

Viola Davis: ‘Beatiful Creatures’

Viola Davis is a critically acclaimed actress who garnered her first Academy Award nomination for Best Supporting Actress for her stellar work in “Doubt,” co-starring Meryl Streep, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Amy Adams. She received her second Oscar nomination, this time in the category of Best Actress in a Leading Role, for her portrayal of Aibileen, in “The Help,” based on Kathryn Stockett’s best-selling novel. Davis also received a Screen Actor’s Guild Award and an NAACP Image Award for that powerful performance. Next fall, Viola will be seen in the sci-fi action adventure “Ender’s Game” opposite Harrison Ford, as well as in the drama “The Disappearance of Eleanor Rigby,” alongside Jessica Chastain, James McAvoy and William Hurt. And she is currently in production on “Prisoners,” starring Hugh Jackman and Jake Gyllenhaal. Her other feature film credits include “Won’t Back Down,” for which she just won another NAACP Image Award, “Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close,” with Tom

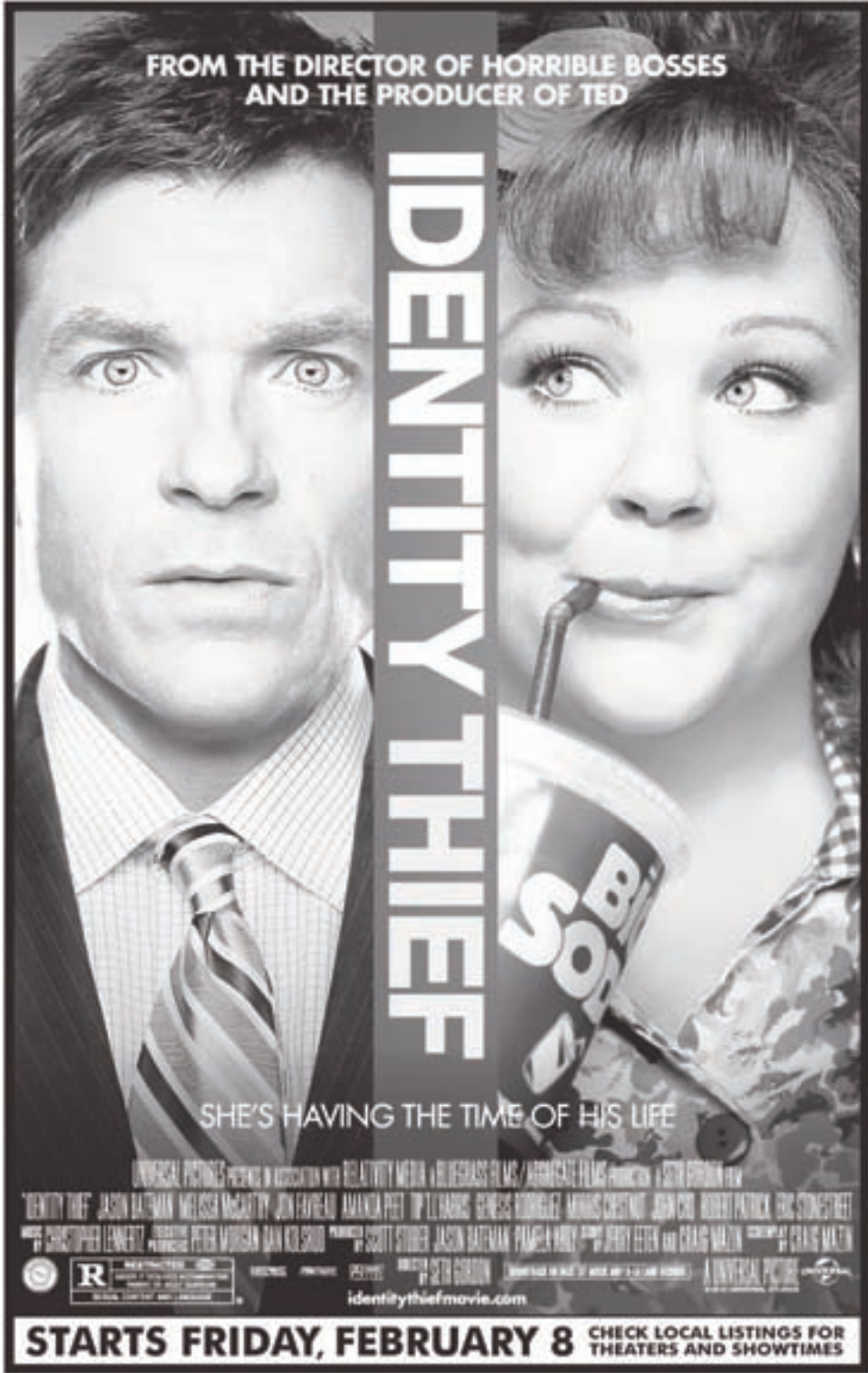


KAM’S CAPSULES
Celebrity Interview

Hanks and Sandra Bullock; “It’s Kind of a Funny Story,” with Emma Roberts, Lauren Graham and Zach Galifianakis; “Eat Pray Love,” starring Julia Roberts; “Knight and Day,” with Tom Cruise and Cameron Diaz; “Law Abiding Citizen,” with Jamie Foxx and Gerard Butler; “Nights in Rodanthe,” based on the Nicholas Sparks novel and starring Diane Lane and Richard Gere; “Madea Goes to Jail”; “State of Play”; “Disturbia”; “The Architect”; “Get Rich or Die Tryin’,” opposite 50 Cent; “Syriana,” starring George Clooney; “Far from Heaven,” with Dennis Quaid and Julianne Moore; and the Steven Soderbergh-directed films “Solaris,” “Traffic” and “Out of



Sight.” On the small screen, Viola was most recently seen in a six-episode arc on Showtime’s hit series “United States of Tara.” Her extensive television credits include roles on “Law & Order: SVU”; “Jesse Stone”; “Life is Not a Fairytale: The Fantasia Barrino Story”; “Traveler”; “Century City”; “Lefty”; “City of Angels”; Oprah Winfrey’s “Amy and Isabelle”; and Hallmark Hall of Fame’s “Grace and Glorie.” A veteran of the stage, in 2010 Viola returned to Broadway in the highly anticipated revival of



Film Fest Shows ‘Africans Through African Eyes’

Bruce Poinsette
Of The Skanner News

The 23rd Annual Cascade Festival of African Films aims to show Portlanders “Africans through African eyes.” “We love the fact that our films don’t just expand on what you see on the news,” says CFAF coordinator Tara Foster. “There are wonderful things happening in these communities. There are heartbreaking things happening. They are complex societies just like ours and for us to just see one side of what’s happening means we’re cheating ourselves of an understanding of other countries.”

In addition to the feature films, the festival will also feature activities such as a family film day, a student fest and talks with directors and/or other stakeholders. All events are free and open to the public and the films will be available at the PCC Cascade Campus library to anyone with a Multnomah County library card.

The festival is dedicated to the memory of Harold Williams, a member of the PCC board of directors and a long-time community leader.

Foster says the festival is both film and education. According to her, the idea is to provide audiences a closer version to the truth.

For example, she says there is a nice connection between the festival’s opening night film “Toussaint Louverture” and the recent success of “Django Unchained.” While Quentin Tarantino’s “Django” is a spaghetti western, revenge narrative about slavery, “Toussaint Louverture” tells the story of the Haitian revolutionary who led the most successful slave revolt in history. Foster says the attention around “Django” can help make the story of Louverture more accessible to those that aren’t familiar.

“A lot of people don’t understand the significance of the rebel he was,” says Foster. “So we have these two book-ends. One fictionalized, Blaxploitation, cowboy film, ‘Django,’ and then we have this really important, historical film.”

A unique feature of the festival is that it will feature talks after every film. Directors Phillipe Niang, Penda Diakite and Eliaichi Kimaro will lead discussions, in addition to other stakeholders, such as professors, economists and others who live in the countries in the films.

“The films are free but our after film speakers are priceless,” says Foster. “You don’t get to go to a film at a regular theater very often and have someone there that specializes in that field, talking about the content of the film.”

“It gives this important perspective that I couldn’t give.” These perspectives play a huge part in the selection of the films.

During marathon screening sessions in the summer, Foster says there are times where she might think a film is great but then a stakeholder could make her aware that it exploits a certain segment of society. This helps her and others maintain a sense of nuance and complexity, concerning the films.

In addition, she says organizers do extensive traveling and speak to filmmakers wherever they go.

Kam Williams: Hi Viola, thanks for another opportunity to interview you.
Viola Davis: Absolutely!

KW: Congratulations on winning another NAACP Image Award. I loved your performance in Won’t Back Down.
VD: Thank you very much, Kam.

KW: Do you think the movie suffered from political blowback, the way that Zero Dark Thirty has been hurt at the box office

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