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New KCPT documentary tackles tough issues on violent crime east of Troost

KANSAS CITY, MO. January 21, 2016 - KCPT will premiere an hour-long documentary “Our Divided City” Friday, January 29 at 7pm. The documentary looks at the social conditions that foster violent crime in Kansas City’s segregated black community east of Troost and asks whether enough is being done to make its neighborhoods safe.

“The title of the film, ‘Our Divided City’, was not the one I had in mind when I first started on the project in October 2014,” says filmmaker Michael Price of English Landing Films. “But in making the film I was able to delve deeper and deeper into the root causes behind Kansas City’s sky-high homicide rate, and that took me further and further into the black community east of Troost Avenue.”

Price spent more than 12 months embedded in the communities east of the Troost and captured more than 100 hours-worth of footage of the neighborhoods most affected by violent crime. Through ride-alongs with Kansas City Police Department, conversations with average citizens, and interviews with city leaders, Price uncovers the naked truth of what it’s like to live on the east side of the city’s racial dividing line.

A spotlight is shone on a new alliance that includes law enforcement agencies, City Hall, and academics called the KC No Violence Alliance or KC NoVA. It introduces a unique style of policing that attempts to work with the community to get ahead of the homicides.

Viewers will go inside KC NoVA as it attempts to put an end to tit-for-tat killings between gang members and it steps into the lives of ordinary families besieged by the violence. There is evidence that community leaders and certain brave citizens are already fighting back, but that for some patience is wearing thin with the city’s authorities.

“We are very proud of this documentary and the work that filmmaker Michael Price and KCPT editor Mark Stamm have accomplished in the finished film,” says KCPT President and CEO, Kliff Kuehl. “This is a tough subject, but KCPT believes in pushing the envelope to bring local issues like this into the community conversation.”

Immediately following “Our Divided City,” KCPT will air “The Crime Caucus” at 8pm, a citizen summit led by Nick Haines with a panel of guests that includes filmmaker Michael Price, community activist Pat Clark and KCPD Major Joe McHale, both featured in the film. Haines picks up on the provocative questions raised in KCPT’s new crime documentary, and pushes for solutions from faith, political, and law enforcement leaders.

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KCPT believes in the power of media on every platform and seeks to use that power to enrich, engage and entertain our viewers both on-air and online. We strive to advance conversations through community engagement and social media; explore complicated issues facing our region with ongoing reporting, investigative reports and informed discussions; and share the stories of people, places, and progress in our community.



Media Announcement

The film is part of a KCPT series of reports focusing on issues of race, crime and justice in our region. The series begins with the documentary “Our Divided City,” includes a community conversation at Paseo Academy, digital storytelling on Flatland, and culminates with the play “Justice in the Embers,” an original production from The Living Room Theatre, The Center for Investigative Reporting, and KCPT, Feb. 4-20.

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