

ABFF INSIDER

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

LOGAN BROWNING

Star of the new Netflix series
DEAR WHITE PEOPLE
gives us the inside scoop.

April 2017 • Issue I



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Feature Story

ABFF INSIDER Know More.



PHOTO CREDIT:
Photography: Diana Ragland
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Wardrobe: Apuje Kalu

Meet Logan Browning

If you saw Justin Simien's debut feature film, DEAR WHITE PEOPLE then you will remember Samantha White, the lead character and female protagonist. The series based on his film premieres on Netflix this month, with Logan Browning starring as Samantha.

ABFF INSIDER chopped it up with Logan to find out more about this rising star.

What was your reaction when you found out you booked "Dear White People?"

Gratitude! I had (and still have) so much gratitude towards God, my family, my agents and manager, my own dedication, and the creators of the show for the new chapter my life was moving into. My first thought was, "I wish Dad was here for this." I immediately got to work on anything I thought was related and would prepare me. No script in hand. The film and my sides from the audition were my only sources. I began to read anything applicable, and went to a radio station to learn how to work the boards. I watched interviews of Justin to get into the realm of what "Dear White People" was all about. I may have also jumped on my coffee table, but I'm going to suggest that's implied with 'gratitude'.

The public has a lot of mixed emotions around this series. Are you prepared for that? *I am not prepared to coddle the entire planet because people don't*

understand artistic expression and oppression. I am prepared to defend this show as a brilliant examination of youthful exploration and self-awakening!

The movie "Dear White People" touched on some pretty heavy topics that college students may have to deal with. Were you able to bring any of your experiences at Vanderbilt University to your character, Samantha White? *Going to Vanderbilt, I anticipated what I think many college freshman do: having an opportunity to create who I wanted to be. I was a professional actress for 3 years when I began my studies so my reputation proceeded me in a way I didn't plan for.*

I was given a label and a voice that I tried to shift into what I wanted it to be. Samantha's radio personality is something she wants, but it garners attention and responsibility in her personal life she doesn't anticipate. Relating to Samantha's multiple angles and masks of her personality for different groups of people was natural to navigate. Governing who the campus sees her to be and who she wants to be was an experience I shared with her.

Have you had the chance to talk to Tessa Thompson, who played Samantha White in the feature? Did she have words of wisdom for you? *This is the second time this has been brought up to me, and it's bewildering that it never crossed my mind. I guess I felt I was already hearing her voice and guidance through her performance in the film. There's mystery and a sense of enjoyment I received from deciding for myself why she might have made certain choices for Sam. I paired my studying of the film with reading the original screenplay to discover pieces of Sam and the themes of Dear White People that may have been written on the page but translated solely through Samantha's expression and action.*

Would Dr. Will have let Brianna and Samantha hang if they were college classmates? *Whoa! Plot twist! I think Will Brown would be honored knowing Brianna met an intellectually awakened voice like Samantha. He may not be ready for Bri to be involved in exercising her free speech to stir up conflict on campus, but I'm sure he would remember trying to make a name for himself and make a difference when he was in college.*

Now on to the fun stuff—we'll do 5 favorites: Favorite recording artist and why?

Ben Howard. I missed him perform at Coachella a few years ago when all my friends wanted to see 2Chainz who was performing at the same time on a different stage. That prompted me to buy a ticket to Inverness, Scotland to watch him perform at the Rockness Music Festival on my birthday that year. It was the time of my life: drinking scotch, perched on the shoulders of a stranger, and singing along with people from all over the world. I can also envision his music as the backdrop to me walking around my Malibu dream home in a white linen smock with my hair blowing in the sea breeze one day.

Vacation spot: *Anywhere I've never been before.*

Shopping habits-Designer, vintage or department store: *Anything consignment, hand-me-downs from family and friends, or stolen from my characters' wardrobe.*

Childhood movie: *I can't pick just one! "A Little Princess", "The Little Rascals", "Mrs. Doubtfire", "Sister Act 2", "Silence of the Lambs", (any of my Dad's favorite movies also became mine) and every Christmas movie made, including and especially the cheesy ones.*

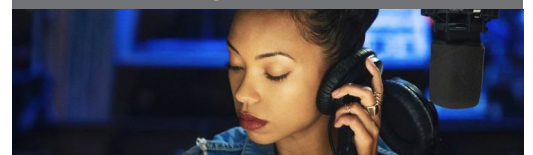
Class in college? (non-performance):

African American Literature in Film. There were less than 10 of us. We would read books with predominately African American characters & written by AA authors. Afterwards, we watched the films and learned how to analyze and compare them to the novels. I also loved Geology my Freshman year. When it came time for exams, I would do this gross thing. We would be given a tray of 12 rocks and minerals and had to examine and notate the names and properties of each. There were usually two white rocks in the tray. Well... I would lick them to see which was salty, and whichever was I knew it was talc. Maybe I should have started with the silly one, but the image of a young and curious Logan in a lab licking a rock for a grade is such a classy shot.

- Story by Lamonia Deanne Brown

My first thought was, I wish Dad was here for this.

UP NEXT



DEAR WHITE PEOPLE
premieres April 28 on NETFLIX

Our cover girl Logan Browning is the star of this new series. Imagine being at a school where almost everyone is white, privileged and biased. What would you want to say to these people? Tune in to DEAR WHITE PEOPLE on Netflix starting April 28—you just might hear your question. Directed by Justin Simien and also starring Brandon B. Bell and Ashley Blaine Featherson, these 30 minute satirical episodes are set to pull back the curtains on various types of discrimination, the sting of which can only be soothed by the narration of Dennis Haysbert.

WHEN LOVE ENDS

MADNESS BEGINS

KATHERINE HEIGL

ROSARIO DAWSON

UNFORGETTABLE

APRIL 21



New On Screen

ABFF INSIDER Know More.



SLEIGHT IN THEATERS APRIL 28

WWE Studios brings us a new thriller about a young street magician who is left to care for his little sister after their parents passing and turns to illegal activities to keep a roof over their heads. When he gets in too deep, his sister is kidnapped and he is forced to use his magic and brilliant mind to save her. *SLEIGHT* stars Jacob Lattimore, Dulé Hill, Seychelle Gabriel, and Sasheer Zamata.



THE GET DOWN STREAMING NOW ON NETFLIX

Eight months later and it's 1978 in New York City. The series will continue to chart the birth of hip-hop and the melting pot of musical styles in the Bronx in the 1970s with all the original cast members, who made it out of 1977 alive, back for Part Two of Season 1.

Hit us at INSIDER@abffventures.com to let us know what you think!



BOSCH SEASON 3 PREMIERES APRIL 21 ON AMAZON STUDIOS

Jamie Hector will continue to play Detective Jerry Edgar and Lance Reddick returns in his role as Chief Irvin Irving. This season will bring viewers a new world of dirty cops and a murder mystery—all evidence pointing at Harry. Angered by the truths behind his mother's murder, LAPD detective Harry Bosch struggles to find integrity in an imperfect justice system. The killing of a homeless veteran, the suicide of a serial killing suspect, and the high-profile murder trial of a Hollywood director pit Bosch against ruthless opponents who all threaten to destroy him. *BOSCH* Season 3 promises to be the most compelling yet.



CHASING TRANE: THE JOHN COLTRANE DOCUMENTARY

Horn lovers and jazz enthusiasts everywhere will be treated to this documentary that follows the life of John Coltrane in the new film *CHASING TRANE: THE JOHN COLTRANE DOCUMENTARY*. Denzel Washington brings Coltrane's voice to life. With the full participation of the Coltrane family, his record label and the artists who knew him best, this is sure to become a classic definitive must see biography of a creative genius. *CHASING TRANE: THE JOHN COLTRANE DOCUMENTARY* premieres in theaters on April 14th in New York and on April 21st in Los Angeles, with a national rollout in top markets to follow.



THE IMMORTAL LIFE OF HENRIETTA LACKS PREMIERES APRIL 22 ON HBO

Oprah Winfrey and Rose Byrne star in this story of medical arrogance and triumph, race, poverty and deep friendship between the unlikeliest of people. Cast members include Hamilton alum Renée Elise Goldsberry, Rocky Carroll, Kyanna Simone Simpson, Courtney B. Vance, Leslie Uggams, Reg E. Cathey, Reed Birney, Ruben Santiago-Hudson, John Douglas Thompson, Adriane Lenox, Roger Robinson and Melvin Van Peebles. Directed by George C. Wolfe and told through the eyes of Henrietta Lacks' daughter, Deborah Lacks, the film chronicles her search, along with journalist Rebecca Skloot, to learn about the mother she never knew and understand how the unauthorized harvesting of Lacks' cancerous cells in 1951 led to unprecedented medical breakthroughs, changing countless lives and the face of medicine forever.

#WorkGoalz

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VALERIE MERAZ

Senior VP, Content Acquisitions & Strategy, Turner Entertainment

Valerie Meraz has been promoted to Senior Vice President of Content Acquisitions & Strategy for Turner's entertainment networks. In this capacity, she negotiates deals for movies and off-network television series on behalf of TBS, TNT, truTV, Cartoon Network, Adult Swim, Boomerang, Turner Classic Movies (TCM)

and FilmStruck. The content she and her team acquire help support original programming for all of those brands, including the programming and brand evolutions at TNT & TBS.

Since joining Turner in 2012, Valerie has provided her expertise during negotiations to license the hit comedy series Brooklyn Nine-Nine for TBS and an unprecedented slate of movie blockbusters for TBS & TNT, including Warner Brother's Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice and all of the upcoming DC Comics films; The Avengers: Age of Ultron, Dr. Strange and other recent hits from Marvel; and the entire Hunger Games and Divergent franchises. She also played an integral part of making TNT & TBS the exclusive basic cable home for the entire Star Wars franchise and has taken part in negotiating long-term deals for Family Guy, Bob's Burgers and other series that help support Adult Swim's original programming line-up.

A San Francisco Bay Area native, Valerie holds a bachelor's degree in mass communications from UCLA and a master's degree in motion picture producing from the Peter Stark Producing Program at USC. She won a Luminary Award from the National Association of Multi-Ethnicities in Communications and the Power BrokHer Award from Women in Film and Television of Atlanta. Valerie is based in Atlanta.



BRIAN NORRIS

VP, Dish Media Sales

DISH has named Brian Norris as Vice President of DISH Media Sales, overseeing DISH and Sling TV's advertising sales, analytics and operations. Brian joined DISH in 2008 to assist in the establishment of DISH Media Sales' flagship office in New York. He has been instrumental in expanding the scope of TV advertising by

bringing new and forward-thinking brands into the addressable advertising fold and encouraging them to tap into Sling TV's unique audience. Most recently, Brian led national advertising sales for DISH Media Sales, where he oversaw the general market, direct response and Latino advertising sales efforts. These efforts spanned DISH Media Sales' entire suite of solutions including linear, addressable, interactive and programmatic advertising, as well as digital advertising on Sling TV and DISH Anywhere.

"We're part of changing the definition of TV and with it, the definition of TV advertising," says Brian. "I'm proud to lead a team of sales innovators that has paved the way in uncharted territory from addressable advertising and programmatic TV to new opportunities offered by Sling TV."

Brian volunteers with Big Brothers/ Big Sisters of NYC and serves as an advisory board member for both Response Magazine and GuidANCE Autism. He earned his bachelor's degree from Towson University and holds an M.B.A from Brown University and IE Business School in Madrid. He resides in New Jersey with his wife Ericka and their daughter.

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ABFF LAUNCHES GREENLIGHTERS ACADEMY Executive Program For College Students

This May the ABFF will kick off the first annual Greenlighters Academy, a new incubator and internship program for African American (and Latino) college students interested in corporate jobs in film and television. The program will serve as a pipeline to place them as interns at major studios and networks. This year's ambassador is actor and TV host, Terrence J. For more info visit <http://www.abff.com/abff-greenlighters-academy/>.



OPENING NIGHT FILM *Girls Trip* (Universal Pictures)

The excitement around the 21st American Black Film Festival is heating up! Our opening night film is directed by Malcolm D. Lee and produced by Will Packer, both ABFF alums. Starring Queen Latifah, Jada Pinkett-Smith, Tiffany Haddish and our Festival Ambassador Regina Hall, you'll definitely want to be with us in Miami for this one!



CLOSING NIGHT FILM *All Eyez on Me* (Lionsgate/Code Black Entertainment)

The festival will close with the highly anticipated film based on the life of Tupac Shakur, from his early days in New York to his status as one of the world's most recognized and influential voices. The movie is directed by Benny Boom, the music is sure to be HOT and it's the high energy content that ABFF has given you for 21 years. Go to www.abff.com to get your passes. Don't be left out!



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