

THE 34th ANNUAL PAN AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL **PAFF SOUL 2026**

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STARS SHINE BRIGHT AT THE 34TH ANNUAL PAN AFRICAN FILM & ARTS FESTIVAL

**Cultural Icons RZA and Ice Cube, Don Cheadle and More Lead a Powerful
Celebration of Global Black Storytelling in Los Angeles**

LOS ANGELES — The 34th Annual **Pan African Film & Arts Festival (PAFF)** concluded its dynamic run in Los Angeles with an unmistakable message: Black storytelling is not a moment — it is a movement. With packed theaters, standing ovations, and red carpets that blended artistry with activism, this year’s festival once again affirmed its position as the nation’s largest and longest-running Black film festival.

Among the cultural powerhouses in attendance were hip-hop pioneer, producer, and filmmaker **RZA** who opened the 2026 festival with a special screening of his action-thriller ***One Spoon of Chocolate***. West Coast rap music icon, entrepreneur, and actor **Ice Cube** stepped onto the PAFF red carpet in support of his longtime friend Chicago music legend **George Daniels** at the Los Angeles premiere of the documentary ***Uncle George The Music Man***. Ice Cube’s presence underscored the festival’s continued impact across music, film, and popular culture. Other celebrities in attendance this year include actor, producer and activist **Jimmy Jean-Louis**, a longtime PAFF ambassador who attended opening night and a red carpet screening of his iconic film ***Phat Girlz***, celebrating the film’s 20th anniversary. Actor and comedian **Lil Rel Howery** stepped onto the PAFF red carpet for the West Coast premiere of the comedy ***The Class Reunion***, which he stars in, bringing his signature energy to the celebration.

From opening night through closing events, PAFF transformed Los Angeles into a global hub for Black cinema and art — welcoming filmmakers, actors, industry

executives, visual artists, poets, and audiences from across the African diaspora. The festival featured a curated slate of narrative features, documentaries, shorts, and animated works that explored identity, resilience, innovation, and the complexity of the global Black experience.

Red carpet arrivals reflected the breadth of Black excellence, bringing together established industry leaders and emerging creatives in a space that prioritizes culture over spectacle. Throughout the festival, filmmakers engaged in robust conversations during post-screening Q&As and industry panels, reinforcing PAFF's longstanding commitment to education, access, and professional development.

"For 34 years, PAFF has been a platform where our stories are centered, protected, and celebrated," said **PAFF Executive Director Oduduwa**. "The continued support from artists, industry leaders, and audiences demonstrates that authentic Black storytelling resonates globally and remains essential to the cultural landscape."

In addition to its film programming, PAFF's multi-day Artfest and live events created economic opportunity for artists and small businesses, while fostering meaningful cultural exchange within the community.

As the curtain closes on its 34th year, the Pan African Film & Arts Festival continues to stand as a cornerstone institution in Los Angeles and beyond — amplifying voices from Africa, the Caribbean, the United States, and across the diaspora.

Planning is already underway for the 35th Annual Pan African Film & Arts Festival.

For more information, visit www.paff.org.

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About the Pan African Film & Arts Festival

The Pan African Film & Arts Festival (PAFF) is the nation's largest and longest-running Black film festival, dedicated to the promotion of cultural understanding and racial tolerance through the exhibition of film, art, and creative expression from the global African diaspora. For more information, visit paff.org.

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PHOTOS

High-resolution images from the Pan African Film & Arts Festival are available for media use. Photos must be credited as indicated (Photo by PAFF) and may not be altered beyond standard cropping. Download photos [here](#).

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

LOS ANGELES, Calif., Feb. 17, 2026 — RZA and his wife, Talani Diggs, pose on the red carpet at the opening night of the Pan African Film & Arts Festival at the Directors Guild of America, where RZA's action thriller "One Spoonful of Chocolate" premieres. (Photo by PAFF)

LOS ANGELES, Calif., Feb. 17, 2026 — RZA speaks with filmmaker and actor Mario Van Peebles during a Q&A following the screening of "One Spoonful of Chocolate" on opening night of the Pan African Film & Arts Festival at the Directors Guild of America. (Photo by PAFF)

CULVER CITY, Calif., Feb. 17, 2026 — Don Cheadle walks the red carpet in support of his daughter, Imani Cheadle, whose short film "Blue" screens at The Culver Theater during the Pan African Film & Arts Festival on Tuesday. (Photo by PAFF)

CULVER CITY, Calif., Feb. 16, 2026 — From left, Lil Rel Howery, director Chazitear and Sarunas Jackson attend the West Coast Premiere of "The Class Reunion" at The Culver Theater during the Pan African Film & Arts Festival on Monday. (Photo by PAFF)

CULVER CITY, Calif., Feb. 22, 2026 — Rapper and actor Ice Cube, left, and Chicago music legend George Daniels attend the Los Angeles premiere of "Uncle George: The Music Man" on the red carpet at The Culver Theater during the Pan African Film & Arts Festival on Sunday. (Photo by PAFF)

LOS ANGELES, Calif., Feb. 17, 2026 — Rapper Yo-Yo attends the opening night of the Pan African Film & Arts Festival at the Directors Guild of America on Tuesday. (Photo by PAFF)

LOS ANGELES, Calif., Feb. 17, 2026 — Actor, producer and activist Jimmy Jean-Louis attends the opening night of the Pan African Film & Arts Festival at the Directors Guild of America on Tuesday. (Photo by PAFF)