

JACOB BURNS FILM CENTER

JACOB BURNS FILM CENTER UNVEILS REFURBISHED THEATERS

**Its Largest Theater to be Renamed the “David Swope Theater” in Memory of
JBFC Chairman Emeritus**



Pleasantville, NY – May 01, 2023 —The Jacob Burns Film Center (JBFC), a nonprofit cultural institution, is proud to announce the completion of the refurbishment project for its three ground-floor theaters. The work significantly improves the moviegoing experience and refreshes the original theaters from the JBFC’s 2001 opening. The project was made possible thanks to the David Swope Fund, the Regional Economic Development Council Initiative, and many generous donors.

Collaborating with the JBFC on this project was Mt. Kisco-based KG+D Architects, recently named "Firm of the Year" by the American Institute of Architects New York State Chapter (AIANYS). KG+D Architects previously worked with the JBFC on the opening of the Media Arts Lab in 2008.

Yorke Construction Corporation, who also worked on the original Theater renovation in 2001 and later on the JBFC’s Media Arts Lab project, provided the construction services for this project. Their expertise in the performing arts community includes: Jazz at Lincoln Center, St. Anne's Warehouse, and the Metropolitan Opera, among many others.

Charcoalblue, the world's leading integrated theater, acoustic, and experience consultancy service, was also on the project. Their previous projects include: Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, and Sydney Theatre Company, among others.

The refurbishment enhancements to the JBFC’s three original theaters include:

- Plush new seats equipped with better-functioning cup holders
- New, optimal-viewing seating layout in Theater Two with easier access to all seating
- Increased legroom in Theaters Two & Three
- New screen in Theater One
- Improved on-stage lighting and sight lines in Theater Two, allowing for enhanced interaction between patrons and special guests

- Updated Hearing Loop technology which works with an individual's own T-coil enabled hearing aid or cochlear implant
- New handrails and an increase in designated accessible seats for those with limited physical mobility and/or vision loss in Theaters One and Two
- Removable seats that can be swiftly adjusted to accommodate wheelchairs
- Improved sound baffling to eliminate outside noise in Theater Two
- LED lighting on aisle armrests and steps for safety
- Updated flooring with new carpets

Theater One, the largest theater, seats 245 people and is now open to host large-scale events and screenings. Theaters Two and Three seat 118 and 77 people, respectively. Theater Four and the Adam R. Rose and Peter R. McQuillan Theater, with 41 seats and 31 seats, were added in 2015 to allow flexibility when planning film programs.

“With these multiple refurbishments, the theatergoing experience matches the world class curation of our programming team,” said **Mary Jo Ziesel, Executive Director of the Jacob Burns Film Center**. “We’re thrilled to unveil the upgraded facilities just in time for the Jewish Film Festival, our concert doc series Sounds of Summer, Pride Month programming, and eagerly-anticipated new releases such as *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse*, *Barbie*, *Oppenheimer*, and *Asteroid City*.”

Ziesel continued, “The timing is also perfect for our Classroom to Screening Room programs in May and June. Educators and students from across the county will benefit from these improvements as they join us for screenings and discussions. Also, our summer campers will get to experience watching their projects on the big screen alongside their families in a beautiful new space.”

The refurbishment project culminates in the renaming of Theater One as the “David Swope Theater” in memory of founding JBFC Board Member and Chairman Emeritus David Swope. Swope, a dedicated businessman, philanthropist, environmentalist, and community leader, passed away in October 2018. “David’s passion for our mission, infectious enthusiasm for our programs, inspiring leadership, and substantial financial support helped to propel the Burns to the institution it is today,” said **JBFC Board Chair Lynn Sobel**. She added: “For many years to come, countless people will enter the David Swope Theater with a smile as they remember a man who touched their lives and had an enduring impact on the JBFC.”

Renovations are now under way to add a wine bar and casual seating in the Jane Peck Gallery, on the top floor of the Theater. With its opening scheduled for the fall, the JBFC will elevate the filmgoing experience further and continue to foster an engaged community that embraces cultural and social opportunities.

For more information, visit burnsfilmcenter.org, FB: [@JacobBurnsFilmCenter](https://www.facebook.com/JacobBurnsFilmCenter), Twitter: [@JBFC_ny](https://twitter.com/JBFC_ny), and Instagram: [@JBFC_pville](https://www.instagram.com/JBFC_pville).

The [Jacob Burns Film Center](http://burnsfilmcenter.org) is a nonprofit arts and education hub on a three-building campus in the New York Metro area. The JBFC brings the transformative power of film to the surrounding community through unique programming and discussion, shared experiences, and educational initiatives. Since its opening in 2001, millions of people have enjoyed the best of current American and foreign cinema, unique film series, and special events at the five-screen theater complex. A pioneer in visual literacy, the JBFC offers educational experiences for students at our state-of-the-art Media Arts Lab, including curricula for public schools and a fellowship and residency program for professional filmmakers.

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