

The Fifth Annual Haiti International Film Festival Honors Christine Ntim and Showcases Haitian Culture through Film

HIFF, in a virtual format, offers an insight to the Haitian people and culture. See the films and panels on Xerb.TV on August 15-16, 2020 from noon to 6 p.m.

HOLLYWOOD, CA, UNITED STATES, August 10, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The pandemic halted the traditional way to attend film festivals worldwide in 2020. The 5th Annual [Haiti International Film Festival](#) (HIFF) joins the new "normal" to move online and continue to support Haitian filmmakers by taking the event virtual on August 15 and 16, 2020 from noon to 6 p.m. PST on [Xerb.TV](#). HIFF will be hosted by Actor Bechir Sylvain, the 2019 HIFF Emerging Leader Honoree and community activist from Moun Lakay. Tickets start at \$10 to watch one film, \$20 for the Festival Day Pass, and \$40 for a 2-day VIP Pass at <https://xerb.tv/channel/haitiinternationalfilmfestivalorg/virtual-events>.

"It is critical that we continue to showcase our Haitian filmmakers, especially at this moment in our history when the Black community voice is rising up," said Jacquil Constant, Executive Director of Haiti International Film Festival and filmmaker. "People should see and hear our voices represented through film." HIFF is a niche film festival that specializes in portraying the humanity of the Haitian culture through the curation of quality films with authentic narratives from the Haitian Diaspora. Viewers from around the world can log on to Xerb.TV to watch HIFF's exciting line up of 7 shorts, 3 feature films, panels, and the Haitian Diaspora Award.



The poster features a black background with a yellow circle at the top containing a silhouette of an Oscar statuette. Below this, the text "Haitian Diaspora Award" is written in a red, cursive font. Underneath, it says "CONGRATULATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE HAITI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. A photograph of Christine Ntim, a woman with long braids wearing a dark blue dress, is positioned on the left. To the right of the photo, the text reads "2020 HONOREE" in white, "CHRISTINE NTIM" in large yellow letters, and "FOUNDER, HAITI TECH SUMMIT" in white. At the bottom, it says "SATURDAY, AUGUST 15TH @2 P.M." in white. A small block of text at the bottom right provides a bio: "Award-winning Haitian-American entrepreneur & startup ecosystem expert for emerging markets. She was selected and featured in Forbes 30 Under 30, AdAge 40 Under 40, Haiti Changemakers 1804 List, Singularity NASA, Entrepreneur Magazine, Huffington Post, Inc Magazine and more. She speaks on digital entrepreneurship, startup hacking, exponential tech AI, and personal branding at over 20+ global conferences a year- which includes former appearances at the US State Department Tours, United Nations, TEDx, SXSW, Startup Grind Global, SeedStars World, European Union Forum and more. She started her career as the founder of Vendedu- a social network connecting people to street markets with the aim of digitizing a \$10 trillion dollar black economy and centralizing the world's 200,000 street markets. Today, Christine is the Director of Startup Grind Dubai Powered by Google For Entrepreneurs and a partner at the GlobalStartupEcosystem.com which hosts the largest digital online accelerator program in the world- graduating over 1000+ companies across 190+ countries a year."

On Sunday, August 16 at 2 p.m., HIFF honors the 2020 Haitian Diaspora Award Honoree Christine Souffrant Ntim, an award-winning Haitian-American entrepreneur and startup ecosystem expert for emerging markets. She is featured in Forbes 30 Under 30, and AdAge 40 Under 40.

"The film festival serves as a platform to connect the Haitian Diaspora Film Community to Hollywood," said Constant. "However, with only 24% of independent films being made every year, the film industry needs aspiring filmmakers who create stories that uplift society. The filmmakers need support to showcase these independent films and that is why I created this film festival." Considered as the HBO for Haitian films, HIFF was established in 2015 and is a non-profit corporation with a 501(c)(3) status. The mission is to showcase positive images of Haitian culture through film and art.

"We are excited to present [Christine Ntim](#) as the 2020 Haitian Diaspora Award Honoree on Sunday at 2 p.m.," said Constant. Christine Souffrant Ntim is an award-winning Haitian-American entrepreneur and startup ecosystem expert for emerging markets. She was selected and featured in Forbes 30 Under 30, AdAge 40 Under 40, and Caribbean Change Makers 30 Under 30 in 2016. Ntim speaks on leadership, disruptive

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Jacquil Constant, Executive Director of Haiti International Film Festival.

entrepreneurship, and exponential tech AI, VR, Robotics.


This year, HIFF features two panels. The Producers Panel, "Thriving in the Film Industry: A Business Perspective," is led by the moderator Florence Regina, Actor/Producer, Soleil Films. Panelists are Dominique Telson, Producer, Astute Films and Janae Desire, Executive, Media Finance, Creative Artists Agency. The Haitian Creative Panel, "Finding your Voice through the Power of Authentic Storytelling," will be moderated by Karen Civil, entrepreneur, and author and philanthropist. The panelists are Jean Elie, a Haitian-American actor/producer, and an Emmy Nominee for the series, "Insecure," and Michele Stephenson, a Haitian director/producer and an Emmy Nominee for the documentary, "American Promise."

"If you want to learn about the business side of the film industry, don't miss this on Saturday,




**5TH ANNUAL
HAITI
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL**


OPENING PANEL
SATURDAY, AUGUST 15TH, 12 P.M.
PRODUCERS PANEL
THRIVING IN THE FILM INDUSTRY: A BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE



FLORENCE REGINA
MODERATOR
Florence Regina is an award-winning producer/actor/director/speaker. Her production company, Soleil Films, produces films, staged productions, and events. She's produced several notable events, including A Focus On International Short Films, An Evening Of Haitian filmmaking, which was presented by the City of Los Angeles Council President, Eric Garcetti (now Mayor of Los Angeles), and the Women In Film International Committee. From NYC to LA she's performed as an actress on stage, film, and TV. Florence is also an award-winning motivational speaker, who travels and speaks about different topics including the entertainment industry, achievement and success.



DOMINIQUE TELSON
PRODUCER, ASTUTE FILMS
She has produced both large films like The Best of Enemies and Welcome to Pine Grove! and smaller festival indies like Premature and The Short History Of The Long Road. Telson was also a VP of Original Programming at Showtime Network where she oversaw the development and production of award-winning and critically acclaimed films. Telson has also always had a passion for creating opportunities for minorities, helping to create Showtime's Black Filmmaker Showcase.



JANAE DESIRE
**EXECUTIVE MEDIA FINANCE,
CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY**
Janae Désiré is a Media Finance Group Executive at leading talent and sports agency Creative Artists Agency (CAA). Désiré began her career in unscripted, working at ABC News All Media as an Associate Producer for TLC, Discovery I.D., and OWN Networks. In 2014, Désiré joined Participant Media and transitioned to the narrative film and television space. Désiré graduated from Rutgers University with a degree in Communication and a double minor in Africana Studies and Women & Gender Studies.

The Producers Panel titled "Thriving in the Film Industry: A Business Perspective" is moderated by Actress/Producer Florence Regina, Soleil Films. Panelists are Producer Dominique Telson, Astute Films and Executive, Media Finance Janae Desire, Creative Artists Agency.

August 15 at noon," said Constant, who was recently honored with the 2020 Caribbean Cultural Innovator Award by myKEEtv, the premier Caribbean TV and magazine in Los Angeles, Canada, and Jamaica. "The second panel on Sunday, August 16 at noon explores the creative side of the film industry, which is equally as important as the producers panel."

"We look forward to this virtual film festival platform that will allow us to reach a wider audience this year, both nationally and internationally," said Constant.

Line-Up, Show Times, and Running Times:

Saturday, August 15, 2020 from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. PST

12 p.m. - Producers Panel: "Thriving in the Film Industry: A Business Perspective"

Panel discussions followed by Shorts

1 p.m. - Going Back Home (Lakay) Short Film Block
Brooklyn to Benin- Directed by Regine Romain- 7:28
Junior- Directed by AJ Wilhelm- 11:35
Rasin- Directed by Pierre Lucson Bellegarde- 21:36

Feature film selections:

2 p.m. - Out of Chaos is a documentary about an artist's journey in Haiti. A place where an artist is born every day. Directed by Pascal Giacomini- 1 hour

4 p.m. - In Search of Voodoo: Roots to Heaven weaves together a personal, cultural, and spiritual journey-capturing the vibrant tales of Voodoo, West Africa, and Benin's son, actor Djimon Hounsou. 1 hour

Networking to follow screenings from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Sunday, August 16, 2020 from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. PST

5TH ANNUAL
HAITI
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL

OPENING PANEL
SUNDAY, AUGUST 16TH, 12 P.M.
HAITIAN CREATIVES PANEL
FINDING YOUR VOICE THROUGH THE POWER OF AUTHENTIC STORYTELLING



STARRING EMMY NOMINATED ACTOR, JEAN ELIE
HBO'S HIT SHOW: INSECURE
Jean Elie is a Haitian American actor/producer, known for playing Ahmal Dee on HBO's critically acclaimed comedy series Insecure. Elie rose to recognition as an actor for playing Yves Durand in the 2017 limited drama series American Crime, before attaining his most prominent role as Issa Rae's brother, Ahmal Dee on Insecure. Other credits include BET holiday drama film Throwback Holiday, horror film The Final Wish, digital series Giants, Rider, and Black Girl in Big Dresses, voiceover on animated series Alvin and the Chipmunks, and short drama films Thin Walls, Detour, and A Gentleman Always.

KAREN CIVIL
ENTREPRENEUR, AUTHOR & PHILANTHROPIST
MODERATOR
Karen Civil is one of the most recognizable forces in entertainment. As a global marketing content creator, she has developed powerful influence in culture and bridged the gap between brand powerhouses and mainstream artists over the years. Civil is a prominent businesswoman that has helped shape careers, curate experiences and emphasize the digital impact for Nipsey Hussle, YG, Jeezy, Nicki Minaj, Dave East, Andre Berto, Pusha T and Nick Cannon. For her unceasing achievements, professional leadership and providing some of the most impressive moments in culture she has been featured in Billboard, Forbes, Black Enterprise, and CNN.

MICHELE STEPHENSON
DIRECTOR/PRODUCER, RADA STUDIO
A co-founding member of the Rada Film Group, filmmaker, artist, and author Michèle Stephenson draws from her Panamanian and Haitian roots and international experience as a human-rights attorney to tell provocative stories in a variety of media that speak to personal and systemic liberation. Her work has appeared on numerous broadcast and web platforms, including PBS, Showtime, and MTV. Her most recent film, American Promise, was nominated for three Emmys, including Best Documentary and Outstanding Coverage of a Current News Story. Her recent book, Promises Kept, written with co-authors Joe Brewster and Hilary Beard, won an NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work.

The Haitian Creatives Panel discusses the power of storytelling. Led by Entrepreneur Karen Civil, the panelists are Haitian Actor/Producer Jean Elie, Emmy Nominee for "Insecure," and Haitian Director/Producer Michele Stephenson, Emmy Nominee for "American Promise."

12 p.m. - Haitian Creatives Panel: "Finding your Voice through the Power of Authentic Storytelling"

Panel discussion followed by Shorts

1 p.m. - Haitian Diaspora Short Film Block

ID- Directed by Gustave Cadet- 8:49

Delivered- Directed by Tara Nichols- 6:02

Lost and Found- Director by Desmyre Volmeus- 15:56

The Acquittal- Director by Yves Beneche- 15:41

Feature film selection:

3 p.m. - Desrances, starring Jimmy Jean-Louis. Francis looks forward to the birth a son, his heir, and the last descendant of the DESRANCES family and his son is captured and will he find him.

Directed and written by Apolline Traore- 1 hour and 35 mins

Networking to follow screenings from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

To interview Jacquil Constant, filmmakers, and actors, or to request media credentials, contact Marie Y. Lemelle for Platinum Star Public Relations at 213-276-7827.

About the Haiti International Film Festival (HIFF)

The annual film festival has showcased more than 30 films by Haitian filmmakers and supporters of Haiti at the Historic Barnsdall Gallery Theatre in Hollywood, California. HIFF has featured documentaries, short films, and narratives from emerging and well-established filmmakers like award-winning Actor and Producer Jimmy Jean-Louis, to uplift the Haitian voice and presence in an industry where it is often absent. HIFF is a catalyst for Haitian artistic expression and cultural diversity. In 2020, because of COVID-19, HIFF has pivoted to a virtual film festival. This year's festival selections include 10 films from the Haitian and African Diaspora that are an exploration of the what it means to be Haitian in the Diaspora.

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