

YOU, AUTHENTICALLY

film screenings and discussion toolkit

FEATURING PEDRO

A FILM BY SET HERNANDEZ

unseen



Thank you for bringing
unseen and Pedro's
story to your
community.

This toolkit will walk
you through the basics
of hosting a screening,
as well as ways to
engage your attendees
in a conversation
around the
intersections of
immigration, disability,
and mental health.

WHAT'S INSIDE

About the Film	2
Planning your Screening	8
Outreach Materials	12
Discussion Guide	17
Next Steps and Calls-To-Action	19
Between the Lines: Poetry in <i>unseen</i>	22
Yours Truly	24

ABOUT THE FILM

SYNOPSIS

Most people dream of a better future. Pedro, an aspiring social worker, is no different. But as a blind, undocumented immigrant, Pedro faces political restrictions to obtain his college degree, secure a job as a healthcare provider, and support his family. As he finally graduates, uncertainty looms over Pedro. What starts as a journey to provide mental health for his community ultimately transforms into Pedro's path towards his own healing. Through experimental cinematography and sound, *unseen* reimagines a cinema accessible for blind and low vision audiences, while exploring the intersections of immigration, disability, and mental health.

DIRECTOR STATEMENT

unseen started off as one kind of documentary. It was going to be an observational portrait about my friend, Pedro, and his experience being a blind, undocumented immigrant. With my background in advocacy, we were going to use the film to revolutionize the discourse around immigration and disability. What I didn't realize is that it would take seven years to complete this project. Along the way, the film would change its course – and so would we as people, both Pedro and I.

I was a 23 year-old community organizer just six months into my job, when I first met Pedro in 2015. He was part of a program for undocumented young adults that I helped to run. At the time, I was young and idealistic. I thought that by serving my community, I could help make a difference. But looking back now, maybe I was just looking for ways to feel needed. Don't get me wrong: my belief in community organizing to change society has always been the biggest reason I've been involved in advocacy. Through the years, however, I've come to realize that maybe there was another side to it. As an undocumented immigrant, I internalized the notion that I had to earn my right to be part of the country I call home and had to prove that I'm just as worthy of dignity and love. Otherwise, I feared that society would throw me away.

When I first started filming with Pedro, I wasn't aware of these things. That lack of self-awareness prevented me from fully understanding Pedro and his story. What I would do was spend hours with Pedro, following him with my camera as a one-person filmmaking team.

But when the shoot had wrapped, I would come home to deal with my own demons in solitude. Little did I know that Pedro was grappling with his own demons too. Pedro would tell me about his own mental health struggles, but until I became aware of my own inner darkness, I never understood what he was talking about.

Too often, films about “marginalized” communities (whether undocumented immigrants or people with disabilities) solely focus on the sociopolitical oppression we experience. I must admit: this was also the approach that I originally planned to film Pedro. I was only framing his story through the lens of his undocumented-ness and disability. But doing so would have reduced my friend into the “social issues” affecting his life, instead of uplifting his full humanity. Doing so would have also neglected Pedro’s agency in this film and the ways his friendship has changed me. I’m glad life intervened so that this film could be shaped into the film it was meant to become.

Beyond Pedro’s story onscreen, *unseen* became a film about the things we often don’t show others and the things we eventually reveal. It’s a film that lifts the veil for audiences to watch its own ever-evolving creation. The behind-the-scenes footage that we could’ve easily cast aside ultimately conveys the most consequential moments of the film, and how Pedro and I grew because of them. In other words, it’s a film about being vulnerable.

Every time I watch the film, I marvel at how different it has become from the one I conceived with Pedro all those years ago. Each time, I’m overwhelmed by Pedro’s trust. I’m a first-time feature filmmaker who did not have all the resources to make this film, but somehow, Pedro kept on letting me into his life. I never imagined that my friendship with him would turn into what it is now. I also never imagined how we would meet a loving community of collaborators to bring this film to life, without whom this film would not be possible. But then again, I never had any luck in anticipating what the future holds. The idealist in me still hopes that *unseen* can contribute meaningfully to advance the immigrant and disability justice movements. (That’s why we have an impact campaign for the film!) For now, what I do know is that this film and being Pedro’s friend have touched my life forever. I’m honored to know that Pedro and many of our filmmaking team members have found solace in this film as well. Maybe, that in itself is a form of impact too.

For you watching this film, I remind you that whatever you are going through is valid. You do not have to carry it alone. Whenever you are ready, I hope you can let yourself be vulnerable and be reminded that you are worthy. I’m grateful you would allow us to share our labor of love with you. I hope you can also join me in thanking Pedro for sharing so much of himself with us.

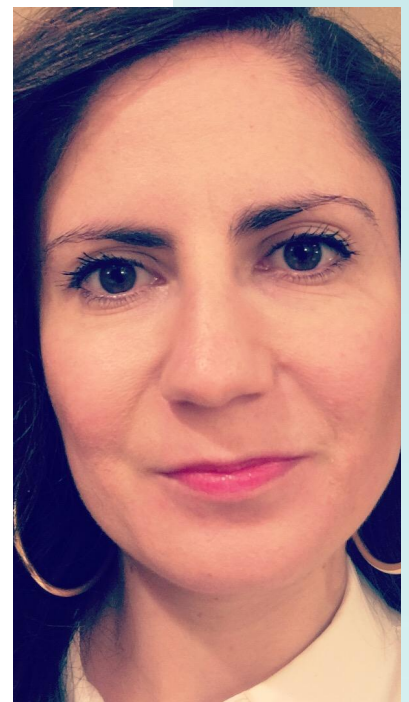
- Set Hernandez

IMPACT TEAM

Impact Producer: Qudsiya Naqui is a lawyer, policy researcher, and activist based in Washington, DC. She is the creator and host of *Down to the Struts*, a podcast about disability, design, and intersectionality. She currently serves as Visiting Assistant Professor in the Immigrant and Noncitizen Rights Clinic at CUNY Law School, where she leads a project aimed at uncovering and addressing the challenges that disabled immigrants face in the U.S. immigration system. Qudsiya's work is centered around access to justice for marginalized communities, including immigrants, people of color, disabled people, and those who face the legal system without a lawyer. She is committed to fighting for transformative change that will ultimately abolish systems of incarceration and economic oppression. Her work has been featured in *Forbes Magazine*, *Vox*, *the Disability Visibility Project*, and *Oxford University Press*. When she's not working on her podcast, Qudsiya enjoys building disability community through adaptive sports—she sits on the board of the Metro Washington Association of Blind Athletes.



Impact Producer: Conchita Hernandez Legorreta was born in Mexico and grew up in California. She advocates for the rights of blind children and their parents in the public-school setting in the United States and abroad. Conchita received a Doctoral degree in Special Education from George Washington University. Conchita is a Biden Presidential Appointee to the National Board for Education Sciences. Conchita is the founder and Chair of METAS, a non-profit organization that trains educators in Latin America that work with blind/low vision students and other disabilities. In this role, she engages lawmakers in policy discussions around people with disabilities and inclusion. Conchita is also a co-founder of the National Coalition of Latinxs with Disabilities, which seeks to amplify the voices of disabled Latinxs in the disability rights movement. Conchita strives to be a voice for change for educators, professionals, and advocates to make full inclusion a reality for people with disabilities in Latin America.



IMPACT TEAM



Impact Associate: Ana Portnoy Brimmer is a poet and freelance translator from Puerto Rico. She holds a B.A. and an M.A. in English Literature from the University of Puerto Rico, and is an alumna of the MFA program in Creative Writing at Rutgers University-Newark. *To Love an Island*, her debut poetry collection, was originally the winner of YesYes Books' 2019 Vinyl 45 Chapbook Contest. *Que tiemble*, a derivative work in Spanish, was published with La Impresora in 2023. Ana was awarded a 2023 MASS MoCA Fellowship for Artists from Puerto Rico and was named one of Poets & Writers 2021 Debut Poets. Her work has been published in *The Paris Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Southeast Review*, *Sixth Finch*, *Sx Salon*, *Aftershocks of Disaster: Puerto Rico Before and After the Storm*, among others. Ana is the daughter of Mexican-Jewish immigrants, resides in Puerto Rico, and finds hope in the poetics of dance parties and revolution.

PROTAGONISTS

Pedro is a social worker, who is devoted to providing vision rehabilitation and mental health services for marginalized groups. As a blind undocumented immigrant himself, the intersectionality between immigration, blindness, and mental health has been a constant in his life. With the support of his family and community, Pedro has learned to embrace his identities, using them to empower others to face their own adversities. Pedro has volunteered his time to promote higher education to undocumented students, as he is a firm believer that knowledge is the key for upward mobility. Aside from his profession, Pedro is also a triathlon enthusiast. It is an activity that grounds him and connects him with his higher self. Since his personal life is as important to him as his professional life, Pedro enjoys spending time with his family and close friends. Their love is what motivates him to keep moving forward.



Set Hernandez is a filmmaker and community organizer whose roots come from Bicol, Philippines. As a queer, undocumented immigrant, their filmmaking lies at the intersection of the poetic and the political. Their feature debut “unseen” (POV/PBS, 2024) received an Independent Spirit Award and was shortlisted for Best Feature at the IDA Documentary Awards. Set’s past documentary work includes the short “COVER/AGE” (2019) and impact producing for “Call Her Ganda” (Tribeca, 2018). An alumnus of the Disruptors Fellowship, Set is also developing both a TV comedy pilot and a feature-length screenplay. Since 2010, Set has been organizing around migrant justice issues, from deportation defense to healthcare access. They co-founded the Undocumented Filmmakers Collective which promotes equity for undocumented immigrants in the film industry. Above all, Set is the fruit of their family’s love and their community’s generosity.



IMPACT GOALS

Beyond the personal story it conveys, *unseen* seeks to advance the discourse around disability, immigration, and mental health. We're working with organizations across the U.S. and beyond to achieve three goals: Access, Affirm, Transform.

1)

Access: The film serves as a model for accessible storytelling by using visuals, sound design, text, and language translation geared towards a wide array of audiences.

2)

Affirm: The film upholds the inherent humanity and worthiness of communities who have often been relegated to the shadows.

3)

Transform: The film contributes towards building a world that is more just for disabled and undocumented people.

PLANNING YOUR SCREENING

unseen deals with a range of issues, from immigration to disability to mental health. Planning your screening with this consideration can maximize the experience and outcomes of your event.

1) SET GOALS FOR YOUR EVENT

Different people and organizations will have different reasons for hosting a screening. Are you working on a campaign related to the issues highlighted in the film, and you're looking for a new tool to galvanize the community? Or are you looking for a new thought-provoking film for your next movie night in your neighborhood? Determining outcomes and expectations can ensure your attendees have a meaningful experience during your screening.

TIP: POP (Purpose, Outcome, Process) is a helpful organizing method to create a foundation for your event. Learn more about it [here](#).

2) BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

Are there other people, institutions, or organizations in your area that work on issues related to the ones in the film? Are you part of a coalition that would like to use the film as a tool in their organizing? Partnering up with others to host your screening can help increase turnout of attendees to your event, distribute work amongst different people, and strengthen (if not forge new) partnerships amongst community leaders.

3) IDENTIFY YOUR VENUE

You can screen *unseen* wherever you'd like: your living room, your workplace, a community center, a place of worship, a theater, you name it! Make sure you have the following items, some of which are essential: (1) A/V system: TV or projector and speakers, (2) Accessibility services, particularly for those with disabilities, (3) Adequate seating, (4) Tabling area for sign-in sheets, informational handouts, and other key materials for your attendees. Here is our [Accessibility Checklist](#) and [Accessibility web page](#), to make sure that your screening is as accessible as possible. As Mia Mingus, Alice Wong, and Sandy Ho beautifully point out, "Access is Love."

4) SECURE ACCESS TO THE FILM

You can host a screening of *unseen* through [GOOD DOCS](#). Contact outreach@gooddocs.net with any questions or to request a waiver code for your organization. Additional information can be found on our [Educational Sales webpage](#).

unseen is also available through the award-winning PBS documentary program, [POV](#), as well as [POV's Community Network](#). Check out [POV Engage's website](#) for more information and educational resources to supplement your screening event. You can also email events@pov.org for support and more information on *unseen's* availability through POV's Community Network. Visit www.unseen-film.com for other ways to watch the film.

5) OUTREACH

Check out the *unseen* outreach materials that we have created on pgs. 12-16. You can find templates and other resources that you can use to bring people to your screening.

6) DESIGNATE ROLES

Some key roles that you might consider for your event include: (1) Facilitator/Emcee, (2) Greeter to coordinate the informational table and materials, (3) Accessibility Coordinator to make sure that the event is as accessible as possible and that people's access needs are being accounted for and met, (4) Tech Coordinator, (5) Social Media Coordinator/Photographer to document your event, (6) Follow-up for any action items that emerged after your screening.

DEVELOP AN AGENDA

How are you going to spend your time with your attendees? Depending on your goals for the screening, there are different ways to set up the agenda for your event. While you can just watch the film, we recommend you pair the viewing of the film with a discussion. Here is a sample 2 - 2.5 hour agenda geared towards creating dialogue around immigration, disability, and mental health.

- Set-Up: Arrive early and troubleshoot any potential tech issues. Make sure your film file works.
- Arrival: Let your guests trickle into the space and find their seats.
- Opening Remarks: Introduce your organization, the film, and any particular reason why you're bringing the film to your community. If you're having a post-screening discussion, invite your attendees to stick around and give them a preview of who the speakers might be.
- Screening (1 hour, 26 minutes)
- Post-Screening Conversation: For smaller events, you can facilitate a discussion after the screening to invite your attendees into a dialogue around the issues addressed in the film. For mid-size or larger events, you might consider having a post-screening conversation and invite local leaders and advocates to talk about what's happening in your community in relation to the issues from the film.
- Stay up-to-date: If you'd like to be updated about *unseen's* impact campaign, what our organizational partners are doing, and how you can support, fill out the following [form](#) and we'll include you in our newsletter.

NOTE #1: If you'd like to bring the protagonist(s) and filmmaker(s) to your event for a post-screening discussion, we request your support in providing travel/lodging accommodations. Honorarium is requested for the protagonist(s) to attend.

NOTE #2: The following page (page 11) includes a sign-up sheet for people to keep track of attendance at the unseen screening they're hosting.

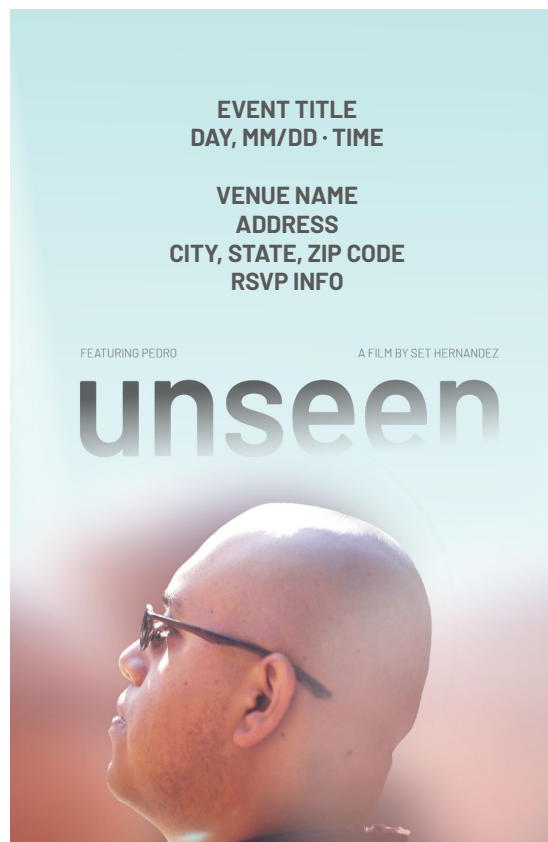
OUTREACH MATERIALS

Below are templates for some outreach tools that you can use to promote your screening.

1) SOCIAL MEDIA IMAGES ([Downloadable Folder](#))

Click on the image below or on the images on page 13 to download the template for each. Edit the text with information about your screening.

Printable Flier
or Postcard



Optimal for Social Media,
inc. Instagram



Optimal for Facebook Event
or Email Banner



2)

**HASHTAGS: #WatchUnseenFilm #unseenFilmPBS
#POVonPBS**

FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM (Sample Posts)

unseen, a film by Set Hernandez, follows the life of Pedro - an aspiring social worker who is blind and an undocumented immigrant - as he faces political restrictions to obtain his college degree and grapples with the uncertainty that follows. Join us for this FREE screening on [DATE] [TIME] at [VENUE] hosted by [NAME OF SCREENING HOSTS]. RSVP at [LINK] #WatchUnseenFilm #unseenFilmPBS #POVonPBS

unseen, a film by Set Hernandez, explores the intersections of immigration, disability, and mental health through the story of Pedro, an aspiring social worker who is blind and an undocumented immigrant. Join us for a FREE screening on [DATE] [TIME] at [VENUE] hosted by [NAME OF SCREENING HOSTS]. RSVP at [LINK] #WatchUnseenFilm #unseenFilmPBS #POVonPBS

3)

TWITTER (Sample Tweets)

@[NameOfYourOrg] is bringing #WatchUnseenFilm to [NAME OF YOUR CITY] to have a discussion about immigration, disability, and mental health. Join this FREE event on [DATE] [TIME]. RSVP: [LINK]

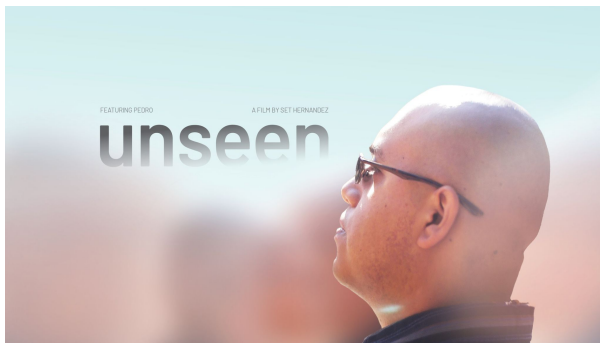
Join @[NameOfYourOrg] for a FREE screening of #WatchUnseenFilm and a discussion about the intersections of immigration, disability, and mental health. [DATE] [TIME] [RSVP LINK]

@watchunseenfilm documentary follows Pedro, an aspiring social worker who is blind and an undocumented immigrant, as he faces political restrictions to obtain his college degree and grapples with the uncertainty that follows. Join FREE screening by @[NameOfYourOrg] on [DATE]! RSVP: [LINK] #WatchUnseenFilm #unseenFilmPBS #POVonPBS

4) EMAIL TEMPLATE

You can use and modify this email template to send to your networks/listservs.

Community – [unseen](#) is a film by Set Hernandez that explores the intersections of immigration, disability, and mental health. We're excited to host a free screening of the film in our community and have a conversation about these interlocking issues. We hope that you can join us, and please feel free to invite others to this free event. More information below.



unseen Community Screening
DAY, MM/DD/YYYY • TIME
Venue Name • Address, City, State, ZIP
[Info about Post-Screening Conversation]
RSVP INFO

ABOUT THE FILM: Most people dream of a better future. Pedro, an aspiring social worker, is no different. But as a blind, undocumented immigrant, Pedro faces political restrictions to obtain his college degree, secure a job as a healthcare provider, and support his family. As he finally graduates, uncertainty looms over Pedro. What starts as a journey to provide mental health for his community ultimately transforms into Pedro's path towards his own healing. Through experimental cinematography and sound, *unseen* reimagines a cinema accessible for blind/low vision audiences, while exploring the intersections of immigration, disability, and mental health. For more about *unseen*, check out the [trailer](#).

*Attach this [unseen Form](#) to your email in case people want to sign up for unseen's newsletter.

5) PRESS RELEASE

You can use and modify this press release template if you'd like to invite media to your screening.

Subject: Invite to documentary event about immigration, disability, and mental health

Hi [FIRST NAME],

unseen, an award winning documentary film by Set Hernandez, follows Pedro, an aspiring social worker who is blind and undocumented, as he navigates political restrictions to obtain his college degree, secure a job as a healthcare provider, and support his family. Here are the details:

WHAT: *unseen* Community Screening

WHEN: [DATE][TIME]

WHERE: [VENUE NAME][ADDRESS]

RSVP [LINK]

Led by a multiracial team of queer, undocumented, and disabled filmmakers, *unseen* has received an Independent Spirit Award, was shortlisted for Best Feature at the International Documentary Awards, and received its national PBS broadcast on the award-winning documentary series, POV.

If you'd like to attend this event, please RSVP, and if you'd like to speak with one of the two featured protagonists in *unseen** or members of the Impact Team, please let me know. Happy to connect you!

Best,

Name

Phone Number

*If you plan to bring the protagonists/filmmakers to your screening.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

FORMAT

Depending on the size of your group and the goals you have for your screening, we recommend two possible formats for your post-screening discussion:

- Facilitated, informal conversation amongst your attendees about their thoughts after seeing the film.
- Moderated Q&A featuring 3-4 speakers who can talk about the issues highlighted in the film. They can either be local leaders, organizers, or advocates, or the protagonists/filmmakers of *unseen*. See *NOTE #1* on pg. 10 about inviting the team behind *unseen* to your screening.

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

- Share your initial thoughts/reactions about *unseen*.
- How does the film make you think differently about the conversation on immigration, disability, and mental health?
- One of the key conflicts in the film is how Pedro's extensive academic preparation and social work experience doesn't grant him access to the U.S. job market due to his immigration status. What are your thoughts about this contradiction?
- Pedro and Set talk about the different identities and experiences undocumented immigrants hold: gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, etc. What are your thoughts on the different layers of the immigrant experience?

DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Set shares their poem, “Me Authentically,” with Pedro at the end of the film. The poem does the work of unapologetically reclaiming worthiness, love, and joy as an act of healing – centering undocumented, queer, and disabled experiences in doing so. What do you take away from the poem? Do you relate to the sentiments shared in the poem?
- What are the organizations in your area that are doing work around the issues addressed in the film? What campaigns are they currently leading? What are ways to support and get involved? What are action steps that audiences can take?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- POV Discussion Guide for *unseen*
- [POV Lesson Plan](#) for *unseen*
- [POV Reading List](#) for *unseen*

NEXT STEPS AND CALLS-TO-ACTION

Through community screenings of *unseen*, we hope to affirm the humanity and dignity of people living at the intersections of immigration, disability, and mental health. We also hope to transform the unjust societal structures that have historically relegated these communities to the shadows by transforming the ways we relate to one another. Deep and lasting change is relational, it starts with you and me. These next steps and calls-to-action address the broad scope of transformational work that deep change entails:

1) BE A FRIEND

unseen is as much a film about friendship and healing as it is about immigration, disability, and mental health. Set and Pedro's friendship - which unfolds and grows in front of the audience - anchors *unseen* and bonds them across their shared identities and experiences. Together, they're able to hold space for each others' struggles, and accompany one another through their healing processes. We invite you to do something that may sound simple, cliché even, but is one of the most important things we can do in our lifetimes: be a friend. Be a source of empathy and understanding. Be a safe place for people in your community. Be a fountain of affirmation and upliftment. Be the Set to a Pedro, be the Pedro to a Set.

2) SUPPORT OUR PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Our partner organizations are sources of unrelenting inspiration and inform how *unseen* moves through the world. We believe in reciprocal partnerships and mutual upliftment. We invite you to visit the "Take Action" section of the [unseen webpage](#) to find resources about our partner organizations who are doing transformational work in diverse social justice, advocacy, and culture related areas.

3) RAISE YOUR VOICE

Publish a blog post, submit an op-ed, or write a letter-to-the-editor in a local or online news outlet. Share your reflections by responding to the issues highlighted in *unseen*. Take part in changing the narrative around immigration, disability, and mental health. [WORD FORCE](#) has created a [guide](#) with tips on how to write an op-ed.

4) INVITE OTHERS TO HOST A SCREENING

Encourage your friends, networks, and community partners to host their own screening of *unseen*. They can download this screening guide in the [unseen Resources Webpage](#), and they can host a screening of the film through [GOOD DOCS](#). They can contact outreach@gooddocs.net with any questions or to request a waiver code for their group or organization. Additional information can be found on our [Educational Sales Webpage](#).



HASHTAGS: #WatchUnseenFilm #unseenFilmPBS
#POVonPBS

5) SHARE THE FILM ON SOCIAL MEDIA

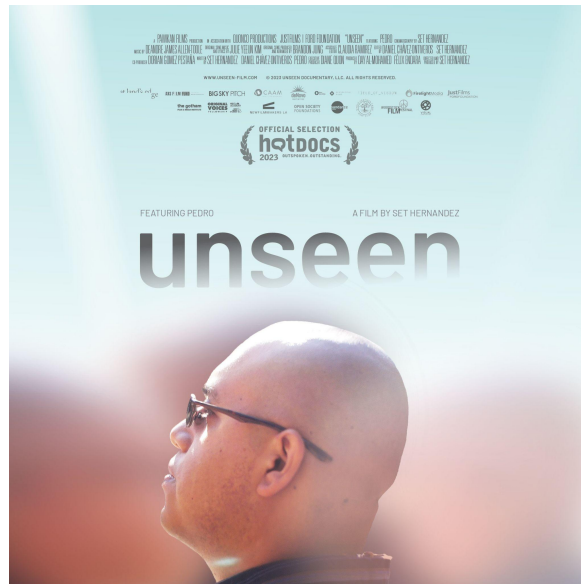
TWITTER (Samples)

#WatchUnseenFilm is a film by Set Hernandez about immigration, disability, and mental health. Learn more and host your own screening at <https://www.unseen-film.com/>

Amplify #WatchUnseenFilm and the immigrant and disability justice movements by hosting a screening of *unseen* in your community. More info at <https://www.unseen-film.com/>

FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM (Sample)

unseen is a film by Set Hernandez about the intersections of immigration, disability, and mental health. Learn more about #WatchUnseenFilm and host your own screening by visiting <https://www.unseen-film.com/>



BETWEEN THE LINES: POETRY IN *UNSEEN*

unseen contemplates healing as a part of the journey towards affirming the dignity of disabled and undocumented communities. At the end of the film, Set shares with Pedro: “When I first approached you to film, my main intention was for advocacy, to bring to light this dual experience of immigration and disability in your life. But after all these years, I think my motivations to continue filming with you [have] changed. Just like you talked about healing, this film has been a big part of my healing too.” Set proceeds to share their poem, “Me Authentically,” with Pedro, which the film closes on.

In interviews, Set has also shared that *unseen* is like a poem in the way that poetry will ask you to read between the lines. To close off this toolkit, we’re sharing poems that accompanied and informed the making of *unseen*, along with brief commentary by Set, one of the protagonists and the director of the film. We invite you to sit with these works, read between the lines, and respond to the film and poetry with your own poem or any mode of creation that speaks to you.

“What I especially like about poems is that the best poems don't exactly tell you what they're about – they beat around the bush, expecting the reader to figure out for themselves what it is really about. This happens in the level of language, rhythm, sentence structure, and beyond. I tend to think of every artistic endeavor that I do as a poem, and I feel that the way we've cut *unseen* thus far makes it feel like one ginormous poem.”

– Set Hernandez

BETWEEN THE LINES: POETRY IN *UNSEEN*

Poems by Joy Harjo

- ["Eagle Poem"](#)
- ["I Give You Back"](#)
- ["Praise the Rain"](#)

Poems by Ada Limón

- ["What I Didn't Know Before"](#)
- ["The Contract Says: We'd Like the Conversation to be Bilingual"](#)

Poems by Mary Oliver

- ["The Summer Day"](#)
- ["Wild Geese"](#)

Poems by more poets

- ["Variations on a Passage"](#) by Edward Abbey
- ["Modes against Too Much"](#) by A.R. Ammons
- ["Go to the Limits of Your Longing"](#) by Rainer Maria Rilke
- ["On Pruning"](#) by Allison Funk

YOURS TRULY

CREDITS

Featuring Pedro

Impact Producers Qudsiya Naqui, Conchita Hernandez Legorreta

Impact Associate Ana Portnoy Brimmer

Directed, Produced, and Cinematography by Set Hernandez

Produced by Day Al-Mohamed, Félix Endara

Executive Director Diane Quon

Co-Producer Dorian Gomez Pestaña

This toolkit was created by Ana Portnoy Brimmer, Set Hernandez

Additional support by Conchita Hernandez Legorreta

Additional materials by Héctor Trinidad Plascencia, Sara M. Acevedo PhD, Veronda Pitchford

With additional support from Courtney Cook, C. Rees, POV, Working Films, Word Force

UNSEEN'S IMPACT CAMPAIGN WAS MADE
POSSIBLE WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM



unseen

lo que no se ve