Mahershala Ali to Receive Breakthrough Performance Award at 28th Annual PSIFF Film Awards Gala

Description

Palm Springs, CA (December 16, 2016) â?? The 28th annual **Palm Springs International Film Festival** (PSIFF) will present **Mahershala Ali** with the **Breakthrough Performance Award** for his role in *Moonlight* at its annual Film Awards Gala. The Film Awards Gala, hosted by Mary Hart, will be held Mond ter. The Festival runs January 2-16, 2017.

â??Mahershala Ali is one of the most in-demand actors in film and television,â?• said Festival Chairman Harold Matzner. â??Ali gives one of the best supporting performances of the year in *Moonlight* as Juan, a Miami drug dealer who opens his doors to Little when he sees the boy being chased through the streets by a gang. For this role that has already received several awards and is sure to receive many more, it is our honor to present the Breakthrough Performance Award to Mahershala Ali.â?•

Past recipients of the Breakthrough Performance Award include Marion Cotillard, Jennifer Hudson, Felicity Huffman, Brie Larson, Lupita Nyongâ??o, David Oyelowo, Rosamund Pike and Jeremy Renner. In the years they were honored, Cotillard, Hudson, Larson and Nyongâ??o went on to receive Academy AwardsÂ®, while Huffman, Pike and Renner received nominations.

A timeless story of human connection and self-discovery, *Moonlight* chronicles the life of a young black man from childhood to adulthood as he struggles to find his place in the world while growing up in a rough neighborhood of Miami. At once a vital portrait of contemporary African American life and an intensely personal and poetic meditation on identity, family, friendship, and love, *Moonlight* is a groundbreaking piece of cinema that reverberates with deep compassion and universal truths. In additional to Ali, the film also stars Naomie Harris, Janelle MonÃ¡e, Alex Hibbert, Ashton Sanders, Trevante Rhodes and AndrÃ© Holland.

For his role in *Moonlight*, Mahershala Ali received a Golden Globe Award nomination, two Screen Actors Guild nominations and an NAACP Image Award nomination. Ali won two Broadcast Criticsâ?? Choice Awards, and numerous Critics Circle awards including Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, Boston, etc. Ali was also honored with the Spotlight Award at the Savannah Film Festival and will receive the Virtuosos Award at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival. In addition, the cast will be honored with the Robert Altman Ensemble Award at the Independent Spirit Awards.

Ali has a wide-ranging background in film, television and theater. On television, he can be seen in the Netflix seriesâ?? *Luke Cage* and *House of Cards*. His impressive list of film credits includes *Free State of Jones*, *Kicks*, *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay â?? Part 1 & 2*, *The Place Beyond the Pines*, *Crossing Over*, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*. Next up he can be seen in *Hidden Figures*, *Roxanne, Roxanne* which will premiere at the 2017 Sundance Festival and *Alita: Battle Angel* in 2018.

Previously announced honorees attending the 2017 Film Awards Gala are Amy Adams, Casey Affleck, Annette Bening, Tom Hanks, Nicole Kidman, Ruth Negga, the cast of *Hidden Figures* including Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer, Janelle MonÃ¡e, Kevin Costner and Jim Parsons, and the cast of *La La Land* , including Emma Stone, Ryan Gosling, and director Damien Chazelle.

About The Palm Springs International Film Festival

The Palm Springs International Film Festival (PSIFF) is one of the largest film festivals in North America, annually welcoming more than 135,000 attendees for its lineup of new and celebrated international features and documentaries. The Festival is also known for its annual Film Awards Gala, a glamorous, black-tie event attended by 2,500 guests, presented this year by Chopard and sponsored by Mercedes Benz and Entertainment Tonight. The Film Awards Gala honors the yearâ??s best achievements in cinema in front of and behind the camera. The celebrated list of talents who have been honored in recent years includes Ben Affleck, Javier Bardem, Cate Blanchett, Sandra Bullock, Bradley Cooper, George Clooney, Daniel Day-Lewis, Leonardo DiCaprio, Clint Eastwood, Matthew

McConaughey, Julianne Moore, Brad Pitt, Eddie Redmayne, Julia Roberts, David O. Russell, Meryl Streep, and Reese Witherspoon. PSIFF is organized by The Palm Springs International Film Society, a 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit organization with a mission to cultivate and promote the art and science of film through education and cross-cultural awareness.

For more information, call 760-778-8979 or 800-898-7256 or visit www.psfilmfest.org.

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