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Roger Corman and "Surrogate's" Wolf
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News

“Blue,” “Tenant” Top Hollywood Black Fest Winners

by Peter Knegt (June 8, 2009)

After 102 films and 6 days of deliberation, jury and audience choice award-winners were announced yesterday for the 2009 Hollywood Black Film Festival.

“We are so pleased to be able to present awards to these filmmakers who have displayed an amazing array of cinematic talent and vision,” said Tanya Kersey, Founder & Executive Director, HBFF. “The 2009 Hollywood Black Film Festival award-winners reflect the full breadth of talent, diversity, and evolution of independent black film. Our filmmakers this year displayed an extraordinary range and depth to their storytelling, and I am pleased to know that HBFF continues to garner a well deserved reputation as being the premiere festival for discovering and showcasing the next generation of talented Black filmmakers. We are thrilled at how the Hollywood Black Film Festival has continued to grow in attendance, local and national awareness and acclaim from filmmakers, writers and directors.”

Director Lucky Ejim’s feature film “The Tenant” took the top audience prize. Sponsored by Indieflix the Audience Choice Award winner took home a cash prize in addition to prizes from Entertainment Partners, Baseline StudioSystems and Showbiz Software. In the film an African refugee faces imminent deportation from Canada. His landlord, a dying retired immigration officer offers to stop the deportation if he convinces his estranged daughter to reconcile with him.

In the narrative feature film category, “Blue,” directed by Ryan Miningham, took top honors. The film tells the story of a prize fighter who struggles to put his dark past behind him as love seems to altar his course and makes him face his redemption while preparing for the fight of his life.

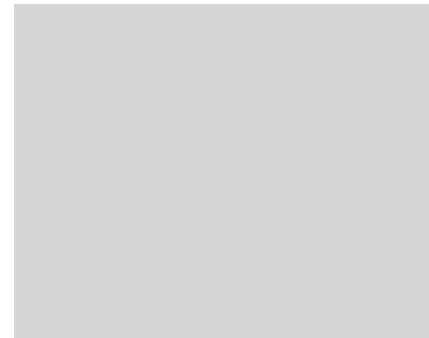
Llewellyn Smith’s documentary “Herskovits at the Heart of Blackness” earned first place honors in the documentary category. The film chronicles 20th century anthropologist Melville J. Herskovits, who ‘re-defined’ black history, helping make it possible for people to pride themselves as African-Americans.

The Short Film winner was “(Mis)leading Man,” written and directed by Morocco Omari. The film is an exploration of what happens to a common man caught inside of the media fishbowl as a result of getting everything that he could ever dream of.

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In the student film category, the award was presented to "The Second Half," written by Andrew Chang and directed by Ralph Jeffrey Elmont, while "1 Out Of 10," directed by Q, won in the music video category.

The festival also announced the winners of the HBFF Storyteller Competition, designed "to promote and support new talent and continue the festival's pledge of creating opportunities for talented black screenwriters." As the main goal is to give new screenwriters industry exposure and help introduce them to Hollywood, in addition to the prize packages, the three finalists will have their scripts distributed to a number of studios and production company executives.

The 1st place winner in the HBFF Storyteller Competition was "Good Mother," written by Cassie Henderson of Tallahassee, FL; "Born To Pitch," written by Robyn Hatcher of New York City took 2nd place honors; 3rd place went to "Far Away From Here," written by Dapo Adeshiyan of Piscataway, NJ .

"The diverse storytelling styles of this year's Storyteller Competition semi-finalists is impressive," said Alexia Ryan, HBFF Storyteller Director, in a statement. "We are pleased to be able to bring these talented, diverse voices to the attention of Hollywood's leading talent buyers."

posted on June 8, 2009

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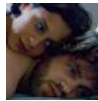
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