

Our Heritage, Our Planet Film Screening
October 11, 2023
6-8pm

Reverend Jesús E. García serves as Lead Pastor of Church of the City since September 2021. A native of Puerto Rico, Rev. García dedicated himself to full-time ministry in February 1997 at Iglesia Bautista de Metrópolis in Carolina, Puerto Rico. Serving as Youth Pastor, and then transitioning to become the Senior Pastor in 2002. With over 20 years of experience within the Pastorate, his heart for community and spiritual development has led him to serve on various non-profit boards, leading social service action for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's (CBF) Puerto Rico region, and the national leadership team for CBF's Latino Network. Pastor Jesús holds a Bachelor degree in Social Work from the University of Puerto Rico, later earning his Master in Divinity from the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico in 2019. He is happily married to Bethzaida Pérez Villegas, and is the father of Fabiana and Alejandro.

Mairim Martinez is the Assistant Curator of Marine Mammals at Mystic Aquarium. With over 15 years of experience working with marine mammals and a Master degree in Zoology from Miami University, Mairim is passionate about the conservation of our planet and inspiring aquarium visitors. Born to Luis and Miriam Martinez, both Puerto Rican natives, Mairim spent her early life traveling to the various duty assignments her father fulfilled while enlisted in the Army. She watched as her father overcame adversity and eventually retired from the Army after 32 years as Sergeant Major, the highest enlisted rank. She is inspired everyday by his drive and as a Latina woman it's that drive and incredible support that has helped her achieve her goals. Currently one of the only Latinas on the Association of Zoos and Aquariums Marine Mammal Taxon Advisory Group (TAG), she works with the TAG to ensure sustainable populations in zoos and aquariums in North America. She serves as the California sea lion studbook keeper and Species Survival Plan Coordinator. Mairim hopes she can inspire ethnic minorities to pursue their goals and is grateful for the many women of color that came before her. She currently serves on the Mystic Aquarium's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and works with the group to ensure everyone in the organization feels included, respected, and supported.

Dr. Maria Rosa is a marine ecologist, and is an assistant professor at Connecticut College. A native of the Dominican Republic, she is a first-generation student. Dr. Rosa earned her PhD in Oceanography at the University of Connecticut, and has research projects both locally and internationally. Her work focuses on how organisms interact with their environments. Her projects include predator/prey interactions between benthic organisms; feeding processes of larval and adult bivalve molluscs, such as oysters, mussels, and scallops; coral reproduction and settlement; as well as work on habitat restoration and living shorelines. You can follow her research and teaching adventures on IG [@rosa_marineecology_lab](#)

As an immigrant and non-native English speaker, this month is a reminder to connect with my heritage and appreciate all of the contributions people like me have made to this country. Growing up in the Dominican Republic, I was never "othered" or really had my place questioned. When we emigrate to a new country, it can be easy to feel disconnected from our roots and community. This month is a reminder of the kinship we share and a way to highlight that our voices matter.

Moderator:

Shaila Diaz is the Executive Assistant at the Hispanic Access Foundation where she supports the President & CEO and the Board of Directors. Shaila has over 14 years of experience as an administrative professional. Prior to joining the Hispanic Access Foundation, Shaila worked as an Executive Assistant at Yale University where she provided executive support at the Yale Cancer Center. Shaila has worked in both the academic and hospital setting in various roles. She received a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and an Associate's degree in Business Office Technology. In addition to her work professionally, Shaila has also given back to the community by volunteering her time at a child psychiatric hospital and in her local church. Shaila enjoys working at the Hispanic Access Foundation and is proud to be a part of such a wonderful organization.

Film Descriptions & Runtimes

WATER / AQUA - (México - Raul Alejandro Robin Morales Reyes) - 5 minutes

Water, the perfect fabric that crosses everything and everyone, which is present in every landscape, in every being, in every thing and in everything we love and see. The water dances through this world and flows at its perfect rhythm, until the hand of man interrupts that journey... can we be part of that journey in a natural way? Are we on time?

El agua, el tejido perfecto que atraviesa todo y a todos, que está presente en cada paisaje, en cada ser, en cada cosa y en todo lo que amamos y vemos. El agua danza por este mundo y fluye a su ritmo perfecto, hasta que la mano del hombre interrumpe ese viaje... ¿podemos ser parte de ese viaje de forma natural? ¿Estamos a tiempo?

The Way You Sea Me / La manera en que me miras (Brazil - Gabriel Melin) - 18 minutes

The film tells the story of a brief encounter between two kids who have very different ways of seeing the world around them. And the sea, who embraces this moment.

The boy, afraid of what the sea might hold for him, and the girl, used to seeing poetry everywhere around her, learn together that in order to enjoy life, all you need to do is give into your senses. Through this life-changing encounter they both learn to overcome their fears and enjoy their world around them.

La película cuenta la historia de un breve encuentro entre dos niños que tienen formas muy diferentes de ver el mundo que les rodea. Y el mar, que abraza este momento.

El niño, temeroso de lo que el mar pueda deparar, y la niña, acostumbrada a ver poesía a su alrededor, aprenden juntos que para disfrutar de la vida basta con entregarse a los sentidos. A través de este encuentro que les cambiará la vida, ambos aprenderán a superar sus miedos y disfrutar del mundo que los rodea.

Coral Reef Restoration/ Restauración de arrecifes de coral (USA - Asa Miller) - 5 minutes

In my short life of 16 years, climate change, declining water quality, overfishing, pollution, and unsustainable coastal development have decimated up to 15% of the world's coral reefs. In my short film "Coral Reef Restoration," I demonstrate four simple steps to do something about it.

En mi corta vida de 16 años, el cambio climático, la disminución de la calidad del agua, la sobrepesca, la contaminación y el desarrollo costero insostenible han diezmando hasta el 15% de los arrecifes de coral del mundo. En mi cortometraje "Restauración de los arrecifes de coral", demuestro cuatro sencillos pasos para hacer algo al respecto.

Garbage Island / Isla de la basura (Brazil - Elisa Santos Guimaraes) - 9 minutes

Janaína and her father Alfredo are facing a traffic jam due to a flood. The girl throws a plastic bottle out of the car window. From that moment on, we follow the entire trajectory of the bottle, going through the sewer system, freshwater basins, riverside communities, all the way to the ocean, where the bottle settles on one of the large plastic islands present in the ocean.

Janaína y su padre Alfredo se enfrentan a un atasco debido a una inundación. La niña arroja una botella de plástico por la ventanilla del auto. A partir de ese momento, seguimos todo el viaje de la botella, pasando por el sistema de alcantarillado, cuencas de agua dulce, comunidades ribereñas, hasta llegar al océano, donde la botella se posa en una de las grandes islas de plástico presentes en el océano.

Paddle Tribal Waters / Padel en aguas tribales (USA - Paul Robert Wolf Wilson, Rush Sturges) - 9 minutes

When the largest dam removal project in history begins, a group of indigenous youth learn to whitewater kayak in hopes of becoming the first people to paddle the restored river from source to sea.

Cuando comienza el proyecto de remoción de presa más grande de la historia, un grupo de jóvenes indígenas aprenden a navegar en kayak en rápidos con la esperanza de convertirse en las primeras personas en remar el río restaurado desde su nacimiento hasta el mar.

Wading for Change/ Vadeando por el cambio (USA - Sofia Jaramillo) - 13 minutes

For Latino conservationist and angler Jr Rodriguez to become "like the pictures he saw in magazines," he had to leave behind what he loved the most. This is his story of pursuing his dream to become a fly fisherman and his efforts to make the sport more inclusive. By juxtaposing Jr's origins in Houston, Texas, and his current home in the world-renowned fly fishing hub of Jackson Hole, we share his perspective of what it is like to participate in outdoor sports in Western mountain towns as a person of color.

Para que el conservacionista y pescador latino Jr. Rodríguez se volviera "como las fotografías que veía en las revistas", tuvo que dejar atrás lo que más amaba. Esta es su historia sobre cómo perseguir su sueño de convertirse en pescador con mosca y sus esfuerzos para hacer que el deporte sea más inclusivo. Al yuxtaponer los orígenes de Jr en Houston, Texas, y su hogar actual en el mundialmente famoso centro de pesca con mosca de Jackson Hole, compartimos su perspectiva de cómo es participar en deportes al aire libre en los pueblos de las montañas occidentales como una persona de color.