

HBO is celebrating Black History Month with the world premiere of the music, dance and energy-filled HBO Films LACKAWANNA BLUES (Feb. 12, 8:00 p.m. ET), the story of an extraordinary woman whose strength and dignity made her the backbone of the community and a source of inspiration for those who knew her.

LACKAWANNA BLUES is based on the critically acclaimed autobiographical

one-man show by Ruben Santiago-Hudson, who also wrote, executive produced and

stars in the film adaptation. Directed by the Tony(R)-winning director George

C. Wolfe and co-executive produced by Oscar(R)-winning actress Halle Berry,

Vincent Cirrincione and Shelby Stone, the film features a stellar ensemble

cast including S. Epatha Merkerson, Marcus Carl Franklin, hip-hop rap artist and activist Mos Def, Carmen Ejogo, Louis Gossett Jr., Macy Gray, Terrence Dashon Howard, Delroy Lindo, Rosie Perez, Liev Schreiber, Jimmy Smits and Jeffrey Wright.

'Lackawanna Blues' on HBO Feb 12th

Written by Robert ID726

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"HBO's 2005 Black History Month celebration pays homage to the ties that

bind the Black community, especially it's sense of family and music," said

Olivia Smashum, executive vice president, affiliate marketing at HBO. "The

film follows the HBO tradition of bringing stories that capture the heart and

vitality of the African-American culture."

In keeping with the spirit of the film, HBO is offering an exciting music-

fueled sweepstakes that gives consumers a chance to honor and celebrate Black

music at the Essence Music Festival 2005, July 1-3 in New Orleans, LA. The

grand prize will include roundtrip airfare for two, with accommodations for

four days and three nights, and \$250.00 spending money. Two first prize

winners will receive a "Lackawanna Blues" cast-signed Gibson guitar, courtesy

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of Gibson Guitar Corporation, and 50-second prize winners will receive a

"Lackawanna Blues" Soundtrack CD, courtesy of Vanguard Records. HBO is a

sponsor of the festival.

Consumers can enter the sweepstakes, which is only open to U.S. residents

21 years or older, between now and February 28, 2005, with a limit of one

entry per person/household. To enter, consumers should visit

<http://www.HBO.com> and click on the sweepstakes link and follow the onscreen

instructions. Winners will be selected in a random drawing on or about March

4, 2005 and will be notified by mail. No purchase is necessary, but other

restrictions may apply.

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HBO and ESSENCE Magazine are also partnering to offer a free one-year

magazine subscription to new HBO and ESSENCE subscribers. To be eligible, new

subscribers must order HBO online or through a local service provider by March

15, 2005. For more information consumers can visit <http://www.HBO.com/essence>

or call 1-800-797-7636.

Additionally, HBO Video will pay tribute to Black History Month with the

re-pricing and promotion of several historically significant titles from its

DVD catalog including Boycott (Jeffrey Wright), Tuskegee Airmen (Lawrence

Fishburne), The Josephine Baker Story (Lynn Whitfield), Introducing Dorothy

Dandridge (Halle Berry), Miss Evers' Boys (Alfre Woodard, Lawrence Fishburne)

and Soul of the Game (Delroy Lindo, Mykelti Williamson, Blair Underwood). HBO

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Video will also release America's Dream, for the first time on DVD, January

25. Starring Wesley Snipes and Danny Glover, the film adapts three short

stories from legendary authors Richard Wright, John Henrik Clarke and Maya

Angelou.

For more insight and background on HBO Films' LACKAWANNA BLUES, consumers

can visit <http://www.HBO.com> or read the February issue of ESSENCE magazine.