

BlackStar Announces Programs, Closing Night World Premiere for 10th Anniversary Film Festival

Features parties, conversations, panels, daily outdoor screenings, and more

World Premiere of Oscar-nominated filmmaker and artist Sophia Nahli Allison's Hallowed Ground Added to Lineup

Menelik Shabazz Awarded 2021 Richard Nichols Luminary Award



(Philadelphia, PA - July 20, 2021) -- [BlackStar Projects](#), the premier organization celebrating visionary Black, Brown, and Indigenous film and media artists, today announced the programs accompanying this year's 10th annual BlackStar Film Festival, as well as the addition of a new world premiere to the film slate.



The BlackStar Film Festival is also proud to announce it has been selected by the **Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences** as a qualifying festival for both documentary and narrative short films, making BlackStar Best Narrative and Documentary Short Award-winners eligible for entrance at the Academy Awards*.

This year's Festival will take place virtually, with select in-person presentations, screenings, and events, **August 4-8, 2021**. Tickets for the festival are available for order [here](#). An all-access pass is \$125, a virtual festival pass is \$100, and an in-person screening pass is \$45. Requests for press credentials are available [here](#).

In advance of this year's Festival, BlackStar has announced the late **Menelik Shabazz** as the recipient of the **2021 Richard Nichols Luminary Award**, recognizing outstanding contributions in the arts and social change. Director of the acclaimed *Burning an Illusion*, among many other films, Shabazz was also the founder and publisher of *Black Filmmaker Magazine*. Shabazz, who passed away in June, was one of the most groundbreaking filmmakers of our time, eternally changing Black, Caribbean, British, and global cinema as we know it. Past recipients of the Luminary Award include Haile Gerima, Julie Dash, RZA, Ava DuVernay, dream hampton, and Marcia Smith.

In addition to the [80 films](#) already announced for the festival, BlackStar is proud to partner with HBO to present the world premiere of feature documentary **Eyes on the Prize: Hallowed Ground**, which will be screened at the Mann Center at 6pm on August 8th, in advance of its streaming availability on HBO Max, which will begin on August 19. Honoring Henry Hampton's masterpiece *Eyes on the Prize*, the film conjures ancestral memories, activates the radical imagination, and explores the profound journey for Black liberation through the voices of the movement. A portal through time, *Eyes on the Prize: Hallowed Ground* is a mystical and lyrical reimagining of the past, present, and future.

Along with the digital screening slate, the BlackStar Film Festival will also feature conversations, programs, roundtable discussions, and more, highlighting the voices and visions of filmmakers, thinkers, and leaders across the field.

Each morning, at 9:30am ET, the festival will kick off with **The Daily Jawn**, a morning talk show co-hosted by BlackStar founder Maori Karmael Holmes, filmmaker-artist Rashid Zakat, and a rotating crew of special guest hosts. The show features interviews with filmmakers and panelists, astrological updates, insightful social critique, and much more.

The run of the festival will also include conversations and roundtables with leading voices in the culture, live-streaming online. Participants include producer, filmmaker, and publisher **Sacha Jenkins**; Grammy Award-winning musician **Meshell Ndegeocello**; acclaimed interdisciplinary artist **Rashaad Newsome**; writer and scholar **Imani Perry**; curator and writer **Legacy Russell**, award-winning score composer **Tamar-kali** (*Mudbound*, *Shirley*, *The Assistant*); and many more. The topics of these conversations span candid discussions of mental health and filmmaking; what actors and filmmakers need to know about forming and being in relationship with literary, film, and casting agents; and non-extractive, healing-centered approaches to storytelling, in pursuit of a framework for values-based filmmaking. The full list of live streamed conversations, which will be aired on Facebook, is available [here](#), and reproduced below.

In addition to the conversations and panels, there will be a number of outdoor in-person events in Philadelphia this year. These include morning group yoga sessions at Drexel Square; opening and closing night parties; and nightly film screenings at **Eakins Oval**, in front of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, from **8pm to 11pm, August 4 - 7**. The parties, yoga sessions, and Eakins Oval screenings are all free and open to the public — free registration is available for both the [opening](#) and [closing](#) night parties on the Festival site.

On August 8, all-access and BlackStar @ the Mann pass holders can attend a **full day of outdoor screenings** at the Mann Center in Philadelphia featuring food vendors, an open lawn, and covered seating options. Screenings will begin at 11:00am ET, with Best Feature Narrative nominee *Waikiki*, and conclude with closing night film *Hallowed Ground*, featuring a post-screening Q&A with director Sophia Nahli Allison, executive producer Mervyn Marciano, and venerable artist and cultural worker Sonia Sanchez.

Returning for the third year, and in keeping with the Festival's maker-centric approach, will be BlackStar's **Pitch Session**, which brings eight filmmakers to pitch short doc projects to a panel of experts from foundations, distributors, and production houses. The Pitch Session will take place August 3, and is open to invited guests and festival passholders.

Live-Streamed Conversations

- **BlackStar Pitch Session**

August 3, 12-2:30pm

Presented by WarnerMedia/OneFifty

- **The Daily Jawn, Presented by PBS and World Channel**

August 4-8, daily at 9:30am, Facebook Live

With Laiya St. Clair, D'Lo, Ethel Cee, Anne Ishii, Dr. Yaba Blay, and more

- **Nuotama Bodomo and Fox Maxy in Conversation With Tina Campt**

August 4, 12-1pm

- **Glitch and the Moving Image**

August 4, 2-3pm

Co-presented by MediaJustice

With Legacy Russell, Cameron A. Granger, E. Jane and Jazmin Jones; moderated by Imran Siddiquee

- **Composers Roundtable**

August 4, 4-5pm

With Sultana Isham, Jlin, Tamar-Kali, and Amanda Jones; moderated by Dave "DJ lil' dave" Adams

- **Sacha Jenkins in Conversation with Dyana Williams**

August 4, 6-7pm

Co-presented by Showtime

- **Meshell Ndegeocello in Conversation with Imani Perry**

August 5, 12-1pm

- **Mental Health and Filmmaking**

August 5, 2-3pm

Co-presented by American Documentary (POV), PBS, Scattergood Foundation, and WORLD Channel

With Michèle Stephenson, Lyric Cabral, Gessica Généus, and Nicole Naone;
moderated by Yolo Akili

- **Lower-Frequency Politics**

August 7, 4-5pm

With Rashaad Newsome, Maya Cozier, Leilah Weinraub, Aziah “Zola” Wells and
Vashni Korin; moderated by Samantha Noël

- **R-E-S-P-E-C-T: Balancing Power and Care in Doc Filmmaking**

August 5, 6-8 pm

In Partnership with the Doc Accountability Working Group

With Natalie Bullock-Brown, Sonya Childress, Michelle Lanier, Twiggy Pucci-
Garcon, Poh Si Teng and Dr. Kameelah Rashad

- **Caribbean Film and Relational Poetics**

August 7, 10:30-11:30 am

In partnership with Third Horizon

Co-presented by Black Public Media

With Wally Fall, Jason Fitzroy Jeffers, Shari Petti, and Nino Martínez Sosa;
moderated by Dessane Lopez Cassell

- **On a Move!**

August 6, 6-7 pm

Co-presented by Leeway Foundation and Temple University Department of Theater, Film and Media Arts

With Debbie Africa, Mike Africa, Mike Africa Jr., Louis Massiah, Maori Karmael Holmes, and Ephraim Asili; moderated by Krystal Strong

- **Going Back to Get It: On Cinematic Archival Practice**

August 7, 12-1pm

Co-presented by Black Public Media and Impact Partners

With Darius Clark Monroe, Tzutz Matzin, Mahasen Nasser-Eldin, and Emily Jacir; moderated by Savannah Wood

- **Agent's & Manager's Roundtable**

August 7, 2-3pm

Co-presented by CAA

With Adesuwa McCalla, Noel Tedla Mesfin, Talitha Watkins and Rukayat Giwa; moderated by Brandon Pankey

- **Love + Grit Podcast at BlackStar**

August 6, 2-3pm

- **Coral Messam in Conversation With Jasmine Johnson**

August 8, 11am-12pm

In-Person Events and Screenings

- **Nightly Outdoor Screenings at Eakins Oval**

August 4-7, 8pm, Eakins Oval (2451 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia)

Free with Registration

August 4: [Beans](#)

August 5: [Eyimofe \(This Is My Desire\)](#)

August 6: [Shorts: Phototropism, featuring six short films](#)

August 7: [Bitchin': The Sound and Fury of Rick James](#)

- **Opening Night Party: Revival! with Rashid Zakat, lil' dave, and Oluwafemi, Co-presented with Firelight Media**

August 4, 8pm-12am, Bartram's Garden, (5400 Lindbergh Blvd., Philadelphia)

- **Festival Happy Hour by Color of Change**

August 8, 5-7pm at Attico (219 S Broad St., Philadelphia)

- **Yoga**

August 6-8, 8:30am at Drexel Square (3001 Market St., Philadelphia, PA)

- **BlackStar @ the Mann ([ticketed](#))**

*August 8, 11am-8pm at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts, TD Pavilion
(5201 Parkside Ave., Philadelphia, PA)*

- **Closing Night Party: Kiss-n-Grind, featuring Vikter Duplaix and Rich Medina, hosted by Laiya St. Clair**

August 4, 8-11pm, Cira Green, (129 S 30th St., Philadelphia, PA)

All times in ET. To register for these events, visit www.blackstarfest.org/2021festival/

This year's Festival is presented with the support of the following sponsors: Annenberg School for Communication, Facebook, Lionsgate/STARZ, Open Society Foundations, WarnerMedia, Eventive, Color of Change, MediaJustice, Netflix, PECO, Philadelphia Foundation, REI Coop Studios, Urban Affairs Coalition/Ending Racism Partnership, The Study Hotel, American Documentary/POV, Catapult Fund, Creative Artists Agency, Firelight Media, Impact Partners, ITVS, The Gotham Film & Media Institute, Leeway Foundation, PBS, Scattergood Foundation, Temple University Department of Theater, Film and Media Arts, Vimeo and WORLD Channel.

BlackStar Projects and its year-round programs are generously supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Ford Foundation/

JustFilms, Independence Public Media Foundation, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, Mighty Arrow Family Foundation, Nathan Cummings Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Perspective Fund, PopCulture Collaborative, Samuel S. Fels Fund, Surdna Foundation, William Penn Foundation, and Wyncote Foundation, in addition to its [board of directors](#), community partners, and a host of generous [individual donors and organizations](#).

For more information on festival programming, visit www.blackstarfest.org/2021festival/.

About BlackStar Projects

BlackStar Projects is the producer of the BlackStar Film Festival, an annual celebration of the visual and storytelling traditions of the African diaspora and global communities of color — showcasing films by Black, Brown, and Indigenous people from around the world. In addition to the acclaimed festival, BlackStar presents an array of programming across film and visual culture year-round, and produces the twice-annual journal *Seen*.

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