

BlackStar Film Festival 2026

August 6 – 9

Mission & Vision

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. Described as a “revelatory cinematic experience” by *The New York Times*, the festival is produced by non-profit BlackStar Projects.

For over a decade, the film festival has been a highlight of Philadelphia’s cultural calendar, and since 2023 we have enlivened the city’s central theater district — Avenue of the Arts — with four days of screenings, panels, parties, and more. The year 2026 marks the film festival’s 15th anniversary and 15 years of:

- **Providing an expansive view of indie cinema of the global majority.**
- **Creating space for nuanced discourse at the intersection of film, art, and social justice movements.**
- **Supporting genre-defying artists at the vanguard of imagining a more liberatory world.**

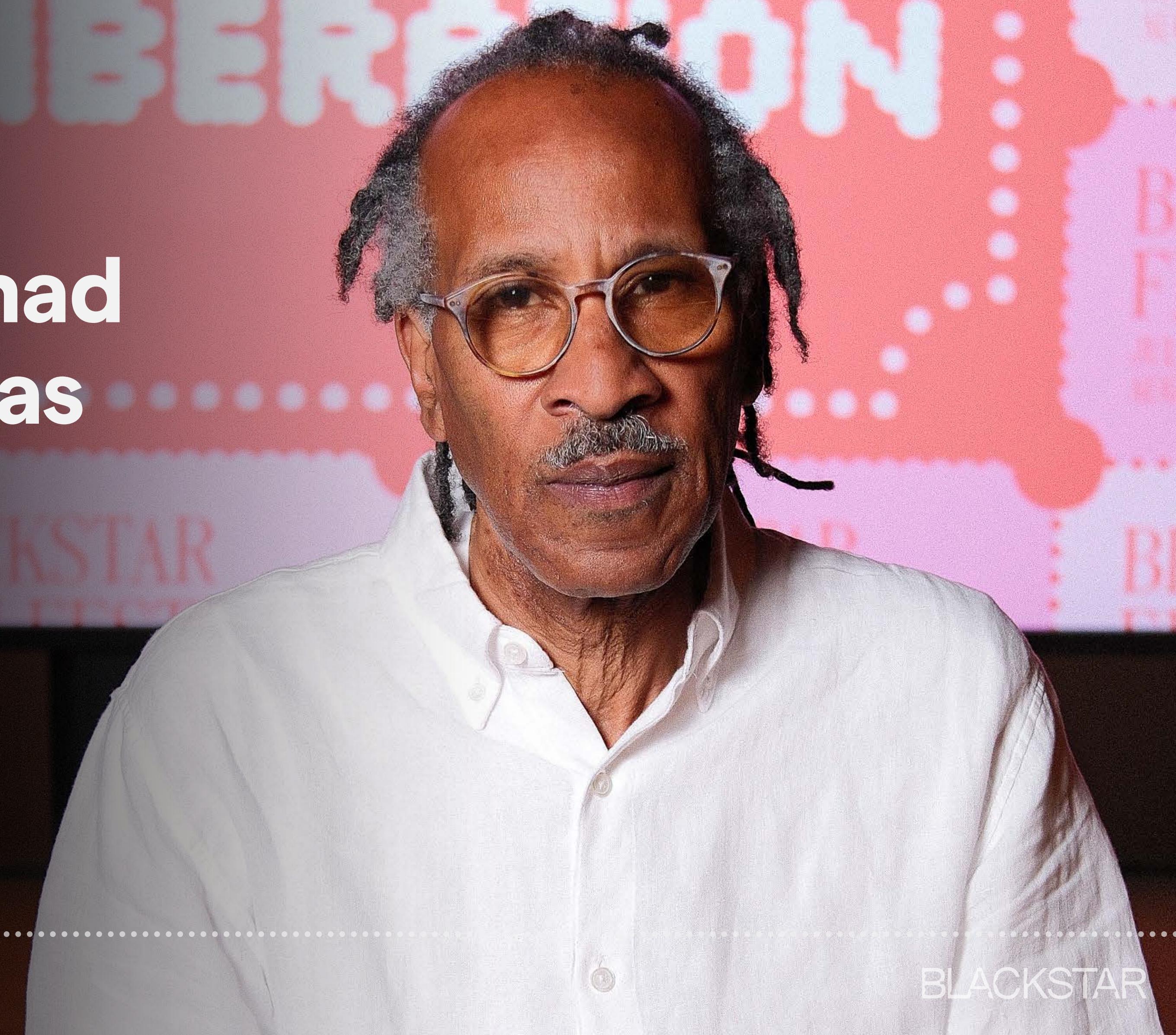


2025 Festival Highlights

**“In many ways,
[Toni Cade Bambara] had
prophesied BlackStar as
being a necessity.
The need continues.”**

– Louis Massiah, Filmmaker

TCB: The Toni Cade Bambara School of Organizing (2025)
BlackStar Film Festival 2025 Opening Night Film



Our Impact



90+
Films from
40 Countries



23K+
Attendees
Globally



96%
of Attendees Would
Recommend
to Others



6M+
Press
Reach



Our Audience



Tastemakers, Industry Insiders, Cross-Generational and Socially Conscious

Our Audience

In 2025, the festival brought in new **U.S. audiences** from around the country, including significant increases in attendance from **New York, Virginia, and Maryland**. The highest number of international visitors this year came from **Brazil, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, South Africa, and Mexico**.



38% under age 24

24% ages 25-34

22% ages 35-44

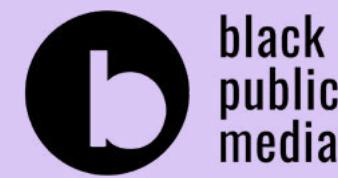
53% audience identify as women

60% Black or African

2025 Sponsors



+impactpartners



Media Recognition



“While it’s grown immeasurably since its earliest days, the festival has continuously maintained its focus on providing a platform for works and visionaries that defy the constraints of genre.”

— Jenna Adrian-Diaz, *SURFACE*



“This is one of the most prestigious film festivals in the US. To premiere here means the world.”

– Letitia Wright, Filmmaker

Highway to the Moon (2025)



Sponsorship Levels

Title \$250,000	Platinum \$125,000	Gold \$75,000	Silver \$50,000	Bronze \$25,000	Brass \$10,000	Copper \$5,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusive Title Sponsor of the Festival • Top-tier logo placement on all promotional materials, festival trailer, step-and-repeat, street advertising, and lanyards • Two-page opening ad in program guide • 20 Industry Passes + 6 Invitations to Directors' Brunch & Awards Ceremony • High-visibility activations at all venues, including banners and activations at opening & closing night parties • All benefits of lower tiers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second-tier logo placement on all promotional materials, street advertising, and festival trailer • On-air mentions in radio and podcast ads • Back inside cover ad in program guide • 10 Industry Passes + 4 Invitations to Directors' Brunch & Awards Ceremony • Filmmaker engagement: Product in filmmaker gift bag • Festival ads: Up to 15-sec on-screen ad before each screening (in-person & digital) • Venue activation opportunity • Social media activation + Bronze-level discount benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgment before every screening and panel • Third-tier logo placement on website and program guide • Full-page ad in program guide • 6 Industry Passes + 2 Invitations to Directors' Brunch & Awards Ceremony • Filmmaker engagement: Product in filmmaker gift bag • Festival ads: On-screen digital still before each screening • Social media activation + Bronze-level discount benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fourth-tier logo placement on website and program guide • Half-page ad in program guide • 4 Industry Passes + 1 Invitation to Directors' Brunch & Awards Ceremony • Social media activation + Bronze-level discount benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fifth-tier logo placement on website and program guide • Half-page ad in program guide • 2 Industry Passes • Discount code: 15% off passes & tickets for employees/ members • Social media activation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sixth-tier logo placement on website and program guide • Social media activation • 2 All-Access Passes • Discount code: 10% off passes & tickets for employees/ members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seventh-tier logo placement on website and program guide



Experiential Activations

The Daily Jawn Stage: \$75,000

The Daily Jawn Stage, which attracts thousands of attendees to the lobby of the Kimmel Center, features a robust schedule of panels, Q&As, and other events throughout the duration of the Festival, creating space for critical dialogue and additional engagement with themes related to the film program as well as relevant topics from the wider field. All events on the stage are free and open to the public.

Industry Lounge: \$50,000

The Industry Lounge provides an intimate space for participating filmmakers, VIP guests, and Industry passholders to network, build knowledge, and relax each day during the Festival. The Industry Lounge is a fully customizable space with opportunities for special programming and engagement with those working in the field.

BlackStar Bazaar: \$30,000

Located inside the central venue, BlackStar Bazaar spotlights independent artisans selling art, apparel, accessories, decor, and more. The Bazaar, which is curated to showcase local Black, Brown, and Indigenous-owned businesses, is free and open to the public.



Experiential Activations

Opening Night Party: \$30,000

The Opening Night party is one of the most well-attended single events of the festival — with over 1400 tickets issued in 2025 — kicking off the Festival in the spirit of community and high vibrations.

Closing Night Party: \$30,000

The Closing Night party closes out the Festival with unforgettable energy and style, with more than 1000 tickets issued in 2025.

Directors' Brunch & Awards Ceremony: \$25,000

Annually, BlackStar juries award outstanding filmmakers in the following categories: Feature Documentary, Short Documentary, Feature Narrative, Short Narrative, Experimental Film, and the Philadelphia Filmmaker Award. These awards are presented at the exclusive Directors' Brunch & Awards Ceremony.

Filmmaker Mixer: \$25,000

The Filmmaker Mixer is a Saturday night happy hour event, while the festival is in full-swing, that creates space for both celebration and networking amongst participating filmmakers, industry professionals, and aspiring filmmakers.



Programmatic Support

First Friday at the Barnes: \$25,000

Each year, BlackStar partners with the Barnes Foundation to co-host their regularly scheduled First Friday program. The event features live music and performances, art, cocktails, and light fare and provides an opportunity for increased Festival visibility to a new audience.

Accessibility: \$25,000

BlackStar centers access and disability justice, providing virtual screenings, ASL interpretation, captions, audio description, and health safety measures that serve over 17% of our audience.

Opening or Closing Night Screenings: \$10,000

The Opening and Closing Night films are among the most anticipated and high-profile screening opportunities of the festival. In 2025, the opening night film sold out with over 600 tickets issued. Featuring World, North America, or US premieres, this event will receive national press coverage, and feature an official red carpet.

Wellness Initiatives: \$10,000

Grounding sessions, quiet spaces, and other initiatives center care for filmmakers and audiences, creating a more supportive, restorative festival experience.



Merchandise & In-Kind

From outfitting our staff to partnering on the official Festival sweatshirt, there are numerous opportunities for high visibility and impact via merchandise sponsorship. We produce over 1000 items of merchandise annually, including t-shirts, hats, and publications. In 2025, our “Cinema for Liberation” line of merchandise completely sold out.

We also welcome in-kind sponsorship of other products or services as it aligns with our programmatic needs. Please reach out to our team to discuss options.

Additional opportunities to sponsor products and events not mentioned above are available.

To discuss bespoke sponsorship packages, contact Catherine Lee at catherine@blackstarfest.org





BLACKSTAR

"BlackStar is the best [film festival] I've ever attended, by far. I felt deeply connected to the art and the people — felt seen and represented."

– 2025 Audience Survey

Advertising Opportunities

Tabling	Pre-Screening	Print	Web	VOD
\$1,000 Single day table	\$1,000 Single interstitial ad	\$3,500 Half page in festival program guide	\$1,000 Single webpage ad or Newsletter banner	\$1,000 Single pre-screening still ad
\$3,500 Full festival tabling	\$35,000 Full festival interstitial ads	\$5,000 Full Page Ad in festival program guide	\$2,500 Single page banner	\$2,500 Single pre-screening video ad
<p>Interstitials are 10-second still or video ads that loop before and after screenings (without sound), while virtual pre-screening ads play for 10 seconds directly before films on the virtual festival platform; all ads run in full color.</p>				
<p>Visit blackstarfest.org/festival/advertising for guidelines.</p>				



“The in-person experience was sublime... Audiences were especially vocal, buzzing with questions during the talkbacks.”

– Chenoa Baker, Observer

“BlackStar Film Festival’s 2025 Selections Unpack the Power and Pretense of Cinema as a Liberatory Tool”

Partnership Timeline



June 1

Sponsorship Commitment Deadline

June 2

Festival Program Announced

June 8

Print Advertising Deadline

July 6

Digital Advertising Deadline

July 7

Schedule Announced

August 6 – 9

Festival Dates

Partner with BlackStar to Shape the Future of Cinema

- Align your brand with visionary artists
- Reach a global audience
- Be part of a movement for joy and liberation



Advertising
blackstarfest.org/ads

Sponsorship
blackstarfest.org/sponsorship

Maori Karmael Holmes
Chief Executive & Artistic Officer
maori@blackstarfest.org

Catherine Lee
Chief Operations Officer
catherine@blackstarfest.org