



**AVA DUVERNAY, TIFFANY HADDISH, BILLY DEE WILLIAMS, OMARI HARDWICK, AND THE CAST OF "MARTIN" WERE HONORED LAST NIGHT AT THE 2018 AMERICAN BLACK FILM FESTIVAL HONORS**

**ANGELA BASSETT, TRACEE ELLIS ROSS, REGINA HALL, SNOOP DOGG, LENA WAITHE, ARMIE HAMMER PRESENTED AWARDS TO THE HONOREES AND WINNERS**

**HOSTED BY ACTOR AND COMEDIAN CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER**

**PERFORMANCE BY CHARLIE WILSON**

**LOS ANGELES, February 26, 2018** – Last night, ABFF Ventures hosted its annual American Black Film Festival (ABFF) Honors at the Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles. The ceremony, hosted by actor and comedian Cedric the Entertainer, honored director **Ava DuVernay** with the Industry Visionary Award, legendary actor **Billy Dee Williams** with the Hollywood Legacy Award, comedian **Tiffany Haddish** with the Rising Star Award, actor **Omari Hardwick** with the Distinguished ABFF Alumni Award and the writer and cast of "Martin" (**Martin Lawrence, Tichina Arnold, Tisha Campbell, Carl Payne II, Bentley Kyle Evans**) received the Classic Television Award.

**Regina Hall, Lena Waithe, Armie Hammer** and **Snoop Dogg** made special presentations to the honorees and **Harrison Ford** made a surprise video tribute to Billy Dee Williams.

*Black-ish* (ABC) and *Insecure* (HBO) were announced as winners of the Television Show of the Year (Comedy) category, presented by actor and comedian **Lil Rel Howery**. **Tracee Ellis Ross, Deon Cole, Issa Rae, Jay Ellis** and **Yvonne Orji** accepted their awards on behalf of their show, cast and crew.

For the second year in a row, *Queen Sugar* (OWN) took home the coveted Television Show of the Year (Drama) award. **Ava DuVernay**, along with the cast (**Dawn-Lyen Gardner, Dondre Whitfield, Tina Lifford, Bianca Lawson, Timon Kyle Durrett**) accepted their award.

Additional winners of the night included *Get Out* (Universal Pictures), for Movie of the Year. **Jordan Peele, Lil Rel Howery, Betty Gabriel** and **Marcus Henderson** accepted the award.

"Some of you know that I did not enter this industry as an artist. I came into this business as an advertiser with a profound love for art, and the ABFF became my canvas, says Jeff Friday, ABFF Ventures CEO. "It has allowed me to show my love of "all things Black," by curating experiences that promote our culture and support young creative people who are now changing the world," Jeff continues. Grammy-winning artist **Charlie Wilson**, accompanied by The Adam Blackstone Band, ended the night on a high note signing "I'm Blessed" and "Outstanding" to an energetic audience standing on their feet and singing along to every word.

In just two years, ABFF Honors has become one of the most talked about Hollywood events, attracting top-tier talent and press coverage in mainstream and African American media outlets including, *LA Times, Essence, Variety, Deadline, Extra*, and *The Associated Press*. The show had its broadcast premiere on BET Networks.

The event was executive produced by ABFF Ventures founder Jeff Friday, in association with Suzanne de Passe and Madison Jones for de Passe Jones Entertainment.

The 2018 ABFF Honors sponsors are BET Networks (Presenting Sponsor), AT&T and Cadillac (Red Carpet Sponsors), American Airlines (Official Airline Sponsor), Hennessy (Official Spirit Sponsor), Hilton (Official Hotel Sponsor) and CBS, Comcast, Creative Artists Agency, Facebook, HBO, Morgan Stanley, Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), Netflix, Prudential and Universal Pictures (Corporate Diversity Sponsors).

For more information about the 2018 ABFF Honors, log on to [www.ABFFHonors.com](http://www.ABFFHonors.com). Also, follow us on our social media platforms:

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### **ABOUT ABFF**

The American Black Film Festival (ABFF) is an annual event dedicated to showcasing quality film and television content by and about people of African descent. The festival is committed to the belief that Black artists and content creators deserve the same opportunities as their mainstream counterparts. ABFF founder Jeff Friday conceived the festival in 1997 as a vehicle to promote diversity in the motion picture industry, and strengthen the Black filmmaking community through resource sharing, education, artistic collaboration and career development. For more than two decades, the ABFF has been the standard-bearer of excellence in independent Black cinema, having premiered the works and supported the careers of many of today's most successful artists, including Ryan Coogler (*Black Panther*), Anthony Anderson (*Blackish*), Will Packer (*Girls Trip*), Issa Rae (*Insecure*), Omari Hardwick (*Power*) and Raoul Peck (*I Am Not Your Negro*). Today, it is the preeminent pipeline for Black talent, in front of and behind the camera, significantly expanding the range of talent in the entertainment industry at large. The ABFF is a property of ABFF Ventures LLC, a multifaceted entertainment company specializing in the production of live events, television and digital content, targeted to upscale African American audiences. The company is a joint venture between Film Life Inc. and Black Enterprise, two prominent media and event companies, each with legacies of showcasing the best of African American culture and achievement.

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