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**17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL PAN AFRICAN FILM & ARTS FESTIVAL**  
**ANNOUNCES FILM COMPETITION WINNERS**

**2009 FESTIVAL FEATURED FILMS FROM 42 COUNTRIES**

**“Skin” Starring Sophie Okonedo the True Story of White Woman  
Born Looking Black During Apartheid in South Africa  
Favorite Among Jury and Audiences**

The **Pan African Film and Arts Festival (PAFF)** announced today the winners of its annual film competition. A favorite among PAFF jurors and audiences was the South Africa/UK film **“Skin”** starring Sophie Okonedo. Based on a true story, a genetic abnormality caused Sandra Laing (Sophie Okonedo), born of white parents in apartheid South Africa, to look like a black person. Tormented and unaccepted by white society though classified as white, she falls in love with a Black man and moves to a township, alienating her parents. The real Sandra Laing flew to Los Angeles from South Africa to attend the screening of “Skin” at the PAFF. Other top honors went to the US film **“Prince of Broadway”** for *Best Narrative Feature*, France’s **“Cuba: An African Odyssey”** for *Best Documentary Feature*, and the Bahamas’ **“Rain”** for *Best Director-First Feature*.

Jury Prizes were awarded in the following categories: Best Documentary Feature, Best Documentary Short, Best Narrative Short, Best Narrative Feature, and Best Director-First Feature. In addition to the Jury Prizes, the PAFF audience cast ballots for their favorite documentary and narrative films, as well as the PAFF Director’s Award and Programmer’s Award. Film nominations are selected by a

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jury of industry professionals, with the exception of the audience favorite awards, which are based on the results of ballots cast by festival filmgoers. Screenings for the 2009 PAFF Jury of all films receiving nominations took place February 5-16, 2009 at the Culver Plaza Theatres. The 2009 PAFF Awards were announced on Monday, February 16 at the annual PAFF Filmmaker Awards Brunch at the Culver Hotel in Culver City.

“With over thirty world and U.S. premieres, this year’s lineup is a remarkable representation of the African cinematic landscape from the United States and across the globe,” commented Sharifa Johka, PAFF senior programming consultant. “Los Angeles has a large international population and I am so excited to bring this diverse and exciting program to this community.”

PAFF is America’s largest and most prestigious flagship black film and arts festival and will take place February 5-16, 2009. With over 2,500 submissions, the 2009 PAFF features films from 42 countries and boasts a record attendance now topping a quarter of a million attendees over its twelve-day run. This year the festival has announced a change of venue to accommodate its ever-growing audience for its film festival to the Culver Plaza Theatres (9919 Washington Boulevard). The PAFF Art Market, a highly anticipated and celebrated major exhibit of black fine art and quality crafts featuring the work of over 100 different artists and artisans, remained at the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza (3650 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.). For more information, please visit [www.paff.org](http://www.paff.org).

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**17<sup>th</sup> PAN AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL FILM COMPETITION WINNERS**

**BEST NARRATIVE FEATURE**

“Prince of Broadway” US  
*Honorable Mention*  
“Happy Sad” Trinidad/Tobago

**BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE**

“Cuba, An African Odyssey” France  
*Honorable Mention*  
“The End of Poverty?” US

**BEST NARRATIVE SHORT**

“Kwame” US  
*Honorable Mention*  
“Warrior Queen” Ghana

**BEST DOCUMENTARY SHORT**

“Scarred Justice: The Orangeburg Massacre” US  
*Honorable Mention*  
“Faubourg Treme’:  
The Untold Story of Black New Orleans” US

**BEST FIRST FEATURE – DIRECTOR**

“Rain” Bahamas

**JURY FAVORITE**

“Skin” US

**17<sup>th</sup> PAN AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL FILM AUDIENCE FAVORITE WINNERS**

**BEST NARRATIVE FEATURE**

“Skin” US

**BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE**

“Nubian Spirit: The African Legacy of the Nile Sudan/UK  
Valley”

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**17<sup>th</sup> PAN AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL DIRECTOR’S AWARD**

**BEST NARRATIVE FEATURE**

“Sugar” US

**BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE**

“Milking the Rhino” US

**17<sup>th</sup> PAN AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL PROGRAMMER’S AWARD**

**BEST NARRATIVE FEATURE**

“Standing N Truth” US

**BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE**

“Run Baby Run” Ghana

*The Pan African Film and Arts Festival (PAFF) was founded in 1992 as a non-profit corporation dedicated to the promotion of cultural and racial tolerance and understanding through the exhibition of film, art and creative expression. It is the PAFFs goal to present and showcase a broad spectrum of Black creative works, particularly those that reinforce positive images and help to destroy negative stereotypes. The PAFF believes film and art can lead to better understanding and foster communication between peoples of diverse cultures, races, and lifestyles, while at the same time, serve as a vehicle to initiate dialogue on the important issues of our times.*