



**Critical Acclaim For
'THE RETURN'**

By Kelly Duane de la Vega and Katie Galloway

“A quiet look at a subject few people in a country with a bulging prison population want to think about: how best to reintroduce former inmates into society. . . . **The Return** . . . helps open up a world that most of society doesn’t want to think about but should.”

—Neil Genzlinger, *The New York Times*

“Changes lives, breaks barriers, and betters this chaotic world of ours. . . . I often say in my writing that cinema changes the world, and I believe it wholeheartedly. But it’s seldom that one watches lives being changed, for the better, throughout a film.”

—E. Nina Rothe, *The Huffington Post*

“[Film subject] Bilal Chatman’s . . . story of redemption is possibly the most heartwarming thing I've seen all year. . . . **The Return** will take you on a roller coaster of emotion.”

—Clara Jeffery, *Mother Jones*

“The push to overhaul the nation’s criminal sentencing guidelines in Congress is an unlikely bipartisan effort. . . . Now lawmakers can get a look at California’s experience with the documentary **The Return**.”

—Jason Dick, *CQ Now*

“With Clinton-era justice policies under new scrutiny by not just Black Lives Matter but voters in general, the timing is right for Kelly Duane de la Vega and Katie Galloway’s documentary.”

—Scott Macaulay, *Filmmaker Magazine*

“This film offers a view of American society that very much resembles the reality depicted in Dickens’ 19th-century novels like *Little Dorrit* and *Bleak House*, stories involving the poor and disadvantaged ground up in a faceless and slow-moving legal system.”

—Kevin McDonough, *United Feature Syndicate*

“**The Return** illuminates the pain that ripples out from imprisonment, capturing the countless ways in which families also serve the sentence. . . . [The filmmakers] capture arresting images whether they’re in a courtroom, prison, half-way house or donut shop.”

—Andrew Gilbert, *California Magazine*

“**The Return** draws a portrait of hope and hard work, not desperation or despair.”

—Lou Fancher, *East Bay Express*

“What sets **The Return** apart from typical issue documentaries is the directors’ focus on individual prisoners.”

—Daniel Eagan, *Film Journal International*

“This powerful film . . . gives a frank and touching look at California’s shift from their Three Strikes law that sentenced individuals to life in prison . . . to grappling with the challenges of life on the outside. . . . **The Return** vividly captures what is wrong with our criminal justice system.”

—**Jacqueline Gurgui, Examiner.com**

“The directors have done such an exemplary job in invoking viewer empathy. . . . When the viewer feels punched in the gut after learning one subject has lost his job, that’s a sign Duane de la Vega and Galloway have done their jobs well.”

—**Peter Wong, Beyond Chron**

“Sad, but quite an eye opener, **The Return** is an educational, straight-forward, in-your-face documentary that needs more eyes, support and push!”

—**Lee Romero, Corriente Latina**

“A heartbreaking study of a terrible law . . . When directors Kelly Duane de la Vega and Katie Galloway simply focus on their subjects and their travails, they hit gold.”

—**Paul Weissman, Film-Forward**

“As these men readjust to life on the outside, attempt to find gainful employment, try to re-establish bonds with family, and resist addiction, the true impact of mass incarceration is palpably felt.”

—**Basil Tsiokos, What (Not) to Doc**