

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: September 25, 2012

Contact: Karen Haver
Phone: 610.898.1930

BERKS ARTS COUNCIL ANNOUNCES 2012 GREATER READING FILM FESTIVAL
FEATURED SELECTIONS

READING, PA – The 7th Annual *Greater Reading Film Festival: An International Festival with a Local Vibe*, a project of the Berks Arts Council, announces its four *Featured Selections*, non-competition films chosen by the Festival Committee for their cinematic quality and their relevance to particular subject matter that resonates in our community. These films are in addition to the Festival Official Selections chosen for entry into our juried competition.

Berks Arts Council Executive Director Karen Haver shared, “The Committee for the Greater Reading Film Festival had a vision of ‘Reflecting Our Community Through Film’ and brought together these four very different films that both celebrate and reflect Greater Reading. We believe we have reached different aspects of the community through music, art and change.”

The Festival kicks off at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 25th, with a reception in the Cohen Gallery at the Goggleworks Center for the Arts followed by a screening of the award-winning *Girls in the Band*, at the RC Reading Movies 11 & IMAX. *Girls in the Band* is an independent film that tells the stories of groundbreaking female jazz and big band instrumentalists from the late ‘30s to the present. The film is composed from archival film clips, rare stills and interviews with some of the greatest, and least known jazz musicians in history. Director and producer Judy Chaikin is a graduate of AFI’s Directing Workshop for Women and is best known for writing, producing and directing the Emmy nominated PBS documentary, “Legacy of the Hollywood Blacklist”.

Acclaimed jazz artist *Herbie Hancock* says *Girls in the Band* is “a vivid experience... I sat there watching and just wiping tears away...tears of joy.” The film won the Audience Award for Best Documentary Feature at the [Palm Springs International Film Festival](#), the Audience Favourite Feature at the [Victoria Film Festival](#) and Audience Choice Documentary, [Omaha Film Festival](#).

Tickets for the opening reception and screening of *Girls in the Band* are \$25. Tickets to the film only, which screens at 7:30 p.m., are \$8 (adults) and \$5 (students with valid student ID).

On Friday, October 26th the Festival will screen two documentaries by the Seattle directorial team of Mark Dworkin and Melissa Young. Award-winning filmmakers Dworkin and Young will attend the screening of their films, *We Are Not Ghosts* (6:00 p.m.) and *Shift Change: Putting Democracy to Work* (7:30 p.m.). They will be on hand for a “Meet and Greet” between the films and for a panel discussion afterwards.

We Are Not Ghosts looks at the residents who are reinventing a post-industrial Detroit as a vibrant new self-sustaining and human-scaled city. "In the voices, work and imagination of Detroiters a new world is taking shape," says Sharon Howell, Professor of Communication and Journalism, Oakland University.

Shift Change: Putting Democracy to Work is a documentary that tells the little known stories of employee-owned businesses that compete successfully in today’s economy while providing secure,

dignified jobs in democratic workplaces. Filmgoer Anne Mosness says “. . . Mark and Melissa have given us a beautiful gift. . . showing flourishing worker cooperatives, shared owner responsibilities, pride of workmanship, generations of security.” Young and Dworkin have been producing documentaries together since 1986, when they founded Moving Images Video Project to produce and distribute documentaries that encourage peace, social justice, and care for the environment. Tickets for both films are \$15, which includes the “Meet and Greet the Directors” and the post-film panel. Individual film tickets are \$8 (adult) and \$5 (students).

At 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 28, the Festival will screen its final Featured Selection *Misa’s Fugue*, the true story of Frank (Misa) Grunwald’s travels through Prague, Terezin, Auschwitz, Mauthausen, Melk and Gunskirchen as a victim of arbitrary Nazi oppression. Poignantly told through film and interviews with Frank Grunwald, the film was edited, musically scored and visually supported by the efforts of students and faculty of Fleetwood Area High School. Sean Gaston, the film’s producer, director and screenwriter, teaches Media & Communications at FAHS. He is also the Communication Director of the Pennsylvania Holocaust Education Council. Gaston will attend Sunday’s showing and will conduct a Q&A session immediately following the film.

The Festival will feature screenings of competition films throughout the weekend and workshops scheduled for Saturday, October 27. All films will be shown at RC Reading Movies 11 & IMAX at 30 N. 2nd Street in Reading. Festival information and updates can be found at www.berksarts.org

The mission of the Berks Arts Council is to cultivate, promote, and support the arts in our community through collaboration, education, and presentation.

The Berks Arts Council presents the Berks Jazz Fest, the Bandshell Concert Series, Greater Reading Film Festival, the Pagoda Awards, the Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts Re-Granting Program, and provides art exhibition and marketing opportunities for member artists. Visit them at www.berksarts.org.

###