For Immediate Release

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Cincinnati to Welcome Diverse Group of Celebrities

to Over-the-Rhine International Film Festival

September 12, 2019 – The Over-the-Rhine International Film Festival (OTRFF), organized by LADD, presented by the Financial Independence Project, is excited to welcome talented filmmakers, actors, writers, and advocates of various backgrounds to Cincinnati for five days of inspiring films. They will be attending select festival events around the city on Wednesday, October 2– Sunday, October 6, 2019.

Highlights of the festival’s celebrities include (in alphabetical order):

* **CJ Jones:** an internationally known stand-up comedian, entertainer, actor, producer, director, writer, musician and inspirational speaker. He has traveled and performed around the world.  Over the years, CJ has appeared on numerous TV shows from “Cold Case” to “Sesame Street”.  He most recently starred in “Baby Driver”, guest starred in “Castle Rock”, and is the creator of the Na’vi Sign Language used in the Avatar 2 & 3 movies. He founded Sign World Media to create opportunities for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in the film and entertainment industries. He is currently partnering with NTID (the National Technical Institute for the Deaf) for post-production development with COOP students this summer to create 2 trailers for the Dark Invocation and The Three Wisdoms He is seeking funding to produce both for full featured films.

* **Ryan O’Connell:** anAmerican writer, actor, director, comedian, LGBTQ activist, and disability advocate. He started a career in show business writing for MTV’s hit show “Awkward” and NBC’s “Will & Grace” reboot. In 2015, O’Connell released his memoir, *I’m Special: And Other Lies We Tell Ourselves,* about his life as a gay man with cerebral palsy. He later adapted this biography into the television series “Special” for Netflix which he wrote, produced and acted as himself. O’Connell is one of a growing number of creators with disabilities breaking barriers in Hollywood.
* **Kate Rigg:** an award-winning, multicultural and multilingual art star, has brought her literate, urban, multidisciplinary sensibility to performances, festivals and events all over the world to great acclaim. She has succeeded as a comedian, published playwright, speaker, actor and lead singer; as well as, creating television shows for NBC Universal, YTV/Disney XD. Kate currently has two shows in development (a comedy dating show for TBS and a celebrity driven pop culture show for E!).

While visiting Cincinnati, CJ Jones and Ryan O’Connell will attend the festival’s Kick-off Luncheon on October 2nd at the Duke Energy Convention Center as well as the VIP Happy Hour Party and Opening Night Reception at the Contemporary Arts Center. Kate Rigg will be a panelist at the “Open Eyes to Biased Casting” workshop on October 3rd at the Art Academy of Cincinnati and will host the festival’s Closing Night Awards on October 5th at the same venue.

Tickets are on sale now for festival screenings and events. Select ticket bundles are also available including:

**Film Fanatic Pass**: $250 (15 Film Tickets, VIP Happy Hour & all 3 Special Events, 3 Drink Tickets)

**Film Buff Pass**: $125 (10 Film Tickets, Entry into 2 Special Events, 2 Drink Tickets)

**Film Enthusiast Pass**: $75 (5 Film Tickets, Entry into 1 Special Event, 1 Drink Ticket)

**To purchase individual screening tickets and ticket bundles, or for more information on our 2019 Over-the-Rhine International Film Festival films and exclusive events visit** **[OTRFilmFest.org](http://www.otrfilmfest.org).**