

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 28, 2009

## ***Politics on Film Announces 2009 Festival Selections*** ***Films reflect festival mission to entertain, inform and debate***

WASHINGTON – *Politics on Film* today announced the line-up of domestic films that will headline the bipartisan festival's inaugural year. The festival runs May 7-10, 2009.

A complete screening schedule, program details and official selections in the International category will be announced in the coming days and will be available at [www.politicsonfilm.com](http://www.politicsonfilm.com).

"We were honored to have nearly 100 films submitted to the inaugural festival by filmmakers from across the country and around the world," said Gayle Osterberg, Chief Operating Officer. "From serious to light-hearted, from local to global, these films represent a true sampling of the diversity of politically themed stories that filmmakers are invested in telling. We are so pleased to work with the Bipartisan Policy Center to provide a platform for them in the nation's capital."

### **2009 Special Screening Selection:**

- ***The Response, Washington Premiere*** - This courtroom drama, based on the actual transcripts of the Guantanamo Bay military tribunals, brings its audience inside the world and workings of the tribunal process. The film stars Aasif Mandvi (*The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*), Kate Mulgrew (*Star Trek: Voyager*), and Peter Riegert (*Animal House, The Sopranos*). The audience, along with the film's military judges, must decide whether the evidence presented is convincing and credible and if the detainee is, indeed, an enemy combatant.

*Politics on Film* marks a homecoming for Director Adam Rodgers and Writer/Producer/Actor Sig Libowitz, who both hail from the Baltimore/DC area. The film was shot and produced locally, and has, to date, been accepted into seven Academy Award qualifying film festivals.

Runtime: 30 minutes

## 2009 Official Selections, Documentary:

- ***Abraham Obama, East Coast Premiere*** - When infamous street artist Ron English's image of Abraham Lincoln and Barack Obama merged together gains national attention for being illegally pasted all over Boston, he decides to gather a crew of artists and musicians and take off across America, plastering the image wherever they can find an open wall. In the spirit of Hunter S. Thompson and the Merry Pranksters, Ron English and crew take you on an unforgettable trip through America's underground. Making its East Coast Premiere at Politics on Film, *Abraham Obama* is the first feature film from Jet Set Productions and had its world premier at the San Francisco Independent Film Festival earlier this year.

Runtime: 56 minutes

- ***Cult of Personality, U.S. Premiere*** - *Cult of Personality* documents the 2006 New Orleans Mayoral election - the most important race for mayor in the history of New Orleans and one of the most unusual elections in the country. Less than a year after Hurricane Katrina, an eclectic group of candidates vied for the attention of voters, many of whom were still displaced. *Cult of Personality* gives a glimpse into the unique brand of New Orleans politics, which is only surpassed by its spirited citizens who tackle the issues at hand with "Big Easy" charm.

Runtime: 45 minutes

- ***Neshoba, Washington Premiere*** - *Neshoba* tells the story of a Mississippi town still divided about the meaning of justice, 40 years after the murders of civil rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner. Although Klansmen bragged about what they did, no one was held accountable until 2005, when the State indicted preacher Edgar Ray Killen, an 80-year-old notorious racist and mastermind of the murders. The film explores whether the prosecution of one unrepentant Klansman constitutes justice and whether healing and reconciliation are possible without telling the unvarnished truth. *Neshoba* has won numerous awards including Best Documentary at the Boston Film Festival and Best Political Documentary at the New York Independent Film Festival.

Runtime: 90 minutes

- ***The Other Side of Immigration, East Coast Premiere*** – Why do so many Mexicans come to the U.S. illegally? What happens to the families and communities they leave behind? Director Roy Germano seeks answers to these and other questions in *The Other Side of Immigration*, a documentary based on his interviews with over 700 households in rural Mexican towns where 20-50 percent of the population has left for work in the United States.

Through an approach that is both subtle and thought-provoking, *The Other Side of Immigration* challenges audiences to imagine more creative and effective solutions to America's illegal immigration problem. *The Other Side of Immigration* is director Roy Germano's first film and was recently seen at the Las Vegas Film Festival.

Runtime: 57 minutes

- ***The Reckoning: The Battle for the International Criminal Court, Washington Premiere*** - Late in the 20th century, more than 120 countries united to form the International Criminal Court (ICC) – the first permanent court created to prosecute perpetrators of crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide. The film follows an ICC prosecution team for three years across four continents as they issue arrest warrants in Uganda, Congo and Colombia, culminating in the arrest warrant for the President of Sudan Omar al-Bashir for crimes in Darfur. As this tiny court in The Hague struggles to change the world and forge a new paradigm for justice, the film highlights the challenges faced in building cases against genocidal criminals. *The Reckoning* premiered at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival in Utah earlier this year.

Runtime: 95 minutes

- ***Sprawling from Grace: The Consequences of Suburbanization, Washington Premiere*** - This documentary feature film explores the unintended consequences of suburban sprawl and illustrates the importance of altering current development trends in the nation's cities. *Sprawling from Grace* is the first feature documentary film from director David Edwards.

Runtime: 82 minutes

- ***What's the Matter with Kansas? Sneak Preview*** - *What's the Matter with Kansas?* follows a group of Kansas conservatives as their fortunes suddenly decline – their candidates lose elections, just as their church splinters, moves to an amusement park, and, when that fails, a Best Western Motel. Meanwhile, an idealistic farmer revives Kansas' progressive tradition, taking his message all the way to Washington, D.C. Based on Thomas Frank's book, which was on the New York Times best-seller list for 38 weeks.

Run time: 90 minutes.

*Politics on Film* is the nation's first juried film festival with a mission to highlight political film broadly, providing a platform for filmmakers who focus on government, the electoral process, or pressing public policy issues, and establishing an entertaining and educational opportunity for the community. The festival will award prizes in four categories: feature film, documentary film, international film, and

political advertising. Screenings will take place at locations including Landmark's E Street Cinema and the Marvin Center Amphitheater on the George Washington University campus.

*Politics on Film* is a project of the Washington Political Film Foundation and is made possible by an alliance with the **Bipartisan Policy Center** (BPC), an organization that promotes political discourse and seeks to unite the constructive center in the pursuit of viable policy goals.

More information is available at [www.politicsonfilm.com](http://www.politicsonfilm.com)

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#### **About Politics on Film**

Politics on Film is a project of the Washington Political Film Foundation. It is an annual, bipartisan film festival based in Washington DC dedicated to providing a platform for films that tell stories of America's politics and policies. The festival celebrates the power of film to educate and motivate, as well as entertain. The Festival also celebrates the historic and ongoing legacy of films about American government and democracy, as well as related stories and themes from an international perspective. [www.politicsonfilm.com](http://www.politicsonfilm.com).

#### **About the Bipartisan Policy Center**

Former U.S. Senate Majority Leaders Howard Baker, Tom Daschle, Bob Dole, and George Mitchell formed the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) in 2007 to develop and promote solutions that can attract the public support and political momentum to achieve real progress. The BPC acts as an incubator for policy efforts that engage top political figures, advocates, academics, and business leaders in the art of principled compromise. For more information please visit our website: [www.bipartisanpolicy.org](http://www.bipartisanpolicy.org).