

Northwestern University

Department of Radio/Television/Film

Winter 2021

Please submit all upcoming news items via [this link](#) by May 17, 2021

Alumni News



Ma Belle, My Beauty, the feature debut written and directed by **Marion Hill** (RTVF '16), won the [Audience Award: NEXT Award at Sundance 2021](#). The film tells the story of a surprise reunion in southern France that reignites passions and jealousies between two women who were formerly polyamorous lovers. DP **Lauren Guiteras** (RTVF '14) discussed the film's cinematography and the collaboration with Hill that began at Northwestern in an interview with [Filmmaker Magazine](#). The film will also play in the Festival Favorites section of [SXSW](#).

Sky Dylan-Robbins (RTVF '11) left her staff journalist position at NBC to run [The Video Consortium](#), a thriving global network that connects the next generation's documentary filmmakers and journalists. Sky launched the nonprofit a few years ago while building the video department at *The New Yorker* magazine, and has since been recognized as a Forbes 30 under 30 in the media for the Video Consortium's contribution to the industry. The VC just opened its 11th chapter in Europe and is soon launching a global mentorship program. Many RTVF alumni are members; please join the community!



Jen Spyra's (MFA WSS '12) debut short story collection, *Big Time*, will be released March 16th, 2021, with Random House. It is a Starred Booklist book, features a foreword by Stephen Colbert, and has received advance praise from Tina Fey, Mindy Kaling, Simon Rich, and Jack Handey.



Will Klein's (MFA Doc '19) thesis film, *Children of the Moon*, premiered at the Chicago Underground Film Festival and will be screening at Anthology Film Archives' New Filmmakers NY, San Francisco Independent Film Festival, and the Athens International Film + Video Festival in 2021.



Benjamin Buxton (MFA Doc '19), graduate of the Documentary Media Master's program 2019, produced *The Touch of the Master's Hand* which premiered at Sundance this year. The film was awarded the Jury Prize in US Short Fiction. Buxton produced the film directed by his longtime collaborator Gregory Barnes along with their production company the *American Standard Film Co. (ASFC)*. The film is a dark comedy about Mormon Missionaries drawing upon Buxton and Barnes' Mormon upbringing.

Building on his success as a producer in recent years, **Nevo Shinaar** (MFA Doc '17) will be leading scripted and documentary development efforts at *Mitten Media* (*Life Itself, Abacus: Small Enough to Jail*). Mitten and Shinaar first collaborated on the 92nd Academy Awards shortlisted documentary "Stay Close", from Co-Directors **Luther Clement-Lam** (MFA Doc '17) and **Shuhan Fan** (MFA Doc '16) and Executive Producer Mark Mitten.





Jennifer Boles's (MFA Doc '19) film [*The Reversal*](#) (2020) screened at Chicago International Film Festival, Antimatter Film Festival (Victoria, Canada), ULTRAcinema (Tepic, Mexico), and Chicago Underground (Jury Award for best film made in Chicago).



Hasan Demirtas (MFA Doc '17) won Best Doc Feature Film from the [*Collected Voices Film Festival*](#) in Chicago for his film, [*You Name It*](#). He dedicated the award to the NU Doc.

Lianna Squillace (SAI '19) has accepted a new role with American Public Media as an audio engineer for the NPR show [*Marketplace*](#).



The audio drama "[*Unwell: a Midwestern Gothic Mystery*](#)," produced by **Jeffrey Gardner** (SAI '19) and Eleanor Hyde, is a finalist for the BBC Audio Drama Award for Best Podcast or Online Audio Drama.

Evelyn Kreutzer (Screen Cultures '20) received a 6-year postdoc position at the Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf (located just outside of Berlin on the Babelsberg Film Studio premises). Evelyn will be part of a new joint research group at the Film University Babelsberg and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem that will investigate the historical and transnational circulation of films from the NS era. She will particularly be taking on the project's videographic component. In addition, Evelyn will start a managing position at the Moving History Film Festival in Potsdam, the first festival on historical films in Germany.



Nayna Agrawal (MFA WSS '15) is a 2020 IATI Theater fellow. This six-month fellowship will culminate with a performance in NYC. In 2020, she wrote freelance episodes for shows produced by DreamWorks, Netflix, Mattel, and Apple. She is one of ten artists selected from nearly 1000 applicants to participate in Hollywood's Salon XYZ initiative. Her radio play, *Plucker*, was featured in the LA Times. She is also a proud steering committee member of [Think Tank for Inclusion and Equity](#).

Faculty News

December 28, 2020



"Eating in front of the computer is bad for you."



Cartoon by Ozge Samanci

Ozge Samanci had her [cartoons](#) published in the *New Yorker*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Airmail*. She also received Provost Grants for Research in Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Arts.



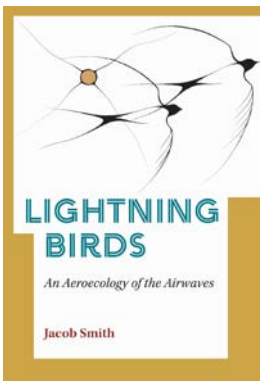
Ariel Stess' play *Kara & Emma & Barbara & Miranda parts 1 and 2* premiered in *Active Listening*, a new podcast series. Featured pieces were produced, recorded, performed, and written by New Dramatists resident playwrights while in quarantine. [3 Views Theater](#) spotlights the artists involved. Episodes are now streaming at [New Dramatists Active Listening](#).



Eric Patrick's film *Lines of Exile* continues its rounds of the international festival circuit, including screenings in Japan, Brazil, Greece, Belarus, and in Spain for the Amnesty International event "Drets, Humans, I.... Accio." The film was also awarded a Juror's Choice Award at the Black Maria Film Festival, and will be featured in the upcoming American Documentary and Animation Festival in Palm Springs, CA.

PBS has commissioned 137 Films (co-directed and edited by **Clayton Brown** to create a short film preceding a documentary in the current season of Independent Lens.

"The Debate," a short documentary about the Creationism vs Evolution debate between Ken Ham and Bill Nye "The Science Guy," will premiere on March 29 nationally.



Jacob Smith's new audiobook project, [Lightning Birds](#) has been published. *Lightning Birds* consists of a five-episode, podcast-style audiobook, a curatorial essay, and a bibliography. All are available to access and download for free at the University of Michigan Press website. *Lightning Birds* is a work of environmentally-minded media history that explores how radio technologies have been tools for understanding bird migration. *Lightning Birds* tells a new story about radio and describes important discoveries about bird migration through interviews with key researchers. Smith also just published an article in the journal [Biosemiotics](#), which explores the history of “bird-scaring”, a long-standing component of the semiotic relationship between humans and birds.

Eliza Bent's article ["I Want You In My Zoom"](#) was recently published in the Brooklyn Rail.

JP Sniadecki's film [A Shape of Things to Come](#) celebrates its Mexican premiere at FICUNAM and its U.S. virtual cinema premiere at Anthology Film Archives in NYC. Distributed by Grasshopper films, *A Shape* will also stream via MUBI, as well as at the Museum of the Moving Image (NYC), The Acropolis in Los Angeles, Gene Siskel, the Belcourt in Nashville,, Lark Theater in Larkspur, CA, the Space Gallery in Portland, Maine, the Parkway in Minneapolis, and other venues. Complete release information is available on the film website's [Find Your Theatre tab](#). The film is the subject of recent articles by Laura Marks in *Anthropologica* and Jay Keuhner in *Senses of Cinema*. JP's previous award-winning films *Yumen* and *Foreign Parts* will be showcased online at Berlinale Forum's Arsenal 3 featuring selections from Harvard's Sensory Ethnography Lab. His co-directed, collaborative Cairo, IL project also received an AJ Muste grant for social justice.

Current Student News

Undergraduates

Lauren Washington's (RTVF '22) documentary “Samuel Johnson Jr: More Than A Barber” that she directed, produced, edited, and shot in Professor Danielle Beverly's “The One Person Documentary” class was published in the [NURJ's Vol. 4 Multimedia Edition](#). Also, her documentary will be screening at the Chicago Filmmakers' seventh edition of [“The Spirit of Chicago”](#) virtual showcase.

Writing for the Screen and Stage

Gahee Lee's (Class of 2021) short script "Copycats" received the bronze medal at 2020 Page International Screenwriting Awards. She's looking for a producer/director for possible collaboration. Gahee's feature script (written in Korean) "Era of Wars" was selected as a finalist with her co-writers at the 2020 [History-Based Screenwriting Competition](#) by the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism. Gahee was introduced in Korean major dailies, including [JOONGANG](#), [DONG-A](#), and [YONHAP](#), as a lead writer of episode 2 of "Nightbird Society," a story-driven game that wbe globally released this fall.

Niv Elbaz's (Class of 2021) play Delilah was one of five winning plays at Panndora's Box 14th Annual New Works (2020). His play *The Blues in Your Whites* was a shortlisted Finalist in [Screencraft Stage Play Contest](#) (2020). His play *Him/Her* was a Semifinalist at Gaslight-Baker Theatre's One-Act Contest (2020). His pilot *Robin* placed in the following competitions: Semifinalist, [Screencraft Tv Pilot Contest](#) (2020); Quarterfinalist, Big Break Screenwriting Competition (2020). And his short film *Fragments* was a Second Rounder (Quarterfinalist) at the Austin Film Festival (2020).



Screen Cultures

Crystal Camargo wrote a short [short piece for Flow](#) on the politics of representation of undocumented immigrants and ICE agents in Netflix's docuseries *Immigration Nation*.

Simran Bhalla was awarded a Buffett Global Impacts Fellowship and has two publications forthcoming (one is a digital catalog for the Block Museum): "Modern Time: Abbas Kiarostami's Immersions, from Sponsored Documentary to Slow Cinema," in "Humanitarian Immersions in Non-Fiction Media," In Focus dossier, *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies*. Bhalla, Simran and Malia Haines-Stewart (eds). "Liberating History: Arab Feminisms and Mediated Pasts." *Block Museum of Art*.

Kelly Coyne received a grant from the Sexualities Project at Northwestern to present a chapter of her dissertation titled "Women as Girls: Making Friendship Legible in Recession-Era Media" at the Modern Language Association's annual conference in January.

Nicola Mccafferty was accepted to The Southwest Popular/American Culture Association's conference and the Popular Culture Association's conference.

Julia Peres Guimaraes co-wrote "The Taste of Cybermedia, an Interview with Hojoon Lee" with Carol Vernallis, which will appear in the edited volume: *Cybermedia Explorations in Science, Sound and Vision*, edited by Holly Rogers, Carol Vernallis, Selmin Kara and Jonathan Leal, Bloomsbury, forthcoming.

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