

THE INTERRUPTERS TO BE SCREENED AT WEXNER CENTER NOVEMBER 9

ACCLAIMED FILM ABOUT "VIOLENCE INTERRUPTERS" FOLLOWED BY PANEL DISCUSSION

HUNDREDS OF HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS TO ATTEND EARLIER PREVIEW SCREENING

"The Interrupters may be the most necessary film you'll see this year."—*Slate.com*

October 24, 2011—The powerful new documentary *The Interrupters*, which chronicles the true stories of three former gang members working to protect their Chicago communities from violence, will be shown in the Wexner Center's Mershon Auditorium on **Wednesday, November 9 at 7 pm**. The screening will be **followed by a panel discussion**.

Working with the organization CeaseFire, Chicago's "violence interrupters"—who have credibility on the street because of their own personal histories—strive to intervene before incidents explode into violence. In the film, the work and insights of the three violence interrupters are informed by their own unusual journeys. Made by the creators of the award-winning *Hoop Dreams* (Alex James and Alex Kotlowitz), *The Interrupters* has won multiple awards, including Best Documentary Award at the 2011 Miami International Film Festival and Minneapolis Film Festival, and was the Official Selection at Sundance Film Festival 2011 and Official Selection at South by Southwest Film Festival 2011.

Notes Roger Ebert, "Patiently, brilliantly, Steve James looks closely at our society. He begins documentaries with no easy end in sight, and persists....In *The Interrupters*, he has made his most important film."

And Manohla Dargis of *The New York Times* writes, "The stories in *The Interrupters*, a hard wallop of a documentary, may weigh heavily on your heart and head, but they will also probably infuriate you....Mr. James has put a face to a raging epidemic and an unforgivable American tragedy."

After the screening, a **panel discussion** will be held, moderated by **Jerry Saunders**, CEO of the Africentric Personal Development Shop in Columbus. Panelists are **Eddie Bocanegra** and **Ameena Matthews**, violence interrupters from Chicago (both featured in the movie); **Zak Piper**, coproducer of *The Interrupters*; and **Dr. Deanna L. Wilkinson**, an associate professor at Ohio State, Director of CeaseFire Columbus, and founder of the Ohio State Youth Violence Prevention Advisory Board, which is cosponsoring the event.

"This powerful documentary film is certain to spark a crucial dialogue about growing prevalence of violence in our streets, especially among youth," says Wexner Center Director Sherri Geldin. "We're pleased to collaborate with experts at Ohio State and in the Columbus community to bring this issue to the fore. *The Interrupters* is a prime example of bold creative artistry that not only documents contemporary urban challenges but inspires audiences to seek and participate in social change."

Notes Wilkinson, "This event is a perfect catalyst for a community-wide discussion about these important and pressing issues. I look forward to the dialogue that day, and to what this event



The Interrupters (violence interrupter and panelist Ameena Matthews pictured at right)
Image courtesy of Cinema Guild

INFO for PUBLIC SCREENING: *The Interrupters* will be screened Wednesday, November 9 at 7 pm in the Wexner Center's Mershon Auditorium, 1871 N. High St., on the campus of The Ohio State University. Run time of the film: 125 minutes. Panel discussion immediately following. Tickets are \$7; members, students, and senior citizens \$5 (wexarts.org or 614-292-3535). The film contains strong language.

Press kit and images:

<http://interrupters.kartemquin.com/press>

Trailer:

<http://interrupters.kartemquin.com/trailer>

Wexner Center event page:

<http://www.wexarts.org/fv/?eventid=5971>

might mean for future conversations and action to address the issue of shootings on the streets of Columbus.”

After its local premiere at the Wexner Center, the film will have a two-week run at the Gateway Film Center (starting November 11).

SPECIAL SCHOOL SCREENING

The Wexner Center’s education department is collaborating with Columbus City Schools, the Columbus Violence Prevention Collaborative, The Ohio State University’s Youth Violence Prevention Advisory Board, and Strategies against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) to screen *The Interrupters* on the morning of November 9 in Mershon for **440 selected 10th- and 11th- graders representing every CCS high school**. After a screening of the film, the students will engage in small-group discussion sessions. At least two violence-prevention professionals will be assigned to lead each of the 22 discussion sessions, and one or two of the actual “violence interrupters” appearing in the film will circulate among the groups to join in discussions and contribute their perspectives.

Prior to and following the screening, the collaborative partners will work together to develop pre- and post-visit discussion materials to facilitate exploration of the issues of violence prevention presented in the film. The group of 44 violence-prevention professionals from the school system, the community, and Ohio State selected to lead the student discussion groups will have already met in the weeks prior to the screening to preview the film and strategize for these student discussions.

In addition, Wexner Center educators will work with OSU’s Youth Violence Prevention Advisory Board to facilitate conversations prior to the event with local social workers and social service organization professionals, who will also be invited to join the film preview.

EVENT AND SEASON SUPPORT

This event is cosponsored by the **Wexner Center for the Arts** and the **Ohio State Youth Violence Prevention Advisory Board**.

The Interrupters is presented with the support of **Huntington Bank**.

Additional support is provided by **Crane Group, Abercrombie & Fitch, United Way of Central Ohio**, and **The Columbus Foundation**.

Significant contributions for the Wexner Center’s 2011–12 film/video season are made by the **Rohauer Collection Foundation**.

Generous support for the visiting filmmakers series is provided by the **Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences**.

The Wexner Center also receives generous support from the **Greater Columbus Arts Council, Nationwide Foundation**, and the **Ohio Arts Council**, as well as from the **Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center Foundation** and **Wexner Center members**.

The preferred airline of the film/video program is **American Airlines/American Eagle**.

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