

# DAILY VARIETY

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## 'One' tops Black fest

By MARY SUTTER

MIAMI — Charles Randolph-Wright's directorial debut, "On the One," swept the feature film prizes at the ninth annual American Black Film Festival, which focuses on independent black cinema. Event closed Sunday.

"On the One" was one of just three features eligible for the grand jury prize, which comes with \$20,000 in film stock from Kodak.

But fest auds, allowed to choose from a wider pool of pics, also named "One," about twin brothers whose lives take distinct paths, best film. Aud award carries a cash prize of \$20,000.

Lead Biloah Greene drew the nod for performance by an actor or actress.

Cle Sloan's "Bastards of the Party," about gang life in Los Angeles, took the docu award and its \$10,000 cash prize. Docu was produced by Antoine Fuqua.

In the HBO-sponsored short film competition, Jonathan Levine's "Shards," about a DJ-graffiti artist trying to break free of a crystal meth addiction, won the short film award and its \$20,000 in cash.

Awards were issued at Saturday night ceremony. Fest honored Mario Van Peebles as director of the year and recognized producer Warrington Hudlin with its Melvin Van Peebles Trailblazer Award.

For the second year, Fox Searchlight Pictures' director of production, Zola Mashariki, held a three-day "Filmmaker Workshop 101" for 100 novice filmmakers. Mashariki used Fox's September release "Roll Bounce" as a case study, with the participation of pic's writer-helmer Malcolm Lee and producer Bob Teitel. Spike Lee also took part.

For the first time, cabler BET held a film/TV pitch session as part of its strategy to pursue more original programming; sister net Nickelodeon introduced a writer's symposium.

BET's Herbert Niles, VP of network program acquisitions, and Robyn Lattaker-Johnson, VP of programming development, sat through about 30 pitches, most from first-timers.

"About 10 projects resonated with us," said Lattaker-Johnson. "Of those 10, three are potentially viable shows."

Niles was weighing acquiring a few projects that screened at the festival, and noted BET is investigating reviving its film brand. BET partnered with Lions Gate on release of "Diary of a Mad Black Woman."