

From: Madeline Kelley
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Subject: TCC's Spotlight Initiative - Van Sant's *I Am Michael* w/James Franco

For Immediate Release

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I AM MICHAEL

**from Executive Producer Gus Van Sant
with**

James Franco, Zachary Quinto, Emma Roberts

CHOSEN FOR 2015 CREATIVE COALITION SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE

New York, NY - (July 20, 2015): *I Am Michael*, the American drama film based on Benoit Denizet-Lewis' New York Times Magazine article, "My Ex-Gay Friend," has been selected to be included in The Creative Coalition's 2015 Spotlight Initiative Film Slate.

I Am Michael, which premiered at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival, is written and directed by Justin Kelly; and stars James Franco, Zachary Quinto, Emma Roberts, and Charlie Carver. The film tells the story of outspoken gay-rights journalist Michael Glatze's 180-degree identity reversal after he found religion, and rejected his "queer lifestyle," and then became a Christian pastor.

"*I Am Michael* takes a nuanced view of complex LGBT issues. The film uses the powerful and potent medium of independent film to enlighten on many different levels," said The Creative Coalition CEO Robin Bronk.

"It is an honor to have *I Am Michael* selected as a Creative Coalition Spotlight Initiative Film. Inclusion in this distinguished program underscores the fact that we were able to make a movie that tells both sides of a risky story without sensationalizing," said *I Am Michael* star James Franco. Producer Gus Van Sant added, "The Creative Coalition's Spotlight Initiative is a home for independent film to be at its most compelling, supporting storylines that are not necessarily easy to grapple with, but that must be told."

The Creative Coalition's Spotlight Initiative is an integrated partnership that champions the art and craft of independent filmmaking by providing cause-related marketing strategies and issue campaign resources that allow the film's message to reach beyond the movie screen. By bringing in influencers from the business, entertainment, arts, and policy arenas to support Spotlight Initiative films, The Creative Coalition is able to promote socially relevant, independent filmmaking.

I Am Michael is directed by Justin Kelly; executive produced by Gus Van Sant and Lauren Selig, produced by James Franco, Michael Mendelsohn, Vince Jolivette, Scott Reed, Joel Michaely, and Ron Singer. Screenplay by Justin Kelly and Stacey Miller; music composed by Tim Kvasnosky and Jason Sellards; cinematography by Christopher Blauvelt, edited by Aaron Butler. *I Am Michael* U.S. distribution will be announced at a later date.

About The Creative Coalition and the Spotlight Initiative:

The Creative Coalition (www.thecreativecoalition.org <<http://www.doubleknot.com/openrosters/ShowPage.aspx?3436323535307L31333438353434>>) is the premier nonprofit, 501(c)(3) nonpartisan charity of the arts and entertainment community. Founded in 1989 by prominent members of the creative community, The Creative Coalition is dedicated to educating, mobilizing, and activating its members on issues of public importance. The Creative Coalition uses the power and platform of the arts and entertainment communities in award-winning public service and advocacy campaigns. Actor Tim Daly serves as the organization's president. The Spotlight Initiative was launched by The Creative Coalition, to support independent films with messages that make a positive difference in the world.

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