

## Hip-Hop Rap Legend RZA LA Film Festival

Written by Robert ID1450  
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Director of Programming Rachel Rosen joined Festival Director Rich Raddon and Film Independent [FIND] Executive Director Dawn Hudson in announcing the full program line-up for the 2005 Los Angeles Film Festival (June 16-26), including the Centerpiece Premiere, the Guest Director, the Artist in Residence, and the Closing Night Film.

Musician, film composer, actor and hip-hop rap legend THE RZA will serve as Artist in Residence for this year's Festival. THE RZA is the chief producer and founding member of the legendary hip hop group the Wu-Tang Clan, which also spawned the solo careers of rap artists Method Man and the late O.D.B.

In addition to his success as a recording artist/producer, THE RZA is a BAFTA-nominated film composer whose credits include Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai, Kill Bill Vol. 1 and Vol. 2, Barbershop II, Blade: Trinity, and Unleashed. THE RZA starred in Coffee and Cigarettes opposite Bill Murray. He will also star in the upcoming film Derailed, opposite Jennifer Aniston and Clive Owen. As Artist in Residence, THE RZA has selected three films which will screen at the Festival and will also be headlining "ToonTime with THE RZA" at the Ford Amphitheater on Wednesday, June 22 at 8:30 pm. While some of the strangest, coolest cartoons screen behind him, THE RZA will layer together a live soundtrack.

The Festival also announced today that Don Cheadle, Lisa Kudrow, and Elijah Wood will serve as Honorary Festival Chairs for the 2005 Los Angeles Film Festival.

"As our organization begins a new chapter, I am proud to show our continued commitment to championing the cause of independent film and raising awareness for emerging artists," said Executive Director of Film Independent [FIND] Dawn Hudson. "With a diversity of backgrounds, voices, and experiences, this year's program slate reflects the wide spectrum of filmmakers we support."

"We are thrilled to be highlighting two films for our Centerpiece and Closing Night Screenings by two wonderful independent directors," said Director of Programming Rachel Rosen. "Both reveal their director's unique mix of humanism, perception, and wit, and each features an embarrassment of riches of ensemble acting talent."

"Sydney Pollack is a master filmmaker, and it is such a gift for our Festival filmmakers to have the opportunity to listen and learn from a director with such a wealth of creative experience," said Festival Director Richard Raddon.

"I'm looking forward to participating in a festival that not only showcases such a diverse line-up of films, but provides audiences with important tools of the trade," said Sydney Pollack. "This is a great opportunity to explore the creative depth of the Los Angeles film community."

Commenting on this year's program, FIND and the Los Angeles Film Festival's Director of Programming Rachel Rosen said, "The program this year offers a full spectrum of independent filmmaking from around the world. Los Angeles audiences will be able to choose from new films by established directors or discover fresh talent from innovative newcomers, many of whom will be attending the festival to present their films to Festival audiences."

Rodrigo Garcia's *Nine Lives* will screen as the Centerpiece Premiere on Tuesday, June 21 at 7:00 pm at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills. A reception will follow the screening. The Centerpiece Premiere screening and reception are sponsored by Target. By depicting nine different characters at emotional crossroads, *Nine Lives* examines how women so often find themselves captives of relationships, both past and present. The film stars Kathy Baker, Amy Brenneman, Elpidia Carrillo, Glenn Close, Stephen Dillane, Dakota Fanning, William Fichtner, Lisa Gay Hamilton, Holly Hunter, Jason Isaacs, Ian McShane, Joe Montegna, Molly Parker, Mary Kay Place, Sydney Tamiia Poitier, Aidan Quinn, Miguel Sandoval, Amanda Seyfried, Sissy Spacek, and Robin Wright Penn. Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu is the executive producer, and Julie Lynn is the producer.

Don Roos's (*The Opposite of Sex*, *Bounce*) *Happy Endings* will screen as the Closing Night Gala on Sunday, June 26 at 7:00 pm at Mann's National Theatre in Westwood. Featuring a talented ensemble cast that includes Tom Arnold, Jesse Bradford, Bobby Cannavale, Sarah Clarke, Steve Coogan, Laura Dern, Lisa Kudrow, Jason Ritter, David Sutcliffe, and Maggie Gyllenhaal, Lions Gate Films' *Happy Endings* deftly weaves together multiple stories to create a sharp, witty look at love, family, and the sheer unpredictability of life.

As Honorary Festival Chairs of the Festival, Elijah Wood will host the Opening Night festivities, Lisa Kudrow will host the Closing Night festivities, and Don Cheadle will be presenting the Target Filmmaker Award for best narrative feature at the Spirit of Independence Evening on Saturday, June 25.

Director Sydney Pollack will serve as Guest Director for the 2005 Los Angeles Film Festival. In this role, Pollack will host a two-day filmmaker retreat, program a sidebar of films that have inspired his work, and attend the Opening Night festivities.

Sydney Pollack's nineteen films have received 46 Academy Award nominations, including two for Best Picture. His film *Out of Africa* won seven Oscars, including Best Picture and Best Director. His body of work includes *The Slender Thread*, *This Property Is Condemned*, *The Scalphunters*, *Castle Keep*, *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?*, *Jeremiah Johnson*, *The Way We Were*, *The Yakuza*, *Three Days of the Condor*, *Bobby Deerfield*, *The Electric Horseman*, *Absence of Malice*, *Tootsie*, *Havana*, *The Firm*, *Sabrina*, *Random Hearts*, and most recently Universal Pictures' *The Interpreter*.

On Saturday, June 25, the Festival will celebrate Family Day at the Santa Monica Pier. The event is free to the public and kicks off at 11:00 am. Family Day is a fun-filled day of celebrity

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storytelling, a kiddie red carpet, arts and crafts galore, dance and yoga classes, karaoke, pony rides, a petting zoo, face painting, magicians, Los Angeles's hottest bands, and more to celebrate the city's creative and cultural diversity. Family Day will conclude with a special outdoor screening of the Academy Award-nominated film, *Babe*. The Festival is pleased to offer a screening of this family classic during its ten-year anniversary. Family Day is sponsored by Target, People, A Disney Playhouse, Häagen-Dazs Light, and The Santa Monica Pier.

As previously announced, the Festival will open with the North American premiere of David Jacobson's *Down In The Valley*; George Clooney will receive its inaugural Spirit of Independence Award; the Target Documentary and Filmmaker Awards are the largest cash prizes in North America with a \$50,000 cash prize each, which represents a \$25,000 increase in the Target Documentary Award over last year; and Elvis Mitchell is this year's Guest Curator.

Go to the LA Film Festival Site [HERE](#) for more information.