



## **BronzeLens Film Festival Positions Atlanta as Film Capital**

"Go East young man," has become the new call in Hollywood. Now Atlanta is furthering its position as the new mecca for the film industry with the BronzeLens Film Festival.

The first annual BronzeLens Film Festival fills a gap in movie and television production by highlighting the work of African-American filmmakers and people of color. Over the course of 4 days, November 11-14, festival producers will bring together film lovers, actors and filmmakers for screenings at multiple venues around Atlanta, informative panels and enlightening Master Classes led by film industry leaders.

The festival's mission is twofold.

"One is to promote Atlanta as this new mecca for film for people of color," said Kathleen Bertrand, senior vice president of community and governmental affairs for the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau. "The second is to be able to have an event that showcases films and provides networking opportunities that will help us develop the next generation of filmmakers."

Atlanta and film have been synonymous for many years thanks to the work of Tyler Perry Studios—the first African-American owned studio in the country—and Rainforest Films. So far, the film industry has invested more than \$647 million in Georgia, bringing \$1.15 billion in economic impact to the state. With an economic driver like that, Georgia has developed one of the deepest and most experienced crew bases in the country with more than 5,000 union and non-union professionals. Another 1,000 suppliers and support vendors call the state home.

The BronzeLens Film Festival fills a pivotal gap in the film industry. According to the Georgia Department of Economic Development, more than 700 films and television series have been shot in Georgia. But people of color represent less than 5 percent of the film industry's investment in the state.

Atlanta has a long history of providing box office gold. Tyler Perry's latest film *For Colored Girls* opened last weekend. It was filmed in Atlanta. Also, filming is currently underway for *The Change-Up* starring Jason Bateman, Ryan Reynolds and Olivia Wilde. The movie includes thousands of Atlantans, who were filmed for a scene this weekend at Turner Field. A few other blockbusters filmed in Atlanta or Georgia include: *The Blindside*, *Due Date*, *The Lottery Ticket*, *The Last Song*, *Zombieland*, *The Crazies*, *Drumline*, *Diary of a Mad Black Woman*, *Madea's Family Reunion*, *Stomp the Yard*, *We are Marshall*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, etc...

Atlanta has succeeded in the film industry thanks, in part, to increased support from state officials in the form of tax incentives. Many states around the country offer incentives. In 2005, Georgia increased incentives for the film industry from 9 to 17 percent. Even then, business was being stolen by other states, like New Mexico and Louisiana. In 2008, the state legislature passed a 30 percent incentive. That brings Georgia's film incentive package in-line with other states, allowing for Georgia to be competitive and bring additional revenue and exposure to Atlanta and the state.

With such a rich film culture, Atlanta was in desperate need of a major film festival. That's where the BronzeLens Film Festival comes in. It starts Thursday at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis. For more information, go to [www.bronzelensfilmfestival.com](http://www.bronzelensfilmfestival.com).

