



“Take a Seat and Make a Stand” Call to Action Campaign Launched Today to Support Films By and About Black Life and Culture

Effort highlights the power of viewers to impact the quality and quantity of Black films.

On Christmas Day, the Black Hollywood Education and Resource Center (BHERC) issued a national call to action to communities across the country to go out and actively support films that focus on telling the stories of the diverse Black Experience that features Black and other diverse actors in key roles. **Take a Seat and Make a Stand** is a clarion call to action by supporting these movies the first weekend and soon thereafter in record numbers. This call to action articulates the power of audience turnout while ensuring that Black and other diverse films have strong box office success; inspiring other critical and much needed diverse stories to be made.

Citing the unprecedented fall and Christmas Day release of six critically acclaimed films featuring Black actors, and about diverse and Black Life and culture (*Fences*, *Hidden Figures*, *Moonlight*, *Loving*, *Queen of Katwe*, *Collateral Beauty*), BHERC feels strongly that the success of these highly important films can be influenced by a “must see” groundswell emanating from the community

Post-Christmas – and through the new year -- there is a unique important opportunity to send a clear message of support for two outstanding films that opened Christmas Day. *Fences* and *Hidden Figures* as well as demonstrating support for films in theaters now *Moonlight*, *Loving* and *Collateral Beauty* and *Queen of Katwe*. Additionally, support *Birth of a Nation* if it is showing in your community.

Fences is set in 1950s Pittsburgh. A former Negro League player, now working as a waste collector, struggles to provide for his family and come to terms with the events of his life. A 2016 American drama film directed by Denzel Washington and written by August Wilson, based on his Pulitzer Prize-winning play of the same name. The film stars Washington, Viola Davis, Stephen Henderson, Jovan Adepo, Russell Hornsby, Mykelti Williamson and Saniyya Sidney.

Hidden Figures (Opens Wide January 6, 2017) is the incredible untold story of Katherine Johnson (Taraji P. Henson), Dorothy Vaughan (Octavia Spencer) and Mary Jackson (Janelle Monáe)—brilliant African-American women working at NASA, who served as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in history: the launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit, a stunning achievement that restored the nation’s confidence, turned around the Space Race, and galvanized the world.



Moonlight is a stirring coming-of-age drama that chronicles the life of a young African-American man from childhood to manhood in a rough Miami neighborhood. Writer/Director Barry Jenkins’ film features a powerhouse ensemble cast including Naomie Harris, Janelle Monáe and Mahershala Ali. *Moonlight* is considered by film critics as this year’s front-runner to win the Academy Award for Best Picture.

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Loving is the story of Richard and Mildred Loving, an interracial couple, whose challenge of their anti-miscegenation arrest for their marriage in Virginia led to a legal battle that would end at the US Supreme Court.



Collateral Beauty. Retreating from life after a tragedy, a man questions the universe by writing to Love, Time and Death. Receiving unexpected answers, he begins to see how these things interlock and how even loss can reveal moments of meaning and beauty.



Queen of Katwe - Living in the slum of Katwe in Kampala, Uganda, is a constant struggle for 10-year-old Phiona (Madina Nalwanga) and her family. Her world changes one day when she meets Robert Katende (David Oyelowo), a missionary who teaches children how to play chess. Phiona becomes fascinated with the game and soon becomes a top player under Katende's guidance. Her success in local competitions and tournaments opens the door to a bright future and a golden chance to escape from a life of poverty.



Set against the antebellum South, **The Birth of a Nation** follows Nat Turner (Nate Parker), a literate slave and preacher, whose financially strained owner, Samuel Turner (Armie Hammer), accepts an offer to use Nat's preaching to subdue unruly slaves. As he witnesses countless atrocities - against himself and his fellow slaves - Nat orchestrates an uprising in the hopes of leading his people to freedom

The call to action to support is simple.

- **Join** the First Weekend Club at www.BHERC.org to receive updates about upcoming films
- Individuals and Families: **Gather** your friends, family, and work colleagues and attend
- Religious organizations, Community Groups, Fraternities and Sororities **organize** group viewings
- Media: **Spread** the word about supporting these films and the community effort
- Parks, Recreation, and Youth organizations: **Plan** outings to see the movies
- Schools: **Implement** an excursion to the theater and work the subjects into your curriculum
- **Volunteer** and Non-Profit Organizations: Offer to **underwrite** tickets for others
- Take a **picture** of your group and **post** and/or **tweet** it on our Facebook page or on Instagram.
- **Share** your comments about the films and **challenge** your network to get out and view them

For more information about BHERC and this effort please call [\(310\) 284-3170](tel:3102843170) or log on to our website www.bherc.org by joining the BHERC First Weekend Club movement today. *Take a Seat to Make a Stand.* "Educate, Inspire, Empower" through the power of film,

BHERC

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About BHERC

Founded in 1996 by Sandra Evers-Manly, BHERC is a nonprofit, public benefit organization designed to advocate, educate, research, develop, and preserve the history and future of Blacks in film and television. Celebrate the artistry by supporting our filmmakers, with diverse topics, stories, techniques and broad themes multi-layered with humor, drama, and reality.

Website: www.BHERC.org
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