

BLACK WEB FEST 2023

APRIL 28TH - 29TH

SPONSORED BY

COMMUNITAS
AMERICA

DAY 1 - FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2023 - SCHEDULE

12:30 PM

DOORS OPENS

1 PM - 2 PM

UNCOVERING FUNDING FOR ARTIST & CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS PANEL

Representatives from different organizations will explain how artist and creators can access grants and resources.

2:15 PM - 2:45 PM

ANIMATION

- Gwen
- Thinkin Robots
- Gangsta Island - Web Series
- Mother, Daughter
- Don't Let The Evils Consume You

2:50 PM - 3:15 PM

BREAK

3:15 PM - 4 PM

DOCUMENTARIES

- Gravitational
- Culture Not Color
- The Nod: Tell Me You Got Me
- Untold African Stories - Namibia

4 PM - 4:30 PM

BREAK

4:30PM - 6 PM

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

During the presentation, we will have a screening of Echoing Green's short film "Unwavering". The film will be followed by a conversation with an Echoing Green fellow and staff.

6 PM - 8 PM

OPENING RECEPTION

DAY 1 - FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2023 - UNCOVERING FUNDING FOR ARTIST & CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS PANEL



SHAWN RENÉ GRAHAM
Deputy Director, Programs
and services, The Field

Shawn René Graham [she/her] is a freelance writer and dramaturg from San Jose, California. She is currently the resident dramaturg of The American Slavery Project's Unheard Voices, the Literary Director for the Classical Theatre of Harlem and founder of All Creative Writes, an artistic assistance service designed to provide individual artists and performing arts organizations with administrative, fundraising and writing support. Ms. Graham holds degrees from the California State University, Los Angeles, and the American Repertory Theatre Institute for

Advanced Theatre Training at Harvard University. She lives in Bronx, NY with her dog, Mercy.



MELISSA LEVIN
Associate Program Officer,
Jerome Foundation

Melissa Levin is a values-driven arts administrator, artist-centered curator, and steadfast advocate for just and equitable practices in the arts. She is currently the inaugural New York City-based associate program officer with the Jerome Foundation. For more than 12 years, Melissa worked at Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC) where she was the Vice President of Cultural Programs. Her role encompassed wide-ranging institutional and artistic leadership, overseeing LMCC's major artist-centered and public-facing initiatives including the River

To River Festival, the Arts Center at Governors Island, and LMCC's artist residency programs. Starting in 2016, with collaborator Alex Fialho, Melissa has stewarded the legacy of and curated critically acclaimed exhibitions dedicated to the late artist Michael Richards, including Michael Richards: Winged (LMCC, 2016; Stanford University, 2019) and Richards' first museum retrospective, Michael Richards: Are You Down? (MOCA North Miami, 2021; North Carolina Museum of Art, 2023).

Melissa additionally serves on the boards of the Artist Communities Alliance and Danspace Project. She holds a B.A. with honors in Visual Art and Art History from Barnard College.

OFFICIAL SELECTIONS

GWEN



ANIMATION

ABOUT: Gwen is a poetic and visual tribute to the life of a unique Southern grandmother, animated in linocut style to evoke her resilience and legacy.

WRITER/ DIRECTOR

Frazier Bostic

THINKIN ROBOTS



ANIMATION

ABOUT: The citizens of NoGottam City are beginning to see the signs of the encroaching danger from a robot war.

WRITER/ DIRECTOR

Benjamin Simms

ANIMATION + DOCUMENTARIES

GANGSTA ISLAND



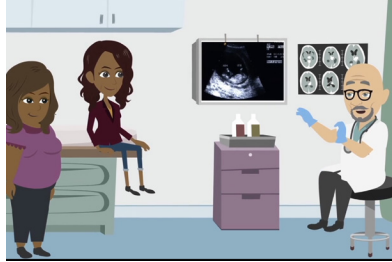
ANIMATION

ABOUT: Gangsta Island is an animated dark comedy series set in 1988 about a teenage boy that must deal with growing up in a dysfunctional environment. It's shocking, clever, and hilarious.

WRITER/ DIRECTOR

Ken Lewis

MOTHER, DAUGHTER



ANIMATION

ABOUT: An animated retelling of a candid conversation between a mother and daughter, explaining the mother's decision to have a child.

WRITER/ DIRECTOR

Shavon Meyers

ANIMATION + DOCUMENTARIES

DON'T LET THE EVILS CONSUME YOU



ANIMATION

ABOUT: An interpretation of the monstrous enslavement of depression, it's sneaking emergence and the lingering darkness it leaves inside. A superficial mask may protect loved ones from witnessing the terror but what's shielding you? .

WRITER/ DIRECTOR

Gerard George

ANIMATOR

LN Arts

GRAVITATIONAL



DOCUMENTARY

ABOUT: Gravitational is the story of Tyrone, a young man who beat the odds and lives as an inspiration to his family and friends despite his disabilities.

WRITER/DIRECTOR

Jovan Brooks

ANIMATION + DOCUMENTARIES

CULTURE NOT COLOR



DOCUMENTARY

ABOUT: Culture Not Color talks about experience with race in the Washington DC area.

WRITER/ DIRECTOR
Brandon Williams

THE NOD: TELL ME YOU GOT ME



DOCUMENTARY

ABOUT: First up was The Nod: Tell Me You Got Me, an insightful exploration into the near-universal gesture recognised by black people who are otherwise unknown to each other. The Nod: Tell Me You Got Me' is an ode to the nod exchanged between Black males and its significance in the building of unity and brotherhood, exploring what it means and why it is important to Black males in modern day Britain.

WRITER/ DIRECTOR
Richard Ampeh

UNTOLD AFRICAN STORIES OF NAMIBIA



DOCUMENTARY

ABOUT: A documentary that takes a deep dive into the rich and cultural diversity of the beautiful country of Namibia through three tribes within Namibia; The San, The Owambo and the Himba tribe.

The film explores different elements that makes it each tribe unique and symbolic, from the hunting and gathering life of the San tribe, to the industrious ways and practices of the Owambo people, to the extraordinary beauty rituals and norms of the Himba tribe.

WRITER/ DIRECTOR

Alex Tackie

DAY 1 - FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2023 - SPECIAL PRESENTATION



ABOUT THE FILM

“Unwavering: The Power of Black Innovation,” premiered as a special on NBC owned and affiliated stations nationwide during the month of February 2022. The film was produced in partnership with Black and Brown woman-owned production company Fearless Video Productions and with support from Comcast NBCUniversal, the film celebrates the long legacy of Black innovation through portraits of nine Black leaders supported by Echoing Green’s Black Male Achievement Fellowship (2012-2020), the world’s first fellowship for social entrepreneurs creating systemic change for Black men and boys in the U.S.

The film features interviews with Dr. Cory Greene (also seen in Ava DuVernay’s “13th”), architect and activist Deanna Van Buren, gaming and tech educator Damon Packwood, and award-winning philanthropic leader Dr. Cheryl Dorsey.

ABOUT ECHOING GREEN

For 35 years, Echoing Green has been on the front lines of solving the world’s biggest problems, raising up the transformational leaders willing to speak truth to power and challenge the status quo. The organization finds emerging leaders with the best ideas for social innovation as early as possible and sets them on a path to lifelong impact. Echoing Green’s community of nearly 1,000 social innovators includes past Fellows such as First Lady Michelle Obama and the founders of Teach For America, Center for Black Innovation, BlocPower, and One Acre Fund. Built and refined over three decades, Echoing Green discovers tomorrow’s leaders, today, and then funds, connects, and supports a new generation of social impact leaders. For more information, visit www.echoinggreen.org.

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WILLIAM M. EVANS
Founder & President,
Neighborhood Benches

William is the founder and president of Neighborhood Benches, an organization increasing the presence of local neighborhood leadership to focus on youth violence and incarceration. During the day he's the Director at the Institute for Transformative Mentoring (ITM). The Institute for Transformative Mentoring (ITM) is a dynamic training program focused on the development of credible messengers (formerly incarcerated men and women) working in the social services fields throughout New York City. Prior to these roles, William provided

re-entry and counseling support through both ICAN on Rikers Island and ATI for returning citizens at the Fortune Society. During the development of Neighborhood Benches William joined Public Allies and worked with the United Federation of Teachers' United Community Schools as the Program & Grants Assistant. As a leader for Neighborhood Benches, William believed that by returning to his community with a specific plan to recruit individuals and helping them understand the need for change, the role they could play in inspiring others and implementing solutions, great changes would come. Knowing these extraordinary individuals had a tremendous impact on how youth live today, on how their society functions, and on what values young people hold, William committed 24 hours a day to recruiting and training these leaders. They were the leaders who "made a difference," and he wanted to recruit them to create long-lasting changes that would improve the quality of life and decrease rates of violence and incarceration. William figured a good strategy would be an effective alignment between benches in the courts and benches in the "hood," focusing on systematic changes. He serves on the advisory boards of Public Allies NY, New Yorkers Against Gun Violence, PS x18 in the Bronx, and as a member of the Restorative Roots Collaborative. William and the RRC members are researching the impacts of historical trauma on restorative justice practice, both the ways in which these traumas enhance and impede their work with participants in the spaces we hold. William is a graduate of ITM and a 2019 Echoing Green Fellow. William received his master's degree in nonprofit management from Fordham University and started his doctoral studies in social work at Yeshiva University.

DAY 1 - FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2023 - SPECIAL PRESENTATION



TIFFANY THOMPSON
Senior Director, Global
Partnerships & Equity,
Echoing Green

Tiffany Thompson leads Echoing Green's equity-driven collaborations and narrative thought leadership strategy.

She develops global cross-sector partnerships and collaborates across the organization to embed equity concepts into all aspects of Echoing Green's internal and external work.

Tiffany has over a decade of experience leading social impact program design and implementation and is committed to innovative programs

serving Black communities and youth.

She previously led Echoing Green's Black Male Achievement Fellowship program, where she supported the leadership and program implementation of social entrepreneurs dedicated to improving life outcomes of Black men and boys in the U.S. By the time this program sunset, more than \$6M was invested in 90 innovators across the U.S.

Before joining Echoing Green, Tiffany worked in the political sector to improve the life outcomes of Black men and boys. She partnered with senior White House administration officials for the My Brother's Keeper (MBK) initiative, supported President Barack Obama's MBK Community Challenge, and, with Deloitte LLP, helped launch the MBK Alliance (now housed within the Obama Foundation). Through her consultancy practice, Tiffany has also worked closely with the philanthropic sector and additional nonprofits, developing culturally-competent impact strategy plans for the Roddenberry Foundation, Tech Talent Project, and Advocates for Youth, among other organizations.

FROM OUR FRIENDS



The Yard is a coworking space at the intersection of creativity, design, & play with locations in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Philly, and DC. To get a taste of what we're about, use the code BLKWEBFST when checking out for a Yard Multi-Pass (5-day) and enjoy a FREE WEEK of coworking on us.