

John Singleton, Maker of ‘Boyz N the Hood,’ Dies at 51

Singleton, the first Black director to receive an Academy Award nomination and the youngest director in Oscar history, sought to tell stories from ‘an authentic Black perspective’

By Jake Coyle and Hillel Italie
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Director John Singleton, who made one of Hollywood’s most memorable debuts with the Oscar-nominated “Boyz N the Hood” and continued over the following decades to probe the lives of black communities in his native Los Angeles and beyond, has died. He was 51.

Singleton’s family said Monday that he died after being taken off life support, about two weeks after the director suffered a major stroke.

Singleton was in his early 20s, just out of the University of Southern California’s School of Cinematic Arts, when he wrote, directed and produced “Boyz N the Hood.” Based on Singleton’s upbringing and shot in his old neighborhood, the low-budget production

starred Cuba Gooding Jr. and Ice Cube and centered on three friends in South Central Los Angeles, where college aspirations competed with the pressures of gang life. “Boyz N the Hood” was a critical and commercial hit, given a 20-minute standing ovation at the Cannes Film Festival and praised as a groundbreaking extension of rap to the big screen, a realistic and compassionate take on race, class, peer pressure and family. Singleton would later call it a “rap album on film.”

For many, the 1991 release captured the explosive mood in Los Angeles in the months following the videotaped police beating of Rodney King. “Boyz N the Hood” also came out at a time when, thanks to the efforts to Spike Lee and others, black films were starting to get made by Hol-

lywood after a long absence. Singleton became the first black director to receive an Academy Award nomination, an honor he would say was compensation for the academy’s snubbing Lee and “Do the Right Thing” two years earlier, and was nominated for best screenplay. (“The Silence of the Lambs” won in both categories). At 24, he was also the youngest director nominee in Oscar history.

“I think I was living this film before I ever thought about making it,” Singleton told Vice in 2016. “As I started to think about what I wanted to do with my life, and cinema became an option, it was just natural that this was probably gonna be my first film. In fact, when I applied to USC Film School they had a thing that asked you to write three ideas for films. And one of them was called

Summer of ‘84, which was about growing up in South Central LA.”

In 2002, “Boyz N the Hood” was added to the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress, which called it “an innovative look at life and the tough choices present for kids growing up in South Central Los Angeles.”

None of Singleton’s subsequent movies received the acclaim of “Boyz N the Hood” and he was criticized at times for turning characters into mouthpieces for political and social messages. But he attracted talent ranging from Tupac Shakur to Don Cheadle and explored themes of creative expression (“Poetic Justice”), identity (“Higher Learning”) and the country’s racist past, notably in “Rosewood,” based on a murderous white rampage against a black community in Florida in 1923. He also made



In this Aug. 26, 2003 file photo, director John Singleton touches his new star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in Los Angeles. Oscar-nominated filmmaker John Singleton died April 29 after suffering a stroke almost two weeks ago, according to his family. He was 51 years old.

the coming-of-age story “Baby Boy,” a remake of the action film “Shaft” and an installment in the “Fast and Furious” franchise, “2 Fast 2 Furious.” More recent projects included the FX crime drama “Snowfall,” which he helped create. Starring Damson Idris, “Snowfall” returned Singleton to the Los Angeles of his

See SINGLETON on page 11

Review cont'd from pg 6

in Vlad (Zlatko Buric), a fan who has seen her perform in a local bar on open mic nights.

Turns out Vlad, a former opera singer, is eager not only to train Violet’s voice, but to serve as her guardian. And over

the ensuing weeks, we watch as a diamond in the rough blossoms into a world-class talent.

Thus unfolds “Teen Spirit,” a coming-of-age tale directed by Max Minghella. The uplifting, overcoming-the-odds adventure borrows elements from many a classic of the genre, ranging from “Cinderella” to “Ka-

rate Kid.” It even goes so far as to include the theme from “Flashdance” on the soundtrack.

Shamelessly derivative, but still manages to tug on your heartstrings!

Very Good ★★★

Rated PG-13 for suggestive content, and for underage smoking and drinking

SWEET TASTE OF THE ARTS:
A NIGHT IN HARLEM
A FUNDRAISER FOR PASSINART THEATRE COMPANY

PRE-MOTHER’S DAY EVENT!
Sweet Taste of the Arts Gala “A Night in Harlem”

Treat that special someone to an evening of elegance. Dress to impress! Get your suit or tux and bowtie; grab your hat and silk scarf – because we are meeting you in Harlem on May 11th! Ladies, sequins, feathers, furs are chic and stylish attire, too. It’s The Savoy, and everybody’s welcome to come and experience an unforgettable evening with PassinArt: A Theater Company as they celebrate artists for their contributions to cultural arts in Oregon. Enjoy cocktails, dinner, a live auction and dancing to the music of Bridge City Soul.

Saturday May 11, 2019 – 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. Reception 6:00 pm Dinner 7:00 pm
Red Lion on the River, Jantzen Beach, 909 North Hayden Island Drive, Portland
Tickets on sale at PassinArt.org

Affordable Condos
Family-size
5020 N Interstate

Homeownership opportunity for current and former residents of N/NE Portland.

Affordable family-size condos will be available for purchase to qualifying N/NE Preference Policy applicants. Preference given to current and former residents of N/NE Portland. Apply for preference April 22-May 3, 2019.

INCOME & CREDIT GUIDELINES APPLY
Find out how to apply for N/NE housing preference at www.portlandoregon.gov/PHB/preference or call 503-823-2375

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD, YOUR VOICE

NORTH/NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING STRATEGY

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON PRESENTS:

The 27th Annual
Good in the Hood
Multicultural Festival

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, JUNE 21-23
King School Park, NE 6th Ave & NE Humboldt St, Portland

LIVE MUSIC!

Jazz • Blues • R&B • Latin • Pop Conscious Hip/Hop • NEO-Soul • DJ intermission

Food • Market Place • Informational Village • Kids Space • Parade

Legacy Emanuel Medical Center’s **“Trauma Nurses Talk Tough”** \$6 discounted bicycle helmet sale and free health screenings, **Saturday, June 22, 12-4pm**

New! Movie in the Park, Friday night June 21 featuring the movie “Black Panther”

Hours: Kick-off Party, music by DJ Pryce, hosted by MC Seezinin, **Friday June 21 King School Park 6-10pm. Parade (NE MLK), Saturday June 22, 11am. Festival** continues, **Saturday and Sunday June 22-23, 11am to 10pm.**

Interested in becoming a Food Vendor, selling merchandise at the Market Place, having an information booth in our Information Village, participating in the Parade, becoming a Kids Space sponsor or volunteering at this year’s festival? Contact **GITH Hotline at 971-302-6380**, or visit www.goodinthehood.org