



REEL SISTERS FILM FESTIVAL AWARDS CEREMONY



REMOTE PARADISE

FRIDAY | 4 2024
OCTOBER

REEL SISTERS OF THE DIASPORA

This festival's winning short films may
qualify for consideration for the

OSCAR[®]

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Oscars.org/Rules

REEL SISTERS TRAILBLAZER HONOREE 2024

HURIYYAH MUHAMMAD

Huriyyah Muhammad is an award-winning director, writer and producer whose projects have been invited to the Sundance Film Festival, Tribeca Film Institute, Outfest, Newfest, AFI, Austin Film Festival, New Voices in Black Cinema, American Black Film Festival and selected by The Criterion Collection. Huriyyah is the 2024 HBO Short Film Competition Winner, a 2024 Series Fest Winner, a Sundance Creative Producing Award Winner, and an alum of the prestigious AFI Directing Workshop for Women (DWW) and the Film Independent Episodic Directing Intensive.



Huriyyah's directing projects often explore those forces both seen and unseen that guide us in our lives. Her work invites audiences to take the journey with her as she tackles tough subjects - death, divorce, eviction - with humor and heart. Huriyyah's sci-fi digital series, KELOID, has become a cult favorite - winning at multiple festivals.

Her fantasy shorts, OUTGROWN and WONDERS, both toured extensively domestically and internationally, winning multiple Best Short and Best Cinematography Awards. Her Excellence in Storytelling Award, at SeriesFest 2024 for her intergenerational short NANI'S BIRYANI, was the first of its kind. Her most recent directorial project, CHOCOLATE WITH SPRINKLES, the 2024 HBO Short Film Competition winner starring Reno Wilson, is a heartwarming, life-affirming tale inspired by memories growing up in her family's Cleveland, Ohio donut bakery.

As busy as Huriyyah is as an artist, she believes strongly in community and put that belief into action by co-founding The Black TV & Film Collective, a 1400-member, non-profit arts organization supporting filmmakers of Black and African descent. Huriyyah holds a BS in Computer Science from Spelman College and an MBA from NYU. Last but not least, she is a proud member of the LGBTQ+ community and does her best work as a loving wife and mother.

MISTRESS OF CEREMONIES

SHEILA KAY DAVIS



Sheila Kay Davis, founder/artistic director of New Professional Theatre, is a lifelong theatre professional. After graduating from Spelman College in Atlanta, Ga. with a degree in theatre, Sheila headed to New York City. She was immediately cast in the hit show “Little Shop of Horrors”, now a classic, in which Sheila originated the role of Ronette. She is featured on the cast album and played the role for five years. She hit the ground running racking up success in television commercials, regional theatres, and daytime dramas.

However, she noticed very few minorities having real sustainable success in the theatre world. Her thorough experience as an actress gave her insight into both the joys and frustrations of minority artists. She used this insight as her drive to found the New Professional Theatre (NPT). Armed with passion and desire, Ms. Davis set out to form a theatre company that would develop African American playwrights, a sorely underrepresented group.

Since its inception, NPT has served over 1000 playwrights with productions, cash grants, dramaturgy, business seminars and providing access to agents and producers. New Professional Theatre is the only African American theatre company located in the Broadway theatre district. NPT writers have been featured in regional theatre, television, and film. Sheila is the daughter of Carrie Meek, the first African American elected to the US Congress in the state of Florida since Reconstruction. Sheila understands developing constituencies and community mobilization. She serves her community through the NPT Education Program a program that provides mentoring, homework assistance, college prep, volunteerism and Broadway outings to New York City Public School Students. She also chairs the Arts Ministry at Antioch Baptist Church. She has received the Spelman College Alumnae Achievement Award for Arts & Media and the Arts Leadership Award from the Coalition of 100 Black/Asian/Latino women at the World of Women Leaders.

PRESENTERS



LETITIA GUILLORY

Letitia Guillory is a multi-hyphenate creative working in theatre, film and television. Her episodic series, gATES, and feature film, HOUND DOG are part of OneFifty, a brand within Warner Bros Discovery. Her work has been presented at Lincoln Center, Harlem Stage, Project Row Houses, BRIC Media Arts, National Black Theatre Festival and more. Letitia's other writing credits include: 8:42 (Austin Film Festival Second Rounder), Hound Dog (Essence Film Festival 2024 Jury Prize Best Script, Oaxaca Film Festival Global Script Competition Finalist, Tribeca All Access Grant), gATES (Official Selection Essence Film Festival, Austin Film Festival Second Rounder, Semifinalist Screencraft TV Pilot Launch).

Letitia produced the award-winning short comedy, Pas Honteux (REVOLT TV), and the powerful LGBTQ narrative short Winston. These films were official selections at the Hip Hop Film Festival, Blackstar Film Festival, American Black Film Festival, TIDE Film Festival, Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival, Bronze Lens Film Festival and more. Her recent project, LETTRE LA has received numerous screenings in the US and abroad, including Essence Film Festival, Micheaux Film Festival, Chelsea International Film Festival, Barbados International Black Film Festival among others.

Letitia produces events for NYC Parks and curates Movies Under the Stars for Brooklyn. She has served on the board of the Black TV & Film Collective. She is a member of the Harlem Dramatic Writers Workshop, NYWIFT, Dramatists Guild and is a proud alum of the University of Texas (BFA, Drama), New York University (MA, Performance Studies), O'Neill Playwrights Conference and a Blackhouse Foundation Multicultural Producers Lab Fellow.

OKEMA T. MOORE

Okema T. Moore is an actress, producer, writer, and director who started as a child actor on Sesame Street, and has cultivated quite a life of experiences since then. These experiences include a shared EMMY Nomination, premiering as a producer at Tribeca Film Festival's, Tribeca N.O.W. 2019, producing the NAACP nominated and WEBBY Award-winning docu-series, UNLADYLIKE2020 for PBS, winning a bronze Telly Award Directing the August Wilson Center's MLK Tribute Special, being nominated for Best Actress numerous times, and winning Best Screenplay and Best Short for her self-written short film, Shh...



Okema also produced the American Black Film Festival 2019 Best Web Series, Little Apple. She can be seen as a hologram in Brian Stevenson's, Equal Justice Initiative Legacy Museum in Montgomery, AL, and in successful web series such as Makeup X Breakup on WE TV's allblk and the Emmy Nominated Pillow Talk now on BET+. She also makes her adult TV debut on Season 2 of Amazon Prime's, Harlem!

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FEATURE FILMS



CHOCOLATE WITH SPRINKLES (INVITED)

narrative | 19:05 min.

PRODUCERS: Okema T. Moore, Cole Sanchez and Yha Mourhia Wright
DIRECTOR/WRITER: Huriyyah Muhammad

On their 25th wedding anniversary, a bickering couple is given one day to do something they haven't done in 25 years — work on their marriage.

REMOTE PARADISE OFFICIAL SELECTION OF REEL SISTERS 27TH SEASON

narrative | 14:20 min.

WRITERS: Tazia Harris, Troy Crossfield
Producer/Director: Sheronna Shakara Osbourne

After 6 months of working remotely from a tropical location Denise gets word from her AI manager Mark that she must return to the office immediately. Disgruntled and unprepared, Denise is willing to do anything to keep her slice of Paradise.



WORLD PREMIERE FILMS & REEL SISTERS FELLOWS

Oct 4, 2024 | Riverside Theater



FINDING JAMIA'S SPIRIT

narrative | 14:43 min.

PRODUCERS: Candace Patrick, Musau Onwubiko
DIRECTOR/WRITER: Candace Patrick

A little girl looks for her dad's ancestor spirit.

29 HOUR FAMINE

narrative | 16:28 min.

PRODUCERS: Gorby Mufan Shih
DIRECTOR/WRITER: Vivienne Shaw (Etzu Shaw)

When a devout teenager discovers evidence of someone eating at her church youth group's annual fasting event, she goes to absurd lengths to catch the culprit.

Oct. 26, 2024 – Maysles Documentary Center, 343 Lenox Ave. (cor. 127 St).



COLD FEAT

narrative | 15 min.

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/WRITER: Morgan Alicia Smith

A suburban physical therapist's life is committed to helping others, while sitting on the sidelines of her own dreams.

MICROBUDGET FILM FELLOWS



Candace D. Patrick is a writer, director, and producer who was born and raised in Los Angeles, CA. She first became passionate about screenwriting in high school after her drama teacher encouraged her to apply to the Scriptwriters Network High School Fellowship Program, of which she was accepted. Participating in that fellowship led her to earn a Screenwriting degree from Loyola Marymount University, where she developed her voice focusing on stories that authentically displayed human journeys.

Having had the opportunity to travel to 25+ countries while working as a marketing director for Semester at Sea, a study abroad program, Candace learned that the feeling of joy is universal, but the path to joy and healing are

uniquely traveled and often include laughter. Her writing often explores grief & healing, mental health and finding joy, and debunking the Strong Black Woman concept. She earned semifinalist rankings for her first feature, “Glow,” in the 2010 StoryPros contest, and the 2017 Screencraft Film Fund for her short script, “Cycle.” In 2019, she wrote, directed, and produced the short film, “The 5th Room,” which received awards and nominations for Best Short, Best Writer, and Best Director. Since then she has worked on several independent film and web projects. Her 1-hour family drama pilot, “Harrington’s Crossing,” advanced to the finalist round of the Spring 2021 WeScreenplay Diverse Voices competition. When not writing, Candace loves to travel, and fight with her cat, Nougat, for the most comfortable seat in her apartment.

Vivienne Shaw is a Taiwanese-American screenwriter and director currently pursuing her MFA in screenwriting from Columbia University. She works primarily in comedy and horror with particular interest in Asian-American, queer, and female-centered stories. Vivienne is the recent recipient of an Alfred P. Sloan Screenplay Grant and a current Sloan Grand Jury Prize nominee for her psychological thriller feature script KILLING JAR. In addition to her own projects, she has worked in development at multiple production companies, including ViacomCBS, Cinetic Media and Gamechanger Films, and has also served as a script reader for the former Sundance Asian-American Fellowship. Outside of film Vivienne also works in video art and projection design for theater, pursuing her continued interest in interactive storytelling. She received her BA from Wellesley College in computer science and cinema and media studies.



Morgan Alicia Smith is a New York based filmmaker who has spent her lifetime in love with film, television, and theatre. After directing her first play at age 17, Morgan earned her undergraduate degree in Geology while also getting minors in Music and Theater. She found ways to keep her passions for storytelling alive by writing and producing stories for Milwaukee PBS, and broadcast news in Wisconsin and Texas. Morgan's path took a circuitous route when she found herself creating animated/graphical content, and running the in-game entertainment efforts for the Texas Stars, a minor league hockey team in Austin. Still, Morgan made time for her personal creative endeavors by writing plays for local festivals. She even wrote and performed a one-woman show, which took her to the finals of a fringe play competition. But when COVID hit and she was laid off from her job, Morgan took a chance at school again, and found herself in Columbia University's Creative Film Producing MFA program. Morgan hopes to put her degree to work telling stories about women, and for women who are underrepresented in mainstream media.

REEL SISTERS SALUTES OUR 2024 AWARD WINNING FILMS!

Reel Sisters Best Narrative Short (Oscar Qualifying Film)
Jellyfish and Lobster

Reel Sisters Best Director (Tie)
Brownies
Superman Doesn't Steal

Reel Sisters Best Screenplay
Ya Hanouni

Reel Sisters Spirit Awards (Tie)
Remote Paradise
The Solace of Sisterhood

Reel Sisters Honorable Mention
Grace

Reel Sisters Best Documentary
Chocolate Milk

Reel Sisters Best Documentary Short
A Race In the Sun

Reel Sisters Best Comedy
Kurta Pants

Reel Sisters Best Animation
Oren's Way

Best Experimental
Centerplay

THANKS TO OUR FRIENDS & SUPPORTERS

African Voices Board

Carolyn A. Butts, Publisher/Editor
Sheila Johnson, Acting Board Chairperson
Pittershawn Palmer, Fundraising Chair
Vera Sims, Member
Iman Childs, Member

Reel Sisters Film Festival Team

Carolyn A. Butts, Founder/Festival Director
Sandra Proto, Festival Coordinator
Kara Ford, Curator
Hangcheng Xu, Intern
Shaye James, Production Manager
Lailani Gibson, Projectionist
Sandrine Dupiton, Writers Lab Coordinator
Pittershawn Palmer, Graphic Designer
Kristin Pintauro, Webmaster
Katie Gallagher, Social Media Content Curator

Reel Sisters Jury Members

Nicole Franklin, Letitia Guillory, Octavia Clahar, Jordan Simon, Kara Ford, David Raghelli, Luisa De La Ville and Berta Jottar.

Community Partners

ImageNation Cinema Foundation, While We Are Still Here,
BRIC Media, Kumble Theater, LIU Media Arts Dept., Miller Theatre,
Riverside Theater, Maysles Documentary Center and Center For Fiction.

Volunteers

Special thanks to all our volunteers!
LaZette McCants and Volunteer Divas & Divos Plus, *Volunteers for Arts & Culture & Community.*

ABOUT AFRICAN VOICES



Founded in 1992, African Voices is a nonprofit arts organization devoted to preserving art, literature, and films by artists of color. African Voices publishes a literary magazine and presents literary readings, art exhibitions, and artistic workshops throughout NYC. The organization sponsors Reel Sisters of the Diaspora Film Festival & Lecture Series, the first Oscar-qualifying film festival in the nation devoted to women of color. Reel Sisters is one

of only 26 festivals with Academy accreditation in the USA and 63 film festivals worldwide! Spelman College has acquired African Voices' art collection.

Please donate and support African Voices
at www.africanvoices.com and www.reelsisters.org.

Special Thanks to our season funders, supporters and venues!

The National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, West Harlem Development Corporation, Council members Crystal Hudson and Farah Louis, Miller Theater, LIU, Center For Fiction, BRIC Media, Riverside Theater, Maysles Documentary Center, Volunteer Divas and Divos for the Arts and While We Are Still Here.

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