



January 4, 2021 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Amherst Cinema Announces New Executive Director, Yasmin Chin Eisenhauer

Amherst Cinema is pleased to announce that Yasmin Chin Eisenhauer has been appointed executive director of the independent, nonprofit movie theater, following a six-month, nationwide search.

After a challenging year, the Cinema’s board has prioritized innovation, creativity, and inclusion as the essential means for the organization to grow and expand. The board is confident that Eisenhauer is the right leader to effect change and achieve new success for the preeminent arthouse cinema.

“We are absolutely thrilled to have Yasmin as our new executive director,” said Salman Hameed, Chair and President of Amherst Cinema’s Board of Directors. “This past year was a challenging one for everyone. But we believe that a vibrant cinema is essential for a healthy community, and Yasmin is the ideal person to lead us into a hopeful future.”

Previously, Eisenhauer was the Associate Director for Learning, Research & Technology at Smith College where she led a team of instructional technologists and media producers in strategic planning and innovation around the institution’s technology. Among her many responsibilities, she co-created programming to support remote learning in response to COVID-19 and launched pilot projects providing community access to high tech resources and emerging ideas.

Eisenhauer, an avid film enthusiast, also brings film distribution and film festival experience to her new role. Prior to working at Smith, she served as the Director of Acquisitions and Distribution for ABFF Ventures, a New York-based entertainment company focusing on African American culture, where she led the creation of BlackFilmFestAMERICA, a multi-city Black independent film festival.

A visionary and inclusive leader with a background in innovative programming, impactful learning experiences, and emerging technologies, Eisenhauer is particularly well suited to take on the challenges of film exhibition during the COVID-19 pandemic with creativity, resourcefulness, and optimism.

“While it’s difficult to predict the future with certainty, one thing is true—the arts have and hold public value,” Eisenhauer said. “Amherst Cinema is a place of human connection, imagination, and learning, a place where we come together—whether virtually or in person—to share our stories. I am excited to lead Amherst Cinema in this moment of disruption, because it is also a moment of opportunity and innovation.”

Amherst Cinema’s staff is eager to welcome Eisenhauer and to support her in envisioning a new path for the Cinema in 2021 and beyond.

“Yasmin brings incredible experience, skill, and character, exceeding the expectations we had before entering into this search,” said Amherst Cinema Outreach Manager Rachel Hart. “After receiving applications from all over the country, we are thrilled to have found that the most deserving candidate is an Amherst resident and Cinema Member! Yasmin understands what we are all about, and is uniquely qualified to guide us into the Cinema’s next era.”

Eisenhauer earned her bachelor’s degree from Smith College and her master’s degree from New York University.

Amherst Cinema’s founding director, Carol M. Johnson, retired in May after a dedicated and inspiring 13-year tenure. Since her departure, Amherst Cinema staff members Holly Greeley and Rachel Hart have served as interim executive director.

About Amherst Cinema

Amherst Cinema is an independent, nonprofit arts and education center brimming with world-class programs. The comfortable, fully accessible theater offers state-of-the-art projection and sound and is a welcoming crossroads for all. Amherst Cinema presents over 250 programs a year on four screens in more than 35 languages. The Cinema’s innovative education program for schoolchildren, [See-Hear-Feel-Film](#), uses the immense power of cinema to teach young learners how to write their own stories. For more information, visit amherstcinema.org.

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