



# CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

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# 53 NEWS

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## **MARSHALL, REGINALD HUDLIN'S RIVETING NEW DRAMA ABOUT THURGOOD MARSHALL'S EARLY YEARS, TO OPEN THE 53RD CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**

Director **Hudlin**, Actors **Chadwick Boseman** and **Josh Gad**, and Producer **Paula Wagner** to Attend the Opening Night Celebration on Thursday, October 12

**CHICAGO** - The **Chicago International Film Festival** today announced *Marshall* as the Opening Night film for the Festival's 53rd edition, October 12-26, 2017. Director **Reginald Hudlin**, actor/producer **Chadwick Boseman**, actor **Josh Gad** and producer **Paula Wagner** are scheduled to attend the premiere at AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois St.).

Led by evening sponsors **Bloomberg Philanthropies** and **Wintrust Community Banks**, the Opening Night celebration will be held at AMC River East 21 on Thursday, October 12 at 7 p.m. and continue with an after-party at the Embassy Suites Downtown Magnificent Mile (511 N. Columbus Dr.). Additional support provided by Patrons Baker Virchow Krause, LLP, John and Jacolyn Bucksbaum Family Foundation, Charles Droege, Cheri Lawrence, Jeanne Randall Malkin Family Foundation, and Penelope R. and Robert Steiner.



Directed by **Reginald Hudlin** and starring **Chadwick Boseman**, **Josh Gad**, **Kate Hudson**, **Dan Stevens**, **Sterling K. Brown** and **James Cromwell**, *Marshall* is based on a true incident in the life of Thurgood Marshall, when he was a young lawyer, long before his appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court. As the nation teeters on the brink of World War II, a nearly bankrupt NAACP sends Marshall to conservative Connecticut to defend a black chauffeur against his wealthy socialite employer in a sexual assault and attempted murder trial that quickly became tabloid fodder. In need of a high profile victory but muzzled by a segregationist court, Marshall is partnered with Samuel Friedman, a young Jewish lawyer who has never tried a case. Marshall and Friedman struggle against a hostile storm of fear and prejudice, driven to discover the truth in the sensationalized trial which helped set the groundwork for the Civil Rights Movement to come.

"Paula Wagner has been a friend of the Festival for more than 20 years," said Festival Founder and CEO **Michael Kutza** "In 2010, we honored her passion, hard work and dedication to the entertainment industry in which she has produced a series of blockbuster successes. *Marshall* is an important and heartfelt film for Paula, which is surely going to deeply move our audiences. We are proud to open this year's Festival with it."

"We're thrilled to be opening the Festival with *Marshall*," said Chicago International Film Festival Artistic Director **Mimi Plauché**. "We were immediately captivated by its powerful storytelling and stunning production design. While the film recounts a significant- if little known - story from America's civil rights movement, it continues to resonate today. With *Marshall*, Illinois-native Reginald Hudlin makes his mark as an exceptional dramatic filmmaker, drawing out dynamic, affecting performances from Chadwick Boseman and Josh Gad."



Filmmaker **Reginald Hudlin (Director and Producer)** is a pioneer of the modern black film movement, helping some of the most influential films and TV series of his generation. In addition to *Marshall*, his most recent efforts include producing the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of "Showtime at the Apollo" for FOX. In February 2016, Hudlin was one of the producers of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences' 88th Annual Academy Awards, for which he subsequently received an Emmy nomination in the category of Outstanding Special Class Program. Also for AMPAS, he produced the 6th Annual Governors Awards and The Black Movie Soundtrack, the recurring live cinematic concert experience at The Hollywood Bowl. Additionally, he has been the

executive producer of the NAACP Image Awards for the past five years (2013-2017). In 2012, he was nominated for a Best Picture Academy Award as one of the producers of Quentin Tarantino's Academy Award- and Golden Globe-winning film *Django Unchained*, one of the top-grossing Westerns of all time. In his more-than-30-year career, Hudlin has written, directed and/or produced numerous popular feature films including *House Party*, *Boomerang* and *Bebe's Kids*. Hudlin was also an executive producer and writer of the animated TV series *Black Panther* and executive producer of *The Boondocks*. Along with the original founding members, Hudlin revived the beloved comic book company Milestone Media. As Black Entertainment Television's first president of entertainment (2005-2009), Hudlin shepherded some of the network's biggest hits, including *Sunday Best*, *BET Honors* and *The BET Hip Hop Awards*. He also built BET's profitable home entertainment division and revamped the network's news division, which went on to win more than a dozen awards during that period.



**Chadwick Boseman (Thurgood Marshall)** made his feature film debut in Gary Fleders' drama *The Express*, playing football great Floyd Little. His breakout performance came in 2013 when he received rave reviews for his portrayal of the legendary Jackie Robinson in Warner Bros' *42*. In 2014, Boseman once again garnered critical praise for his portrayal of James Brown in Universal Pictures' *Get On Up*. Boseman received the 2014 CinemaCon Male Star of Tomorrow Award, was named one of the Top 10 Best Movie Performances of 2014 by Time Magazine and was awarded a Virtuous Award from the Santa Barbara International Film Festival for his portrayal of Brown. Last year, Boseman joined the Marvel Cinematic Universe as the African superhero "Black

Panther" in Marvel's *Captain America: Civil War*. His other feature film credits include: the revenge thriller *Message from the King*, garnering Boseman the Vanguard Honor for Achievement in Performance Award at the Toronto International Film Festival, the independent psychological post-war drama *The Kill Hole* and Summit Entertainment's *Draft Day* opposite Kevin Costner. Boseman's theater directing credits include: *Dutchman*, *Wine in the Wilderness*, *Indian Summer*, *Spear in the Sun*, *Colored Museum*, and *Six Hits*. For the screen, he wrote, directed and executive produced the short film *Blood Over a Broken Pawn*. His theater acting credits include *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Breathe*, *Learning Curve*, *Willie's Cut and Shine*, *Rhyme Deferred*, *Bootleg Blues*, *Zooman and the Sign* and *Urban Transitions*, for which he won an AUDELECO Award for Best Supporting Actor. Additional writing credits include *Deep Azure*, which was nominated for a Jeff Award for Best New Play and is published in the Hip Hop Theater

Anthology *Say Word*; *Hieroglyphic Graffiti*, which was produced at the National Black Theatre Festival and the Hip Hop Theatre Festival; and co-wrote *Rhyme Deferred*, which appears in the Hip Hop Theatre Anthology *The Fire This Time*.



**Josh Gad (Sam Friedman)** brings incredible wit, humor and depth to all of his roles from a Summer-loving snowman to a wacky Mormon missionary. He was most recently seen in the live-action Disney film *Beauty and the Beast* and lent his voice to Sony's *The Angry Birds Movie*, an animated film adaptation of the popular game. Gad's upcoming projects include Paramount's comedy, *Heavy Duty*, based on his original idea and STX's *Russ and Roger*, where he will star alongside Will Ferrell and play the role of Roger Ebert. Last year, Gad starred alongside Billy Crystal in the FX show *The Comedians* about a veteran comedian who is reluctantly paired with a younger, edgier comedian for a late-night comedy

sketch show. Additional film credits include starring alongside Adam Sandler and Peter Dinklage in Sony's *Pixels*, starring opposite Kevin Hart in *The Wedding Ringer*, Zach Braff's indie project, *Wish I Was Here*, starring as the loveable sidekick 'Olaf' in Disney's award-winning animated film, *Frozen*, the Steve Jobs biopic *Jobs*; *Thanks for Sharing* with Gwyneth Paltrow, Mark Ruffalo and Tim Robbins; Shawn Levy's *The Internship*, opposite Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson; Ed Zwick's *Love & Other Drugs*, with Jake Gyllenhaal, Anne Hathaway and Hank Azaria; Shawn Levy's *The Rocker*, alongside Rainn Wilson; *21*, opposite Kate Bosworth, Lawrence Fishburne and Kevin Spacey; and *Crossing Over*, with Harrison Ford, Sean Penn, Ray Liotta and Ashley Judd. Other voice credits include *Ice Age: Continental Drift*, alongside Ray Romano, Queen Latifah, Jennifer Lopez and John Leguizamo. In 2012 Gad served as an executive producer, co-creator and star on NBC's family comedy *1600 Penn*. Gad has also lent his voice to 'Woodie' on MTV's animated series *Good Vibes* and played the title role on BBC Worldwide's *Gigi: Almost American*. He has guest-starred on hit series such as *New Girl* and *Modern Family*. Gad also took Broadway by storm starring as Elder Cunningham in the Tony Award-winning comedy musical *Book of Mormon*. Gad was nominated for Tony, Drama League and Astaire awards, winning the Outer Critics Circle Award. He made his Broadway debut in a Tony-winning production of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*.



Golden Globe Award winner and Academy Award nominee **Kate Hudson (Eleanor Strubing)** made her studio film debut in *200 Cigarettes*, co-starring with Ben Affleck, Courtney Love and Paul Rudd. Her early films also include *Desert Blue* and *Gossip*. However, it was her career-making performance in Cameron Crowe's *Almost Famous* that won the hearts of critics and moviegoers around the world, earning her a Golden Globe Award, an Academy Award nomination as Best Supporting Actress and a BAFTA nomination. She followed with roles in Robert Altman's *Dr. T and the Women*, *About Adam* and Shekhar Kapur's period remake of *The Four Feathers*, opposite Heath Ledger. She achieved global box office success starring opposite

Matthew McConaughey in the hit romantic comedy *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days*, which earned more than \$200 million at the box office worldwide. Her films also include Merchant-Ivory's contemporary comedy *Le Divorce* and Garry Marshall's *Raising Helen* for Disney, as well as the psychological thriller *Skeleton Key*. She starred in the comedy *You, Me and Dupree* opposite Owen Wilson, Matt Dillon and Michael Douglas and re-teamed with Matthew McConaughey in Warner Bros.' *Fool's Gold*. She produced and starred opposite Anne Hathaway in *Bride Wars* and dazzled in Rob Marshall's all-star movie musical *Nine*. She appeared in Michael Winterbottom's provocative noir thriller *The Killer Inside Me* with Casey Affleck and Jessica Alba, the romantic comedy *Something Borrowed*, as well as the dramatic thriller, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, which premiered at the Venice and Toronto International Film Festivals. She



starred in Zach Braff's *Wish I Was Here* and Barry Levinson's *Rock the Kasbah*, opposite Bill Murray, Bruce Willis, Zooey Deschanel and Danny McBride and her voice was heard in DreamWorks Animation's global hit *Kung Fu Panda 3*. She reunited with Garry Marshall for *Mother's Day* with Julia Roberts, Jennifer Aniston and Jason Sudeikis, and co-starred in Peter Berg's *Deepwater Horizon*.



**Paula Wagner (Producer)**, film and theater producer, has also worked in the top ranks of the entertainment industry as a talent agent at CAA and studio executive. Through the production company Cruise/Wagner, which she launched with her former CAA client Tom Cruise, Wagner produced many critically acclaimed and financially successful films, including *Mission: Impossible 1, 2, 3, Without Limits, Shattered Glass, Narc, The Others, Vanilla Sky* and *The Last Samurai*. She has made films all over the world and her production company C/W, was based at Paramount for 12 years. After two years as co-owner and CEO of United Artists Entertainment, LLC from 2006 to 2008, Wagner established her own production company, Chestnut Ridge Productions. Her most recent project, *Marshall*, starring

Chadwick Boseman, Josh Gad and Kate Hudson, will be released in October 2017. *Marshall* was a script that was presented to Wagner by her friend Lauren Friedman, who was also the daughter of Sam Friedman, one of the lead characters in the film. She developed the film over a period of four-and-a-half years, and was particularly interested in the character development and high quality performances, partnering with Reginald Hudlin as producer and director. In addition to the many films that Wagner has produced, she also produced the critically acclaimed and award-winning Lifetime original movie, *Five*, which featured five short films about women with cancer; the 2013 Governors Awards ceremony for AMPAS; and both the 2011 and 2012 Producers Guild Awards shows. Her Broadway producing credits include *The Heiress* starring Jessica Chastain, David Strathairn and Dan Stevens, *Grace* starring Paul Rudd and Michael Shannon, and Terrence McNally's TONY nominated play *Mothers and Sons*. She is currently developing *Pretty Woman: The Musical* for Broadway for 2018. In addition to being on the board of the American Cinematheque, The National Film Preservation Foundation, and Carnegie Mellon University, her alma mater, she is a member of AMPAS and the PGA. Wagner is married to Rick Nicita (former co-chair of CAA, who now heads RPMedia, a production company). They have two sons, Zachary and Jesse.

Open Road Films will be releasing ***Marshall*** in theaters nationwide on October 13. Official movie social media accounts can be found on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

#### **Ticket and Event Information**

The Chicago International Film Festival Opening Night premiere of ***Marshall*** takes place at AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois) on Thursday, October 12, beginning at 7 p.m. with guest presentations, followed by the film presentation at 7:30 p.m. Additional film screenings take place at 7:45 p.m. and 8 p.m. An after-party with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres will follow at the Embassy Suites Downtown Magnificent Mile (511 N. Columbus Dr.) Film-only tickets start at \$35 with VIP tickets (including film and after-party) at \$100/ticket. **Ticket and event information is available by calling 312.683.0121.** Online purchases will be available at a later date.

**The 53rd Chicago International Film Festival is October 12-26.** Additional selections and full categories will be announced throughout September with a complete lineup and schedule announced September 18. Passes are on sale now and available by calling 312.683.0121.

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#### **About Bloomberg Philanthropies**

Bloomberg Philanthropies works in more than 120 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's charitable activities, including his foundation

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### **About Wintrust Financial Corporation**

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### **About Cinema/Chicago**

Cinema/Chicago, the presenting organization of the Chicago International Film Festival, is a year-round non-profit arts and education organization dedicated to fostering better communication between people of diverse cultures through the art form of the moving image. In addition to the [Chicago International Film Festival](#), Cinema/Chicago's programs include: [International Screenings Program](#), [Chicago International Television Festival](#), [CineYouth Festival](#), and year-round [Education Program](#). Celebrating its 53rd edition October 12-26, 2017, the Chicago International Film Festival is North America's longest-running competitive film festival.

### **Festival Sponsors and Partners**

The 53rd Chicago International Film Festival's sponsors include Official Airline: American Airlines; Premiere Sponsors: AARP, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Wintrust Community Banks; Participating Sponsors: Chicago Line Cruises, TV5Monde, Wansas Tequila; Education Sponsors: Allstate Insurance Company, HBO; Event Partners: AMC Theaters, Sound Investment AV; Hotel Partners: Ambassador Chicago, Conrad Chicago, The Whitehall Hotel; Platinum Media Partners: National CineMedia (NCM); Gold Media Partners: WTTW11, WBBM, WXRT; Silver Media Partners: WBEZ, Firewatch Films; Special support provided by Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the National Endowment of the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council Agency, Illinois Film Office, Chicago Film Office, and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE).