

Netflix Joins PitchBLACK Forum & Awards Honoring Yoruba Richen



Yoruba Richen

Black Public Media is having its sixth PitchBLACK Forum on April 25th and April 26th. The competition awards Black creatives up to \$150,000 for film and media projects. The winners will be announced on April 27th at the PitchBLACK Awards honoring documentary filmmaker Yoruba Richen. The event will happen at The Green Space in Manhattan and Baltimore comedian Sir Alex is the emcee. Netflix's Fund for Creative Equity is supporting the PitchBLACK Forum and Awards for 2022 and 2023. The new grant builds on previous support to Black Public Media in 2020.

"We are so happy to have Netflix continue its work with our organization through this partnership," said Leslie Fields-Cruz, executive director of BPM. "Just as Netflix helped change the way audiences find and consume their entertainment, we at BPM are confident that this partnership

will help us continue our work to help Black and independent storytellers and creative technologists forge new paths.”

BPM has awarded more than \$1.7 million to over 17 projects since its PitchBLACK forum launched in 2015. Some of the projects have premiered on PBS, WORLD Channel, Create and PBS Digital. Program Alumni have produced for PBS, CNN, Showtime, Netflix, BET, NBC, The CW and more. The PitchBLACK Forum is a funding competition for filmmakers and immersive media producers/directors developing new projects about the Black experience. The participants compete for awards up to \$150,000 in funding in front of a panel of media professionals and a virtual audience of funders, distributors and industry leaders.

The forum this year culminates BPM's 360 Incubator+ program, an intensive three-month fellowship under the mentorship of veteran producers offering participants an opportunity to develop a film, web series or engagement project. The event includes the PitchBLACK Film Forum on Tuesday, April 25; and the PitchBLACK Immersive Forum on Wednesday, April 26. Winners will be announced on the evening of Thursday, April 27 during the PitchBLACK Awards honoring Richen, whose works have chronicled the trials and triumphs of Black life with films about Harry Belafonte, Rosa Parks, Harry Belafonte, the killing of Breonna Taylor and more. Richen will join the ranks of other of BPM Trailblazer Award winners including Orlando Bagwell, Joe Brewster, Michèle Stephenson and Marco Williams.

BPM will also present the Nonso Christian Ugbode Fellowship to a yet-to-be-announced recipient. The fellowship is named after BPM's late director of digital initiatives.

The PitchBLACK Immersive Forum and PitchBLACK Awards will stream live on BPM's social media channels. The PitchBLACK Film Forum is invitation-only.

For more information on BPM, visit blackpublicmedia.org.

Follow the organization and watch the events at @blackpublicmedia on Instagram and Facebook and @BLKPublicMedia on Twitter.

Pitch BLACK

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