

For Immediate Release:

January 25, 2021

Contact:

Michael Mitchell 202-826-8168

michael.mitchell3@dc.gov

OCTFME Recognizes Merawi Gerima as the January 2021 Filmmaker of the Month



Washington, DC filmmaker Merawi Gerima taps into his DC roots to inform and shape his community-inspired films.

Washington, D.C. – The District of Columbia Office of Cable Television, Film, Music, and Entertainment (OCTFME) is pleased to recognize Merawi Gerima as our January 2021 Filmmaker of the Month!

“I’m happy to be joining the ranks of all the other incredible Black DC creatives who have been similarly recognized by OCTFME, and those who will be recognized in the future,” said Merawi Gerima.

Filmmaker Merawi Gerima is a Washington, DC native, and it is this origin that inspires and informs the community-inspired orientation of his projects, including his debut feature film, “Residue.” Written and directed by Gerima, “Residue” follows aspiring filmmaker Jay (Obinna Nwachukwu) returning to his childhood Washington, DC, neighborhood that has been changed beyond his recognition. “Residue” is an intense, thought-provoking, evocative and emotional story of social dislocation and broken lives set against the backdrop of gentrification in the District of Columbia.

Gerima filmed “Residue” on location in the District, working with limited resources but an abundance of determination, talent, and community support. The film was a total communal endeavor, made possible primarily by the effort of the people it portrays.

Following its world premiere at the 2020 Slamdance Film Festival, “Residue” was honored with the festival's Audience Award for “Best Narrative Feature” and the festival’s “Acting Award” for star Obinna Nwachukwu. “Residue” was also an official selection of the 77th Venice International Film Festival’s Giornate degli Autori.

Merawi believes it is important for a filmmaker to go outside the boundaries of creative conventions to be a true artist. For an emerging filmmaker to discover and cultivate an authentic artistic voice, they must recognize, respect, and protect their own inherent creative instincts. Gerima says he has learned to listen to those instincts over and above what he learned in film school. “I think the more you listen to your own amateur instincts, the more you're following what will become your voice.”

“Residue” is currently streaming on NETFLIX through Ava DuVernay’s production and distribution company, ARRAY, and has been awarded a string of stellar reviews and top film of the year honors.

Gerima is a graduate from the University of Southern California (USC) School of Cinematic Arts (SCA). He is the son of celebrated Ethiopian filmmaker Haile Gerima, a legendary figure in the L.A. Rebellion film movement and owner of local afro-centric

bookstore and café, Sankofa. Gerima currently resides in Washington, DC.

MERAWI'S MOST RECENT FILM CREDIT(S):

RESIDUE (2020): arraynow.com/residue

Writer/Director/Producer/Editor

MERAWI'S SOCIAL MEDIA:

Twitter: twitter.com/Gerima_Gang

Facebook: facebook.com/merawi.gerima

Instagram: instagram.com/gerima_gang

MERAWI'S WEBSITE:

arraynow.com

imdb.com/name/nm5813830

MERAWI'S MEDIA COVERAGE:

Slamdance: slamdance.com/merawi-gerima-on-residue

Rolling Stone: rollingstone.com/movies/movie-reviews/residue

Variety: variety.com/2020/film/news/merawi-gerima

###

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 Office of Cable Television, Film, Music and Entertainment (OCTFME) produces and broadcasts programming for the District of Columbia’s public, educational, and government access (PEG) cable television channels and digital radio station; regulates the District of Columbia’s cable television service providers; provides customer service for cable subscribers; and supports a sustainable film, music, and entertainment creative economy and labor market in the District of Columbia.

OCTFME operates and manages the District’s government television access channels: the District

Council Channel (DCC), the District of Columbia Network (DCN), and the District Knowledge Network (DKN). OCTFME's award-winning content provides resourceful information on government activity, education, current events, history, music, arts and entertainment. OCTFME manages and programs DC Radio 96.3 HD4 digital radio station, the District of Columbia's first government radio station in partnership with Howard University's WHUR. It is one of only two full-power, city-managed and programmed radio stations in the country

OCTFME provides production support services that advance film, television, video, entertainment, interactive, multimedia, and digital media content creators. These services include permitting; location scouting; production support; job placement assistance; workforce development; and the DC Film, Television and Entertainment Rebate Fund.

OCTFME supports the creative economy through Mayor Muriel Bowser Presents: 202Creates initiative, administering programs supporting the growth and sustainability of the creative industries in all 8 Wards of the District.

For more information, contact the Office of Cable Television, Film, Music, and Entertainment at (202) 671-0066, visit us online at: entertainment.dc.gov, and follow us on Facebook.com/entertaindc, Instagram.com/entertain_dc and Twitter.com/entertain_dc.

###