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UCLA Professors Get Featured In 3 Short Films

By lednewsdesk — On May 29, 2023

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Three new short films directed and produced by a UCLA alumna will give viewers a compelling look inside the work of the UCLA Film & Television Archive.

The films, collectively titled "See the Bigger Picture," illuminate the Archive's work beyond the screen —from advancing UCLA's research mission and preserving cultural heritage to showcasing international cinema and championing historically marginalized creators and communities. The films are being screened throughout the summer at the Billy Wilder Theater at the Hammer Museum and are available now on the Archive's YouTube channel.

The films were produced, directed and edited by the Archive's recent filmmaker-in-residence, Gwendolyn Infusino, who earned a master of fine arts in production and directing from UCLA in 2018.

Roughly three minutes in length, each film features a candid interview with one primary subject: Chon Noriega, a distinguished professor at the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television; Peter Sellars, a distinguished professor at the UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture; and artist and filmmaker Zackary Drucker, a co-director of the 2021 HBO documentary series "The Lady and the Dale."

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"The experiences that Zackary, Chon and Peter share in these films, expertly crafted by our UCLA team, pull back the curtain on the regenerative role of the UCLA Film & Television Archive and expand the view into our work," said May Hong HaDuong, director of the Archive.

The Archive, which is a division of UCLA Library, is the second largest repository of moving-image materials in the country after the Library of Congress. It has more than 500,000 film and television holdings conserved in a state-of-the-art facility at the Packard Humanities Institute Stoa in Santa Clarita, California, which is where the films were shot — including forays into the vaults.

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The film crew was made up primarily of students and graduates of the School of Theater, Film and Television. John Clifton, director of photography, colorist and post-production supervisor; Stephen Heleker, producer; Sasha Timan, camera operator; and Gregory Armstrong, assistant editor, are all alumni. Hamoun Dolatshahi, assistant director; and CJ Christensen and Sophie Hand, production assistants, are current UCLA students. Additional personnel included award-winning sound designer Frank Gaeta, re-recording mixer, and John Bin Zhao, sound mixer.

"See the Bigger Picture with Zackary Drucker"

Filmmaker and artist Zackary Drucker reveals how the use of archival materials from the Outfest UCLA Legacy Project collection, the largest publicly accessible collection of LGBTQIA+ moving images in the world, enabled her to construct new stories and bring hidden trans histories to light. Learn more in an Archive blog post by Todd Wiener, the Archive's motion picture curator.

"See the Bigger Picture with Chon Noriega"

Chon Noriega, former director of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, shares the story of how a quick-thinking producer saved tapes from the Chicano public affairs program "Reflecciones," which aired on KABC-TV in 1973 and 1974, and the subsequent partnership that, years later, preserved those materials and made them available for research. Learn more in an Archive blog post by Mark Quigley, the Archive's John H. Mitchell Television Curator.

"See the Bigger Picture with Peter Sellars"

Award-winning theater director Peter Sellars reminds viewers of the expansive power of cinema and celebrates the Archive's historic and ongoing efforts to introduce international cinemas and filmmakers to U.S. audiences. Learn more in an Archive blog post by Maya Montañez Smukler, an Archive research and study center officer.

