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7th Annual Greater Reading Film Festival Brings Documentary Filmmakers to Luncheon Roundtable with Stakeholders in Reading's Economic Revival

[READING, PA] – The Berks Arts Council's 7th Annual Greater Reading Film Festival joins forces with the Sustainability Committee of the City of Reading on October 26, 2012 to bring Seattle documentary filmmakers to a luncheon roundtable to discuss worker ownership of businesses as a component of an ongoing strategy to overcome the city's economic downturn.

Seattle-based filmmakers, Melissa Young and Mark Dworkin, are coming to Reading to participate in the Film Festival's screening of two of their films, *We are Not Ghosts* and *Shift Change: Putting Democracy to Work*, as Featured Selections. Both films focus on how communities find local solutions to economic challenges. *We Are Not Ghosts* looks at residents who are reinventing a post-industrial Detroit as a vibrant new self-sustaining and human-scaled city. *Shift Change: Putting Democracy to Work* tells the stories of employee-owned businesses that compete successfully in today's economy while providing democratic workplaces.

Young and Dworkin will meet with Mayor Vaughn Spencer, city administrators, business organizations, business incubators, labor and other interested stakeholders to discuss the formation of worker-owned businesses as part of sustainable economic development and job creation for Reading.

WHAT: Luncheon roundtable to discuss worker-owned businesses as part of economic development for Reading. The list of sponsors is in formation, but to date sponsors include the Berks Art Council's 7th Annual Greater Reading Film Festival, Reading Mayor Vaughn Spencer, the Mayor's Sustainability Committee, United Steelworkers Local 6996 and Bullfrog Films.

WHEN: Friday, October 26, 2012, from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

WHERE: Council Chambers, 2nd floor, Reading City Hall, 8th and Washington Streets in Reading. Parking is available nearby at the Poplar and Walnut Streets garage. Entrance on Poplar St.

WHO: The event is a joint project of the Berks Arts Council's 7th Annual Greater Reading Film Festival and the Sustainability Committee of the City of Reading. In keeping with the theme of this year's Festival, *Reflecting Our Community Through Film*, the Festival is reaching into the community to forge meaningful connections between cinematic substance and issues of concern or special interest to our community.

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-Grant Program, and provides art exhibition and marketing opportunities for member artists. The mission of the Berks Arts Council is to cultivate, promote, and support the arts in our community through collaboration, education, and presentation. Mayor Spencer's Sustainability Committee fosters the implementation of economically and environmentally sustainable strategies to overcome poverty and community-wide economic distress while addressing climate change and making the city a greener place to live. For more information about the luncheon roundtable, please call Bill Vitale at 610-207-4149.