Director Todd J. Stein's THE FINAL FIGHT Film Enters Final 15 Days of Third Seed&Spark Crowdfunding Campaign

After a successful NYC private screening, $20K+ raised and 112K+ trailer views, Todd J. Stein makes a final push to bring film to festivals and audiences.



The Final Fight Private Screening

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, September 28, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Independent filmmaker Todd J. Stein has entered the final 15 days of the third Seed&Spark crowdfunding campaign for The Final Fight, his deeply personal short film inspired by the true story of his battle to protect his father from an unwanted guardianship. With the film completed, its first private New York screening successfully held at Village East by Angelika in Manhattan, and its official trailer reaching more than 112,000 views, Stein and his filmmaking team are making a final crowdfunding push to take The Final Fight to its next stage: film festivals, new audiences, programmers, and industry professionals while building momentum toward a feature-length motion picture.

> The Final Fight is an incredible story that needs to be told."
>
> *Council Member, Frank Morano*

The campaign follows two successful crowdfunding efforts that raised more than $20,000 toward the production of the film. With only 15 days remaining in the current campaign, Stein is calling on the community that helped make the film possible, along with new supporters discovering the story, to help get it seen. Funds raised will support festival submission fees, publicity, and outreach to help position the short for festival consideration and connect the project with programmers, distributors, and potential partners for the feature-length adaptation. "Our first two campaigns helped us make this film. Now we have 15 days left to help make sure people actually get to see it," said Stein. "We've raised more

than $20,000, hundreds of people have supported us, and our trailer has reached over 112,000 views. We've come this far because people believed in the story. We're asking them to help us take one more step.”

"Independent filmmaking doesn't happen alone. Every contribution, every shared post, every person who watches the trailer or tells someone about the film can make a difference. Sometimes helping us reach one festival programmer with this story can change what happens next." A Successful First Screening Brings Together Film, Community and Public Officials.



The Final Fight Cast Attends the Private Screening



Writer/Director Todd J. Stein Attends The Private Screening

On August 31, The Final Fight held its first private New York screening at Village East by Angelika, bringing together cast members, filmmakers, supporters, advocates, and elected officials for an evening celebrating independent cinema and highlighting the human impact of guardianship. The screening was followed by a cast and filmmaker Q&A, giving audience members an opportunity to hear directly from the artists who brought Stein's personal story to the screen. Among those in attendance were New York City Council Members Frank Morano and Virginia Maloney, whose participation demonstrated how the film's subject matter can bring together people across political lines. Morano, who has been advancing bipartisan legislation to examine New York City's adult guardianship system, praised the film as a "masterful piece of filmmaking" and "an incredible story that needs to be told."

For Stein, the evening represented an important milestone: the moment a story that began with his own family became a shared experience among audience members, performers, public officials, and people concerned about the rights and dignity of vulnerable adults. The screening also underscored the film's ability to encourage conversation beyond the theater, connecting the

emotional experience of a father and son with broader questions about family responsibility, elder protection, and the legal systems entrusted with safeguarding vulnerable individuals.



Council Member, Frank Morano attends Private Screening of The Final Fight



Actors Josh Davis and Tom Hair portray father and son Scott and Martin Cohen

The screening and the story behind The Final Fight have attracted coverage from New York publications, including Our Town and Upper East Site. In his September 2 coverage of the private screening for Our Town, journalist Jack Ahern reported on the film's emotional reception, the cast's participation in the post-screening discussion, and the presence of elected officials. The article, Private Screening of “The Final Fight” Highlights Guardianship Reform, highlighted Stein's personal journey and the film's potential to bring greater public attention to guardianship reform. Earlier coverage by Our Town and Upper East Site followed the film's development and production, exploring the real-life family experience behind the screenplay and Stein's decision to transform that experience into a dramatic film. The growing attention has helped introduce the project to audiences interested in independent filmmaking, family relationships, elder justice, and stories inspired by real events.

The Final Fight is inspired by Stein's real-life efforts to protect his father, Marvin Stein, a former Golden Gloves boxer, during a painful family guardianship battle. Their experience was chronicled by journalist John Leland in The New York Times article "The Fight of This Old Boxer's Life Was With His Own Family," which helped bring national attention to the family's ordeal. Stein transformed that personal history into a dramatic story about a Hollywood producer whose career and personal life are unraveling when he returns home to rescue his aging father from a guardianship that threatens his independence. As the son confronts family betrayal, institutional obstacles, and his own past failures, he discovers that the fight to protect his father may also be his last opportunity to rebuild their relationship.

At its heart, The Final Fight is a story about fathers and sons, forgiveness, dignity, and the courage to stand beside someone you love when the odds seem impossible. The short film stars Josh Davis as Scott Cohen and Tom Hair as his father, Martin Cohen, with Trini Alvarado portraying a fictionalized journalist inspired by the reporting that brought the family's story to public attention. With the short film completed, the production's next objective is to secure screenings at a broad range of film festivals, including festivals that provide pathways toward Academy Award qualification. The team hopes to reach programmers who champion independent storytelling, character-driven drama, socially relevant cinema, and emerging filmmakers.

Festival participation can create opportunities for the film to reach new audiences, generate critical attention, connect with industry professionals, and build relationships that may help advance the feature-length version of The Final Fight. The production's goal is to pursue an Academy Award-qualifying festival pathway while developing the short film as a proof of concept for a feature-length motion picture. "Making the short was our first major step," Stein said. "Now we need to give it the opportunity to reach audiences and festival programmers who can help us take this story further. Our goal is to build toward an Oscar-qualifying opportunity and, ultimately, bring the feature-length version of The Final Fight to the screen."

"These final 15 days matter. We're asking everyone who has followed this journey, and everyone just discovering it, to help us finish this campaign strong and give the film the best opportunity to find its audience." With only 15 days remaining in the Seed&Spark campaign, supporters can contribute, share the campaign and trailer, follow the film on social media, and introduce the project to friends, family members, film enthusiasts, festival programmers, journalists, and others who may connect with its themes. Stein said, “sharing our trailer, telling a friend, posting about the campaign, or helping us reach someone who programs a festival can be as meaningful. Every person who joins us helps move this film forward."

About Todd J. Stein:

Todd "TJ" Stein is a New York filmmaker, writer, producer, and director whose work on The Final Fight is inspired by his personal experience fighting to protect his father, Marvin Stein, from an unwanted guardianship. After his family's story was chronicled in The New York Times, Stein began developing the experience into a screenplay, using dramatic storytelling to explore the emotional consequences of family conflict, aging, guardianship, and the struggle to preserve a loved one's dignity. His short film The Final Fight serves as a proof of concept for a planned feature-length adaptation.

About The Final Fight:

The Final Fight is an independent dramatic short film written and directed by Todd J. Stein and inspired by his family's true story. When a Hollywood producer whose personal life is in trouble and his career is in crisis returns home to rescue his ailing father from a corrupt guardianship,

he discovers his power can't save him from a system built to prey on the weak. The fight for justice becomes a reckoning with family, failure, and the limits of control. The film explores the bond between a father and son, the vulnerability of aging adults, and the courage required to fight for family when everything is at stake.

Media and Industry Inquiries

Visit the film's official website: www.thefinalfightfilm.com

Follow the film on Instagram: @thefinalfightfilm.com

Festival programmers, journalists, distributors, and industry professionals interested in the film may contact the production team to request screening access, interviews, or additional materials about the planned feature-length adaptation.

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