



OVER-THE-RHINE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

organized by **ladd** 

**A CELEBRATION
OF INCLUSION IN
FILM & MEDIA**

MARCH 11, 2021

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WELCOME

Friends,

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to A Celebration of Inclusion in Film & Media. We could all use a little celebration right now, and inclusion – the strides made and the work left to do – is surely a worthy cause.

At LADD – a Cincinnati nonprofit empowering adults with developmental disabilities to live, work and connect – we are guided by the belief that all people have ability and value. Every person of every community, ability and identity deserves the opportunity to live their best lives. How do we make that happen? Listening to each other’s stories, learning from new perspectives and connecting through our shared humanity is a start.

That’s why we organize the Over-the-Rhine International Film Festival, bringing untold stories about diversity, disability, faith, freedom and identity from across the globe to Cincinnati. The festival also aims to spotlight the Queen City and its role in reframing how we see disability in the entertainment industry’s ongoing discussion of diversity.

It’s an exciting time for the festival and for LADD, despite the challenges the pandemic has brought. We are growing, innovating and, at the same time, keeping our community safe and healthy during this ongoing crisis. Today, LADD supports more than 600 people in living lives of independence, opportunity and connection. This past year we launched our Smart Living Pilot, the first-of-its-kind in the nation using wearables and smart home technology to build a new model of community living for adults with disabilities. And we couldn’t do any of that without friends like you.

We welcome you to join our community of changemakers. Connect with us online at laddinc.org and on social media. And don’t miss the OTR International Film Festival July 8-11, 2021.

Sincerely,

Rob Zimmerman
LADD Board President

Jack Geiger
OTR International Film Festival
Leadership Committee Chair



Welcome!

Thank you for joining us for A Celebration of Inclusion in Film & Media – a special evening of connection, community and culture hosted by the Over-the-Rhine International Film Festival.

As we look to heal, rebuild, perhaps return to some level of normalcy or begin anew after this past year, many of us are seeing life through a new lens. That's what tonight is all about: celebrating our shared humanity and discovering new perspectives. It's what we do every day at the OTR International Film Festival, the nation's first diversity film festival led by the disability community.

This festival is a catalyst for conversation, change and inclusion. The movies we watch and the media we consume have so much power in shaping the way we view the world. We envision a world where film and media reflect all so that our communities welcome all. The festival is returning July 8-11, 2021, with an incredible lineup of powerful films from around the world, but first, we're thrilled to be gathering virtually with you tonight.

Sincerely,

Molly Lyons
OTR International Film Festival Director

THANK YOU!

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Photo by Tina Turnbow

LEA DELARIA

Lea DeLaria seems to have achieved overnight stardom with her two time, SAG Award winning, stand-out role as 'Carrie 'Big Boo' Black' in the Netflix hit series "Orange is the New Black." However, DeLaria's multi-faceted career as a comedian, actress and jazz musician, has in fact, spanned decades.

Lea holds the distinction of being the first openly gay comic on television in America which led to countless television and film roles portraying police lieutenants, PE teachers and the lesbian who inappropriately hits on straight women. Selected TV credits: "Broad City," "Baroness Von Sketch," "The Jim Gaffigan Show," "Awkward," "Clarence," "Californication," "The Oblongs," "One Live to Live," "Law and Order: SVU," "Will and Grace," "Friends" & "Matlock." Selected Film credits: Cars 3, Support The Girls, First Wives Club, Dear Dumb Diary, Edge of Seventeen.

She's received Obie & Theater World Awards, and a Drama Desk nomination for her portrayal as 'Hildy' in the Public Theatre's revival of On The Town, an Ovation nomination for The Boys From Syracuse, and has played both Eddie and Dr. Scott in the gender-bending Broadway musical The Rocky Horror Show.

Lea was the featured vocalist at the 50th Anniversary of the Newport Jazz Festival, and has performed in some of the most prestigious houses in the world including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Chicago Symphony, Hollywood Bowl, The Royal Albert Hall and the Sydney Opera House.

Lea has five records on the Warner Jazz and Classics label and her book "Lea's Book of Rules for the World" is in its third printing at Bantam Doubleday and Dell. Her sixth record, House Of David delaria+bowie=jazz, was released in the Summer of 2015 to critical acclaim.



SAMMI HANEY

Sammi Haney plays Esperanza (Dion's best friend), a sassy wheelchair user, on Netflix's *Raising Dion*. The 10-year-old also started DisabilityShirts, an online t-shirt company that provides themed apparel and products for people with disabilities (and their parents and supporters) in a mission to spread awareness, acceptance and love for the community.

Sammi was born with osteogenesis imperfecta (OI or brittle bone disease) and has broken hundreds of bones from simple things like tossing and turning too much when asleep or simply sneezing too hard. OI also affects her teeth, lungs and much more. She receives infusions to make her bones thicker, but they are still brittle in the same way that thicker Styrofoam is stronger, but it is still brittle. She also has telescoping rods in her arms, legs and back, which straightened her and allows her bones to heal better when they do break. She has had to wear many medical braces and has had lots of surgeries, but she never lets that get her down. "I have brittle bones and live life to the fullest!" she's proud to say. She hopes by starring in Netflix's *Raising Dion*, she will be able to help remove the stigma that people with disabilities cannot star in a major drama series, and that those stories can be about so many things, not just someone's disability or medical condition.

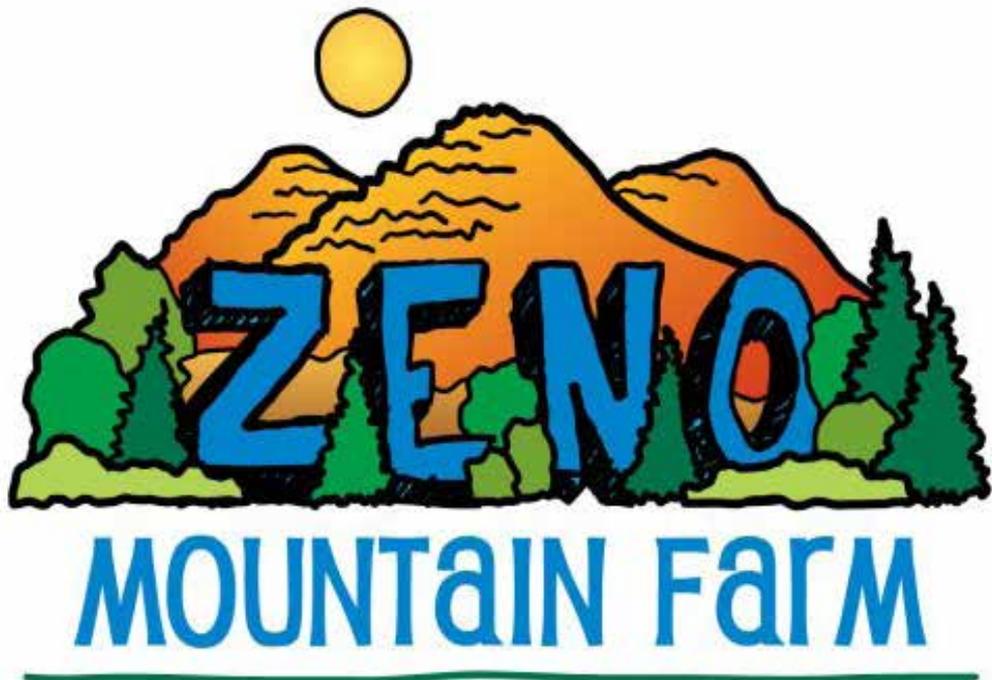


RYAN NIEMILLER

You may know Ryan Niemiller as the disarmingly handsome comedian and 3rd place finalist from America's Got Talent Season 14. Despite being born with a disability in both arms, Ryan, the self-proclaimed, "Cripple Threat of Comedy," shares his views of the world from the perspective of the handicapped (and very handsome).

Ryan began his comedy career in Los Angeles, California, and hasn't looked back since. He's a favorite performer in clubs and colleges across the country. His comedy covers topics such as dating, trying to find employment and attempting to find acceptance in a world not designed for him.

With his quick wit, good looks, great timing, and a gimmick that only he can exploit, Ryan hopes to prove to the comedy world that he may be unarmed, but he is dangerous. And handsome - in case you missed it the first three times.



ZENO MOUNTAIN FILMS



Rickey Alexander Wilson Jr. was born in Fort Worth, Texas. Growing up playing sports, he diverted his attention to acting during the end of high school after having to take a fine arts class in order to graduate. In 2010, Rickey enrolled into New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, graduating with a B.F.A. in Fine Arts in 2014. He is known for his role in "Best Summer Ever" as well as appearances in "This is Us," "Modern Family" and "Into the Dark."



Andrew Pilkington is a producer living in Manhattan. He has worked for award-winning directors including Alex Gibney and Morgan Spurlock. Pilkington has produced four feature-length films, which he wrote, directed, edited and produced. He also created a series of videos that explored technology for people with disabilities in collaboration with the Institute of Human Centered Design. Born with cerebral palsy, Pilkington takes a nonchalant view of his disability. He is a graduate of the Harrington School of Communication and Media at the University of Rhode Island where he won the Film Excellence Award in 2014. He loves making movie magic. He produced and co-wrote Best Summer Ever, a feature musical starring actors with disabilities that was selected into the SXSW Film Festival 2020. It was awarded the Final Draft Screenwriter Award prize.



MAT FRASER

Mat Fraser is a British actor, writer, drummer, musician and cabaret performer. The classic Jack of all trades and master of only one. He's known for his work in "American Horror Story," "His Dark Materials" and "Silent Witness." He's also the curator of "CripTales," a collection of six short films each written and performed by people with disabilities that premiered on BBC America.

The pieces include stories about a disabled actor lamenting the audition process, a wheelchair user contemplating getting an abortion in the 1960s, a woman dealing with the inefficient benefits system in the U.K., a young man exploring his sexual freedom upon getting his first electric wheelchair, an amputee looking for love, and a wheelchair user grappling with a controlling caretaker. For the project, BBC America procured an accessible studio, and Fraser worked with the crew about how to best work with actors with disabilities before the filming began.



VALARIE KAUR

Valarie Kaur is a seasoned civil rights activist and celebrated prophetic voice “at the forefront of progressive change” (Center for American Progress). Valarie burst into American consciousness in the wake of the 2016 election when her Watch Night Service address went viral with 30+ million views worldwide. Her question “Is this the darkness of the tomb – or the darkness of the womb?” reframed the political moment and became a mantra for people fighting for change. Valarie now leads the Revolutionary Love Project to reclaim love as a force for justice in America.

As a lawyer, filmmaker, and innovator, she has won policy change on multiple fronts – hate crimes, racial profiling, immigration detention, solitary confinement, Internet freedom, and more. She founded Groundswell Movement, Faithful Internet, and the Yale Visual Law Project to inspire and equip new generations of advocates. Valarie has been a regular TV commentator on MSNBC and contributor to CNN, NPR, PBS, the Hill, Huffington Post, and the Washington Post. A daughter of Sikh farmers in California’s heartland, Valarie earned degrees at Stanford University, Harvard Divinity School, and Yale Law School. Valarie’s book, SEE NO STRANGER: A Memoir & Manifesto of Revolutionary Love, was released in 2020 and expands on her “blockbuster” TED Talk.



DEIRDRE LOVEJOY

Deirdre Lovejoy was born in Abilene, Texas, and grew up in Elkhart, Indiana -- the birthplace of Alka Seltzer, most of America's R.V.s, Band Instruments and the famous "River City" song about classic Broadway musical "The Music Man." As a kid, Deirdre tagged along with her mother Marcia, aka "The Theater Matriarch of Michiana," to the Elkhart Civic Theatre and fell in love with acting from the moment she stepped on stage as a fifth grader in "Cat On A Hot Tin Roof." She received her BFA from the University of Evansville and her MFA from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Deirdre's career spans hundreds of appearances on TV, major motion pictures, several Broadway shows and many world theater premieres.

Deirdre portrayed States Attorney Rhonda Pearlman for five seasons on HBO's critically acclaimed *The Wire*. The show is often cited as one of the most influential and realistic television dramas of all time and continues to thrill fans on

HBO On Demand. Dede has played murderers, mothers, detectives, doctors, lawyers, social workers, and weeping versions of all of the above. She's been lobotomized, arrested, jailed, killed by cars and peanut oil, witnessed successful face transplants and had her head exploded off of her body by sniper fire (one of the series *Bones*' most popular GIFS to date). *Bones* fans know her as the brilliant/evil lawyer/serial killer, Heather Taffett, aka "The Gravedigger." Last year, she made waves with her searing portrayal of kidnapping psychopath Wanda Barzee in the critically lauded *I am Elizabeth Smart*. She can currently be seen recurring on *The Blacklist* on NBC and in leading roles on Netflix's *Raising Dion* and *Big Dogs*.



ALYSON PALMER

Alyson Palmer is a producer, director, activist and community organizer best known for her longtime work as a singer/songwriter in the indie rock trio, BETTY. With the band, Aly tours, writes and performs music for soundtracks, commercials, film, radio and television – including the theme songs for HBO’s Encyclopedia and Showtime’s L Word – as well as the Off-Broadway hit, BETTY RULES. With equality activism a fundamental part of her musical DNA, Aly often leads workshops on tour through the band’s non-profit wing, The BETTY Effect. Through that advocacy project for women, girls and the LGBTQ+ community, she became an Arts Envoy with the US Department of State and has presented empowerment programs all over the world.

On November 11, 2016, Aly founded 1@1 Productions (1at1.org) to create powerful arts events for social justice. Her first action, the 1@1 Minute for Women’s Equality, united one million people worldwide in January 2017. For the 2020 centennial of the 19th Amendment, Aly created and directed Women Take the Stage, a multi-ethnic, pan-American virtual concert and rally to increase voting by and for women. She is the creator of the long-running women’s-history-through-music project, CHIX and the Revolutionary Love Conference’s Artists Uprisings. She has received numerous humanitarian and music industry awards in over three decades of international touring with BETTY. During the lockdown of 2020, Aly created the virtual math and music project AlyAstra.com to ensure that pre-k students of all backgrounds continue to grow math confidence, in part to help create a more equitable economic future. Aly and her family are based in New York City.



KATE SIAHAAN-RIGG

Kate Siahaan-Rigg is an actor, stand-up comic and writer based in New York City. Her solo rock-n-roll comedy shows "Birth of a nASIAN" and "Americasiana" were both invited to the Smithsonian Institute and she has performed her irreverent, political and Asian-centric humor at the Montreal Comedy Festival, The Perth International Festival, and on PBS, Showtime, LOGO, Comedy Central and NBC. She performs at clubs and colleges all over the world with her Amerasian music and comedy duo Slanty Eyed Mama and is a graduate of the Juilliard School.

She has hosted events for the Kennedy Center, Asian Heritage Month celebrations all over the country, The Smithsonian, Harvard University, L.A. Grand Performances and more. Her comedy film Happy Lucky Golden Tofu Panda Dragon Good Time Fun Fun Show was invited to ten film festivals including the first OTR Film Festival and won several awards including Best Feature at the Broad Humor Film Festival in Los Angeles. She is the creator and executive producer of three comedy based reality shows and her work as an actor has been seen on Law and Order, Fox's Family Guy, New Amsterdam, Tales of The City, The Dr. Phil Show where she was a comedy correspondent, SVU, and the recent film Mile 22. Please visit www.katerigg.com for more.



INDIGO GIRLS

The Indigo Girls are among the most enduring musical outfits to emerge from the late-'80s female singer/songwriter scene and to a lesser degree the later iteration of the Athens, Georgia scene that birthed R.E.M., Love Tractor, and Widespread Panic. The Grammy-winning duo of Amy Ray and Emily Saliers established a devoted national fan base thanks to early hits such as "Closer to Fine" from their self-titled Epic release in 1988; it was the first of six consecutive gold- and/or platinum-certified albums.

The Indigo Girls are celebrated almost as much for their political and social activism on such issues as LGBTQ and Native American rights, protecting the environment, and work against the death penalty. With a passionate live show that consciously sought to erase distances between audience and performer, they have grown a fan base across U.S. borders into Canada and Europe.



Photo by Christopher Robinson

SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK

Sweet Honey In The Rock® is a performance ensemble rooted in African American history and culture. The ensemble - currently consisting of members Carol Maillard, Louise Robinson, Nitanju Bolade Casel, Aisha Kahlil, and featured musician Romeir Mendez on upright acoustic bass and electric bass - educates, entertains and empowers its audience and community through the dynamic vehicles of a cappella singing and American Sign Language interpretation for the Deaf and hard of hearing.

Sweet Honey's audience and community comes from diverse backgrounds and cultures throughout the United States and around the world, and includes people of all ages, economic/education/social backgrounds, political persuasions, religious affiliations, sexual preferences and differing abilities.



BETTY

BETTY, the alternative pop rock band fronted by activists Alyson Palmer, Amy Ziff, and Elizabeth Ziff, is known for clever lyrics, soaring harmonies and energetic live shows. Since forming in 1986, the band's distinctive sound has been heard in concert worldwide, on tv and tube (The L Word theme song, Weeds, Ugly Betty, & more), in films (the holiday classic Life With Mikey, The Out-of-Towners, and more), Off-Broadway (the hit musical BETTY Rules, directed by Michael Greif of Dear Evan Hanson and RENT), on the radio as Holiday Commentators for NPR, as guests on many compilation recordings and on ten albums of their own, readily available online.

BETTY's heartfelt feminist passion and international appearances as Arts Envoys for the US State Department led Gloria Steinem to suggest they create The BETTY Effect, a non-profit for their ongoing work on behalf of women and girls, LGBTQ+ people and those marginalized by society. BETTY has received numerous arts and humanitarian honors for their lifelong mission, including the BMI Career Excellence Award and the Official State Honor of Buenos Aires. Currently, they're recording their 11th album and telling their wild adventures on the podcast BETTY: Girlband.



**OVER-THE-RHINE
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL**

organized by **ladd** ↓

**A CELEBRATION OF:
INCLUSION IN FILM & MEDIA**

MARCH 11, 2021

A VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE

PRODUCED BY



KATE SIAHAAN-RIGG

Writer / Creative
Executive Producer



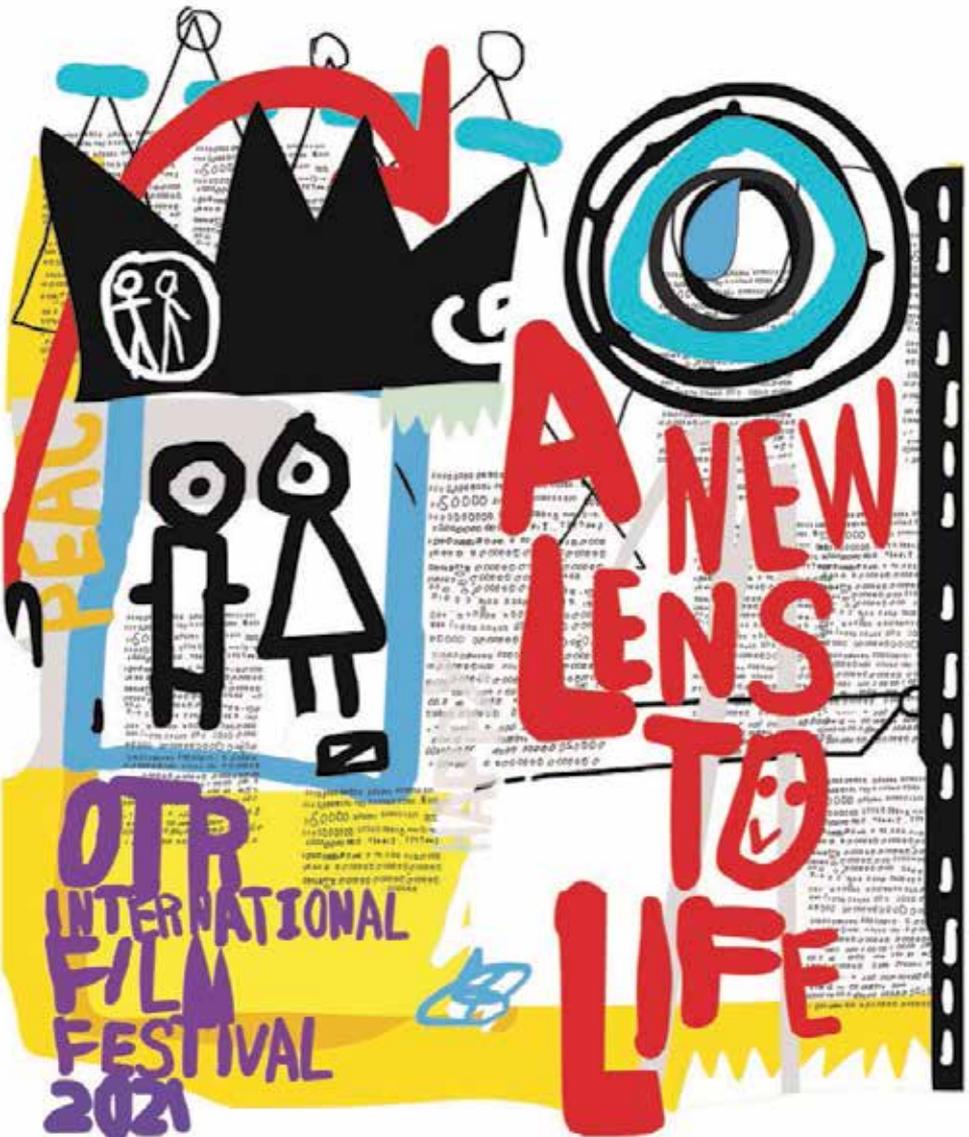
ALYSON PALMER

Producer



A NEW LENS TO LIFE: OVER-THE-RHINE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

July 8-11, 2021 Cincinnati, Ohio otrfilmfest.org for tickets



COLLABORATION WITH HAPPEN INC. BREADWINNERS

LADD artists and Happen Inc.'s Breadwinners, an earn-and-learn program where teen participants meet every week to share a meal and to design and print their own t-shirts, met collaboratively over three sessions to create artwork for the 2021 theme of the OTR International Film Festival. Ideas were consolidated into final design options that were voted on by LADD artists and the OTR Film Festival Marketing Committee. Happen's Breadwinners printed the shirts and will earn money for their work. A portion of the proceeds also provides support for community identified needs.

Special thanks to:

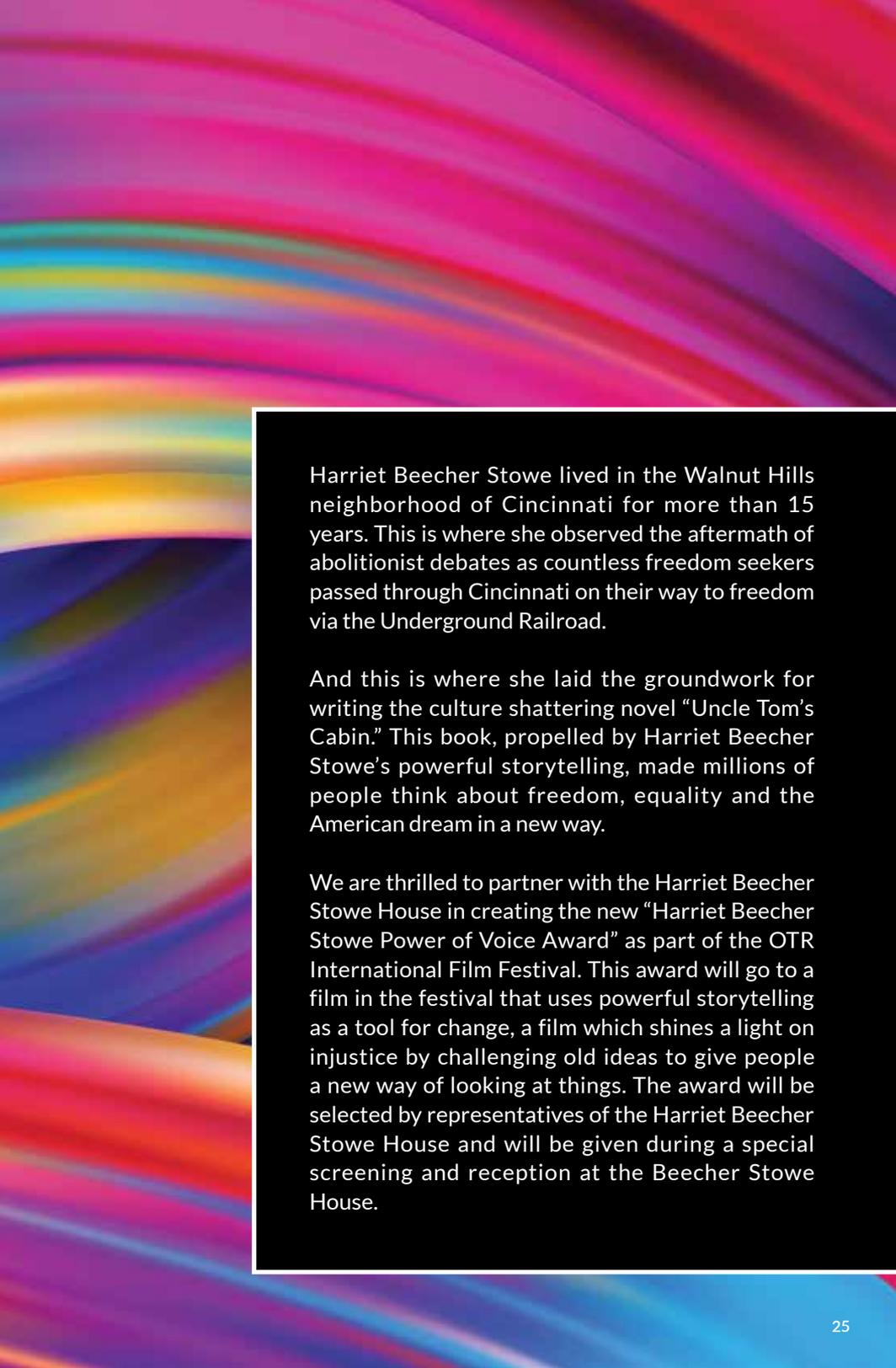
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TOBY CRUMPLEY
TIANNA HILL
ALICE LYONS SILER
EMMY REISING

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

POWER OF VOICE AWARD: _____





Harriet Beecher Stowe lived in the Walnut Hills neighborhood of Cincinnati for more than 15 years. This is where she observed the aftermath of abolitionist debates as countless freedom seekers passed through Cincinnati on their way to freedom via the Underground Railroad.

And this is where she laid the groundwork for writing the culture shattering novel “Uncle Tom’s Cabin.” This book, propelled by Harriet Beecher Stowe’s powerful storytelling, made millions of people think about freedom, equality and the American dream in a new way.

We are thrilled to partner with the Harriet Beecher Stowe House in creating the new “Harriet Beecher Stowe Power of Voice Award” as part of the OTR International Film Festival. This award will go to a film in the festival that uses powerful storytelling as a tool for change, a film which shines a light on injustice by challenging old ideas to give people a new way of looking at things. The award will be selected by representatives of the Harriet Beecher Stowe House and will be given during a special screening and reception at the Beecher Stowe House.

NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD FREEDOM CENTER FREEDOM AWARD



The Underground Railroad is the spring from which all other social justice movements in the United States emerged. From the suffragists, to Black Lives Matter, to every movement in between, people drew inspiration from the freedom seekers, conductors and abolitionists who fought together for a better world.

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center seeks to build on the legacy of the Underground Railroad with programs that promote Inclusive Freedom: That is economic, systemic, educational, and political freedom. Freedom that extends to everyone regardless of race, gender, sexuality, ability, or religion.

In order to be empowered in our society, it is important for us all to be seen and

heard. For our stories be shared. For different points of view to inspire and light the way for future generations.

We are so excited to partner with the Freedom Center in creating the new “Freedom Award” at the OTR Film Festival, awarded to a film which puts freedom front and center. The award will be selected annually by a jury of trustees and presented at a special screening and reception at the Freedom Center.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Honoring Indigenous Peoples



We respectfully acknowledge that the land on which we live, work and gather - the land on which Cincinnati was built -- are the lands of Indigenous peoples, including the Shawnee and Myaamia. We honor with gratitude the stewards of this land, both past and present, and celebrate all Indigenous communities.

We also thank Jheri Neri of the Greater Cincinnati Native American Coalition for his consultation on this acknowledgement.

Acknowledgement is a simple, powerful gesture, but is only the beginning toward truth and reconciliation. To take further action, we invite you to support Indigenous-led movements as well as donating to Indigenous organizations.



The Over-the-Rhine International Film Festival has become a driving force for film, inclusion and community in Cincinnati because of an incredibly talented cadre of volunteer leaders. Members of our leadership and marketing committees give their time and efforts ensuring the festival's mission is realized. Even in the midst of this unprecedented past year, they have infused new life into the festival and prioritized how to re-engage safely with you, members of our OTR Film Fest community. I am deeply grateful for their hard work and commitment to celebrate our shared humanity.

Sincerely,

Barbara Hauser

OTR International Film Festival
Marketing Committee Chair

LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE



Jack Geiger

*OTR Film Festival
Leadership Committee Chair*



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AGAR

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

The theme of this year's festival is "A New Lens to Life," which encourages us to seek out new perspectives and experiences as we join together to create that perfect idyllic global community. Film offers opportunities to explore multiple layers of identity, storytelling, history, and culture.

The Over-the-Rhine International Film Festival is committed to diversity, actively searching for films from storytellers of all races, cultural traditions, genders, abilities, sexualities, ages, and national origins. We endeavor to spotlight intersections of ideas and identities by giving under-represented filmmakers the chance to present their stories to audiences at our festival. Our goal is to showcase Cincinnati as a cultural hub for storytellers.

As part of this effort, we recognized the strain the pandemic placed on filmmakers, in particular, and instituted a plan to ease that burden. During the opening month of our film submission process, we waived fees for filmmakers, many of whom were struggling to map out their festival options with limited resources. **That decision, by the end of our submission period, led to a record number of films up for consideration – more so than during our first two years combined.** In turn, that inspired our screening committee, comprised of film professionals, academics, volunteers, and representatives from LADD to open themselves up to the challenge of building a slate dedicated to ensuring that accessibility concerns are presented in the broader cultural and societal conversations about race, gender, and faith. Only then can inclusivity truly be seen as part of our overall mission.

The same way we've intentionally focused on filmmakers, we plan to keep audiences – in particular, everyone's health and safety – in the forefront as we move forward. Our "New Lens to Life" has meaning and communal impact only when we can unite our passions and burgeoning understanding through respectful debate safely. I look forward to sharing updates with you throughout these months leading up to July's celebration of our shared humanity.

tt stern-enzi

OTR International Film Festival

Artistic Director

SCREENING COMMITTEE



Daniel Coleman

Walnut Hills High School



Kevin Fleischmann

Screening Core Team



Marcelina Robledo

Screening Core Team



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OTR International Film Festival



Mark Fried

LADD Film Critic



Michael Gott

UC Film and Media Studies



Peter Niehoff

UC Film and Media Studies



Sara Drabik

NKU Film and Media Studies



Todd Herzog

UC Film and Media Studies



Beau Alquizola

Screening Core Team

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Kathleen Sheil

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Saul Schottenstein
FOUNDATION B

Saul Schottenstein Foundation B congratulates Jason's Connection for reaching over 300,000 community members on its Facebook page and website making it one of the largest disability-related sites internationally.

Jason's Connection, founded by an individual with a disability, shares current news and information about disability through a cultural and societal lens from the perspective of adults with disabilities.

Follow Jason's Connection:
Facebook: [JasonsConnection](#)
Website: jasonsconnection.org.





PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

 EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

People with Disabilities are powerhouses of perspective. They have extraordinary life experiences that cause them to discover opportunity in the ordinary, leading to innovation that can change the world.



WHAT EXTRAORDINARY INNOVATION WILL THE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ON YOUR TEAM FUEL?

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see the world in a
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Diversity, when coupled with inclusion, makes our world a better place. It brings innovation and intelligence that makes all of our businesses more profitable.

Fifth Third Bank is passionate about our diversity work and engaging with our community partners to make deeper connections that positively impact inclusion across our footprint.

Learn more at: www.53.com/diversity.



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