

SPOTLIGHT ON HOUSTON FILM & MEDIA

Houston Cinema Arts Festival

Houston Media Conference

Filmmaker Development

Houston City Council Committee | Arts & Culture

October 14, 2026



ABOUT HCAS & SWAMP

Southwest Alternate Media Project (SWAMP)

Grows the next generation of storytellers in the Southwest. Supporting filmmakers through workforce training, mentorship, fiscal sponsorship, and early career initiatives in the K-12 school system, SWAMP has been amplifying Houston filmmakers for 50 years.

Houston Cinema Arts Society (HCAS)

Founded in 2008, amplifies Houston by connecting audiences and artists with public, educational, and career-advancing film and arts programming.

HCAS hosts the largest independent and international film festival in Houston, which just wrapped its 18th edition.

HOUSTON
**CINEMA
ARTS**
SOCIETY



SWAMP

**Together, HCAS and SWAMP
are building a sustainable,
centralized media ecosystem in
Houston through infrastructure
development, education,
and unified advocacy.**

Fourth Annual Houston Media Conference

4 Days | 90 Panels, Workshops, Networking Events | 50 Vendors
1,200 Attendees



Houston Media Conference Keynote Speakers



Elizabeth Avellán
Troublemaker Studios,
Spy Kids



Jared Ian Goldman
Ponies, Russian Doll,
Ingrid Goes West



Eddie Jackson
Former NFL, Food
Network Chef



Stephanie Wittels Wachs
Rec Room Arts,
Lemonada Media



Chase Musselwhite
Media For Texas



Alexandria Stapleton
God Save Texas,
The Brittney Griner Story

Hannah Teare - Salesforce | Sean Teare - Harris County District Attorney| Nell Teare - Filmmaker





THE BIG PITCH:
Houston Tech Investors | Houston Filmmakers
“Shark Tank” Style Feedback
Real Intentions. Real Meetings. Real Money.



Houston Film Commission

WOMEN IN FILM & TELEVISION



suite bread



AUSTIN FILM SOCIETY

FILMATIC



rad!o lounge



Media for TEXAS



Kathrine G. McGovern College of the Arts UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

SH Sam Houston State University College of Arts & Media



Houstonfirst

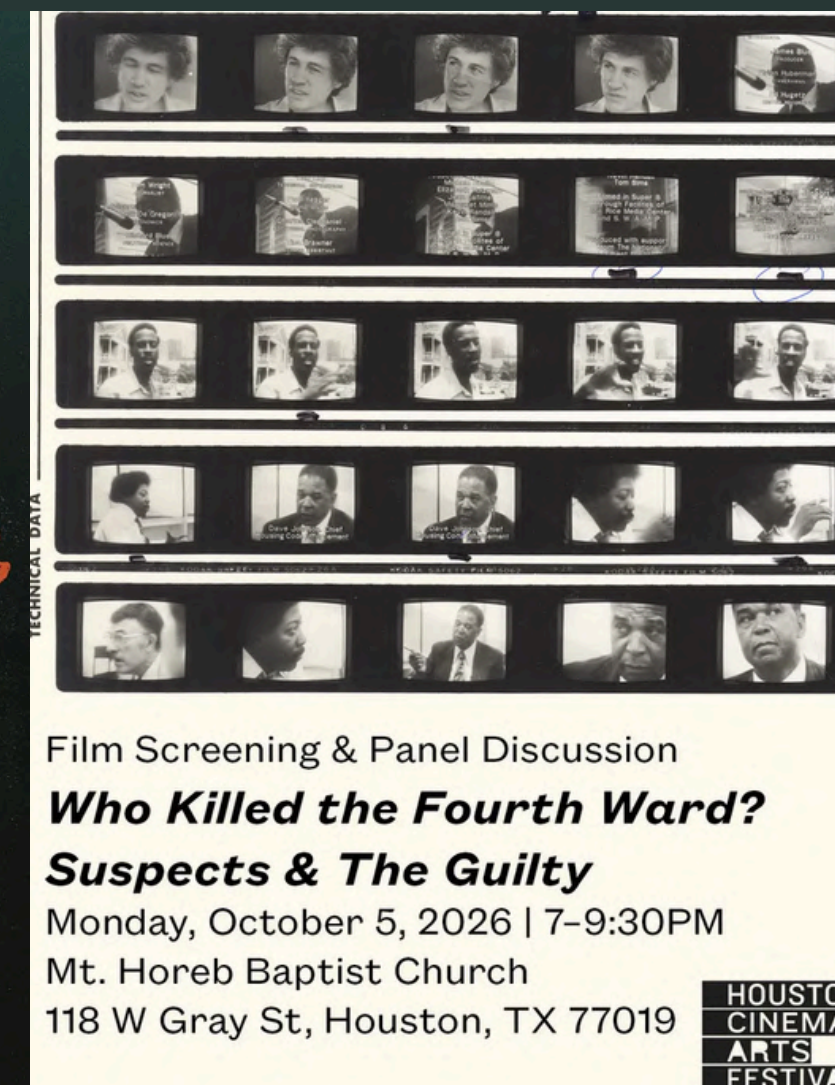
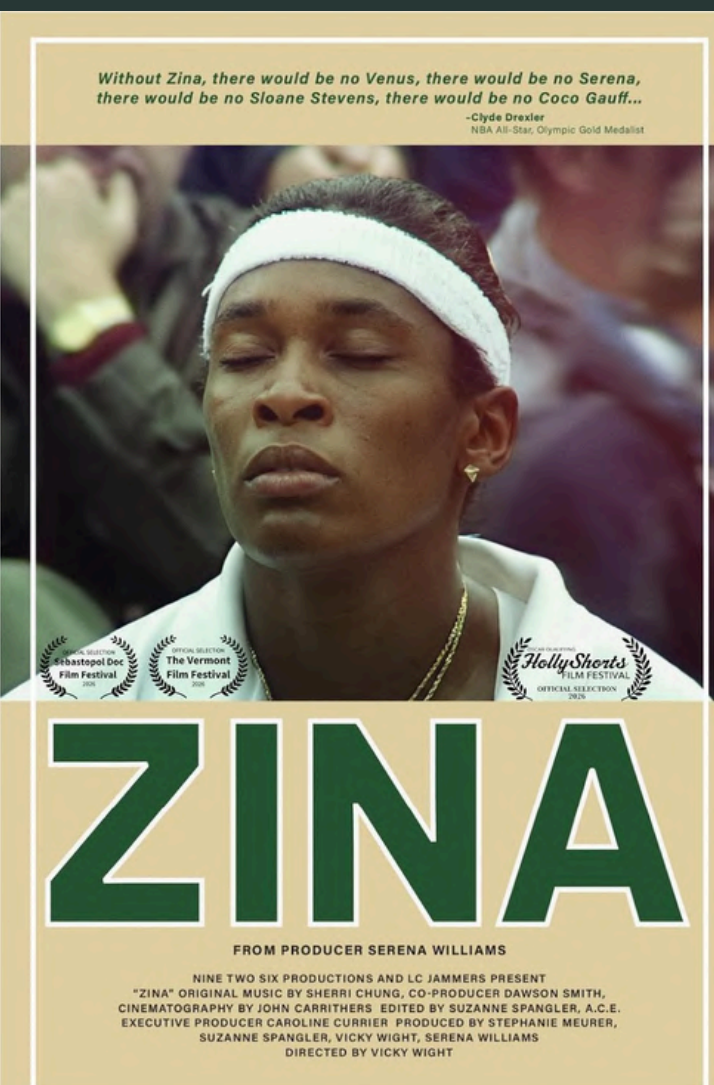
HOUSTON CINEMA ARTS FESTIVAL

CONNECTING
THROUGH CINEMA
OCTOBER 1-11, 2026

18th Annual Houston Cinema Arts Festival

11 Days | 87 Films | 60 Events | 30+ Texas Filmmakers
6,000 Attendees

"We are reflecting Houston to the world and the world back into Houston."
–Michael D. Robinson, Lead Festival Programmer

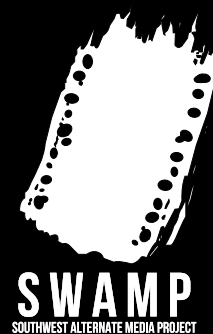


50TH ANNIVERSARY: WHO KILLED THE FOURTH WARD

TECHNICAL DATA



HOUSTON
FREEDMEN'S
TOWN
CONSERVANCY



HOUSTON
CINEMA
ARTS
FESTIVAL

Contemporary
Arts Museum
Houston



funded in part by the
City of Houston
through Houston Arts Alliance



Proclamation

Zina Garrison

WHEREAS, the City of Houston proudly recognizes Zina Garrison, a native Houstonian, outstanding athlete, Olympic champion, humanitarian, mentor, and one of the most accomplished women players to emerge from the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, Zina Garrison's remarkable journey began on the public courts of Houston's Astoria-Maitland Park, where coach John Whitson nurtured her natural talent, discipline, and determination, earning her place in the world stage; and

WHEREAS, as a young player, Zina Garrison captured both the Wimbledon and U.S. Open tennis championships in 1982, establishing herself as one of the brightest stars in women's tennis, inspiring generations of athletes who followed her; and

WHEREAS, having her distinguished career, Zina Garrison has had a career high No. 4 world ranking, became the 1989 Wimbledon single finalist and first Black woman since Althea Gibson to reach a Grand Slam singles final, and proudly represented the United States at the 1984 Olympic Games in Seoul, earning gold in women's doubles and bronze in women's singles; and

WHEREAS, Zina Garrison has given back to the Houston community through the Zina Garrison Tennis Academy, providing access to tennis, education, mentorship, and wellness while inspiring young people to reach their full potential and showing that a neighborhood court can be the beginning of a journey to the world stage; and

WHEREAS, On Monday, October 4, 2020, the Houston Cosmos Arts Festival will honor her legacy with a Houston evening of ZINA, directed by Vicki Wright, followed by a special presentation with Garrison, Houston sports legends Clyde Drexler and Carl Lewis, and Wright at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; and

WHEREAS, on this momentous occasion, the City of Houston recognizes Zina Garrison and celebrates her as a true heroine of Houston, with excellence achieved on the world stage and a lasting commitment to inspiring future generations through talent and service;

THEREFORE, I, John Whitson, Mayor of the City of Houston, hereby proclaim October 4, 2020, as

Zina Garrison Day

in Houston, Texas.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and have caused the Official Seal of the City of Houston to be affixed this 2nd day of October 2020.

John Whitson
John Whitson
Mayor of the City of Houston



ZINA GARRISON: FIELD TRIPS



Recognition

MovieMaker Magazine:

“Houston is back in the top 10 of
‘Best Places to Live and Work as a Moviemaker’
citing diversity, low cost of living, and local festivals

MovieMaker on HMC: the conference
"builds on the momentum of the rising film hub"

PaperCity (Oct. 4):

Houston is beginning to look less like a city that
occasionally produces great filmmakers and more
like a Film City



**A PIPELINE FOR FILM
EDUCATION & INFRASTRUCTURE
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
FILMMAKER RESOURCES
NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED EXHIBITIONS
OUR MESSAGE TO FILMMAKERS:
STAY IN HOUSTON: TELL YOUR STORY HERE**

SWAMP at 50: A LEGACY OF INDEPENDENT VISION

50 Years of Film Education | 32 Years of THE TERRITORY

**Direct Support for Texas Storytellers including
Richard Linklater, Robert Rodriguez, and Eagle Pennell**

**Fiscal Sponsorships | Media Education | Community Advocacy
Building the next 50 years of Media in Texas**

WHERE WE NEED YOUR HELP

A seat at the table in decisions that impact arts funding

Workforce Development Programs

**Introductions to local entities, corporations, chambers,
advocacy groups, etc. who are interested in amplifying
film and media in Houston**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED ADVOCACY



THANK YOU