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**OCTFME Recognizes Bonnie Nelson Schwartz
as the
March 2018 Filmmaker of the Month**

*Local television and theatre producer acknowledged for her contributions to film,
television, and theatre community in the District*



Washington, D.C. -- The District of Columbia Office of Cable Television, Film, Music, and Entertainment (OCTFME) is pleased to recognize local multi-platform film producer [Bonnie Nelson Schwartz](#) as the March 2018 Filmmaker of the Month.

A graduate of [Catholic University Law School](#), Schwartz's work includes over 100 films, television programs, theatrical plays, and concerts in Washington, D.C., New York, and London over the span of her impressive career. She is a resident of Foggy Bottom in Ward 2.

“Despite my work in New York City on Broadway or around the world, D.C. is my priority -- it’s a place I’ve invested into the community and making a difference. And because I work in these areas -- film, television, theatre, and music -- D.C. is where I choose to put my energy. The District has experienced enormous growth and I am humbled to have had a small hand in it,” said Schwartz.

Schwartz served as the first president and one of the early founders of the D.C.-based media professional organization, [Women in Film & Video](#), a group that honored her as “Woman of Vision” in 2000. Schwartz also founded the [Helen Hayes Award](#) in 1983 which is now the highest distinction in the District for the theatrical performing arts.

“After I worked in New York, I was asked if D.C. had anything like the Tony Awards. At that time, there were only 12 active theatres. Clearly, it was a time to shine a light on D.C. theatre and its potential, so I started an award named after ‘First Lady of the American Stage,’ [Helen Hayes] who made her first appearance as a child at D.C.’s very own National Theatre,” says Schwartz. “Now, the D.C. theatre community is over 90 theatres and growing; they are a strong economic and cultural force in the community.”

Schwartz’s love of the “boards” has run a thread in her earlier career: She and others led a group of D.C.-based preservationists to oversee D.C.’s [Lincoln Theatre](#) renovation. Back in the late 1960’s, [U Street Corridor](#) was referred to as the [Black Broadway](#) with nearly vacant performance venues and Schwartz was an active leader and caretaker.

“[The Lincoln] had deteriorated; When it opened, Cab Calloway was in attendance. At that time, I was so excited about him and what U Street would become -- and produced a series of plays, *Backstage at the Lincoln*, which focused on African American themes. In fact, one of those plays starred Julian Bond. It was an Eureka moment for the public I think -- they had never heard of [The Green Book](#) or U Street as a venue spot before,” added Schwartz.

Schwartz is currently producing [Traveling While Black](#), a virtual reality film and transmedia exhibition that tracks and chronicles how African Americans navigated the travel and accommodations restrictions imposed them during the era of segregation. *Traveling While Black*, produced with Oscar-winning director Roger Ross Williams, is filming at D.C.’s famed [Ben's Chili Bowl](#), as one of the locations for the project.

Schwartz is also currently working on *20/20 One Woman, One Vote Festival*, a festival showcasing both history and contemporary women's issues that is slated for a 2020 roll-out; and *Legacy and Life*, a visual concert honoring President John F. Kennedy.

Power of 7, another of Schwartz's projects, is a powerful documentary film written by 7 award winning scribes dramatizing heart-wrenching examples of abuse perpetrated against women throughout the world. The film will be hosted by Oscar winner [Meryl Streep](#) and will be filmed at [The George Washington University](#) (Ward 2).

Earlier in Schwartz's career in the arts, she taught at both [The Smithsonian](#) and [American Film Institute](#), produced NBC's Closing Ceremonies at the [Barcelona Olympic Games](#) and produced The Olympic Woman Exhibition at the [Atlanta Olympic Games](#) in 1996.

"I am constantly amazed at the continual growth and strength in Washington, D.C -- from my first love, theatre, but also with film, television and music," concluded Schwartz.

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OCTFME launched the "Filmmaker of the Month" initiative as a vehicle for highlighting the talents and creative contributions of filmmakers that make the District of Columbia their home. The Filmmaker of the Month initiative is part of OCTFME's mission to elevate the national and international profile of the District's talented filmmakers.

***If you know of a filmmaker that would make a great future Filmmaker of the Month, you can send OCTFME your recommendations using this [nomination form](#).

About OCTFME

The District of Columbia Office of Cable Television, Film, Music, and Entertainment is responsible for implementing, managing, and administering programs, initiatives, and services that support media industry economic activity, growth, and employment in the District of Columbia.

Washington, D.C.'s instantly recognizable landmarks, diverse neighborhoods, cultural amenities, and first-class accommodations are just some of the many features that make the nation's capital a venue of choice for media production.

For more information, contact the Office of Cable Television, Film, Music, and Entertainment at (202) 727-6608, visit us on the web at <http://entertainment.dc.gov>, join the DC Film community on <http://www.facebook.com/EntertainDC>, or follow us on http://twitter.com/Entertain_DC.

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