

Title of Presentation:

***Approaching Current Filmmaking in Haiti***

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**Abstract:**

This presentation draws on Haiti's emerging filmmaking and illustrates the aesthetics of selected films in comparison to their cultural value on a local and global scale. Fostered by the recent inception of Haiti's first film school in Jacmel, current filmmakers search for implementing a film production that aims at reaching out towards a local, and not necessarily cinema-affiliated audience. However, audiovisual production in Haiti today is not only grounded in a virtually non-existent cinema historiography, it also faces challenges within the context of a to date internationally distorted image production on Haiti's exceptional past, decades of political instability and a lacking cultural vector for an informal film industry to gain ground, as well as a vulnerable media condition following the 2010 earthquake and Hurricane Matthew in 2016.

Of particular importance to the presentation are two areas: First, I will trace the multilocal and interdisciplinary research process carried out between 2015 and 2017 in Jacmel, Port-au-Prince, New York City, Montreal, Paris, and Amsterdam, which involves data of empirical and archival research such as narrative interviews with filmmakers, curators and players in Haiti's cultural and cinematic fields in order to integrate a first-hand present day view on the history and making of diverse film cultures in Haiti. Second, I will illustrate the findings on various themes, aesthetics, and contexts addressed in two recent documentary films along the in-depth film analysis. The analysis includes a critical stance on modern narratives of Haiti's colonial and imperial past, current dependencies on international humanitarian interventions, effects of political turmoil, and reflections on gender constructions in the emerging film production. In doing so, the presentation outlines for one, how current filmmaking addresses the de- and reconstruction of visual narratives of Haiti. It asks for the potential of Haiti's filmmaking to be considered within the landscape of a global transcultural cinema, for the other. It ultimately addresses Haiti's emerging film cultures' possible contribution to the field of postcolonial cinemas.