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## Black Alphabet Film Festival

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### For Immediate Release

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## Black Alphabet Film Festival reigniting in exciting 2017 return

**(Chicago, IL – July 17, 2017)** – After a brief hiatus, Black Alphabet (BA) returns in August with its signature event, the Black Alphabet Film Festival (BAFF). In its fourth outing, the festival has been reenergized and will continue to showcase films and works highlighting and exploring Black Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) and Same Gender Loving (SGL) experience, along with its representative talents.

The festival runs for two days – Friday, August 18 and Saturday, August 19 – and will be presented at the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, 915 East 60<sup>th</sup> Street, on the University of Chicago campus in the historic Hyde Park neighborhood. BAFF returns to the Logan Center thanks in large part to the generous support of the Chicago Center for HIV Elimination (CCHE), a University of Chicago Medicine program which seeks to eliminate new HIV transmission events over the next 30 years.

One day (\$15) and two day (\$25) tickets are now available for purchase at: [www.blackalphabet.org](http://www.blackalphabet.org).

### The Films

The festival kicks off Friday, August 18th with the short film, “90 DAYS,” directed by Nathan Hale Williams and Jennia Fredrique Aponte. Audiences may remember Williams as both an actor and producer of the award-winning comedy, “The Ski Trip,” directed by fellow filmmaker, Maurice Jamal. Aponte is known best for her roles in “Noah’s Arc” and “The Skinny.”

90 DAYS is a riveting story of love, integrity and compassion, exploring a couple's relationship, and the life altering decision they must make after ninety days of dating. Fueled with gripping performances by an extraordinary cast of actors led by Teyonah Parris and Nic Few, 90 DAYS is a groundbreaking cinematic piece that confronts the human experience overcoming one of life's greatest perceived challenges. Teyonah Parris is known for her roles in “Survivor’s Remorse” on the STARZ network and the Spike Lee film, “Chi-Raq.” Many are familiar with Nic Few from the web series, “The Chadwick Journals.” The film is executive produced by Jussie Smollett, Nathan Hale Williams, Richard E. Pelzer II and Sol Aponte.

90 DAYS is sponsored and presented by Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH). CDPH will also host a post-film panel discussion, featuring Director and Executive Producer Nathan Hale Williams along with Actor, Nic Few.

Additional programming presented on August 19 along with a second showing of 90 DAYS include:

“CHECK IT”, directed and produced by Dana Flor and Toby Oppenheimer. Executive produced by Steve Buscemi, Stanley Tucci, Justin Wilkes, John Kamen and Dave O’Connor, CHECK IT explores the undying friendship between a group of bullied kids who formed an inner-city LGBTQ gang in Washington, DC in 2009. As vulnerable gay and transgender youth, they’ve been shot, stabbed and raped. Their unbreakable bond is tested every day as they fight to stand up for who they are in a community relentlessly trying to beat them down.

"It knocked me right over. It was an amazing emotional ride. It was funny and moving, I learned a lot and it gave me a lot to think about after." – Louis C.K.

"JEWEL'S CATCH ONE," written and directed by C. Fitz, documents the oldest Black owned disco in America and establishes the legacy of businesswoman, activist, and healer, Jewel Thais-Williams, who stood up against hate and discrimination for more than four decades. The story of Jewel and "The Catch" celebrates the music, fashion, celebrity and activism that helped change the course of our nation. Jewel

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helped changed laws, save lives and influence communities across Los Angeles, California as she opened and operated her legendary nightclub's door for some 42 years.

"KIKI" by Sara Jordenö and Twiggy Pucci Garçon. Through a strikingly intimate and visually daring lens, KIKI offers a riveting and complex insight into safe spaces created and governed by LGBTQ youth of color, who demand happiness and political power. An exciting coming of age story about agency and resilience through the art form of voguing, transformed into an artistic activist subculture, called the Kiki Scene.

Since the festival's inception, BAFF has featured more than 50 national films and shorts as well as one international film. With both growing interest and attendance, the festival has garnered support from numerous local and national organizations. Once again in 2017, Black Alphabet is excited to reignite the festival they have become known for in the city of Chicago. Windy City Times and boiMAGazine are media sponsors of the 2017 Black Alphabet Film Festival.

## **Other Ways to Be Involved**

BAFF always appreciates any help in the planning stages, so if you or anyone you know would like to volunteer, please sign up at: <http://blackalphabet.org/volunteer.html>. You can also help by spreading the word and telling your friends, families and film enthusiasts about the Black Alphabet Film Festival.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available. Download the sponsorship package at <http://blackalphabet.org/sponsors.html>.

For assistance, contact Black Alphabet Director of Communications, David Dodd, at 773.501.3290 or via email at [david.dodd@blackalphabet.org](mailto:david.dodd@blackalphabet.org).

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## **About Black Alphabet**

Established in 2013 and named for the many letters used to create LGBTQ/SGL inclusivity, Black Alphabet (BA) is a non-profit Chicago-based collective of individuals with a mission to empower the Black LGBTQ/SGL community by celebrating, promoting and nurturing untold stories often forgotten in the broader LGBTQ/SGL landscape.