



The 13th Annual American Black Film Festival Culminates with its Awards Presentation and a Private Community Reception and Screening of "Pastor Brown"

The Roe Effect Wins the HBO Short Film Award, Len Bias Story for Best Documentary, and Mississippi Damned for Best Feature

Miami, FL- June 30, 2009 – Film Life's 13th annual American Black Film Festival (ABFF) announced the winners of their independent film awards at the Colony Theatre on June 27, 2009. The ABFF is the premier international marketplace for films that showcase the best new work by and about people of African descent. The ABFF Audience Award winner *Blue* was determined by the mobile voting as part of the festival's digital media marketing initiatives. HBO® is the festival's founding and title sponsor. In addition, this year marked the launch of the American Black Film Festival's community initiative and partnership with the City of Miami Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA).

The ABFF Independent Film Awards continues to celebrate the best independent films produced and directed outside of Hollywood. "We are committed to providing new opportunities each year for emerging talent and bring the best work of these gifted filmmakers to a broad audience. The talent this year was impressive and I believe that the lineup of films and programming is the best we've had in 13 years," said Jeff Friday, CEO of Film Life and Founder of the American Black Film Festival.

The award winners are as follows:

HBO® Short Film Award, Sponsored by HBO®-Prize \$20,000

The Roe Effect directed by Kiel Adrian Scott

ABFF Audience Award

Blue directed by Ryan Minnigham

Grand Jury Prize for Best Narrative Feature sponsored by BET Networks-Prize \$5,000

Mississippi Damned directed by Tina Mabry

Grand Jury Prize for Best Documentary

Len Bias Story directed by Kirk Fraser

Allstate Beyond February "Be Reel Film Contest Winner, sponsored by Allstate-Prize \$5,000

The Broken Sole directed by Travis Dent

Grand Jury Prize for Best Actor

Tessa Thompson in "*Mississippi Damned*"

Star Project Winner Actor –Khalilah Joi Dubose-Sponsored by Vibe Magazine

Star Project Winner Actor-Bechir Sylvain sponsored by Vibe Magazine

This year also marked the beginning of a partnership with the City of Miami Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and the City of Miami Commissioner Michelle Spence-Jones to provide the community with the opportunity to have access to some of the movers and shakers in the film industry. A youth filmmaker workshop with Vivica Fox, Wendell Pierce, Steven Barnes, Ronald Lang

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and Kevin Sharpley was held at the Lyric Theatre in Overtown. To close out the 13th Annual American Black Film Festival there was a pastor's appreciation reception and private screening of the ABFF's Centerpiece film "Pastor Brown". Trolleys were also provided to the American Black Film Festival patrons to take them to "Shop, Dine and Explore" some of the City of Miami's cultural destinations that include areas as Miami Bayside, the Gusman Theater, Jacksons Soul Food, Miami River Walk and the historic Ice Palace Film Studios. Shop, Dine & Explore is a new marketing campaign to promote the City of Miami's Community Redevelopment Agency's Southeast Overtown, Park West and Omni Redevelopment Districts.

HBO[®] is the ABFF's Founding and Premier Sponsor. Other corporate supporters include: Premier Sponsor BET Networks; Official Sponsors: Allstate, City of Miami Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB); Supporting Sponsors: Nielsen Media Research, Nickelodeon, HSBC Bank USA, ESPN, TNT, Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority (VCA), and Parish-Nation; Industry and Marketing Partners: One Village Entertainment, Stella Artois, Fox Searchlight Pictures, Soblu Inc., Codeblack Entertainment, Tyler Perry Studios, SAGIndie, Writer's Guild of America West, New York Women in Film & Television, Final Draft, FilMiami: Miami-Dade Office of Film & Entertainment, The Governor's Office of Film & Entertainment, the Broward Alliance, the City of Miami Mayor's Office of Film & Cultural Affairs, Film in Florida, GMCVB Miami Boutique Hotels, Film Florida, Vegas Style Entertainment, Vitaminwater and; Media Partners: Essence, Vibe, Black Enterprise, Uptown, Upscale, Heart & Soul, Automotive Rhythms, Monarch, Black Noir, Precious Times and EUR Web.

Founded in 1997, the American Black Film Festival(www.abff.com) is an industry retreat and competitive marketplace for films by and about people of color. The festival's mission is to facilitate distribution opportunities for quality films and introduce the top echelon of emerging artists to the industry at large. Since its inception, the ABFF has premiered over 600 films, positioning it as the leading film festival for Black and urban content. The ABFF is a property of Film Life, Inc., a New York-based event marketing, production and distribution company founded in 2002 by Jeff Friday (CEO).

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