

FACETS THEATRE

CANCELS



AMERICAN- ISRAELI JEWISH ARTIST KOSHA DILLZ

DURING JEWISH
HERITAGE
MONTH

By Ina Bochian

Photo Credits: Ronit Bezalel

WHAT A TIME TO BE A JEW

NO JEWISH PERSPECTIVE ALLOWED at Facets Theater

At exactly 3:21 PM CST on May 13th, the day after Eden Alexander — the last American hostage to be released by Hamas, and the day before Israel’s 77th Independence Day, only 3 hours before the advanced screening of the documentary, “Bring the Family Home,” created and produced by Kosha Dillz, Rami Matan Even-Esh, an Israeli-American Jewish artist, an e-mail from the operations manager of Chicago Jewish Alliance, the co-hosts of the event, went out stating:

“Facets Theater has canceled tonight’s screening of Bring the Family Home — not because of the film, not because of any credible threat, but because of Kosha Dillz’s Jewish identity, and Facets received calls from Facets patrons trying to intimidate them.

Let that sink in.”

Upon receiving the e-mail while on the treadmill, as someone who appears in the film and was present during some of the live discussions, I was stunned Facets Theatre canceled the screening with barely any notice. Having invited friends to the screening, I frantically scrambled to text them to inform them of the cancellation as I imagined the CJA volunteers were doing simultaneously.



Kosha Dillz | Wilmette Theater
Photo Credit: Ina Bochian

Firing off a text that read, “THIS IS A LOGISTICAL NIGHTMARE,” I knew everyone at CJA would somehow “figure it out,” as they always do when Jewish events get cancelled or when there are security concerns. Within the next hour, before receiving a second e-mail about the location change to Wilmette Theatre, CJA had already posted the swift change on their Instagram.

Unfortunately, being Jewish nowadays is less acceptable than chanting “Heil Hitler,” along with Ye’s new song that praises the architect of the Holocaust, while glorifying the final solution. Many fans, especially Chicago natives, defend Ye’s choice to encourage the annihilation of all Jewish people if you go on social media and look at the comments under any post discussing the song and artistic choices made by Ye, intended to incite hate.

On the other hand, Kosha Dillz, who is also a rapper, is ostracized and canceled during Jewish Heritage Month for showing a movie about peaceful dialogue on college campuses about making a path for peace amongst Palestinians and Jews? When Kosha started talking about the incident and having talked to the Facets Theater management, he stated, “They said they are canceling me, Kosha Dillz, not just the film.” He went on to explain that representatives of the facility did not watch and refused to watch the film, even though they had previously agreed to screen it.

Apparently we are on Hate Time, with a blatant disregard to the meaning of Jewish lives that have ended prematurely due to the brutal massacre of October 7th at the hands of Hamas, which resulted in the premature loss of over 1,200 lives and the kidnapping of 250, including those of Americans that attended the NOVA Music Festival, which was a key location in inciting the ongoing Hamas Israel War.



Josh Weiner | Co-founder Chicago Jewish Alliance
Photo Credit: Ronit Films

Any life lost to war is an atrocity, but Jews don’t count, nor are they regarded by those who are avid supporters of Hamas. In the film, there are a few parts where Kosha is having a conversation with pro murder terrorist supporters who say something along the lines of, “If you have family there (in Israel), I hope Hamas kills them all and all the people you know until there are no more of you left.” Allowing the raging fans of violence speak, Kosha remains calm and responds, “I hope for peace. I don’t want anyone to die. I don’t want a war. I hope your families and friends make it out ok.”

Besides what was included in the film, I was physically present while similar discussions took place on campus at DePaul, alongside Kosha Dillz, Matt Levine, the cinematographer, other students like Michael Kaminsky, who is one of the students who suffered from a fractured wrist while attacked on the DePaul campus by masked assailants with his fellow student, Max Long, who sustained a brain injury as a result of the attack. Just like Kosha Dillz, these brave young men wanted to create space to open dialogue about the conflict between Hamas and Israel. They were attacked while holding a sign encouraging conversations about Israel. Bearing first hand witness to the discourse on campus, no one can argue that the documentary was an inaccurate representation of factual events because I was there.

No amount of gaslighting Facets Theatre participates in, painting Kosha Dillz as someone whose “overall tone” is a threat to the community, will negate my lived experience while this documentary was filmed. To the best of my recollection, Kosha Dillz is one of the most calm and collected individuals I have been around who finds creative ways to engage in dialogue, build bridges through conversations, and look for ways to encourage peace and coexistence.

The true victims of the cancellation are the young impressionable minds of students and young adults who are indoctrinated to encourage the brutal assassination of Jewish people, much like the minds of Young Nazis during the 1930's. The pathway to peace isn't through murder, but through open dialogue. Unfortunately, venues like Facets Theatre prefer to silence voices of peace without even offering an opportunity to show “Bring the Family Home,” alongside a documentary that offers a vastly different perspective, “No Other Land.”



David Pawlan | Michael Kaminsky | Wilmette Theater

“Bring the Family Home” Panel

Photo Credit: Ronit Films

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The saddest part of the documentary for me was seeing Jeremiah Smith, the 27 year old cousin of the massacred American Jewish hostage, Hersh Goldberg-Polin, whose family and grandmother are local to Chicago. Before the news of Hersh's violent end reached his family, Jeremiah dedicated himself to driving a truck around Chicago to raise awareness about the hostages suffering at the hands of Hamas in Gaza. As he appears in the documentary, he seems hopeful and full of faith that his cousin would come home alive, but he received the devastating news his dream was cut short on his wedding day, a day a different dream came true for Jeremiah.

"AS HE APPEARS IN THE DOCUMENTARY, HE SEEMS HOPEFUL AND FULL OF FAITH THAT HIS COUSIN WOULD COME HOME ALIVE, BUT HE RECEIVED THE DEVASTATING NEWS HIS DREAM WAS CUT SHORT ON HIS WEDDING DAY, A DAY A DIFFERENT DREAM CAME TRUE FOR JEREMIAH."



"Bring The Family Home" Screening | Wilmette Theater

Photo Credit: Ronit Films

On the panel after the screening of the documentary, Kosha makes a point to express that although life has been lost, love prevails as another kind of life begins. For Jeremiah, a black Chicagoan born in a Cabrini-Green bathroom, Marcy Goldberg, who is Hersh's grandmother, offered him the possibility to dream of a family life when she took him in as family, he explains in an interview with [Dr. Yvette Alt Miller](#) for Aish magazine titled, "[Why This Chicago Man is Raising Awareness about Gaza Hostages.](#)"

While poignantly summarizing the tragedy of a life lost too soon at the hands of those who believe in "resistance at any cost," much like some local Chicago Ye fans who espouse a radical ideology, like the "final solution," for all Jewish people, it seems the central message has been overshadowed. For me, Jeremiah serves as a tangible representation of the local Chicago conflict between those advocating for an end to the war between Hamas and Israel, seeking the safe return of all hostages, and those who believe that Jewish people and their allies have no place in the world, thus rejecting the possibility of dialogue for peace.

Desiring peace and the return of hostages reflects a stance that is both pro-Palestine and pro-Israel. In contrast, endorsing resistance through the brutal kidnapping, rape, and murder of innocent civilians [many of whom are around the median age of Lollapalooza concert-goers] only perpetuates a cycle of trauma that keeps us suffering while we remain silenced and divided.

Not only have I heard firsthand accounts of pro-Palestinian protesters praising Hamas on the campus of DePaul University while "Bring the Family Home" was being filmed, but I was also with Michael Kaminsky just hours after he was violently attacked at Loop Synagogue, which was hosting an Arab-Israeli proponent of peace in the Middle East. During that incident, we were all terrified as protesters broke down the synagogue doors and stormed into the place of worship, disrupting potential dialogue about the peaceful coexistence of Jews, Christians, and Muslims.



Yoseph Haddad | Michael Kaminsky | Loop Synagogue
Photo Credit: Ina Bochian

**“Desiring peace
and the return of
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and pro-Israel.”**

By the grace of G'd, the speaker, Yoseph Haddad, was able to address us that night. Those of us who believe in peace felt a renewed sense of hope, recognizing that building bridges toward peaceful treaties between Jews, Christians, and Muslims is possible. If we continue to advocate for open dialogue among those committed to creating a pathway that ends this conflict, we can strive to prevent any further loss of life on either side. Unfortunately, this hopeful moment was short lived because most of the progress made by peacemakers, like Michael Kaminsky, Yoseph Haddad, and now Kosha Dillz is short lived.

While we take a few steps forward, we find ourselves forcibly pushed back, but somehow manage to find Jewish Joy, as David Pawlan, one of the co-founders of Chai Chi, on the panel hosted after the documentary screening, suggests. Encouraging Kosha, David sympathized with him regarding the loss of friends, opportunities and challenges by stating, "You're bringing Jewish joy [simcha], when you chose to be vocal ... and you chose to approach this [anger] with a smile...We can sit here, and be happy... reflecting on our experiences with a positive light and moving forward there will still be that positivity no matter what's happened in the past."



David Pawlan | Co-Founder Chai Chi | Michael Kaminsky
"Bring the Family Home" Advanced Screening Panel
Wilmette Theater

Photo Credit: Ronit Films

"YOU'RE BRINGING
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— DAVID PAWLAN
CO-FOUNDER CHAI-CHI



Photo Credit: Ronit Films

David Pawlan | Co-founder Chai Chi | Michael Kaminsky
David Rosenfield | American Jewish Committee
“Bring the Family Home” Advanced Screening | Wilmette Theater

Echoing a similar sentiment, Jake Rosenfield from the American Jewish Committee, who also spoke on the panel, said, “Today is a perfect example for how it’s felt for us the past 18 months.... Being Jewish — in Chicago — has been an extremely isolating experience.... What is beautiful about this documentary is that you highlight it in such a way that you’re going to engage in constructive dialogue.” Nodding in agreement, we could almost cut the tension in the room with a knife because looking around the room, there was a heaviness in the comradery that brought us together, but also a sense of calm.

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—Jake
Rosenfield |
American
Jewish
Committee

שלום simcha



Josh Weiner |
Co-founder
Chicago Jewish
Alliance
& Kosha Dillz



Photo Credits: Ronit Films



Danny Schwartz | Co-founder Chicago Jewish Alliance
"Bring the Family Home" Advanced Screening | Wilmette Theater

Find
Jewish
Joy

The discomfort we felt in the room was similar to the sentiment I felt while celebrating Israel's Independence Day, Yom Ha'atzmaut, at Chai Chi's YOM HAATZMAYACHT event a couple of weeks back. Regardless of what may have happened in the past and what brought us all together with our unique perspectives, at least we are all in the same boat. Perhaps under different circumstances, none of us would even know each other, but looking around at each other in the room, or having seen ourselves on screen, we find solace in knowing we are doing our part to move the plot toward a more beautiful tomorrow. We find joy in knowing that we have a bond that transcends adversities because external enemies are only solidifying our sense of community.

To sum up the moment, Michael Kaminsky said, "I don't know about you guys, but there really isn't an off switch for me when it comes to being Jewish... I feel like... just wearing your Star of David is being an activist. Right? It is leading from in front. It is setting a precedent that it's OK to be a Jew in 2025. It's OK to be a Jew everywhere you go. And people take notice of that...and what we need more of." To be a courageous Jew today requires leaning into the Jewish identity that may be easier to deny during such a time as this, yet bravery is built minute by minute on tough days that seem more like a test than celebrating Jewish culture, like we ought to in the month of May.



Group Shot with Kosha Dillz at Wilmette Theater
"Bring the Family Home" Advanced Screening

Photo Credits: Ronit Films



"I feel like... just wearing your Star of David is being an activist."

-Michael Kaminsky-



Sarah Munson | VP of Marketing | Chicago Jewish Alliance
Kosha Dillz at Wilmette Theater
"Bring the Family Home" Advanced Screening

Photo Credits: Ronit Films

Later that night, at dinner, Kosha Dillz, whose real name, Rami, derived from the Arabic word "Ram," meaning "to dream," remarked, "This isn't a celebration. We haven't done much. This is where the work begins so that our voices are heard." Reflecting on the evening's events, I observed Rami, half-present and focused on his phone, and I began to grasp what it means to have a unified dream as a people, rather than merely pursuing individual goals. For the Jewish community, it seems we are all interconnected; one person's progress inspires and empowers the dreams of others awaiting their own moments of fulfillment. These moments can be both bittersweet and beautiful, much like how Jeremiah must have felt on his wedding day, learning of the loss of a cousin who was like a brother to him.



Ina Bochian | Kosha Dillz | Matthew Levine | Benjamin Altman

"Bring the Family Home" | Wilmette Theater

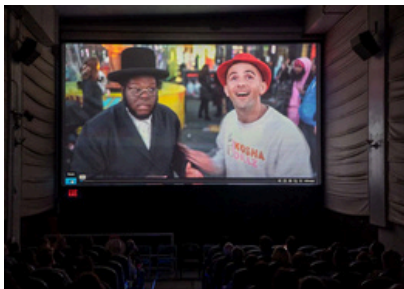
Photo Credits: Ronit Films



Photo Credits: Ronit Films

"This isn't a celebration... This is where the work begins."

-Kosha Dillz-



"Bring The Family Home"

Seated next to a Christian ally named Grace and across from Michael Kaminsky, his brother, and father, we discovered new ways to connect and shared moments of laughter as we discussed our mutual acquaintances. The world feels remarkably small when you are part of a team training for the Maccabiah Games or simply striving for survival and acceptance. It may seem cliché, yet it is fitting to reflect on the grace we've been given to live during this historical moment, actively contributing to a narrative that transcends the documentary Rami has brought from dream to reality.

Jeremiah, who is not Jewish, remained heavy on my heart as I considered the impact he must have on the Black community in Chicago, even if it touches only a few individuals. Not too long ago, Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream, but he walked so Jeremiah could drive a truck around Chicago and Rami could run. As I looked at my friend Iola Kostrzewski, who is Black and Jewish and works for the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), I appreciated her willingness to share her own experiences of navigating the isolating landscape of a post-October 7th world. I was grateful that Kosha had brought us all together while producing his documentary. We first met at the Cubby Bear during one of Kosha's shows on a Shabbat.



Grace Keathly | Josh Weiner | Co-Founder CJA
"Bring the Family Home" Advanced Screening Panel
Wilmette Theater

Photo Credit: Ina Bochian

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The adversity faced while helping Kosha realize his dream seemed to echo the manifestation of Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream as well. This time, the resolution to conflict isn't solely about merging black and white, but about embracing the intersectionality of our shared experiences while creating space for the unique nuances that define us. Kosha and the Chicago Jewish Alliance have been the catalysts for developing "Bring the Family Home," while the rest of us are responsible for driving the rest of the narrative as we maintain continuity. If we unite towards the common goal of bringing the family home, we also have to work together as a family that prepares a home for those who long for a seat at our Shabbat table.



Lola Kostrzewski | Anti-Defamation League (ADL) & Michael Kaminsky
"Bring the Family Home" | Wilmette Theater
Photo Credits: Ronit Films

“If we unite towards the common goal of bringing the family home, we also have to work together as a family that prepares a home for those who long for a seat at our Shabbat table.”



Photo Credits: Ronit Films



Photo Credits: Ronit Films



To support this unfinished project and contribute to fund this project, follow Kosha Dillz on social media at:

Spotify: [Kosha Dillz](#)

Instagram: [@koshadillz](#)

YouTube: [Kosha Dillz](#)

Website: <https://koshadillzworld.com/>

Kosha Dillz is a self-funded artist who has been using his own resources to travel, create, and produce "Bring the Family Home," a documentary aimed at fostering dialogue on how to pave a path to peace between pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli protesters, while advocating for the safe return of the remaining hostages. Your help, support, social media comments, shares, and financial contributions are greatly appreciated.

Please also follow Chicago Jewish Alliance (CJA) on social media:

X: [@ChiJewishAllies](#)

Facebook: [Chicago Jewish Alliance](#)

Instagram: [@chicagojewishalliance](#)

Chicago Jewish Alliance (CJA)—a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to uniting Jewish people and their allies.

For upcoming Jewish events, collaborations, and sponsorships, also follow Chai Chi, an event planning company created with the idea of fostering community through fun, parties, entertainment, music event, and activism to connect Jewish young professionals and non Jewish allies. In the words of co-founder, Harrison Lippy, **"Everyone is welcome as long as they are ally and good, kind, people."**

Instagram: [@chai.chicago](#)

To stand in solidarity with the Jewish community and support fellow Jewish creatives, it is essential that we also uplift each other virtually through our comments and voices on social media. By expressing your support for "Bring the Family Home" and backing organizations like CJA and Chai Chi, you actively participate in "Tikkun Olam," the Jewish principle that encourages individuals and communities to work towards making the world a better place.

BRING THE FAMILY HOME



PHOTO CREDITS: RONIT FILMS



PHOTO CREDITS: RONIT FILMS

**“I MARCHED FOR
BLM, I MARCHED
FOR UKRAINE
BUT THIS TIME
ME AND MY
PEOPLE IN THE
NEED OF RAIN.”**

“Bring the Family Home”
KOSHA DILLZ

*"My family
heated
'cause
most of
us died
in the
ovens."
-KOSHA DILLZ-*

PHOTO CREDITS: RONIT FILMS



BRING THE FAMILY HOME

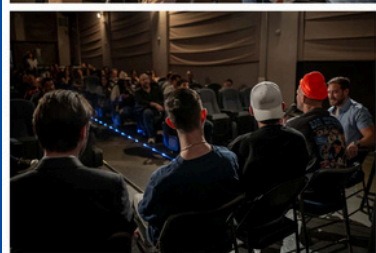


PHOTO CREDITS: RONIT FILMS

BRING THE -Kosha Dillz- FAMILY HOME

**“Bring the family home, we got the world sayin’
Cry to death or can’t sleep, that’s the worst pain
I’ll remember tonight, the night the world changed
The Lion just roared, y’all heard me
Bring the family home, we got the world sayin’
Cry to death or can’t sleep, that’s the worst pain
I’ll remember tonight the night the world changed
The Lion just roared, y’all can’t hurt me.”**

BRING THE FAMILY HOME



PHOTO CREDITS: RONIT FILMS

*"This is for social
justice keyboard
what aboutists
For every family
member murdered
and wasn't
counted."*

-KOSHA DILLZ-

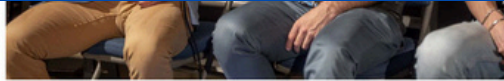


PHOTO CREDITS: RONIT FILMS

“IF VICTORY IN WAR, I THINK
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“Bring the Family Home”
KOSHA DILLZ”



BRING THE FAMILY HOME



BRING THE FAMILY HOME

-Kosha Dillz-

PHOTO CREDITS: RONIT FILMS

BRING THE FAMILY HOME



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"Bring the Family Home"



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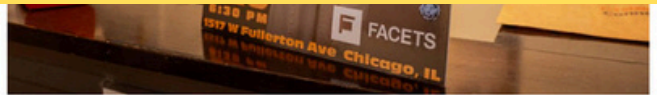


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BRING THE FAMILY HOME

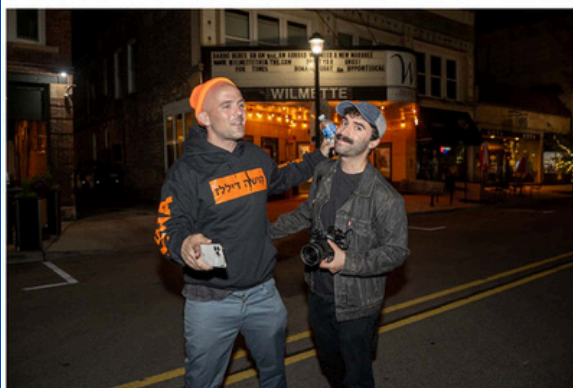


PHOTO CREDITS: RONIT FILMS

"Bring the Family Home"



Matthew Kyle Levine |
Cinematographer |
Director of Photography

"Bring the Family Home"
Advanced Screening |
Wilmette Theater

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Josh Weiner | Co-founder Chicago Jewish Alliance
David Rosenfield | American Jewish Committee
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Kosha Dillz
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BRING THE FAMILY HOME