



URBANWORLD FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES TYRESE GIBSON AS FESTIVAL AMBASSADOR AND ADDS *SHAME* TO 2015 FESTIVAL LINE-UP

Urbanworld Digital, hosted by HBO, Announces Line-Up

Nation's Premiere Showcase For Multicultural Cinema To Be Held in New York September 23 – 27, 2015

NEW YORK, NY – (September 15, 2015) – The 19th Annual Urbanworld Film Festival (www.urbanworld.org), presented by BET Networks with founding sponsor HBO, announced the addition of the world premiere of *Shame* to its slate on **Saturday, September 26, 2015** at **6:30pm** at **Manhattan's AMC Empire 25 on 234 West 42nd Street**.

Tyrese Gibson and Academy Award® winner **Jennifer Hudson** star in *Shame*, a **Paul Hunter** film produced by **Denzel Washington**. In the short film written by Gibson, up-and-coming soul singer Lionel Jacobs (played by Gibson) is working the nightclub scene, trying to climb to the top of the charts while married to his background singer Bobbi Ann (played by Hudson). He wants to do right by his wife and their children but, his struggle with drugs and alcohol test the strength of his fidelity and their relationship. A conversation with Gibson will follow the screening.

Gibson will also serve as the ambassador for this year's festival. "I'm honored to serve as the ambassador of the 2015 Urbanworld Film Festival and to premiere my short film *Shame* in such a creative and exciting environment. I strive to create art across all mediums that supports and showcases our diverse landscape and Urbanworld is the perfect partner as they actively and significantly do the same. I'm thrilled to join the filmmakers showcasing their projects at the festival as we inspire, encourage and excite others through film." says Gibson.

Also confirmed to participate in the festival, ABC News Correspondent **Deborah Roberts** will moderate the panel discussion with prima ballerina **Misty Copeland** and **Nelson George** from the closing night film *A Ballerina's Tale* on Saturday, September 26, 2015. **Gbenga Akinnagbe** and **Tai Beauchamp** will host the festival's invitation-only awards brunch. **Academy Award®** winner **Geoffrey Fletcher**, *Orange Is The New Black's* **Selenis Leyva**, **Raven-Symoné**, **Loretta Devine**, **Lamman Rucker**, **Angie Martinez**, **Bevy Smith** and **Omari Hardwick** are also confirmed to attend the week-long events.

Urbanworld Digital, presented by **HBO** since 2010, is a day dedicated to exploring the intersection of digital technology and content creation by exposing its audiences to the innovation and opportunities that exist. This year, the series of panels, presentations and conversations will be on Thursday, September 24 from 12 noon until 6:00 pm. Festival filmmakers and digital influencers, as well as a mix of executives, entrepreneurs and content creators seeking ideas on how to best leverage digital platforms to amplify their work on both the creative and

business sides of the industry are invited. “HBO recognizes the importance of technology as it relates to content creation, distribution and multicultural audiences,” said Dennis Williams, Vice President of Corporate Social Responsibility at HBO. “We are proud to support Urbanworld Digital, as it provides a unique opportunity to connect diverse content creators and industry influencers within the rapidly evolving digital landscape.” Session curators include HBO Now, Global Grind, Time Warner, The Virtual Reality Company, NBCUniversal and Urban Movie Channel (UMC). UMC will curate A Conversation with **Bob Johnson**, RLJ Entertainment Chairman and BET Founder.

This year's **Urbanworld Music** will include partnerships with New York's finest music masters via a series of parties curated by some of the best DJ's in New York City. **Stretch Armstrong** and **Bobbito Garcia** will appear on Thursday, September 24 and **DJ Moma** of **Everyday People** will lead the festivities on Friday, September 25. **E.Z. Mo Breezy** of **Saturday Morning Cartoons** fame will co-host on Saturday, September 26. www.urbanworld.org/music includes a full list of the events.

BET Networks will review the finalist scripts for the best screenplay competition with consideration for potential development at the network and a \$5,000 award to the winner. The four scripts selected as finalists include four female writers—*Are They Dead Yet?* written by Inda Craig-Galván, *Bleeding Sunshine* written by Yaa Boaa Aning, *Chasing Jeremy* written by Mary McCallum and *Y Los Hipsters Que* written by Yohanna Baez. A live screenplay reading event will be hosted by BET Networks in partnership with WGA East, where an ensemble of actors will perform a selected scene from each finalist's script in front of an audience.

Along with presenting sponsor BET Networks and founding sponsor HBO, key supporters of Urbanworld Film Festival include premiere sponsors Comcast NBCUniversal Telemundo and Time Warner. Industry Circle supporters are Fox Audience Strategy, Fox Global Directors Initiative, Interactive One, MoviePass, RLJ Entertainment, Urban Movie Channel, The Swirl Group, Directors Guild of America, Writers Guild of America and AMC Entertainment. In addition, Urbanworld collaborates with a myriad of media, promotional and community partners.

For the complete slate of films, film synopsis, ticket information, complete list of sponsors and the most up to date full daily schedule of films and events for the nation's largest competitive multicultural film festival, September 23-27, 2015 in New York, visit www.urbanworld.org and @UWFilmFest on Twitter.

ABOUT URBANWORLD® FILM FESTIVAL

The Urbanworld® Film Festival, founded in 1997 by Stacy Spikes, is the largest internationally competitive festival of its kind. The five-day festival includes narrative features, documentaries, short films, spotlight screenings, events, live staged screenplay readings, the Urbanworld® Digital track focused on digital and social media panels and workshops and Urbanworld Music, which highlights emerging talent in live performances during after party events. Over the last 19 years, Hollywood studios, indie film distributors, and established and emerging filmmakers have consistently chosen Urbanworld® to premiere box office and award-winning hits. Urbanworld® has also provided a platform for some of today's leading brands seeking to reach key influencers across the industry and within the consumer marketplace. The Urbanworld® Film Festival is an initiative of the Urbanworld® Foundation Inc., a nonprofit organization that endeavors to consistently manifest its mission of redefining and advancing the presence and impact of the multicultural community in cinema and cross-platform media. By implementing initiatives that actively support and develop content creators of color, Urbanworld significantly contributes to the evolution of the media and entertainment landscape and the diversity that it reflects. Gabrielle Glore serves as Festival Director for the Urbanworld Film Festival. The festival website is www.urbanworld.org.

ABOUT BET NETWORKS

BET Networks, a subsidiary of Viacom Inc. (NASDAQ: VIA, VIAB), is the nation's leading provider of quality entertainment, music, news and public affairs television programming for the African-American audience. The primary BET channel reaches more than 90 million households and can be seen in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom and sub-Saharan Africa. BET is the dominant African-American consumer brand with a diverse group of business extensions: BET.com, a leading Internet destination for Black entertainment, music, culture, and news; Centric, the first network dedicated to Black women; BET Digital Networks - BET Gospel and BET Hip Hop, attractive alternatives for cutting-edge entertainment tastes; BET Home Entertainment, a collection of BET-branded offerings for the home environment including DVDs and video-on-demand; BET Event Productions, a full-scale event management and production company with festivals and live events spanning the globe; BET Mobile, which provides ringtones, games and video content for wireless devices; and BET International, which operates BET in the United Kingdom and oversees the extension of BET network programming for global distribution.

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MEDIA CONTACTS

Staci R. Collins Jackson
The Collins Jackson Agency
312.600.7774 | SRCJ@TheCollinsJacksonAgency.com

Terrece Walker
BET Networks
212.205.3264 | Terrece.Walker@BET.net