essentially contradictory structures, fortifying the (imagined) integrity of nation-states while severing communities, constraining movement, and fueling mistrust. They are sites of inclusion and exclusion, dividing yet connecting people who conceive of their own identities partly in relation to which side of a wall they stand on. Pablo Iraburu and Migueltxo Molina's *Walls* hinges on these and other paradoxes, underscoring the similarities between three different areas divided in both literal and figurative ways. This ambitious, multilingual production brings together several stories that are as timely and relevant as they are dramatically intense. Its regionally dispersed look at enforced partitions takes the viewer to the boundaries between South Africa and Zimbabwe, Morocco and Spain, and Mexico and the United States. Ironically, the film suggests that a common sense of humanity can be derived from a shared sense of division. As barbed wire, fences, gates, and other barriers spring up with greater and more pernicious insistency in our own corner of the world, motion pictures like this might be one of our best defenses against hopelessness or resignation.

Transit Havana

Director: Daniel Abma

Cuba / 2016 / 86 minutes



Film subject Malú Cano will be in attendance for a post-screening **Q&A, moderated** by Dr. Karina Cespedes.

Colorado Premiere

Thursday, April 20

Lory Student Center Theatre

7:00 p.m.

Winner of the "Best Human Rights Film" Award at the 2016 Verzio Film Festival in Budapest and similar honors throughout the world, director Daniel Abma's *Transit Havana* is an eye-opening look at Cuba's LGBTQ community and the long history of homophobia that has begun to melt away in the light of recent anti-discrimination campaigns. Specifically, we see three transgender individuals — Odette, Juani and Malú — who are awaiting sexual reassignment surgery, a procedure that will be funded by the Cuban government and carried out by Belgian and Dutch doctors making their annual trip to the island nation. Mariela Castro Espín, the director of the Havana-based National Center for Sex Education, is the daughter of Cuban president Raúl Castro, and her pledge to support governmental healthcare coverage for members of the trans community suggests that the socialist revolution of the past has expanded to accommodate the sexual revolution of the present. Although just over two dozen patients had received treatment by the time Abma's camera started rolling, significantly more Cubans are encouraged by this sign of things to come, this indicator of more positive transformations in the body politic. The excitement of the moment is palpable, but so too is the desperation of those who remain on the waiting list for the much-coveted surgery and face opposition from their own family members. A profoundly personal examination of this political issue, *Transit Havana* is deserving of its many accolades.

Sing Your Song

Director: Susanne Rostock

USA / 2011 / 105 minutes



Although popularly known as the voice that brought the "The Banana Boat Song" ("Day-O") and other calypso numbers to mainstream America in the 1950s, Hollywood actor and singer Harry Belafonte has done more than nearly anyone else in the film and recording industries to fight for civil rights in the United States and for human rights around the world. This expansive and loving tribute of a documentary provides a wide-ranging look at Belafonte's career in the world of entertainment (where he battled racist attitudes, stereotypical representations, and FBI investigations) as well as his commitment to social justice, demonstrated through archival clips of him marching alongside Martin Luther King, Jr. and traveling to African countries in support of pro-democracy causes. A UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and recent winner of the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award, this legendary icon remains as vital today as he was during the Civil Rights era, when he challenged white America's prejudices and institutional biases while paving the way for other African American entertainer-activists.

Friday, April 21
Lory Student Center Theatre
4:30 p.m.
Free Screening

I Am Not Your Negro

Director: Raoul Peck

USA / 2017 / 95 minutes



Legendary Hollywood actor, singer, and social activist Harry Belafonte will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Dr. Ray Black. Belafonte will talk about his life as an advocate for equality and human rights as well as the importance of James Baldwin's work in the context of contemporary U.S. race relations.

Friday, April 21

Lory Student Center Theatre

7:30 p.m.

Haitian filmmaker Raoul Peck is among the most accomplished and consistently brilliant auteurs in the emerging arena of human rights cinema. In 2000 he directed the film *Lumumba*, about the Republic of Congo's postwar independence movement, and five years later helmed the made-for-TV historical drama *Sometimes in April*, about the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. These productions, in addition to documentaries and narrative features about his own homeland's humanitarian crisis following the catastrophic earthquake that devastated Port-au-Prince and other cities in 2010, reveal Peck to be a chronicler of the collective pain that has become the world's currency in recent years. His latest work takes viewers back to a place and time — the U.S. Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s — that uncannily parallel the current state of race relations in this country. *I Am Not Your Negro* shuttles between past and present, showing how the words and ideas of America's greatest mid-century poet-philosopher-social activist, James Baldwin, still reverberate in a world where the Black Lives Matter movement struggles for cultural recognition and political legitimacy. Narrated by Samuel L. Jackson, who reads passages from Baldwin's personal memoirs and published notes, and incorporating clips from old Hollywood films trafficking in African American stereotypes, *I Am Not Your Negro* reveals how foundational he and other Civil Rights leaders (including Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Medgar Evers, featured in archival scenes) are to contemporary efforts to heal the still-gaping wounds of this nation's shameful past.

2017 ACT STUDENT SHORT FILM COMPETITION OFFICIAL JUROR SELECTIONS

Jurors' First Place

Not Yours

Kitty Noowong / Portland State University / 5:47 minutes

Screens before *RAVING IRAN*, Saturday 4/15, 4 p.m.

Not Yours is a short documentary on sexual assault and harassment.

Jurors' Second Place

Overcome

Estefany Vega / Boise State University / 4:45 minutes

Screens before *THIS IS EXILE*, Sunday 4/16, 5 p.m.

In 2008, the United States faced the largest economic collapse since the Great Depression and the fallout was enormous. Richard was one of many people that lost his stable income and had to face a new reality -- years of unsheltered homelessness in Boise, Idaho. Through this journey he became invested in building relationships between the homeless community and city officials.

TRANSaction: Stepping Out of the Closet

Bridget Galaty / Denver School of the Arts / 6:09 minutes

Screens before *THE QUEEN OF IRELAND*, Friday 4/14, 7:30 p.m.

The issue of transgender rights is one that is often discussed, but many people have not actually had the opportunity to meet or talk to a transgender person. In this documentary, we hear about the experiences of transgender high school students while wardrobe shopping.

And Then

Cindy Yang / California Institute of the Arts / 1:43 minutes

Screens before *THE FOG OF SREBRENICA*, Monday 4/17, 4:30 p.m.

What if the everyday routine of the world suddenly breaks?



CALL TO act.

Inspired by the Call2Action Program launched by the Boulder International Film Festival, the ACT Human Rights Film Festival is committed to helping audiences connect to organizations working to make a difference in the world. Nearly every ACT film has been paired with one or more local, national, or international nonprofit organizations. Representatives from these nonprofit organizations will be onsite and ready to help connect film-goers to additional information, opportunities for action, and organizational involvement at home and beyond. Please take a moment to learn about their mission and services.

The following nonprofit and student organizations are participating in the 2017 ACT Human Rights Film Festival:

A Face to Reframe
American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado
Black Lives Matter 5280
The Council for International Student Affairs
Cultivating Capacities
El Centro
Fort Collins For Progress
Free Our Girls
GLBT Colorado
The Girl Scouts of Colorado
The International Rescue Committee
The Music District
NoCo Aids Project
NoCo National Organization of Women
OnSpec
Pride Resource Center
Project Ava
Rams for Progress
Rams for Refugees
Rocky Mountain Collegian
Save the Children
UCOUNT
United Way
Women and Gender Advocacy Center

HARRY BELAFONTE RESISTANCE THROUGH ART AWARD

Each year, the ACT Human Rights Film Festival honors the work of a filmmaker and film subject(s) who have demonstrated the important role that artistic and cultural productions play in challenging discriminatory attitudes or repressive systems of thought and action. Named after the internationally recognized American actor, singer, and social activist Harry Belafonte, this award will be given to a film featuring individuals who harness the power of literature, music, painting or other types of expressive communication to bring about political change locally, nationally, and/or globally.

This year's Resistance Through Art Award will be given to Johanna Schwartz, director of *They Will Have to Kill Us First*, and Khaira Arby, Mali's "Reigning Queen of Song" (and one of the subjects of the documentary), in recognition of their efforts to keep the popular music of Mali alive after the country was taken over by religious extremists who banned musical performances.



ACT Human Rights Film Festival Programming Committee

*Thank you for your vision, service,
time, and energy ~*

Dr. Scott Diffrient, Programming Director

Usama Alshaibi

Rita Brown

Carol Busch

Dr. Greg Dickison

Dr. Evan Elkins

Dr. Kit Hughes

Dr. Julia Khrebtan-Hörhager

Hali Martin

Lindsey Nielsen

Shantel Rizzotto

Corey Wilson

Take ACTION and raise your voice for the Liberal Arts with a gift to the ACT Human Rights Film Festival in celebration of Colorado State University's Love Your State Day of Giving on April 19.

Make your gift online right now and your impact will double, thanks to the generosity of our ACT Founder's Circle Members. In celebration of the Day of Giving, these supporters have agreed to match your gifts up to \$5,000.

Together, we have the opportunity to raise \$10,000 in support of ACT.

Here's how:

1. Visit <http://giving.colostate.edu/loveyourstate/>
2. Scroll down to the College of Liberal Arts page, and click.
3. Make your gift.
4. Share with your friends, and encourage others to participate!

Please help us make this festival possible in the years to come by making a gift today!





Special Thanks

The ACT Human Rights Film Festival name and brand were conceived and developed by founding sponsor, One Tribe Creative. Thanks to Paul Jensen and his team for committing its vision, dedication, and excellence in the name of social justice.

ACT recognizes the Eracism Film and Discussion Series for its vision to “heighten awareness and create a better understanding of the issues facing people of color or of minority ethnic backgrounds” through the power of film. Founded in 2001, the series was held throughout the month of October until 2015. In all, 54 films were screened and each was followed by discussion with relevant, knowledgeable facilitators. In 2016 the Eracism Film and Discussion Series board decided to fold its energy and resources into ACT. We are deeply grateful to the board for this beautiful gesture.