

BlackStar Film Festival to Host Exclusive Screenings of *A Love Song for Latasha* on Anniversary of L.A. Uprisings

The 2019 short film by Sophia Nahli Allison will stream for a limited time this weekend, followed by a powerful panel discussion



(Philadelphia, PA – April 30, 2020) – BlackStar Film Festival and Sophia Nahli Allison announced today that they would be hosting three exclusive online screenings of Allison’s *A Love Song for Latasha* this weekend, in recognition of the 28th anniversary of the L.A. Uprisings. Allison’s 19-minute experimental documentary, which won Best Documentary Short at the 2019 BlackStar Film Festival, centers on the life of Latasha Harlins, the 15-year-old whose 1991 murder in Los Angeles set the stage for the racial justice protests that swept the city the following year.



This weekend's screenings will culminate in a live conversation at 5pm ET on May 3rd between Sophia Nahli Allison, *Insecure* producer Deniese Davis, artist Lynnée Denise, *Surviving R. Kelly* executive producer dream hampton, and scholar Marcus Anthony Hunter, on the links between visual art, collective memory, and Black liberation.

The film will be streamed three times consecutively over the course of an hour, beginning at the following times:

Friday, May 1 - Beginning 7 pm ET / 4 pm PT

Saturday, May 2 - Beginning 7pm ET / 4 pm PT

Sunday, May 3 - Beginning 4 pm ET / 1 pm PT

followed by

5 pm ET / 2pm PT Live Conversation

The live streams will be accessible on BlackStar's Facebook page, [here](#). A Facebook account is not required to view the streams.

"We are currently living through history, an unprecedented time for us all. Art has always been a tool to reimagine, radically dream, dismantle, and heal. As we approach the 28th anniversary of The 1992 L.A. Riots, how do we engage with the past in a way that is healing and radically transforms our own understanding of time and black liberation? How does engaging with the past allow us to persevere through the present and envision a new future? How does art, the archive, collective memory, and the power of dreaming challenge and dismantle how our stories have been remembered and recorded?," said Allison. "Latasha Harlins is a name that is synonymous with the riots, but too often nuanced stories of black women and black girls go unnoticed and their trauma becomes their full existence. To commemorate this time in LA history we hold space for Latasha Harlins, celebrating her life and the women who've kept her memory alive."

A Love Song for Latasha premiered at the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival and was an official selection of the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, in addition to winning Best Documentary Short at the 2019 BlackStar Film Festival. BlackStar will stream the film on their

Facebook page three times consecutively at 7 pm ET on May 1st and 2nd, and three times again at 4 pm ET on May 3rd. The third and final screening on May 3rd will be followed by the live conversation, at 5 pm ET, also on BlackStar's Facebook page.

Sophia Nahli Allison is an experimental documentary filmmaker, photographer and dreamer. A native of South Central Los Angeles, she disrupts conventional documentary methods by reimagining the archives and excavating hidden truths. Her work is a meditation of the spirit. She conjures ancestral memories to explore the intersection of fiction and non-fiction storytelling. She is a 2020 United States Artists Fellow in Film and has held residencies at The MacDowell Colony, The Camargo Foundation in Cassis, France., The Center for Photography at Woodstock, and POV Spark's African Interactive Art Residency. She is a recipient of a 2014 Chicago 3Arts Award and has received grants from the Sundance Institute New Frontier Lab Programs, Glassbreaker Films, and Getty Images. In 2017 she was named the Student Video Photographer of the Year by the White House News Photographers Association. She has a Master's Degree in visual communication from UNC. Past projects have been featured on *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *The Root*, with Los Angeles Filmforum at MOCA, and more. Her short documentary *A Love Song For Latasha* premiered at the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival, the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, and received the Grand Jury Documentary Prize at AFI Fest, along with Best Documentary Short awards at the New Orleans Film Festival, BlackStar Film Festival, and more including an IDA Documentary Awards Nomination.

Deniese Davis got her start in entertainment by producing indie low-budget projects including music videos, short films and digital content. In the web-series realm she is best known for producing Issa Rae's award-winning web series, *The Mis-Adventures of Awkward Black Girl*. She is currently a Producer on the HBO comedy series *Insecure* and an Executive Producer on the upcoming HBO limited series *The Dolls* while continuing to produce and oversee content for Issa Rae Productions. She also serves as COO of ColorCreative, which provides access and opportunities for diverse and emerging writers and recently sold their first feature film *Love in America* to Universal. Originally from Las Vegas NV, Deniese is an alum of CUNY-Brooklyn College and the American Film Institute Conservatory.

Lynnée Denise was shaped as a DJ by her parents' record collection. She's an artist, scholar, and writer whose work reflects on underground cultural movements, the 1980s and electronic music of the African Diaspora. Lynnée Denise coined the phrase 'DJ Scholarship' to reposition the role of the DJ from party purveyor to an archivist, cultural custodian and information specialist.

dream hampton is a writer and filmmaker from Detroit.

Marcus Anthony Hunter is the Scott Waugh Endowed Chair in the Division of the Social Sciences, Professor of sociology, and Chair of the department of African American Studies at UCLA. He is author of three books: *Black Citymakers: How The Philadelphia Negro Changed Urban America* (Oxford University Press, 2013), *Chocolate Cities: The Black Map of American Life* (University of California Press, 2018) coauthored with Zandria F. Robinson, and *The New Black Sociologists* (Routledge, 2018).

About BlackStar Film Festival

The BlackStar Film Festival is 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.

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