



**ANNAPURNA, THE 56TH ANNUAL NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL AND APOLLO THEATER
TO CELEBRATE BALDWIN AND BEALE STREET IN HARLEM**

US PREMIERE OF JENKINS' *IF BEALE STREET COULD TALK* TO UNSPOOL AT THE HISTORIC THEATER, A FIRST FOR THE NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL

"Know whence you came. If you know whence you came, there is really no limit to where you can go." – James Baldwin

Thursday, August 23, 2018 (NEW YORK, NY) – Barry Jenkins' feature film adaptation of James Baldwin's 1974 novel *"If Beale Street Could Talk"* will have its US premiere at Harlem's Apollo Theater as part of the 56th New York Film Festival, presented by the Film Society of Lincoln Center. This marks the first time that the festival will present a screening at the historic theater.

Based on the novel by James Baldwin, *If Beale Street Could Talk* is the story of Tish, a newly engaged Harlem woman who races against the clock to prove her lover's innocence while carrying their first-born child to term. It is a celebration of love told through the story of a young couple, their families and their lives, trying to bring about justice through love, for love and the promise of the American dream.

On Tuesday, October 9th, writer-director Barry Jenkins will join his cast including KiKi Layne, Stephan James, Regina King, Colman Domingo and others at Harlem's landmark Apollo Theater.

"It's been an honor working with the estate to bring this piece of James Baldwin's legacy to the screen," said writer/director Barry Jenkins. "From the birthplace of Baldwin to the streets and homes within which we made this film, the honor is doubly felt in the NYFF's generous offer to widen its borders for our US premiere: up on 125th Street, in the community Jimmy forever knew as HOME."

Author James Baldwin was born at Harlem Hospital on August 2, 1924. He spent much time throughout his childhood at local libraries in the neighborhood, and at the young age of 13, wrote his first article "Harlem - Then and Now" which was published in his junior high school's magazine.

NYFF Director and Selection Committee Chair Kent Jones said, "We've always wanted to bring the New York Film Festival to more of our city, and I can't imagine a better place to begin, or a better movie to begin with. Barry's adaptation of *If Beale Street Could Talk* is a brave and passionate film that looks unflinchingly at systematic racism in America. And it is 100% Harlem-based—shot in Harlem and based on a novel by a great American writer who was Harlem-born...so how could we possibly present it anywhere but the Apollo?"

“*If Beale Street Could Talk* is a timeless work of Black Love set in Harlem,” said Kamilah Forbes, Apollo Theater’s Executive Producer. “The Apollo Theater is thrilled to partner with the Film Society of Lincoln Center and Annapurna to premiere this important work in the community in which it was filmed.”

If Beale Street Could Talk was shot almost entirely in New York City in the fall of 2017 with production taking place in various Harlem locations. In celebration of the vibrant community and their gracious hospitality and support of the film, Annapurna and the Film Society will be working with the Apollo Theater's community and education outreach programs. Local high school students as well as Harlem residents will be invited to join the festivities and be among the first audiences to see this Harlem love story unfold on the big screen, in the neighborhood that is home to its characters.

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ABOUT ANNAPURNA

Annapurna, founded by Megan Ellison in 2011, focuses on creating sophisticated, high-quality content that is critically and commercially conscious while still appealing to a diverse audience. By upholding the company’s vision to put filmmakers and artists first and preserve their authentic creative voices no matter the genre or medium, the company has garnered a total of 38 Academy Award nominations, including four Best Picture nods for *American Hustle*, *Her*, *Zero Dark Thirty*, and *Phantom Thread*. Annapurna’s upcoming releases include, Jacques Audiard’s

The Sisters Brothers, Barry Jenkin's film adaptation of James Baldwin's *If Beale Street Could Talk* and Adam McKay's *Untitled Dick Cheney Project*.

FILM SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER

The Film Society of Lincoln Center is devoted to supporting the art and elevating the craft of cinema. The only branch of the world-renowned arts complex Lincoln Center to shine a light on the everlasting yet evolving importance of the moving image, this nonprofit organization was founded in 1969 to celebrate American and international film. Via year-round programming and discussions; its annual New York Film Festival; and its publications, including *Film Comment*, the U.S.'s premier magazine about films and film culture, the Film Society endeavors to make the discussion and appreciation of cinema accessible to a broader audience, as well as to ensure that it will remain an essential art form for years to come.

THE APOLLO THEATER

The legendary Apollo Theater—the soul of American culture—plays a vital role in cultivating emerging talents and launching legends. Since its founding, the Apollo has served as a center of innovation, and a creative catalyst for Harlem, the city of New York, and the world. With music at its core, the Apollo's programming extends to dance, theater, performance art, spoken word initiatives, and more. Recent highlights have included *James Brown: Get on the Good Foot*, which will begin an international tour in 2015, the Africa Now! Festival, and Apollo Club Harlem. The Apollo is a presenting organization that also produces festivals, large-scale dance and music work. The Apollo's vision is global and includes touring and a digital media presence. The Apollo's work is organized around a set of core initiatives: Apollo Music (African American and culturally diverse artists); Signature programs (Amateur Night, Salon Series and the Apollo Music Café); Legacy Series (work that celebrates and extends our legacy in a more contemporary way); Global Festival (international and U.S. based artists presentations focused under a specific theme); Special Projects (multidisciplinary work with partner organizations). Since introducing the first Amateur Night contests in 1934, the Apollo Theater has served as a testing ground for new artists working across a variety of art forms, and has ushered in the emergence of many new musical genres – including jazz, swing, bebop, R&B, gospel, blues, soul, and hip-hop. Among the countless legendary performers who launched their careers at the Apollo are Lauryn Hill, Machine Gun Kelly, Unlocking the Truth, Miri Ben Ari, D'Angelo, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, James Brown, Michael Jackson, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, and Stevie Wonder; and the Apollo's forward-looking artistic vision continues to build on this legacy. The Apollo Theater is a not-for-profit organization and currently in the midst of fundraising for its 21st Century Apollo Campaign, created to extend the institution's role in fostering artistic innovation and in building appreciation of American culture around the world. For more information, visit www.apollotheater.org.