

Film Streams Strategic Plan

2019-2021



About

Film Streams is a 501(c)3 nonprofit arts organization dedicated to enhancing the cultural environment of the Omaha-Council Bluffs area through the presentation and discussion of film as an art form.

Our organization oversees two wonderful and distinct cinemas: the Ruth Sokolof Theater, the two-screen venue we opened in 2007 within the Saddle Creek Records complex in North Downtown Omaha, and the historic Dundee Theater, Omaha's longest surviving neighborhood cinema.

photo by Adam Casey



Open seven days a week, our two cinemas host a variety of programs within five principal areas:

- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- EDUCATION
- NEW RELEASES
- REPERTORY SELECTIONS
- SPECIAL PROGRAMS

As a nonprofit committed to screening films based on their creative, artistic, and social merits, Film Streams depends on the support of our membership program, individual donors, grants from foundations, corporations and government organizations, and community volunteers. We also benefit from the proceeds of our Feature galas, which bring some of the greatest living artists in film to Omaha for conversations about their careers and perspectives on the medium.



photo by Adam Casey

Film Streams Strategic Plan '19-21

Overview

In our 2019-2021 strategic plan, Film Streams articulates the relationship between each of our five core programmatic areas — Community Development (page 4), Education (page 6), New Releases (page 8), Repertory Selections (page 10), and Special Events (page 12) — to one or more components of our organization's mission (page 2) and ultimate goal of enhancing the cultural environment of the Omaha and Council Bluffs area. Film Streams also identifies how we will measure progress toward the long-term goals for each program.

In doing so, Film Streams will be better positioned to define priorities and allocate earned and contributed revenue and other resources in each programmatic area. In addition, for each programmatic area, Film Streams has assessed, and will continue to assess, opportunities to utilize and enhance our strong differentiation in the market, with a specific focus on Film Streams' unique differentiating factors among cultural institutions.

The 2019-2021 strategic plan also includes a goal for longevity and, in particular, long-term sustainability in programming, relevance, and funding. This goal — "Preparing for the Future" (page 14) — will maintain our unique ability to foster and engage through film while enhancing Film Streams' flexibility and vibrancy in the community over the long-term.

CONTENTS

About	2
Overview	3
Community Development	4
Education	6
New Releases	8
Repertory Selections.....	10
Special Events & Feature.....	12
Preparing for the Future	14
Acknowledgments.....	15

In a 2018 survey developed by the national consortium Art House Convergence, 58% of respondents said Film Streams “helps build bridges among diverse community groups”.

While that’s higher than the national average across arthouse cinemas (43.8%), Film Streams’ goal is to increase that figure to 70% by the end of 2021.

Community Development

Impact

Film Streams will create collaborative events that foster dialogue about important issues among divergent and diverse community members with an objective to develop relationships that extend beyond our venues.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- Number of community partnerships across all programs
- New partners engaged annually
- Attendance for Community Development events

Quality

Film Streams’ Community Development program will be recognized locally and nationally as an inclusive space creating memorable programs that are a genuine reflection of our commitment to film as an art form and as a community builder.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- Establishing new partnerships annually
- # of kids welcomed to our cinemas*
- Feedback from attendees, partners, and panelists

*Named for Film Streams supporter Ron Widman, Film Streams’ Widman Youth Engagement Fund provides free tickets and concessions items for schools, organizations, and mentees working with youth in our community.

Education

Pedagogy

Film Streams will establish a method of film analysis that informs how we create meaningful and thought-provoking movie-going experiences.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- Develop branded pedagogical structure for film analysis
- Improvement in teacher and student understanding of film analysis

Daytime Education Program

Film Streams' Daytime Education Program will be a leading, self-sustaining, accessible initiative focused on film and the theatrical experience.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- Increased program support
- Number of students, teachers, schools, and districts served
- More opportunities for student discussion with filmmakers

Courses

Film Streams will elevate our adult education programs.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- Number of Courses and Deep Dive seminars offered
- Number of registrants



IN 2016,

Film Streams hired our first Education Director, the result of a strategic plan (2013-2015) goal to further develop our organization's integration into Omaha's education system. Led by Diana Martinez (PhD, film and media studies), our Daytime Education Program now serves thousands of students annually through a school-year calendar of field-trip screenings and guided discussions for high school and middle school classes. Meanwhile, our Courses program of multi-week and single-day seminars now provides adult audiences opportunities throughout the year to dive deeper into the art form and learn the essential tools of film analysis.

Building on this momentum, our 2019-2021 strategic plan includes a major goal to establish

a Film Streams-specific pedagogical method of film analysis

that would not only inform our Education initiatives but our conversations around New Releases, Repertory Selections, Community Development events, and Special Programs. We look forward to hiring an Education Coordinator to devote more staffing capacity to this program, and to seeking new sources of program support for its growth and sustainability.

See Change:

A GENDER PARITY INITIATIVE

The numbers are shameful and consistent. From 2007 to 2018, just 4.3% of major films released in the United States were directed by women. Women now represent a majority of film-goers in the U.S. but only a fraction of filmmakers.

While independent films have fared better, averaging 28% women directors over the past decade, a clear imbalance remains. At Film Streams, we've been programming against that trend for years. In 2018, 34% of the films we screened were directed by women — far higher than the percentage of studio films with women directors and on par with arthouse releases for the year. But that isn't enough.

SEE CHANGE is our initiative to do better.

SEE CHANGE is our commitment to reach gender parity among directors of the films we program by the end of 2021.



New Releases

Program Enhancement

Film Streams will offer opportunities for interaction across all New Release experiences at our cinemas, developing a more vibrant culture through authentic engagement and enhanced film literacy.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- Overall attendance for New Releases
- Film Streams grosses vs. national per-screen average
- Gather attendee feedback on a daily basis
- More community partnerships around New Releases
- Grow membership and maintain strong retention rate

Representation

Film Streams will further differentiate ourselves in Omaha through New Releases programming that amplifies the diversity and global spectrum of contemporary cinema.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- 50% of films by women directors (see 'See Change' sidebar)
- New Releases from 30+ countries annually

Audience Trust

Film Streams' audiences will develop an even deeper trust in our uncompromising vision and discerning taste in programming New Releases, leading to a growing community of cinephiles confident our selections represent the medium at its most artistic, innovative, and relevant.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- Student Night attendance
- Increase opening-weekend averages at the Ruth Sokolof Theater
- Increase opening-weekend averages for the Dundee's Linder Microcinema

Repertory Selections

Audience Building

By reframing how we program and market, Film Streams will increase interest and break down barriers to grow our repertory audience.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- Increase attendance for Repertory programs
- Build audience for Family & Children's series
- Enhance digital marketing and outreach strategies for Repertory programming

Apparent Relevance

Film Streams' repertory program will provide deeper context that reconsiders the canon and contributes to a growing community that finds curated series and revivals relevant and enriching to their lives.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- Invite special guests to Omaha to curate Rep programs
- Draw national media attention for classics programming
- Survey feedback from attendees, partners, and panelists



In 2018, 60% of survey respondents said they “strongly agree” that Film Streams **“teaches me about film appreciation or history,”** compared to 44.3% across art houses nationally. **We want to increase that figure to at least 70% by the end of 2021.**

Special Events & Feature

Impact

Film Streams will develop a more intentional, proactive strategy for successful and impactful artist visits that engage multiple audiences in powerful ways.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- Increase number of programs offered with visiting artists
- Engage community partners for off-site programs with visiting artists

Refine & Sustain

Refine Film Streams' programming, execution, marketing, and support of special events in a way that scales sustainably and appropriately to our growth as an organization.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- Maintain biennial Feature gala
- Develop fundraiser model for non-gala years

Special Guests

Invite dynamic emerging and established guests with broad expertise, global reach, and diverse cultural backgrounds.

EXAMPLES OF MEASURABLES

- Ensure 50% of visiting artists are women
- Invite visiting artists of diverse backgrounds
- Host at least one special guest based outside of the U.S. each year



Clockwise from top: photos by Chris Machian, Harrison Martin, Abiola Kosoko, and Chris Machian



Preparing for the Future

FLEXIBLE FUNDING

Film Streams will develop a comprehensive plan to generate contributed revenue sufficient to sustain Film Streams’ programming in the long-term.

STAFF STRENGTH

Film Streams will engage in a comprehensive staff development program.

BOARD & ADVISORY BOARD STRENGTH

Film Streams will have maintained the strength of the Board of Directors and will have further developed the Advisory Board.



photo by Adam Casey

Acknowledgments

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Lists current as of December 2019.*

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Communications Director
Aaron Lee
Shift Manager
JoAnna LeFlore
Event Manager

Casey Logan
Deputy Director
Diana Martinez, PhD
Education Director
Taylor Page
Shift Manager
Sean Pratt
Associate Manager, Ruth Sokolof Theater
Carol RedWing
Membership Coordinator
Kevin Rooney
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Dana Ryan Mike
Development Manager
Paul Sanchez
Shift Manager
Travis Upshaw
Shift Manager
Adam Wiener
Weitz Fellow
Connie White
Balcony Booking
Kate Williams
General Manager
PROJECTIONISTS
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Thomas Latchford
Art Lehr
Matt Maine, *Lead Projectionist*
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