

THE MARSH BERKELEY
ADDS ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCE
AND POST-SHOW TALKBACKS FOR
LIVING THE SHUFFLE

Written, Performed, Directed and Co-Produced by Robert Townsend
Co-Produced by Don Reed
Now through March 1, 2020

BERKELEY, CA (12 February 2020) – Celebrating Black History Month, Black film pioneer **Robert Townsend** will add one additional performance for the closing run of his solo show *Living the Shuffle* on Sunday, March 1 and three special post-show discussions at **The Marsh Berkeley**. Renowned actor/director Robert Townsend has worked with Hollywood icons like Beyoncé, Denzel Washington, Eddie Murphy, Morgan Freeman, James Earl Jones, and many more. Now, the trailblazing filmmaker takes audiences on a one-man rollercoaster-ride through the ups and downs of show business, from the dangerous streets of Chicago to performing *Julius Caesar* at a pimp convention in New York City, then creating the breakout film that would launch his career, *Hollywood Shuffle*, and becoming one of the "Godfathers of the Independent Film World." Written, performed, and directed by Robert Townsend, and co-produced by Marsh favorite Don Reed and Townsend, *Living the Shuffle* must close on **March 1, 2020** with performances 8:00pm Fridays, 8:30pm Saturdays, and 5:30pm Sundays at **The Marsh Berkeley** 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley. Special post-show discussions will follow Sunday performances on February 16, February 23, and March 1. For tickets (Regular \$37.50, Reserved VIP Seating \$50 and \$100, Post-show event only \$15), the public may visit www.themarsh.org or call The Marsh box office at **415-282-3055** (open Monday through Friday, 1-4pm).

Critics and audiences alike have been praising **Robert Townsend** and *Living the Shuffle*. *The San Francisco Chronicle* said, "*Living the Shuffle* transcends," lauding it as "a raw and madcap comedy" and imploring audiences to "come for the gossip, stay for Townsend's imagination." *BroadwayWorld* hailed it as "fascinating and inspirational, 90 minutes of captivating tales,"

exclaiming they "wouldn't be the least bit surprised to see it eventually land on Broadway for a lengthy run." *Berkeleyside* adds, "There may only be one actor onstage, but Townsend contains multitudes."

Following Sunday performances on February 16, 23, and March 1, Townsend will host an exclusive discussion about his body of work and how he creates as an artist, sharing Hollywood secrets with the audience. Attendees will have the chance to ask Townsend questions. Commemorative items will also be available for purchase. Admission to these special post-show events is free with a valid ticket to that day's performance, or \$15 general admission to the event only.

Robert Townsend is an actor, director, writer, and filmmaker with over 30 years in show business. Noticing the difficulty Black actors had finding jobs and the lack of good work available in the film industry led Townsend to create opportunities for himself and fellow artists. He co-wrote, directed, produced and starred in his first film, financed by his personal credit cards and a miracle—the critically acclaimed *Hollywood Shuffle*, a satire depicting the trials and tribulations of Black actors in Hollywood.

Nominated for 30 NAACP Image Awards, Townsend's prolific television work has been seen on Disney, Fox, NBC, MGM, HBO, WB and MTV. His credits include creating, executive producing, and starring in "The Parent 'Hood" (The WB); creating the variety series "Townsend Television" (Fox TV); and directing "Carmen: A Hip Hopera" starring Beyoncé (MTV films), "Livin' for Love: The Natalie Cole Story" (NBC), and "10,000 Black Men Named George" (Showtime). Townsend's myriad film projects include co-writing and directing *The Five Heartbeats*; writing, directing, and starring in *The Meteor Man*, the first African American superhero movie; and directing Halle Berry in *B*A*P*S*, Eddie Murphy in *Eddie Murphy Raw*, and *Why We Laugh: Comedians on Black Comedy*, a documentary on the history of Black comedians including interviews with Chris Rock, which was an official selection at the Sundance Film Festival. As an actor, he has starred opposite Denzel Washington in *A Soldier's Story*, and appeared with Diane Lane in *Streets of Fire*, Kevin Costner in *American Flyers* and Angela Bassett in *Of Boys and Men*. Recently, he directed *American Soul*, the story of "Soul Train"

founder Don Cornelius (BET); directed the 2019 NAACP Image Award-nominated film *Making The Five Heartbeats*, a documentary about his cult-favorite film *The Five Heartbeats*; and directed and appeared in “Black Lightning,” the Netflix/ CW TV series based on the DC Comics character of the same name.

Co-producer **Don Reed** recently appeared onstage at The Marsh in *That Don Reed Show* and *East 14th*. He is a 2018 nominee for the Theatre Bay Area (TBA) Outstanding Solo Production, as well as the 2016 TBA Winner and the 2017 TBA nominee for the same award. He is also a San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle nominee and NAACP triple nominee for Best Actor and Best Playwright. Don is presently co-starring in the Amazon Prime series “Bartlett,” where Reed plays the boss in a struggling ad agency. The series was co-financed and recurring role stars Lin-Manuel Miranda (*Hamilton* creator and star). Reed can be seen in the movie *Unleashed* starring Kate Micucci (*The LEGO Batman Movie*), Justin Chatwin (“Doctor Who”), and Steve Howey (“Shameless”), now on Netflix. Reed has performed, written, produced, and directed for film, television, and theater (including an Off-Broadway run of *East 14th*). A memorable performance on “Robert Townsend and His Partners in Crime” (HBO) years ago caught the attention of some Hollywood guns and led to many recurring and guest starring roles. Additionally, he wrote, directed, produced, and starred in short films for HBO's Def Jam: *Lucky: The Irish Pimp* and *Pookie Watson: Hood Detective*. Reed has also created and starred in content for Oprah Winfrey’s OWN. On the stand-up side, Don was the opening act/warm-up comedian for “The Tonight Show with Jay Leno” for more than 1,000 episodes. Voice-over production and work has been instrumental in his career. His voice has been heard on “Spiderman,” “Johnny Quest,” The Wayans Bros, “The Voice,” “Law & Order,” and as the voice of the cat on “2 Broke Girls.” He has created promos for “Chappelle's Show,” The Golden Globes, The Academy Awards, MLB, Tyler Perry Films, and the Olympics. Not long ago, Reed shared an excerpt story from *East 14th* – “I Miss Toni” on NPR/WYNC’s “Snap Judgment” so compelling that it was woven into the graduate writing curriculum at American University in D.C.. Charitable work includes Elevate Oakland, a nonprofit focused on keeping arts and music in Oakland Public Schools; and Mercy House, giving the homeless self-esteem by giving them a home.

The Marsh is known as “a breeding ground for new performance.” It was launched in 1989 by Founder and Artistic Director Stephanie Weisman, and now annually hosts more than 600 performances of 175 shows across the company’s two venues in San Francisco and Berkeley. A leading outlet for solo performers, The Marsh’s specialty has been hailed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as “solo performances that celebrate the power of storytelling at its simplest and purest.” The *East Bay Times* named The Marsh one of Bay Area’s best intimate theaters, calling it “one of the most thriving solo theaters in the nation. The live theatrical energy is simply irresistible.”

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: Celebrating Black History Month, Black film pioneer **Robert Townsend** will add one additional performance for the closing run of his solo show *Living the Shuffle* on Sunday, March 1 and three special post-show discussions at **The Marsh Berkeley**. Renowned actor/director Robert Townsend has worked with Hollywood icons like Beyoncé, Denzel Washington, Eddie Murphy, Morgan Freeman, James Earl Jones, and many more. Now, the trailblazing filmmaker takes audiences on a one-man rollercoaster-ride through the ups and downs of show business, from the dangerous streets of Chicago to performing *Julius Caesar* at a pimp convention in New York City, then creating the breakout film that would launch his career, *Hollywood Shuffle*, and becoming one of the "Godfathers of the Independent Film World." Critics and audiences alike have been praising Townsend and this new solo show. *The San Francisco Chronicle* called it “a raw and madcap comedy,” imploring audiences to “come for the gossip, stay for Townsend’s imagination.”

WHEN: Now through March 1, 2020

SHOWS: 8pm Fridays
8:30pm Saturdays
5:30pm Sundays
Special post-show discussions following performances on Sundays February 16, February 23, and March 1

WHERE: **The Marsh Berkeley**, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley
*Parking: Allston Way Garage, 2061 Allston Way between Milvia & Shattuck
The Downtown Berkeley BART station is one block away on Shattuck*

TICKETS: Regular \$37.50; Reserved VIP seating \$50 and \$100
Admission to special post-show discussions is free with valid ticket to Sunday performance; \$15 General Admission to discussion only.

THE MARSH BERKELEY ADDS ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCE AND POST-SHOW DISCUSSION FOR "LIVING THE SHUFFLE"
5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5

INFO: For information or to order tickets visit **themarsh.org** or call **(415) 282-3055**
(Monday through Friday, 1pm-4pm).

-30-

PRESS: Contact Lauren Goldfarb, Carla Befera & Co.
650.327.1200 | lauren@cb-pr.com

PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here:
<http://cbpr.co/press/livingtheshuffle>