

**30<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL**

# **LES**

**THEATER FOR THE NEW CITY  
PRESENTS**

## **The Lower East Side Festival of the Arts**

**Fri. Sat. Sun.  
May 23, 24, 25, 2025**

**Free!**

**Free!**

**Friday, Saturday, Sunday:  
Evenings 6 pm to Midnight  
Theater • Music • Dance • Film •  
Poetry • Cabaret • Visual Arts •  
Youth Program**

**Cultural Fair on E. 10th St: Saturday 12pm to 6pm**

**Youth Program: Saturday 2pm to 5pm**

**Poetry Program: Sunday 4pm to 7pm**

**Celebrate the Cultural & Artistic Explosion  
of the Lower East Side!**

**NYC** Cultural  
Affairs

NEW YORK  
STATE OF  
OPPORTUNITY

Council on  
the Arts

# SATURDAY FILM PROGRAM 12 PM – 10 PM

The Cabaret Theater (downstairs) seats about 65. Free to attend.

Curator: Burak Tatar

Technical Director: Roy Chang

Hosted by Burak Tatar and Eva Dorrepaal

<https://theaterforthenewcity.net/shows/lower-east-side-festival-of-the-arts-2025/>

***Q&A After each block.***

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## 12:00 PM

### **[#1] Flying Lessons**

Director: Elizabeth Nichols

Runtime: 84 min

Synopsis: When their Lower East Side building comes under siege by a predatory landlord, a young filmmaker and an aging punk artist forge an unlikely friendship. As the two women collaborate on a portrait of a creative life amidst NYC's cultural crisis, they discover what it means to be neighbors.

Key Cast: Philly Abe

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## 1:40 PM - (block of 3 films)

### **[1-3 / #2] Elder Artists & Institutional Legacy**

Director: Christine Stoddard

Runtime: 9 min

Synopsis: Elder Artists & Institutional Legacy is a short web report on three older New York artists and their struggles to pass the torch to the next generation.

Key Cast: Christine Stoddard

### **[2-3 / #3] The Man in the Red Bandana**

Director: Maria Walsh

Runtime: 4 min

Synopsis: The Man in the Red Bandana tells the story of Welles Crowther, a 24-year-old who saved multiple lives during the 9/11 attacks, identified by the red bandana he always carried. Aided by survivor testimonies, the documentary highlights Welles' courage, selflessness, and legacy as a symbol of hope and heroism amidst tragedy.

### **[3-3 / #4] West Landing**

Director: Doug Gallo

Runtime: 15 min

Synopsis: West Landing is a short documentary about a group of open-water swimmers on Long Island who gather every summer morning in Hampton Bays. Born out of the post-pandemic era, their daily swims provide a sense of calm and a newfound community, proving that it's never too late to find friendship, purpose, and joy in life's simple pleasures.

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## 2:25 PM - (block of 5 films)

### **[1-5 / #5] XenoAmerica**

Director: Je'Jae Cleo Daniels

Runtime: 6 min

Synopsis: Xenophobia keeps Americans locked in bigotry, as well as pushing out arrivals. In a Museum of Moving Image, Doc Fellowship of Fall 2019, a cohort of Womxyn filmmakers tackling Immigrant issues, had two months to prepare a short film of their liking. Through a partnership of Third World Newsreel, our creatives tackle this systematic subject, one interview at a time.

Key Cast: Sam Jackabee, Brenda Salazar, Ran Yan, Alex

### **[2-5 / #6] The State of Apathy**

Director: Christopher Albert De La Roa

Runtime: 15 min

Synopsis: Out of the approximately 1.2 million people in the United States who are currently living with HIV, about 1 in 7 of them, do NOT even know it.

A fact, and issue that has so deeply impacted the life of activist and educator Raymond De La Torre, that he founded No Cure No Rest, the organization dedicated to promoting HIV/AIDS awareness, education, research and free testing for communities in need.

Key Cast: Raymond De La Torre

### **[3-5 / #7] My Back Pages**

Director: Nick Canfield

Runtime: 10 min

Synopsis: A portrait of Mitch Blank, the world's foremost collector of Bob Dylan memorabilia and recordings, all kept in his tiny New York City apartment. This short documentary follows Mitch as he donates his life's work to the Bob Dylan Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It is a voyage into the ephemera of one of the greatest American musicians, a study on the nature of collecting and what it means to devote your life to something - then let it go forever.

Key Cast: Mitch Blank

### **[4-5 / #8] Path**

Director: Uriel Pedroza Rivera

Runtime: 17 min

Synopsis: Jerry Vezzuso is a 60 year old man. A talented artist, his passion for creation encourages him to create something new every year, but the economic needs and decisions of the city have driven him to the brink of death.

He made the difficult decision to devote his professional life to art and now lives in Brooklyn and is a professor at several universities.

The story unfolds in Brooklyn Heights, where he has lived since the rent control law was passed.

Key Cast: Jerry Vezzuso, Mark Roussel, Kenneth Kiehl, Enid Esmond, Darin Mickey

### **[5-5 / #9] Feeling the Blues**

Director: Ricardo Montero

Runtime: 6 min

Synopsis: A profile of Harlem legend Samuel Hargress Jr. and his iconic jazz bar, Paris Blues. Mostly filmed in 2016, four years before Covid-19 took Sam's life and lead to the permanent closing of the venue, this short documentary captures a man in his time capsule.

Key Cast: Samuel Hargress Jr.

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## **3:18 PM - (block of 5 films)**

### **[1-5 / #10] Surrogate**

Director: Peter F Welch

Runtime: 13 min

Synopsis: SURROGATE is a twelve-minute, experimental film by New York based multidisciplinary artist Peter Welch, featuring celebrated theater creator and actress Melanie Maria Goodreaux. The story revolves around a wandering Visual Artist who's undergoing a severe existential crisis, and the strange, unlicensed healer who attempts to remedy their situation. Shot throughout the United States, the film explores the darker side of the artistic process with an interesting blend of psychological twists and absurdist humor ultimately addressing the age-old question "In the end, is any of it really worth it?"

Key Cast: Melanie Maria Goodreaux, Peter F Welch

### **[2-5 / #11] CLIME**

Director: Sherry A Erskine, Bonnie Sue Stein

Runtime: 12 min

Synopsis: an experimental documentary, CLIME brings attention to the vitality and safety of public space, particularly the East River Park in New York City.

### **[3-5 / #12] Unstaged: Untouched**

Director: Abdul-Rauf Saba

Runtime: 4 min

Synopsis: The brief visual work Unstaged examines vulnerability, creativity, and identity. It tracks a person negotiating the demands of self-expression in a society that frequently requires performance through complex settings and symbolic objects.

Key Cast: Leann Gardner

### **[4-5 / #13] Caution Spawn Ahead**

Director: Stacey Larkins

Runtime: 15 min

Synopsis: An experimental film, mostly told in rhyme, that explores our current political climate, presented as a warning in a banned children's book.

Key Cast: Rene Henry, Soulo Smith, Rew Starr, Amy Simon, Angela Morone

### **[5-5 / #14] Gold Punch**

Director: Nira Burstein

Runtime: 6 min

Synopsis: Another day, another strange gallery opening on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

Key Cast: Marie Pohl, Jan Kutrzeba, Silvia Pena, Mary Ashlyn Moore

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## 4:30 – 5:30 PM : FILMMAKER NETWORKING PARTY

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### 5:30 PM - (block of 6 films)

#### **[1-6 / #15] Lovearthcam**

Director: Aitor Marín Correcher

Runtime: 3 min

Synopsis: He, she and a webcam in New York.

Key Cast: Aitor Marín Correcher

#### **[2-6 / #16] Clock Shop**

Director: Jennifer Sklias-Gahan

Runtime: 4 min

Synopsis: It's just before noon at the neighborhood Clock Shop. The owner sits in position behind the counter, attending to her daily tasks as the street penny-whistler plays his tune. Time ticks and tocks. The doors are open for business as usual.

Key Cast: Patricia Angelin, Billy Lyons, Olivia Cookman

#### **[3-6 / #17] Brooklyn**

Director: Timur Guseynov

Runtime: 20 min

Synopsis: After saving an abused pit bull, a troubled Brighton Beach teenager who makes ends meet through crime while raising his little brother, must protect the dog from its nefarious owners.

Key Cast: Feodor Dolan, Hayden Schuster, Alison The Pitbull

#### **[4-6 / #18] Not So American**

Director: Mohamed Ommran

Runtime: 21 min

Synopsis: Nader, from Astoria, Queens honors his Arab American roots yet strives for independence. He faces pressure from all sides, his family, his cultural and traditional duties, and his aspirations. Nader must define his own identity and carve a path that feels true to who he is before others decide for him.

Key Cast: Abdelrahman Eissa

#### **[5-6 / #19] The Bad Daughter**

Director: Min Cho

Runtime: 9 min

Synopsis: Ann gets caught having a girlfriend while talking to her mom in Korea on the phone.

Key Cast: Da Eun Yoon, Claudia Thiedmann

#### **[6-6 / #20] PRIME REAL ESTATE**

Director: Burak Tatar

Runtime: 15 min

Synopsis: Married couple, Arthur and Helen, go to the cemetery to put flowers on the graves of her loved ones.

Key Cast: Pat Clune, James Fordyce

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## **6:58 PM - (block of 4 films)**

### **[1-4 / #21] The Gender Symphony**

Director: Phoebe Legere

Runtime: 14 min

Synopsis: Gender Symphony follows enslaved person Columbina as she toils under Dr. Pants - a boss who is obsessed with getting rich. Pants discovers an incantation he believes will "make him a rich man." However, the spell summons not gold, but a feminist witch! On the sly Columbina sips the potion and "becomes a rich man."

Key Cast: Ivan Galietti, Kathy Brew, Phoebe Legere

### **[2-4 / #22] The Price of Gum**

Director: Shoshana Ehrenkranz

Runtime: 4 min

Synopsis: A middle school girl starts an underground gum business putting the PTA's snack shoppe out of business.

Key Cast: Zeina, Stevie, Helen, Frankie, Joanna, Hui Yan, Stella, Catherine, Stevie, Frankie, MS. Obernauer

### **[3-4 / #23] Moonlight in the Bronx**

Director: Rita Costanzi

Runtime: 5 min

Synopsis: made in 2020 at the height of the Pandemic, and voted by viewers around the world, as the top choice to receive the Hershey Felder Presents Arts Prize.

Key Cast: Rita Costanzi

### **[4-4 / #24] The Voyage Back - Lovers scene**

Director: David Willinger

Runtime: 12 min

Synopsis: With amusing desperation, and against Trudy's better judgment, Paul resolves to bring the dead back using a medieval cabalistic ritual that never works due to his countless mistakes.

Key Cast: Written and Directed by David Willinger; Film & Sound Editing by Roy Chang

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## **7:45 PM**

### **[#25] A Phantom Song**

Director: Michael Gorman & Donna Daly

Runtime: 45 min

Synopsis: A playwright and advocate breathes new life into a long-abandoned theater, creating a visual metaphor of recovery and rehabilitation for both the theater and those living in the shadows of the opiate crisis in the State Capitol of Augusta, Maine.

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## 8:45 PM - (block of 4 films)

### **[1-4 / #26] Stalled**

Director: Erich Rich

Runtime: 12 min

Synopsis: A man is sitting on the toilet in a public restroom when he's interrupted by a child crawling into his stall. He begins to panic when the kid won't leave no matter how emphatically he asks. What follows is a descent into madness as he tries to devise a plan to escape, without being branded a sexual predator.

Key Cast: Langston Fishburne, Asher Morrisette

### **[2-4 / #27] Launch at Paradise**

Director: Carrie Ann Quinn

Runtime: 15 min

Synopsis: The lines between life and death become blurred for John as he takes the risk to live forever.

Key Cast: Catherine Curtin, Zainab Jah, Lauren Schaffel, James Harkness, Daniel Mitura, Patrick Shane.

### **[3-4 / #28] Don't Forget You Are A Boy**

Director: Clay Horwitz

Runtime: 13 min

Synopsis: A one-shot film showcasing three best friends battling to earn their spot in one of their wildest hormonal dreams.

Key Cast: Bo Tyler, Benjamin Anderson, Michael Sarov

### **[4-4 / #29] Out to Run: A Tale of Blood Velvet**

Director: James Berry

Runtime: 10 min

Synopsis: A gay couple get attacked by vampires that drink the blood of queer people. Why? Because we taste the best, obviously!

Key Cast: Matt Lauria, Briana Venskus, Ryan McCartan, Miles Tagtmeyer