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## ***GONE TOO SOON Community Screenings at Express Newark*** **Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Post-Show Discussion with Producer/Director Celeste A. Bateman & Film Crew**

**NEWARK, NJ** – (November 30, 2021) – On Saturday, December 11, 2021, Rutgers University–Newark, Office of University Community Partnerships in collaboration with Woman In Media Newark and Celeste Bateman & Associates, LLC will host community screenings of the celebrated new documentary *Gone Too Soon: The Life, Legacy and Loss of Newark's Cultural Icons*. Screenings will take place at Express Newark, 54 Halsey Street Room #213 in downtown Newark at 11 AM and 1:30 PM. The event is free, but registration is required. A post-show discussion with producer/director Celeste A. Bateman and members of the film crew will immediately follow both showings.

Produced and directed by Celeste A. Bateman, *Gone Too Soon* chronicles the lives of 11 creative giants and their gifts that helped land the city on the National Center for Arts Research Top 10 list of Most Vibrant Arts Communities in America (2017). The film combines life stories with oral testimonies, historic footage, photographs, music, narration and color portraits to paint a picture of extraordinary human beings who paved the way for today's artists, in particular, and the community at large.

*Gone Too Soon* unveils portraits of:

**Cephas Bowles** former WBGO Jazz-88 President/CEO, Poet, Playwright, Activist **Amiri Baraka**, Poets **Breya “Blkbrry Molassez” Knight** and **Halim Suliman**; Actor/Director/Arts Administrator **Rodney Gilbert**, Historians **Dr. Clement Alexander Price**, **Charles Cummings** and **Dr. Robert Curvin**, Artists **Russell A. Murray** and **Jerry Gant** and Theater Producer **Kabu Okai-Davies**

"We are humbled and honored to host "Gone Too Soon" here at Express Newark at Rutgers University, Newark," said Salamishah Tillet, Director of Express Newark and New Arts Justice. "Not only does the film actively remember our city's most visionary leaders, but it is also a moving monument and loving memorial to their lives and their ongoing legacy."

"Our mission in creating this documentary is to memorialize the lives and contributions of these individuals who factored significantly in the artistic and cultural landscape of Newark but died before they were able to enjoy the fruits of their labor," Bateman said. "We also wanted to create awareness among emerging artists of those who came before them, providing a strong foundation for their own creative contributions." She added, "Finally, we want those who are new to the city – residents, workers, students, teachers, developers – to understand

and appreciate the rich tapestry of Newark’s culture and those who in recent decades helped to weave it.”

Guests attending the events must wear masks at all times and register at [bit.ly/gtsexpress11](http://bit.ly/gtsexpress11) for the 11 AM screening or [bit.ly/gtsexpress130](http://bit.ly/gtsexpress130) for the 1:30 PM. No food or beverages will be allowed in the venue.

Funding for the documentary has been provided by the M&T Weiner Foundation; Newark Arts (ArtStart Grant); the City of Newark Creative Catalyst Fund in Partnership with Newark Arts, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center and generous contributions from individual donors.

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**About Rutgers University-Newark**

Rutgers University – Newark aims to be a national leader in 21st century higher education through a community as an anchor institution, and drawing the connection between local and global, for the improvement of the economic and social well-being of society as a whole.

**About the Office of University-Community Partnerships (OUCP)**

Rutgers OUCP serves as the nexus that connects Rutgers University–Newark students, faculty and staff to expand, create and promote reciprocal and mutually beneficial partnerships that support and align with the university’s strategic engagement priorities.

**About Woman In Media – Newark**

Woman In Media – Newark is an organization that educates the public about issues affecting the lives of women using film, video and new media as our platform. Merging culture and academia, we rally behind our sisters who courageously struggle to assume leadership roles in the film industry with their conscious effort to present a balanced image of women, dispelling the stereotypes, and changing public perception of their sisters worldwide.

**About Celeste Bateman & Associates, LLC**

Celeste Bateman & Associates, LLC is a production and special events firm and licensed booking agency that specializes in arts and cultural programming, arts management consulting and arts advocacy. To view the *Gone Too Soon* trailer, please visit: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=kh8VB8YAKtc&t=1s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kh8VB8YAKtc&t=1s).