



# MEDIA INFORMATION

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## **BET NETWORKS AND URBANWORLD ANNOUNCE MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TO PRESENT THE “URBANWORLD FILM FESTIVAL” PRESENTED BY BET NETWORKS**

**Venture Joins Together the Leading Media and Entertainment Company for African Americans  
with the Premier Platform for the Urban Film Community**

**Film Submissions Due by Saturday, May 31**

**NEW YORK — May 19, 2008** — BET Networks today announced a three-year strategic partnership to present the **Urbanworld Film Festival**. The unique partnership, bolstered by BET’s position as the leading media and entertainment provider for African Americans and consumers of Black culture, will further establish the festival, now in its 12th year, as one of the world’s largest competitive film festivals designed to redefine and enhance the roles of multicultural constituents in contemporary cinema. This year’s festival will be held in Manhattan from Wednesday, September 10 through Sunday, September 14.

The Urbanworld Film Festival will feature studio premieres, independent film screenings, panels, screenplay readings, talent spotlights, and an awards brunch honoring the festival’s winners. As a result of the new collaboration, this year’s festival will be a larger and more exciting experience with a host of new elements featured.

“We’re thrilled to join efforts with Urbanworld and sponsor this incredibly important event,” said Janet Rollé, Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, BET Networks. “BET Networks is committed to delivering to our audience content that explores a broad range of the Black experience, so it’s extremely exciting and significant for us to expand our efforts and support filmmakers of color through this new partnership.”

“As the leading entertainment destination for African Americans and consumers of Black culture, BET Networks has made it our mission to identify the best and most compelling ways for our audience to engage with our brand,” said Alvin Bowles, Senior Vice President, Integrated Marketing, BET Networks. “By teaming up with Urbanworld, we’re looking forward to combining the power of our brand with the foremost film festival for our community.”

“We are very excited to have BET join the festival as the Presenting Sponsor. This alliance will usher in a new era for films by and about people of color,” said Stacy Spikes, founder of Urbanworld. “Our partnership will galvanize Urbanworld’s vision to deliver these universal stories to the widest audience possible, via Theatrical, TV, Online and Mobile distribution platforms.

During its tenure, the festival has screened more than 700 urban-themed independent films and has been a launching pad for a host of major breakout films such as **Collateral, Hustle and Flow, Hero, Soul Food, Rush Hour 2, and Barbershop**, and has also attracted the industry’s hottest stars, including **Tom Cruise** and **Jamie Foxx**, to name a couple. Urbanworld is the premier event showcasing films by and about people of color.

As part of the alliance, BET will serve as the exclusive global telecast/video partner, providing pre- and post-event exposure on the network and at BET.com in support of the festival. In addition, BET will work in partnership with Urbanworld to expand their offerings throughout the year and into new media outlets, aggressively cross-promoting the festival to consumer and trade constituents.

The Urbanworld Film Festival is currently accepting submissions for the 2008 festival. Submission information is available at [www.urbanworld.org](http://www.urbanworld.org) or [www.withoutabox.com](http://www.withoutabox.com), with competitive categories that include narrative feature, narrative short, documentary feature, documentary short, and screenplay. The submission deadline is Saturday, May 31.

#### **About BET Networks**

BET Networks, a division of Viacom Inc. (NYSE: VIA, VIA.B), 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 87 million households according to Nielsen Media Research, and can be seen in the U.S., Canada and the Caribbean. 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; BET Digital Networks - BET J, BET Gospel and BET Hip Hop, attractive alternatives for cutting-edge entertainment tastes; BET Event Productions, a full-scale event management and production company; BET Home Entertainment, a collection of BET-branded offerings for the home environment including DVDs and video-on-demand; BET Mobile, which provides ringtones, games and video content for wireless devices; and BET International, an extension of BET network programming for global distribution.

#### **About Urbanworld**

Urbanworld was launched in August 1997 by founder Stacy Spikes, a former executive at Miramax and October Films. Over the past eleven years, Urbanworld has presented over 700 features, shorts and documentaries, with estimated attendance reaching 15,000+. Now in its twelfth year, the Urbanworld Film Festival is one of the largest internationally competitive festivals of its kind. The Urbanworld Film Festival is an initiative delivered by the Urbanworld Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to redefining the role of multicultural constituents in contemporary cinema by implementing programs and events that support the development and success of the urban filmmaking community. Spikes serves as chairman emeritus. Gabrielle Glore serves as executive producer. For more information, please visit [www.urbanworld.org](http://www.urbanworld.org).

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