



STEVEN M. FULOP
MAYOR OF JERSEY CITY

CITY OF JERSEY CITY OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY HALL | 280 GROVE STREET | JERSEY CITY, NJ 07302
P: 201 547 5500 | F: 201 547 5442



STEVEN M. FULOP
MAYOR OF JERSEY CITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 20, 2018

Contact: **Hannah Peterson**

M: 732-881-1209

E: HPeterson@jcnj.org

“How Many Lives?” Documentary Opens in Jersey City on June 21st

The Documentary Explores the Impact of Local and National Gun Violence Through the Eyes of 25 Jersey City High School and College Students Who Created a 180-Foot Long Mural Titled “How Many Lives?”

JERSEY CITY – Directed by Duda Penteadó and produced by Unshakeable Productions, “How Many Lives?” depicts numerous well-publicized episodes of gun violence, some that are local and deeply personal to the team producing the film, others that have occurred across the country. The team behind the documentary will hold a screening on Thursday, June 21, 7pm, at White Eagle Hall, 337 Newark Avenue, Jersey City.

The documentary explores the impact that gun violence has had on a local and national level through following the 25 high school and college students who played a role in the creation of a 180-foot mural that brings attention to this important issue. Some of the images the students chose to depict in the mural include victims from the Pulse Night Club shooting, Columbine, and the Aurora movie theatre, as well as the murders of Trayvon Martin, Philando Castile, and Jersey City Police Officer, Melvin Santiago.

“These students provide a powerful look into the issue of gun violence throughout our nation, and reminds us that this is an issue that impacts us all,” said Mayor Fulop. “I am proud of the the work of these incredible and thought-provoking students, as well as the production team and director Duda Penteadó who brought this documentary to life. I encourage everyone to join us on Thursday to experience the tragedies of gun violence through the eyes of these students.”

Through the artistic process in creating the mural, the artists’ discussions about their creation and its impact on them, as well as the observations and experiences of those interviewed, the viewer is asked to approach the question of what led to the emergence of an American gun culture and why have we been unable or unwilling to solve this most pressing social, political, and human tragedy.

“A great work of art is never based on a simple idea, but it has the power to present and reflect on several important issues. This is exactly what is happening this year of 2017 during the Jersey City Summer Works: Public Art Program where a group of 25 art students decided to embrace and explore the difficult topic of the gun culture throughout the United States,” said director Duda Penteadó.

The project is part of the Jersey City Mural Arts Program (JCMAP), an initiative created in 2013 by Mayor Fulop as part of the city’s anti-graffiti efforts which has so far resulted in over 100 large-scale murals painted throughout the city by a

mix of local, national and international artists.

Each summer, JCMAP offers mural opportunities to Jersey City's emerging young artists aged 11-24. The youth work in teams and are paired with professional public artists who provide step-by-step instruction on public art techniques, including concept development, color selection, surface preparation, design enlargement and coherence, paint application, and preservation techniques.

"I believe that this program is very important and this topic is very important because it's something that happens in our community almost every other day and it's good that we're raising awareness and letting people know about what's happening and how we can help," said Ria Monga, 16, of Snyder High School.

The documentary takes us on a metaphorical train ride throughout Jersey City on the Hudson County Light Rail system, where each station stop represents a significant phase in the artists' exploration of gun violence. In this journey, they not only discuss their views and feelings, but also provide insight by influential policymakers and citizens of Jersey City; insights into the history, political dynamics, and everyday implications of an American gun culture. Among those interviewed in the documentary are:

Steven Fulop, Mayor of Jersey City / Rev. Joshua Rodriguez, Ph.D., Jersey City Police Department Chaplain / Carlos Hernandez, Ph.D., President Emeritus, New Jersey City University / Steven J. McGill, Jersey City Fire Department Chief / Ann Marley, Jersey City Public Schools, Visual Arts Department/ James R. Shea, City of Jersey City, Public Safety Director / Alvin D. Pettit, Director, Bethune Center/ Brooke Hansson, Jersey City Mural Project Director - JCMAP / Meenakshi Dash, Secretary to the Jersey City Public Arts Advisory Board & Co - Director JCMAP

Tickets for the screening are \$10 and can be purchased here:

https://www.ticketfly.com/purchase/event/1696113?utm_medium=api

All media inquiries should be directed to Hannah Peterson at HPeterson@jcnj.org or 732-881-1209.