



**BUTLER  
FILM**

## Documentary “Sacred Ground” takes Director David Butler off the beaten path.

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*“There’s a saying that if you want to know how people treat the living, check out how they treat the dead. Well right now, Baltimore City...would be condemned.”*

*Melvin Stukes  
Maryland State Delegate, District 44*

Spots aren’t the only stories David Butler brings to the screen.

“Sacred Ground: The Battle For Mount Auburn Cemetery” is a feature-length documentary directed by David Butler. David joined forces with Writer/Producer Sean P. Murphy to tell the story of a historic Baltimore cemetery and the passionate group of people willing to fight for the respect their deceased loved-ones deserve.

This four-year project, completed this past October, exposes the current conditions of Mount Auburn Cemetery and the struggle of restoring it to a place of reverence and pride.

The film revolves around community activists and family members battling the cemetery’s long-time owner Sharp Methodist Church for control of Mount Auburn Cemetery, which is a registered historic landmark in Baltimore City. When it was founded in the mid 1860's Mount Auburn was one of the only dignified places in Baltimore where African-Americans could be buried. It is the final resting place of lightweight boxing champion Joe Gans, the first African American world champion in any sport, a number of early civil rights movement leaders and many other historically prominent African-Americans.

One would never know there are 40,000+ souls buried beyond the front gates. At first glance, Mount Auburn seems like a small cemetery with shorn lawns and a few dismantled gravestones, but look deeper and you realize that small cemetery is only a fraction of it’s true size, most of which is in state of disarray with over-grown weeds, squatters and exposed graves.

David entered into this documentary with one goal in mind; tell the story well. He and Sean would set out on early mornings, weekends, and holidays and to capture interviews & footage, just so they could shed some light on this very dark story.

It was with the help and generosity of many that this project came to pass. In addition to the crew who volunteered their time, Clean Cuts in Baltimore provided the audio work, while Cerebral Lounge in Silver Spring delivered the sharp opening titles and graphics.

Sacred Ground is currently on the festival circuit. The Trailer can be seen at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tn3K0jf7gM>

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