



Lightbox

Film Center

WHO WE ARE

Lightbox Film Center is Philadelphia's premier exhibitor of film and moving image art. As the signature arts program of International House Philadelphia, an independent nonprofit organization, Lightbox presents an unparalleled slate of repertory, nonfiction, experimental and international cinema. Beyond the traditional movie theater experience, Lightbox delivers enriching film programs with artist talks, live music and other multidisciplinary programs year-round in a dedicated venue known as a gathering place for cinephiles.

While Lightbox Film Center presents its own calendar of curated events, its theater also hosts major film festivals and programs in partnership with leading presenting organizations in the region, including the BlackStar Film Festival, Exhumed Films, Intercultural Journeys, Israeli Film Festival of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival, Scribe Video Center, Philadelphia Jewish Film Festival, and University of Pennsylvania Cinema and Media Studies. Lightbox also regularly collaborates and develops film screenings with preeminent visual arts organizations in the region, including the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Vox Populi and others.

OUR VISION

Lightbox Film Center advances underrepresented and unexpected modes and makers of moving image art. Building a community around a shared reverence for cinema, Lightbox celebrates the projected image as a framework for diverse ideas and perspectives. Lightbox programs inspire discourse, invite exploration and challenge the status quo.

QUICK FACTS

Year founded: 1979

Number of films screened annually: 500

Number of film programs offered annually: 234

Number of audience members annually: 22,000



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OUR HISTORY

Lightbox Film Center draws on a rich history as a regional resource for cinephiles for the last four decades. Initially known as The Neighborhood Film/Video Project, the program was established by Linda Blackaby in the 1970s and was housed in International House of Philadelphia starting in 1979. As the city's first cinema to focus exclusively on independent and international films, The Neighborhood Film/Video Project played an important role in advancing local access to emerging filmmakers and engaging audiences around social, cultural and political issues—defining aspects of the work it continues to do today.

In 1992, International House launched the Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema, the first major regional film event of its kind. In the late-'90s, the program underwent a period of transition and reemerged with a renewed focus on year-round film programming and an expanded scope of moving image presentation that included experimental film and video works, artist cinema, digital art and other emerging forms. In 2008, the theater was renovated and in 2012, a Barco 2K digital cinema projector was installed, ensuring industry standard digital compatibility alongside increasingly rare capabilities for 16mm and 35mm projection. In 2017, the program was renamed Lightbox Film Center to create more visibility and better position itself for the next era of moving-image presentation.

During our four decades we have hosted leading filmmakers and artists, including Wim Wenders, Albert Maysles, Michael Snow, Richard Kern, Jonas Mekas, Ousmane Sembène, Yvonne Rainer, Robert Downey Sr., Phil Niblock, Derek Boshier, Sam Green, Tony Conrad, Lizzie Borden, Richard Hell, Babette Mangolte, Harry Shearer and others. Sun Ra and his Arkestra once performed on the roof of the building and Buckminster Fuller also occupied an office inside.

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