



The Whistleblower Summit & Film Festival Wins "Best of the Fests" a Best Festival Award at FestFourms Santa Barbara 2019

FestForums honors Jon Anderson, Ray Parker Jr., and Penelope Spheeris; Whistleblower Summit honors John Singleton with Mary Pickford Award for civic activism

SANTA BARABRA, CA, US, November 26, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On November 20-22, over 1,000 attendees and exhibitors converged on the Hilton Santa Barbara Beachfront Resort, formerly The Fess Parker. FestForums Santa Barbara awarded lifetime achievement awards to Jon Anderson, Penelope Spheeris, and Ray Parker Jr., and winners from three festival types: Music; Arts, Film & Culture; and Food & Beverages. The Whistleblower Summit won "[Best of the Fests](#)" for innovative in Arts, Film & Culture. The "Best of the Fests," is an award ceremony recognizing North America's leading festivals. Earlier this year the [ACORN 8](#) hosted the 8th Annual [Whistleblower Summit & Film Festival](#) on Capitol Hill.

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

"I want to say thank you on behalf of Marcel Reid, the summit co-organizer, and the entire whistleblower community. We are extremely pleased to receive this recognition and "Best of the Fests" award as a breakthrough festival in Arts, Film & Culture—because we are largely considered a group of misfits. Whistleblowers are often maligned, marginalized and largely ignored. However, recent events in the international news prove that whistleblowers play a very important role in society and popular culture. And the Whistleblower Summit & Film Festival celebrates them.

"I would like to specifically thank FestFourms for this award and your positive reaction to our community. Specifically, Laurie Kirby and Stuart MacNaught for making this happen and allowing us to participate in an event with organizers of festivals that changed the world like Woodstock, Coachella, Sundance, Burning Man and Essence. I also want to thank C.R. Caper and the Harlem Film House for noticing the summit and recognizing our efforts and longevity as African American event organizers within the festival community. Including the Whistleblower Summit on stage with Essence, BET Live, Broccoli City and Harlem Eat Up was truly amazing.

"On the first day of FestFourms, I took the festival boot camp and discovered that we were doing everything WRONG. There were half-a-dozen to a dozen tips and best practices and we did none of them right. Except for one thing—our WHY. We exist to provide a sense of community and support network for whistleblowers and advocates. We save lives! We have our WHY and that makes all the difference. Thank you." – Michael McCray, Co-founder, Whistleblower Summit & Film Festival

Festivals that focus on African American culture have become a driving force in the festival industry. From Essence Festival in New Orleans, which boasts over half a million attendees, to AC3 in Atlanta, to festivals produced by Hip Hop moguls and top names in the industry, and prestigious festivals in Washington, DC — on Capitol Hill, festivals mired in the Black experience are in a unique position to claim market space in a world oversaturated with festivals. The panel examined the unique perspective of these festivals from the men and women who defy industry norms and have made culture a global experience using music, film, health and cuisine.

"We designed the Whistleblower Summit for Civil & Human Rights to highlight the contributions of women and minority whistleblowers along with public health and safety advocates. Earlier this year we honored John Singleton with the Mary Pickford Award, not for his incredible talent as a filmmaker, but for his courage and activism standing up against racism in the studio system of Hollywood." – Marcel Reid, Co-founder, Whistleblower Summit & Film Festival.

The Whistleblower Summit & Film Festival is the largest assembly of whistleblowers in the country and is the only film festival dedicated to whistleblowers and first amendment activism. The summit recognizes that cinema is a powerful medium for highlighting civil and human rights violations across the globe. It seeks to shine a light on stories of courage and perseverance in the face of injustice; and to encourage individuals to stand together to achieve human rights for all. The call for submissions for this annual film festival, which will take place in July 2020, is open. The summit is looking for films about whistleblowers, the First Amendment or that touch on one of several human rights issues including freedom of expression, women's rights, discrimination, communal violence, and defending human rights. However, the themes mentioned are not exhaustive; films centered on social justice or other civil and human rights issues are welcome for submission.

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