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***ACTOR AND COMEDIAN MIKE EPPS CONFIRMED AS HOST OF THE 2016  
AMERICAN BLACK FILM FESTIVAL (ABFF) HONORS***

*Annual Awards Gala to Salute Excellence in Motion Pictures and Television  
Sunday, February 21 in Los Angeles*

October 27, 2015, Los Angeles, CA --- ABFF Ventures announced today that actor and comedian Mike Epps will host the 2016 ABFF Honors on February 21 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles. This annual gala is a celebration of Black culture, recognizing individuals, movies and television shows that have had a significant impact on American entertainment, as well as those who are proponents of championing diversity and inclusion in Hollywood. The guest list of the invitation-only awards dinner, which will be held one week before the Academy Awards, includes influential artists, executives and stakeholders in the Hollywood community.

To kick off this inaugural year, ABFF Honors has chosen a host who is a talented and dedicated actor and comedian. Mike Epps' career has evolved over the years and his work in both film and television continues to garner praise and admiration from peers and critics alike, in Hollywood and beyond. Among his many notable achievements are the Starz' hit series *Survivor's Remorse*, the ABC series *Uncle Buck*, HBO's Emmy-winning biopic *Bessie* and the much anticipated Lee Daniels' film *Pryor*, featuring Oprah Winfrey, Eddie Murphy and Kate Hudson, where he will play the title role of comedy icon Richard Pryor.

"I am very proud to be hosting this year's ABFF Honors celebrating the best in film and television. To be in a room with such amazing talent and creativity will make for an exciting night, and you know I'll be ready to hit the stage and entertain," says Epps.

The ABFF Honors ceremony is a hybrid of the Kennedy Center Honors and the Golden Globes Awards, featuring Competitive Awards as well as Special Tributes. The 2016 Awards Committee, comprised of artists, journalists and industry influencers, determines the honorees and competitive award winners. The evening will begin with Red Carpet Arrivals at 5:00 p.m., followed by an elegant and spirited Awards Dinner and Post-Awards Honoree Party.

“I am encouraged that a handful of Black artists are now being acknowledged at high-profile mainstream award ceremonies, but work of the majority of our artists continues to be unheralded. ABFF Honors will change this and there’s no better person to host our first show than Mike Epps. He is an inspiration to many standup comics and living proof that talent combined with focus and perseverance will eventually bring success. I plan to be laughing all night,” says Jeff Friday, Executive Producer and President of ABFF Ventures.

ABFF Honors will be one of the most prominent events of the Hollywood Awards season and Black History Month. The event is produced by ABFF Ventures (a partnership between Film Life and Black Enterprise) in association with de Passe Jones Entertainment.

The ABFF Honors Award Categories include:

### **COMPETITIVE AWARDS**

**FILM OF THE YEAR** – Presented to the most outstanding theatrically distributed motion picture released in 2015.

**TELEVISION SHOW OF THE YEAR** – Presented to the most outstanding original scripted television series distributed by a network or Internet-based platform in 2015.

### **SPECIAL HONORS**

**HOLLYWOOD LEGACY AWARD** – Honoring a highly acclaimed artist whose trailblazing work and groundbreaking achievements, over at least four decades, have inspired generations and made an enduring contribution to film and television.

**EXCELLENCE IN THE ARTS AWARD (female)** – Honoring an actress in recognition of her distinguished career achievement who has earned critical acclaim.

**EXCELLENCE IN THE ARTS AWARD (male)** – Honoring an actor in recognition of his distinguished career achievement who has earned critical acclaim.

**EXCELLENCE IN THE ARTS AWARD (content creator)** – Honoring an individual in recognition of commercial success and/or critically acclaimed work as a writer, producer and/or director.

**HOT IN HOLLYWOOD** – Celebrating a contemporary artist in acknowledgment of recent success and future promise.

**ENTERTAINMENT ICON AWARD** – Presented to a multitalented artist in recognition of groundbreaking commercial success across multiple entertainment disciplines, including television, film and live performance.

**DISTINGUISHED ABFF ALUMNI AWARD** – Presented to an American Black Film Festival (ABFF) alumnus in recognition of career achievement, post-festival.

For more information about the 2016 ABFF Honors, log on to [www.abffhonors.com](http://www.abffhonors.com). Also, follow us on our social media platforms:

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/abff>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/American-Black-Film-Festival/47321635722>

Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/AmericanBlackFilmFestival>

#ABFF20

### **ABOUT THE ABFF**

The American Black Film Festival (ABFF) is an annual event dedicated to bringing awareness of quality entertainment content made by and about people of African descent to a worldwide audience. Committed to the belief that Black artists deserve the same opportunities as their mainstream counterparts, ABFF founder Jeff Friday conceived the festival in 1997 as a vehicle to encourage diversity in the film and television industry. Today, it is widely recognized for showcasing established and new Black talent, both in front of and behind the camera, and is regarded as one of the leading film festivals in the world. The ABFF will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary June 15-19 in Miami Beach, Florida.

For additional information about the Awards and festival, visit [www.ABFF.com](http://www.ABFF.com).

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