

HBCU Arts and Castle of our Skins Present Blacknificantly Divine & Vineyard Arts Festival

A three-city tour and week-long festival bring artists, entrepreneurs, and communities together through music and cultural exchange.

BOSTON, MA, UNITED STATES, June 16, 2026
/EINPresswire.com/ -- [HBCU Arts](#) and [Castle of our Skins](#) announce a major Summer 2026 collaboration featuring a three-city concert tour and week-long Martha's Vineyard arts festival celebrating HBCU artistry, entrepreneurship, intergenerational mentorship, and cultural legacy.

The collaboration begins with Blacknificantly Divine, a three-city chamber concert tour featuring artists from HBCU Arts and Castle of our Skins performing music by the Blacknificent 7 Composer Collective — Jessie Montgomery, Jasmine Barnes, Shawn Okpebholo, Damien Geter, Dave Ragland, Joel Thompson, and Carlos Simon — alongside a newly commissioned work by emerging composer Jaylin Vinson, supported through American Composers Forum and the Blacknificent 7 commissioning initiative in celebration of America 250.

HBCU Arts: Blacknificantly Divine Tour Dates:
Saturday, July 11, 2026 – 2:00 PM
First Congregational Church on the Green
3 Lewis St., Norwalk, CT 06851

Saturday, July 11, 2026 – 7:30 PM
Asylum Hill Congregational Church
814 Asylum Ave., Hartford, CT 06105



The promotional poster for the Martha's Vineyard HBCU Arts Festival 2026 features a collage of artistic elements. At the top, a violin and sheet music are visible. The central text reads "HBCU Arts & Castle of our Skins Present: Martha's Vineyard HBCU Arts Festival 2026". Below this, two gold-framed portraits are shown: one of a stylized figure in a colorful dress and another of a woman's face with white face paint. A lighthouse is depicted at the bottom left. The poster includes the following text: "MARTHA'S VINEYARD", "AUGUST 1-6", "A week of live performances, conversations, and curated experiences celebrating HBCU artistry on Martha's Vineyard.", "Learn more and reserve your excursion package today!", and "Visit: HBCU-Arts.org/fest". Logos for "HBCU ARTS FESTIVAL", "DRIVEN THEATER", and "CASTLE OF OUR SKINS" are at the bottom.

Martha's Vineyard HBCU Arts Fest
Promotional Poster

Saturday, August 1, 2026 – 6:30 PM
Union Chapel
55 Narragansett Ave., Oak Bluffs, MA
02557

The final tour concert on Martha's Vineyard serves as the official opening of the [Martha's Vineyard HBCU Arts Festival](#), launching six days of performances, conversations, artist showcases, and community engagement across the island.

Martha's Vineyard HBCU Arts Festival: Held across Martha's Vineyard from August 1–6, 2026, the festival gathers artists, alumni, creatives, entrepreneurs, and community members for live performances, artist conversations, showcases, and curated island experiences celebrating Black cultural expression.

Festival Highlights:

Saturday, August 1, 2026

HBCU Artists as Entrepreneurs Panel Discussion

1:00–2:15 PM | Union Chapel

Join visionary HBCU creatives who are redefining what it means to be an artist in today's world. Discover how they are transforming their talents into thriving enterprises, building sustainable careers, and using entrepreneurship as a tool to uplift communities and shape cultural narratives. Whether you're an artist, student, educator, or creative entrepreneur, this conversation will inspire you to think bigger, lead boldly, and create with intention.

Featuring Dr. Jolie Rocke, Dr. Ciyadh Wells, Avid Williams, Kyle Exum, and Stacey Allen.



Castle of our Skins logo



Martha's Vineyard HBCU Arts Fest

Blacknificently Divine Opening Concert

6:30–8:00 PM | Union Chapel

Featuring music by the Blacknificent 7 Composer Collective and a newly commissioned work by Jaylin Vinson.

Sunday, August 2, 2026

Church Service Presentation

10:00 AM | Union Chapel

Festival artists join the Union Chapel community for a special worship service presentation.

Monday, August 3, 2026

VIP Reception

4:00–7:00 PM | West Tisbury Inn (Under the Tent)

1070 State Rd., Vineyard Haven, MA 02568

Join HBCU Arts and Castle of our Skins for an evening of connection, conversation, and celebration at the official Martha's Vineyard HBCU Arts Festival VIP Reception.

Tuesday, August 4, 2026

HBCU Artist Showcase

3:00–4:30 PM | West Tisbury Inn

Interactive Storytime with Stacey Allen and D is for Dance: Dancing Through the Diaspora, a vibrant celebration of movement that follows a young Black girl through an alphabet of dance styles rooted in the African diaspora.

HBCU Visual Artist Showcase

4:30–6:00 PM | West Tisbury Inn

Open Mic Night Under the Tent

7:00–9:30 PM | West Tisbury Inn

Open to island residents, visitors, and festival attendees alike, this community open mic invites musicians, poets, storytellers, comedians, dancers, and multidisciplinary artists to share their work during an evening of creativity, connection, and artistic expression.

Wednesday, August 5, 2026

HBCU Artist Showcase

1:00–2:30 PM | West Tisbury Inn

Spirit of the Quilt with Dr. Jolie Rocke explores the hidden languages of freedom woven into African American and Indigenous cultural traditions through storytelling, historical artifacts, quilt-making, and conversations about sustainability, community, and cultural legacy.

HBCU Artist Showcase

3:00–4:30 PM

Featuring cellist Richard Jimenez

Thursday, August 6, 2026

HBCU Artist Showcase

3:00–4:30 PM | West Tisbury Inn

Featuring classical guitarist Dr. Ciyadh Wells

“HBCU Arts on the Vineyard is about creating space for artists, alumni, entrepreneurs, and community members to gather, share ideas, and celebrate the creativity that has long flourished within HBCU communities. This festival highlights the power of artistry rooted in HBCU communities to inspire connection, innovation, and cultural pride. We are thrilled to partner with Castle of our Skins to bring this vision to Martha’s Vineyard.”

— Dr. Jolie Rocke, Founder of HBCU Arts and Lecturer at Prairie View A&M University

“Castle of our Skins is honored to partner with HBCU Arts on a project that brings together music, storytelling, and cultural exchange in such a meaningful way. Martha’s Vineyard has long served as a gathering place for Black community and culture, making it the perfect setting for artists and audiences to connect through a collective celebration of Black artistry.”

— Dr. Ciyadh Wells, Executive Director of Castle of our Skins

Additional festival events, excursion opportunities, and artist announcements will be released throughout the summer.

For schedules, tickets, excursion packages, and additional information, visit hbcu-arts.org/fest.

About HBCU Arts

HBCU Arts preserves culture by fostering workforce and entrepreneurial development to amplify the multidisciplinary creative expressions of artists from historically Black colleges and universities.

About Castle of our Skins

Castle of our Skins is a Black arts institution dedicated to fostering cultural curiosity and celebrating Black artistry through music. In classrooms, concert halls, and beyond, Castle of our Skins invites Black heritage and culture exploration, spotlighting both unsung and celebrated figures of past and present.

Kelley Hollis

Castle of our Skins

kelly@castleskins.org

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/919977452>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.