



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

11th Annual BronzeLens Awards Show BronzeLens 2020: The Virtual Experience Wraps with Honoring Filmmakers and Talent in Competitive Categories

**Praize Sweeps three categories: Best of Festival,
Best Webisode and Best Actress
The Subject Wins Best Feature**

ATLANTA – August 20, 2020 – The 11th Annual BronzeLens Film Festival (BronzeLens 2020) which premiered as a virtual experience from August 11-16, wrapped a packed schedule of 76 film screenings, multiple talkbacks, and its new PowerHouse series with the highly anticipated 11th BronzeLens Awards Show. Winning filmmakers and actors received honors in the Festival's competitive categories including Features, Documentaries, International Films, Shorts, Student Films, Webisodes, Music Video and Best Actress and Best Actor.

Director Thomas Goggans' *Praize* received Best Webisode, Best Actor and Best of Festival. Goggans was also presented a cash prize of \$2500 by WarnerMedia SVP Enterprise Inclusion - Marketing and Communications James Anderson for winning Best Webisode. Screenwriter Chisa Hutchinson and Director Lanie Zipoy won Best Feature for *The Subject* and have been granted the opportunity to meet with UMC Chief Content Officer Brett Dismuke about distribution and future business. BronzeLens 2020 Best Short *Catching Up*, directed by Fowzi Abdelsamad is now eligible to enter the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Science's Short Subject competition for the concurrent season.

The ceremony opened with Spoken Word artist Tavares Stephens who delivered a riveting performance of his original poem titled "Atone". BronzeLens Founder and Executive Producer Kathleen Bertrand, performed "*Peace on Earth*" (words and lyrics by Rachelle Ferrell) accompanied by Professor of Music at Clark Atlanta University, Producer, Musician, and Film Composer Phill Davis; and the event climaxed with a moving In Memoriam tribute to film industry icons and civil rights leaders. Other presenters included BronzeLens Founding Artistic Director Deidre McDonald, BronzeLens Board Chair and National Director, Communications and Community Engagement AIDS Healthcare Foundation W. Imara Canady and Producer Valerie Benning-Thompson. To see the BronzeLens Awards Show in its entirety go to [@bronzelens](https://www.bronzelens.com).

"As we come to the close of the 11th year of the BronzeLens Film Festival, we can conclude it is one that will stand out in the annals of our history as we were faced with shifting our programming to a virtual experience," said BronzeLens Founder and Executive Director

Kathleen Bertrand. “Regardless of the pandemic, we never wavered in our commitment to celebrate diverse filmmakers from around the world and to provide them with a platform for bringing their stories to life. Congratulations to all of our 2020 BronzeLens winners.”

The complete list of BronzeLens Best of Festival Awards are as follows:

BEST OF FESTIVAL

Praize

Thomas Goggans, Director

AUDIENCE AWARD

No Ordinary Love

Chyna Robinson, Director

BEST SHORT

Catching Up

Fowzi Abdelsamad, Director

BEST MUSIC VIDEO

Hesar (Gate)

Nomadic Alternative & Farnaz Ohadi, Directors

BEST STUDENT FILM

Our Home Here

Angela Chen, Director

BEST WEBISODE

Praize

Thomas Goggans, Director

BEST DOCUMENTARY

Thumbs Up for Mother Universe: Stories from the Life of Lonnie Holley

George King, Director

BEST SHORT DOCUMENTARY

Quiet No More: The Struggle of Reverend Sharon Risher

Eléonore Hamelin, Director

BEST SOUTHERN SHORT DOCUMENTARY

Watching the Storm

Sheena D. Carter, Director

BEST INTERNATIONAL FEATURE

In Dark Places

Michael Bennett, Director

BEST FEATURE

The Subject

Lanie Zipoy, Director

BEST ACTOR

James Anthony

Crossroads (Rodney)

BEST ACTRESS

Kei Landa Rembert

Praize (Davida)

The first ever virtual BronzeLens Festival, provided completely free of charge on various online platforms, presented 76 official selections from 11 countries. The categories included shorts, features, documentaries, short documentaries, music videos, and webisodes from an international cadre of filmmakers representing the United States, Belgium, Israel, Canada, Jamaica, New Zealand, Pakistan, Poland, South Africa, and Switzerland.

New to this year’s schedule was the Festival’s dynamic panel series PowerHouse on BronzeLens Live which featured high-profile producers, actors and industry executives including blockbuster producer Will Packer, actor Omari Hardwick, writer/director Felecia Pride, writer/showrunner Karin Gist, Educator/Consultant Judiffier Pearson and ARRAY President Tilane Jones. Film and TV industry power couples Salli Richardson Whitfield and Dondré Whitefield; Angi Bones and Derrick Doose; Denise Burse Fernandez and Peter Fernandez discussed working together in the industry.

Members of The Reel Divas of Atlanta, a coalition of writers/directors/producers/showrunners based in Atlanta discussed producing in the pandemic. The PowerHouse panel included Producer Dianne Ashford, Digital Content Producer Lisa Cunningham, Producer/Showrunner Shante Paige, Writer/Producer Cas Siggers Beedles, Producer/Director/Writer Gieava Stinchcomb, Producer Tamra Simmons, Producer/Creator Ty Johnston and Producer Angi Bones.

BronzeLens’ signature events successfully returned to the Festival; Sunday Brunch with the Brothers presented a frank conversation about the film and television business and overcoming diversity moderated by Producer/Director, President and CEO of Bobbcat Films Roger M. Bobb with panelists Actors Darrin Henson, Carl Anthony Payne, Film and TV Director, President and Partner of Tri Destined Studios Trey Haley and UMC Chief Content Officer Brett Dismuke. In addition, BronzeLens’ distinct cornerstone event Cinema and Social Justice hosted by Arts Historian/Administrator Dr. R. Candy Tate which proved timelier than ever before.

Daily virtual mixers and nightly after-parties with guest DJs, DJ Tron, DJ Curly Sue, DJ Salah Ananse, DJ Kaos and DJ Ace Star were a hit addition to Festival event offerings.

About the BronzeLens Film Festival

BronzeLens Film Festival of Atlanta, Georgia, is a non-profit organization, founded in 2009, that is dedicated to bringing national and worldwide attention to Atlanta as a center for film and film production for people of color. Its mission is two-fold: to promote Atlanta as the new film mecca for people of color; and to showcase films and provide networking opportunities that will develop the next generation of filmmakers. Since its inception, BronzeLens producers have brought national and worldwide attention to Atlanta, helping to showcase the city as a leader in the thriving film industry.

In 2017 the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences approved BronzeLens as a qualifying festival for the Short Film Awards category. The short film that receives the BronzeLens Best Short Award is eligible to enter the Academy's Short Subject competition for the concurrent season.

2020 BronzeLens Sponsors

2020 BronzeLens Sponsors include Warner Media, Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau, City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs, ARRAY Alliance, DeKalb Entertainment Commission, and MHR International.

For more information regarding the BronzeLens Film Festival, please visit www.bronzelens.com. Photos available upon request.

Contacts:

Terri Vismale-Morris

Director of Public Relations BronzeLens Film Festival
404.346.0410 or tvorris@bronzelens.com

Tandi Reddick

BronzeLens Film Festival
404-786-5458 or tandibronzelens@gmail.com

Sommer Vega

BronzeLens Film Festival
678-463-5471 or sommerbronzelens@gmail.com

Chelsye J. Burrows

BronzeLens Film Festival
303-250-3668 or ChelsyeBbronzelens@gmail.com

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