

# R.I.P. Ruby Dee

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Actress and activist Ruby Dee passed yesterday at the age of 91 from natural causes at her home in New Rochelle, New York. Dee started her career in film, television and Broadway in the '40's. She became famous for her appearances in *The Jackie Robinson Story* and *A Raisin In The Sun*. Her acting career continued to grow and she commanded roles in a variety of productions and reached new generations in two Spike Lee films and *American Gangster* of which she earned an Oscar nomination. Ruby Dee and her husband Ossie Davis sometimes worked together and were very active in the Civil Right Movement. They participated in Dr. King's March On Washington and Ossie eulogized Malcolm X. She amassed a variety of honors including a Grammy, Emmy, Obie and in 2004 she and Davis received Kennedy Center Honors. Ossie Davis preceded her in death passing in 2005 and she continued to work most recently appearing in the Lifetime film, *Betty and Coretta. Life's Essentials with Ruby Dee*, a film about Ruby and Ossie's life together, directed by their grandson Muta Ali will premiere at the American Black Film Festival on Sunday June 22nd.

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**SUN., JUN. 22: World Premiere  
of Documentary on Icons Ruby  
Dee and Ossie Davis by their**

# Grandson



NEW YORK (June 10, 2014)â€”*Lifeâ€™s Essentials with Ruby Dee*, the documentary about the iconic Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee by their grandson Mutaâ€™Ali, will have its world premiere at Film Lifeâ€™s 18th Annual American Black Film Festival on Sunday, June 22 in New York City. The filmâ€”part tribute, part history lesson and part coming-of-age storyâ€”give viewers an intimate look into the remarkable lives of the couple many consider the all-time king and queen of Black Hollywood.

Stunned by the death of his grandfather, Mutaâ€™Ali moves to New York to be able to spend more time with his grandmother and to get answers to some of his burning questions. The film, produced by Jevon â€œNJâ€ Frank, follows Mutaâ€™Ali as he delves into chapters of their lives that span the 20th and 21st centuries, posing probing questions to his grandmother as well as to celebrity friends, costars and fellow activists of the star couple in his search for his own lifeâ€™s path. Alan Alda, Angela Bassett, Harry Belafonte, Danny Glover, Hill Harper, Samuel Jackson, Spike Lee, Sonia Sanchez and Dr. Cornel West are among the notables who offer insights into and memories of the coupleâ€™s love, art and activism. Davis weighs in, too, speaking to his grandson through never-before-seen footage and memorabilia from the Davis-Dee family archives. Along the way, Mutaâ€™Ali lays bare the rich history of Davis and Dee, who played pivotal roles in the civil rights struggle through their social activism, while maintaining illustrious careers in the arts and a full family life.

â€œTo admire and speak highly of my grandparents is easy, but to apply their principles in my own life has proven less so. There is self-discovery in the vast space between what I look up toâ€”their 56 year marriage, their socially conscious

career choices, and their bravery in the struggle”and what I may be willing to practice,” said Muta™Ali. *Life’s Essentials with Ruby Dee* will be screened on Sunday, June 22 at 1:50 pm at the School of Visual Arts (SVA) Theatre, 333 West 23 Street, between 8th and 9th Avenues in Manhattan. (Take the A, C, E or 1 to 23rd Street.) Tickets are \$12.00 and can be purchased by visiting [www.abff.com](http://www.abff.com). For more information on the film, visit <http://rubydee.lifesessentialsdocs.com/>.