

Authors & Artists Magazine

***THE Source
for News & Information
on Authors, Artists
& the Creative Arts***

5 Questions

with

Artist

Frank Kelley, Jr.

**Viola Davis'
Personal Story
Will Make You
Love Her
Even More**

Authors and Artists Magazine

July 2019



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Tony Smith, Editor-in-Chief

Let me introduce myself: I am Authors and Artist Magazine’s new Editor In Chief. I extend a warm thank you to my partner and AAM publisher Gina Johnson Smith. From our very first lunch meeting together just to - as they say - chop it up, we have built a friendship and business partnership that I treasure. I bring publishing and entertainment experience to Authors and Artists that I am confident will serve the publication and our readers well.

I understand the power and influence of the press. Substantive and timely coverage, attractive and eye catches photos and images, immaculate style and thought-provoking editorial make for a great publication. Whether a magazine is delivered to your doorstep or to your computer, printed on glossy stock or on cheap tabloid paper, appearing on your iPad or your cell-phone screen; it is still the primary job of an editorial team to create a beautiful and meaningful publication. This is our goal with Authors & Artists Magazine.

Los Angeles is the Entertainment Capital of the world and we give our readers a full dose of what’s happening in the worlds of literature, fashion, music, theater and more. I can assure our readers that with each issue that we will represent Authors and Artists with the highest of ethics, with a abroad scope of coverage, as well as highlights on your favorites in the entertainment industry.

This month’s issue features the incomparable Viola Davis and our signature ‘5 Questions’ with Artist Frank Kelly, Jr. As always, we give you insight on what’s upcoming in film, fashion, music and more. We are excited about this issue and we are sure our readers will love it as well.

Stay with us—and expect more.

Tony Smith, Editor-in-Chief

Authors & Artists Magazine

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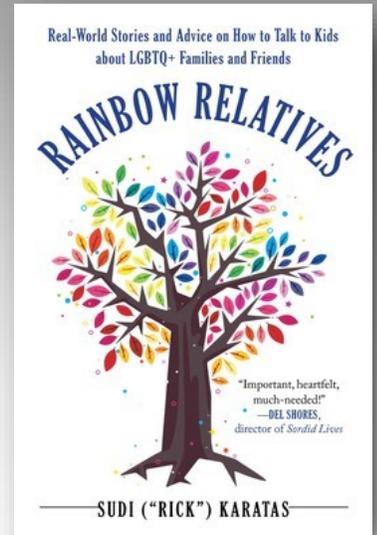
Meet the Authors



5 Questions with Author Rick (Sudi) Karatas

Rainbow Relatives

*Real World Stories and Advice On How
To Talk To Kids About LGBTQ+ Families
and Friends*



AAM: You've written a thought-provoking book that helps individuals bridge the LGBTQ challenges they may be facing with their own family and friends. What inspired you to come from a direction of humor?

KARATAS: I like to do most things with a sense of humor, the world is serious enough, I like to lighten things up. Also, I think people are more apt to read something if it will entertain them and make them laugh. If it were just a statistical book it would be less interesting. I wanted to make it more human.

That said, I knew there were some serious things like bullying and violence against trans and gay people and divorce when one parent turns out to be gay, so I tried to balance the book with info about all that as well.

Betty DeGeneres (Ellen's mom) read the book and this is her quote: "This book has lots and lots of good info - told with a sense of humor. That's the best way!" - Betty DeGeneres, author of Love, Ellen - a Mother/Daughter Journey

AAM: The book incorporates stories from people from a variety of backgrounds. Why did you feel this was important?

KARATAS: America is made up of people with a variety of backgrounds and depending on where people live often affects the experiences they go through. For example there are some very conservative religious places where it is harder to be gay or trans or to raise kids as two moms or two dads so it was important to get those stories. One thing that surprised me was even in some very liberal areas like NYC there were still some issues.

I interviewed the country singer Chely Wright and she mentioned even in NYC where she lives there are places she feels uncomfortable holding her wife's hands and they experienced discrimination at a business.

AAM: The book was released back in 2018. What has the reception been like?

KARATAS: It has been good so far. I've had people say it really changed their minds about a few things. One of my favorite country female singers from the 80's SYLVIA (Nobody) bought a copy and gave a nice review on Amazon (there are several others on there as well) and she recommends it to some of her life coach clients.



I've done some events at some bookstores across the country and we've had some interesting helpful discussions. (one older woman who attended my book signing/discussion event at the Book Review in Huntington Long Island had bought the book and came to the event because she came from a time when being gay was not as acceptable.

Her granddaughter who is 15 had just come out as a lesbian and the woman (the grandmother) was having a hard time understanding it but here she was trying to. That is part of what the book is about. I think it is opening up more conversations and helping people be more accepting and understanding of all kinds of families and people.

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AAM: You have a production company, Walk A Mile Productions. We'd love to hear about any upcoming projects.

KARATAS: My film *Walk A Mile In My Prada's* was with Walk A Mile Productions (the film is now on Amazon Prime (FREE for members and it stars Nathaniel Marston, Tom Arnold, Dee Wallace, Mike Starr and Bruce Vilanch (cowritten with Tom Archdeacon)). My new company is Charlie's Dream Productions and I am producing a film I wrote called *Charlie's Dream* with John Schneider attached and Joely Fisher directing. We hope to shoot in Nashville later this year or early next. It is a family inspirational film with country music and some faith based elements.

I plan to shoot my other finished 10 scripts in the near future as well. The writing is easy, it's getting them made that is the challenge. I am also working on a gift/humor book for animal lovers which should be out next year.

AAM: How can our readers stay posted on your activities? (website, social media, etc.)

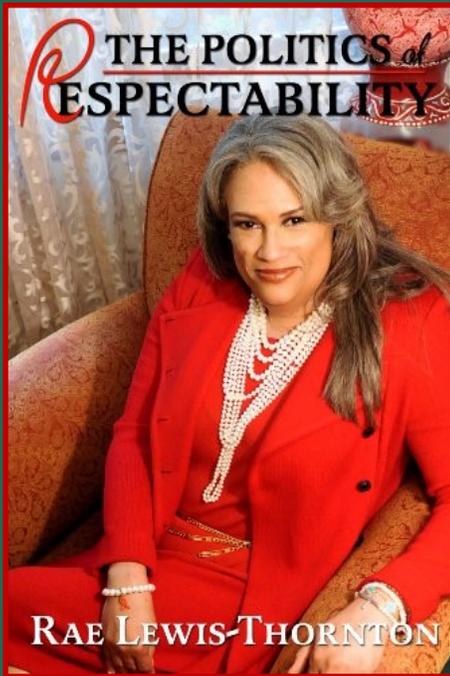
Website: www.rickkaratas.com

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/rick.karatas>

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/sudirick/>

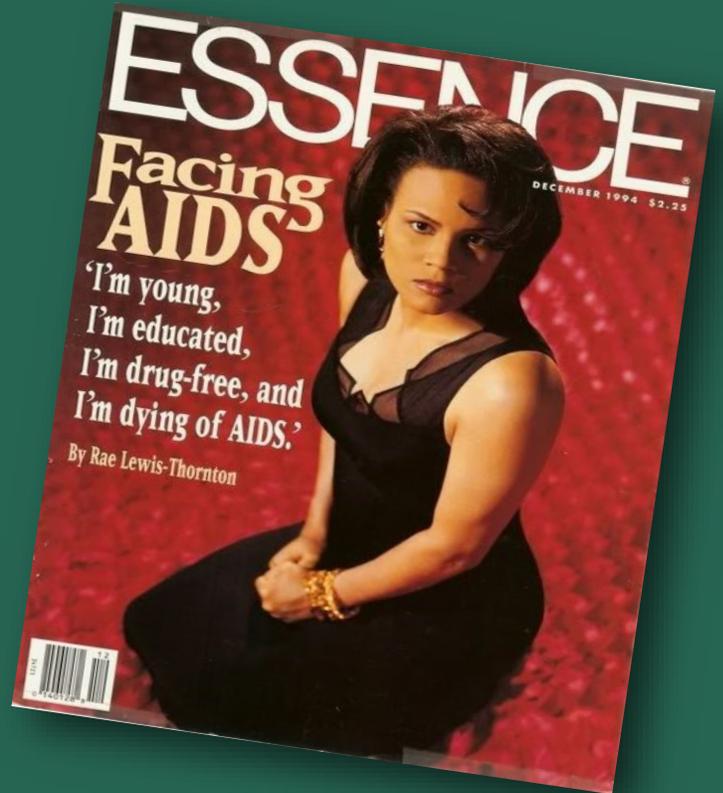
Twitter <https://twitter.com/sudirick>

Sudi (Rick) Karatas was born and bred in Long Island New York, and has resided in Van Nuys California for the last 16 years. He goes by two different names because the name Sudi is too common, and he is a Gemini (one name for each personality). He gets his "Italian/Latin" looks from his Turkish dad and American mom (some Irish, English and Welch mixed in). He's been seen on a few Soaps, *The Ground Floor* (as writer and actor) and his own comedy show which he wrote and produced called, *Skits and Giggles*. He also appeared on a milk carton once as a child. His passion is writing. He has written over a dozen screenplays, he's working on a couple more, as well as a new book. He also writes songs, he's a coordinator for NSAI (Nashville Songwriters Association Inc. He likes writing everything - except checks.



The Politics of Respectability

By Rae Lewis
Thornton



R

ae Lewis-Thornton is an Emmy Award winning AIDS Activist and the first African-American Woman to tell her story on a cover of a national publication, Essence December 1994.

I thought that she would never live to see 50 years of age. In the backdrop of my 50th birthday, I trace my life and my collision with respectability; what a black woman ought to do and be. I've been wanting to write a book by my 50th birthday for at least the last eight months. Something that spoke to the very core of who I am as a woman; My 50 years of wisdom about sex, dating, self-love and being true to one's self, but I kept procrastinating.

Then on May 1, 2011 I received a call that would change my life, forever. After I dried my tears I sat at the computer and the words simply flowed. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority rescinding my membership as an honorary member gave me the fuel I needed to unpack a larger issue that I tackle everyday. What kind of woman am I? Am I, "Respectable," enough as a Woman, Christian and Minister. While this book is autobiographical in nature, it is not my full story. My memoir is yet to be published.

This book is however, my story. It unpacks the core of who I am and what I do. I don't know how to be anything else. I am my ministry and my ministry is wrapped around my journey. My experiences have shaped me for better or worse and they inform my day-to-dayness. My journey landed me into Delta and it landed me out of Delta. This book traces my journey and my collision course with, "*The Politics of Respectability*," from my mother to men. The need to be seen as respectable ruled my life and left me battered as a girl physically, emotionally and sexually abused and then as a woman living with HIV in secret for 7 years.

I will share my story in first person, some pass blog posts from my Diva Living With AIDS Blog, as well as, my seminary and PhD studies to craft my collision course with respectability that ended in my expulsion from Delta.

Bishop T.D. Jakes & Crushing

Crushing: God Turns Pressure into Power

Follow God's process for growth and learn how you can benefit from life's challenging experiences with this book by bestselling inspirational author T.D. Jakes.

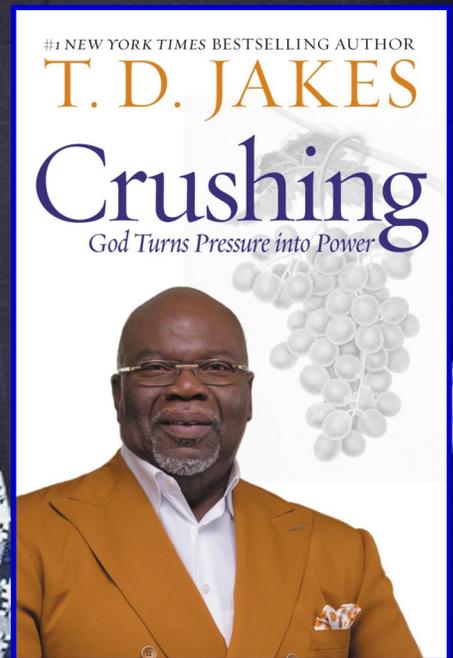
In this insightful book, #1 New York Times bestselling author T.D. Jakes wrestles with the age-old questions: Why do the righteous suffer? Where is God in all the injustice?

In his most personal offering yet, Bishop Jakes tells crushing stories from his own journey—the painful experience of learning his young teenage daughter was pregnant, the agony of watching his mother succumb to Alzheimer's, and the shock and helplessness he felt when his

son had a heart attack. Bishop Jakes wants to encourage you that God uses difficult, crushing experiences to prepare you for unexpected blessings. If you are faithful through suffering, you will be surprised by God's joy, comforted by His peace, and fulfilled with His purpose.

Crushing will inspire you to have hope, even in your most difficult moments. If you trust in God and lean on Him during setbacks, He will lead you through.

Available everywhere books are sold.



Why We LOVE Viola Davis!

By Erika Hayasaki

A young girl grows up hungry but goes on to become an award-winning actress. Hollywood script? No, that's the real deal for Viola Davis—and the reason she's fighting to help 17 million kids just like her.



At home in Granada Hills, California, Viola Davis opens her stainless-steel refrigerator. It's stocked with almond milk, tofu, low-sugar orange juice, and organic meat. On a table there's a bowl filled with bananas; around the newly remodeled kitchen, all kinds of ingredients for smoothies. Such healthy abundance was unimaginable for Davis while growing up. As she puts it simply: "We had no food."

Until recently the actress—a two-time Oscar nominee (*The Help* and *Doubt*) who is now wowing audiences in ABC's *How to Get Away With Murder*—has kept many of the harrowing details of her childhood to herself. That changed last year, when she realized she could do something for the nearly 17 million kids in America who are hungry. She could tell her story, and she could fight for change at the same time.

Born 49 years ago on her grandmother's farm, a former slave plantation in St. Matthews, South Carolina, Davis grew up with five siblings. Her mother had an eighth-grade education; her father, who groomed horses at a racetrack, made it only to fifth grade. When the family moved to Rhode Island, they got permission to live rent-free in buildings slated to be demolished; "128 Washington Street was infested with rats," recalls Davis. She'd huddle with her sisters on a top bunk, where they'd wrap bedsheets around their necks to protect themselves from bites, horrified at the sounds of rodents eating pigeons on the roof. (Even now, she says, "When my sister and I have a nightmare, we say it was about 128.") Then, when Davis was eight, the girls won a local skit contest, which launched her passion for acting. The prize? A softball kit with a red plastic bat. Back at home, one sister used it to pummel the rats.

But even harder to bear than the vermin was hunger—ever present and completely preoccupying. After the first-of-the-month welfare check arrived, Davis' parents would buy groceries, yet the food would quickly disappear. "It was like, If you don't eat it now, it'll be gone, and you're going to be hungry for the next—Lord, who knows how long," Davis remembers. She constantly plotted how to get food, befriend a boy whose mother would give her banana bread, or joining a summer program for the free Kool-Aid and doughnuts. She even remembers digging through a Dumpster. At school, she says, "I was always so hungry and ashamed, I couldn't tap into my potential. I couldn't get at the business of being me."





But somehow she did: After discovering her love of acting in high school, she earned scholarships to study theater at Rhode Island College and to attend the Juilliard School in New York City. Her screen debut was a blink of a role—a nurse in 1996's *The Substance of Fire*. But by 2001 she was winning Tony's on Broadway, the first one for playing a mother fighting for abortion rights in *King Hedley II*. Despite all the accolades since, Davis says, it has taken seven years of therapy, along with support from her husband of 11 years, Julius Tennon, and the adoption of their daughter, Genesis, for her to fully accept her life in all of its success, failure, beauty, and mess. "One thing that is missing from the vision boards is what happens when you don't get what you want," she says. "Your ability to adapt to failure, and navigate your way out of it, absolutely 100 percent makes you who you are."

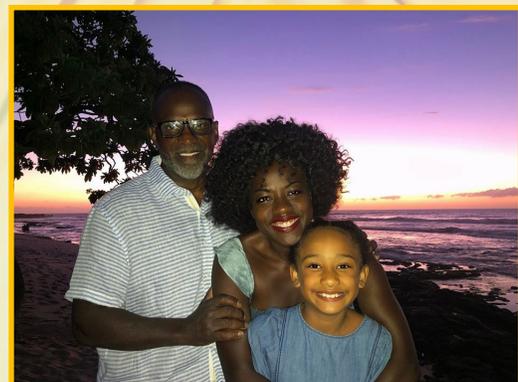
A journey like Davis' takes serious inner power, notes Shonda Rhimes, an executive producer of *How to Get Away With Murder* (in which Davis plays a seductive, ruthless criminal-law professor and lawyer). Davis "began life [with] a profound lack of choices," Rhimes says. "Instead of settling or giving up, she built her own path all the way to the acting icon she is now. That, with her dedication to motherhood and her tireless efforts to make a difference, is inspiring."

So far, Davis has helped raise over \$4.5 million for Hunger Is, a new campaign by the Safeway Foundation and the Entertainment Industry Foundation (you can learn more at hungeris.org). Friends like Rhimes and Streep are supporters, "and yes, I'm going to hit up more of my friends," says Davis. "This is the richest country in the world. There's no reason kids should be going to school hungry. Food is something that everyone should have. It

just is." Her efforts are especially appreciated in her old neighborhood, where families often have to choose between a meal or medicine, according to Hugh Minor, spokesman for the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. "It is so powerful for Viola Davis to say, 'I was affected by hunger—and many people still are,' " he says. "It really is a rallying call for people to do something."

In one memorable episode of *How to Get Away With Murder*, Davis removes her makeup, eyelashes, and wig, physically and figuratively stripping herself vulnerable before confronting her husband about his infidelity. That scene was her idea. She wanted to show a woman so powerful, so put-together in the outside world, taking off her mask. "I'm finally comfortable with my story," says Davis. "And I finally understand what [mythologist] Joseph Campbell meant when he said: 'The privilege of a lifetime is being who you are.'"

Her words to live by: "I tell my daughter every morning, 'Now, what are the two most important parts of you?' And she says, 'My head and my heart.' Because that's what I've learned in the fox-hole: What gets you through life is strength of character and strength of spirit and love."



Writing News

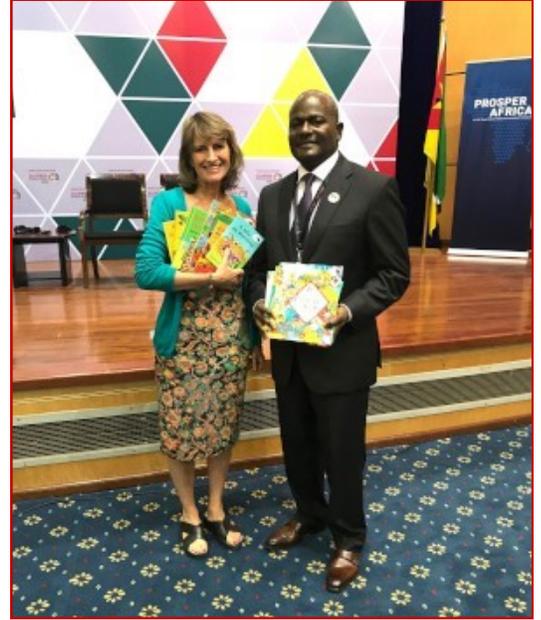
Andrew Dykstal And Aliya Chen Announced
As Grand Prize Winners Of 35th Annual
Writers Of The Future



Andrew Dykstal, a writer from Arlington, VA, has been named the Grand Prize Winner of the 35th Annual Writers of the Future, and Aliya Chen, an illustrator from Fair Oaks, CA has been named the Grand Prize Winner of the 30th Annual Illustrators of the Future. L. Ron Hubbard Achievement Awards for Writers and Illustrators of the Future Contests in the genres of Science Fiction & Fantasy held at the Taglyan Cultural Complex in Hollywood, CA on Friday evening, April 5, 2019. A capacity crowd of 400 people attended the Black-Tie GALA. Presented by Author Services, Inc. and Galaxy Press, the theme for the two-hour awards show was Retro Robotics.

Andrew Dykstal, The Winner of the Grand Prize Writer's Award, said: "This is absolutely fantastic! I feel that my career as a writer has now been catapulted. It's a tremendous honor to be here. The quality of the stories of my fellow writers in this contest is amazing. I have made new friends for life. Having the opportunity, as I have for this past week in workshops networking and learning from authors I grew up reading, and whom continue to influence and inspire me, has been an experience I will never forget."

Books for Africa Sends 300,000 Barefoot Books to Mozambique



Four canisters loaded with 30,000 copies of 10 different Barefoot Books titles in Portuguese, with a retail value of \$6 million, are scheduled to arrive in Mozambique later this summer after being custom-printed in Hong Kong and shipped from its port. The books will be distributed to AIDS orphans and their caregivers.

This shipment of 300,000 books is part of a new Books for Africa initiative in which the organization will begin publishing some books in local languages for charitable donation through a partnership with a publisher. Typically, BFA sends used book donations to countries in Africa in English, and occasionally French, Spanish, and Arabic.

The books chosen to launch the publishing initiative have African themes and characters, as well as educational notes and other learning materials. They include African Tales, Children of the World, We All Went on Safari, We're Sailing Down the Nile, and How Loud Is a Lion? [READ MORE](#) or visit

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music

5 Questions with Tanya Alexander Henderson

INSIDE...

AAM: Tell us about your project 'INSIDE'. What inspired it?

TANYA: INSIDE is my second spoken word EP and I wanted to do something funky and eclectic with this project. My first project, 'Pieces of Tanya', is very smooth and neo-soul inspired, but this one has an electro dance, tribal vibe and it's very introspective in terms of the subject matter. It really is a testament about my own journey and evolution as an artist, human, and woman of color.

AAM: I've listened to a few sample cuts on CD Baby. There's a distinct Jill Scott- Lauren Hill vibe going on. What message did you want to send with this project?

TANYA: The most prominent message is that what we are INSIDE, we project outside and vice versa. Our outer world is a great reflection of what's going on IN-

SIDE. We are 360 human beings and there's no separation between our outer and inner worlds.

AAM: You are an actress by trade. What inspired you to move into this area?

TANYA: I've been writing poetry since I was in grade school. I started performing spoken word after getting a BA in theatre and then moving to New York City. I'd always kept writing, but one piece 'Candy From Strangers' (on the Pieces of Tanya album), inspired me to get onstage and speak to audiences. That was in the late '90s and I've been performing and recording my poetry ever since.

AAM: You have a Go-Fund me for this project. What is your goal and what are you looking to achieve?

(continued)



TANYA: Independent artists are always inspired in some way to spread their work. And we can't let money or resources limit that. I knew I wanted to tour with this project and I decided that a GoFundMe campaign would be a great way to expose this vision and raise funds to produce this mini-tour. So \$3,000 to cover travel and accommodation costs to at least five cities is the goal.

AAM: How can our audience find you online?

Audiences can visit www.TanyaAlexander.net to find out about all my projects and download my poetry and music. To donate visit- www.gofundme.com/f/making-memories-2019 or CashApp \$SuperNovaT.

INSIDE

A Spoken Word Project

Available now at

www.TanyaAlexander.net

MUSIC



Lindsey Webster

The earthy, charismatic and beautiful Lindsey Webster is a surprising and welcomed anomaly in the contemporary jazz world. The sultry and soulful young singer/composer, who has scored two Billboard #1's on the Contemporary Jazz Chart, making her the first vocalist in the format to garner a #1 since the iconic Sade, is still amazed by her own success. "It is unbelievable that it is really happening" says Webster. "But now that it has, I feel like my world and career have opened up and that it is only the beginning!" Blessed with a honey-toned voice and enviable range, Webster's uniquely identifiable sound is fueled by potent messages of love that are timely for today's climate. Webster is holding her own in a

largely male dominated genre comprised of artists who are much older than her and she is quickly becoming a favorite on the charts and international touring circuit. Her sophomore Shanachie recording, *Love Inside*, is about realizing the power that each of us possess as individuals. "So frequently, we are looking outside of ourselves for the answers, when most of the time, we need to address what is within, first" states Webster. "I thought it to be an appropriate title for this album with all of the negativity and animosity that runs rampant in today's world." Through a tapestry of twelve evocative originals that fuse the best elements of R&B, jazz, pop and soul, Webster,

along with her pianist and husband Keith Slattery, explore the world of love and loss in relationships as well as the love needed to unite and honor one another's humanity.



Love Inside opens with the album's title track and catchy first single. Webster sings and reminds us to "Take a moment to count your blessings..." The singer knows a thing or two about taking stock of all of the good that life has to offer. "The new songs are uplifting and positive which is just how I feel!" exclaims the singer. The pulsating "A Love Before" chronicles the trials and tribulations of finding true love. Webster confesses it is one of her favorite songs on the recording. "Bad Grammar (Me & You)" finds Lindsey pleading for another chance at love as she sings, "think about it for a minute more, before you walk out the door. Take a second just think it through, is this the end of me and you?" Slattery's elegant and pirouetting solo adds a beautiful touch to this heart tugging last appeal for love.

The funk-fueled "Free To Be Me" touches on a topic that Lindsey Webster is passionate about. "This song is an anthem for anyone who is facing injustice in this world today," states the singer/songwriter. "It was inspired by the subject of immigration that has been an issue at the forefront of our country, but the lyrics kind of morphed the song into something more. It states three things: the problem (people judging each other), how we all unwittingly can be a part of the problem (ignorance), and then offers what I believe will be a solution (our strength as a human race).

Another gem on Love Inside is the wistful bluesy ballad "Dream," inspired by Dr. King's infamous 1963 speech delivered at the Lincoln Memorial. "I, too, share Dr. King's dream," states Lindsey. "This song is about how I will try to live my own life today in order to make this dream a reality tomorrow."

Love Inside also features "Don't Give Up On Me," which speaks to the fear of losing someone you love when you are at your weakest point, while the Latin-tinged "One Last Time" is about two people in love who must part ways in order to honor commitments in their lives. The interlude "Even If He Lied" shows what some people will put up with in order to be in a relationship and the blues ballad "Walk Away" is somewhat of an answer to "Even If He Lied," offering a different alternative. We have all heard someone say "It's Not You, It's Me" but Webster in her typical clever fashion puts a new spin on the saying on her song of the same title. "Typically, a person says this to another during a breakup as a kind of consolation, not wanting the other person to think it is their own fault," she shares. "In this song, the person who is being left is saying, 'I know I've

A highlight on Love Inside is the insatiable groove and positivity on "Opportunity" as Lindsey sings, "I feel things about to turn around for me cause I've been working for a long timeJust when you think you had enough and you feel you're gonna give up, that's when life will turn around and you'll see, in the problem is the opportunity." The album closes with "By My Side," which shines light on the strength gained by having the right person by your side.

"You know you are extra lucky when you find your true love and are then able to share not only your lives with one another, but your passion as well." Lindsey and Keith married in 2016. "Keith is a blessing for me," beams Lindsey. "We are always striving to become stronger and better songwriters, and as a team, I really think we have crafted some powerful and beautiful music."

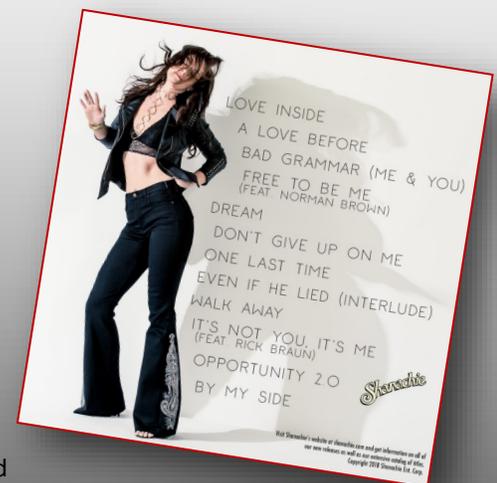
Webster concludes, "I hope our fans can hear the passion and hard work that went into writing these songs. Although the times are changing and albums are becoming less popular than buying a single, we still like to think of the music we write as a collection. We arranged the songs in a specific order, as to tell a story and bring the listener on a journey."

Growing up in an artist community, the daughter of loving hippie parents, in Woodstock NY, the allure of music was never far from Lindsey Webster. The singer grew up listening to her parent's Jimi Hendrix, The Beatles and Elvis Costello LPs and later the Supremes and Aretha Franklin. Influenced by everyone from Mariah Carey and Gwen Stefani to Steely Dan and Earth Wind and Fire, Webster once pursued medical school before finally settling on music. Webster made history in 2016 with her original "Fool Me Once", which was the first vocally driven song to top the Billboard Contemporary Jazz charts since

Sade's Soldier of Love in 2010, beating Sade's three-week run at #1 with a four-week stay at the top of the chart with "Fool Me Once". November 2016, Webster made her Shannachie debut with Back To Your

Heart, which spawned three songs to make

the Top 3 on Billboard (Back To Your Heart, Next To Me, and Where Do You Want To Go), with "Where Do You Want To Go" reaching #1, her second #1 in a year.



Music



5 Questions with Recording Artists CrystalChyna

ChystalChyna are performing twin sisters Crystal and Chyna Johnson. These two charismatic entertainers are experienced performers taking the lead in changing the lives of today's youth through thought-provoking, life empowering music. "We love what we do because music excites us and allows us to speak to our generation about real things while also giving us a platform to celebrate being young and creative."

AAM: You have a new release 'No Pressure'. Tell us the inspiration for this new single.

CC: The inspiration for 'No Pressure' is personal. When we were in the process of writing it, we kept in mind that we're young ladies stepping into womanhood, and there will be tons of new experiences. We mutually wanted a

vibe, something you could just ride to and still find yourself singing along to it.

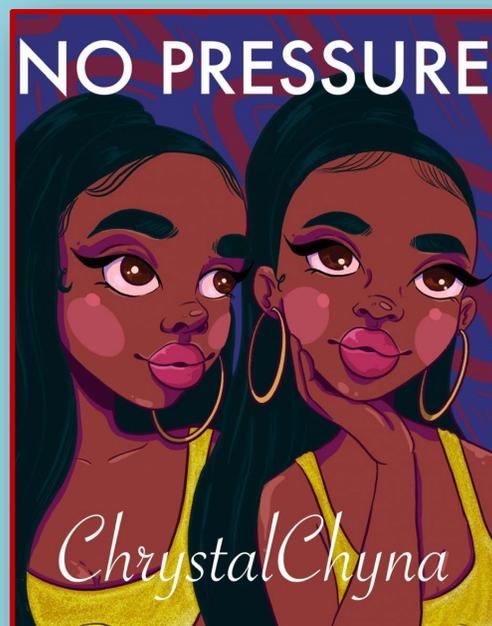
AAM: I've known you both for a while. You've really been putting in the work to develop your craft. What has been the importance of this process for you?

CC: Simply trusting the process, as there has been many setbacks along the journey. But with that, remaining positive and pushing through because we know the setbacks never last.

AAM: You've been cultivated by some heavy hitting industry veterans. What was the most important tip you received?

CC: Our Godmommy (Natalie Cole) would always remind us to be ourselves. Never compare yourself to anyone, only be in competition with yourself to better

yourself. We've learned from this advice to never let anyone tell us we're any different from who we actually are.



AAM: What does the future hold for Chrystal-Chyna?

CC: Oh man! Right now, we're currently gearing up for our forthcoming EP! 'No Pressure' has a visual on its way, and a debut showcase coming really soon.

AAM: How can our audience keep up with your happenings and most importantly, how can they purchase your single?

CC: 'No Pressure' can be streamed and purchased on Apple Music, Spotify, iTunes, Google Play, Amazon Music, and YouTube. If you want more ChrystalChyna, you can find us on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter!



Meet the Artist

5 Questions with Frank Kelley, Jr.

If you haven't heard of artist Frank Kelley, Jr., you're missing something special. We caught up with Mr. Kelley for our '5 Questions' Series to give you a quick overview of the man and the artist.

AAM: Who has been your greatest artistic influence?

FKJ: Dr. James Shane, Art Director at Grambling State University. I had the opportunity to share my #2 pencil drawings with him – at the time I had no formal art training. He encouraged me to take drawing courses. My growth and success from there inspired me to continue my art education, eventually receiving a degree in Fine Art.

AAM: What moves you to create a piece?

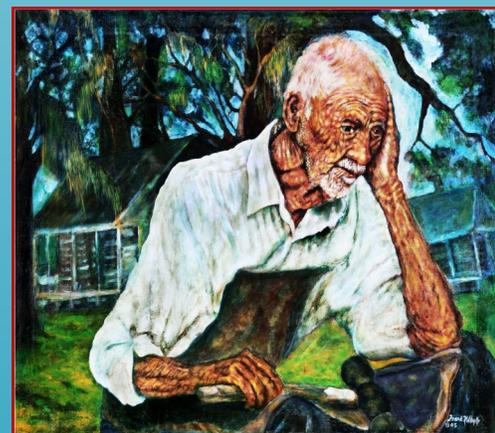
FKJ: I meditate and pray before commencing a piece. I am inspired by stories – both past and present. I also have an affinity for the elderly, so you'll see them depicted in everyday situations in the South. Some of my work is strongly influenced by South-

ern, rural living, as I am from North East Louisiana.

"Abstraction allows man to see with his mind what he cannot see physically with his eyes." —Arshile Gorky

Arshile Gorky, an Armenian-American painter best known for his profound influence on Abstract Expressionism defines it best. My abstract works are inspired by the intensity of life experiences and emotions that I call up at the time of artistic creation. Every shape, every color, line and texture is symbolic in some way. Abstracts are designed to move both the artist and collector emotionally.

The landscape pieces are reminiscent of my years growing up in the South. Each depicts places I have spent time. As a Son of the South, the nuanced character of these areas rests in my soul, transporting me back to treasured times. I'm honored to share a glimpse of my interpretation.





AAM: You travel around the country with both your Youth Arts Program, as well as inspiring others to reach for their goals despite obstacles. Tell us about these areas of your work.

FKJ: It has been a pleasure to create the Youth Arts Initiative Program in 2001. Thousands of youth have come through our program successfully. We travel around the country, offering youth organizations and schools the opportunity to create their own original art, while learning many lessons. I felt it important that kids be trained not only in math, reading and life skills, but in developing their creative side through artwork. Every element of learning can be found in our program. Whether math to determine the scale of the work, reading to understand composition and thought – but also life skills through translating their thoughts and feelings onto canvas. Hundreds of studies have proven out that students who don't have access to art classes may not only miss out on a key creative outlet, but might also face greater difficulty mastering core subjects, higher dropout rates and more disciplinary problems.

AAM: What is the process for commission work?

FKJ: Commissioned artwork is personal in nature, so a series of interviews to excavate the story and the vision for the piece is necessary. Together we develop a written concept that becomes my guide to telling your story on the canvas. Afterwards I begin the work of pursuing the concept on canvas. It takes 3 – 4 months, depending on the size and depth of the vision. Once completed, the client receives the piece, along with a Certificate of Authentication.

AAM: You have Collector Programs for your collectors. Tell us about them.

FKJ: I have developed Collector Programs that help collectors increase their net worth. When a collector purchases a collectible piece, they will generally consider the following: Who is the artist? How significant is the art? What is the art's history and documentation and what is the asking price?

About Frank Kelley Jr. - An artist of humble beginnings, Frank Kelley, Jr. weaves paintings reflective of the rural life of his youth. From celebrated jazz figures, expressive Southern life and moving portraiture, Frank creates art that takes its viewer on a journey. His expressive work takes the form of current life, yesteryears, as well as evoking the emotions of sorrow and happiness, struggle, hope, and togetherness and love. Private and corporate collectors around the world have acquired his investment quality work. For more information, visit <http://www.frankkelleyjr.com/>



Get Ready Greenleaf, Season 4

The Season 4 trailer for Greenleaf is out, showcasing the increasing drama inside a megachurch undergoing a strange transition. The fourth season will premiere at 10 p.m. Tuesday, September 3, a shift from last year's Wednesday night slot.

Season 4 finds the Greenleafs attempting to maintain a united front in the face of losing Calvary to Bob Whitmore (Beau Bridges) and Harmony & Hope Ministries. But secrets past and present create what could be fatal fractures in the family's fragile foundation.

Lady Mae (Lynn Whitfield) and Grace (Merle Dandridge) form an uneasy alliance as they endeavor to reclaim their church from Harmony & Hope: Grace from within the church, where she's operating as interim head pastor, and Lady Mae using her persuasive ways from the outside. But Grace's mission becomes complicated when a mysterious phone call sets in motion a chain of events that threatens to reveal her biggest secret yet. The Bishop (Keith David) continues working to mend his rift with his wife Lady Mae, while Harmony & Hope's grip on Calvary tightens day by day.

Writer/executive producer Craig Wright (Lost, Six Feet Under), and executive producers Clement Virgo (Empire), Kriss Turner Towner (The Romanoffs) and Oprah Winfrey are behind the series, which last season was Wednesday night's No. 1 original cable series for African-American women and total viewers and has averaged more than 2 million viewers in each of its three seasons.

Greenleaf is produced for OWN by Lionsgate in association with Harpo Films and Pine City.

Viewers can catch up on the show's complete three seasons on Netflix. [WATCH TRAILER HERE](#)



Film

Clarence Avant

The mysterious 'Black Godfather' who redefined the Black entertainment industry

Most powerful, renowned and most elusive. These three phrases, at complete variance from each other, describe the clout of the man he is.

Clarence Avant is described by Barack Obama, the first black president of America, as “the bridge from a time where there was no opportunity to a time when doors began to open.”

Jamie Foxx says of him, “An African-American man anyone can call concerning anything – that takes a lot, and for a man who opens his house, heart and his mind up to you, a man who sees something special in you and helps you go for it. You seldom see people in today’s world who look for the best in people but Clarence Avant is a man who you can call on the phone, get a real voice and get a real knowledge on something.”

An integral part of entertainment in America, Ludacris summarizes Avant’s life as a person who believes that “The bigger we are together, the bigger we will be as a culture.”

Born February 25, 1931, Clarence Avant began a business in music in the 1950s as a manager of Teddy P’s Lounge in Newark, New Jersey, owned and promoted by Teddy Powell.

The 88-year-old grew up in a tiny town in North Carolina before

moving to New York. He started as the manager of pianist-composer Lalo Schifrin and later founded two independent record labels in L.A. that were short-lived – Sussex Records and Tabu.

He developed his career after he moved to New York where he worked under music manager Joe Glaser. Avant has served as a concert organizer and produced special events including fund-raisers for Democratic politicians while serving as a mentor to African American executives in the entertainment industry.





Avant established himself as the person those in the spotlight could turn to and he helped many of them – folks like Hank Aaron and the late Soul Train host Don Cornelius to David Geffen and former President Bill Clinton. He helped them all without inserting himself into the glitz and glam of Hollywood—an aspect Avant prided himself on.

“Sometimes real power is behind the scenes, helping people achieve their dreams,” Nicole Avant, Clarence Avant’s daughter and producer of *The Black Godfather*, told *The Hollywood Reporter*.

According to BET, prominent people such as Clarence Avant, Little Willie John and Sarah Vaughan, Venture Records, Ja’Net Dubois, Stax Records, Sussex Records, Bill Withers, Dennis Coffey, Avant Garde Broadcasting, The S.O.S Band among others, are some of the big names he has influenced.

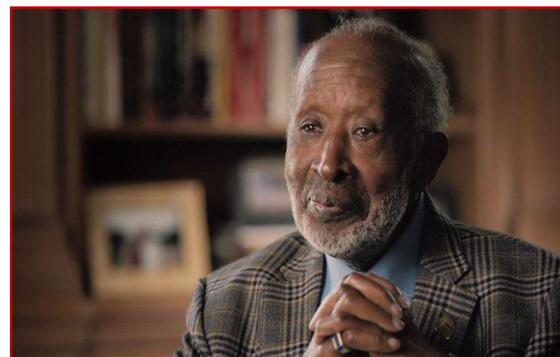
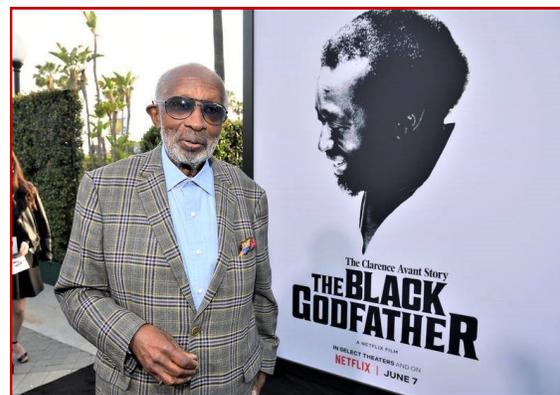
Black entertainers, as well as renowned politicians, agree that Avant is a successful powerhouse of many giant things that have happened in their careers, and even so, in the

way Blacks have been viewed publicly throughout the decades.

In fact, he is so influential that if you expect to have a career as an entertainer and you don’t know his name, you certainly will eventually.

Avant is essentially responsible for the rise of the Black American culture within various imprints of entertainment, from music to TV, film and sports. It was his counseling and business savvy tactics that redefined entertainment for people of color long before they had a voice in the industry, and he remains a figure that Hollywood’s elite continues to lean on for sound advice and mentorship. His influence hasn’t just aided in the entertainment realm—even political leaders have turned to Avant for guidance.

Avant is highly regarded for launching the careers of many and helping white corporations like MGM and ABC learn how to deal and make room for black American culture, and he’s managed to do it all while remaining completely behind the scenes.



Available on Netflix

MPTP PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

A ONE WOMAN SHOW SERIES

A WOMAN'S FREEDOM OF SPEECH SHOULD NEVER BE COMPROMISED!

DOWN TO EARTHA

Starring
DIERDRA McDOWELL
as
EARTHA KITT

Directed by
MARISHKA S. PHILLIPS

THE GENE FRANKEL THEATER

24 Bond Street
New York, NY 10012
btwn: Lafayette St & Bowery

August 7th - 17th at 8pm

August 11th show at 4pm

TICKETS \$25

via

Downtoeartha.brownpapertickets.com

Theater

One-Woman Show DOWN TO EARTHA to Chronicle Eartha Kitt's Infamous CIA Blacklisting

Down to Eartha will begin its run at the Gene Frankel Theater on August 7 at 8pm. Shows will run August 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17 at 8pm. There will also be a matinee performance on Sunday, August 11 at 4pm. Tickets for all performances are available now.

Actress, singer, author, and activist Eartha Kitt might be best known as the singer behind "Santa Baby" and "C'est si bon," or as the third Catwoman on the sixties Batman TV series. However, a government-led blacklisting in the late sixties halted her career for an entire decade. The infamous blacklisting forms the basis for Down To Eartha, a one-woman show which will begin its 10-show run at the Gene Frankel Theater (24 Bond Street) in August.

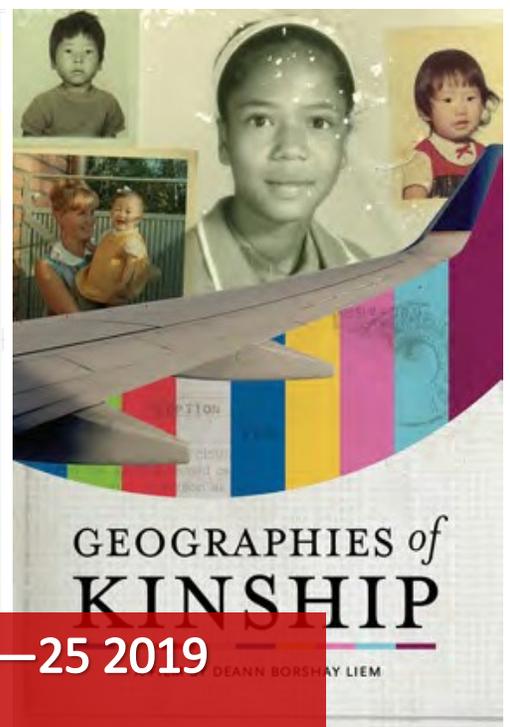
"I simply loved her as a young girl growing up in the theater," said Down To Eartha producer and director Marishka Phillips. "After seeing her comeback performance in Timbuktu! I knew I wanted to be a part of this business."

The play, which premiered earlier this year at the WOW Cafe in Manhattan, was written by Deirdra McDowell, who also stars as Kitt.

"I was first inspired to play Eartha Kitt by acting coach Susan Batson, in 2010," said McDowell. "After performing an animal exercise in class, she simply stated, 'I see Eartha.' From there, I felt the need to tell Kitt's story." [TICKETS HERE](#)

A poster for the one-woman show 'Down to Eartha'. The background is black with a close-up of Eartha Kitt's face, looking intensely at the viewer. She is wearing a fur collar. Text on the poster includes: 'MIPP PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS', 'A ONE WOMAN SHOW SERIES', 'A WOMAN'S FREEDOM OF SPEECH SHOULD NEVER BE COMPROMISED!', 'DOWN TO EARTHA', 'Starring DIERDRA McDOWELL as EARTHA KITT', 'Directed by MARISHKA S. PHILLIPS', 'THE GENE FRANKEL THEATER, 24 Bond Street, New York, NY 10012, btwn: Lafayette St & Bowery', 'August 7th - 17th at 8pm, August 11th show at 4pm', 'TICKETS \$25 via [downtoeartha.brownpapertickets.com](#)'.

Film Festival



The Asian Film Festival of Dallas is set for July 18—25 2019

The Asian Film Festival of Dallas (AFFD) is a film festival held annually in July in Dallas, Texas. The festival programming consists of international films from Asia as well as Asian-American features and shorts. The festival is held primarily at Landmark Theatres' Magnolia Theatre in the West Village, Dallas, Texas. With a typical slate of 25-30 feature films and 20 short films, the week-long festival is the largest Asian-themed film festival in the southwestern United States.

The festival presents jury prizes for best short and feature films entered in competition, as well as an

Audience Award. The Asian Film Festival of Dallas (AFFD) is dedicated to celebrating and supporting emerging and established Asian and Asian-American filmmakers and sharing the rich diversity of Asian culture through the medium of cinema.

[SEE SCHEDULE HERE](#)



FILM & EVENT SCHEDULE
JULY 18-25, 2019

<p>THURSDAY, JULY 18 7:00 PM THE ODD FAMILY : ZOMBIE ON SALE 9 PM-11 PM OPENING NIGHT PARTY @ AKAI</p> <p>FRIDAY, JULY 19 THEATER 4 1:00 PM YOUNGJU 3:00 PM MISSBEHAVIOR 5:00 PM MISS BAEK 7:00 PM INUYASHIKI 9:45 PM THE THIRD WIFE</p> <p>THEATER 7 2:00 PM DRAMA SHORTS 4:00 PM WE DON'T WANNA - NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE 5:30 PM MY SWEET REQUIEM 7:30 PM MANILA IN THE CLAWS OF LIGHT 10:00 PM LATE NIGHT SHORTS</p> <p>SATURDAY, JULY 20 THEATER 4 12:30 PM EXPERIMENTAL SHORTS 2:00 PM BENTO HARASSMENT - NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE 4:15 PM PENGUIN HIGHWAY 6:45 PM THAT DISAPPEARANCE - NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE 9:00 PM CALL HEAVEN TO HEAVEN - WORLD PREMIERE 11:00 PM HOW TO LIVE IN THIS WORLD - WORLD PREMIERE</p> <p>THEATER 7 12:00 PM STUDENT SHORTS 2:30 PM MISS BAEK 4:30 PM THE WIDOWED WITCH 6:45 PM THIS LITTLE LAND OF MINES - INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE 8:15 PM ASAKO I & II 10:45 PM WISH YOU WERE HERE (在乎你)</p> <p>SUNDAY, JULY 21 THEATER 4 12:00 PM THIS LITTLE LAND OF MINES - INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE 1:30 PM LONG TIME NO SEA 4:00 PM WHERE THE SUN DON'T SHINE - NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE 7:00 PM GO BACK TO CHINA (CENTERPIECE FILM) - CENTERPIECE RECEPTION @ ANGELIKA FILM CENTER (PRIOR TO THE FILM)</p>	<p>THEATER 7 1:00 PM WOMEN'S SHOWCASE SHORTS 3:00 PM INSIANG 5:00 PM INUYASHIKI 7:30 PM GEOGRAPHIES OF KINSHIP 9:30 PM THE THIRD WIFE</p> <p>MONDAY, JULY 22 THEATER 4 1:30 PM DOCUMENTARY SHORTS 3:30 PM MY SWEET REQUIEM 5:30 PM BENTO HARASSMENT - NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE 7:45 PM WISH YOU WERE HERE (在乎你) 10:00 PM YOUNGJU - NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE</p> <p>TUESDAY, JULY 23 THEATER 4 1:00 PM WHERE THE SUN DON'T SHINE - NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE 3:00 PM RAMEN SHOP 5:00 PM JERONIMO - WORLD PREMIERE 7:00 PM SAVAGE 9:30 PM MISHIMA: A LIFE IN FOUR CHAPTERS</p> <p>WEDNESDAY, JULY 24 THEATER 4 1:00 PM PENGUIN HIGHWAY 3:30 PM SWINDLER - WORLD PREMIERE 5:30 PM ASAKO I & II 8:00 PM FLY BY NIGHT 10:15 PM THE WITNESS</p> <p>THURSDAY, JULY 25 THEATER 6 12:00 PM GO BACK TO CHINA 2:00 PM THE ODD FAMILY : ZOMBIE ON SALE 4:30 PM THAT DISAPPEARANCE - NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE 7:00 PM SAMURAI MARATHON (CLOSING NIGHT FILM) 9:45 PM CALL HEAVEN TO HEAVEN - WORLD PREMIERE 11:30 PM HOW TO LIVE IN THIS WORLD - WORLD PREMIERE 9 PM-12 AM AFFD CLOSING NIGHT - COGNAC & CONVERSATIONS</p>
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18TH ANNUAL ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL OF DALLAS

AFFD

2019

JULY 18-25
ANGELIKA FILM CENTER - DALLAS

Fashion



"This event supports the growth of Atlanta's local fashion and creative industries," says Sonya Moste, director of Marketing at ADA and interim marketing executive for Brand Atlanta. "Fashion Week is about economic development and raising Atlanta's profile."

"Atlanta International Fashion Week is dedicated to showcasing Atlanta's elite designers and models in the fashion industry. This week, full of fun-filled events exemplifies your dedication to the economic development for the City of Atlanta. I commend Atlanta International Fashion Week for your commitment to Atlanta's fashion and design community,"

- Shirley Franklin (Former Mayor, Atlanta)



Atlanta International Fashion Week - September 24–29, 2019

Atlanta International Fashion Week is engineering the global fashion experience and attracting industry influencers with a passport to arts, culture, fashion, and entertainment. The destination is fashion with a journey through art and an encounter with style. The proclaimed Atlanta International Fashion Week is bridging the gap and connecting continents through fashion! Introducing, Tour de Atlanta, a six-day adventure through Atlanta's premier locations showcasing the retail, art, and cultural communities. Fashion is more than just the clothes on one's back. It's a movement, a feeling, and an expression. AIFW fosters and encourages established and up-and-coming designers through numerous industry and networking events. AIFW has developed Fashion Lives Here a fashion awareness program created to generate international attention to Atlanta's vibrant retail market and arts community. Atlanta has one of the top 10 retail markets in

the country and AIFW has goals to grow the vitality of the Atlanta fashion arts community, maintain global relations along with the promotion of the arts through fashion and entertainment. The 11th annual AIFW is taking place September 25th-30th at various downtown locations.

With worldwide appeal, 50 designers, 12 runway shows, 6 celebrity events, 4 fashion workshops, 2 trunk shows in one week and eleven years in the making, the Atlanta International Fashion Week has become one of the largest fashion and entertainment events of the year. You will be immersed in six days packed with runway shows, live entertainment, learning sessions, and network events to bridge the gap and connect continents through fashion. This star-studded affair will be entertaining and designed to benefit local and national charities all in the name of fashion.



The BIZZ Magazine

The BIZZ Magazine is a Personal Event Concierge Magazine. Founded by CEO Octavia Clayton Smith, the publication is dedicated to empowering event professionals with ideas, intelligence and resources to create amazing experiences for clients. They also profile some of the most exciting event personalities and events in the business. From high profile event professionals, casual event enthusiasts, national, regional and local events, The Bizz Magazine, LLC covers a spectrum of topics related for the event professional.

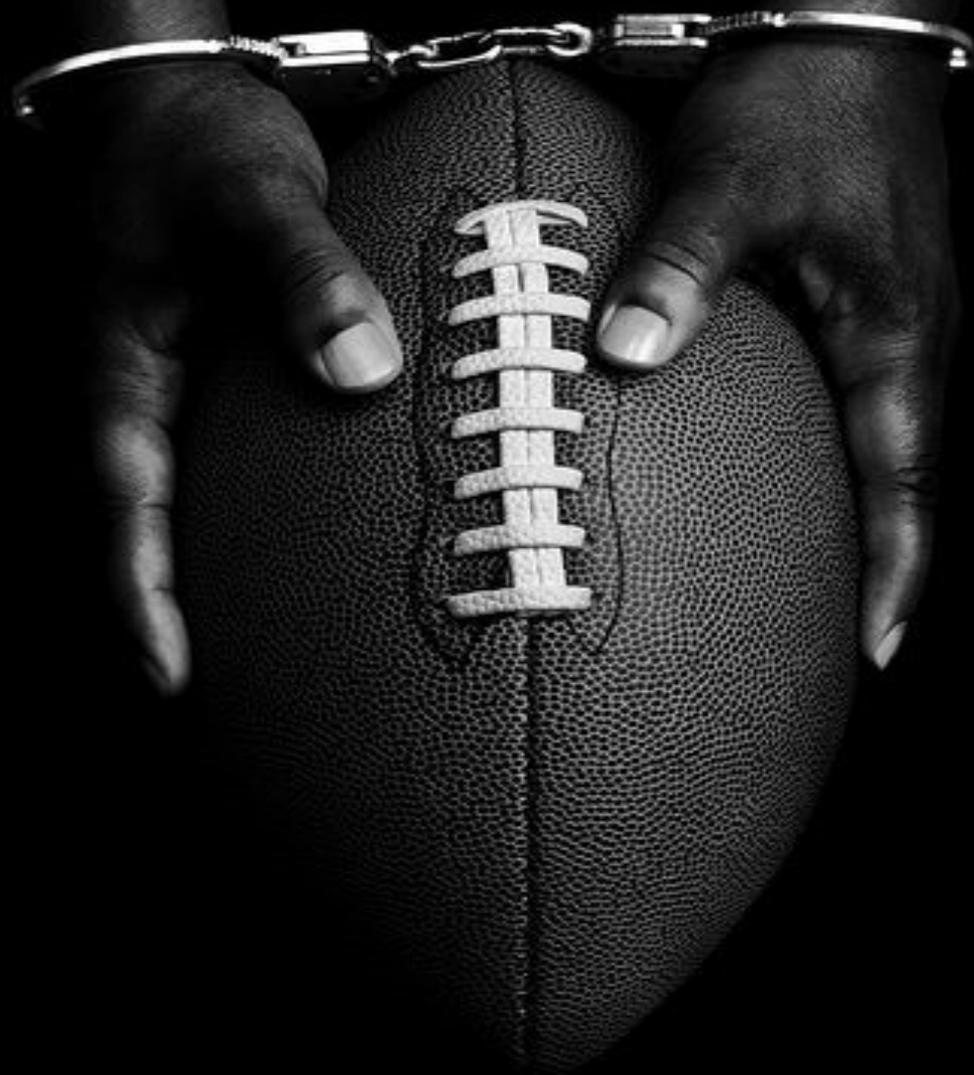
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