



THE PALEY CENTER FOR MEDIA

THE PALEY CENTER FOR MEDIA ANNOUNCES ITS BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION: A SALUTE TO BLACK ACHIEVEMENTS IN TELEVISION PRESENTED BY CITI

**Month-long Celebration Spotlights Critically Acclaimed and Culturally Influential
Black Icons, Innovators, and Leaders**

**Experience Includes Spotlights on Black Women in Government and Politics and a Celebration of the
100th Anniversary of Baseball's Negro Leagues, with Special Virtual Tour for
Citi cardmembers and Paley Corporate Members**

***Paley Front Row presented by Citi Programs Feature ABC's and Sony Pictures Television's *For Life* in
Conversation with Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson, and OWN's *Queen Sugar* with Ava DuVernay
Including an Exclusive Season Five Premiere for Citi cardmembers and Paley Members***

Special Family Preview Screening of Netflix's *Family Reunion*

***Paley Front Row presented by Citi Programs Available on the Paley Center's Dedicated Channel on
Verizon Media's Yahoo Entertainment and YouTube***

Dynamic Interactive Experiences with Video, Trivia, Education Classes, and Family Programs

February 1, 2021 – New York, NY – The Paley Center for Media today announced its Black History Month celebration, *A Salute to Black Achievements in Television presented by Citi*, honoring the incredible legacy and achievements of iconic Black on-screen talent, creatives, and influencers. The Paley Center is proud to have Citi return as the Presenting Sponsor.

Starting Monday, February 1, the celebration includes dynamic interactive experiences on The Paley Center for Media's website paleycenter.org including spotlights on **Black Women in Government and Politics on TV** and **Baseball's Negro Leagues**, along with family activities and education classes. In addition, highlights include insightful and engaging content featuring some of the most influential names in entertainment from drama, comedy, news, sports, music, and variety, following their journeys to prominence on television and their place as thought leaders in Black society.

The annual celebration is part of the Paley Center's long tradition of honoring diversity in media and entertainment. Over the years, the Paley Center has hosted tributes and exhibitions honoring African American and Hispanic achievements in television, the enormous contributions of women, the impact and importance of LGBTQ+ representation in television, among many others.

"The Paley Center for Media is incredibly proud to shine a spotlight on the significant contributions of the Black community from icons, innovators, and leaders through *A Salute to Black Achievements in Television presented by Citi*," said Maureen J. Reidy, the Paley Center's President & CEO. "We look forward to celebrating their impact and increasing awareness about important diversity issues with timely in-depth discussions and historic content. We are thrilled to have Citi return as the Presenting Sponsor, and our thanks to Verizon for their generous support."

The Paley Center will also feature *Paley Front Row presented by Citi* programs including a conversation with musician and media mogul **Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson** and the creative talent behind ABC's *For Life*, and with the Academy Award–winning **Ava DuVernay** and cast members from OWN's *Queen Sugar*. These programs are available on the Paley Center's dedicated channel on Verizon Media's Yahoo Entertainment and Paley's YouTube channel.

"As we continue to strive for equality, accessibility and inclusion for all, it's important to celebrate and learn from those who have worked tirelessly to overcome issues of racial injustice," said Tami Erwin, CEO, Verizon Business. "Verizon is proud to support Paley's salute of black icons, innovators and leaders, and provide a forum for others to listen, learn and ultimately lead with action."

"I'm proud to join the Paley Center for Media to facilitate a much-needed dialogue about social justice issues that have been overlooked for far too long," said Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson, executive producer of ABC's *For Life*. "Criminal justice reform is at the forefront of the national conscience, and *For Life* tells the true story of a Black man's pursuit of freedom amid systemized obstacles. It is an honor to tell Isaac Wright, Jr.'s story, which has opened so many people's eyes to the need for action."

For Life in Conversation with Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson
Monday, February 1, 8:00 pm EST on Paley YouTube

On Monday, February 1, the Paley Center will present a *Paley Front Row presented by Citi* program headlined by Grammy Award–winning American rapper, songwriter, television producer, actor, and entrepreneur **Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson**. Jackson is the producer behind ABC's crime drama series, *For Life*, inspired by the life of Isaac Wright, Jr. The television show follows the storyline of an imprisoned man, Aaron Wallace, who becomes a lawyer to reverse his life sentence for a crime he did not commit. The Paley Center will host a discussion featuring **James Forman, Jr.**, Pulitzer Prize–Winning Author and Professor, Yale Law School; Writer and Executive Producer **Sonay Hoffman**; Executive Producer **Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson**; Supervising Producer **Kirk A. Moore**; Executive Producer, Creator, Showrunner **Hank Steinberg**; and Executive Producer and Series Inspiration **Isaac Wright, Jr.**; with **Alicia Quarles** as the moderator. *For Life*, a co-production of Sony Pictures Television Inc. and ABC Studios, airs Wednesdays at 10:00 pm ET/PT on ABC.

Queen Sugar
Monday, February 15, 8:00 pm EST on Yahoo Entertainment

The Paley Center is excited to celebrate the upcoming fifth season of one of OWN Network's most popular series *Queen Sugar* on February 15. The acclaimed original drama series tells the story of a Black family in rural Louisiana who are fighting to preserve their father's legacy while navigating their own personal journeys. Viewers witness the joy around the pain and humanity's ability to persevere and find light in the darkest of times. Creator and Executive Producer **Ava DuVernay** will discuss her decision to revamp the new season to focus on some important issues facing us today, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement. Joining her will be cast members **Dawn-Lyen Gardner** ("Charley"), **Rutina Wesley** ("Nova"), and **Kofi Siriboe** ("Ralph"). In addition to Citi cardmembers, Paley Center Members receive special Member benefits including exclusive access and once-in-a-lifetime experiences such as a special sneak preview of the season five premiere on Saturday, February 13 and Sunday, February 14. For more on becoming a part of the valued Paley Membership community, please visit paleycenter.org/join-us/.

Special Family Preview Screening of Netflix's *Family Reunion*
Saturday, February 27 and Sunday, February 28

As part of the month-long celebration offerings for families, there will be a special sneak preview screening of a new episode from the upcoming season of Netflix's *Family Reunion*, along with family watch party screening

guides and fun recipes. The second season of the family comedy, starring Tia Mowry-Hardrict and Emmy-winner Loretta Devine, is in production now and slated to debut later this year. The new episodes will follow the McKellans as they settle into their new lives in the South and even more hilarious antics ensue as they learn to live together under M'Dear's roof and the family bonding gets real. New episodes will be coming this spring.

Interactive Experience

At paleycenter.org, visitors will find a comprehensive and thoughtfully curated experience that celebrates some of the most iconic figures and most important milestones in the history of Black achievements in television from the Paley Center's exclusive archive of events. Archival content that highlights notable anniversaries in 2021, including the 65th anniversary of *The Nat King Cole Show*, 60th anniversary of Freedom Rides, 50th anniversary of *Soul Train*, 30th Anniversary of Tupac "2Pac" Shakur's solo debut *2Pocalypse Now*, and the fifth anniversary of the premiere of the critically acclaimed comedy *Atlanta* will also be celebrated. In addition, the Paley Center's curated spotlights on paleycenter.org will feature:

Spotlight on 100th Anniversary of The Negro Leagues

The Paley Center for Media will also pay tribute to the 100th anniversary of **The Negro Leagues**. This spotlight explores the rich legacy and icons of The Negro Leagues and their influence on the evolution of sports, with insightful and engaging factoids, photos, and videos from Major League Baseball legends like Rube Foster, Buck O'Neil, Josh Gibson, Satchel Paige, Oscar Charleston, Cool Papa Bell, Buck Leonard, Jackie Robinson, Larry Doby, Ernie Banks, Willie Mays, Hank Aaron, and others. In December 2020 Major League Baseball announced that the records of Negro Leagues players would become included in the game's official statistical record. This turning point in the history of the Negro Leagues sheds an important light on the achievements of generations of iconic players.

The Paley Center has collaborated with the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, and will incorporate their insights and share and discuss some of the museum's rare artifacts during a special virtual tour of the entire Salute to Black Achievements in Television on February 10 for Citi cardmembers and Paley Corporate Members. The tour will be led by special advisors Trey Ellis, Professor Columbia University, screenwriter of *The Tuskegee Airmen*; Kristal Brent Zook, Professor Hofstra University, author of *Color by Fox: The Fox Network and the Revolution in Black Television*; Dr. Ray Doswell, Vice President Curatorial for the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum; and Ron Simon, Head of Curatorial The Paley Center for Media.

Spotlight on Black Women in Government and Politics on TV

Tens of millions watched on TV when Kamala Harris broke through as the first woman of color to become the United States Vice President, and her success sheds new light on the incredible legacy of Black women at all levels of American politics during the television age. This spotlight will celebrate the bold leadership and important contributions of many prominent and influential Black women who, like Vice President Kamala Harris, have blazed a trail. Whether as pioneering candidates, influential office holders, and government officials, or other highly visible roles, these women have impacted and inspired our nation.

From early Vice Presidential and Presidential candidates Charlotta Spears Bass, Charlene Mitchell, and Representative Shirley Chisholm to icons such as Former First Lady Michelle Obama, Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and Former UN Ambassador Susan Rice. The accomplishments of the current wave of Black women shaping American politics like Stacey Abrams, Former Representative Mia Love, Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, Representative Val Demings, and others are also celebrated.

In addition to elected officials, many of the Black women who have worked as key political strategists, such as Donna Brazile, who was the first Black woman to manage a major party presidential campaign, and Symone Sanders, who served as a senior advisor to the Biden/Harris 2020 Presidential campaign and is now Vice President Kamala Harris's chief spokesperson, are also included.

Education

In addition, the Paley Center's education department will provide at-home learning on subjects specific to media and Black achievements in television through zoom classes, weekly newsletters, and downloadable arts and crafts projects. An interactive trivia quiz will be offered to challenge TV lovers with questions about some of the most popular shows, most prominent stars, and most important moments in TV history.

The Paley Center is grateful to **Citi** and **Verizon**, and the following individuals and organizations for their ongoing support: Amazon, AMC Networks Entertainment Group, Apple, Inc., Banijay & Endemol Shine Holdings, Berlanti Productions, BET, CAA, CBS Entertainment Group, Deutsch LA, EPIX, Facebook, FOX Entertainment, Fremantle, FTI Consulting, Inc., FX Networks & FX Productions, GroupM North America, HBO/HBO Max, Kevin Reilly, Legendary Entertainment, Lionsgate Television Group, MACRO, MediaLink, MSGCI, NBCUniversal Television and Streaming, Netflix, Nielsen, OWN: The Oprah Winfrey Network, PwC, Showtime Networks & CBS, Sony Pictures Television, Spotify, The Lippin Group, The Walt Disney Company, Tyler Perry Studios, Verizon, ViacomCBS, Warner Bros. Television Group, WME, World Surf League, and YouTube.

The Black History Month celebration interactive experience is curated with the assistance and counsel of special advisors Trey Ellis, Professor Columbia University, screenwriter of *The Tuskegee Airmen* and Kristal Brent Zook, Professor Hofstra University, author of *Color by Fox: The Fox Network and the Revolution in Black Television*. The Paley Center also wishes to thank Bob Kendricks, President of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, for his support.

For more information, please visit paleycenter.org.

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About The Paley Center for Media

The Paley Center for Media, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with locations in New York and Los Angeles, leads the discussion about the cultural, creative, and social significance of television, radio, and emerging platforms. Drawing upon its curatorial expertise, an international collection, and close relationships with the leaders of the media community, the Paley Center examines the intersections between media and society. The general public can access the Paley Center's permanent media collection, which contains over 160,000 television and radio programs and advertisements, and participate in programs that explore and celebrate the creativity, the innovations, the personalities, and the leaders who are shaping media. Through the global programs of its Media Council and International Council, the Paley Center also serves as a neutral setting where media professionals can engage in discussion and debate about the evolving media landscape. Previously known as The Museum of Television & Radio, the Paley Center was founded in 1975 by William S. Paley, a pioneering innovator in the industry. For more information, please visit paleycenter.org.