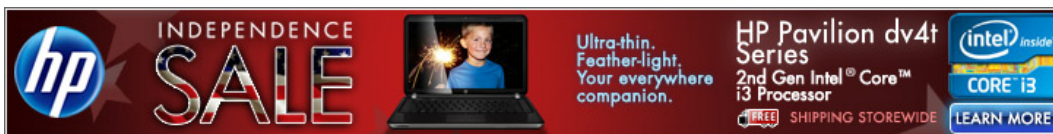




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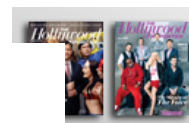
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## Keenen Ivory Wayans to Receive American Black Film Fest's Icon Award

Michael Elliot, Bill Duke and Robert Townsend to lead Master Class.

4:33 PM 6/1/2011 by Jay A. Fernandez

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Getty Images

Keenen Ivory Wayans

Michael Elliot, Bill Duke and Robert Townsend are set to lead the American Black Film Festival's 2011 Master Class, while Keenen Ivory Wayans has been chosen to receive the festival's annual Entertainment Icon Award. The fest, now in its 15th year, runs from July 6-9 in Miami.

An Emmy Award-winning writer, director and producer for 25 years, Wayans has been a major creative force behind Eddie Murphy's classic concert film *Raw*, the early features *Hollywood Shuffle* and *I'm Gonna Get You Sucka*, the groundbreaking Fox comedy series *In Living Color*, plus the films *The Five Heartbeats*, *A Low Down Dirty Shame*, *White Chicks*, *Little Man* and *Scary Movie*, which grossed more than \$300 million worldwide.

"Keenen Ivory Wayans is a trailblazer in the truest sense of the word," said ABFF founder Jeff Friday. "In fact, very few people in the industry have provided such a dynamic platform in cultivating such notable talent and revolutionizing comedy and comedic television. Beyond that, Wayans has proven to be an amazing mentor to his family by nurturing the careers of his siblings in the industry, and we are proud to bestow him with the festival's highest distinction, especially on our anniversary year."

Wayans' award will be handed out at the ABFF Honors July 9 at the Fillmore Miami Beach Jackie Gleason Theater. Morgan Freeman, Lee Daniels, Spike Lee, Townsend, Russell Simmons and Halle Berry have been previous recipients.

In its second year, ABFF's invitation-only Pro-Hollywood Initiative will continue to encourage professional athletes to explore careers in movies. Baltimore Ravens All-Pro linebacker Terrell Suggs has been named Sports Ambassador for the initiative this year. The PHI master classes, taught by Elliot (*Just Wright*), Duke (*A Rage in Harlem*) and Townsend (*The Five Heartbeats*), cover acting, screenwriting and pitching. Additional filmmaking classes will explore producing, directing, scoring, cinematography and financing.

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