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Director's Statement - Mx. Chelsey Morgan

Telling stories have, and will always be a fundamental part of being human. It's what defines our cultural understanding the world around us and our individual understanding of ourselves. It mirrors our views on race, sexuality, relationships, politics, spirituality, psychology and violence. Growing up in a religious household filled with mixed opinions and contradicting views on identity and choice, media, television specifically, was how I learned who I wanted to be. As a young, undiagnosed autistic, queer person, I searched through my screen for a "how-to" on being a human in this world and found narratives of love, lust, anger, aggression, mental illness, attachment wounds and compounding evidence that those who existed as I did, as queer, as black, as Hispanic, as masculine, as ambitious, as out-spoken, as different, were not in for a life of balance and of peace, but of chaos and of war. As a media maker, after years of unlearning and re-learning and dismantling and rebuilding my identity, I tell stories to show the truth of what it is to live in this world with intersecting identities.

My short film, "Let Them Be Loved" began as a film that I called a "love letter to my identities". It was meant to show the beauty in the intersection of my queer, black, masculine identity while commenting on the complexity of what it means to hold a spiritual identity alongside them. The film asks viewers to contemplate the question, can queerness live peacefully within spirituality? Is there a balance? Does God really make no mistakes? It shows the mother contemplating all of these questions while simultaneously accepting the love she has for her son as love that comes directly from God and knowing that, according to her beliefs, that God knew the plans he had for her child alongside her fears for him before she ever could have. Like the rest of my work, the film is also inspired by decades upon decades of strong BIPOC creatives and strong black women who have instilled in me that, despite the odds against us, black joy is possible and is revolutionary.

My work, in its purest form, is a reflection of who I am. It is, as a whole, a series of love letters to my identities, to my communities, to my pain, and to my pleasure. It is a choice to share me with the world and to show the communities I love in their strength, in their vulnerability, in their darkness and in their infinite light. I make films about people being human, radically, flawed, insatiably and undeniably human.