

THE DOCYARD ANNOUNCES SPRING 2020 SEASON GUEST CURATOR

Festival programmer and critic Abby Sun has been hired as the DocYard's Guest Curator for the Spring 2020 season



Cambridge, MA – The DocYard, Boston's home for artful non-fiction cinema, has announced that Abby Sun will be the Guest Curator for the Spring 2020 season.

The DocYard, founded in 2010 by Sara Archambault, Ben Fowlie, and Sean Flynn and a program of the LEF Foundation, is an award-winning documentary film and discussion series at the Brattle Theatre. Over the past decade, it has been recognized with a Special Commendation from the Boston Society of Film Critics and a 50 on Fire Media Award for its contributions to Boston's documentary film community. Sara Archambault has been involved in curating the series since its inception and will have presented over 175 programs by the close of the Fall 2019 Season, when she will be stepping down from her curatorial role after a ten-year tenure.

The DocYard's Spring 2020 Guest Curator Abby Sun is a filmmaker, photographer, film writer, and programmer. After graduating from Harvard College in 2013 with a degree in Visual and Environmental Studies, Sun returned to her hometown of Columbia, Missouri to work as a programmer for True/False Film Fest for three years. She has also programmed for Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival.

According to Sun, she first began to think about movies in high school. During that time, she attended True/False screenings and started going to Ragtag Cinema, an independent movie theater in Columbia. At Harvard, she was accepted into a year-long Sensory Ethnography course with filmmakers Lucien Castaing-Taylor and V  r  na Paravel, and soon she was making her own short films in addition to writing about film. Sun's latest short film, "Cuba Scalds His Hand" (with Daniel Garber) premiered at Maryland Film Festival in 2019. Her film criticism includes bylines in Film Comment and Hyperallergic.

While at True/False, Sun programmed feature films and shorts, as well as speakers and industry guests. Sun spearheaded partnerships with groups such as Brown Girls Doc Mafia and Women on Docs. She is passionate about advocating for a more equitable and culturally diverse documentary industry. In particular, Sun is interested in how we engage with and judge films made by filmmakers from the global south, East Asia, and

from vulnerable communities.

“I believe in programming as one of many tools to hold space for and to champion daring films and forward the conversation on documentary. I believe films should be complex because humans and humanity are complex,” she shared. “I want to move beyond the liberal framework of the current conversation around diversity and inclusion that calls for more complete representation but ignores the power dynamics in the documentary form’s inherent smudging of reality. I am interested in exploring ways of presenting film selections that resist taking an authoritative stance on what is and should be important, which frequently makes patronizing assumptions about audiences.”

Sun says she is thrilled to be returning to Cambridge after several years away. In programming the DocYard’s next season, Sun is excited to connect with the audience and re-invest her time and energy into local filmmakers, writers, students, exhibitors, and viewers.

“The DocYard is a rare project that allows for more time to reflect and to respond to the unique circumstances of each maker, project, and audience,” she explained. “It represents something that isn’t tied to the institution that it’s housed in, fitting a crucial middle ground between academia, independent film festivals, and commercial releases. Instead, it builds capacity for ambitious, distinctive programming that incorporates local filmmakers in substantive ways.”

“We are thrilled to have Abby be a Guest Curator,” said Lyda Kuth, Executive Director of the LEF Foundation, “as she clearly understands and is excited about carrying out the mission of the DocYard as a ‘home for artful non-fiction’.”

The DocYard community will have an opportunity to meet Abby Sun at upcoming screenings during the remainder of the Fall 2019 Season, including the November 4 screening of COMBAT OBSCURA, and the final screening of the Fall 2019 season on December 16, PRESENT.PERFECT, where Sun will be moderating the Q&A.

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