



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Drexel Theatre to screen *Being There* as part of series of exploring politics, political themes

The Drexel Theatre (2254 E. Main St.) will screen satirical comedy-drama *Being There* (1979) at 7 pm Wednesday, May 8.

The screening is part of the Drexel's *Voices: A Century of Political Cinema* series, showcasing a wide variety of films that brought the politics of their time to the screen. The series is curated from a [special edition of *The New Republic* magazine, titled "The 100 Most Significant Political Films of All Time"](#) and continues through November.

Each screening is accompanied by commentary from a subject expert who will help guide the audience through the film's historical and cinematic importance. Speakers following *Being There* will be David Milenthal and Bexley Mayor Ben Kessler.

David Milenthal founded HMS Partners in 1978 which became the largest advertising and public relations agency in Ohio before being sold to a multi-national advertising conglomerate in 2011. An advertising agency leader, Milenthal developed the long-running "Ohio, the Heart of It All" for the state's economic development and tourism efforts which stood for 16 years under two state administrations (governors Richard Celeste and George Voinovich) and is now again the state slogan during the current DeWine administration. He has helped spearhead efforts to develop brands for the nation's leading cruise line, Carnival; the nation's largest energy company, American Electric Power; one of the nation's top five health care giants, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield; and other national and regional companies.

But Milenthal's primary passion is political strategy and messaging. He is best known as the media consultant for the election and reelection of Gov. Richard Celeste. He also handled messaging on one side or the other of virtually every major Ohio ballot issue campaign in the '80s and '90s. The Milenthals were once called "Masters of

Persuasion” by the *Columbus Dispatch*. Today, David Milenthal is a consultant and chairs a growing new energy marketing company that works throughout the country.

Ben Kessler was re-elected to the office of Mayor in November of 2023, and has served as Mayor since 2012. With a prior professional background in commercial real estate and finance, Mayor Kessler has emphasized sound planning and holistic redevelopment with a focus on neighborhood-scale planning and environmental sustainability.

In addition to his role as Mayor and chief executive of the City of Bexley, Mayor Ben is a past chair of and serves on the executive board of the Central Ohio Mayor’s and City Managers Association as its Secretary and Treasurer; is an executive board member with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, where he serves as Secretary of the board and chairs the Sustainability Advisory Committee; is the Chair of the Central Ohio Energy Efficient Special Improvement District; and serves on the board of the Ohio Environmental Council as Strategic Committee co-chair.

Being There (1979) is a comedy-drama starring Peter Sellers, Shirley MacLaine and Melvyn Douglas. After the death of his employer forces him out of the only home he’s ever known, Chance (Sellers), a simpleminded, sheltered gardener, becomes an unlikely trusted advisor to a powerful tycoon and an insider in Washington politics.

The screening and discussion are free of charge. Advance registration is strongly encouraged at Drexel.net.

Being There is presented in conjunction with the Drexel’s Tuesday Film Parlor program, designed to create a conversation around films with significant artistic and cultural impact. The [Film Parlor](#) is made possible in part by an investment of public funds from the Ohio Arts Council (OAC). The OAC is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally, and economically.

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About the Drexel Theatre

For generations, the Drexel Theatre has been central Ohio’s first source for independent film and the best of Hollywood and international cinema, striving to specialize in simply the best films from around the world. Support is provided by The Columbus Foundation from the Herbert Peterson Fund with the assistance of the Ingram-White Castle Foundation.

About Friends of the Drexel, Inc.

Established in late 2009 by a group of committed community leaders and arts patrons, Friends of the Drexel, Inc. is an independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to a more creative and prosperous

future for the Drexel Theatre. Its mission is to secure and sustain the future of the historic Drexel Theatre as a distinctive cultural asset to Bexley and the greater Columbus community. It envisions the Drexel as a sustainable provider of unique arts content as well as a vibrant community meeting place that preserves the charm and eclectic, neighborhood film-going experience in a warm and inviting, yet technologically advanced, facility. The Friends of the Drexel, Inc. is grateful for the philanthropic support provided by individuals and corporations that make our work possible. For a full list of donors, please visit: <https://www.drexel.net/supporters/>.

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