

Pan African Film & Arts Festival Illuminates Black Cinema with Spotlight Screenings

As a premiere celebration of African and African diaspora cinema, PAFF continues to shine a light on extraordinary talents and remarkable storytelling.

LOS ANGELES, CA, USA, February 5, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Pan African Film & Arts Festival (PAFF) is proud to announce its highly anticipated Spotlight Screenings lineup for 2024. As a premiere celebration of African and African diaspora cinema, PAFF, taking place in Los Angeles February 6-19, in Los Angeles, continues to shine a light on extraordinary talents and remarkable storytelling.

PAFF's Spotlight Screenings have long been a hallmark of the festival, showcasing exceptional films that captivate and inspire audiences. This year's selection promises to be no exception, offering a diverse array of thought-provoking and entertaining movies that explore various aspects of African and African diaspora experiences.

PAFF aims to foster cross-cultural dialogue, showcase untold stories, and amplify diverse voices through the power of cinema and the arts. With its Spotlight Screenings, the festival invites audiences to explore the rich tapestry of African and African diaspora cultures, histories, and experiences on the big screen.



Being BeBe: The BeBe Zahara Benet Documentary



Bob Marley: One Love



Iwájú

"We are thrilled to present this year's Spotlight Screenings, which exemplify the heart and soul of the Pan African Film & Arts Festival," said Ayuko Babu, Executive Director. "These films not only entertain but also educate, enlighten, and challenge us to see the world through different lenses. We invite everyone to join us for this incredible cinematic journey."

This year's film festival features over 200 films from 54 countries, in 28 languages, including 68 World and 25 North American premieres. Of the films selected for the Festival, 49% are helmed by female, queer or non-binary filmmakers. Tickets and passes are on sale now at paff.org.

Highlights of the Spotlight Screenings at PAFF this year include:

Being BeBe: The BeBe Zahara Benet Documentary

Immigrating from Cameroon, where Queerness is criminalized, a young man finds his purpose through performance and eventually becomes the very first winner of iconic reality show RuPaul's Drag Race. Marshall Ngwa (aka BeBe Zahara Benet) came to the US in pursuit of education and discovered his gifts in the art form of drag. Filmed over 15 years, the documentary parallels Marshall's fight to maintain the trajectory of his career alongside a deep connection with his traditional African roots and family.

Bob Marley: One Love

Bob Marley: One Love celebrates the life and music of an icon who inspired generations through his message of love and unity. On the big screen for the first time, discover Bob's powerful story of overcoming adversity and the journey behind his revolutionary music. Produced in partnership with the Marley family and starring Kingsley Ben-Adir as the legendary musician and Lashana Lynch as his wife Rita, Bob Marley: One Love is in theatres February 14, 2024.

GENIUS: MLK/X

GENIUS: MLK/X follows both Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (Kelvin Harrison, Jr.) and Malcom X (Aaron Pierre) from their formative years, where they were molded by strong fathers and traumatic injustices, to their rich, parallel stories as they shaped their identities and became the change they wished to see in the world. The docudrama series offers an intimate look into their complex lives as husbands, fathers, brothers and sons, taking them off the iconic T-shirts to show their humanity. GENIUS: MLK/X brings their wives, Coretta Scott King (Weruche Opia) and Betty Shabazz (Jayme Lawson), who are often portrayed as peripheral figures, to the forefront and shows them as formidable equals of the Movement. Episodes will explore the moments between the monumental historical events we've come to know and shine a light on how each leader and those closest to them questioned their resolve and decisions as they navigated the rigors of balancing a public persona with a private life. While King and X met only once and often challenged each other's views, neither would have been as successful without the other. Q&A to follow with director.

Iwájú Spotlight Screening

In a first-of-its-kind collaboration, Walt Disney Animation Studios teams up with Pan-African comic book entertainment company, Kugali, for an original animated series set in a futuristic Lagos, Nigeria. This exciting coming of age story follows Tola, a young girl from the wealthy island, and her best friend, Kole, a self-taught tech expert, as they discover the secrets and dangers hidden in their different worlds.

Kemba West Coast Premiere

Based on the true story of Kemba Smith, a sheltered college student who falls in love with a man, only to learn he is a drug kingpin who leads her down a path of abuse and manipulation, placing her in the middle of the government's "war on drugs," and ultimately landing her in federal prison.

Sacred Soil: The Piney Woods School Story World Premiere

Sacred Soil: The Piney Woods School Story is a documentary film set against the culturally historical backdrop of one of America's oldest Black boarding schools. This film amplifies the journeys of several Piney Woods School students and staff members, providing a never-before-seen window into the ever-evolving, complex layers of the school and its students. Vividly, yet beautifully Sacred Soil: The Piney Woods School Story captures the emotional, physical, and mental tolls required to be young, Black, and educated in America by honoring the students' perspectives of themselves and their school.

Sense & Sensibility

A period adaptation of Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility. After a change in circumstances, Marianne is torn between two men, while Elinor longs for a man beyond reach.

Country: United Kingdom, Ireland, Bulgaria

Cast: Deborah Ayorinde, Bethany Antonia, Victor Hugo, Akil Largie, Martina Laird, Victoria Eanoye, Dan Jeannotte

Director: Roger Bobb

Executive Producer: Tia Smith

Courtesy of: Hallmark

For the complete list of PAFF's Spotlight Screenings, please visit: <https://www.paff.org/pan-african-film-arts-festival-illuminates-black-cinema-with-spotlight-screenings/>.

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