



**Star Filmmakers from the Jacob Burns Film Center's New *Creative Culture* Program  
Selected for the 2018 Sundance Film Festival and Named 2018 Sundance Ignite Fellow**

*A Newly Launched Initiative Designed to Support Local & Visiting Filmmakers, Creative Culture Fosters an Artistic Community in the Hudson Valley*



*Jacob Burns Film Center's featured fellows: Crystal Kayiza, Rahessa Vitório and Emily Ann Hoffman (L to R)*

**Pleasantville, NY – December 6, 2017 – [Jacob Burns Film Center's](#) (JBFC) fellows are making headlines! Sundance Institute just announced the newest round of **2018 Sundance Ignite Fellows**, chosen from a global crop of more than 800 applicants. JBFC fellows **Crystal Kayiza** and **Rahessa Vitório** were both selected as finalists, with Crystal ultimately receiving one of the 15 fellowships. The fifteen 18-to-24-year-old filmmakers were selected from a short film competition and will receive a year of creative and professional mentorship, and an all-expenses-paid trip to 2018 Sundance Film Festival. Crystal's submission *Why We Stay* and Rahessa's submission *Saudade* were produced in the JBFC's [Creative Culture Program](#).**

The short film *Nevada*, which was written and directed by JBFC Emerging Artist Fellow **Emily Ann Hoffman** during her **Creative Culture** tenure, was just officially selected for the **2018 Sundance Film Festival**. In addition to playing at Sundance, *Nevada* recently made its East Coast Premiere at the Hamptons International Film Festival and played alongside another of Emily's films, *OK, Call Me Back*, at the New Orleans Film Festival.

**Creative Culture Director Sean Weiner** expressed his excitement: "When we first conceived of Creative Culture, we talked about how it would create a community of filmmakers who could grow beyond the Burns, maybe—one day, if we were lucky—even screening at festivals like Sundance. The fact that the program has been so successful in its pilot year is still surreal."

Recognizing a gap in support for filmmakers in the Hudson Valley, JBFC launched Creative Culture in October 2016, a unique initiative designed to foster a thriving artistic community in the region. The goal of the program is to transform makers into strong and successful storytellers by strengthening their voice, providing a supportive network, and helping to connect them to industry jobs and opportunities. The five-month, project-based program invites emerging and working professionals to the JBFC Theater, Media Arts Lab, and Grant St residence to fully realize their short artistic projects. Creative Culture is an application-based program, and JBFC offers fellowship opportunities and stipends to accepted applicants in need.

"What excites me most about Creative Culture is how the JBFC is cultivating the storytellers of tomorrow – filmmakers, animators, and virtual reality artists – through collaborative and innovative professional learning experiences," says **Ron Howard, director and JBFC board member**.

**Know a filmmaker?** Fellowships at JBFC are a unique opportunity for an emerging artist to propose their individual project. Fellows are granted free and open access to all Media Arts Lab equipment and facilities, along with a financial stipend, as well as the time and resources necessary to work on a media project of their choice. The required time commitment to the program, including teaching time, is an average of 25 hours per week. The fellowship will culminate in a public presentation of the completed project. Previous JBFC fellows come from a diverse variety of backgrounds and their work has covered an impressive scope of genre and style from documentary and narrative, to animation and experimental film.

**The deadline to submit for the [Fellowships](https://burnsfilmcenter.org/artist-services-creative-culture/) listed below is January 1, 2018!** Visit <https://burnsfilmcenter.org/artist-services-creative-culture/> for more information.

- **The Valentine & Clark Emerging Artist Fellowship** – Open to **college graduates under 30 who are based in the Hudson Valley** and demonstrate a strong interest in pursuing a career in the film/media arts. This Fellowship is made possible thanks to support of the Westchester Community Foundation, a nonprofit community endowment for the benefit of Westchester County.
- **The Sally Burns Shenkman Woman Filmmaker Fellowship** – Open to all **woman filmmakers** who have graduated college and demonstrate a strong interest in pursuing a career in film/media arts. This fellowship is made possible by the Jacob Burns Foundation.
- **The Silver Sun Diverse Voices Fellowship** – Open to all filmmakers from **underrepresented communities** who have graduated college and demonstrate a strong interest in pursuing a

career in the film/media arts. This Fellowship is made possible thanks to support from The Silver Sun Foundation.

For more information on Creative Culture and the various JBFC fellowships, visit <https://burnsfilmcenter.org>.

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Located in Pleasantville, NY, [Jacob Burns Film Center](https://burnsfilmcenter.org) (JBFC) is a nonprofit arts and education hub located on a three-building campus in the New York Metro area. The JBFC brings the transformative power of film to the surrounding community through unique programming and discussion, shared experiences, and educational initiatives. Since opening in 2001, over 3,000,000 people have enjoyed the best of current American and foreign cinema, unique film series, and special events at the five screen theater complex. A pioneer in visual literacy education, the Jacob Burns Film Center offers courses in filmmaking, screenwriting, and animation for students of all ages at our state-of-the-art Media Arts Lab and develops curriculums for public schools throughout the region.

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