



For Immediate Release

Filmfest DC is Back (in movie theaters)
with In-Person Screenings at Landmark's E Street Cinema
*DC's longest-running film festival will welcome viewers back to the theater
while keeping virtual options available*

(March 29, 2022) - WASHINGTON, DC –From April 21 through May 1, 2022, Filmfest DC will return for its 36th season of bringing new and timely films to the Nation's Capital. As the pandemic numbers have declined dramatically, the festival will offer a hybrid option for audiences this year, with live screenings at Landmark's E Street Cinema on weekends and virtual screenings throughout the week. The festival will open with a screening and reception at the newly restored Martin Luther King Jr Memorial Library and wrap up with a screening at the Embassy of France.

“Downtown DC is coming back, and it was important to us to be a part of that recovery, with both the films we chose and by being in-person at Landmark's E Street Cinema. After two difficult years, Washington is reopening, Downtown DC is alive, and Filmfest DC is back to contribute to its cultural vitality,” said festival director, Tony Gittens.

Many of the selections this year will match the mood of a city beginning to return to normal after two years of life interrupted. **Mission: Joy – Finding Happiness in Troubled Times** is Filmfest DC's Opening Night feature. It provides unprecedented access to the unlikely friendship of two international icons who transcend religion: His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. These self-described mischievous brothers give a master class on how to create joy in a world that was never easy for them.

As usual, the festival will also feature an impressive slate of international films. Among the highlights this year are *One Second* (China), a Sundance selection about a man who goes to extraordinary lengths to see a film his daughter appears in for just one second; *After Love* (UK) a drama depicting a woman's discovery of her late husband's secret

family; and *Peace by Chocolate* (Canada) a feature-length based on the true story of a Syrian refugee family who try to restart their chocolate business with the help of their new community in Nova Scotia.

Other highlights this year include two films centered on a woman's right to choose—*Happening*, detailing a young French woman's attempts to end her unplanned pregnancy in the 1960s when that was illegal, and *The Janes*, an in depth look at the group of women who came together in pre-Roe v Wade USA to help women seeking abortions. A discussion with the film's co-directors and participants will follow the screening.

There are several connections to DC, including *DC4Reel*, a block of films that feature local filmmakers. Among those films are *Fierceness Served*, by DC Native Michelle Parkinson, about a gay and lesbian coffee club in the city during the 1970s. *Imagining the Indian* is a documentary by DC based filmmaker Aviva Kempner that details the movement to end the use of Native American likeness in sports names, logos, mascots and more. *The First Step* by DC area brothers, Lance and Brandon Kramer, is an observational portrait of Black progressive activist and political commentator Van Jones as he faces a polarized society in an effort to reform a broken criminal justice system. Finally, *Life After the Gunshot* examines DC area survivors of shootings and their attempts to put their lives back together after the traumatic event. "The value of a film festival is that it tells multiple stories, not just one story," says Gittens. "The more voices we can put forward, the more inclusive we can be."

Many of the above film directors, subjects and stars will be present throughout the festival. Tickets go on sale beginning April 1. The full catalog of films will be available beginning on April 1 online and in a full page spread in *The Washington Post* on Friday, April 15. For more information and to see the growing list of films, please visit: <http://www.filmfestdc.org>

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Filmfest DC seeks to keep pace with global culture and social activities, taking a special focus on issues of the moment in hopes of increasing clarity and civil discourse. Filmfest DC is made possible by the support of our Board of Directors, sponsors, staff and hundreds of volunteers. Filmfest DC believes that good movies make the world a better place. www.filmfestdc.org

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