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# LGBTQ rights activist and Oscar-winning screenwriter Dustin Lance Black to attend Cinetopia Film Festival

*Will answer audience questions after screenings of The Case Against 8*



Ann Arbor and Detroit, Mich. – **Cinetopia International Film Festival** is proud to welcome activist and screenwriter **Dustin Lance Black** to its June 4-8 program. He will participate in a panel discussion and audience Q&A session after both Cinetopia screenings of the new gay rights documentary [\*The Case Against 8\*](#).

Featuring attorneys **David Boies** and **Ted Olson**, the two prosecuting couples, and Black himself, *The Case Against 8* gives audiences the inside scoop on the overturning of Proposition 8, which gave same-sex couples in California the right to marry. *The Case Against 8* will screen on Saturday, June 7, at 4:45 PM at the Michigan Theater in Ann Arbor (where Black will be joined by representatives from the **ACLU of Michigan**) and Sunday, June 8, at 6:00 PM at the College for Creative Studies in Detroit.

An honors graduate of UCLA's School of Film and Television, Black began his career as an art director and quickly transitioned to directing documentaries and commercials. In 2004, Black signed on to draw on his Mormon childhood experiences in San Antonio as a writer and co-producer on HBO's Emmy- and Golden Globe-nominated polygamist drama ***Big Love***.

In 2009, Black won the Academy Award and two WGA Awards for Best Original Screenplay for ***Milk***, the biopic of the late civil rights activist Harvey Milk, starring Sean Penn. Since then, Black has split his creative time in order to fight for LGBTQ equality at the federal level. He is a founding board member of the American Foundation for Equal Rights (AFER), which successfully led the federal case against California's Prop 8, and served on the board of the Trevor Project, a national LGBTQ youth suicide hotline. Black has also been on an international equal rights speaking tour, and was one of a handful of organizers of the LGBTQ March on Washington in October 2009 where he spoke to an audience of over 150,000 demonstrators in front of the nation's capital.

In 2012, Black merged his passions with "8," a play based on the federal Prop 8 trial. L.A.'s opening night cast included George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Jane Lynch, Martin Sheen, Jamie Lee Curtis, George Takei, and John C. Reilly. The play was broadcast live and continues to break viewership records online. "8" has now been staged over 400 times in all 50 states and eight countries.

**About Cinetopia International Film Festival:** Created for the people of southeastern Michigan, the Cinetopia International Film Festival features the best feature-length dramas, comedies, and documentaries from the world's best film festivals, including Sundance, Cannes, Venice, and Toronto. The Cinetopia International Film Festival would not be possible without the generous support of our presenting sponsors the Knight Foundation, the MASCO Corporation Foundation, Toyota, AT&T and MGM Grand Detroit. Visit [cinetopiafestival.org](http://cinetopiafestival.org) for more information.

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