

MARTHA'S VINEYARD AFRICAN AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL KICKS OFF IT'S 22ND YEAR CELEBRATING OVER TWO DECADES OF STORYTELLERS OF COLOR WITH COLMAN DOMINGO, CYNTHIA ERIVO, SHERYL LEE RALPH, LYNN WHITFIELD, RENEE ELISE GOLDSBERRY, CHEF PATRICK NEELY & MORE!

Honorary AKA Member Cynthia Erivo to be honored with a Fireside Chat

The annual festival will feature documentaries and critically acclaimed films that have taken this year's festival circuit by storm

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Martha's Vineyard, MA – July, 11 2024... The Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival (MVAAFF) proudly announces its 22nd annual celebration, taking place from August 2nd to August 10th. This esteemed Oscar-qualifying festival showcases the best of black cinema, featuring independent films, acclaimed documentaries, panel discussions, and exclusive events ESPN returns as the Presenting Sponsor for this unforgettable 9-day celebration.

"We are beyond thrilled to mark 22 years of amplifying the voices and stories of black filmmakers," said Floyd Rance, founder of Run & Shoot Filmworks and producer and co-founder of the MVAAFF. "From our beginnings in Park Slope, Brooklyn to the beautiful shores of Martha's Vineyard, we are extremely proud of the financial impact felt by all island business, during the two weeks of the festival, and look forward to another year of celebrating black excellence in film."

Brian Lockhart, ESPN SVP of Original Content and ESPN Films states, "We are incredibly honored to be a presenting sponsor of the prestigious Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival. This festival stands as a beacon for celebrating diverse voices, showcasing powerful narratives, and fostering meaningful conversations within the community. Being part of this vibrant and influential festival not only aligns with ESPN's mission of elevating unique and vital perspectives, but also allows us to contribute to its continued success and impact. We look forward to engaging with the festival's discerning audience and supporting the extraordinary talent showcased here."

The MVAAFF is committed to promoting diversity in the film industry, providing a platform for black and brown filmmakers to share their unique perspectives and stories. Over the past 22 years, the festival has grown into a premier event, attracting A-list talent and audiences from around the world. Featured shorts and Documentaries include **Albany Road; Luther: Never Too Much; Rebel Girls** and **How Do You Remember the Days of Slavery** from Harvard Historian, Vincent Brown.

The festival kicks off on opening night with the powerful new release from A24, **"Sing Sing,"** starring Academy Award Nominee **Colman Domingo**. The film tells the inspiring story of Devine G. (Domingo), a man imprisoned at *Sing Sing Correctional Facility*, for a crime he did not commit, who finds purpose by acting in a theatre group alongside other incarcerated men. The screening will take place at the Martha's Vineyard Performing Arts Center at 8:00pm and will be followed by a discussion with Colman Domingo, producer Monique Walton and Gina Belafonte (President and CEO of Sankofa.org).

On **August 3rd**, from **11am – 3pm** in the Vineyard Lounge, step into the Magic Iyanu as Lion Forge Entertainment, Cartoon Network, and Max present ***The Magic of 'IYANU'***: an animated series inspired by West African folklore, coming to Cartoon Network and Max in 2025. Follow a young hero's journey as she discovers her superpowers and races to save Yorubaland from an ancient curse with her newfound friends. Join Lion Forge Entertainment at MVAAFF for family-friendly activities, including an art wall, drum circle, and panel discussion with the series creators. Plus, an EXCLUSIVE REVEAL of scenes from the series and a book signing with Roye Okupe, creator of the original 'Iyanu: Child of Wonder' graphic novel.

Warner Bros Television presents "A Color of Conversation" with the incomparable **Sheryl Lee Ralph** on **August 3rd**, at 8:00pm. The Emmy-winning actress and singer will discuss her latest triumph with the award-winning series "**Abbott Elementary**."

Foodies and film lovers alike will delight in an exclusive culinary experience on Sunday, August 4th. Celebrity Chef and bestselling author **Patrick Neely of the Food Network** will join renowned **Chef Juan Martinez** of the Harbor View Hotel for a first-of-its-kind dinner to celebrate African American cuisine to kick off the festival weekend. The dinner will feature exquisite wines curated by Boston's own Black Owned Sommelier, TJ Douglas.

Apple Original Films has partnered with Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival to kick off the official opening festivities taking place at l'etoile restaurant from 10:00pm to 1:00am. A multi-year partner of MVA AFF, Apple's award-winning, high-quality programming features a diverse range of stories that connect with our shared humanity and are available in more than 100 countries on Apple TV+.

Additional screenings, panel discussions and a host of surprises will continue to be updated throughout the festival. All screenings and events will take place at Martha's Vineyard Performing Arts Center (MVPAC) 100 Edgartown Road, Oak Bluffs, MA 02557. The Festival will also highlight its signature events which include the annual White Party, Director's Brunch as well as the signatory Bonds of Brotherhood and Women's C-Suite lunches.

For more information on the MVA AFF and a complete schedule of screenings and special events, please visit www.mvaaff.com.

About Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival

The MVA AFF, established in 2002, is an OSCAR®-qualifying film festival in the short film category. It is a nine-day event where independent and established African American filmmakers can showcase, screen, and promote emerging feature, documentary, and short films from across the world. The brainchild of the husband-and-wife team, Floyd, and Stephanie Rance, the MVA AFF provides a nurturing environment for African American filmmakers to test their creativity while giving sponsors a captive audience to promote their brands among a highly discerning community of people of color.

About Run&Shoot Filmworks

Run&Shoot Filmworks, the producer of the Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival (MVA AFF) and the Color of Conversation Film Festival (COCHF), is a film production company credited with creating outstanding visual work for several clients, including HBO, Martell Cognac, Reebok, NBC Sports, Hallmark Channel and Footlocker. For the past 20 years, Run&Shoot Filmworks has produced the MVA AFF and the COCHF with the primary goal of providing a positive environment where filmmakers can share their thoughts, ideas, and aspirations.

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