

PAFF 2016 hosts A Conversation with Creed's director Ryan Coogler (Recap)

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"I'm not saying I'm gonna change the world, but I guarantee that I will spark the brain that will change the world," Tupac Shakur.

Monday, February 8, 2016, the Pan African Film Festival (PAFF) hosted, A Conversation with... director Ryan Coogler, and writer Aaron Covington, the duo that brought the film Creed to life. Creed has already earned over \$100 million dollars, but still screened at PAFF to a sold out crowd. After the gasps and quivers from watching an intense boxing film, moviegoers got to stay in their seats for a Q&A with the filmmakers. Many know Coogler from his first feature film "Fruitvale," but Covington revealed that the idea for Creed, developed long before the success of "Fruitvale." As USC students, Coogler and Covington often helped out each other on their school projects, in any aspect including; production sound, gaffer, and even a little acting from Coogler. While roommates Coogler and Covington kept returning to the theme of boxing for a screenplay idea, which later became Creed, Covington's first produced screenplay.

When asked about the story development for Creed, Coogler and Covington wondered aloud, "how specifically young and black can we get" to make Creed, which led to a battle of being broad while keeping the film's specificity to reach the target audience.

When it came time for audience questions many young adults jumped in line to ask Coogler about his shot selections, advice on how to direct actors, and his social activism. Coogler noted his role as a director is to talk and communicate, and he extends that to all actors, not just the big name stars. As time was running out a few more promising young filmmakers were able to squeeze in their comments; including questioning the ending of Creed, wondering did the filmmakers purposely leave a lane open for a sequel. Addressing social activism, Covington's advice is "don't try to measure your activism against someone else, just do something." Coogler notes anybody can get involved with activism, which may be as simple as not shopping on certain holidays, or linking up with friends to create their own stories. When asked for clarification on his stance concerning the Oscars and diversity, Coogler responded with "my stance is with my people," which flickered a spark and cheers from the young audience members.

PAFF will continue to showcase films through Monday, February 15, 2016, including, Miles Ahead (Don Cheadle), Sweet Micky For President (Wyclef Jean, Pras Michel), and They Don't Give a Damn: The Story of the Failed Chicago Projects.

Additional free events include: Studentfest, Children's festival, Senior Connections, and the PAFF Fashion Show. Visit PAFF.org for details.

• Caption: Creed's Q&A PAFF Creed Screening

• Record: [ed6dc2794ebf22e7523a1978903f8e26973235d](#)

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