



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:
Strategic Heights Media
info@strategicheights.com
212-634-7176

**THE 20TH AMERICAN BLACK FILM FESTIVAL WILL SCREEN
A WIDE AND DIVERSE SELECTION OF NARRATIVES,
DOCUMENTARIES, SHORT FILMS AND WEBISODES IN
MIAMI, JUNE 15-19**

**"CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE" WITH DWAYNE JOHNSON AND KEVIN HART TO PREMIERE AS
OPENING NIGHT FILM AT THE ABFF**

-- OMARI HARDWICK SERVES AS ABFF JURY PRESIDENT--

New York, New York (June 1, 2016) – The American Black Film Festival (ABFF) announced today the lineup of over 25 narrative features, web originals, short films and documentaries that will be showcased at the Olympia Theater, Colony Theatre and Regal Cinemas in Miami Beach, Florida, June 15-19.

Director Rawson Marshall Thurber's *Central Intelligence*, presented by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures, will make its debut at the festival opening night, Wednesday, June 15, at 7:45 p.m. at the Olympia Theater, located at 174 East Flagler Street. Starring **Dwayne Johnson** and **Kevin Hart**, the action comedy is one of the most talked about film releases of the 2016 summer season. The film also stars **Amy Ryan**, **Aaron Paul** and **Danielle Nicolet**.

The films in this year's competition will be voted on by a prestigious group of industry tastemakers, executives and filmmakers, led by jury president, actor **Omari Hardwick**.

The 2016 ABFF selection of narratives, web originals, shorts and documentaries showcases diverse content creators, exploring a broad range of topics including love, sex, race, self-identity, politics, relationships, crime and fame.

“This year’s films not only reflect diverse storytelling and diversity within the Black experience, but also the technological advances of the times -- from the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, to a narrative feature film shot entirely on the iPhone 6s. We have people coming from all around the nation to support the work of these talented filmmakers, and we hope that the local community will take part in ABFF as well,” said Jeff Friday, ABFF CEO and Founder.

The complete list of films selected for the Narrative Features, Web Originals and Documentary sections, as well as the HBO® Short Film Competition is as follows:

OPENING NIGHT FILM

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Sponsored by the Motion Picture Association of America

Courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures

Director: Rawson Marshall Thurber

Writer: Rawson Marshall Thurber, Ike Barinholtz, David Stassen

Producers: Scott Stuber, Peter Principato, Paul Young, Michael Fottrell

Cast: Dwayne Johnson, Kevin Hart, Amy Ryan, Aaron Paul, Danielle Nicolet

"Central Intelligence" follows a one-time bullied geek, Bob (Dwayne Johnson), who grew up to be a lethal CIA agent, coming home for his high school reunion. Claiming to be on a top-secret case, Bob enlists the help of former “big man on campus,” Calvin (Kevin Hart), now an accountant who misses his glory days. But before the staid numbers-cruncher realizes what he’s getting into, it’s too late to get out, as his increasingly unpredictable new friend drags him through a world of shoot-outs, double-crosses and espionage that could get them both killed in more ways than Calvin can count.

NARRATIVE FEATURES “IN COMPETITION”

DESTINED

Writer/Director: Qasim Basir

Producers: Tommy Oliver, Rick Rosenthal, Matt Ratner

Cast: Cory Hardrict, Jesse Metcalfe, Margot Bingham, Robert Christopher Riley, Zulay Henao, Jason Dohring, Mo McRae, La La Anthony, Hill Harper, James McCaffrey, Curtiss Cook

“Destined” tells the parallel stories of Sheed and Rasheed (Cory Hardrict) as they explore the idea of destiny as well as how the smallest incident can become a life-changing event.

EVERYTHING BUT A MAN

Writer/Director: Nnegest Likké

Producers: Nnegest Likké, Jimmy Jean-Louis, Steven J. Wolfe

Cast: Monica Calhoun, Jimmy Jean-Louis, Camille Winbush

A successful career woman has a life-changing romance with a mysterious man from another culture, whose radical lifestyle differences challenge her perspective on love, relationships and what it means to be a "strong" woman.

THE FIX

Director: Paris Bauldwin

Writer: Paris Bauldwin

Producers: Paris Bauldwin, Kenny Lofton, Brenton Earley

Cast: Meta Golding, Eric Roberts, Asia Queen, Nicole Steinwedell, Blaine Gray, Jeremy Suarez, Sean O'Bryan, Timon Kyle Durrett, Jeremy Luke

Abigail witnesses the shooting of an unarmed teen by an LAPD officer, with whom she is carrying on an affair. To further complicate things, a teenaged girl appears claiming to be the daughter Abigail gave away at birth.

HOW TO TELL YOU'RE A DOUCHEBAG

Director: Tahir Jetter

Writer: Tahir Jetter

Producers: Julius Pryor, Marttise Hill, Tahir Jetter

Cast: Charles Brice, DeWanda Wise, Jenna Williams, William Jackson Harper, Tonye Patano, Alexander Mulzac

A womanizer falls in love in this modern romantic comedy about chauvinism, courtship and millennial woes.

SERVICE TO MAN *World Premiere

Directors: Aaron Greer, Seth Panitch

Writer: Seth Panitch

Producers: Aaron Greer, Seth Panitch

Cast: Morgan Auld, Christopher Livingston, Lamman Rucker, Keith David

Two outsiders from radically different backgrounds struggle to find a common purpose within the pressure cooker of Nashville's all-black medical school in the 1960s.

NARRATIVE FEATURES "WORLD SHOWCASE"

HALFWAY

Director: Ben Caird

Writer: Ben Caird

Producer: Jonny Paterson

Cast: Quinton Aaron, Jeffrey DeMunn, Gillian Zinser, Amy Pietz, TJ Power, Marcus Henderson

A recently released convict finds himself trapped between his urban criminal past and his new life on probation as the only back man in a conservative, white Wisconsin farming town.

9 RIDES

Director: Matthew A. Cherry

Writer: Matthew A. Cherry

Producers: Jerome Caldwell, Matthew Keene Smith, Datari Turner, Monica Young, Natasha Ward, Jaia Thomas, R. Vaughn Gill

Cast: Dorian Missick, Omar J. Dorsey, Robinne Lee, Xosha Roquemore, Amin Joseph, Thomas Q. Jones, Skye P. Marshall, Aasha Davis, Sujata Day, Tracie Thoms

On the busiest night of the year, an Uber driver in Los Angeles gets life-changing news.

FINDING HER *U.S. Premiere

Director: Vlad Feier

Writers: Vlad Feier, Peter Gutter

Producers: Vlad Feier, Ana Paula Rivera, Regina Bang

Cast: Johnny Whitworth, Maurice McRae, Afton Williamson, Jeremy Holm, Larry Pine, Danny Johnson

Monique Watson goes missing. Police are not doing anything to find a lead. The mission drops on the desk of journalist Christian Baker.

KILLING LAZARUS

Director: Desmond Faison

Writer: Desmond Faison

Producer: Jahmela Biggs

Cast: Deji LaRay, Tracey Dukes, Wade Maurice Johnson, Jr., Robert Davis, Jahmela Biggs, Rome Green, Jr., Amanuel Richards, Shayla Hale, Billy Mayo

Childhood friends turned adult drug dealers struggle to define what's next in their strained friendship. Anything but typical, "Killing Lazarus" is unlike anything you've seen.

SECRETS

Director: Juwan Lee

Writers: Juwan Lee, Jamal Hill

Producers: Jamal Hill, Kia Hicks Freeman, Gregory Freeman

Cast: Harold Moore, Denyce Lawton, Denise Boutte, Dennis White, Tobias Truvillion

When a successful businessman has a sexual appetite larger than what's on his plate at home, chaos erupts. Tarron's irresistible co-worker serves it up, while his wife, who's ironically named Secret, releases a few secrets of her own.

ILLICIT *World Premiere

Director: Corey Grant

Writers: Corey Grant, Lanett Tachel

Producers: Kevin Fleming, Lanett Tachel Corey Grant, McKinley Freeman, David Ramsey

Cast: David Ramsey, Shireen Crutchfield, McKinley Freeman, Michele Weaver, Lanett Tachel,

Dean Cain, Vivica A. Fox, Dionne Gipson, Michael Monks, Essence Atkins, Vincent A. Ward, Sade Kimora Young, Durrell "Tank" Babbs, Charlie Farrell, Adam Senn

Sasha and Guy's marriage is tested when sexy, young lovers, both with dark pasts and hidden nefarious agendas, independently seduce by.

HBO® SHORT FILM COMPETITION

*A panel of HBO executives will judge the final entries during the festival. A grand prize of \$10,000 will be awarded by HBO to one filmmaker at the ABFF Awards on June 16, 2016, with runners-up each receiving \$5,000. All finalists will have the opportunity to have their entries licensed by HBO for exhibition on the HBO service, HBO Go, and HBO Now.

THE BIG CHOP *World Premiere

Director: Derek Dow

Writer: Alisha Cowan

Producer: Cayman Grant

Cast: Simone Missick, Chinedu Unaka, McKenzie Franklin, Kevin Kilumbu

"The Big Chop" takes a look inside the world of natural hair, following a child's once positive outlook on her hair, through to her adult years, when her perspective is shaken by negative hints from peers, family and media.

FLOWERS *World Premiere

Directors: Nikyatu Jusu, Yvonne M. Shirley

Writers: Nikyatu Jusu, Yvonne M. Shirley

Producers: Nikyatu Jusu, Yvonne M. Shirley

Cast: Ameer Apedo, Belle LeGrand, Tambellini

When Brooklyn teens Mya and Erin seek revenge on a teacher their well-calculated plans quickly spiral out of control.

GUBAGUDE KO (Blood Is Upon Them) *World Premiere

Director: Philiane Phang

Writer: Philiane Phang

Producers: Annick Jaegy

Cast: Mahershala Ali, Erica Tazel

A man witnesses a young woman's rape and experiences the guilt of his inaction.

ON TIME *World Premiere

Director: Xavier Burgin

Writers: Xavier Burgin, Tiara Marshall

Producers: Tony Ducret, Kendra Cole, Tim Astor, Angelica Lopez

Cast: Inger Tudor, Arajia DaCosta, Kevin Craig West, John Marrot, Louis Baker, Jordana Berliner, Amani Starnes

Renee Johnson, a mother living in South Central LA, must make a difficult decision when she's late for her job interview.

UGLY *World Premiere

Director: LeRon Lee

Writer: LeRon Lee

Producer: Derrick Williams

Cast: Devon Moyd, Andrea-Rachel Parker, Jamal Steven Defreitas, Jo Lee, Kevin Bennett, Jr.

A coming-of-age story about a boy looking for love in the wrong place...his own environment.

ABFF WEB ORIGINALS

2 SELF HELP BOOKS AWAY FROM PERFECT

Director: Lopez Williams

Writer/Creator: Kimberly Young

Producers: Lopez Williams, Kimberly Young, Morris Young, Richard Monroe, Lori Stewart Tannis, Sam Baumel

Cast: Kimberly Young, DJ Cipa Sounds, Nate Gill, Carmen Lynch, Sharron Paul, Jourdan Guyton, Jared Prudoff-Smith, Lauren Besser, Gibran Saleem, Godfrey Taylor, Jr., Sue Berch

In “2 Self Help Books Away from Perfect,” we follow Kimmy Monroe, a bright-eyed Brooklynite who, through a series of hilarious and sometimes awkward events, learns that finding true love first begins by accepting one’s true self.

BLACK ACTRESS

Director: William Alexander Runnels

Writers: Andrea Lewis, Austin Hall

Producers: Andrea Lewis, Brian Walker, Essence Atkins, Tatyana Ali

Cast: Andrea Lewis, Allison Edwards Crewe, Rob Vincent, Tristan Wilds

“Black Actress” is a scripted meets documentary style series. Every episode opens with the testimony of a celebrity Black actress, while viewers get to follow the life of Kori Bailey (Andrea Lewis), a struggling Black actress living in New York City, who desperately needs to get out of her own way.

FIRST DATES

Director: Talibah Newman

Writers: Talibah Newman, Uzo Ometu

Producers: Talibah Newman, Uzo Ometu

Cast: Angela Wildflower, Justin Sams, Shana Solomon, Laci Mosley, Andre Columbus

Samantha, a newly divorced political consultant, tries to get her love life back in order, only to find men, friends and her career getting in the way of finding true love.

GET YOUR LIFE

Directors: Amanda Seales, James Bland

Writers: Amanda Seales, Steven Chew

Producers: Amanda Seales, Issa Rae, Benoni Tagoe, Quan Lateef-Hill, Marshon Thomas

Cast: Amanda Seales, Lil Rel, Godfrey, Issa Rae, Yvonne Orji, BT Kingsley, Tehran

“Get Your Life” is an edgy scripted comedy about the very non-scripted life of comedian/actress Amanda Seales and her continuing effort to keep it real and find the funny amidst dating cornballs, Hollywood BS and being a new New Yorker to Los Angeles.

KINGMAKERS OF OAKLAND

Director: Cheo Tyehimba Taylor

Writer: Cheo Tyehimba Taylor

Producers: Christopher Chatmon, Judd Flemming, Shaka Jamal

Cast: Christopher Chatmon, Jerome Gourdine, Baayan Bakari, Jahi, AAMA students

“Kingmakers of Oakland” follows the teachers and students of OUSD during the 2015-16 school year as they overcome obstacles both at school and home, and redefine what it means to be a “king.”

THE MOVEMENT

Directors: Christian Mazza, Jimmy Shelton, Justine Bo

Writers: Antonia Hylton, Darnell Moore, Jimmy Shelton

Producers: Antonia Hylton, Regina Delea, John Lagomarsino

“The Movement” is an original docuseries that explores the work of individuals fighting to reclaim and recover marginalized communities and spaces across America.

ABFF DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION

DADDY DON'T GO

Director: Emily Abt, Andrew Osborne

Writer: Emily Abt

Producers: Emily Abt, Keryn Thompson, Suzette Burton, Omar Epps, Malik Yoba

“Daddy Don’t Go” explores the crisis of fatherlessness in America, documenting two years in the lives of four disadvantaged fathers in New York City as they fight to defy the odds against them. It provides compelling portraits of men who are unwavering in their commitment to parenthood despite the challenges they encounter.

JIM BROWN’S AMER-I-CAN DREAM

Director/Writer: Aurora Ferlin

Producers: Aurora Ferlin, Keith Cardwell, Ronnie Barron

Cast: Jim Brown, Monique Brown, Ray Lewis, John Wooten, Rockhead Johnson, Ronnie Barron, Aqeela Sherrills, Julian Mendoza, Tonie Jackson, Anthony Blanks, Jacques White-Barron

NFL legend Jim Brown forges an unlikely coalition with former convicts and gang members to stop the deadly wave of violence on America's streets.

OLYMPIC PRIDE, AMERICAN PREJUDICE

Director: Deborah Riley Draper

Writer: Deborah Riley Draper

Producer: Deborah Riley Draper

Executive Producer: Blair Underwood, Dr. Amy Tiemann, Michael Draper, Deborah Riley Draper

Cast: Isiah Thomas, Carl Lewis, Ambassador Andrew Young, Joanna Hayes, Dr. Tommie Smith, Anita DeFrantz

In 1936, when 18 African American athletes, dubbed the "black auxiliary" by Hitler, participated in the Berlin Olympic Games, defying Nazi Aryan supremacy and Jim Crow racism, history forgot all except one – Jesse Owens. This is the story of the other 17.

To purchase passes and tickets for events, panels and screenings at the American Black Film Festival, log on to www.ABFF.com

Join the conversation on social media by logging on to ABFF's multiple social media platforms:

- On Twitter by using hashtag: #ABFF20, #ABFFBackToTheBeach; @ABFF
- On Facebook by liking the fan page, American Black Film Festival
- On Instagram by liking the fan page at [Instagram.com/AmericanBlackFilmFestival](https://www.instagram.com/AmericanBlackFilmFestival)
- On YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-GzePGxJt8ZzbuLLL8ESVg>

Sponsors for the American Black Film Festival are HBO® (Founding and Presenting Sponsor), Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau (Host and Presenting Sponsor), TV One, Cadillac, and McDonald's (Presenting Sponsors); Apple, BET, Comcast NBCUniversal and Prudential (Platinum Sponsors); AARP, American Airlines, Coors Light, Kwesé Media, Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), Time Warner, and VH1 (Official Sponsors); Planned Parenthood of America, and TBS (Supporting Sponsor); 21st Century Fox, ABC, ASPIRE, Atlanta Mayor's Office of Film & Entertainment, CAA, CNN Original Series, Fox Searchlight Pictures, Motion Picture Editors Guild, RLJ Entertainment, SAGIndie, Walter Kaitz Foundation (Industry Partners); Black Enterprise, Ebony Magazine, MIA Magazine, Upscale and TheYBF.com<<http://theybf.com>> (Media Partners); and Blacknoir.com<<http://blacknoir.com>> and The JDot Agency (Promotional Partners).

ABOUT ABFF:

The American Black Film Festival (ABFF) is an annual event dedicated to showcasing quality film and television content by and about people of African descent. The festival is committed to the belief that Black artists and content creators deserve the same opportunities as their mainstream counterparts. ABFF founder Jeff Friday, conceived the festival in 1997 as a vehicle to promote diversity in the motion picture industry, and strengthen the Black filmmaking community through resource sharing, education, artistic collaboration and career development. Today, the ABFF is recognized as the preeminent pipeline to new Black talent, both in front of and behind the camera,

and is regarded as one of the leading film festivals in the world. The ABFF is a property of ABFF Ventures, LLC., which is a partnership between Film Life, Inc., and Black Enterprise.