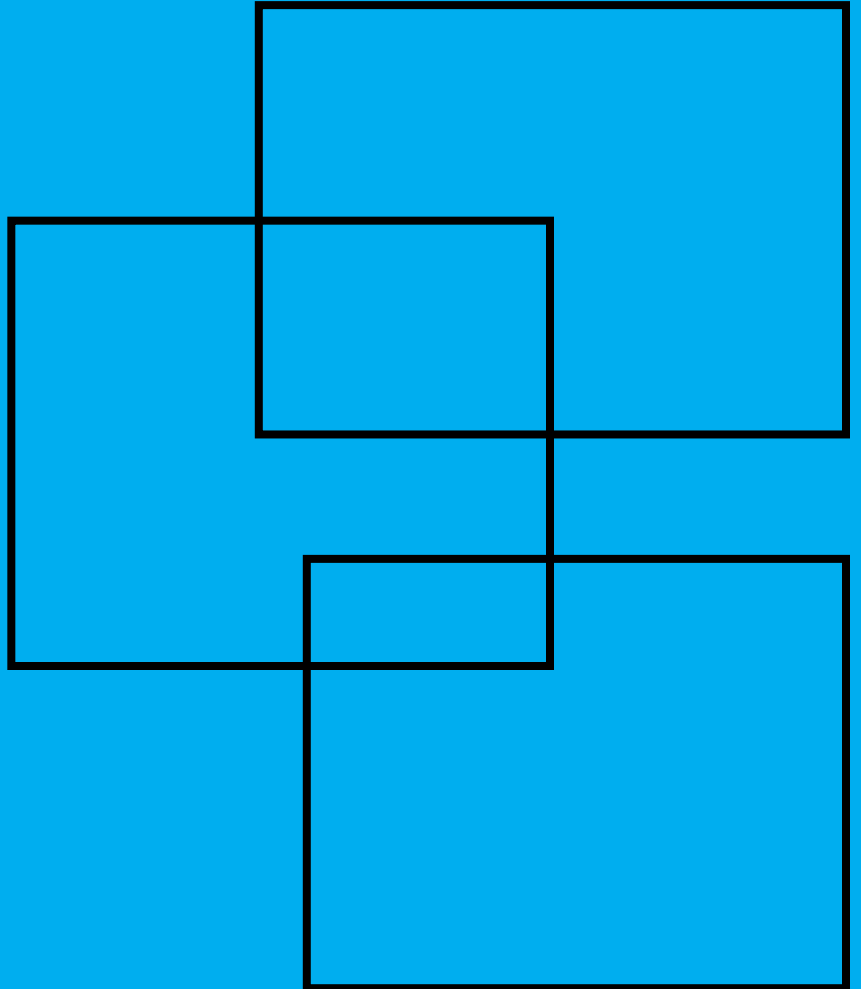
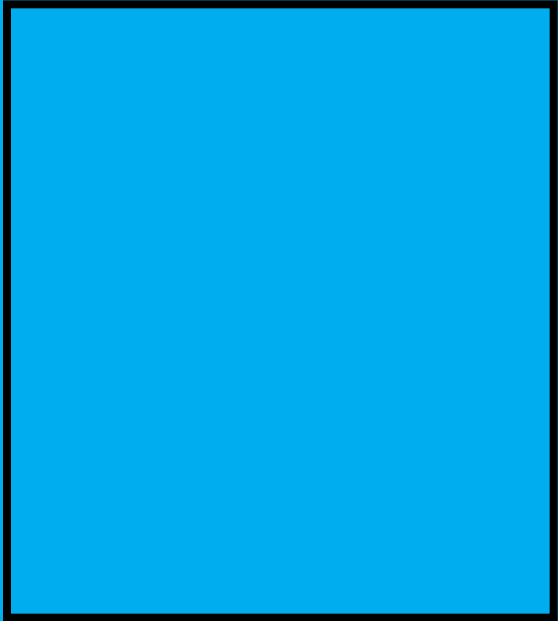


BAMMS

Bay Area
Media Maker
Summit



Background

The creation of the Bay Area Media Maker Summit (BAMMS) has been an experiment to spark greater connection between Bay Area film and media makers, and the organizations that support them. We launched the project during the peak of pandemic isolation in 2021 and closed 2023 with new insight and experience about what it takes to sustain these activities.

At the writing of this progress report, times are still fraught for the film and media sector in the Bay Area. Notably, San Francisco's economic and social recovery from the pandemic has been painfully slow. Large employers in tech and media have laid off thousands of workers (including media makers), audiences have been slow to return to in-person events, several movie theaters have closed, and many of our independent film and media organizations face increased financial precarity. Adding in macro factors, there have been significant ruptures between labor and Hollywood studios, and intensified calls for more equitable and transparent access to distribution models. In this context, we believe there is ample need for projects like BAMMS to create accessible spaces for learning, dialogue, and community-building in the Bay Area film and media sector.

The Summit

BAMMS 2023 was held August 19-20 in Oakland and San Francisco. The summit had over 300 unique registrants and over 20 participating film and media organizations representing the Bay Area and surrounding counties.

Highlights from Summit Stats and Surveys

Summit participants were drawn from all of the Bay Area counties, and farther south into the Central Coast, Central Valley and Southern California.



Attendance by County:

Alameda	49.0%	Tulare	2.9%
San Francisco	25.0%	Santa Clara	1.9%
San Mateo	4.8%	Contra Costa	1.9%
Santa Cruz	4.8%	Sonoma	1.0%
Marin	3.8%	Monterey	1.0%
Solano	2.9%	Los Angeles	1.0%

Participant Comments from the Post-Summit Survey

“ I enjoyed and learned a lot from all the speakers. Valuable information/insight was shared.”

“ Just being able to share a moment with the beautiful film community of the bay. The panels were great!”

“ I really enjoyed the Film Festival & Funder Fair and the Bay Area Filmmaker Lamb and Rum Fest!”



Registration Table / BAMMS Volunteers



Attendees

August 19th,
Oakstop, Oakland

Keynote Speaker: Cheryl Dunye

Dunye is an award-winning Liberian-American filmmaker. In her keynote address, she shared that she didn't wait to get permission from the film industry to make her now iconic film *The Watermelon Woman*. She encouraged filmmakers in the audience to create in their own voices despite the barriers and use the media community in the Bay Area for support.



Cheryl Dunye

Growing a Regenerative Bay Area Filmmaking Hub: Open-Sourcing Visions of Independent, Equitable Productions



Following a presentation of a model for equitable and conscientious narrative filmmaking processes, participants workshopped a new way of working ethically, eco-consciously, and collectively among Bay Area narrative filmmakers.

Presenters: Florencia Manovil (she/her), Taj / LaTajh Weaver (They/Them), D.A. Mission (He/Him), Tony Jonick (He/Him), Rae Dawn (They/Them), Sean Gillane (He/Him)

Beyond the Film Festival Panel Discussion

Representatives from Frameline and California Film Institute, along with a Bay Area filmmaker, shared how they work together in supporting filmmakers beyond the film festival through distribution and educational activities.

Presenters: Joanne Parsont (She/Her), Julie Ludwig (They/Them, She/Her), A.K. Sandhu (she/her)



Film Festival & Funder Fair

Filmmakers met local film festivals, film and media funders, and industry professionals in a casual environment over lunch.

Organizations attending: Frameline Film Festival, SFFILM, California Film Institute (Mill Valley Film Festival & DocLands), SF IndieFest & SF DocFest, International Ocean Film Festival, SF Dance Film Festival, Watsonville Film Festival, Drunken Film Festival Oakland, Coven Film Festival, Cinemama, Alexander Valley Film Festival, Poppy Jasper Film Festival, Frozen Film Fest, Catapult Film Fund, ITVS, Berkeley Film Foundation, Color Congress, California Humanities, SF Arts Commission, Film SF, BAVC Media, Brown Girls Doc Mafia, The Video Consortium.



Public Call for BAVC Media Maker Survey

Kailen Sallander (BAVC Media) and John Carnwath (Wolf Brown) presented the Bay Area Film and Media Maker survey project, and encouraged attendees to participate.

August 20th,
The Roxie Theater,
San Francisco

Music and Audio for Film Storytelling

The co-founders of pre and post-production audio studio Liema discussed technical and artistic elements of sound mixing, audio design, and use of music in film.

Presenters: Lien Do (They/Them) & Matthew Pereira (He/Him)



The Pay Transparency Project: Making Media and Making a Living in the Bay Area

The Pay Transparency Project (PTP) is a community-driven database that offers nonfiction video professionals timely insight into constantly-evolving hiring trends and pay parity practices: www.paytransparencyproject.org

Presenters: Kitty Hu (She/He/They), Jim McSilver (He/Him), Michaelle McGaraghan (She/Her)



Lamb & Rum Feast

To conclude BAMMS 2023, attendees gathered in Golden Gate Park to celebrate the creativity and achievements of our film and media-making community.

Hosts: Cinemama and George Rush.

Testimonial from a BAMMS Organizer, Imani Outen

I had a great experience organizing for BAMMS. As a Black American, queer emerging filmmaker from a working class background, being a part of BAMMS has reassured me I have what it takes to cultivate positive filmmaking experiences. By creating a low-cost experience with minimal access barriers, things that once felt impossible are more tangible than ever. I'm grateful to exercise my leadership skills and empowered to continue building this legacy of sustainable independent filmmaking and community care.



Testimonial from Florencia Manovil - Facilitator for Growing a Regenerative Bay Area Filmmaking Hub: Open-Sourcing Visions of Independent, Equitable Productions

For months, I had been having isolated conversations with fellow filmmakers about our desire to strengthen the systems of connectivity within the Bay Area filmmaking ecosystem. BAMMS served as an anchor for me to organize others around these visions and bring them to the community at large. The session was a vibrant success, thanks to the opportunity created by BAMMS to have dozens of local filmmakers all together in one space — a rare occurrence!

Areas of Growth

We made several improvements to our collective and the execution of the Summit between 2022 and 2023.

- 🕒 **Expanding our organizing team to include more diverse perspectives and to share the mostly volunteer labor.**
 - ✓ When three of our founding committee members transitioned out of BAMMS, we onboarded three new committee members with diverse perspectives and the capacity to assume key roles.
- 🕒 **Increasing our collaborative outreach and engagement activities with community partners and schools.**
 - ✓ Through our partnership outreach, more film and media organizations promoted and participated in the Summit, including Color Congress and the Berkeley Film Foundation as well as the Bay Area chapters of national organizations Brown Girls Doc Mafia and The Video Consortium.
- 🕒 **Increasing the amount of time allocated for soliciting proposals for BAMMS session leaders, to increase access and participation.**
 - ✓ Our call for proposals lasted two months this year, a notable increase over last year that allowed for more deliberation and promotional time.
- 🕒 **Securing a larger venue for the BAMMS to accommodate more participants.**
 - ✓ We successfully secured larger-capacity venues.
- 🕒 **Improving our operating systems to facilitate smooth event operations and planning.**
 - ✓ We implemented more streamlined processes for collecting materials and for assigning support tasks to day-of crew members. While we had more shared labor around marketing and promotional efforts, this process was less streamlined than desired.
- 🕒 **Expanding geographically to include a BAMMS event in the South Bay, in addition to the East Bay and San Francisco.**
 - ✓ Although we were unable to host a BAMMS event in the South Bay due to limited resources, we attracted participants from surrounding counties, including a large group of media makers that participated from Santa Cruz County.
- 🕒 **Continuing to build upon BAMMS' equitable practices and learning as a collective.**
 - ✓ We continued to compensate program participants and committee members. We continued to crowdsource the bulk of the Summit program. We ensured that our venues were accessible. We developed COVID-19 safety protocols that put our collective decision-making process to work. We experienced, in positive and challenging ways, the time and energy needed to arrive at shared decisions.



Areas for Improvement

While BAMMS events were selected from an open call for proposals process, we learned that curating key sessions is also important, especially for emerging media makers. The Bay Area's media community contains a wide range of experiences and an inclusive summit requires customizing sessions to be relevant to a diversity of skill levels and backgrounds. There are foundational subjects that we can offer on a range of topics (e.g. film funding and grant writing, how to build your team, how to create an LLC for your production company, how to plan for accessibility in your budget, or considering whether to have an impact campaign) that media makers can benefit from. We can't ensure that these core subjects are covered through the crowdsourced process. We hope to strike a balance in future iterations.

We are also interested in continuing to offer hands-on training opportunities for emerging film and media administrators, similar to the programmer-in-training activity that we facilitated in 2022 with the screening of Bay Area shorts at the Roxie Theater.

To improve our data and analysis about BAMMS impacts, we will collect demographic information during the registration process (rather than post-event) and improve our survey implementation planning.

Reflections and Recommendations for the Future of BAMMS

Our mission of creating a healthier, more connected film and media ecosystem in the Bay Area remains important and beyond the core missions of existing organizations. With a strong focus on inclusion, collaboration, and intergenerational exchange, our efforts have deepened relationships between peer organizations, given a platform to emerging film and media makers to showcase their work and expertise, and helped to stimulate broader conversations about film and media as drivers of economic development in our region.

We believe that BAMMS, as a mostly volunteer-led project, has been a successful proof of concept. Its success was largely the result of our committed organizing team and in-kind resources from The Roxie Theater, BAVC Media, collaborators such as George Rush (the host of the Lamb and Rum Fest), and our seed funding partner, the Kenneth Rainin Foundation.

To make this project sustainable and more effective, it needs paid staff. This could be a part-time position, supplemented by specialized contractors (in areas such as marketing and event production) and a volunteer advisory board that continues to champion diverse perspectives and collective decision-making. We recommend that the advisory board is composed of representatives from local film and media organizations, collectives, and independent media makers, in the spirit of BAMMS' founding organizing committee.

Operating as a stand-alone entity is also unsustainable. The Roxie's fiscal sponsorship of BAMMS absorbed the true cost of the project, including accounting, contract management and venue-related expenses. We recommend that BAMMS transition to become a program of a mission-aligned organization that can support more of its infrastructure needs in an effective, transparent way.



BAMMS TEAM

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bammsummit.org