

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**June 5, 2025**

**CONTACT:**

**Michelle M. Bailey, [michelle.bailey@dc.gov](mailto:michelle.bailey@dc.gov) (202) 702-6404**

## **OCTFME RECOGNIZES PRIEST DA NOMAD AS THE JUNE 2025 FILMMAKER OF THE MONTH**



Photo credit - Craig Kilgore of Next Level Visions

Washington, D.C. – The award-winning DC Office of Cable Television, Film, Music, and Entertainment (OCTFME) is proud to recognize **Larry Ware II**, professionally known as **Priest Da Nomad**, as the **June 2025 Filmmaker of the Month**. A pioneer of independent hip hop in Washington, DC, and a vital force in the revival of the historic U Street arts scene in the 1990s, Priest has long used his platform to spotlight the voices and stories rooted in the culture of the District. Today, he continues that mission as a filmmaker dedicated to preserving the creative legacy of DC.

His latest project, *I Was the Weirdo*, will have its **DC premiere this Friday, June 6 at 7:30 p.m.** at the **Angelika Pop-Up Theatre in the Union Market District**. The feature documentary uses Priest’s personal journey of pioneering underground rapper to illuminate the often-overlooked U Street hip hop and arts subculture in Washington, DC, exploring how it was shaped by politics, crime, Black excellence, and the District’s own homegrown sound: Go-Go. The screening is part of the **LightReel Film Festival**, Washington, DC’s largest BIPOC film festival, and marks a major hometown moment as Priest brings this deeply personal and culturally rich documentary to the community that helped shape it.

*“Priest Da Nomad’s work exemplifies why we support DC filmmakers,” said LaToya Foster, DC Film Commissioner and OCTFME Director. “He’s telling real, authentic DC stories. That’s how you preserve culture, and that’s how you move it forward.”*

Priest began his public performances in 1992, gaining early recognition at college parties and nightclubs, where DJs would invite him to freestyle in the booth. Through a mutual manager, *LaMont “Monte” Wanzer*, Priest came under the wing of hip hop legend *Biz Markie*, forming a lifelong friendship and appearing in the documentary *All Up in the Biz*, which chronicles the late icon’s life and impact on the genre. As a recording and mix engineer, he has collaborated with an impressive list of artists, including



*Raheem DeVaughn, Ludacris, Dru Hill, BT, Will.i.am, Biz Markie, DJ Kool, and gospel legend Richard Smallwood.*

His solo career and work with the *Freestyle Union* positioned him as a key figure in DC's underground scene. He also helped lead the national hip hop theatre movement, starring in the groundbreaking play *Rhyme Deferred* alongside the late Chadwick Boseman and Apollo Theater producer Kamilah Forbes. Over the past three decades, Priest has released six full-length albums and numerous singles, with appearances on BET's *Rap City*, WUSA9's *Great Day Washington*, Voice of America, and Sirius XM. His work has been featured in *The Source*, *Billboard*, *Sister to Sister*, *Rap Pages*, *Blaze*, *The Washington Post*, *The Washington Times*, and *Washington City Paper*—including a cover story by acclaimed author Ta-Nehisi Coates. He is also the subject of the book *Hip Hop as Performance and Ritual* by ethnomusicologist Dr. William E. Smith, which is currently used as a course text at Bowie State University.

*"I have long been passionate about the underexposed stories and history of the U Street corridor and the artists that emerged from its legacy," said Priest. "So, to be recognized for my contribution to the legacy of U Street and hip hop in DC means the world to me. Thank you!"*

Priest's film credits include [\*I Was the Weirdo\*](#) (documentary feature), [\*The Music Ain't Loud Enough\*](#) (remake music video featuring DJ Kool), and [\*Can't Lose the Soul\*](#) (music video).

Click [HERE](#) to catch Priest's exclusive interview on Saturday, June 7, 2025 at 12:00 pm ET available on our SoundCloud, Apple Podcasts, Spotify. For more information, visit <https://www.iwastheweirdo.com> or connect with Priest on Instagram (@priestdanomad), Facebook (@priestdn), and YouTube (@priestdn) or Email ([priestdanomad@gmail.com](mailto:priestdanomad@gmail.com)).

###

### **About FILMMAKER OF THE MONTH**

The Office of Cable Television, Film, Music, and Entertainment (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," please send OCTFME recommendations using this [nomination form](#).

### **About OCTFME**

The DC [Office of Cable Television, Film, Music and Entertainment](#) (OCTFME), an award-winning District of Columbia Government agency, leads the city's extensive efforts to build and support a sustainable film, music, and entertainment creative economy and labor market. Additionally, OCTFME serves as the city's cable television service provider regulator and as the customer service hub for cable subscribers.

OCTFME's extensive portfolio includes:

- The District's government cable access channels [District Council Channel](#) (DCC), the [District of Columbia Network](#) (DCN), and the [District Knowledge Network](#) (DKN)
- [D.C. Radio](#) (96.3 HD4), OCTFME's owned and operated digital radio station, in partnership with Howard University's WHUR.
- [District of Columbia Entertainment Network](#) (D.C.E), OCTFME's 24-hour streaming platform available worldwide on ROKU, Apple TV, and Amazon Fire TV as well as iPhone and Android mobile devices (download the D.C.E Network App or at [D.C.ENetwork.com](#)).



- The handling of all of the District's filmmaker production needs including **permits, city services, and logistical support**, job placement assistance, workforce development and the [D.C. Film, Television, and Entertainment Rebate Fund](#) (D.C. Rebate Fund).
- Providing additional support to the creative community through the [Creative Affairs Office](#) (CAO) and [Mayor Muriel Bowser Presents: 202Creates](#) initiative. CAO showcases and preserves the District of Columbia's rich creative communities throughout all 8 Wards.

For more on OCTFME: (202) 671-0066 or [www.entertainment.dc.gov](http://www.entertainment.dc.gov).

**Follow OCTFME on Social Media:**

