



SHER VANCOUVER PRESENTS

MY NAME WAS *January*



TRANS WOMEN OF COLOUR MATTER

A Film By
ELINA GRESS & LENE SON

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15+

This film is intended for audiences 15 years of age and over, and specifically intended for students in Grades 10 to 12 and college and university. It is recommended that professors, instructors and high school teachers view the film prior to showing it to their students to determine if it is suitable for their class.

THIS FILM IS AN EXCELLENT RESOURCE TO USE TO MARK TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE WHICH IS HELD ANNUALLY ON NOVEMBER 20TH

PRODUCED BY SHER VANCOUVER

Sher Vancouver LGBTQ Friends Society is a social, cultural, and support non-profit organization for LGBTQ South Asians and their friends and families.

CAST

January Marie Lapuz
Josh Soronow, Friend
Ash Brar, Best Friend
Velvet Steele, Friend
Betty Lapuz, Mother

Alex Sangha, Friend
Natasha Adsit, Social Activist
Kelendria Nation, Social Activist
Pam Hayer, Friend

When a trans sister, **January Marie Lapuz**, is brutally murdered in her own home, a community reacts and other trans women of colour come to share and voice their issues, concerns and challenges.



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www.movingimages.ca



THE FILMMAKERS



LENÉE SON, DIRECTOR

Lenée is a Khmer Krom settler who grew up in Surrey on unceded Kwantlen, Katzie, Semiahmoo and Kwikwetlem territories. She has a Bachelors of Journalism and a minor in Sociology from Kwantlen Polytechnic University. Her work as a freelance multimedia journalist has appeared in publications such as rabble.ca, Multimedia Photojournale, The Volcano, West-coast Food and Inside Vancouver. When she's not working on multimedia projects, she is committed to anti-poverty community organizing in Surrey and Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

She/Her pronouns.



ELINA GRESS, DIRECTOR

Elina is a freelance multimedia journalist (primarily photojournalist) in the search for a greater understanding of our world. She has a deep interest in the complexities of the human population and telling people's stories from their perspective and not her own—telling stories that can change people's hearts and minds through photography and documentary. That said, Elina has a passion for wildlife conservation and preservation, not to mention the determination to protect our one and only home, Earth.

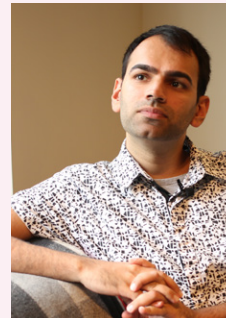
She/Her pronouns.



ALEX SANGHA, PRODUCER

Alex is the Founder of Sher Vancouver. He has an MSc in Public Administration and Public Policy from the Department of Government from the London School of Economics and a Master of Social Work from Dalhousie University. Alex has worked as a social worker, instructor, clinician, youth counsellor & team leader. He is the recipient of the Meritorious Service Medal from the Governor General of Canada.

He/Him pronouns.



ASH BRAR, PRODUCER

Ash is the President of Sher Vancouver and was January's best friend. He invited January to become the Social Coordinator of Sher Vancouver where she became the first trans person to hold an Executive position within the organization. Ash and January had a common bond as they were both born in the Philippines and spoke Tagalog and were recent immigrants to British Columbia.

He/Him pronouns.

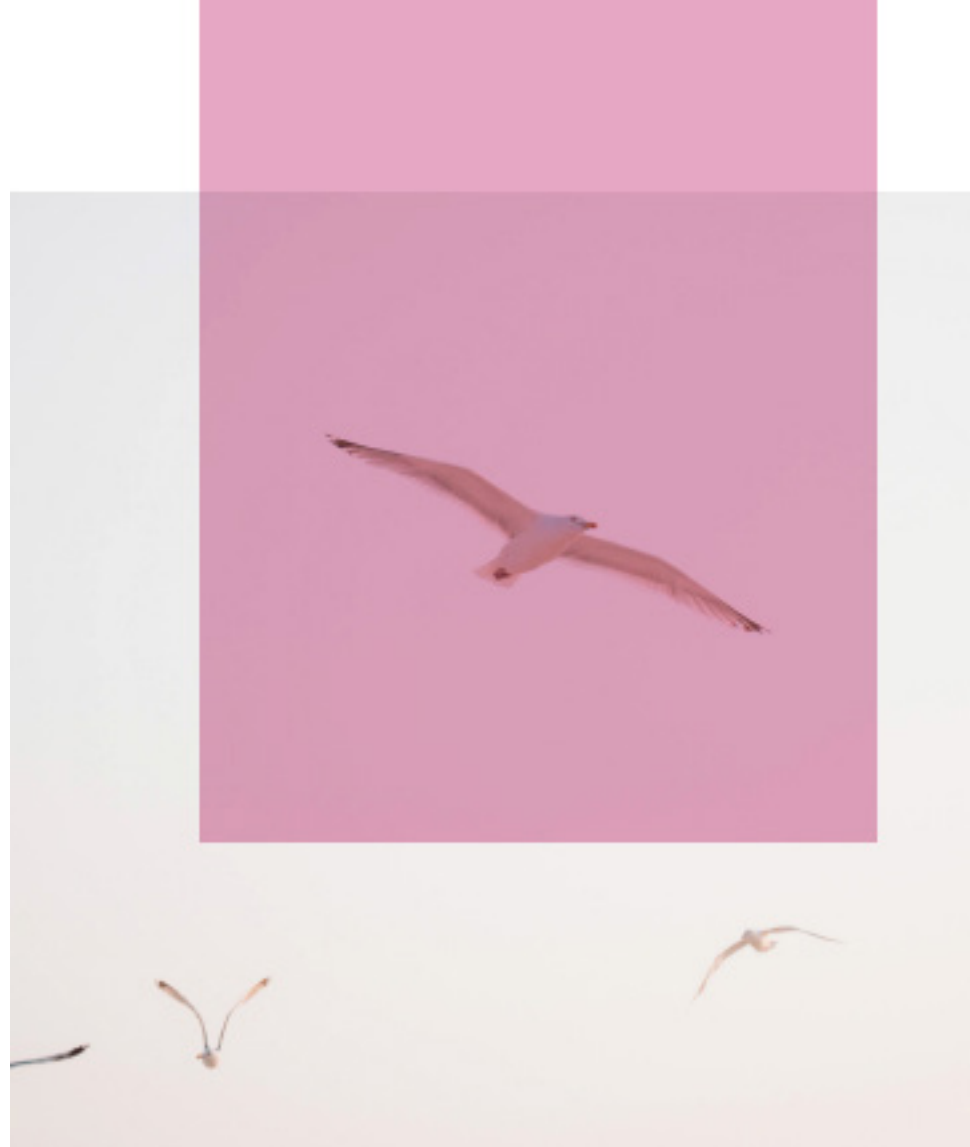


January Marie Lapuz was a transgender woman of colour who was murdered in September 2012 in New Westminster, B.C. A grassroots, community-driven “Justice for January” march followed shortly afterwards.

January was born in Santiago, the Philippines on April 9, 1986, and later immigrated to Vancouver, Canada with her adoptive mother. She was an advocate for trans rights and was known as the “bright light” among Vancouver’s LGBTQ community. January’s glowing heart has inspired and touched many across the community and through sharing her story, we hope to emit her light, legacy, and advocacy.

Trans women of colour are being murdered at an unprecedented rate and it is critical we stand in solidarity with trans women and fight for justice and trans rights, support trans narratives, and push for the eradication of discrimination against transgender people.

This documentary is a celebration of January's life, as well as other trans women of colour. This film is about remembering the impact that January had on the lives of everyone she encountered, about uplifting the narratives and lived experiences of trans women of colour, and about collectively liberating all marginalized and oppressed people.



ACTIVITY ONE

I Love This Person Because...

Think about someone you love. With a partner, take turns describing that person—with one catch: try not to use gendered pronouns or gendered names.

Did you notice a difference in how you described them? What about how you spoke about them?

DISCUSSION

Working in groups, discuss what you heard from Ash, Josh, Velvet, Betty, Alex and Pam about January as a friend.

What strikes you about January's qualities?

If you had to introduce January to someone who had never met her and has not seen the film, how would that sound?

ACTIVITY TWO

The Role of a Parent

On a piece of paper think of words that define the role of a parent/guardian towards their children.

DISCUSSION

What can we learn from Betty about the way she treated her daughter January?

How did Betty play the role of a parent towards January?

How can parents/guardians and family members be supportive of their trans family members?

What words describe the role of parents/guardians?

ACTIVITY THREE

QUEER & TRANS STATS

No Laughing Matter

Ash describes January's joke about calling the police if no one had heard from her in several hours. While it was certainly part of January's playful ways, looking at the Queer & Trans Stats on the following page, and thinking about the words of Social Activists Natasha and Kelendria, was there any truth behind the joke?

DISCUSSION

What does violence against Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC) members of the LGBTQ community suggest about our society?

What is something we can personally do to change societal attitudes that lead to such violence?

26% of trans people of colour of experienced police harassment due to their race/ethnicity.
(Trans Pulse 2010)

22% of trans people of colour have been turned down for a job due to their race/ethnicity.
(Trans Pulse 2010)

More than 1 in 3 trans youth have attempted suicide.
(SARAVYC 2015)

87% of LGBTQ and HIV-affected murder victims in 2011 were people of colour.
(National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs)

45% of reported hate murders were transgender women while only 10% of total hate violence survivors and victims.
(National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs)

Anti-LGBTQ homicides increased in 2017, making it the deadliest year on record for the LGBTQ community in the U.S. particularly among transgender individuals.
(National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2010)

NOTE: While we would have provided even more Canadian statistics, unfortunately before the passing of Bill C-16 in 2017, no statistics were kept on the number of trans women of colour murdered in Canada.

ACTIVITY FOUR

Intersectionality of January

Intersectional theory asserts that people are often disadvantaged by multiple sources of oppression: their race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and other identity markers. Coined by Black civil rights advocate and Critical Race Theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw.

What are your thoughts on intersectional theory? Do you think there is some truth to support this theory?

DISCUSSION

Listening to all of her friends and family, in what ways was January's life intersectional?

Why is it important for us to talk about her life not just as one issue, but many?

ACTIVITY FIVE

Survival Sex Work

Sex trade work is rarely discussed in the way that it's discussed in this film. What are your thoughts on Natasha's fears around violence in the sex trade?

How can we keep sex trade workers safe?

DISCUSSION

What might Kelendria be referring to when she said, "There are still things I need for myself to make me feel comfortable. We have things we need to get done. It's a sense of urgency. Trying to feel comfortable in our bodies as we navigate the world."?

Are there any accessible and affordable options for trans woman to get the things they need for themselves such as surgeries? If not, why not?

ACTIVITY SIX

Inclusivity of January

Kelendria raises a very important question which needs to be discussed and answered: How can we build more inclusive spaces for trans women of colour?

DISCUSSION

How can we build more inclusive spaces for trans women of colour through Social Service (volunteering), Social Responsibility (knowledge building), and/or through Social Justice (systemic long-term institutional change)?

ACTIVITY SEVEN

January's Legacy

What are you taking away from the film?

DISCUSSION

What is something you can do to support the LGBTQ community, and the Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC) community within it?

How will you help continue January's legacy?

JANUARY MARIE LAPUZ YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD

An annual award bestowed upon a deserving youth—of any sexuality or gender identity—between 16 to 30 years of age who has demonstrated involvement, commitment and leadership in the LGBTQ community locally, nationally or internationally.

Visit shervancouver.com for details and to apply.

ACRONYMS

LGBTQ

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer. For the purposes of this resource this acronym is meant to be inclusive of all queer communities.

BIPOC

Black, Indigenous, People of Colour

TRANSGENDER

Transgender people have a gender identity or gender expression that differs from their assigned sex. Transgender people are sometimes called transsexual if they desire medical assistance to transition from one sex to another. Being transgender is independent of sexual orientation: transgender people may identify as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, asexual or may decline to label their sexual orientation.

(wikipedia.org/wiki/Transgender)

CISGENDER

Cisgender (often abbreviated as "cis") is a term used to describe people whose gender identity matches the sex that they were assigned at birth. Cisgender may also be defined as those who have "a gender identity or perform a gender role society considers appropriate for one's sex." It is the opposite of the term transgender.

(wikipedia.org/wiki/Cisgender)

HETERONORMATIVITY

Heteronormativity is the belief that people fall into distinct and complementary genders (male and female). It assumes that heterosexuality is the norm or default sexual orientation, and that sexual and marital relations are most (or only) fitting between people of the opposite sex. A "heteronormative" view therefore involves alignment of biological sex, sexuality, gender identity and gender roles. Heteronormativity is often linked to heterosexism and homophobia.

(wikipedia.org/wiki/Heteronormativity)

PRIDE PARADE

Pride parades (also known as pride marches, pride events and pride festivals) are events celebrating lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) culture and pride. The events also at times serve as demonstrations for legal rights such as same-sex marriage. Most pride events occur annually, and many take place around June to commemorate the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York City, a pivotal moment in modern LGBTQ social movements.

(wikipedia.org/wiki/Pride_parade)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

INDIGENOUS RECOGNITION

This guide was created on the ancestral and unceded lands of the Coast Salish Peoples. Vibrant nations and civilizations have existed here since time immemorial. It is of crucial importance that as settlers and visitors of these lands, we walk in ways we can act to bring justice to the many that have been marginalized and erased through genocidal policies of the Canadian state. Some Indigenous nations do have the concept of Two-Spirit people. Much like LGBTQ folk, Two-Spirit people have felt the yoke of intersectional oppression when colonial policies attempted to erase not just Indigenous knowledge, culture and nations but also to impose cissexual, heteronormative societal norms. As we celebrate the life of January and her many facets, we do so with the promise that justice for January must be rooted in justice for all Indigenous peoples. As settlers we must do all we can to learn, to be better, and to truly reconciliate.

DISCUSSION GUIDE CREATED BY:

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**IN LOVING MEMORY OF
JANUARY MARIE LAPUZ
1986-2012**

Resources

SHER VANCOUVER

www.shervancouver.com

EGALE CANADA HUMAN RIGHTS TRUST

www.egale.ca

PFLAG VANCOUVER

www.pflagvancouver.com

PRIDE EDUCATION NETWORK

www.pridenet.ca

QMUNITY

www.qmunity.ca

RAINBOW REFUGEE

www.rainbowrefugee.com

TRANS ALLIANCE SOCIETY

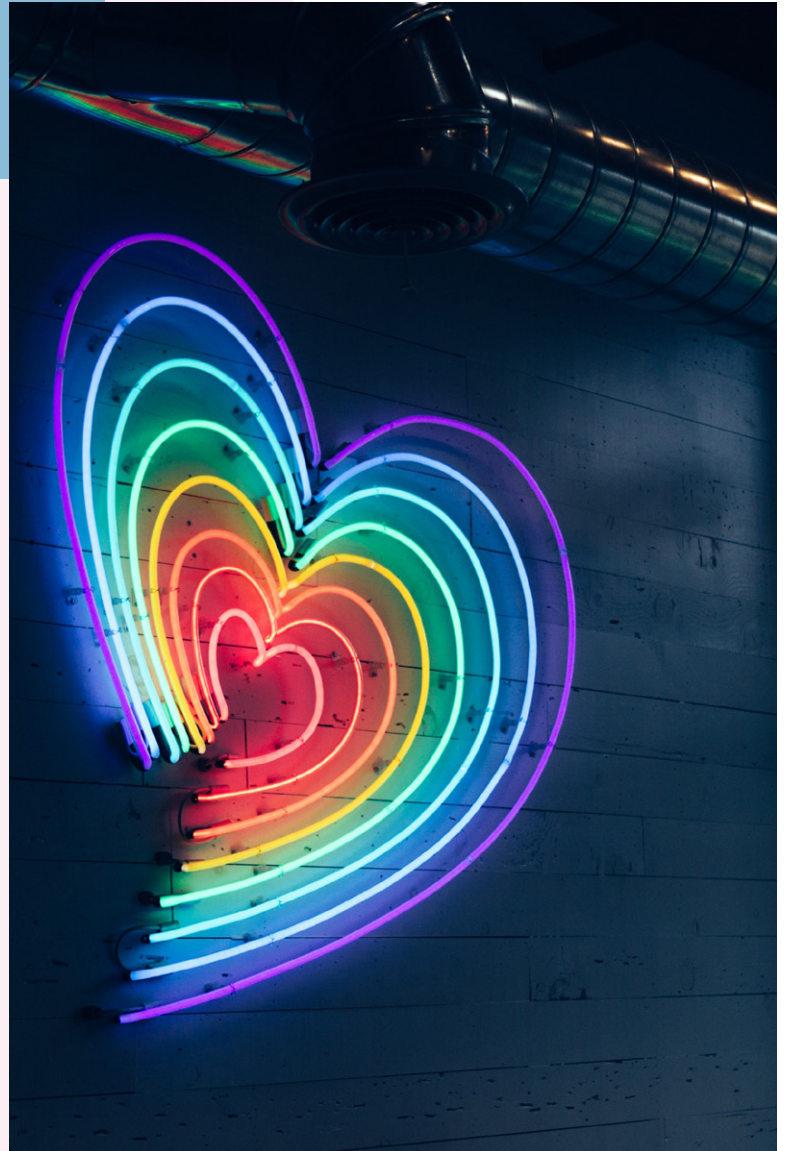
www.transalliancesociety.org

TRANS CARE BC

www.phsa.ca/transcarebc

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR GENDER AND SEXUAL DIVERSITY

www.ccgds-ccdgs.org



What People Are Saying

"A poignant, gentle exploration of the joy January brought to her friends and community. A gentleness that is all the starker given the violence of her death. A compelling memoir of a life taken too soon."

— Jen Marchbank, Professor, Simon Fraser University
Department of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies

"The film shares the beauty of community support and love, and gives a home for a better future for LGBTQ folks living in the margins."

— David Ng, Co-Founder, Love Intersections

"As a critical social justice educator, at the school where January once attended, it will be an honour to use this film in my Social Justice classes to explore humanity and the beauty of all LGBTQ folk."

— Annie Ohana, Indigenous Department Head, Critical Social Justice Educator, L.A. Matheson Secondary

"A valuable addition to the small but growing number of publicized stories about visible minority LGBTQ+ people, a community that's often marginalized and neglected on many counts."

— Surinder Bhogal, Chief Librarian, Surrey Libraries

