



For Immediate Release

**AMERICAN BLACK FILM FESTIVAL HONORS ANNOUNCES 2024 HONOREES & 2024  
SHOW DATE OF MARCH 3RD**

***Hosted by Tommy Davidson, ABFF Honors to Celebrate Legendary Performer Garrett Morris, Taraji P. Henson, Jeffrey Wright, and Mara Brock Akil and Announce the ABFF Fan Favorite Movie of the Year***

**LOS ANGELES, CA – (January 24, 2024)** –The **6th American Black Film Festival (ABFF) Honors** announced today the honorees of its annual awards ceremony recognizing excellence in the motion picture and television industry. Presented by **NICE CROWD**, the **2024 ABFF Honors** will take place on Sunday, March 3rd at the SLS hotel in Beverly Hills, CA hosted by actor and comedian **Tommy Davidson**. Guests at the intimate, non-televised dinner will include ABFF honorees and festival partners.

The ABFF Honors and recipients are:

**Hollywood Legacy Award** – actor, comedian, writer, singer, and first Black cast member of *Saturday Night Live*, **Garrett Morris** (*The Jamie Foxx Show*, *2 Broke Girls*, *Martin*); Presented to a trailblazing artist whose work (four decades or more) has inspired generations and made an enduring contribution to film and television.

**Excellence in the Arts Award (Female)** – Golden Globe-winning and Academy Award-nominated actress **Taraji P. Henson** (*Empire*, *Hidden Figures*, *The Color Purple*); Honoring a highly acclaimed artist in recognition of their body of work and distinguished career achievement.

**Excellence in the Arts Award (Male)** – Emmy Award, Golden Globe, and Tony Award winner **Jeffrey Wright** (*Basquiat*, *Westworld*, *American Fiction*); Honoring a highly acclaimed artist in recognition of their body of work and distinguished career achievement.

**Industry Visionary Award** – screenwriter and producer **Mara Brock Akil** (*Girlfriends*, *The Game*, *Being Mary Jane*); Presented to a trendsetting content creator in recognition of their outstanding work and commitment to championing

diversity, equity, and inclusion in the motion picture and television industry, through their work.

### **ABFF FAN FAVORITE MOVIE OF THE YEAR**

Presented in recognition of the year's most outstanding narrative feature-length motion picture directed by a person of African descent. To be eligible, films must have a minimum running time of 72 minutes and a theatrical or streaming release date between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023.

The nominees and winner are determined by an online poll of the more than one hundred thousand (100,000) festival alumni. The winning film is revealed during the ABFF Honors ceremony.

2024 Nominees:

***A Thousand and One***, directed by A.V. Rockwell (Sight Unseen Pictures, Hillman Grad, Makeready) - Focus Features

***American Fiction***, directed by Cord Jefferson (Orion Pictures, MRC, T-Street, Almost Infinite, 3 Arts Entertainment) - Amazon MGM Studios

***Origin***, directed by Ava DuVernay, (ARRAY Filmworks) – Neon

***The Color Purple***, directed by Blitz Bazawule (Harpo Films, Amblin Entertainment) - Warner Bros.

***They Cloned Tyrone***, directed by Juel Taylor (Federal Films) - Netflix

***The Equalizer 3***, directed by Antoine Fuqua (Columbia Pictures) - Sony Pictures Entertainment

“For decades, these esteemed ABFF Honorees have elevated their projects, and brought joy to audiences across the world,” **said NICE CROWD CEO and President Jeff and Nicole Friday**. “It is our honor to recognize Garrett, Taraji, Jeffrey, and Mara for all their contributions to culture and the industry throughout their remarkable careers. We look forward to celebrating their many achievements and gathering with our fantastic ABFF partners.”

**Garrett Morris** is a TV legend to generations of loyal viewers. Having most recently been a series regular on CBS' *2 Broke Girls*, Garrett is beloved by generations of TV watchers as one of *Saturday Night Live*'s original “Not Ready for Prime Time Players”. Born in New Orleans and raised by his Baptist Minister grandfather, he spent his childhood singing in the church choir and eventually trained at the Juilliard School of Music. His first professional break was performing with the Harry Belafonte Singers whom he remained with for ten years. Morris resides in Los Angeles where he owns and operates The LA Blues & Comedy Club. In 2007 Garrett was honored by Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa for his work and contributions to the black community.

**Taraji P. Henson** is an Academy Award nominated, Emmy nominated, and Golden Globe-winning actor, filmmaker, and activist who quickly rose to fame after her breakout performance in the critically acclaimed film *Hustle & Flow*. In 2020, Henson wrapped her iconic

run as “Cookie Lyon” in Fox’s hit musical drama *Empire*, which has earned her three Emmy nominations, a Golden Globe Award, a Critics Choice Award, and three BET Awards. Henson can most recently be seen starring in the Blitz Bazawule adaptation of *The Color Purple* as “Shug Avery”, which was released on December 25, 2023. She stars opposite Fantasia and Danielle Brooks, with Oprah Winfrey, Steven Spielberg, Scott Sanders, and Quincy Jones producing. Henson also starred as “Miss Hannigan” in NBC’s *Annie Live!* in December of 2021, for which she won an NAACP award for Outstanding Actress in a Television Movie, Limited Series or Dramatic Special.

**Jeffrey Wright** is a Tony, Emmy, AFI, and Golden Globe Award-winning actor who has enjoyed an illustrious career spanning the worlds of theatre, film, and television. Wright was most recently seen in the critically acclaimed role of “Bernard Lowe” in HBO’s *Westworld*, for which he earned three Emmy nominations. He can currently be seen in the George C. Wolfe-directed Civil Rights pic, *Rustin*, portraying “Adam Clayton Powell”. Other recent projects include lead roles in Netflix’s *All Day And A Night* (May 2020), HBO’s *O.G.*, which premiered at the 2018 Tribeca Film Festival, where Wright won the award for Best Actor in a U.S. Narrative Feature Film and Netflix’s *Hold the Dark* (September 2018). Wright can currently be seen giving one of the best performances of his career in Orion Pictures/Amazon MGM Studios’ *American Fiction*, written and directed by Cord Jefferson; for which Wright has received nominations from the Gotham Awards, Golden Globe Awards, Independent Spirit Awards, Critics Choice Awards and the SAG Awards thus far for his wonderful performance as protagonist, “Thelonious Monk Ellison”.

**Mara Brock Akil** has written and produced over 400 episodes of television, leaving her mark on Hollywood. Her groundbreaking body of work includes the television series *Girlfriends* (2000), a witty and honest exploration of the multi-faceted nature of Black womanhood. During its eight seasons on-air, it was one of the highest-rated scripted shows among African-Americans ages 18 to 34. Beyond her work as a writer, producer and director, her peers have consistently recognized Brock Akil as a leader in the industry. In 2019, she was honored with the prestigious Brandon Tartikoff Legacy Award by NATPE for exhibiting extraordinary passion, leadership, independence, and vision through her contributions to television. Some of her prior accolades include Essence Magazine’s Visionary Award during their annual Black Women in Hollywood luncheon, being named to Variety and The Hollywood Reporter’s Showrunner Power Lists, as well as to The Hollywood Reporter’s “Women in Entertainment Power100” multiple times. In 2021, Mara expanded her passion for non-profit work and started her very own non-profit writing residency in Los Angeles, the Writers’ Colony. The Writers’ Colony is a launching pad for the next generation of Black screenwriters. It is a place for them to write, to belong, and to find their voice.

ABFF Honors is the American Black Film Festival’s annual awards season gala dedicated to recognizing excellence in the motion picture and television industry. Founded in 2016, the ceremony pays tribute to Black artists who have made significant contributions to American entertainment through their work as well as those who champion diversity and inclusion in

Hollywood. In addition to the individual honors, the ceremony includes a competitive award; the “Fan Favorite Movie of the Year” as determined by popular vote of the festival's alumni.

ABFF Honors stems from the American Black Film Festival (ABFF), founded by Jeff Friday in 1997, the leading festival of its kind showcasing Black storytelling. Since its inception, the ABFF has been dedicated to supporting Friday’s conviction that Black artists deserve the same opportunities as their mainstream counterparts. Having premiered the work and encouraged the careers of many of today’s most successful filmmakers and actors, the ABFF has become the standard-bearer of excellence for Black American creativity.

ABFF Honors is executive produced by **Nicole and Jeff Friday** (NICE CROWD) in association with **dePasse Jones Entertainment** and **Rikki Hughes** (Magic Lemonade). Sponsors for the event include: **Cadillac** (Presenting), **Amazon MGM Studios** (Premier), **Sony Pictures Entertainment** (Supporting) and **Fulton Films** (Supporting).

For more information about ABFF Honors visit [www.abffhonors.com](http://www.abffhonors.com). Follow @AmericanBlackFilmFestival on Instagram and Facebook, and @ABFF on X.

#### **About NICE CROWD**

NICE CROWD, formerly ABFF Ventures, is a Los Angeles-based live events company that develops and produces properties in the arts, entertainment, lifestyle and wellness industries that showcase BIPOC culture and talent. The Company’s tentpole event is the American Black Film Festival, founded in 1997.

To learn more about NICE CROWD events, visit [www.nicecrowd.com](http://www.nicecrowd.com).

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**For 2024 ABFF Honoree Photos please use this link: [HERE](#)**