

# Raul Benitez

As part of the Chicago Film making and exhibition community for the past 15 years Raul has developed and planned various film screenings, panels and film events. That experience comes with working for and working with various non-profit and for profit Film organizations including Educational and Industry Partners. I have programmed, organized and exhibited over 300 screenings from the DIY level to large film festivals.

## EXPERIENCE

**Midwest Film Festival**, 2425 W 14TH ST Chicago, IL 60608,

Senior Film Programmer, Contracted work.

As senior programmer I vet films and screen submitted Films. I also manage the screening committee. Other tasks include helping with preparations of each screening including helping with Q&A's and introductions. Screenings occur once a month at the Gene Siskel Film Center.

2021-Present

[midwestfilm.com](http://midwestfilm.com)

**Chicago International Film Festival**, 212 W Van Buren St., Suite

400, Chicago, IL 60607, After Dark and Shorts Film Programmer  
Contracted work.

Film Programmer for the After Dark series and Shorts program. This involves selecting films, interacting with distributors, film makers and studios. Introducing films and facilitating Q&A's during the festival as well as hosting visiting filmmakers. Also collaborating with the programming team during selections. I also attend the Genre Film Market at the Fantasia Film Festival representing the Festival. The After Dark series is composed of six feature films and a shorts film program. In 2023 I programmed the City and State shorts where 2 films out of that program won awards.

2021-Present

[chicagofilmfestival.com](http://chicagofilmfestival.com)

**Chicago On Screen**, 541 N. Fairbanks, Chicago, IL 60611

Contracted work.

Part of the selection and screening committee vetting locally made films.

2019-Present

[Chicagoonscreen.com](http://Chicagoonscreen.com)

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Chicago, IL 60618

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[raulito.net](http://raulito.net)

## SKILLS

Film projection experience including 8mm and 16mm film projection.

Desktop software skills including Outlook, Microsoft Office, and Google Docs.

Social media marketing experience.

## AWARDS

**New City Screen Gem** Named by [New City](#) as a Chicago screen gem in 2015, 2017, 2019, and in 2023 was named into the Screen Gem Hall of Fame.

### Best outdoor Film Series

Comfort Stations film series named best outdoor film series by the Chicago Reader (2013) and New City (2015).

### DCASE Grant Winner

Was awarded a Esteemed Artist DCASE [grant](#) in 2022.

## LANGUAGES

Native Spanish speaker.

**Full Spectrum Features**, 2000 S. California Ave Floor 1, Chicago, IL  
60608, Lead Programmer for Chicagoland Shorts, Contracted work.

As Lead program for the Chicagoland Shorts series, I was involved in the curation of submissions, following up and contacting filmmakers who got into the program and set up screenings for the series locally and nationally. Presented and introduced those screenings at venues. I presented this program throughout the Chicago area and nationally at the Northwest Film Forum in Seattle, Echo Park Film Center in Los Angeles, and the Spectacle Theater in New York among other venues.

January 2018 - Present

[Fullspectrumfeatures.com](http://Fullspectrumfeatures.com)

**Comfort Station Logan Square**, 2579 North Milwaukee

Avenue, Chicago 60647, Volunteer Lead Film Programmer

Duties for lead film programmer involve booking films and contacting filmmakers, making sure projection rights have been established for films, promotion, and marketing for film screenings. Setting up of events including projection. Introducing films and filmmakers and facilitating Q&A's and partnering with local film organizations. The series is every Wednesday night from April to October. The series not only includes local films but a genre film series and a very popular Silent Films series with live music. The series has won awards for its programming.

March 2013 - Present

[Comfortstationlogansquare.org](http://Comfortstationlogansquare.org)

**Chicago Underground Film Festival** ,

Film Programmer

Currently a programmer and part of the screening committee. Previously I volunteered as ticket agent, guest service liaison, festival transportation, marketing and festival website administrator. I have also introduced films and facilitated Q&A's.

2008 - Present

[cuff.org](http://cuff.org)

**The Nightingale Cinema**, 1084 North Milwaukee, Chicago, IL, Volunteer  
Film Programmer

Programming duties involve booking of films, interacting with filmmakers, and communicating with other film organizations. Introducing films and facilitating Q&A's. The Nightingale focused on experimental film and hosted many touring experimental film programs.

June 2016 - Present

## EDUCATION

Purdue University  
Hammond, IN

## Boards

[Chicago Film Society](#) Board  
member as of 2023.

[Chicago Filmmakers](#) Board  
member as of 2023.

## PROJECTS

### [Musicbox of Horrors,](#)

Programmed and Introduced the first two [El Santo Films](#), the first sound Mexican Horror film [La Llorona](#), two [Mexican female Wrestling films](#) and [The Phantom of the Monastery](#). All the films were screened at the Musicbox Theater. All the films were restored by [Permanencia Voluntaria Archivo Cinematográfico](#).

### [Chicago Cinema Workers Fund,](#) Various Organizations

Fund created by organizations and individuals in the Chicago Film Community which gathered and donated money to Movie Theater workers laid off by the pandemic.

April 2020

### [Chicago Cinema Exchange,](#)

With Full Spectrum Features Raul was part of a grant award from the MacArthur foundation for an [International Connections grant](#) in 2019. The result of the grant was the Chicago Cinema Exchange with filmmakers from Chicago and Mexico City. The exchange was based on a project Raul was already working on independently. In June 23, 2020 the program was revived by Raul and had in person screenings in Mexico City in March of 2022 and in Chicago June of 2023. The Chicago Portion of the Exchange was funded by an Esteemed Artist Grant by the Department of Cultural Affairs.

### [Screening Committees,](#)

Raul has participated and continues to participate in the following screening committees. True/False Film Festival, Camden International Film Festival, Onion City Film Festival, Fantastic Fest, One Screen Chicago Film Festival, Chicago International Children's Film Festival