

6th Annual
OAKLAND INTERNATIONAL
BLACK LGBT FILM FESTIVAL

**MEDIA ADVISORY
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Event Producer: Oakland International Black LGBT Film Festival
Theater & Ticket Outlet: Parkway Theater, 1834 Park Blvd , Oakland
Theater Phone: (510) 814-2400
Dates: August 14-17, 2008
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<http://www.clubrimshot.com/filmfestival08.html>

6th ANNUAL OAKLAND INTERNATIONAL BLACK LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL,
& TRANSGENDER FILM FESTIVAL

Oakland CA- It was six years ago when festival producers Debra Wilson and Joe Hawkins decided to do what many thought was not possible – create a film festival dedicated to showcasing films about the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people of African descent.

“I felt compelled to produce this festival after I learned from Debra (who is also a filmmaker) that there was only one Black LGBT film festival in the world at that time.” Hawkins said. But after doing some research, he said that it was clear that the closest thing to a Black LGBT film festival that existed in America were the film screenings that sometimes took place in hotels during Black Gay Pride celebrations around the country.

Festival co-producer Debra Wilson said; “When we held our first screening in 2003 at the Parkway Theater, there was a line down the street, I was a little shocked, but I knew that we were filling a void.” Hawkins said that even the one other film festival that existed when the Oakland festival began six years ago, has resorted to offering free screenings on a very small scale.

Oakland is home to some of the world’s most notable black gay and lesbian film-makers to include the late Marlon Riggs (Tongues Untied & Ethnic Notions) and more recently award winning directors Debra Wilson (Butch Mystique & Jumpin’ The Broom) and Maurice Jamal (Dirty Laundry & Ski-Trip) who’s films have also been shown on MTV-Logo. Another unique characteristic of Oakland is that it is home to the largest population of African and African-American LGBT people in Northern California, according to a recent survey by the International Federation of Black Prides.

The festival takes place at Oakland 's landmark Parkway Theater, located at 1834 Park Blvd , August 14-17. “Opening night, we selected a RETRO film from African-American cinema that resonates within the Black LGBT community. Last year we chose The Wiz

and this year we will screen Mahogany.” Hawkins said. Mahogany will also be presented in memory of former owner of the Historic Bates House, Joe Ware, who died earlier this year. "Joe was a major supporter of the film festival and hosted the filmmakers at the Bates House at his Bed & Breakfast along with the annual opening night reception. Joe Ware was the epitome of class and often opened his business to the Black LGBT community when no one else would" Hawkins said.

This year’s festival selections include: Logo's (from MTV Networks) Sneek-Peek screening of its ground-breaking new reality show "Shirts & Skins," which is scheduled to premiere on LOGO in mid September. Shot in San Francisco and Directed by talented African-American director Leola Westbrook, the show follows the true-life story of the San Francisco Rockdogs, a young all-star gay basketball team who must reunite to uphold their city's three-generation legacy of international gay games gold medal, and national tournament wins. The Bay Area Premiere of Oakland native, Maurice Jamal’s latest offering - Ski-Trip 2 (Friends & Lovers), part romantic comedy, part drama, part Hollywood spoof and all signature Jamal. Hanifah Walidah’s, U People - A documentary steeped with sexy, intelligent women who have gathered together to make a unique music video; BLUEPRINT Director and Out 100 honoree, Kirk Shannon-Butts, tells the story of Keith, a reserved conservative transplant to New York City from Los Angeles and Nathan a street-smart, pot smoking Brooklynite who lives on the edge. Pariah - Pariah is a coming-of-age drama about a lesbian teenager who unsuccessfully juggles multiple identities to avoid rejection from her friends and family and The Sakia Gunn Project - documentary that tells the story of Sakia, a 15 year old charismatic, dynamic young woman who was tragically murdered. Sakia was out and proud about being an 'aggressive' (woman who dresses in masculine attire but does not necessarily identify as either lesbian or female-to-male transgender.) Sakia held promise as a basketball player and was looking forward to becoming an upper classman at Newark’s West Side High.

The festival also presents a dark look at AIDS with "Young & Evil" by Writer-Director Julian Breece who makes a striking debut with a dramatic short about a defiantly promiscuous young man who finds eros in self-destruction. The Alameda County Office of AIDS Administration has joined Realstate Firm, The Harrison Team and others, as a sponsor of the festival and will be presenting their new HIV Prevention & Awareness Campaign; HIV STOPS WITH US (HSWU), created and implemented by San Francisco-based social marketing firm Better World Advertising . This new campaign builds on the highly successful HIV STOPS WITH ME Social Marketing Campaign and features the photography of internationally recognized photographer, Duane Cramer. A preview of this new approach to HIV prevention will take place at the Oakland International Black LGBT Film Festival August 15th - 17th. Ads will be showcased and spokes-models will be in attendance.

In addition to films, there will be a Black LGBT Media Summit at Club Anton in Oakland's Jack London Square on Saturday, August 16 and festival after parties to include a San Francisco Rockdogs after-party on Friday, August 15 at Maxwell's Nightclub in Downtown Oakland and a Donna Summer (who is headlining at the Paramount Theater in Oakland on Saturday, August 16) "Boogie Night" after party at

Oakland's newest gay club Vibe Lounge. Hawkins stated that "We want the whole community to come out to this film festival, straight or LGBT, White, Latino or Asian. We created this festival to help bring a better understanding of who we are to the community at large, and that means you!"

Films run August 14-17 at the Parkway Theater. For a detailed list of films and event, please visit the website at

<http://www.clubrimshot.com/filmfestival08.html>